



European Parliament

# LEGISLATIVE TRAIN 01.2026

6 A NEW PUSH FOR EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY

PROPOSAL ESTABLISHING THE RIGHTS AND VALUES PROGRAMME - Q4 2020

[ ADOPTED ]

MFF NL

## CONTENT

According to Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union, the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights, including the rights of the persons belonging to minorities. Since European societies have lately been confronted with extremism and divisions, which challenge the idea of open and inclusive societies, the Commission has evaluated that it is more important than ever to promote and strengthen these values. Furthermore, people are still victims of discrimination on the ground of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation, and women, children and other people at risk face violence daily. Citizens are also not sufficiently aware of the values of the EU and of their rights as citizens, and some are even questioning them.

The Commission has found that the fragmented nature and limited resources that have been dedicated to this area so far are not enough to answer all these challenges, so it has combined them into a new Rights and Values programme, to be funded under a new Justice, Rights and Values Fund, with a total allocation of €641.7 million. The proposal for a regulation establishing the Rights and Values programme was published on 30 May 2018.

The proposed new programme groups together two existing funding programmes, the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme and Europe for Citizens programme, whose grouping is expected to bring the much needed simplification, mutual reinforcement and increased effectiveness. The general objective of the programme is to protect and promote the rights and values enshrined in the EU Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. This general objective will be achieved through three specific objectives:

- promotion of equality and rights (Equality and rights strand);
- promotion of citizen engagement and participation in the life of the Union (Citizens' engagement and participation strand);
- fight against all forms of violence (Daphne strand).

The Equality and rights strand and the Daphne strand will be allocated €408.7 million, whereas the Citizens engagement and participation strand will be given €233 million.

On 27 May 2020 the Commission amended its MFF 2021-2027 proposal to better respond to the COVID-19 crisis, which was criticised by civil society organisations, as it proposes cuts to the Rights and Values Programme.

In the European Parliament, the proposal establishing the Rights and Values Programme was assigned to the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE), with the Budgets (BUDG), Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL), Culture and Education (CULT), Legal Affairs (JURI), Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) and Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) Committees giving an opinion. The Committees for Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) and Petitions (PETI) decided not to give an opinion. The LIBE Committee (Rapporteur, Bodil Valero, Sweden, Greens/EFA) had the status of associated committee on the file along with the CULT Committee (Rapporteur Sylvie GUILLAUME, France, S&D) and the FEMM Committee (Rapporteur, Sirpa PIETIKÄINEN, Finland, EPP). LIBE Committee adopted the report on 10 December 2018. The plenary debate on the file was scheduled for 16 January 2019, and the report was adopted on 17 January with 426 votes to 152 with 45 abstentions. The Parliament adopted the agreement reached with the Council on 17 April. On 24 September 2019 the LIBE Committee voted to open interinstitutional negotiations after first reading in the Parliament. The Parliament's 23 July resolution on the extraordinary European Council meeting of 17-21 July 2020 listed the Rights and Values Programme among those needed to be singled out in increases to the figures proposed by the European Council.

The Council started working on the file in June 2018. On 19 December the Council agreed its position on the file. The agreement does not cover the budgetary aspects and some issues of a horizontal nature. On 6 March 2019 the European Parliament and the Council reached a provisional agreement on the programme. The budgetary aspects are subject to the overall agreement on the EU's next long-term budget. The Council confirmed the agreement on 13 March. At the Special European Council 17-21 July 2020 meeting the EU leaders agreed a recovery package for the Covid-19 pandemic and the 2021-2027 budget. It was decided that the financial envelope for the Justice, Rights and Values Programme would be €841 million. The agreement between the European Parliament and the Council reached on 10 November 2020 doubled the allocation to Rights and Values to € 1.6 billion. On 17 December the Parliament gave its consent to the next multiannual financial framework and the Council and the Parliament reached a provisional agreement on the programme. It will have an overall budget of maximum €1.55 billion (the programme will have a budget of €641.7 million, with an additional allocation of maximum €912 million).

On 3 February, the COREPER analysed and approved the outcome of the negotiations between the Council of the EU and the European Parliament. On Thursday 4 February, the Committees on Civil Liberties (LIBE) and Legal Affairs (JURI) approved the agreement (52 votes in favour, 14 against and 2 abstentions).

The Council formally adopted its first-reading position on 19 April. On 27 April 2021, Parliament adopted the 'Rights and Values Programme 2021-2027'. On 5 May, it was published in the Official Journal.

## References:

- EP Legislative Observatory, [Procedure file on Rights and Values programme 2021–2027](#), 2018/0208 (COD)
- European Commission, [Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Rights and Values programme \(2021 to 2027\)](#), COM/2018/383
- Council, [Interinstitutional File 2018/0207\(COD\)](#), 8 June 2018

- Council, [Rights and values programme: Council presidency and European Parliament reach provisional agreement](#), press release 17 December 2020
- European Council, [Special European Council, 17-21 July 2020](#), meeting page
- European Parliament, [Resolution of 23 July 2020 on the conclusions of the extraordinary European Council meeting of 17-21 July 2020](#), 2020/2732(RSP)
- European Economic and Social Committee, [Opinion New Justice, Rights and Values Fund](#), SOC/454-EESC-2012-1580

### Further Reading:

- European Parliament, EPRS, [Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme](#), At a Glance, April 2021
- European Parliament, EPRS, [Cohesion, resilience and values: Heading 2 of the 2021-2027 MFE](#), Briefing, April 2021
- European Parliament, EPRS, [Promoting the Rights and Values, Justice and Creative Europe programmes](#), Initial Appraisal of a European Commission Impact Assessment, Briefing, November 2018

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