

Background brief*15 June 2026*

General Affairs Council

16 June 2026, Luxembourg

PRESS**EN****Chair:**

Marilena Raouna, Deputy Minister for European Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus

Commission representatives:

Piotr Serafin, European Commissioner for budget, anti-fraud and public administration

Michael McGrath, European Commissioner for democracy, justice, the rule of law and consumer protection

Starting time: 10.00**Media opportunities:**

- Doorstep Marilena Raouna: 26 May 2026, 09.10
- Press conference General Affairs Council: 16 June 2026, +/- 17.15

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Main agenda topics:The Council will continue preparations for the **June 2026 European Council** by discussing draft conclusions.In public session, ministers will hold a policy debate on the next **multiannual financial framework** (MFF) 2028-2034 and will be invited to adopt partial general approaches on three of its main components.Also in public session, the Council will be invited to endorse its **18-month programme** covering the period from 1 July 2026 to 31 December 2027.Ministers will then focus on the 2026 **European Semester** by approving a horizontal note on the integrated country-specific recommendations and agreeing to transmit it to the European Council for endorsement.Finally, the Council will be updated about the rule of law situation in Hungary as part of the **Article 7 procedure** triggered by the European Parliament's reasoned proposal of September 2018.

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[General Affairs Council, 16 June 2026 - meeting page](#)[Press conferences, doorsteps and other public events in video streaming](#)[High quality photo and video material](#)

June EUCO preparation

The Council will continue preparations for the June European Council meeting by discussing draft conclusions. Leaders are expected to discuss:

- Russia's war of aggression against **Ukraine**
- latest developments in the **Middle East**
- the next multiannual financial framework (**MFF**) 2028-2034
- global **economic challenges**
- European **defence** and **security**
- **migration**
- **illicit drugs**
- **European Semester**

In addition, the Council, as part of the preparation for the upcoming European Council, will be informed of the state of play on the implementation of the **joint declaration** on legislative priorities for 2026 and of the '**One Europe, One Market**' Roadmap.

[*European Council \(18-19 June 2026\), annotated draft agenda*](#)

Multiannual financial framework (MFF) (in public session)

Ministers are expected to exchange of views on the revised "**negotiating box**" for the **MFF 2028-2034**. This document, prepared under the responsibility of the Cyprus presidency, aims to identify elements for political consideration, **including draft figures** for the various headings and programmes, and facilitate their discussion by EU leaders ahead of the June 2026 European Council. The negotiating box should also form the basis for future negotiations between member states at technical level.

The Council will also be invited to adopt partial general approaches on three main components of the MFF 2028-2034, namely the:

- regulation establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security (**NRPP regulation**)
- regulation on establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (**ECF**), including the specific programme for defence research and innovation activities
- regulation establishing the **Global Europe** instrument

The **National and Regional Partnership Plans** aim to encourage investments and reforms addressing barriers to the single market. The new **European Competitiveness Fund** is designed to support strategic industries and technologies. **Global Europe** seeks to develop external partnerships as a way to advance the strategic interests of the Union.

The MFF is the EU's long-term budget, covering a period of seven years. On 16 July and 3 September 2025, the Commission presented its proposals for the **next MFF** amounting to **almost €2 trillion**. Since then, work has continued at both political and technical level with a view to achieving an agreement between member states by the end of 2026.

[*General Affairs Council meeting, 26 May 2026*](#)

[*General Affairs Council meeting, 17 March 2026*](#)

[General Affairs Council meeting, 16 December 2025](#)

[General Affairs Council meeting, 17 November 2025](#)

[General Affairs Council meeting, 21 October 2025](#)

[The EU long-term budget \(background information\)](#)

[The 2028-2034 EU budget for a stronger Europe, Commission background information, September 2025](#)

[*Eighteen-month programme of the Council \(in public session\)*](#)

The Council will be invited to endorse its **18-month programme** covering the period from 1 July 2026 to 31 December 2027. The programme has been prepared by Ireland, Lithuania and Greece as the incoming trio of presidencies, and the High Representative as regards the Foreign Affairs Council, in cooperation with the Commission.

[*Eighteen-month programme of the Council \(1 July 2026 - 31 December 2027\)*](#)

[*2026 European Semester*](#)

In the framework of the European semester 2026, the Council will be invited to approve a horizontal note on the integrated **country-specific recommendations** and agree to transmit it to the European Council for endorsement.

[*European Semester – Horizontal note on the integrated country-specific recommendations, 8 June 2026*](#)

[*2026 European Semester: Spring package, European Commission, 3 June 2026*](#)

[*Timeline: the 2026 exercise \(background information\)*](#)

[*The European Semester explained \(background information\)*](#)

[*Article 7 procedure concerning Hungary*](#)

As part of the **Article 7(1) TEU procedure**, the Council will be updated on the state of play of the rule of law situation in **Hungary**.

In its **reasoned proposal**, adopted on 12 September 2018, the European Parliament presents issues in several areas that, in its view, justified the triggering of the Article 7 procedure:

- (1) the functioning of the constitutional and electoral system,
- (2) the independence of the judiciary and of other institutions and the rights of judges,
- (3) corruption and conflicts of interest,
- (4) privacy and data protection,
- (5) freedom of expression,
- (6) academic freedom,
- (7) freedom of religion,
- (8) freedom of association,
- (9) the right to equal treatment,
- (10) the rights of persons belonging to minorities, including Roma and Jews, and protection against hateful statements against such minorities,
- (11) the fundamental rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, and
- (12) economic and social rights.

[*General Affairs Council, 27 May 2025 \(main results\)*](#)

[Reasoned proposal triggering the Article 7 procedure for Hungary](#)

[Interim report of the European Parliament](#)

[2025 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter Hungary](#)

[2024 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter Hungary](#)

[2023 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter Hungary](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 24 April 2024 on ongoing hearings under Article 7\(1\) TEU regarding Hungary to strengthen the rule of law and its budgetary implications](#)

[Standard modalities for hearings referred to in Article 7\(1\) TEU](#)

[2025 Rule of law report \(European Commission\)](#)

[Rule of law \(background information\)](#)

Simplification (in public session)

In a public session, the presidency will present a progress report on **omnibus simplification** legislative packages.

[Omnibus simplification legislative packages, progress report, 12 June 2026](#)

[Simplification of EU rules \(background information\)](#)

Other points

As an item without discussion, the Council will approve conclusions on a homogeneous extended internal market and EU relations with **non-EU Western European countries** and with the Faroe Islands.

Also, without discussion, the Council will take note of a presidency report on strengthening Europe's **democratic resilience** and implementing the **European Democracy Shield**.

During breakfast, Ministers will hold an informal exchange of views on cooperation with candidate countries and potential candidates regarding the **European Democracy Shield** and the **European Centre for Democratic Resilience**. Ministers from the candidate countries and potential candidates were invited to attend this point.