

EU budget for 2019: Conciliation ends without agreement

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On 19 November 2018, the Council and the European Parliament ended negotiations on the EU budget for 2019 without agreement.

The two arms of the budgetary authority concluded that they were not able to bridge their differences by midnight – the legal deadline laid down in the treaties.

“The Council regrets that it was not possible to reach an agreement on the 2019 EU budget today,” said Hartwig Löger, Minister for Finance of Austria and chief Council negotiator for the 2019 EU budget. “Throughout the conciliation process the Council tried hard to find a solution that would equip the Union for the challenges ahead. But I am still confident that we will be able to agree on next year’s budget before the end of the year.”

While the Council made a constructive offer that would have gone beyond the initial proposal by the Commission, the Parliament preferred to use unspent funds from previous years related to research projects. The Council was however concerned that this would create a precedent, with unknown consequences for the future.

The Parliament would also have liked to have a smaller contribution from the EU budget to the funding of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey. Member states agreed in June to finance €1 billion of an additional €3 billion for the facility by contributions according to their share of the EU’s GNI. €2 billion of this amount would therefore need to come from the EU budget.

Next steps

The Commission now has to present a new draft budget.

If, at the beginning of next year, the EU budget has not yet been definitively adopted, the system of provisional twelves applies. This means that not more than one twelfth of the budget appropriations for the previous year may be spent each month.

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