

Common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund; general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

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The presidency informed the Council about the state of play in the ongoing trilogue discussions with the European Parliament and the Commission on the [EU's cohesion policy package for 2014-2020](#) on the basis of an issue paper (see Council doc. [13796/13](#)).

The Council exchanged views and provided guidance to the presidency for finalising the negotiations with the European Parliament.

All Member States considered that a timely agreement was urgently needed in order to allow the new cohesion policy programmes to be implemented as from 1 January 2014. Member States reminded the significant concessions which the Council had already made to the European Parliament. They reiterated their willingness to continue working in a constructive spirit on this file.

With regard to the outstanding political issues, the discussion went along the following lines:

- Several Member States opposed any dilution of the macro-economic conditionality. They stressed its importance for making sure that the five European structural and investment funds (the European regional development fund ([ERDF](#)), the European social fund ([ESF](#)), the cohesion fund ([CF](#)), the European agricultural fund for rural development (EAFRD) and the European maritime and fisheries fund (EMFF)) were not undermined by unsound macro-economic policies.
- Many Member States objected to any change to the performance reserve and the pre-financing which could have an impact on the payments' profile, seen as a core element of the MFF agreement.
- Some Member States resisted to any modification to co-financing, reminding that national cofinancing was essential to guarantee the ownership of the different programmes on the ground.