



EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT

Brussels, 22 October 2013

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It is my pleasure to invite you to the meeting of the European Council which will take place in Brussels on 24 and 25 October 2013.

Our meeting will start at 17.00 with the traditional exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament and the family photo. In our first working session on Thursday, we will hold a thematic discussion, on the basis of an introduction by Jose Manuel Barroso, on issues which are vital for our competitiveness in the world: the digital economy, innovation and services. A truly single digital market would make a considerable contribution to growth and job creation in our countries, and will be vital for Europe to regain a global lead in these sectors. It will require our strong commitment in three main areas: promoting new investments, developing a consumer and business-friendly Digital Single Market and improving skills. We will also look at ways to further encourage innovation and take full advantage of Europe's scientific capital. Finally, we should seek to maximize the impact of the Internal Market for Services. My intention is to approve the first part of our conclusions at the end of this working session.

Over dinner, the focus will be on economic and social policy issues and on the Economic and Monetary Union. It is important that we evaluate together the progress since our June meeting on youth employment, the financing of the economy and regulatory fitness. We will also take stock of the progress on deepening our Economic and Monetary Union, including on the banking union, strengthened coordination of economic policies and the social dimension of the EMU. We will be joined for the dinner discussion by the President of the European Central Bank who will address issues such as the comprehensive balance sheet assessment of credit institutions and the completion of the banking union. The conclusions relating to these issues will be adopted over dinner.

When we resume on Friday morning, we will first look at the state of play on preparations for the Eastern Partnership Summit that will be held in Vilnius on 28-29 November. Finally, we will hold an exchange of views on the situation following the recent tragic events at sea in the Mediterranean.

&salutations

H. VAN ROMPUY