

Background – European Parliament Press Kit for the European Council of 10-11 December 2020



All documents included in the press kit, along with additional information, can be found on the European Parliament's website.

European Parliament President David Sassoli will represent the European Parliament at the summit and:

- address the heads of state or government at 14:00
- hold a press conference at 14:30 on 10 December. More information [here](#).

On 10 December, EU leaders will meet in Brussels to discuss further coordination on COVID-19, Multiannual financial framework and the Recovery fund, climate change, security, and external relations. On 11 December, the leaders will also meet for the Euro Summit.

Italy: Intesa Sanpaolo and the EIB Group: 2.8 billion euro in loans and

resources



- In 2020, agreements for more than €2.8 billion in funding were signed to support SMEs and mid-caps in research, innovation and overcoming the health emergency.
- The funds are intended to support the economies of the countries in which Intesa Sanpaolo operates, particularly the Italian economy.
- Two projects were funded related to tourism and courses for university students.

In 2020, **Intesa Sanpaolo** and the **European Investment Bank Group** (EIB and EIF – European Investment Fund) extended their cooperation to jointly provide **new financial resources to support the countries where Intesa Sanpaolo operates.**

In a particularly difficult year for the world's economies due to the COVID-19 health emergency, several initiatives have been launched through a number of specific agreements. Under these agreements, the **EIB Group** has made and will make financial resources available to **Intesa Sanpaolo** that, combined with resources added by the Italian bank, will make it possible to grant **over €2.8 billion in new loans** to final recipients **destined primarily for the Italian economy.**

Intesa Sanpaolo will **allocate the funds** mainly to its **more than 200 000 corporate customers** for:

- **financing small and medium-sized Italian companies and mid-caps**, i.e. companies with up to 3 000 employees at a consolidated level, for:
 - new investments, particularly in research projects and innovation;
 - ongoing working capital needs;
 - liquidity to overcome the COVID-19 crisis.
- **support for two projects through EU Structural Funds:**
 - an **agreement with the Sardinia Region** to counter the COVID-19 crisis that focuses primarily on the tourism sector (another is being finalised with the Sicilian regional administration);
 - an **agreement to provide student loans to university students.**

Among the agreements signed in 2020 between the **EIB Group** and **Intesa Sanpaolo** is the synthetic **securitisation** of an existing loan portfolio amounting to **approximately €2 billion under the GARC programme** (*Gestione Attiva Rischio di Credito* – Active Credit Risk Management). Through this agreement, after optimising the credit risk on an existing portfolio, it will be possible to make available **€450 million in new loans** for **SMEs and mid-caps** affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

Italian businesses will be able to access new credit on favourable terms, also in combination with the COVID-19 measures provided for by the so-called Liquidity and Relaunch Decrees, and therefore benefiting from the guarantees from the **Central Guarantee Fund** and **SACE**.

Also being finalised is an **innovative social housing project** through urban

redevelopment projects that include improving the energy efficiency of the areas involved.

Intesa Sanpaolo is the leading bank in Italy and one of the soundest and most profitable banks in Europe. It offers commercial, corporate investment banking, asset management and insurance services. The Intesa Sanpaolo Group has approximately 14.6 million customers who are assisted through both digital and traditional channels. The Group's international subsidiary banks serve 7.2 million customers across Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Intesa Sanpaolo is considered one of the most sustainable banks in the world. For the Group, creating value means being a driver for growth, for the benefit of both society and the economy. As regards the environment, the Group has set up a €6 billion fund for the circular economy. Intesa Sanpaolo supports major economic inclusion and poverty reduction projects, including an impact fund of €1.2 billion for loans available to social groups who struggle to access credit. Intesa Sanpaolo has a high level of involvement in cultural initiatives, organised by the bank or in collaboration with other entities in Italy and further afield. These include permanent and temporary exhibitions showcasing the bank's impressive artistic heritage at the Gallerie d'Italia, the Group's museums located in Milan, Naples, Vicenza and soon Turin.

[Press release – Deal on financing a just energy transition in EU regions](#)



The Just Transition Fund (JTF), worth 17.5 billion EUR, is one of the EU's key tools to support regions in the transition towards climate neutrality by 2050.

During their talks, EU institutions agreed to broaden its scope to also fund micro-enterprises, universities and public research institutions, digital innovation and activities in the areas of education and social inclusion. Investments in renewable energy and energy storage technologies, investments in energy efficiency and heat production for renewables-based district heating, smart and sustainable local mobility will also be financed.

The decommissioning or construction of nuclear power stations, activities linked to tobacco products and investment related to the production, processing, transport, distribution, storage or combustion of fossil fuels cannot be funded through the JTF.

At the initiative of the Parliament, a “Green Rewarding Mechanism” will be introduced, if JTF resources are increased after 31 December 2024. The additional resources will be distributed among member states, with those that succeed in reducing greenhouse gas emitted by their industrial facilities receiving more funding.

Other key measures agreed

- In their territorial just transition plans, member states have to focus on supporting **outermost regions and islands** and earmark specific amounts from their national allocations;
- **Businesses in difficulty** may receive support in compliance with temporary EU state aid rules established to address exceptional circumstances;
- Resources may be transferred from other cohesion funds on a **voluntary basis**;
- The proportion of the investments to be provided by EU funding (**co-financing**) is set at maximum of 85% for less developed regions, 70% for transition regions and 50% for more developed regions.

Quote

Rapporteur [Manolis Kefalogiannis](#) (EPP, GR) said: “The European Parliament gave a strong political signal: the social, economic and environmental impact of the energy transition in the most affected regions must be addressed. We took a pragmatic approach that will allow us to move into a new green era without leaving anyone behind.”

Next steps

Parliament and Council are now expected to endorse the content of the agreement.

Background

The Commission [published](#) in January 2020 a legislative proposal on the Just Transition Fund (JTF), the first legislative proposal implementing the priorities set out in the European Green Deal, followed in May by an [amended proposal](#) containing an increase of the Fund’s resources. In July, the European Council set the financial envelope of the JTF at EUR 7.5 billion from the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework, supplemented by EUR 10

billion from the EU Recovery Instrument.

Invitation letter by President Charles Michel to the members of the European Council ahead of their meeting on 10-11 December 2020



At this week's European Council meeting we will have to tackle many important issues. We will start with our traditional exchange of views with President Sassoli.

On the COVID-19 pandemic, we welcome the positive developments on vaccines. This does not however mean that the pandemic is over. We can now step up our preparations for the deployment and distribution of vaccines. We must sustain our efforts to coordinate on testing and the lifting of restrictions, including for travel, when the epidemiological situation allows it.

I am confident that we can find an agreement on a common package to allow for the swift implementation of both the Multiannual financial framework and the Recovery fund.

Our afternoon session will be dedicated to climate change. An agreement on an enhanced emissions reduction target of at least 55% by 2030 is within our grasp. Work on the best way to get to this ambitious target is well under way. This would be a major achievement and would underpin our claim to play a leading role in fighting climate change.

Over dinner, I would like us to tackle our important international agenda. After the elections, our relations with the US will enter into a new phase and we should set the basis for a strong and equal partnership. As agreed in October we will also return to relations with Turkey.

On Friday morning, we will address the Southern Neighbourhood. It is a key region for our strategic interests and we should examine how to revive it and lend it a new dimension.

We will then turn to our security. The terrorist attacks of the past few weeks have only strengthened our resolve to work together against terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism. We will focus in particular on operational measures that further reinforce our cooperation.

At the end of our meeting, we will be joined by the Presidents of the ECB and the Eurogroup for a Euro Summit in inclusive format. This will be an

opportunity for us to discuss the economic situation and to give further guidance on the Banking Union and the Capital Markets Union.

When it comes to relations with the UK, negotiations are on-going based on our common mandate. It is not the intention to plan a discussion on the matter. The President of the Commission will debrief us on the state of play.

I look forward to seeing you in Brussels.

[Visit the meeting page](#)

Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Venezuela



On 12 November 2020, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2020/1700^[1].

The Council has decided that the restrictive measures should be renewed for a further period of 12 months, until 14 November 2021. The Council also decided to amend the statement of reasons of fourteen persons listed in Annex I to Decision (CFSP) 2017/2074.

The Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania^[2], and the EFTA countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this Council Decision.

They will ensure that their national policies conform to this Council Decision.

The European Union takes note of this commitment and welcomes it.

^[1] Published on 13.11.2020 in the Official Journal of the European Union L 381/25.

^[2] The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.