

European Council agrees on Brexit, discusses the multiannual budget and the EU enlargement

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On 17 - 18 October, the leaders of the EU Member States met in Brussels to discuss topical issues, such as Brexit, the multiannual budget for the next period, the EU's institutional cycle following the European Parliament elections, the opening of accession negotiations with Albania and Macedonia, as well as other external policy issues.

At the European Council meeting, the leaders of the Member States backed the agreement on the UK's Withdrawal Agreement. Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš emphasizes: "The agreement ensures clarity for citizens and protects the European Union's single market, which is essential for our entrepreneurs. We currently have a good outcome in a poor situation. Let us now wait for the decision of the British Parliament. If the two chambers of the British Parliament approve the agreement, the vote is yet to be made by the European Parliament."

The new priorities of the European Commission's work were brought to the attention of the Heads of the Member States.

"We expect a high level of ambition from the European Commission regarding the future development of the European Union – it relates to both the multiannual budget for the next period and the strengthening of the single market, as well as the achievement of climate policy objectives. It is essential that the European Commission begins work on common development as soon as possible," the Prime Minister stressed.

The leaders of the Member States decided to further discuss the opening of accession negotiations with Albania and Macedonia ahead of the summit in Zagreb scheduled for May next year. As regards the situation in Syria, the leaders of the Member States condemned the Turkey's attacks in north-eastern Syria and called for an end to the attacks.

"History shows that it is not possible to resolve conflicts by military means, the European Union, by its example, shows that we can achieve much more through dialogue," stresses K.Kariņš.

At the European Council meeting, the Heads of State also discussed the next EU multiannual budget. Prime Minister K.Kariņš pointed out that Europe needs a budget that ensures growth in all Member States.

"We see the European Commission's proposed 1.11% of the European Union's gross product as the starting point for negotiations. We have substantial adequate funding from the cohesion and agricultural funds, particularly, in the light of the fact that these funds contribute to the implementation of innovation and climate objectives," the Prime Minister said.

K.Kariņš met with future President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and discussed the issues on the EU agenda within the framework of the visit. The Prime Minister also gave interviews to a series of international media – BBC World Service, Bloomberg Television, CNN International etc.

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