

Eurogroup statement on Cyprus

The Eurogroup welcomed the new Cypriot Finance Minister, Michalis Sarris, and the information he provided on the situation in Cyprus following the presidential elections and on the policy intentions of the new government. The first exchanges with the new Cypriot government have been useful. With the new government now in place in Cyprus, the Eurogroup is confident that a swift conclusion of the negotiations towards a Memorandum of Understanding can be reached.

The Eurogroup welcomes the commitment of President Anastasiades, reiterated by Minister Sarris, to closely cooperate with Cyprus's European partners towards the earliest possible completion of the loan agreement. For its part, the Eurogroup reiterates its readiness to assist Cyprus in its adjustment effort, including of its banking sector, in order to bring the economy to a sustainable growth path with sound public finances and to safeguard financial stability.

The Eurogroup has been informed that the preparatory work for concluding a Memorandum of Understanding is advanced and that the new government has agreed on an independent evaluation of the implementation of the anti-money laundering framework in Cypriot financial institutions.

The Eurogroup called on the international institutions and Cyprus to accelerate their work on the building blocks of a programme, and agreed to target political endorsement of the programme around the second half of March.

The Eurogroup will reconvene again in the near term in view of the progress of the discussions between the Cypriot authorities and the international institutions.