
The European leaders' meeting yields no results. Top jobs postponed until end of June

In Brussels, everything went according to plan. The informal dinner of the 27 Heads of State and Government, convened by the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, to decide on the “top jobs” of the European Union, produced no “official” results. Nor any “special effects.” Rather, it confirmed what seems to be the most viable path: Ursula von der Leyen (EPP), the outgoing German President of the European Commission, is set to be confirmed for a second term with Portuguese Antonio Costa Socialist President of the European Council, and Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas, (Liberals) High Representative for Foreign Affairs. All three appointments represent the majority that will be restored in the wake of the European Parliament elections, which saw right-wing parties gain ground in Europe, but not enough to change the balance of power in the EU. For the time being, the Greens have not been taken on board, although they declared their willingness to support von der Leyen with a common environment-friendly agenda. Eurosceptic or sovereignist groups have been excluded outright- namely the Conservatives (which includes MEPs elected with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's Fratelli d'Italia) and Identity and Democracy (which includes MEPs elected with the Lega party), It is almost certain that the names will be confirmed on 27 and 28 June, with a meeting of the EU's political titans: French President Macron (who faces legislative elections in which he will try to crush the Lepenist far right), German Chancellor Scholz (whose government has been weakened by the European vote), Polish Prime Minister Tusk and Spanish Prime Minister Sanchez. It is a game of three involving the EPP, S&D and the Liberals. If von der Leyen finally wins the support of the heads of state and government, she will still have to contend with the European Parliament's vote: the numbers are on her side, but she must be prepared to avoid surprises or defections. The situation is different for the presidency of the European Parliament, which is obviously decided independently by the Strasbourg assembly: in this case, the outgoing president, Roberta Metsola (EPP) of Malta, is expected to be re-elected. Furthermore, on 27 and 28 June, EU leaders are expected to agree on the "strategic agenda" for the period 2024-2029: the draft that has been circulated, divided into three chapters, does not seem particularly innovative, except for the issue of defence, especially in view of the challenges that the EU will face in the coming years. Is it really possible to postpone the quantum leap towards a stronger and more cohesive Europe, united around the values of democracy and the rule of law?

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