

European Council of 18-19 June 2026 - Invitation letter by President António Costa to the members of the European Council

Dear colleagues,

I would like to invite you to our European Council meeting on 18 and 19 June.

In a challenging geopolitical context, we will address several crucial issues for our citizens and our companies, including competitiveness and global economic challenges, the European Union's Multiannual Financial Framework for 2028-2034, as well as Ukraine and the situation in the Middle East.

Like in previous – and future – meetings of the European Council, our discussions will focus heavily on the cornerstone of Europe's prosperity and social model: the competitiveness of our economy. We will therefore start our meeting by reviewing progress on the 'One Europe, One Market' agenda, together with the President of the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission, and as part of the presentation of the main results of the Cyprus Presidency by President Christodoulides. The ongoing joint monitoring carried out by the three institutions will contribute to this discussion.

We will revert to economic issues during dinner, when I would like us to focus on global macroeconomic imbalances and their implications for Europe's competitiveness and prosperity. The aim is to develop a common understanding of the challenges and to provide guidance to the Commission on the way forward. Europe must do its economic homework – but, at the same time, fair competition at the global level requires a level playing field.

Building on our productive debate in Cyprus in April, I would like us to come back to the next Multiannual Financial Framework. The Cyprus Presidency will present a first negotiating box with figures. To guide the work of the incoming Irish Presidency, we should focus our discussion on the key elements to facilitate an agreement by the end of the year. This includes making progress on new own resources, which will be decisive for matching our ambitions with the necessary means.

Ukraine remains high on our agenda, and we will start our discussion by hearing from President Zelenskyy. Ukraine has demonstrated renewed success on the battlefield, while Russia is failing to achieve its military and strategic objectives. Russia's increasingly reckless and irresponsible behaviour towards EU Member States is unacceptable and signals the opposite of strength. Our two-pronged approach – supporting Ukraine and increasing pressure on Russia – is working. Our meeting will provide an opportunity to send a strong signal of unity and, I expect, to welcome the opening of the first cluster of chapters in the accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova, an important milestone on their EU path. This puts an end to a long impasse in the accession process of those two countries. Together with the momentum regarding the Western Balkans, as seen during our recent Summit in Tivat with partners of that region, there is a renewed impetus in the enlargement process.

Recent drone incursions into EU airspace, including the crash of a Russian drone carrying explosives into a residential building in Romania, underline the urgency of advancing our shared defence readiness agenda, including by strengthening the EU's Eastern flank. While progress has been made on defence spending and capabilities, much more remains to be done.

We will address the latest developments in the Middle East, including the conflict in Iran and its broader implications, notably for energy prices. We will also discuss the dramatic situation in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as developments in Lebanon, including continued EU efforts to support the ceasefire and the Lebanese state and its people.

Continuing our usual practice, we will also take stock of progress in the implementation of previous conclusions on migration to ensure that work continues at a high pace in all priority areas. We can expect a letter from President von der Leyen to inform our discussion.

Finally, I would like us to address illicit drugs – an issue that directly impacts the lives of European citizens and our societies. This is a challenge that requires a comprehensive, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. Following the adoption of the

EU Drugs Strategy, it is important to ensure its effective implementation.

Our meeting will start on Thursday, 18 June, at 18:00 and my aim is to conclude the proceedings after lunch on Friday, 19 June.

I am looking forward to seeing you in Brussels,

António Costa

- [Invitation letter](#)

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