

3 - 7 June 2024

## I. Political and Policy Developments

1. EU elections start with right-wing surge looming
2. Top job manoeuvring gains pace
3. Commission services working on policy briefs

## II. Latest Projections

## III. Key institutional milestones

### I. Political and Policy Developments

#### 1. EU elections start with right-wing surge looming

The EU elections have kicked off. Voting began in the Netherlands on 6 June, followed by Ireland and Czechia on 7 June, and will continue across Member States, concluding on 9 June.

In the Netherlands, exit polls show Frans Timmermans' centre-left GroenLinks-PvdA and Geert Wilders' far-right PVV neck and neck for first place. Both parties are well ahead of the others, including outgoing PM Mark Rutte's VVD.

Despite indications of a victory for von der Leyen's European People's Party (EPP), her reappointment hangs on securing majority support from national governments and MEPs. The European Council will meet informally on 17 June, with a formal discussion and potentially a decision on top jobs on 27-28 June.

The political picture around EU governance is more fluid than previous elections. While a centrist coalition between the EPP, the Socialist & Democrats (S&D) and Renew Europe remains the main option, any Commission President is likely to need additional votes to get elected. There is speculation of an- at least informal- alliance between the EPP and Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni's European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR). Both the S&D and Renew have, however, excluded cooperating with right-wing groups.

Meanwhile Meloni is keeping her options open, remaining non-committal on supporting von der Leyen or forming a right-wing supergroup between the ECR and Identity and Democracy, which is being pushed by French right-wing leader Marine Le Pen. The coming days and weeks will see intense negotiations among governments and European parties, with a view to defining EU governance for the next five years.

#### 2. Top job manoeuvring gains pace

As elections take place, speculation around EU top jobs is mounting. European Council President Charles Michel is holding bilateral talks with national leaders in preparation for the upcoming European Council meetings.

According to media reports, Michel is working to replace von der Leyen with another figure (the two had a difficult working relationship during this mandate), while eyeing the role of High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy for himself. Michel has made no secret of his interest in moving from his European Council presidency to another top EU position. Credible alternatives for the High Representative post are current Belgian PM Alexander De Croo, Estonian PM Kaja Kallas and Polish Foreign Affairs Minister Radek Sikorski.

Mario Draghi, former ECB President and Italian PM, is increasingly floated as a potential successor to either von der Leyen or Michel. According to a Polling Europe survey, 49% of EU voters favour Draghi over von der Leyen (47%) for Commission President. The prospect of Draghi landing the European Council presidency currently seems more realistic, as Italian PM Meloni is likely to send one of her close allies to Brussels as Italian commissioner.

The German government is reportedly preparing for the possibility that von der Leyen may not secure a second term, lining up green party candidates for commissioner. Names circulating include Economy Minister Robert Habeck, state secretaries Franziska Brantner and Sven Giegold, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and MEP Terry Reintke.

### 3. Commission services working on policy briefs

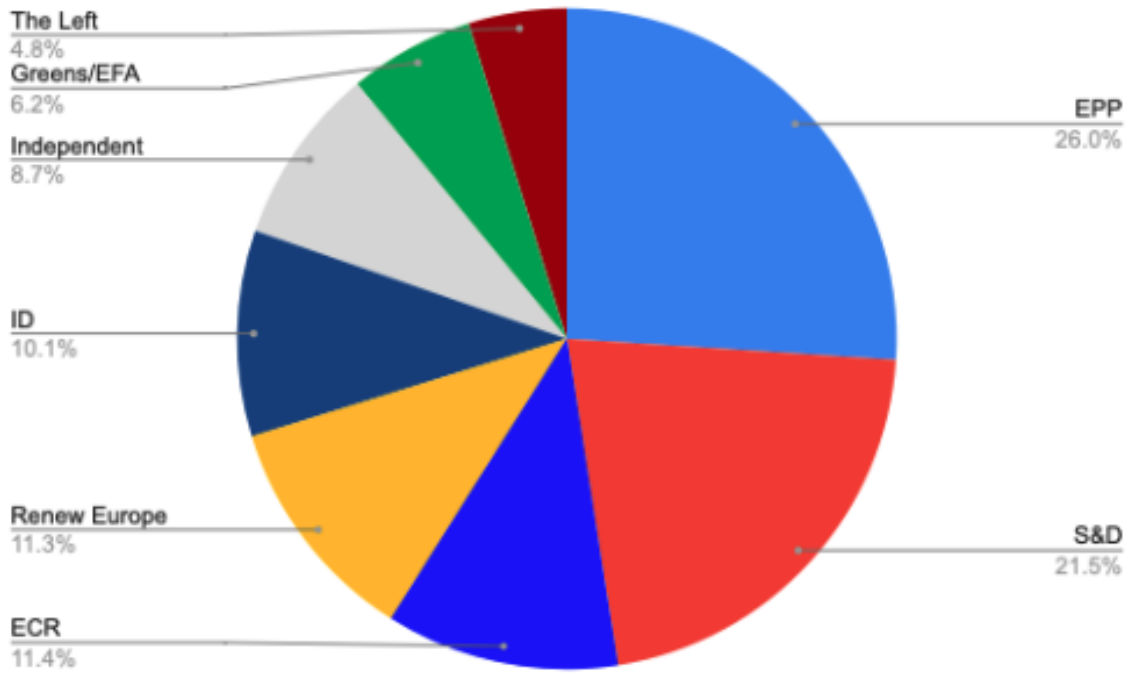
European Commission services are in the middle of preparing briefing documents for the next commissioners. These briefs take stock of the policy landscape and outline options for the next mandate.

A leaked document circulating in Brussels shows the key areas Commission services are currently focusing on:

- **Energy**, with a focus on decarbonisation (carbon markets, carbon leakage, climate diplomacy / climate finance, CCUS, and fossil fuel phaseout), renewables, hydrogen, fusion energy and energy efficiency.
- **Environment**, with a focus on circular economy (recycling, reuse and repair), biodiversity and nature conservation, land use, chemicals, as well as water management and resilience.
- **Agriculture**, with a focus on food security / availability / quality / affordability, animal welfare, pesticides, precision farming, organic products, NGTs, GMOs and the future of CAP.
- **Digital**, with a focus on AI (generative AI, AI literacy, ethics, international governance), data / cloud, cutting edge technologies (chips, high performance and quantum computing, metaverse), telecoms / connectivity, as well as DSA / DMA.
- **Single Market**, with a focus on completing the capital markets union and the banking union, market surveillance, public procurement, intellectual property and standardisation, new consumer agenda (product safety / liability).
- **Industrial policy / competitiveness**, with a focus on open strategic autonomy, economic security, net zero industries, critical raw materials, biotech, as well as SMEs / retail.
- **Health**, with a focus on antimicrobial resistance, non-communicable diseases and mental health.

- **Trade**, with a focus on trade enforcement, bilateral deals (with explicit mention for the Mercosur agreement) and reforming the WTO.

## II. Latest Projections



1. **European People's Party (EPP):** 173 seats
2. **Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D):** 143 seats
3. **European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR):** 76 seats
4. **Renew Europe:** 75 seats
5. **Identity and Democracy (ID):** 67 seats
6. **Independent:** 58 seats
7. **Greens – European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA):** 41 seats
8. **The Left (GUE/NGL):** 32 seats

Source: [Politico](https://www.politico.com) (6/6/2024).

### III. Key institutional milestones

Date	Event
6-9 June	EU elections
10-11 June	EP President Roberta Metsola to meet with political groups chairs to discuss election aftermath
17 June	Informal European Council
18-19 June	EPP constituent meeting (new memberships & election of new president)
19 June	Greens' constituent meeting (election of new co-chairs)
25 June	PES constituent meeting (vote on new president) PEL constituent meeting
26 June	Renew Europe constituent meeting ECR constituent meeting
27-28 June	European Council on 2024-2029 Strategic Agenda and top jobs appointments
1 July	Beginning of Hungarian Presidency
4 July	ID constituent meeting
16-19 July	European Parliament first plenary session
18 July (exp)	European Parliament vote on Commission President
22-25 July	Formation of European Parliament committees
October-November	European Commissioner-candidates hearings
1 December	New European Council President takes office
16-19 December (exp)	European Parliament vote on the new Commission