



COORDINATION SUD

RASSEMBLER & AGIR
POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ INTERNATIONALE


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EUROPE

**INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY HANDBOOK
FOR MEMBERS OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

HOW CAN THE EU PROMOTE A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MODEL?

July 2024

Coordination SUD is the national platform of French international solidarity NGOs.

Coordination SUD was founded in 1994 and is currently made up of 184 NGOs, either as direct members or through six networks of associations (CLONG-Volontariat, Cnajep, Coordination Humanitaire et Développement, CRID, FORIM and Groupe initiatives). These organisations take action in the fields of emergency humanitarian and development aid, environmental protection, human rights, advocacy, and global citizenship education for international solidarity – with a special focus on working both with and for the most disadvantaged groups of people.

To support the French NGO sector working on international solidarity, Coordination SUD and its member organisations (i) foster an enabling environment for civil society organisations (CSOs) so that they can take action and speak out; (ii) support and strengthen these CSOs; (iii) develop and advocate joint positions on international solidarity policies vis-à-vis public and private institutions in France, Europe and across the world; and (iv) monitor and analyse the international solidarity sector, its developments and its challenges.

Coordination SUD, Bringing Together and Acting for International Solidarity

Introduction

Climate crisis, war in Ukraine, surge in worldwide poverty since the Covid-19 crisis... The new European Parliament elected in June 2024 – and the European Union (EU) in general – will be facing unprecedented challenges. But the EU's tendency to prioritise competition and focus on its own interests puts into question its ability to assume its responsibility and role in addressing these crises and in fighting global inequalities. A turnaround is needed: the EU must show that it can be relied on and must reaffirm that it's a trustworthy ally for the countries and people of the Global South.

Some key figures:

- Nearly 700 million people live below the extreme poverty line, representing 8.6% of humanity¹.
- Between 691 and 783 million people around the world are suffering from hunger².
- Half of the world's population lacks access to essential health services³.
- Rising water levels threaten 10% of the world's population⁴.

We live in an interconnected world. For this reason, actions to achieve living conditions that are more sustainable, equitable and just – in the countries where improvement is needed the most – is undoubtedly one of the best investments the EU can make for its own future. The people of France and of the rest of the EU are aware of these interactions and of the importance of this international solidarity:

- 73% of respondents surveyed in France, Germany and Italy believe that EU support for health, education and development in the poorest countries should be maintained or increased (2024)⁵.
- 58% of respondents on average in France (56%), Germany (53%) and Italy (64%) agree with the statement 'Supporting the development of the poorest countries is a core value of the European Union' (2024)⁶.
- 55% of the French think that global issues (climate change, war, pandemics) are exerting a growing impact on their daily lives (2022)⁷.

Coordination SUD believes that the international credibility of the EU depends primarily on how well the EU respects its commitments and on the stability of its official development assistance (ODA). Another factor is the EU's ability to align its external policies with its own values of democracy, rule of law, protection of civic space, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This model, which the EU highlights in the Treaty on European Union, must be protected and reaffirmed.

DID YOU KNOW?

Development policy is a core aspect of the EU's external policies. It seeks to reduce and ultimately eradicate poverty, and it plays a key role in the EU's action to support the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Three main texts determine the direction of the EU's international solidarity policy:

- The new European Consensus on Development, adopted in 2017, which defines a set of principles for development cooperation
- The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)
- The Treaty on European Union.

Official development assistance (ODA) is one of the three main sources of external financing for developing countries. Although ODA accounts for less than foreign direct investment and remittances, it plays a key role because it's the most stable and predictable source of funds. ODA is therefore crucial for vulnerable people, especially in situations of crisis, when other flows tend to decline. ODA increased, for example between 2020 and 2021, during the Covid-19 pandemic, helping to partially meet the needs of the poorest people⁸.

1. All footnotes can be found on page 18 of this document.



European Parliament's powers for fostering a Europe of international solidarity

As a Member of European Parliament (MEP), you can respond to global challenges by supporting the EU's international action for a more inclusive and just world.

Legislative power

The European Parliament, together with the Council of the EU, adopts EU legislation based on proposals from the European Commission (EC). The European Parliament also examines the EC's work programme and invites it to submit legislative proposals.

Budgetary power

Parliament approves the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), i.e. the EU's multiannual budget. It also has the power to adopt the annual budget, on an equal footing with the Council of the EU, and to approve how the EU budget is spent.

Supervisory power

Parliament has a series of supervisory and control powers:

- It listens to the President of the Council of the EU discuss their programme in plenary.
- It can set up committees of inquiry to look into possible violations of EU law by Member States.

- It elects the European Ombudsman, who investigates complaints about maladministration in the EU institutions and bodies.
- It can ask the Court of Justice to take measures against the Council or the EC if it finds contradictions with European legislation.
- It is consulted on the appointment of the Chair and the Executive Board of the European Central Bank (ECB) by the European Council.

In addition, MEPs have the power to influence the Council's action by sending written or oral questions to recommend new measures or policies.

Special procedures

The European Parliament can also take action through several special procedures:

1. The consent procedure, which is a right of veto in 16 areas.
2. The consultation procedure, which allows Parliament to give a non-binding opinion and which is mandatory in some 50 areas.
3. The right of initiative, which allows Parliament to ask the EC to present a legislative proposal.



**Brief summary
of Coordination SUD's
5 priorities for the next
legislative term**



Fighting the risks of instrumentalisation of ODA

We have seen a worrying trend in recent years in the EU international solidarity policies: development assistance is becoming instrumentalised, especially to serve political, trade or security goals. The European Parliament has a key role to play in eliminating this trend.

EU instrumentalisation of ODA to manage migration has been observable for several years. The Council of the EU confirmed this trend in its 2021 conclusions, when it invited the EC to ‘ensure effective returns, from the European Union [...] to countries of origin [...] using as leverage all relevant EU policies, instruments and tools, including [...] development’⁹. This tendency can be seen in the €5 billion Emergency Trust Fund (ETF, 2015), in the NDICI regulation which dedicates 10% of funding to migration¹⁰, and in the agreements signed with non-EU countries which make ODA subject to cooperation on returning migrants despite the risks to their human rights¹¹. More recently, the MFF revision has led to €4.5 billion initially earmarked for development being redirected towards migration management; this action has even raised legal questions¹².

The 2007 European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid sets out the common vision of the EU and the

principles of humanitarian aid. These principles guarantee needs-based assistance without discrimination. However, imbalances persist in the funding, which must be distributed equitably, including for forgotten crises. Furthermore, the fight against the financing of terrorism complicates humanitarian aid by imposing sanctions and restrictions that hinder action and dialogue with certain parties. This struggle must include a humanitarian exemption in sanctions regimes to maintain access to vulnerable populations.

Finally, EU ODA policy is influenced by its own political and economic priorities, despite the commitment to direct ODA to the poorest countries. The criteria for allocating ODA often remain opaque and give priority to the EU’s economic interests. The ‘Global Gateway’ strategy is criticised for prioritising trade and financial interests at the expense of development objectives. The use of ODA to attract private investment tends to benefit middle-income countries and lucrative sectors, meaning that basic social services are neglected. And the dominant role of the Business Advisory Group (BAG) heightens concerns about the excessive influence of the European private sector, with the risk that it could cause prejudice to local stakeholders and to poverty reduction.



Scan or click to see our brief
on instrumentalisation of ODA.

- Strengthen supervision over migration-related projects, to fight instrumentalisation of aid and to ensure that human rights are respected.
- Ensure that humanitarian action is prosecution-free, neutral and impartial, and exempt from any restriction related to international sanctions and the regulation of the financing of terrorism.
- Ensure greater transparency, to fight the rerouting of aid to private interests.



For a European Parliament that promotes the SDGs

In the EU context, Parliament can be a driving force in Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD), which is designed to mainstream economic, social, environmental and governance aspects into national and international policies. The advantage of PCSD is that it helps consider the externalities of EU policies during their design stage, thereby addressing the negative impacts of the EU economic model. The EU must therefore implement PCSD to minimise the negative impacts of its policies on partner countries. For this, the multidimensional indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) act as a guide. The SDGs are in fact the only global set of goals that address the major challenges of the future. They promote an economy focused on well-being and sustainability through 2030.

Effective communication of PCSD by the European External Action Service (EEAS) could improve partner countries' perception of the EU and boost trust in the EU among the people of those countries¹³. Maximising the EU's positive impacts around the world could thus improve relations with non-EU countries. In addition, a recent report estimates that promotion of sustainable trade on a global scale, which is included in the PCSD, could bring in at least

€133 billion a year for the EU¹⁴. These observations are the result of an in-depth analysis of methodologies used to implement PCSD and are in line with the guidelines of UNEP¹⁵ and the OECD¹⁶.

UNEP and other bodies stress the importance of mainstreaming PCSD into policies to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The EU is working on PCSD, but shortcomings persist, especially within the EC and Parliament. Recommendations have been made to bolster this commitment, in particular by improving the role of bodies such as DG INTPA and the EC Secretariat-General, as well as by creating a parliamentary network to mainstream PCSD into all legislative work¹⁷.

PCSD is a legal obligation of the EU, but the lack of impact assessments and indicators means that there is insufficient monitoring on how European policies impact the 2030 Agenda. The European Parliament and the Committee on Development play a role in these assessments, but they have limited capacity for action. To improve the effectiveness of the PCSD, various bodies and EU institutions agree that a clear strategic plan that includes quantified objectives, a timetable and concrete indicators is necessary.



Scan or click to see our brief on the 2030 Agenda.

- Establish governance to align EU policies with the SDGs.
- Monitor the impact of EU policies on the SDGs and developing countries through comprehensive evaluation systems.
- Implement an ambitious European strategy to promote all the SDGs.



Effective humanitarian action

Humanitarian action is currently threatened by three phenomena:

1. Available funding is stagnating, or even decreasing, despite the sharp increase in the number of people in need of humanitarian aid (309.9 million in June 2024¹⁸).
2. The many violations of international humanitarian law, human rights, refugee law and other applicable standards threaten 'humanitarian space'. This makes humanitarian action dangerous for the people receiving aid as well as for the personnel conducting the activities (attacks on humanitarian and health workers practically doubled between 2010 and 2021¹⁹).
3. Excessive compliance and accountability requirements from donors undermine the quality and effectiveness of aid by delaying humanitarian response times and diverting resources away from activities targeting vulnerable people.

Parliament's budgetary and oversight powers make it an essential cog in the EU's humanitarian policy, both to ensure funding availability and to protect humanitarian space within the international community.

Many NGOs operate in environments where international sanctions regimes apply, including those put in place by the EU. When international sanctions are applied to a country or region, financial transactions

and delivery of equipment become difficult there. The result is a tendency for longer humanitarian response times or even reduction or suspension of NGO activities. Even if fighting the financing of terrorism is an EU priority, it must not hinder humanitarian action. That's why the systematic introduction of a cross-cutting humanitarian exemption for all sanctions regimes can help protect humanitarian aid and firmly preserve humanitarian space in all contexts. At the same time, Directive 2024/1226, which harmonises the definitions of criminal activities linked to money laundering, includes an exemption for humanitarian aid. This exemption, which protects humanitarian action against potential criminalisation, should be transposed by all Member States uniformly.

Directive 2018/843, which amends Directive 2015/849 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for money laundering or terrorist financing, extends, to all legal persons, the prohibition on providing funds or economic resources to entities subject to asset-freezing measures. However, specific due diligence obligations apply only to the obliged entities listed in Article 2 of the latter directive, which do not include NGOs. Consequently, institutional donors from the EU and Member States cannot impose measures that are more restrictive than those provided for by law. On the other hand, international solidarity NGOs should thus, in line with the social aspects of their mandate, assume responsibility for developing and implementing their own measures to prevent the risks of money laundering and terrorist financing.



Scan or click to see our brief on humanitarian action.

- Maintain EU support for humanitarian action.
- Commit to respecting international humanitarian law and speak out against violations of it.
- Support the introduction of a crosscutting humanitarian exemption in all EU autonomous sanctions regimes and commit to eliminating the criminalisation of aid.



An ambitious European external policy on gender equality

Progress on gender equality is regressing. The UN reports that at the current rate it will take us another three centuries to achieve gender equality²⁰. Recent crises have particularly affected women, girls and gender minorities. Women and girls continue to face much gender-based violence today, including early marriage, sexual violence and human trafficking during migration²¹. They are also the foremost victims of armed conflicts²², climate crises and food insecurity²³, this due to economic, social and cultural factors²⁴. The European Parliament, which is often at the vanguard of gender-equality issues, will have a key role to play during this new legislative term.

To reduce gender inequalities, it is crucial to support local feminist organisations, which have considerable impact thanks to their close work with communities and their understanding of socio-cultural norms²⁵. Yet, these organisations received only 0.5% of EU institution support targeting gender equality in 2019 and 2020. This lack of financial support compromises their work towards gender equality: they must seek funding constantly, and the funding that is granted is short term more often than not²⁶.

In 2019, France launched the Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF). What sets this initiative apart is its support for the structural costs and development of feminist organisations as well as its flexi-

bility for funding adapted to local needs. The FSOF has enabled increased funding for gender equality. Transposing this approach to the European level would be particularly relevant to gender-equality goals.

The implementation of the third European Gender Action Plan (GAP III) was launched in 2020 to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in EU external policies. However, its drawbacks include absence of detailed annual reports on its implementation, lack of resources and training, and unambitious quantified targets. In 2021, only 4% of new projects were specifically focused on gender equality, a sign of the challenges to meeting the GAP III objectives²⁷.

To achieve the SDGs, it's essential to secure the participation and leadership of pre-adolescent and adolescent girls and women in political and public life. However, female political representation is stagnating. According to the UN, parity in national legislative bodies will not be reached until 2063 on the current track. In its Strategic Guidelines, the EU is committed to giving young people – especially young women and girls – a greater voice and leadership role in EU external action via the Youth Action Plan.



Scan or click to see our brief on gender equality.

- Create a European support fund for local feminist organisations.
- Strengthen the financial and human resources of the EC and its services, to promote a feminist foreign policy.
- Involve women and girls in the governance of EU external action.



Sufficient European financing adapted to the needs of the most vulnerable people

The 2017 European Consensus on Development, which guides EU cooperation with developing countries, underlines the EU's collective commitment to allocate 0.7% of GNI to ODA. The increase in financing needs for international solidarity means that the financing gap for the SDGs increased from \$2.5 trillion before the pandemic to \$3.9 trillion in 2023²⁸. The European Parliament of the previous legislative term stressed the importance of meeting this long-standing commitment. At the end of 2023, 90% of the EU budget and 75% of the initial margins of the 2021-2027 MFF had already been used or allocated to meet new needs and unexpected crises. During the revision of the 2021-2027 MFF, only €3.1 billion was added to the dedicated budget heading, but all this financing was earmarked for migration²⁹.

Above and beyond the volume of financing mobilised, ODA should be used optimally to ensure its effectiveness. Coordination SUD proposes three main areas for improvement:

1. For the least developed countries (LDCs), which represent 13% of the world's population and 1.3% of global GDP³⁰, and which receive only 18.4% of bilateral ODA from the EU³¹, we recommend allocating 50% of bilateral ODA to these countries, mainly in the form of grants so as not to increase their debt.

2. For basic social services (BSS), such as water, sanitation, education and health, which currently receive only 20% of ODA, we recommend increasing the share to 50% in order to improve the conditions of the most vulnerable people.
3. With regard to transparency and accountability, during its last legislative term the European Parliament called on the EC to show greater transparency by using varied indicators and by sharing this information with the public³².

The 2017 European Consensus on Development recognises the crucial role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in promoting human rights and democracy. Strategic partnerships between international and local NGOs strengthen their impact and the effectiveness of their advocacy. Support for their right of initiative promotes innovative approaches, thereby strengthening the effectiveness of ODA³³. Furthermore, because CSOs are agile and independent, they can work effectively in vulnerable areas, with rigorous management and traceability of funding³⁴. Coordination SUD calls for an increase in EU funding directly allocated to CSOs, to at least 15% of total funding. It is also crucial to promote access to this funding for small CSOs, as they effectively complement large-scale actions.



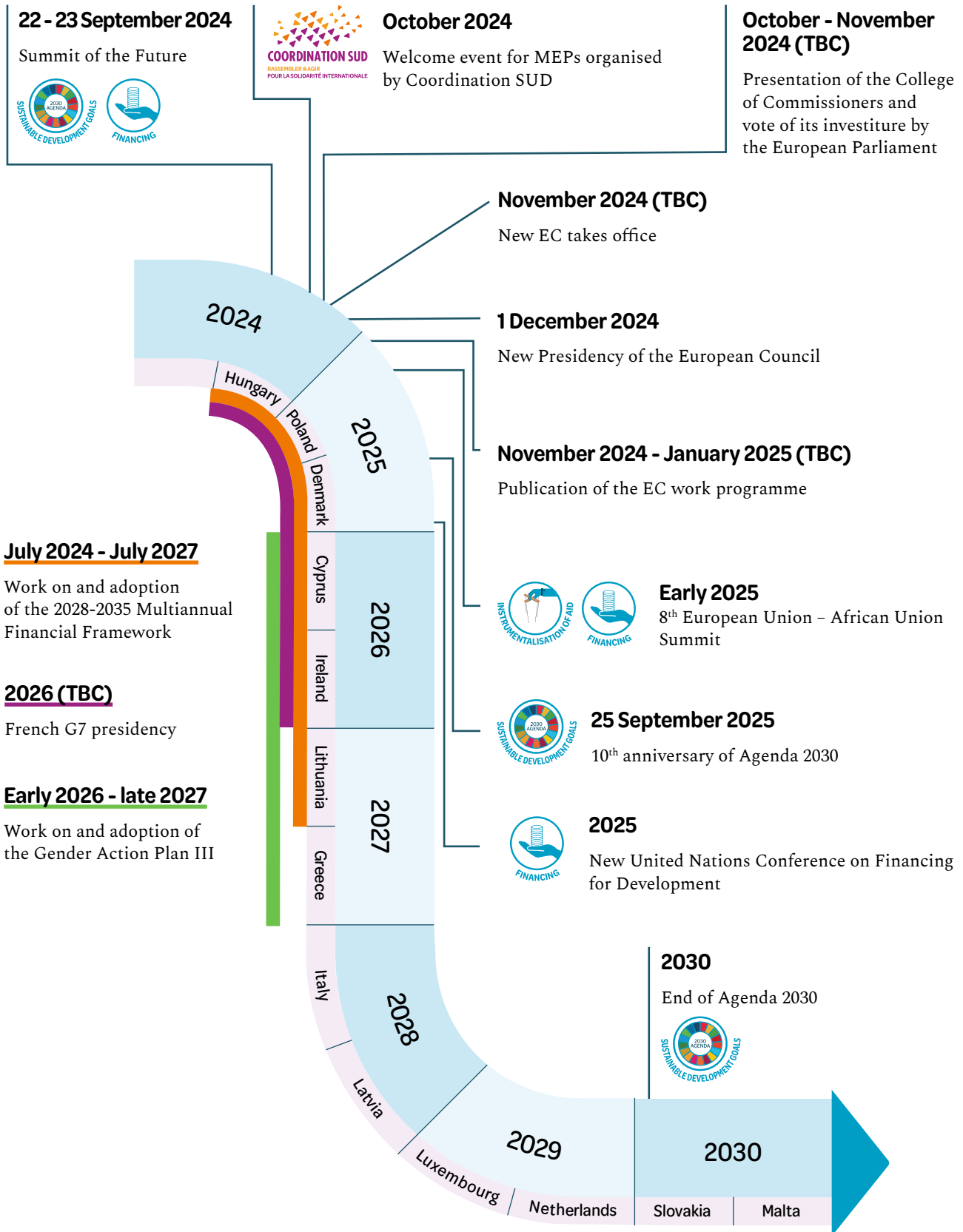
Scan or click to see our brief on financing

- Strive to make development assistance meet global challenges as well as the EU commitments.
- Enhance the quality of aid so that it helps the most vulnerable people.
- Promote access to financing for all NGOs and support their power of initiative and innovation.

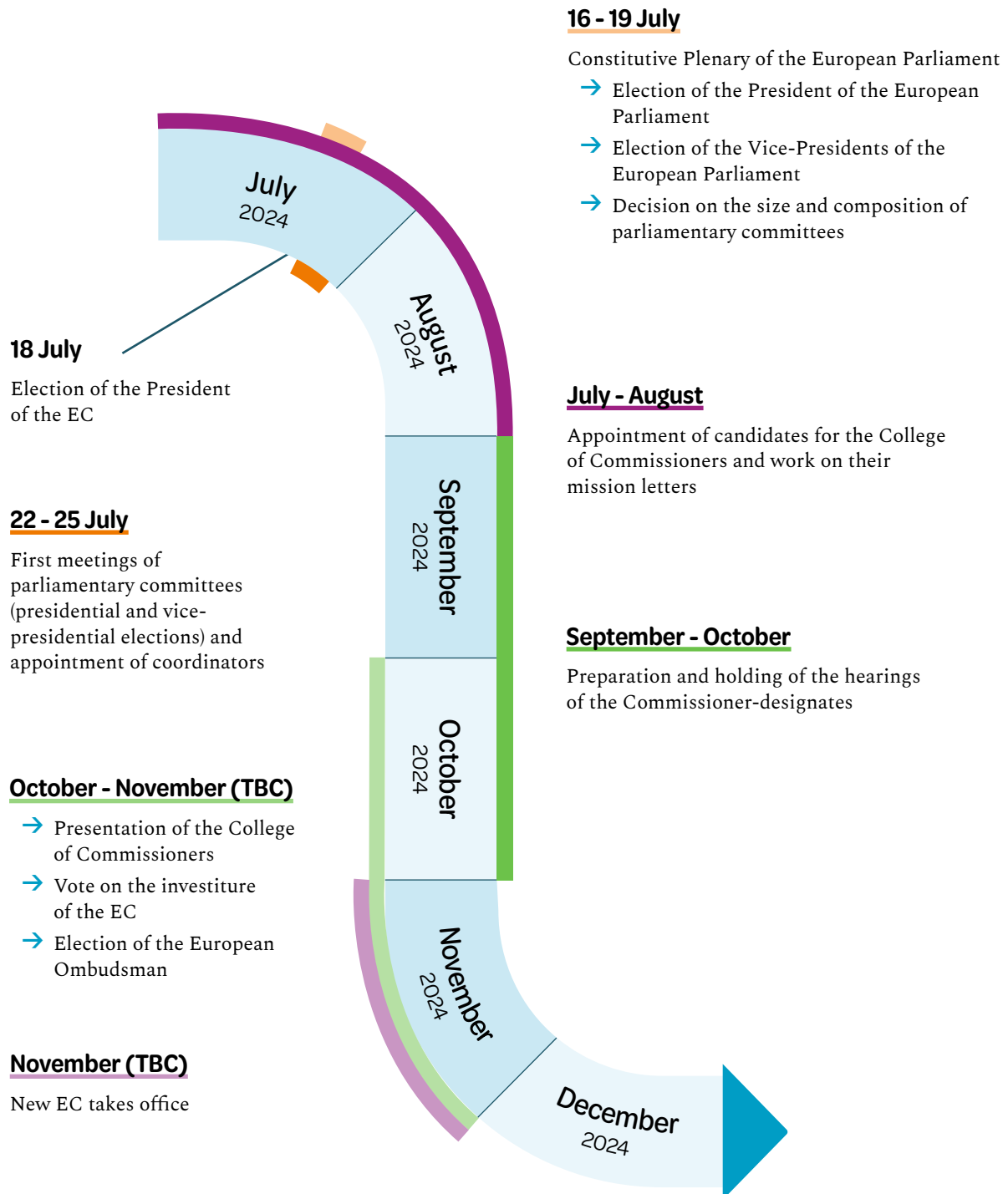


**Tools
and
key events**

The key dates of the legislative term for Coordination SUD



Renewal of the EU institutions



Adoption of the 2028-2035 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)³⁵

What can Parliament do ahead of time?

- Adopt resolutions to influence the EC's proposal

September 2024

Publication of impact assessments and start of consultations

What can Parliament do?

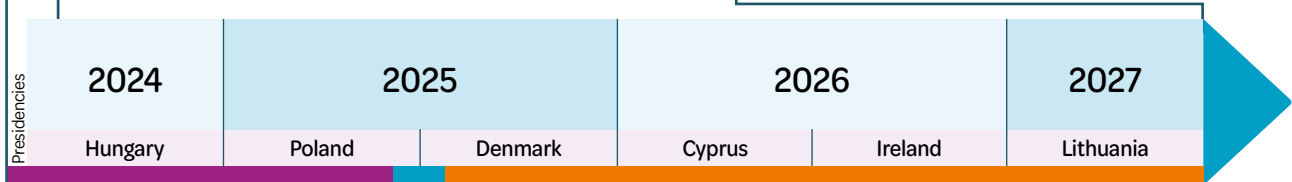
- Adopt resolutions to influence the EC's proposal
- Discuss directly with key actors of the EC

July 2027

Approval of the MFF by the European Parliament

What can Parliament do?

- Vote for or against in the BUDG committee, according to the results of the work of the Council of the EU
- Vote for or against in plenary, according to the results of work of the Council of the EU



June 2024 – early 2025

Interministerial negotiations in France to determine French priorities and creation of coalitions with other Member States on some topics

What can Parliament do?

- Reach out to the public (SNs, editorials, media, etc.)
- Informal influence on the work of the EC

May - June 2025

Publication of the EC's MFF proposal

June 2025 - July 2027

Parliamentary and interinstitutional negotiations

What can Parliament do?

- Adopt resolutions to influence the work of the Council of the EU
- Discuss directly with key actors of the Council of the EU

COMMITTEE IN CHARGE	TYPE OF LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee on Budgets (BUDG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special legislative procedure³⁶ ('Consent Procedure'³⁷ or 'Assent Procedure' (APP)) European Parliament can accept or reject a legislative proposal by absolute majority, but it cannot amend the proposal Legislative basis: Article 312, Treaty on the Functioning of the EU³⁸

Adoption of the NDICI or similar instrument³⁹

July 2025 - July 2027

Parliamentary and interinstitutional negotiations

What can Parliament do ahead of time?

- Identify the needs and requests of organisations in the international solidarity sector

September 2024

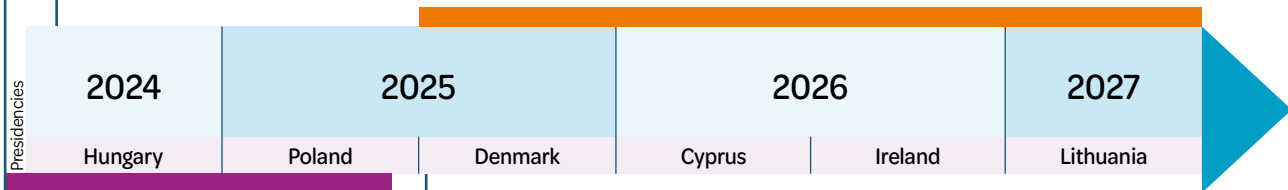
Publication of impact assessments and start of consultations

What can Parliament do?

- Adopt resolutions to influence the EC's proposal
- Discuss directly with key actors of the EC

What can Parliament do?

- Designate the competent committee(s)
- Appoint rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs
 - Strategic positioning (rapporteurs)
- Work in Committees (6+ months):
 - Amendments, communication, voting, influence of rapporteurs
- Plenary vote:
 - Influence of voting by one's own group and other groups, plus group amendments
- Start of trilogues
- Readings in European Parliament and the Council of the EU
 - Adoption of the text



June 2024 - early 2025

Interministerial negotiations in France to determine French priorities and creation of coalitions with other Member States on some topics

What can Parliament do?

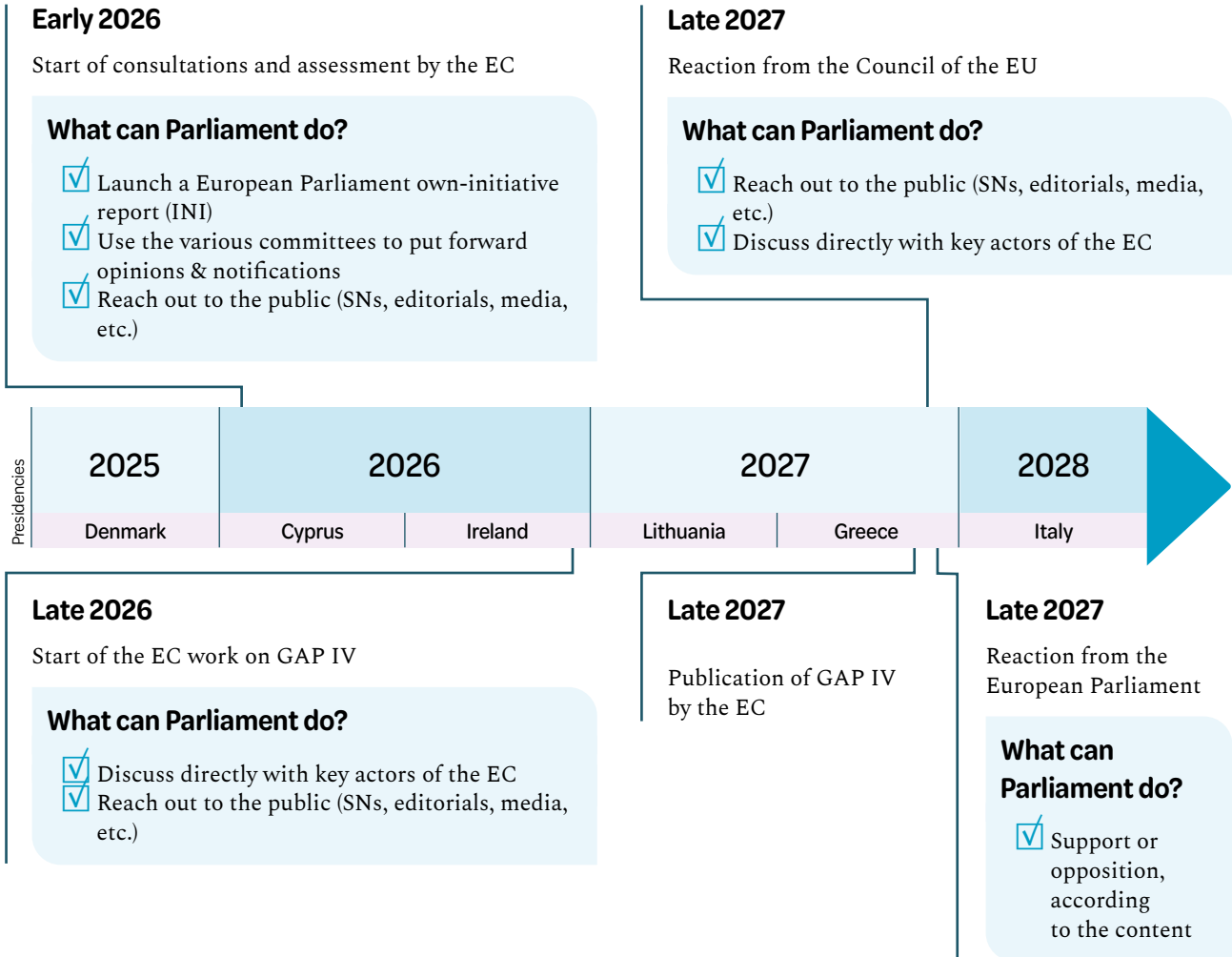
- Reach out to the public (SNs, editorials, media, etc.)
- Informal influence on the work of the EC

July 2025

Publication of sectoral regulations

COMMITTEE IN CHARGE	TYPE OF LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) Committee on Development (DEVE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ordinary Legislative Procedure (COD) The European Parliament and the Council of the EU jointly consider, amend and adopt a legislative proposal presented by the EC⁴⁰ Article 294, Treaty on the Functioning of the EU

Adoption of GAP IV⁴¹



COMMITTEE IN CHARGE	TYPE OF LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE ⁴²
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee on Development (DEVE) • Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication from the EC • Communications typically introduce new strategic agendas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible support through a report and a European Parliament resolution - Possible support through Council conclusions, which may also be conclusions of the President of the Council of the EU • Outside the nomenclature of Article 288 of the TFEU (atypical act not provided for by the Treaties)⁴³

End notes

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Acronyms used

AAP: Consent Procedure

AFET: Committee on Foreign Affairs

BAG: Business Advisory Group

BSS: Basic social services

BUDG: Committee on Budgets

COD: Ordinary Legislative Procedure

CSO: Civil society organization

DAC: Development Aid Committee

DEVE: Committee on Development

DG INTPA: Directorate-General for International Partnerships

EC: European Commission

ECB: European Central Bank

EEAS: European External Action Service

ETF: Emergency Trust Fund

EU: European Union

FEMM: Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

FEOF: Support Fund for Feminist Organizations

GAP: Gender Action Plan

GDP: Gross domestic product

GNI: Gross national income

GG: Global Gateway

LDCs: Least developed countries

MEP: Member of European Parliament

MFF: Multiannual Financial Framework

NDICI: Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument

ODA: Official development assistance

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

PCSD: Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SNs: Social networks

TFEU: Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme

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Cover credits

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July 2024

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