

EU Processes Advocacy Opportunities

Joint meeting of Civil Society Fora on HIV and Communicable Diseases
and on Drugs

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Overview of MFF

- The multiannual financial framework (MFF) is the EU's long term budget.
- The Council, after obtaining consent from the European Parliament, adopts the MFF regulation.
- It establishes the maximum amount of spending in the EU budget for broad policy areas
- It operates on multiannual cycles, usually 7 years. The current cycle ends at the end of 2020, so negotiations are currently underway for the next cycle, which will cover the period 2021-2027.

Key dates for MFF

- 2 May 2018: The European Commission presented its proposal for the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework (MFF)
- By mid-June: sectoral proposals covering EU funding programmes were also revealed, formally starting the MFF negotiations
- Ideally by May 2019: finalisation of political agreement between the European Parliament and Member States on the basis of Commission proposals and adoption by the European Parliament and Council of the EU.
- Early 2021: beginning of implementation.

Overview of European Parliament Elections

- European Parliament elections to elect MEPs are held every five years
- Overall, there will be 705 MEPs in the next legislature
- Elections are contested by *national* political parties, so most effective advocacy can be carried out at national level
- Once MEPs are elected, most opt to become part of transnational political groups
- The Parliament election results will influence the next European Commission

Key dates for European Parliament Elections

- Nov/Dec 2018:
 - Potential lead candidate/Spitzenkandidat process
 - Manifestos of political groupings
- Feb - March 2019:
 - Start of the electoral campaign
- April-May 2019:
 - Lead candidates' debates
- 23-26 May 2019
 - Elections
- June-November 2019:
 - Formation of new Commission

Opportunities for common positions/ advocacy

- On the MFF process:
 - The health strand of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)
 - HIV and communicable diseases
 - In relation to drugs, recital 38 states:

“the Health strand of the ESF+ should contribute to to disease prevention throughout the lifetime of the Union’s citizens and to health promotion by addressing health risk factors such as [...] consumption of illicit drugs and reduction of drugs-related health damage, [...]in line with the relevant strategies”
 - Also potentially relevant is the Internal Security Fund. In particular, the Fund aims at intensifying cross-border operational cooperation in relation to the prevention, detection and investigation of cross-border crime, in particular through increased cooperation between public authorities, civil society and private partners from across Member States.
- On the election process:
 - Pre-election: common position on overarching issues, translatable to both EU and national contexts
 - Post-election: structured engagement with new MEPs