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## European Parliament Press Kit for the European Council of 28-29 June 2018

This press kit has a selection of European Parliament press releases that show MEPs' priorities and what they have been pushing for in relation to topics on the summit agenda.

European Parliament President, Antonio Tajani, will represent the European Parliament and hold the following meetings at the European Council today 28 June:

14:15 Meeting with Spanish PM, Pedro Sánchez

14:45 Meeting with Italian PM, Giuseppe Conte

15:15 Speech to assembled heads of state or government

16:00 Press conference

Follow President Tajani's live press conference by clicking on the following [link](#).

MEPs **urge EU leaders to work out a solution** to the current impasse on migration and asylum. Parliament is ready to start talks to reform existing rules. Actually, it adopted its mandate on the reform of the Dublin Regulation, which is the centerpiece of EU asylum policy, already in November 2017, but negotiations on the final form of the text could not start since member states have not agreed their position.

On the 2021-2027 **multi-annual financial framework (MFF)** reform, Parliament asks for the Erasmus+ programme budget to be tripled, specific funding for SMEs and tackling youth unemployment to be doubled as well as the research and innovation budget to be increased by at least 50%. Additional funding is likewise needed for security, migration and external relations.

As to reforming the **EU's sources of revenue ("own resources")**, MEPs welcome the proposed introduction of three new EU own resources, based on a new corporate tax scheme, revenues from the Emissions Trading System and a plastic tax, to reduce gross national income-based direct contributions from member states.

Regarding **EU security and defence**, Parliament stressed that it is vital to reinforce EU cyber defence with a rapid cyber response team, noting that Russia, China and North Korea, but also

non-state actors, have already carried out malicious cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure in the EU, engaged in cyber espionage and mass surveillance of EU citizens, run disinformation campaigns and taken internet access hostage.

On **EU-NATO relations**, MEPs stress that neither organisation has the full range of tools to tackle new security challenges, which are increasingly less conventional and more hybrid. MEPs want EU-NATO strategic ties to focus on strategic communication, counter-terrorism, situational awareness, sharing classified information, stemming irregular migration and removing obstacles to the swift movement of military personnel and assets within the EU.

The **new European Defence Industrial Development Programme**, with a €500 million budget for 2019-2020, was recently agreed by MEPs and Council negotiators and provides for the development of new and upgraded products and technologies to make the EU more independent, make budget spending more efficient and spur innovation in defence.

Finally, Parliament laid out its possible association framework for **future EU-UK relations after Brexit**, which, taken into account the red lines announced by the UK government, could have the shape of an association agreement. It could be based on trade and economic relations (FTA), internal security, cooperation in foreign policy and defence and thematic cooperation, for example on cross-border research and innovation projects.

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## Migration

**This section covers the EU summit and migration, the state of play on asylum-related legislation and the Parliament's mandate to overhaul the Dublin system.**

[EU Summit/Migration: Parliament calls for joint solutions based on solidarity](#)

27-06-2018

**MEPs urge EU leaders to work out a solution to the current impasse on migration and asylum and stress their readiness to start talks to reform existing rules.**

Ahead of a crucial European Council, during which EU leaders will discuss how to best deal with the influx of migrants and asylum-seekers, MEPs underline that Europe needs an effective Common European Asylum System that respects fundamental rights, paired with enhanced border controls and reinforced security.

Parliament has already adopted their position on all of the legislative files related to the reform of the EU asylum policy and is ready to start talks with EU Ministers.

Claude Moraes (S&D, UK), Chair of the Civil Liberties Committee, said: "It is key that the Council comes up with comprehensive, humanitarian and effective solutions to migration at this meeting. The European Parliament has done its work as co-legislator by putting forward its position on Dublin. With the reform of the Common European Asylum System the solution for an EU approach based on solidarity and shared responsibility is on the table and the Council needs to act now - and if it is not possible to take a decision by unanimity, it is time to decide by majority".

"The cases of Aquarius and Lifeline showed us once more the importance of a decent and human EU approach and Council can no longer block the Dublin file, which is key to this", Moraes insisted.

Finally, he made clear that “we will not support unviable policy solutions such as off-shoring that put at risk human rights. This is a red line for the Parliament.”

Cecilia Wikström (ALDE, SE), EP rapporteur for the reform of the Dublin Regulation, added: “It is time for the Council to deliver and unite. The European Parliament has been ready to start negotiations on the Dublin regulation since November. I hope that EU governments during the summit are willing to set enough of their differences aside at this point in order to allow for negotiations between the Parliament and Council to begin”.

“We must find ways forward that allow for the creation of a functioning asylum system with adequate support for frontline states, shared responsibilities and correct management of our external borders. Without such negotiations, we stand empty handed with the current failed asylum system and no answers for citizens”, Wikström concluded.

### State of play of asylum-related legislation

**Parliament adopted in November 2017 its [mandate on the reform of the Dublin Regulation](#) , which determines the member state responsible for dealing with an asylum application and is the centerpiece of a comprehensive reform of the EU asylum policy, but negotiations on the final form of the text will only begin once member states agree on their position.**

[MEPs have repeatedly called](#) on the Council to show real political will to move ahead with the reforms and put an end to people dying in the Mediterranean while trying to reach Europe.

Parliament and member states have reached preliminary deals on several other files of the asylum package, such as the [recast Reception Conditions Directive and the new Qualification Regulation](#) and the new [EU Asylum Agency](#), but those may only be confirmed if there is an agreement on the key Dublin Regulation. Significant progress has also been made during talks on a [strengthened Eurodac system](#) and a new [EU Framework for resettlement](#).

The updated [Procedures Regulation](#) and the review of the [EU Blue Card](#) for highly skilled workers are two other proposals on which the co-legislators aim to reach an agreement before the end of legislature.

EP mandate on overhaul of Dublin system

16-11-2017

- Country of entry no longer automatically responsible for processing asylum applications
- All EU countries should accept their fair share of responsibility for hosting asylum seekers
- Those that refuse could lose EU funds

**The European Parliament is ready to start talks on revamping the Dublin system to ensure that asylum seekers are fairly shared among EU member states.**

A broad majority of MEPs endorsed [the mandate](#), drawn up by the Civil Liberties Committee, in a vote on Thursday 16 November (390 to 175, with 44 abstentions). Parliament can now begin talks with the Council as soon as EU member states have agreed their own negotiating position.

The proposed changes to the Dublin rules aim to remedy weaknesses in the current system and ensure that all EU countries accept their fair share of responsibility for hosting asylum seekers in the EU.

Under the reform, the country in which an asylum seeker first arrives would no longer be automatically responsible for processing his or her asylum application. Instead, asylum seekers should be shared among all EU countries, by being swiftly and automatically relocated to another EU country. EU member states that do not accept their fair share of asylum seekers should face the risk of having their access to EU funds reduced.

The key principles of the mandate are:

- all member states must participate and share responsibility for asylum seekers to reduce the disproportionate burden on “frontline” member states;
- security measures should be stepped up. All asylum seekers must be registered upon arrival and member states must maintain their external borders;
- asylum seekers should follow the rules of the system and not attempt to move between countries on their own, and
- faster procedures: people in need of international protection should get it much faster.

Read more about Parliament’s position in this [background note](#).

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# Economy and finance

This section covers the post-2020 EU budget and Parliament challenging the Commission's cuts and a statement from the EP's MFF and Own Resources Contact Group.

[Post-2020 EU budget: Parliament challenges Commission over scale of cuts](#)

30-05-2018

- MEPs challenge EU Commission's comparative figures for the next multi-annual financial framework (MFF)
- Parliament's calculations show that agricultural funds would be reduced by 15%, and regional development ones by 10%
- EU should boost research programmes, support for young people and small firms

**MEPs want adequate EU funding to meet new challenges like security and migration and deliver on existing policy aims such as regional development and Erasmus+.**

A [non-legislative resolution](#) on the [EU Commission's 2 May legislative proposals](#) for the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (MFF) and "own resources" reform was passed on Wednesday by 409 votes to 213, with 61 abstentions.

MEPs say that the Commission's comparative data do not show the full extent of the proposed EU funding reductions for Europe's regions and farming communities.

According to Parliament's [own calculations](#), these would lose 10% and 15% respectively, rather than "around 5%" as [calculated by the Commission](#). They reiterate their position that funding for the common agricultural and cohesion policies must be maintained at least at current levels.

Similarly, the Commission's proposed increases for key programmes such as research or Erasmus+ are significantly smaller than announced, say MEPs.

Parliament asks for the Erasmus+ programme budget to be tripled, specific funding for SMEs and tackling youth unemployment to be doubled and the research and innovation budget to be increased by at least 50% , "in order to enable [key EU policies] to fulfil their mission and objectives." Additional funding is likewise needed for security, migration and external relations, it adds.

Read about MEPs' first reactions from 2 May to the Commission's proposals in this [press release](#) and [this declaration](#).

### Own resources

As to reforming the EU's sources of revenue ("own resources"), MEPs welcome the proposed introduction of three new EU own resources, based on a new corporate tax scheme, revenues

from the Emissions Trading System and a plastic tax, to reduce gross national income-based direct contributions from member states.

Parliament also reiterates that the expenditure and revenue sides of the next MFF should be treated as a single package in the upcoming negotiations, and that “no agreement can be reached with Parliament on the MFF without corresponding headway being made on own resources”.

### **Background**

This resolution supplements Parliament’s position (and mandate for the forthcoming negotiations with the Council), consisting of two earlier resolutions, voted on 14 March, on the [expenditure](#) and [revenue](#) sides of the next MFF.

The adoption of a new MFF Regulation requires Parliament’s consent.

About 94% of the EU budget funds real activities on the ground in EU countries and beyond. It goes to citizens, regions, cities, farmers, researchers, students, NGOs and businesses. The EU’s administrative expenses account for about 6% of the total EU budget.

### [MFF and Own Resources Contact Group declaration on the post-2020 EU budget package](#)

02-05-2018

### **Declaration of the EP’s MFF and Own Resources Contact Group following the Commission proposals on the next Multiannual Financial Framework and the reform of the EU’s own resources**

The European Parliament is strongly in favour of an ambitious and political budget for the MFF 2021-2027 based on a clear strategy and objectives and on the principle of European added value.

The next MFF 2021-2027 should be the translation of the EU’s political project and policy priorities into the financial means needed to achieve them and should be based on a reformed and modernised own resources system.

Therefore, as the only directly elected EU institution, the European Parliament is fully committed to playing a constructive role in the forthcoming negotiations on the MFF and own resources.

The European Parliament adopted two resolutions on 14 March 2018 setting out detailed positions on the main aspects of the next MFF and on the reform of the EU’s own resources, thereby constituting the reference for the upcoming negotiations.

Parliament is ready to start work immediately to make it possible to deliver a satisfactory outcome to citizens ahead of the EU elections of 23 to 26 May 2019.

It is our common responsibility to give an important political signal on the Union's capacity to act, and Parliament expects from the Council and the member states the same willingness to engage in an active and constructive dialogue with the European Parliament, as of today.

The European Parliament's consent is needed to adopt the new MFF and while Parliament is ready to advance quickly, it is determined to make full use of its prerogatives when assessing the outcome of the upcoming negotiations.

A large majority of political groups consider that the expenditure and revenue side of the next MFF form part of a single package and no agreement can be reached on the MFF without corresponding headway being made on own resources.

While different positions exist within the Parliament on the budgetary priorities, all political groups stand united in reminding that Parliament is to give its final consent. They are therefore determined to ensure that Parliament's role is central throughout the entire process, in the interest of the European citizens.

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# Security and defence

**This section covers MEPs' call for a robust EU cyber defence and closer ties with NATO and the informal deal struck on the first ever EU defence industry fund.**

[MEPs want robust EU cyber defence and closer ties with NATO](#)

13-06-2018

- Malicious cyber attacks by Russia, China and North Korea demand robust response
- Set up European cyber rapid response team
- Maintain strategic EU-NATO ties

**New hybrid threats make it vital to reinforce EU cyber defence with a rapid cyber response team and closer cooperation with NATO, MEPs said on Wednesday.**

The cyber defence resolution, passed by 476 votes to 151, with 36 abstentions, notes that Russia, China and North Korea, but also non-state actors, have carried out malicious cyber attacks on critical infrastructure in the EU, engaged in cyber espionage and mass surveillance of EU citizens, run disinformation campaigns and taken internet access hostage (e.g. Wannacry, NonPetya).

### **Closer cooperation on cyber defence**

MEPs stress that Europe's fragmented defence strategies and capabilities have made it vulnerable to cyber-attacks. They therefore urge EU member states to enhance the ability of their armed forces to work together and to strengthen cyber cooperation at EU level, with NATO and other partners. This would entail more joint cyber exercises, training and exchanging military officers, recruiting cyber forensics experts, and also improving the cyber defence expertise of EU missions and operations.

MEPs welcome two cyber projects to be launched within the [Permanent Structured Cooperation \(PESCO\)](#): an information-sharing platform for cyber incidents and cyber rapid response teams. They hope this will lead to the creation of a European cyber rapid response team, which would coordinate, detect and counter collective cyber threats.

### **EU-NATO relations**

In a separate resolution on EU-NATO relations, approved by 411 votes to 182 with 57 abstentions, MEPs stress that neither organisation has the full range of tools to tackle new security challenges, which are increasingly less conventional and more hybrid.

In addition to improving cyber defence cooperation, MEPs want EU-NATO strategic ties to focus on strategic communication, counter-terrorism, situational awareness, sharing classified information, stemming irregular migration and removing obstacles to the swift movement of

military personnel and assets within the EU.

## Quotes

EP rapporteur on cyber defence [Urmas Paet \(ALDE, EE\)](#) said: "A successful cyber attack can turn a nuclear power plant into a nuclear bomb or cause chaos in a hospital, putting patients' lives at risk. In order to defend ourselves from such threats, we need to strengthen cyber defence capabilities by boosting cooperation between Member States, the EU and NATO. "

EP lead on EU-NATO relations [Ioan Mircea Paşcu \(S&D, RO\)](#) said: "Since the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the pace and the substance of the EU and NATO collaboration have accelerated, representing today no less than 74 common actions. Controlling hybrid threats, countering cyber attacks, building resilience, fighting terrorism, improving cooperation on missions and operations as well as military mobility, represent concrete domains of further cooperation."

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## First-ever EU defence industry fund: MEPs and ministers strike informal deal

23-05-2018

- EU's defence "strategic autonomy" to be achieved by fostering efficiency and innovation
- €500 million to develop defence products and technologies
- Excellence, innovation and competitiveness as key contract award criteria

**The new European Defence Industrial Development Programme, with a €500 million budget for 2019-2020, was informally agreed by MEPs and Council on Tuesday night.**

EU financial aid will help fund the development of new and upgraded products and technologies to make the EU more independent, make budget spending more efficient and spur innovation in defence.

## Who can apply?

To be eligible for funding:

- companies need to be part of a consortium of at least three public or private companies, established in at least three different EU member states,
- at least three of the eligible companies, established in at least two different member states, must not be controlled, directly or indirectly, by the same entity or by each other,
- beneficiaries and their subcontractors must be public or private companies established in the EU, and
- their infrastructure, facilities, assets and resources, including their executive management structures, used for the funded actions will have to be located in the EU throughout duration of the action and must also be established in the EU.

## What can be funded?

The European Defence Industrial Development Programme will fund the development phase (between research and production) of new and upgraded defence products and technologies in the EU, from studies, to design, testing and up to certification and development phases.

## Selection and work programme

To win contracts, project backers will need to prove their contribution to excellence, innovation and competitiveness.

The EU Commission would adopt a two-year work programme detailing the procedures for selecting actions for EU support, the type of financing and the budget allocated, as well as the categories of projects that can be funded, including projects specifically dedicated to SMEs.

## Experts

Independent experts, whose credentials need to be validated by member states, will assist the Commission in the award procedure. These experts will be EU nationals from as broad a range of EU countries as possible. The Commission will assure a balanced composition and an appropriate rotation.

## Quote

Rapporteur [Françoise Grossetête \(EPP, FR\)](#) said: “This first European programme specifically dedicated to defence industrial projects will increase cooperation and strengthen the competitiveness of the EU defence industry. The all-European defence technological and industrial base, in particular our SMEs, will benefit from this programme in order to strengthen our strategic autonomy. Excellence and innovation will be key to selecting projects.”

## Next steps

Once the full House and Council have formally approved the regulation, it will enter into force upon publication in the EU Official Journal, while the first capability projects are expected to be financed in 2019.

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## Brexit

This section covers the EP's recommendations on future EU-UK relations post Brexit.

[EP recommends association agreement for future EU-UK relations](#)

13-03-2018

- Respecting the integrity of the internal market, customs union and four freedoms
- Securing equal and fair treatment for EU citizens living in the UK and British citizens living in the EU
- Preserving the rights of citizens as set out in the Good Friday Agreement (Irish border)

**Plenary endorses a resolution laying out a possible association framework for future EU-UK relations after Brexit.**

Taking into account red lines announced by the UK government, an association agreement between the EU and the UK could provide an appropriate framework for their future relationship, says the resolution adopted by 544 votes in favour, 110 votes against, with 51 abstentions. This relationship could be based on four pillars:

- trade and economic relations (FTA),
- internal security,
- cooperation in foreign policy and defence and
- thematic cooperation, for example on cross-border research and innovation projects.

MEPs insist that the framework should include consistent governance, with a robust dispute resolution mechanism.

The resolution, prepared by the EP [Brexit Steering Group](#), stresses the uniqueness of the EU ecosystem with its binding common rules, common institutions and common supervisory, enforcement and adjudicatory mechanisms. This means that even closely-aligned non-EU countries with identical legislation cannot enjoy similar rights, benefits or market access to those of EU member states.

Any framework for the future relationship would also need to respect the integrity of the internal market, customs union and four freedoms, without allowing for a sector-by-sector approach (cherry-picking EU laws). It should preserve the EU's independent decision-making and legal order, including the role of the ECJ.

**Withdrawal agreement and transitional period**

The resolution welcomes the Commission's 28 February [draft of the Withdrawal agreement](#) and expresses support for the transitional arrangements proposed.

It also reiterates the importance of securing equal and fair treatment for EU citizens living in the UK and British citizens living in the EU.

The resolution welcomes the European Commission's draft protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland including its backstop option outlined in the [December Joint Report](#) that provides a concrete fall-back solution against any hardening of the border and preserves the North-South cooperation. MEPs also underline the importance of the British government ensuring there will be no diminution of the rights of citizens as set out in the Good Friday Agreement.

### **Next steps**

The resolution sets out Parliament's input ahead of 22-23 March summit of EU heads of state or government, which is expected to approve the Council's guidelines for negotiations on the UK's future relationship with the EU. Any withdrawal agreement and future association or international agreement with the UK will need to win the approval of the European Parliament.

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# About Parliament

**This section gives you information on the make-up of the European Parliament and seat allocation.**

The European Parliament is made up of 751 Members elected in the 28 member states of the European Union. Since 1979, MEPs have been elected by direct universal suffrage for a five-year period.

Each country decides on the form its election will take and a secret ballot. EU elections are by proportional representation.

Seats are allocated on the basis of population size of each member state, but by "degressive proportionality", i.e. the largest member states actually have fewer members than could be expected on the basis of population size alone and the smallest member states have more. Slightly more than one third of MEPs are women. MEPs are grouped by political affinity, not nationality.

On top of making EU laws, Parliament scrutinizes the work of the EU Commission, approves EU budgets (together with the Council), has veto rights over the EU's international agreements and can suggest new laws to the Commission.

## Political groups in the European Parliament

This section sets out the Parliament's composition, based on the number of MEPs per political groups.

(situation on 28.06.2018)

European People's Party (Christian Democrats)	219
Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the EP	189
European Conservatives and Reformists	71
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	68
The Greens/European Free Alliance	52
European United Left - Nordic Green Left	51
Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group	45
Europe of Nations and Freedom	35
Non-attached Members	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>751</b>