Multiannual financial framework (MFF) for the years 2014-2020: transfer of unused allocations for the year 2014

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The Council discussed a revision of the EU's multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2014-2020 and took note of the state of play.

To recall, the aim of the revision is to allow the EU to transfer EUR 21.1 billion of unused commitments for certain funds from 2014 to subsequent years.

These commitments remained unused in 2014 because of the late adoption of EU programmes jointly managed by the Commission and the member states. The programmes concerned are supported by the structural funds, the cohesion fund, the European agricultural fund for rural development, the European maritime and fisheries fund, the asylum, migration and integration fund, and the internal security fund.

The MFF regulation adopted on 2 December 2013 obliges the EU to revise its multiannual financial framework in the case of late adoption of programmes under shared management. The MFF regulation also sets a deadline of 1 May 2015 for adopting the revision.

The Council must unanimously adopt the revised MFF regulation after having obtained the consent of the European Parliament.

State of play: a vast majority of delegations indicated their readiness to support the Commission's proposal. However, a small number of Member States were still hesitant and requested additional information and assurance from the Commission in order to better understand the justification for its suggestion to transfer the unused appropriations mainly to the year 2015.

In reply to the concerns of these Member States, the Commission pointed out that transferring a major share of the allocations to later years would not be in line with the principle of equal treatment between Member States and also not in line with the European Union's commitment to enhancing growth and creating jobs. Moreover, any shift of the unallocated amounts to later years would **further increase the pressure on payments at the end of the MFF period and beyond**.

The Presidency concluded that an agreement on the proposed Regulation could not be reached at this stage. It recalls, however, the urgency of reaching an agreement as soon as possible, given the tight time schedule for obtaining the European Parliament's consent and adopting the revision within the deadline foreseen in the MFF Regulation.

The Presidency therefore emphasizes the need for the Council to take a position on the draft Council Regulation at the earliest convenience.