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***“The European Council facing conflicts over the
Multiannual Financial Framework (2021 to 2027)”***

9 January 2020

Centre International de Formation Européenne
Berlin, Germany



TRACK Teaching and Researching
the European Council

Title : "The European Council facing conflicts over the Multiannual Financial Framework (2021 to 2027)"

Date : 9 January 2020

Venue : Centre International de Formation Européenne, Berlin

Participants : 29

TRACK organized a public lecture on "The European Council facing conflicts over the Multiannual Financial Framework (2021 to 2027)" at the Centre International de Formation Européenne (Cife) in Berlin. The event which was part of a conference of the European Online Academy's online master was attended by international students. Besides *Wolfgang Wessels* and *Edgar Lenski*, *András Inotai* and *Thomas Traguth* also contributed to the event.

Edgar Lenski, who is head of the European desk in the German chancellery and thus responsible for preparing the sessions of the European Council, described and analyzed the way the European Council had so far dealt with the upcoming Multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2021 to 2027 and identified several steps. First general discussions about the Commission's proposal amongst political leaders took place in June 2018, however even after some technical work in December 2018, the discussions remained superficial. In June 2019, political leaders took stock of the technical preparations and proposed intensive talks until the end of 2019. In October 2019, a first proposal with concrete and substantial figures was put forward by the Finnish presidency; however, disputes about the climate dossier prevented the proposal from being discussed. In December 2019 European Council President Charles Michel conducted so-called confessionals – bilateral exchanges – on the MFF with every member of the European Council. Furthermore, an additional summit is planned to take place before the next summit in spring and could lead to a clash between leaders and consequently to a change in the leaders' "mind set."

Lenski further identified several general features of the upcoming MFF negotiations. Firstly, except for Angela Merkel, no other leader has any experience in those kind of negotiations and most leaders so far did not want to get into serious debates on the issue. Furthermore, leaders also have to develop a feeling that beyond national interest any compromise on the MFF must have a European dimension as well. Lenski moreover expects some issues to be excluded from the package or put into a procedure for future considerations. So far, the president of the European Council has not come up with his own proposal, something that Member States will definitely expect. Other relevant issues, such as migration might be linked to the MFF. Finally, on the discussion of net-contributors and net-beneficiaries, a simple cost-benefit calculation without taking long term effects would be insufficient,



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as e.g. more funding for Poland could lead to more imports from Germany and thus the latter benefitting as well.

Find out more...

- ▶ Wessels, Wolfgang (2019): [Das politische System der Europäischen Union](#). Wiesbaden: Springer.
- ▶ Weidenfeld, Werner; Wessels, Wolfgang (2020): [Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration](#). Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- ▶ Weidenfeld, Werner; Wessels, Wolfgang (2020): Europa von A bis Z. Taschenbuch der Europäischen Integration. Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- ▶ Wolters, Johannes; Wessels, Wolfgang (2019): [Der Europäische Rat: Schlüsselinstitution der Europäischen Union](#), in: Lippert, Barbara; Becker, Peter (Hrsg.): Handbuch Europäische Union. Wiesbaden: Springer.

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