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10669/26
PV CONS 40
AG 102
PARLNAT

DRAFT MINUTES
COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
(General Affairs)
16 June 2026

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Council adopted the agenda set out in document 9939/1/26 REV 1.

2. Approval of "A" items

a) Non-legislative list

9940/1/26 REV 1

The Council adopted all the "A" items listed in the document above, including all linguistic COR and REV documents presented for adoption.

b) Legislative list (Public deliberation in accordance with Article 16(8) of the Treaty on European Union)

9942/26

Economic and Financial Affairs

1. Council position on DAB No 1/2026: surplus 2025

SIC

9917/26

Adoption

9916/26 + ADD 1

Approval of a letter

REV 2

approved by Coreper, Part 2, on 10.06.2026

FIN

The Council adopted the Council position and approved the letter. The item was taken in public session.

A statement by the Council to this item is set out in the Annex.

Legislative deliberations

(Public deliberation in accordance with Article 16(8) of the Treaty on European Union)

3. Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034:

SIC

10058/26

negotiating box

Policy debate

The Council held a policy debate.

4. Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034



- a) **Regulation establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 ('NRPP Regulation')**

9807/1/26 REV 1 +
ADD 1-3
9808/26 + COR 1

The Council reached a partial general approach on the Regulation establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034.

Czechia, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden presented statements, and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as well as Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Romania presented joint statements, as set out in the Annex.

- b) **Regulation on establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), including the specific programme for defence research and innovation**

² 10489/26 + ADD 1
REV 1 + ADD 2
10491/26 + COR 1

The Council reached a partial general approach on the Regulation on establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), including the specific programme for defence research and innovation.

Austria and Slovakia presented statements and Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland as well as Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia presented joint statements, as set out in the Annex.

- c) **Regulation establishing Global Europe
*Partial general approach***

10432/26 + ADD 1
10442/26

The Council reached a partial general approach on the Regulation establishing Global Europe. Bulgaria, Portugal and Spain presented statements, as set out in the Annex.

5. Omnibus simplification legislative packages *Progress report*





9834/1/26 REV 1






The Council took note of the progress report.

6. Any other business

None.

Non-legislative activities

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| 7. | Preparation of the European Council on 18-19 June 2026 |  | |
| | a) Conclusions
<i>Exchange of views</i> | | 7875/26 |
| | b) Joint declaration on the EU legislative priorities for 2026
and One Europe, One Market Roadmap
<i>State of play</i> | | 10395/26 |
| 8. | European Semester 2026: horizontal note on the integrated
country-specific recommendations
<i>Approval</i>
<i>Transmission to the European Council</i> | | 9613/26 |
| 9. | Eighteen-month programme of the Council
(1 July 2026-31 December 2027)
<i>Endorsement</i> |  | 10392/26 |
| | <u>The Council</u> endorsed the eighteen-month programme of the Council for the period of 1 July 2026 to 31 December 2027. | | |
| 10. | Values of the Union in Hungary/Article 7(1) TEU reasoned
proposal
<i>State of play</i> | | 12266/1/18 REV 1
+ REV 1 COR 1 |
| 11. | Any other business | | |
| | a) Enlargement
<i>Information from France and Germany</i> | | 10558/26 |

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- | | |
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|  | First reading |
|  | Special legislative procedure |
|  | Public debate (Article 8(3) of the Council's Rules of Procedure) |
|  | Restricted item |
|  | Item based on a Commission proposal |
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Statements to the legislative A items set out in doc 9942/26

Ad "A" item 1: Council position on DAB No 1/2026: surplus 2025
Adoption
Approval of a letter

STATEMENT BY THE COUNCIL

“The Council notes that, in its presentation of the calculation of the financing of the budget [by category of own resources and by Member State], the Commission has reduced the level of detail and transparency by omitting the calculation of a “national contribution”.

The discontinuation of information on the total current transfers paid by the general government of each Member State to the institutions of the European Union -figures which are subject to regular adjustments due to their basis in statistical aggregates- constitutes a break with EU financial reporting standards established at least since the financial year 2007, and also removes a standardised reference point for stakeholders, thereby limiting the possibility of conducting a well-informed analysis of contributions made to the EU budget.

The Council invites the Commission to reintroduce a calculation of “national contribution” in future draft budgets and draft amending budgets.

The adoption of this position on draft amending budget No 1/2026 is without prejudice to future or ongoing legislative deliberations that may be affected by the notion and concept of “national contributions”.

Statements to the legislative B items set out in doc. 9939/1/26 REV 1.

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034

Ad "B" item 4 a):

- a) Regulation establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 ('NRPP Regulation')
Partial general approach

STATEMENT BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC

“The Czech Republic considers it important to reach a Partial General Approach on the Proposal for a Regulation on National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPP), so as to enable progress in the subsequent stages of the negotiations.

The Czech Republic appreciates the efforts made by the Presidency and the changes introduced in the compromise text. At the same time, it would like to underline that certain elements of the text should not be overlooked in the next stages of the negotiations.

In particular, some parts of the NRPP, including its annexes, are highly technical in nature and could not always be discussed in full detail. The Czech Republic therefore trusts that any inconsistencies which may emerge at a later stage — whether during the negotiations or during the preparation of the plan — will be duly addressed in the subsequent steps of the legislative process. This concerns, in particular, issues resulting from omissions or from elements that may not have been fully taken into account during the intensive phase leading to the Partial General Approach.

This applies notably to provisions linked to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Discussions on sectorial legislative proposals for the CAP and Common Markets Organization (CMO) will continue in the Council during the upcoming Irish Presidency and the position of the Council on both texts is expected to further develop. Considering that not all relevant agricultural provisions were transferred from the NRPP Regulation to the CAP and CMO Regulations, it is especially important to highlight that Partial General Approach for the NRPP cannot prejudge the work of AGRIFISH Council and its preparatory bodies on these two Regulations. Allowing a future discussion on a proper transitional period for the CAP will be especially necessary.

Overall, the Czech Republic remains committed to a constructive approach to the negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the related legislative proposals with a view to reaching a balanced and timely agreement. In this context and in order to help to move the work forward, the Czech Republic supports the Partial General Approach as part of the broader package.”

STATEMENT BY HUNGARY

“Hungary considers that the compromise text on the NRPP Regulation does not adequately reflect the real and practical risk that the approval process of the NRP Plans may significantly delay the start of implementation of the funds planned under the individual chapters, nor does the text provide for adequate chapter-level flexibility mechanisms to address these risks.

As a result, the text does not sufficiently ensure the fulfilment of the objective set out in the European Council conclusions, namely the need to ensure that EU funding reaches beneficiaries without interruption as of January 2028.”

STATEMENT BY ITALY

“L'Italia ringrazia la Presidenza cipriota del Consiglio UE per l'intenso lavoro svolto e, alla luce dei significativi progressi compiuti nel corso del negoziato, approva l'orientamento generale parziale sul Regolamento.

In particolare, l'Italia accoglie con favore la maggiore visibilità riconosciuta alla Politica Agricola Comune e il trasferimento di numerose disposizioni fondamentali relative alla PAC dal Regolamento sui Piani alla pertinente normativa settoriale; i miglioramenti introdotti nella governance dei Piani per assicurare al meglio la continuità delle strutture attuali; la flessibilità rispetto all'architettura istituzionale degli Stati membri; la maggiore visibilità riconosciuta alla Politica Comune della Pesca, che richiede tuttavia un ulteriore sforzo in termini di stanziamento di risorse; i progressi raggiunti per assicurare semplificazione e un'attuazione in continuità con la corrente programmazione, nonché l'introduzione di tassi di cofinanziamento specifici per i fondi HOME.

L'Italia esprime inoltre apprezzamento per il compromesso raggiunto sulla condizionalità relativa allo Stato di diritto e ai diritti fondamentali. Il relativo quadro normativo si fonda ora su un approccio più coerente ed equilibrato, ispirato ai principi della certezza del diritto, della proporzionalità e basato su un adeguato coinvolgimento degli Stati membri.

Tali elementi rappresentano importanti miglioramenti rispetto alla proposta originaria della Commissione e riflettono una serie di priorità che l'Italia ha sostenuto con continuità nel corso del negoziato.

Al tempo stesso, l'Italia desidera ribadire le proprie riserve in merito alle insufficienti garanzie previste per la Politica di Coesione, che non ne preservano adeguatamente la natura e gli obiettivi specifici. L'Italia sottolinea che la Politica di Coesione – in quanto politica fondamentale sancita dai Trattati dell'UE – necessita di garanzie e risorse più solide per assicurarne la dimensione territoriale e la prevedibilità di lungo periodo.

L'Italia auspica che nel prosieguo del processo legislativo si venga incontro a queste preoccupazioni.”

STATEMENT BY LITHUANIA

“Despite the progress achieved so far on the NRPP proposal, the principle of “nothing is agreed until everything agreed” is still valid and Lithuania would like to draw attention to several important outstanding issues.

The latest version of the NRPP Regulation places a significant number of CAP-related provisions into brackets. As a result, the substance of the current agreement remains limited, with important elements such as financing, the overall EU contribution, key annexes and other essential provisions effectively deferred to future negotiations. Moreover, the partial general approach cannot be interpreted as an agreement to the proposed MFF structure.

This also raises a broader concern regarding the integrity of the CAP within the NRPP framework. The CAP should not be treated merely as one component of a horizontal planning and financing instrument. Its specific objectives, delivery model, control system and protected financing logic need to remain clearly identifiable and legally safeguarded within the overall architecture.

In addition, several CAP-related concerns remain unresolved, such as extension of output-based delivery model to CAP investment interventions, level of financial correction rates, flexibility for adjusting target values, placing of food processing outside the list of ring-fenced CAP interventions.

Given these unresolved issues, we remain concerned that key elements of the CAP architecture and implementation framework are not yet sufficiently safeguarded. Therefore, Lithuania believes that these concerns should be adequately addressed in the forthcoming negotiations.”

STATEMENT BY MALTA

“Malta acknowledges the considerable efforts undertaken by the Cypriot Presidency and the progress achieved in advancing discussions on the NRPP Regulation.

Nevertheless, Malta remains concerned that the proposed implementation framework does not explicitly preserve a genuine real cost-based implementation option alongside performance-based and simplified cost approaches.

Malta considers that a model primarily based on estimated costs and milestones may create significant budgetary, governance and accountability challenges, particularly where responsibility for implementation and financial risk is concentrated at central level, which should be carefully reflected in the design of a long-term framework.

Malta therefore maintains that the future framework should preserve a genuine choice between implementation models, including an explicit real cost-based option alongside performance-based and simplified cost approaches.

Malta further considers that, given that responsibility for implementation and financial risk lies with the Member State, the application of conditionalities under the Regulation - particularly where these rely on reports, assessments or similar instruments capable of giving rise to financial or implementation consequences, must be grounded on transparent, objective and verifiable criteria and applied in a manner that ensures legal certainty, proportionality, transparency and equal treatment.

Malta underlines that the principle that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed remains fully applicable. Malta reserves the right to revisit this issue in the context of future negotiations on the Regulation and in the context of the broader discussions on the MFF.”

STATEMENT BY THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

“While acknowledging the progress achieved on the NRPP Regulation Slovakia supports continued efforts towards establishing simpler, realistic and workable rules for the future programming period bringing overall positive change to regions and people.

We share the common objective of all Member States to ensure the timely implementation of the National and Regional Partnership Plans. In this context, Slovakia has already launched its national preparations in a spirit of partnership, cooperation, and constructive engagement.

Given the importance of the NRPP Regulation, which brings together several Treaty-based policies and instruments, Slovakia continues to advocate for greater clarity, consistency, and coherence with sectoral legislations and the performance framework. Ensuring legal certainty, predictability, and clear implementation rules remain our key priority.

The proposal represents a fundamental shift in the delivery model and has the potential to contribute to modernisation of the Cohesion Policy. To achieve this objective, it is essential that this transformation also delivers genuine simplification for beneficiaries. Regarding the performance framework, Slovakia supports a results-oriented approach, provided that a greater flexibility is ensured for Member States while reducing the administrative burden. At the same time, the delivery framework should allow the use of the most appropriate implementation methods including the real-cost model in duly justified cases. Moreover, we advocate for removing inconsistencies regarding the verification obligations of the plan authorities, which, together with the broad definition of serious non-compliance, create uncertainty as to the scope of controls and audits and risk undermining the clarity of the overall control framework.

Slovakia fully respects the principles of the rule of law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights and remains committed to their consistent and objective application. To further strengthen legal certainty, predictability, objectivity and proportionality, Slovakia believes that additional work is needed to establish credible sources, assessment methodologies and a direct link between the breach and the sound financial management or the financial interests of the Union. This should include a strong preventive dimension together with a reinforced focus on dialogue to remedy deficiencies, as well as a strict application of the principle of proportionality.

Particular attention should be given to ensuring legal certainty and predictability during the transition between programming periods of the Common Agricultural Policy. From Slovakia's perspective, this and other important CAP elements including the proposal for degressivity and capping of payments, should be further addressed. A suitable approach should therefore be identified that reflects the different farm structures across the EU and safeguards the continuity of support, especially regarding direct payments, which remain essential for maintaining the viability, resilience and competitiveness of European and Slovak farmers.

In this respect, Slovakia underlines the importance of maintaining the necessary legislative space to ensure that the final architecture of the overall framework remains operational, internally consistent and capable of delivering its objectives in practice.”

STATEMENT BY SPAIN

“Declaración de España

sobre la Orientación general parcial Reglamento por el que se establece el Fondo Europeo para la Cohesión Económica, Social y Territorial, la Agricultura y las Zonas Rurales, la Pesca y el Mar, la Prosperidad y la Seguridad para el período 2028-2034 («Reglamento sobre los Planes de CNR»)

Consejo de Asuntos Generales de 16 de junio de 2026

España agradece el trabajo de la Presidencia chipriota durante los últimos meses en torno a la propuesta de Reglamento de Planes de Cooperación Nacionales y Regionales, y reconoce el progreso en distintos puntos del expediente. De igual modo, agradecemos a la Comisión la presentación de información y la organización de seminarios técnicos para intentar dotar de claridad a elementos específicos del texto.

Reafirmamos nuestro compromiso de seguir trabajando de manera activa con las Presidencias de Chipre e Irlanda con la firme voluntad de solventar las dificultades que esta propuesta presenta antes de fin de año.

Sin embargo, España no puede apoyar el texto propuesto para el Reglamento sobre los Planes Nacionales y Regionales.

España tiene un firme e incuestionable compromiso con el proyecto europeo y con la adecuada implementación de sus políticas y prioridades. No obstante, consideramos que la propuesta del fondo único articulado a través de planes nacionales y regionales presenta dificultades estructurales, políticas, técnicas y de gobernanza para su efectiva implementación.

En este momento, permanecen sin resolver cuestiones sobre la implementación y aspectos prácticos de la propuesta.

Cualquier modificación de la gobernanza en el ámbito de la cohesión y la PAC, como principios fundacionales blindados por los Tratados, debe respetar el equilibrio territorial que define a la Unión. La propuesta de los planes nacionales y regionales desvirtúa estos principios y no prioriza ni garantiza el papel de las regiones ni la búsqueda de su desarrollo equilibrado.

La propuesta de los planes nacionales y regionales difumina la especificidad y el propósito de las distintas políticas comunitarias, uniendo en un único modelo de programación y gestión y articulando bajo las mismas reglas de diseño y ejecución, prioridades de inversión profundamente heterogéneas.

Además, el modelo presentado genera importantes dudas sobre su viabilidad práctica al obviar la realidad institucional, constitucional y administrativa de los Estados miembros. Europa se construye sobre sistemas de gestión y procedimientos presupuestarios diversos, pero siempre basados en gastos reales, verificables y sometidos a control.

La propuesta de la Comisión no supone una simplificación, sino que impone una carga administrativa adicional derivada del sistema paralelo de hitos y objetivos cuya eficiencia no ha sido demostrada. Genera incertidumbre jurídica y financiera, dificultando las reprogramaciones y penalizando a las regiones con menores recursos y por tanto el núcleo de la política de cohesión.

En la propuesta falta claridad sobre el papel de las regiones y su grado de autonomía política, administrativa y financiera en un modelo que se aleja del reparto tradicional seguido en los periodos anteriores. Esta cuestión es aún más compleja en aquellos países en los que las regiones ejercen, por mandato constitucional, competencias fundamentales en la planificación, ejecución y gestión de las políticas públicas con autonomía.

España no puede compartir una propuesta que diluye las competencias de nuestras regiones. Existe una preocupación unánime y compartida, tanto en la administración central como en las Comunidades Autónomas, sobre las implicaciones reales de este modelo.

Por todo ello, el modelo corre el riesgo de generar complejidad, incertidumbre y mayores dificultades de implementación para los Estados miembros.

En el marco de la Política Agrícola Común (PAC), nos preocupan tanto los niveles de financiación propuestos como el modelo de gobernanza previsto.

En particular, la posibilidad de incluir nuevas intervenciones, como las inversiones en la transformación y comercialización de productos agroalimentarios y las inversiones forestales o en regadío, que deban financiarse con cargo a los fondos reservados o ring fenced en un presupuesto de la PAC considerablemente inferior al actual.

También tenemos serias reservas con la propuesta de medidas transitorias para dar continuidad a los pagos y con el Mecanismo de la UE, donde agricultores y ganaderos quedarían excluidos tanto del fondo como de la reserva para crisis derivadas de desastres naturales, cuestión de enorme interés para el sector agrario.

Consideramos que todas las cuestiones técnicas relacionadas de la PAC incluidas en el reglamento de los planes deberían debatirse, en todo caso, de forma paralela con el resto de la legislación de la PAC.

España seguirá trabajando de manera activa y constructiva hacia una propuesta que sea ambiciosa en sus objetivos, pero también aplicable en la práctica, con el firme objetivo de alcanzar un modelo que garantice el papel de las regiones y funcione para todos los Estados miembros.“

STATEMENT BY SWEDEN

“Sweden welcomes the stronger link that has been made to the European semester and the country specific recommendations in this part of the Regulation. Sweden can accept the partial general approach, but we maintain our objections regarding the wording in ANNEX VI point b). Sweden understands the word including to entail that funds may be allocated to address material deprivation, through food and/or basic material assistance to the most deprived persons but that material deprivation can equally be addressed by accompanying measures.“

JOINT STATEMENT BY ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA

“Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania acknowledge the progress achieved during the negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework package. We remain fully committed to supporting the work of the Cypriot and Irish Presidencies to reach an agreement this year.

Nevertheless, important concerns remain regarding the extent to which the proposed framework reflects the challenges faced by the European Union’s Eastern border regions, in particular those bordering Russia and Belarus.

On 18 February 2026, the Commission adopted its Communication “Strong Regions for a Safe Europe”, recognizing that NUTS2 regions bordering Russia, Belarus and Ukraine face specific security, economic and demographic challenges stemming from Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, hybrid threats and the fundamentally changed geopolitical environment and states that “the regions most affected by the deteriorating security environment and by increased risks of conventional military actions are those on the external border with Russia and Belarus”. Addressing these challenges comes at the expense of long-term investments in competitiveness, innovation, societal well-being and sustainable socio-economic development. Communication rightly underlines that strengthening the resilience and prosperity of these regions is a strategic investment in Europe’s security and stability.

While references to the Communication and the challenges faced by Eastern border regions have been introduced into several legislative proposals, the corresponding provisions do not yet sufficiently reflect the scale, persistence and unique nature of these challenges.

The needs and circumstances of the eastern border regions are unique, and the challenges faced by Eastern border regions in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania go beyond what can reasonably be addressed through national budgets alone. These regions are required to absorb growing security, resilience and preparedness costs and impact on the population, while simultaneously safeguarding their economic vitality, social cohesion and long-term development prospects. Without a stronger response, these pressures risk deepening territorial disparities and undermining the attractiveness and competitiveness of regions located on the Union’s external border. In this context, there is high importance to mitigate these challenges properly.

Therefore, we maintain our position that regions bordering Russia and Belarus require greater visibility across the future legislative framework, accompanied by additional EU-level support and adequate budgetary backing under the Multiannual Financial Framework. A framework that acknowledges these challenges without providing a commensurate response risks falling short of the Union’s strategic objectives.

The Baltic States remain among the Member States receiving the lowest proposed ring-fenced amounts per hectare. Given the challenges and additional investments needs to strengthen security and resilience of the EU's Eastern border regions, continuing external convergence of direct payments remains important to ensure food security and resilience of our regions. This issue should be addressed accordingly.”

For these reasons, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania consider that further work is required to ensure that the next Multiannual Financial Framework delivers a more balanced and credible response to the realities faced by the regions bordering Russia and Belarus.

JOINT STATEMENT BY HUNGARY, BULGARIA, THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND ROMANIA

“Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Romania acknowledge the work done by the Cypriot Presidency on the NRPP Regulation.

Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Romania believes that despite reaching the partial general approach on the NRPP Regulation, the principle of “nothing is agreed until everything agreed” is still valid, especially due to the fact that the NRPP Regulation has obvious and strong interlinkages among others with the post 2027 CAP regulations, where adopting the general approach will require more time and will only be reached later.

Therefore Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Romania underline that the future approval of the general approach on the CAP regulations might require changes in the CAP-related articles of the NRPP Regulation and preserve the right to initiate that.“

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034

Ad "B" item 4 b):

- b) Regulation on establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), including the specific programme for defence research and innovation
Partial general approach

STATEMENT BY AUSTRIA

“Österreich anerkennt, dass die Wahl des Energiemixes nationale Kompetenz und jedem Staat frei überlassen ist. Österreich vertritt jedoch die Auffassung, dass Kernenergie weder eine nachhaltige noch eine wirtschaftlich tragfähige oder sichere Technologie für die Zukunft Europas darstellt. Aus österreichischer Sicht dürfen Mittel des Unionshaushalts nicht für Investitionen in die energetische Nutzung der Kernenergie, einschließlich des Baus neuer Kernkraftwerke, der Laufzeitverlängerung bestehender Anlagen oder der Stilllegung nuklearer Einrichtungen, verwendet werden.

Österreich verweigert sich nicht der Fortführung der weiteren Verhandlungen und unterstützt die partielle allgemeine Ausrichtung zum Europäischen Fonds für Wettbewerbsfähigkeit (ECF) im Verständnis, dass der Fonds weder den Bau noch die Stilllegung von Kernkraftwerken fördert oder finanziert.“

STATEMENT BY SLOVAKIA

“Slovakia fully supports the objectives of the European Competitiveness Fund to leverage the strength of European research and innovation to strengthen the competitiveness of the European industry. In this respect the European Competitiveness Fund is a key instrument for the next programming period. Slovakia also acknowledges the progress achieved during the negotiations and supports continued efforts to develop simpler, realistic and workable rules capable of delivering positive change across the Union ensuring that the Fund contributes to competitiveness in a genuinely European and inclusive manner.

Slovakia agrees that excellence must remain the core principle of the Fund. However, excellence should be complemented by criteria and safeguards that ensure broad participation, promote the dissemination of excellence across the Union and support the development of diversified and resilient European value chains. Slovakia remains concerned that the current text does not sufficiently address inclusive access to funding opportunities for businesses from all Member States, nor does it provide a sufficient framework for engaging Europe’s full innovation potential, expertise and production capabilities. Without clearer provisions in this regard, there is a risk that the Fund will primarily benefit already well-established ecosystems and further widen the competitiveness gap between different Member States. The balance between excellence, competitiveness and broad participation should therefore be further strengthened.

Slovakia acknowledges the need to advance negotiations on the proposal with a view to its timely adoption together with the European Parliament. Slovakia stands ready to continue engaging constructively in the next stages of the legislative process with the aim of achieving a more balanced, inclusive and effective European Competitiveness Fund.”

JOINT STATEMENT BY ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA AND POLAND

“We support the objectives of the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) with the ambition to strengthen the resilience, security and competitiveness across the whole Union. At the same time, we consider that the Fund should be adequately prepared to respond to the evolving security and economic realities in the Union.

Geopolitical context, in particular Russia’s full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine and persistent hybrid attacks across the Union, have demonstrated that energy and communications networks are essential components of Europe's competitiveness and security architecture. Recent incidents particularly in Member States on the Union's eastern border have also exposed vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure and supply chains, underlining the need for stronger European support for preparedness, recovery capabilities and strategic reserves. More broadly, the deteriorating security environment also affects economic resilience and competitiveness by increasing investment risks, raising financing costs and weakening growth prospects in the regions most exposed to security and military threats, as highlighted in the Commission Communication on the EU's eastern regions bordering Russia, Belarus and Ukraine (COM (2026) 82) and duly noted in the European Council conclusions of 19 March 2026.

Against this background, we consider it important that the ECF framework:

1. should provide for a clearer and more operational recognition of critical infrastructure;
2. should adequately reflect in the operative part of the Regulation suboptimal investment situations driven by persistent geopolitical risks, in particular in EU's eastern border regions facing structurally higher risk premia and weaker investment conditions;
3. should appropriately recognise regions exposed to long-term geopolitical pressure, including EU's eastern border regions, alongside other structurally disadvantaged territories.

In light of the above, we can support Partial General Approach for the ECF at this stage, with the clear expectation that above mentioned key elements will be duly reflected in the final compromise text.”

JOINT STATEMENT BY BULGARIA, CROATIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY AND SLOVENIA

“Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia recognise the importance of strengthening the competitiveness of European industry, research and innovation and welcome the objectives of the proposal establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF).

At the same time, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia consider that the current draft Regulation does not yet provide sufficient predictability regarding the mechanisms that would ensure the effective realisation of a vision to mobilise and connect complementary capacities, infrastructures, expertise and innovation ecosystems across all Member States, thereby enabling the Union to fully harness its collective potential.

Nevertheless, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia acknowledge the need to advance negotiations on the ECF with a view to its timely adoption together with the European Parliament and therefore support the Partial General Approach as an important step in this process. This support is given on the understanding that further work on the Fund's implementation modalities will continue during the subsequent stages of the negotiations.”

Ad "B" item 4 c):

- c) Regulation establishing Global Europe
Partial general approach

STATEMENT BY BULGARIA

“The Republic of Bulgaria attaches great importance to the promotion and protection of human rights. The country is and will remain dedicated to its human rights commitments.

At the same time, and without prejudice to its support for the compromise text of the Partial General Approach, Bulgaria reiterates its national position regarding some elements, included in the proposed Regulation establishing “Global Europe”:

In 2018 the Bulgarian Constitutional Court adopted a decision stating that the Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (“Istanbul Convention”) promotes legal concepts related to the notion of “gender” that are incompatible with main principles of the Bulgarian Constitution. Any reference to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) will not be applicable with regard to the Republic of Bulgaria in accordance with Judgement № 13/2018 of the Constitutional Court. For the same reasons, Bulgaria reaffirms its position on the EU Global Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in External Action (GAP III) and does not consider itself bound by its application.

In view of the above-mentioned, the Republic of Bulgaria accepts the term “gender” (“пол“) to refer to the two biologically defined sexes “male/female.”

STATEMENT BY SPAIN

“En relación con el considerando (58) del proyecto de Reglamento que establece Europa Global, España realiza la siguiente declaración, solicitando a la Secretaría General del Consejo que se recoja en el acta de la reunión del Consejo de Asuntos Generales de 16 de junio de 2026.

España cree firmemente que un enfoque de derechos humanos en materia migratoria favorece la integración y cohesión social, lo cual, fortaleciendo los valores europeos, beneficia a la sociedad en su conjunto.

España sigue determinada en la lucha contra el tráfico de migrantes y las organizaciones criminales implicadas en la trata de personas. España seguirá animando al diálogo con los países de origen y de tránsito como la estrategia mejor y más eficaz.

Durante la negociación del Reglamento, España se ha opuesto sistemáticamente a la inclusión del término “soluciones innovadoras”. Lamentablemente, el término permanece en los considerandos del texto, por lo que a España no le resulta aceptable.

Las razones que esgrime España son las siguientes:

Desde un punto de vista formal, este lenguaje nunca ha sido recogido ni en Conclusiones del Consejo Europeo ni en normas jurídicas comunitarias. En concreto, ni en el Reglamento de Retornos, ni en los reglamentos de Tercer País Seguro, ni en el de la Lista de Países de Origen Seguro se incluye la expresión “soluciones innovadoras”. Nos resulta extremadamente problemático que en una norma horizontal como el Reglamento financiero se incluya una referencia a estas “soluciones innovadoras”, cuando, no ha sido nunca empleada en los ámbitos sectoriales en los que hubiera debido reconocerse previamente.

Precisamente por ello, el Servicio Jurídico del Consejo ha destacado la “indeterminación jurídica” de esta expresión en numerosas ocasiones. Al motivo jurídico se añade el financiero y de seguridad jurídica: la posibilidad de financiar un indeterminado jurídico es abrir la puerta a la arbitrariedad.

El mismo considerando (58) indica: “Todas las acciones relacionadas con la migración en el marco del Instrumento deben llevarse a cabo con pleno respeto del Derecho internacional, incluido el Derecho internacional de los derechos humanos, el Derecho internacional humanitario y el Derecho de los refugiados, así como de las competencias de la Unión y de los Estados miembros”. Esta expresión se ve reflejada en la parte dispositiva, concretamente en el artículo 12.2: “Dichas acciones deberán llevarse a cabo con pleno respeto del Derecho internacional, incluido el Derecho internacional humanitario, de los derechos humanos y de los refugiados, así como de las competencias de la Unión y de los Estados miembros”. Sobre la base de esta disposición, España considera que los denominados “centros de retorno” no tienen cabida dentro de las referidas “soluciones innovadoras” a las que se refiere este mismo considerando, y que, por tanto, estos centros no podrán ser financiados con fondos del Instrumento Europa Global.

El Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea no se ha pronunciado hasta la fecha sobre esta cuestión de posible ubicación de los centros de internamiento en el exterior. Sin embargo, la Abogada General Laila Medina, en sus conclusiones del pasado 4 de junio, considera que la ubicación de los centros es una competencia estatal no armonizada y pone de manifiesto que las causas de internamiento y sobre todo las garantías están plenamente armonizadas por el Derecho de la Unión y que el Estado miembro responsable debe estar en condiciones de garantizarlas (C-706/25 y C-707/25).

Garantizar extraterritorialmente los derechos de los solicitantes de asilo, que tengan la asistencia jurídica necesaria, que tengan efectivamente acceso a recursos, incluido el acceso a la justicia, supone un coste desproporcionado, que resulta inasumible desde una perspectiva de la sostenibilidad y debida diligencia presupuestaria. Lo que es peor, ese sobreesfuerzo presupuestario a la postre no puede garantizar esos derechos, porque los Estados externalizan su responsabilidad, para facilitar las expulsiones, lo que hace más difícil asegurar los derechos y todas las garantías.

Además de las consideraciones jurídicas y presupuestarias, no podemos perder de vista la perspectiva política y de relaciones exteriores. Estos centros, como ha demostrado la práctica reciente, generan un enorme rechazo en las sociedades receptoras, que puede ser capitalizado políticamente por Gobiernos que pueden tender hacia posiciones extremas, alejándose de la Unión Europea, debilitando por lo tanto la posición de esta última en el mundo de la Unión y su necesaria relación con terceros países.

Los Estados de primera entrada, entre los que se encuentra España, llevamos tejiendo relaciones diplomáticas duraderas y de confianza con terceros sobre la base de la igualdad y la cooperación, que están cosechando buenos resultados. La creación y financiación de estos centros por parte de la Unión Europea no solo supone un problema serio para nuestra imagen, sino que puede poner en riesgo la arquitectura de cooperación, policial o diplomática, que hemos construido durante décadas.”

STATEMENT BY PORTUGAL

“Portugal apoia plenamente um Programa Europa Global forte, que é um instrumento fundamental para a promoção dos valores, princípios e interesses da União em todo o mundo.

Como tal, consideramos que os recursos limitados da União devem concentrar-se no apoio a medidas que sejam eficazes, consensuais e que tenham o máximo impacto.

Tendo em conta estes princípios, Portugal manteve uma reserva relativamente à referência a “soluções inovadoras” na proposta Europa Global.

Além disso, esta terminologia não corresponde à linguagem estabelecida do Conselho Europeu, nomeadamente em matéria de migrações, e carece de clareza suficiente quanto ao seu significado preciso e implicações.

No entanto, num espírito de compromisso e considerando a importância do Programa Europa Global, o equilíbrio geral do pacote e os progressos alcançados durante as negociações, Portugal apoiará a adoção do texto e solicita que a sua posição conste da ata.”
