

ECR Group statement on the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework

As we approach the crucial negotiations for the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the ECR Group wishes to express its stance on the future of the EU budget. Our vision is rooted in the principles of Eurorealism, accountability, democracy, and sound financial management. We emphasize the importance of ensuring that spending is based on real needs and adheres to the principle of subsidiarity, guaranteeing that financial resources are allocated efficiently and effectively, addressing the actual requirements of EU citizens and regions while delivering EU added value. We call for a budget that respects the sovereignty of member states and ensures that decisions are made as closely as possible to the citizens.

In light of the upcoming MFF package proposal, we would like to outline our priorities and concerns:

We advocate for a budget that promotes free enterprise and minimal regulation to stimulate economic growth and competitiveness. The EU budget must focus on delivering tangible results and creating synergies between national and EU projects. The EU internal market has been a cornerstone of European prosperity, driving economic integration, enhancing competitiveness, and providing consumers with greater choice and lower prices. Improving a level playing field within the EU internal market is crucial to reap the benefits of our common project. These can only be achieved if we also address the over-regulation and red tape, since they are severely restraining EU businesses to adapt to changes in the global business environment. In light of the EU's economic growth imperatives and energy security priorities, we also consider there is an urgent need to address the excessive regulatory burden and increased energy costs driven by the European Green Deal.

We call for a more effective and flexible cohesion policy, in the spirit of the mid-term review recently proposed by Executive Vice-President Fitto. We call for cohesion policy funding to remain a dedicated envelope and oppose the establishment of a single, centralised and conditional fund, a model that would jeopardise the identity and effectiveness of cohesion policy, distancing it from its original mandate and territorial foundations. It is essential that regional and local authorities retain their role in the design and implementation of EU policies to ensure that the specific needs and circumstances of all regions are adequately addressed.

Equally so, we firmly oppose any proposal to include the CAP budget in a single fund with other policies or funds, as such an approach would reduce the effectiveness of interventions and compromise the Union's strategic objectives in terms of food security and rural development. Therefore, we stress the importance of maintaining the CAP budget as a stand-alone, distinct and dedicated budget, tailored to the specific needs of the European agricultural sector.

Following the rapid changes in the geopolitical context, we agree with the Commission that the status quo is not an option. We believe the next MFF should support a comprehensive security approach, including increased investment in both civil and military capabilities. These efforts should seamlessly align with our commitment to a revitalised NATO and strengthen overriding value of the transatlantic security relationship. The MFF should support investments

in critical infrastructure and cross-border infrastructure, such as transport connections, power grids and communication networks improving military mobility and cross-border connections.

Finally, we reiterate the ECR's long-standing call for a firm, rules-based migration management centred on border control, return mechanisms and strategic partnerships. The MFF must allocate adequate resources to ensure the effective protection of the EU's external borders and address the challenges of migration in a manner that is both humane and firm.

ECR Group