

Statement of Commissioner Lewandowski on the adoption of the 2012 EU budget

"I am pleased that the Council and the European Parliament have reached an agreement on the 2012 EU budget this Saturday morning. The increase in payments on 2011 is 1.85%, amounting to €129 billion. This is clearly an austerity budget as most Member States are in the midst of a serious financial crisis.

I also welcome the fact that, unlike last year, both arms of the budgetary authority have adopted the EU budget before the end of the conciliation procedure.

However, I regret that they did not take into account the fact that, as we are reaching the end of the current financial period, EU funded projects across Europe gather speed, and that therefore the European Commission has to pay higher amounts to beneficiaries than at the beginning of the financial period.

There is now a serious risk that the European Commission will run out of funds in the course of next year, and will therefore not be able to honour all its financial obligations towards beneficiaries of EU funds such as Europe's regions and towns, businesses and scientists.

When this happens, I count on both the Council and the European Parliament to honour their joint statement to the full, providing us with additional means to honour our commitments".

Note: in their 18/11 joint statement, the European Parliament and the Council "ask the Commission to request additional payment appropriations in an amending budget if the appropriations entered in the 2012 budget are insufficient to cover expenditure under sub-heading 1a (competitiveness for growth and employment), sub-heading 1b (cohesion for growth and employment), heading 2 (preservation and management of natural resources), heading 3 (citizenship, freedom, security and justice), and heading 4 (EU as a global player)".