

5-point plan for a strong Europe that protects and shapes the future

1. A European Security & Defence Pact

In a more dangerous world, struck by wars, pandemics and increased criminality, Europe must keep people safe and ensure its strategic autonomy and preparedness. This means Europe must be capable to defend itself while fully supporting an enlarged NATO. Against Putin's unjustified aggression, we will stand firmly on the side of our Ukrainians friends, for as long as it takes. We will combat terrorism and organized crime, protecting all citizens, especially women and children, from violence online and offline.

- Create a **European Defence Union** with increased resources.
- Create a **European single market on defence**.
- Create a **European Commissioner for Security and Defence**.
- Create a **European Security Council**.
- Make better use of the Permanent Structure Cooperation (**PESCO**) and its flagship projects.
- Ramp up Europe's **defence industrial base** with joint procurement and more investments, especially in new technologies with a **Defence Tech 2.0**.
- Establish a **European missile defence shield**, including a nuclear defence shield.
- Create a **European Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)**.
- Create a **European Cyber-brigade**.
- Provide sustained political, economic, humanitarian and military **aid to Ukraine** for as long as it takes and until its victory.
- Establishment of an **international tribunal for the crimes of aggression** committed by the political and military leaderships of Russia and Belarus against Ukraine.
- Promote and provide predictable long-term funding for **reconstruction** of Ukraine and ensure its **European future**.
- Strengthen **Europol** making it an operational police agency with enforcement powers and double its **staff from 1.400 to 3.000**.
- Strengthen the **European Arrest Warrant**.
- Better **protect our Police officers**.
- Protect European **strategic industries** and our **critical infrastructure**, notably with a **European Port's Strategy**.
- Launch an **EU Action Plan against cyberbullying and online child abuse to protect our children**: cyberbullying must be considered a criminal offence throughout Europe and a common definition covering all relevant forms of cyber violence must be implemented.
- Deploy 1,000 officers in a Europol special unit to **combat human trafficking**.
- Create a true **Civil Protection Union force** and a **European Civil Contingencies Resilience Plan** with strategic reserves of food, medicines and medical equipment.

EPP COMMISSION WORK PROGRAM 2024-2029 - SECURITY AND DEFENSE

- **Revision of Regulation (EU) 2016/794 on Europol** to amend the mandate of the agency and insert enforcement and autonomous investigation powers including reinforcement of its budget and staff.
 - **Swift conclusion of Regulation 2024/0061(COD) European Defence Industry Programme** and framework of measures to ensure the timely availability and supply of defence products ('EDIP').
 - **Amending regulation 2022/0219(COD) European Defence Industry Reinforcement** through common Procurement Act (EDIRPA) to make the procurement rules more stringent and continue the financing beyond 2025.
 - **Revision of the Framework Decision on the European Arrest Warrant** in order to make detention and surrender between Member States automatic and to extend it to crimes against constitutional integrity and against public order.
 - Introduction of draft legislation that would foresee a legal path to **confiscate immobilised Russian assets in the EU** and redirect its proceeds to **finance the military effort** of or reconstruction of Ukraine.
 - **Proposing a directive establishing minimum protection standards for police officers** and members of security forces against violence.
 - **Communication on an EU Action Plan against cyberbullying and online child abuse**, including massive awareness campaign across EU and the needed coordination of already existing legislative and other measures.
 - **Revision of Decision (EU) 2019/420 to enhance the capabilities of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism**, strengthen the Emergency Response Coordination Centre, increase its budgetary, material and human resources and improve the EU preparedness to crises and war-like scenarios.
 - **Create a true Civil Protection Union force and European Civil Contingencies Resilience Plan** with strategic reserves of food, medicines and medical equipment by building on and **extending the Internal Market Emergency and Resilience Act**.
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2. A Europe that stops illegal migration

Europe needs a migration policy that works. A policy that protects our external borders ensures the integrity of the Schengen area and stops illegal migration. The guiding principle of our migration policy is a humane approach grounded in responsible and effective solution. State authorities, not smugglers must decide who can enter Europe and who cannot. The EPP Group led and achieved fundamental common European solutions and we must now take it a step further. After the finalisation of the Asylum and Migration Pact, it is time to focus on its implementation and boost the external dimension of our migration and asylum policy, prioritising agreements with key third countries and making our return policy more effective.

- Make **Frontex** a true European EU border and coastal protection force, **triple its staff to 30.000**, provide it with **implementing powers**, and a larger budget.
- Completely and quickly **implement the new EU Asylum and Migration Pact** which will ensure stricter, common rules for arrival and border control as well as more solidarity among Member States in times of need.
- Reinforce national capabilities, **set up physical infrastructure** and advanced means of surveillance to protect the EU's external borders.

- Build closer **EU cooperation on migration management with third countries** to stop illegal migration, focus on addressing the root causes of irregular migration through development cooperation, conclude further **migration deals** with EU neighbours and renew EU-Turkey agreement.
- Better **intelligence cooperation between Member States, third countries and EU Agencies** to effectively prevent and combat smuggling and trafficking.
- Establish an **effective EU system for return**.
- Intensify **measures against cross-border crime and secondary movements**.
- Review our **visa policy** to prevent the misuse of legal channels and monitor post visa liberalisation as well as countries' level of cooperation on readmission.
- **Ban golden passports** (CBI - citizenship by investment) and strictly **regulate golden visas** (RBI - residence by investment).

EPP COMMISSION WORK PROGRAM 2024-2029 - MIGRATION

- **Revision of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 on the European Border and Coast Guard** and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1052/2013 and (EU) 2016/1624 to **progressively increase the capacity of the standing Frontex corps until a maximum capacity of 30 000** as well as reinforce its leading role in returns (amending its mandate and budget including staffing).
- Annual budgets and MFF: **increase the budget and detailed operations to be financed including physical infrastructure** to protect the EU's external borders under the Instrument for financial support for border management and visa (BMVI).
- **New Memorandum of understanding for comprehensive partnership package with third countries** of origin and transit like Mali, Niger, Chad, Nigeria or Ethiopia following the model of EU-Tunisia agreement and the strategic and comprehensive partnership between Egypt and the EU.
- Negotiate and **conclude status agreements with neighbouring countries** like Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina, as well as key African third countries like Mauritania and Senegal for the deployment of Frontex Standing Corps.
- **Withdraw the proposal for a recast of the Return Directive** [Directive 2008/115 (EC)] and **replace it by a new proposal for a Regulation on returning third country nationals that arrived illegally to the EU** (proposal to be adapted to the new circumstances and challenges).
- **New proposal on the instrumentalisation of migrants**, taking recent events into account and the legislative framework of the Pact as a starting point.
- **Revision of the Safe Third Country Concept**, in line with article 77 of the Asylum Procedures Directive, in particular the connection criteria and the possibility for the applicant to consent.
- Presenting a **White Paper on "Return Hubs" in third countries** for persons subject to a Return Decision and whose countries of origin don't accept them.
- Establishing a **Code of Conduct for the involvement of civil society organisations participating in search and rescue activities**, in order to avoid loss of life at sea and to ensure a humanitarian approach whilst further discouraging human smuggling and trafficking networks.
- **Completing full access for Bulgaria and Romania to the Schengen area**.

3. A European Competitiveness Strategy

We will strengthen our economy, competitiveness and trade relations. Our single market and our capacity to innovate are our best resource to achieve this goal. In a technology-driven economy, Europe must be at the forefront of technological innovation. With coal and steel, shared energy was the foundation of European integration. Today, we want Europe to ensure energy security and affordability for all citizens and businesses. Economic and energy security must go hand in hand with food security: we will support our firms, farmers, and fishers to become more competitive, create quality jobs and secure access to quality and affordable food for all.

- **Cut red tape for our companies and SMEs:** EU action plan for less bureaucracy (a third less by 2029), “1 in, 2 out” principle, “sunset clauses” to European legislation and European added value review.
- Introduce **mandatory dynamic impact assessments**.
- Establish a **European Single Portal for reporting duties and financing opportunities**.
- Appointment of a **Commissioner for SMEs and Better Regulation** with associated relevant Directorates-General.
- Closer cooperation with like-minded partners in a “**Union of Democracies**” and promoting **rules-based international trade**: new, modern and tailor-made free trade agreements, (finalising the ongoing negotiations with Mexico and Mercosur) and strengthening EU leadership in the WTO, including through a reinforced trade partnership with the US and addressing trade unbalanced relations with China.
- **Commissioner for Trade** (stand-alone portfolio).
- Taking **Global Gateway** to the next level to the benefit of the EU and its partner countries, boosting global competitiveness and strengthening partnerships that are key for Europe’s own strategic autonomy.
- Complete the **integration of EU capital markets**: allow our SMEs, households and citizens to benefit from better access to loans and investments’ options.
- Competitiveness must be the guiding principle of **the next Multiannual Financial Framework**.
- Launch an **Investment Plan for European Jobs** to unlock investments in innovation for clean and digital technologies, including through structural funds and secure financing for skill development.
- Create a “**CERN**” for Artificial Intelligence.
- Create a true **European Energy Union**: strengthen the internal market for energy, build cross-border infrastructure.
- Promote a common **European resource strategy** for future innovations (critical raw materials).
- Promote **diversification and de-risking** avoiding dependencies from third countries while strengthening resilience.
- Strengthening coordination on **foreign investment screening** at EU level.
- Moving away from fossil fuels towards **clean energy**, for example, ramping up of international **hydrogen production**.
- **Less bureaucracy** for agriculture and fisheries.
- Investments in agriculture as a high-tech industry, for example **European moon-shot for precision agriculture, robotics and integrated pest management**.

- **Direct payments** have to be true recognition of farmers' work and be greatly simplified.
- **Improve the position of farmers** in the food supply chain.
- **Revise the protection status of wolves and bears** that threaten traditional pastoralism.
- **Commissioner for Fisheries** (stand-alone portfolio).

EPP COMMISSION WORK PROGRAM 2024-2029- COMPETITIVE EUROPE

- **New comprehensive proposal for a regulation on Better law making and cutting regulatory burden** by one third by 2029 including the introduction of mandatory dynamic impact assessments and competitiveness/SME tests and a binding "1 in 2 out principle".
- New proposal establishing a **European Single Portal for national and European reporting duties** and financing opportunities as a one-stop shop for businesses (containing all templates and information related to national and EU reporting requirements).
- **Halt implementation of CSRD and CSDD reporting duties** for companies and only go ahead after a review to significantly reduce reporting duties.
- **Stocktaking of the combined effect of EU legislation on businesses** (implementation cost sector by sector) Adopt an **Omnibus-Regulation for simplified and fast permit procedures** to make it the norm across all sectors, including chemicals
- **Overhaul of the Securitisation Framework** to be simplified to revitalize the market and encourage sustainable securitisation practices.
- **Facilitate access to risk capital:** expand opportunities for pension funds and insurance companies to invest in private equity, venture capital/VC markets
- Commission (implementing) decision setting a **new European Centre of excellence and research for Artificial Intelligence (CERAI)**.
- **Establish an industrial alliance on Small Modular Reactors** to facilitate the deployment of the first reactors by 2030 to increase the availability of low carbon energy.
- Take measures, including in the Connecting Europe Facility, to facilitate **investments in the development of electricity and gas network interconnections** (of at least 15% interconnectors by 2030), including offshore grids, and investments in CCS and CCU infrastructure, batteries and other storage technology.
- Establish a simple, technology-neutral and pragmatic **definition for low-carbon hydrogen** in the upcoming delegated act pursuant to Art.8 of the Gas Directive.
- **To be reflected for the next MFF programmes:**
 - Establish a competitiveness **mainstreaming with the mandatory target of spending 70% of the EU budget on competitiveness** and a mainstreaming of the innovation principle as a cross-sectoral principle for all MFF funding and part of Better Regulation.
 - **Maximise leverage of private investments into competitiveness** including by strengthening the InvestEU programme.
 - Secure **new own resources** in order to finance the next big European projects and MFF programmes and to ensure that the Recovery Fund repayment does not lead to cuts in EU programmes and fall on our youth.

- In-depth analysis of the current CAP to **ensure that the CAP for the period after 2027 is less bureaucratic, better supports generational renewal and fairly rewards farmers**, through direct payments and rural development, for delivering food security.c
 - **Reforming the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)** to account for changes since 2013 in order to make it better suited for future challenges.
 - **Revision of the Industrial Emissions Directive** splitting the directive into an industrial and an agricultural part.
 - Full-scale **inquiry into why farmers are not receiving a fair price** for their products; **revision of the Directive on Unfair Trading Practices and targeted amendment of the Common Markets Organisation Regulation (CMO)** to improve the remuneration of farmers.
 - **Request robust impact assessments for the economic viability of farms** when it comes to new proposal on **animal welfare**. If the impact assessments show unacceptable economic consequences for EU farmers, the new proposals should be reconsidered.
 - **Postpone the application of the deforestation regulation** and address problems related to its implementation.
 - **Revising the protection status of wolves and bears** under the Habitats Directive.
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4. A Europe that preserves our European Way of life

Our European way of life combines tradition with progress, preserves our cultural richness and diversity, keeps societies together caring for peoples' health and for the ones most in need. It is about building bridges across generations, facilitating their talents to the fullest, caring for all generations equally and protecting the climate and the planet for the young and future generations. With the record-time development of the Covid-19 vaccine, for example, we proved: Europeans are unstoppable when they work together.

- Keep **delivering with the Green Deal** and turning it into a Green Growth Deal achieving the 55% CO2 emissions' reduction target by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050 while at the same time boosting the EU's competitiveness and ensuring technological neutrality. We protect the climate, but also ensure that it does not create overwhelming bureaucracy.
- Keep **financially supporting our companies**, notably, SMEs, farmers and fishers, in the transition.
- Make **EU responsible for negotiating and concluding international environmental agreements** with third countries.
- Intelligent sharing of droughts' management.
- Keep the EU at the forefront of environmental protection while not allowing third countries to exploit our high standards, notably **China**.
- **Revise the ban on combustion engines** and develop cutting-edge combustion engine technology. We stick to technological neutrality.
- Establish a **European Health Union** to join our resources and best minds to create breakthrough innovation in medicine.
- Fully implement and ambitiously develop the **European Cancer Plan** further and jointly fight the most serious diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's.
- Europe must become **"the pharmacy of the world:"** better conditions for more

medicine production and overcome medicine shortages.

- Launch an **EU action plan for cardiovascular health**.
- Launch an **EU action plan for mental health**.
- Continue strengthening the economic, social and territorial cohesion for all regions and cities via the **cohesion policy** in the next MFF with focus on closing the gap between rural and urban areas
- Launch a **“Brain Gain” action plan** to bring brains back home, focusing on youth and tackling labour shortages by providing good opportunities in every region.
- Create a **Pact for Intergenerational Fairness**, including a youth and elderly proof check on all EU legislation.
- Create a **Digital Museum of European Culture**.
- Foster an **European Education Area** to provide more and better opportunities for European citizens to study, train and work abroad;
- Develop and propose a **coherent post-2027 Youth Strategy**

EPP COMMISSION WORK PROGRAM 2024-2029 - EUROPEAN WAY OF LIFE

- A pragmatic and successful **implementation of the Green Deal**, including through:
 - **Revising the rules for CO2 reduction for new cars and vans** to allow for the use of alternative zero-emission fuels beyond 2035
 - Proposing a **new E-Fuel/Biofuel/Low carbon fuel Strategy**, with targeted incentives and funding, to accompany the EU Hydrogen Strategy.
 - Creating a **single market for CO2 including a market-based framework for CCS and CCU** similar to the gas/hydrogen package, to build a business case for these technologies and provide investment security and adopt a legislation for negative emissions.
 - Expanding the list of **key projects in the Net Zero Industry Act** and develop similar rules for other sectors so climate neutral businesses are exempted from certain regulatory requirements.
- Adopt a comprehensive **revision of the Medical Device Regulation and propose a new Critical Medicines Act**.
- Present **Action Plans for cardiovascular diseases and neurodegenerative diseases**.
- Propose concrete and ambitious **post 2027 EU Youth Strategy**.

5. A stronger European democracy in the world

We will make our European democracy fit for the challenges ahead. This means we must make the EU more capable of acting, more efficient and democratic while keeping the central role of Member States, according to the subsidiarity principle. In the new global context, Europe can only represent its interests if it speaks with one voice, if it can respond quickly and it can effectively cooperate with its partners. We need a forward-looking approach to enlargement as not only our foreign policy, but also our own security policy depends on it. The EU has to show unambiguous commitment to the foundational values of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights enshrined in the Treaties, and should consolidate enforcement mechanisms that protect those values.

- A **forward-looking and merit-based enlargement strategy** for Ukraine, the Western Balkans, Moldova and Georgia, with sufficient financial resources. Each candidate country should also be ready for membership, respecting the Copenhagen criteria, implementing reforms and fully adhering to concluded international agreements and negotiating frameworks. No discount on conditionality.
- Establish a **new rule of law mechanism** in the hands of European Court of Justice.
- **Increased democratic scrutiny of the Parliament** on EU Budget spending including through a more binding **discharge procedure**.
- **Greater accountability and transparency for NGOs**, in particular those accessing EU funding.
- **Simplification of procedures of accessing EU funding** as well as reinforcing the monitoring and control systems for the implementation of the EU Budget.
- Create a **Centre for Democratic Resilience** to defend our democracy against disinformation and foreign interference, the independence of judicial systems and media.
- Right of the **European Parliament to initiate EU legislation**.
- Right of the **European Parliament to independently decide about the President of the European Commission**, based on the results of the European elections.
- Establish a fully-fledged **European Diplomatic Academy**.
- Establish a **European Foreign Minister**.
- Move towards **majority decisions** in foreign and security policy.
- Significantly upgrade and deepen our **strategic relations** with regional actors like **NATO, AU, ASEAN** and like-minded global partners such as **Canada, Japan or Australia**.
- Redouble efforts to **halt democratic backsliding worldwide** by strengthening key multilateral organisations such as the UN and the ICC.
- Strengthen the EU's capacities to detect, expose and **fight disinformation** globally and to reinforce the **protection of journalists** around the world.
- Promote **democratic values and human rights** inside the EU but also worldwide through active partnerships with third countries, international and regional organisations.
- Enhancing the **protection of Christian minorities** worldwide by, among others, strengthening the role of the **Special Envoy** for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the European Union with additional resources and staff.
- Launch a **European Convention** to adapt the EU to the challenges of the future.

EPP COMMISSION WORK PROGRAM 2024-2029 - DEMOCRACY

- New **Commission proposal for a regulation on Rule of law**, complementing the existing regulation 2020/2092 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget (the conditionality regulation).
- **Revision of the EP-EC Framework agreement to include the right of legislative initiative for the EP**, through clear commitments on Commission follow-up to Parliament's requests, ensure parliamentary accountability where the Commission proposes action based on Art.122 TFEU and secure Parliament's involvement in all international agreements
- Commission commitment to **facilitate a joint understanding** between the EP, the Commission and the Council on cooperation modalities in cases where the

Treaties lay down **Special Legislative Procedures**, including where Parliament has a right of legislative initiative.

- **Activate passerelle clauses** foreseen in the Treaties based on articles 48(7) and 31(3) TUE to introduce majority voting decisions on: sanctions regimes, human rights in international for and civilian CSDP missions.
 - **A new directive protecting EU citizens' rights against abuse through intrusive surveillance**, while respecting the right of governments to use adequate and proportional instruments to provide security to the citizens.
 - **Revision of Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 on the EPPO** that will grant it the power to investigate evasion of sanctions (...)
 - **Treaty revision of Art 319 TFEU clarifying that Parliament is the discharge authority**, including in relation to the other EU institutions or bodies and outlining the clear consequences, including political ones, for not granting discharge.
 - **Revision of the EP-EC Framework agreement to make discharge procedure more binding**, by outlining clear consequences of the refusal to grant discharge to the Commission; **to increase Parliament's scrutiny rights over the implementation of EU Budget** by foreseeing the obligation of the Commission to duly inform Parliament before RRF payments, before assessments of the fulfilment of CPR enabling conditions, and before decisions to suspend or resume payments under cohesion or agriculture programmes, etc.
 - **NGO Regulation** to address topics such as revolving doors, transparency in financing and donations, the fight against money laundering, limiting foreign interference, independence from political and economic influence, whistleblowing and transparent governance structures.
 - **Revision of the Financial Regulation** to ensure the further simplification of procedures and reduction of red tape when applying for EU funding; further transparency provisions related to the final beneficiaries of EU funding.
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