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## **European elections: debate between lead candidates. Migration, security and defence. “No to Putin’s allies in the EU Parliament”**

The debate among the candidates for the Presidency of the Commission has been a little heated around the issue of migration and the responses needed in terms of reception and security. During his speaking time, Schmit stressed the “need to improve people’s daily living conditions with decent wages and quality jobs”. He stressed the importance of equal rights for women and the need to create jobs for young people. He then attacked the conservatives and sovereignists: “They are not democratic forces and we do not intend to cooperate with them” in the next parliamentary term. This view was supported by the other candidates. Another hot topic was security and defence. In the face of the Russian threat, Gozi spoke of the “necessary defence capability” for which, he said, €100 billion would be needed. “But we also want equal investment in education and culture”. Von der Leyen, in turn, spoke of the need to improve defence and the commitment “to stand by Ukraine. What is at stake – she said – is the choice between freedom and oppression, between democracy and autocracy”. Reintke stressed the “internal security threats” that, according to her, also come “from the far-right that undermines our interests”; “we cannot have Putin’s allies in the European Parliament”, she said.

Gianni Borsa