

European Council: Security Remains Priority Area in the Next Five Years

Thomas Wahl



News

On 20 June 2019, the European Council of the European Union adopted a [new strategic agenda for the next five years \(2019-2024\)](#). Security – which had already been made one of the main priorities by Commission President *Jean-Claude Juncker* during his term of office – remains high on the agenda.

The new agenda focuses on four main priorities:

- Protecting citizens and freedoms;
- Developing a strong and vibrant economic base;
- Building a climate-neutral, green, fair, and social Europe;
- Promoting European interests and values on the global stage.

Regarding the priority area “Protecting citizens and freedoms,” the agenda calls to mind that “Europe must be a place where people feel free and safe.” In this context, the European Council outlines more specifically political commitments to the following issues:

- Rule of law as a key guarantor for European values; it must be respected by all Member States and the Union;
- Effective control of the EU’s external borders;
- Development of a fully functioning comprehensive migration policy, which includes (1) – externally – deepened cooperation with countries of origin and transit in order to fight illegal migration and human trafficking and to ensure effective returns, and (2) – internally – agreement on an effective migration and asylum policy (especially reform of the Dublin regulation);
- Proper functioning of Schengen;
- Strengthened fight against terrorism and cross-border crime, improved cooperation and information sharing, further development of the EU’s common instruments;
- Increase in the EU’s resilience against both natural and man-made disasters;
- Protection from malicious cyber activities, hybrid threats, and disinformation originating from hostile state and non-state actors; this requires a comprehensive approach with more cooperation, more coordination, more resources, and more technological capacities.

The Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 provides an overall political framework and direction. It is designed to guide the work of the European institutions in the next five years. It will therefore also influence the work of new Commission President *Ursula von der Leyen*.

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