
TALKING CASH AND TOP JOBS AT EU SUMMIT

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Brexit raises its head again on Friday, as EU leaders meet for an informal summit in Brussels - to talk money and top jobs.

The consequences of Britain's departure will be on their minds as they discuss the next seven-year budget - which the EU Commission wants to increase, to pay for security, defence and migration policies.

And, as the biggest net contributor, Germany is focusing on the latter.

"When EU structural funds are redistributed we need to make sure that the distribution criteria in future reflect the commitment of regions and communities to take in and integrate migrants," said Chancellor Angela Merkel.

With the loss of around 10 billion euros a year post Brexit, the budget proposals include hiking country contributions, cuts affecting agriculture and cohesion funds, and opening up new sources, including taxes on polluting companies.

"Europe is not only a supermarket"

The future budget could also be used as a sanctions weapon against some countries, the cutting of funds for law violations.

"The point is conditionality, which means you can not just give and receive, but you need to have some kind of balance," explained analyst Charles de Marcilly, from the Robert Schuman Foundation.

"So, I think that the question of the rule of law and respect for the European unity, we have to sometimes use a strong arm, to bring someone to reason, telling them that Europe is not only a supermarket."

At the summit, leaders are expected to back plans to cut the number of MEPs to 705 - after British deputies depart.

But they're set to reject a proposal to give the Parliament a bigger voice in selecting the next head of the European Commission.

De Marcilly commented: "There is another concept: certain government and state leaders do not like to have their hands and feet tied by a decision that would not be theirs to make anymore."

The summit is set to kick-start the debate on a post-Brexit EU and help parties prepare ahead of next year's European elections.

Kaynak/Source: