

European Council 12-13 December 2019

This will be the first EU summit chaired by Charles Michel as the **new President of the European Council**. It will start on Thursday 12 at 15.00 with an exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli.

During their first working session leaders will discuss **climate change**. The heads of State or Government are expected to finalise their guidance on the EU's long-term strategy to be submitted to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in early 2020. The focus will be on setting a target for achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

The European Council will also discuss over a working dinner the EU's long-term budget, the **multiannual financial framework (MFF)**. The discussion will be based on a negotiating box with figures prepared by the Finnish presidency, as requested by the leaders in October.

Leaders are also expected to address other issues, including the **Conference on the Future of Europe**, relations with **Russia**, the **EU-Africa** partnership and the situation regarding the **WTO's** mechanism for settling disputes.

On Friday there will be a Euro Summit in inclusive format where EU27 leaders will take stock of the implementation of their June 2019 statement concerning the strengthening of the Economic and Monetary Union (**EMU**).

Afterwards EU27 leaders will discuss **Brexit** and preparations for the negotiations on future EU-UK relations after withdrawal.

[Meeting page](#)

[Invitation letter by President Michel](#)

Indicative programme:

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| Thursday: | 15:00 | Exchange of views with President of the European Parliament |
| | 15:30 | Working session of European Council |
| | TTBC | Press conference by Presidents Michel and Von der Leyen |
| | Followed by | Working dinner |

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| Friday: | 10:00 | Euro Summit |
| | 12:00 | Special European Council (Article 50) |
| | Followed by | Press conference by Presidents Michel and Von der Leyen and the Prime Minister of Finland Marin. |

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

Climate change

The European Council will focus on finalising its guidance on the EU's long-term strategy on climate change to be submitted to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in early 2020.

The aim of the discussion will be to endorse the target of achieving climate neutrality by 2050 and to define the enabling framework to get there. Leaders are expected to highlight the need for a just and socially balanced transition, and discuss the appropriate instruments and level of funding to make it possible.

[Tackling climate change in the EU - background information](#)

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

The European Council will exchange views on the long-term EU budget, the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). On the basis of a paper presented by the Finnish presidency, the negotiating box, which includes figures, leaders are expected to discuss the main features of the MFF, including the overall level, the financing and the volumes of the main policy areas, as well as conditionalities and incentives.

The debate should go beyond the exchange of views between the leaders in October and aim at narrowing the distance between the different positions to allow room for compromise.

[Multiannual financial framework: shaping EU expenditure - background information](#)

[Negotiating box with figures prepared by the presidency](#)

Conference on the Future of Europe

The European Council will discuss the idea of a Conference on the Future of Europe, starting in 2020 and ending in 2022, to involve the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission in their respective roles.

EU-Africa partnership

The European Council is expected to highlight the importance of the EU- Africa partnership and the need for strategic discussions, in particular ahead of the next EU-Africa summit.

Relations with Russia

Chancellor Merkel and President Macron will inform the leaders about the implementation of the Minsk agreements, following the meeting in Normandy format on 9 December in Paris.

Trade

EU leaders are expected to express their concern at the paralysis of the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism, after the Appellate Body became dysfunctional this week. Since 2017 the United States has blocked the replacement of any of its seven members and rejected proposals to launch the selection process to fill the remaining vacancies.

Euro Summit

EU27 leaders will take stock of the implementation of the Euro Summit's June 2019 statement. The heads of State or Government will look at the progress made in strengthening of the economic and monetary union (EMU), in particular through the revision of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) Treaty, the budgetary instrument for convergence and competitiveness (BICC) and technical work on the strengthening of the banking union. The President of the Eurogroup, Mario Centeno, and the President of the European Central Bank, Christine Lagarde, will also be present at the debate.

[Deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union - Background information](#)

[Statement of the Euro Summit, 21 June 2019](#)

Brexit

The European Council (Article 50) will meet in EU27 format to discuss Brexit and preparations for the negotiations on future EU-UK relations after withdrawal.

Leaders will reconfirm their aim of establishing as close as possible a future relationship with the UK and set out the main lines of the EU's internal organisation for the negotiations. They are expected to welcome the Commission's decision to reappoint Michel Barnier.

[Brexit: timeline and documents](#)
