

2010-09-16 12:11:26 by webmaster

16 SEP 2010

EurActiv

European Union leaders are meeting in Brussels today (16 September) amid continuing disagreement over what sanctions to apply for EU countries breaking the bloc's budget discipline. Some are already asking for more time to conclude the negotiation.

Today's summit was initially intended to tighten the bloc's economic governance in the wake of the Greek sovereign debt crisis.

But talks have reached a dead-end over what sanctions to apply for countries breaking the EU's budget discipline rules, laid down in the Stability and Growth Pact.

Germany is pushing hard for changes applicable to all EU countries, while the UK insists they should only apply to the 16 eurozone members.

In an interview with the Financial Times newspaper yesterday (15 September), Christine Lagarde, French finance minister, said "the whole question of sanctions, the timing and pattern of sanctions, is at stake here".

European Council President Herman Van Rompuy, who is chairing the summit, will give an update to EU leaders over lunch on the progress made by his task force on economic governance, put in place on 26 March in the midst of the Greek crisis.

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