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Bulgarian Presidency of the Council
of the European Union

Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2018 priorities and challenges

01 January - 30 June 2018





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of the European Union

Fellow colleagues, friends, Europeans,

This year, we celebrate 60 years of the Treaty of Rome, laying the foundation of the European Union. On 25 March, EU Leaders unanimously agreed that “Today, we are united and stronger: hundreds of millions of people across Europe benefit from living in an enlarged Union that has overcome the old divides.”

The European Union is unique, because our diversity does not divide us, but brings our European family closer together; and unity is exactly what the Bulgarian Presidency will work for – the motto of our Presidency, enshrined in the Bulgarian constitution, is ‘United We Stand Strong’. So it is with great commitment, that Bulgaria prepares to hold its first Presidency of the Council.

*Over the last years we have weathered many storms. This year, we turn a new leaf in the European project - it is time to look forward, with hope and ambition. We need Europe. And Europe needs us. Each and every one of us. We, Bulgarians, are proud to be and always have been part of the European family, culture and history. As Prime Minister Boyko Borissov has said, the message we want to send from the heart of the Balkans, is for **peace, stability, and prosperity.***

Bulgaria is a country with a special place in Europe – we are at the core of the Balkans, have been the bridge to Asia and the Orient for over 1300 years, and our lands have been a melting pot for Roman, Thracian, Slavic, and proto-Bulgarian culture for thousands of years. Archaeologists continue to find countless artefacts and ancient structures, which we treasure today and share with 500 million citizens across Europe.

*The Presidency is a historic moment for us, a privilege, but also a great responsibility. We will work to bring our citizens stability and security, take the EU closer to its citizens, and strengthen the links within Europe, including to the Western Balkans. We will listen to all European partners and aim to **build understanding and consensus.***

It is my pleasure to present to you our priorities.

We look forward to working with you, and I hope after June 2018, you will take a little piece of Bulgaria with you...



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lilyana'.

Lilyana Pavlova PhD

Minister for the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU 2018

United We Stand Strong

the motto of the Bulgarian Presidency



Main goals:

- Bulgaria will seek to achieve real results, following the principles of **transparency** and **accountability**
- The Bulgarian Presidency will be an honest broker and will seek **consensus**, **compromise**, and **understanding** among EU Member States to take decisions and adopt legislation

Main goals:

- Bulgaria will encourage **the partnerships** on all levels through unity and mutual cooperation.
- The Bulgarian Presidency will work strongly in the field of **youth** and **security** taking into consideration the complex nature of the challenges the EU faces
- The specific focus will be on the **European perspective** and **connectivity** of the **Western Balkans**

‘Open to Citizens’ the First Bulgarian Presidency



Europe and Europeans need



How will we achieve our goals?

THROUGH:



Consensus



Competitiveness



Cohesion

Our long-term goals:

Strong
Digital
United

Europe



Our Institutional Partners

“We should preserve the unity that we have managed to develop over the past year.”

*Leader’s Agenda
20 October 2017*



Donald Tusk
President of the European Council

“Now is the time to build a more united, a stronger, a more democratic Europe for 2025.”

Jean-Claude Juncker
President of the
European Commission
*State of the Union Address
13 September 2017*



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“Together we share the responsibility to make Europe work so that our citizens will see results on common current challenges: migration, security and job creation for young people.”

Antonio Tajani
President of the European Parliament
Visit in Bulgaria, 21 November 2017



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“Bulgaria is ready to take the helm of the Council of the European union. Our ambition is to make the Union stronger and more resilient during the Bulgarian Presidency.

We will pay a special attention to the Western Balkans. The whole Union has an interest in the security, stability, and the progress of this region. We will not create false expectations, but we will work for the expansion of the cooperation with the countries from the region.”

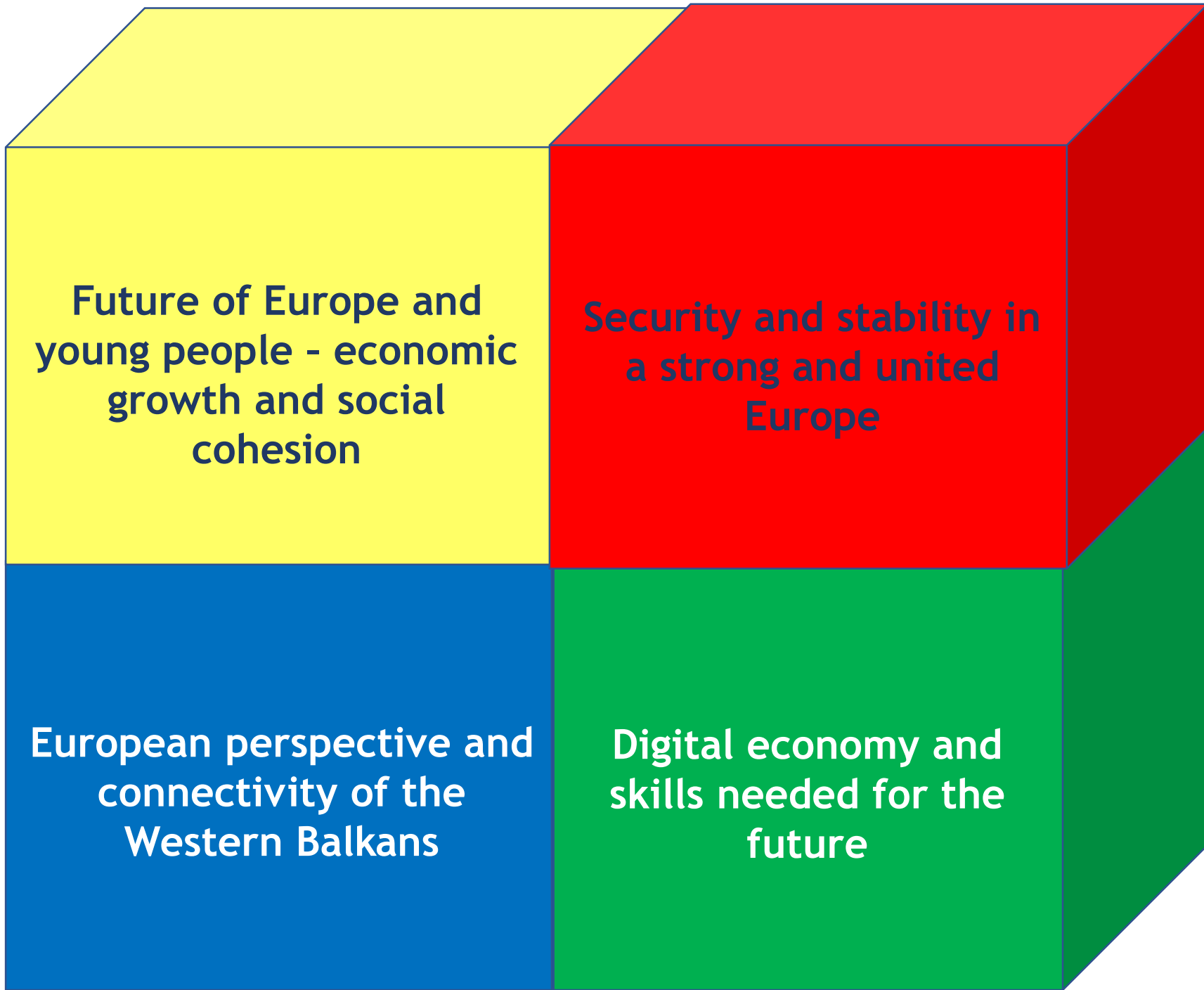
Boyko Borissov
Prime Minister
of the Republic of Bulgaria





Priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU 2018

Priorities



Cohesion policy, investment policy, Common Agricultural policy

- ✓ Reformed Multiannual Financial Framework post-2020
- ✓ Cohesion policy after 2020
- ✓ The Future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) - Simplification and Modernization
- ✓ Economic and Monetary Union
- ✓ Sustainable Integrated Approach for the Danube and the Black Sea Regions
- ✓ Culture as a Strategic Resource for the Better Future of the EU

Young people and Future of Europe

- ✓ A central place in the debate on the Future of Europe
- ✓ Providing access to training
- ✓ Fostering digital, entrepreneurial and creative skills
- ✓ Providing adequate infrastructure for training, education and research

Important files

- 1) Legislative proposals for the ESIF 2021-2027 (Cohesion Policy)
- 2) Proposals amending the Economic and Monetary Union
- 3) Legislative proposals on the Banking Union including the European Deposit Insurance Scheme (EDIS)
- 4) Package of legislative proposals on the CAP reform

Important files

- 5) The new 'Erasmus+' EU Framework Program for Education, Training, Youth and Sport after 2020
- 6) Draft Decision on a common framework for the provision of better conditions in the field of skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision №2241 /2004 /EC
- 7) Better inclusion of culture in the Multiannual Financial Framework post-2020 and in the new Work Plan for Culture (2019-2022)

- ✓ Delivering a tangible European perspective for all the countries from the Western Balkans
- ✓ Promoting peace, security and prosperity
- ✓ Dialogue based on implementation of the criteria and the merit principle, political will and decisive reform on the part of these countries
- ✓ Enhancing regional cooperation and developing good neighbourly relations
- ✓ Enhancing links with the EU Single Market and improving connectivity
- ✓ Promoting the EU's Digital Policies

- 1) Conclusions on EU Enlargement and the Stabilization and Association Process - the EC will publish a Strategy for the WB countries in February 2018 and the Regular Enlargement Report on April 2018
- 2) Strengthening security cooperation and initiatives to counter terrorism, organized crime, border security and Rule of Law in the Western Balkans region
- 3) Initiative for digital connectivity with a step-by-step adoption of the EU roaming rules by the WB countries as well, aiming for a gradual reduction of roaming charges and increase in broadband internet access opportunities
- 4) Encouraging regional cooperation and good interconnectivity as ‘vital’ preconditions to establish a secure, well-functioning and accessible energy network

- ✓ Devising and implementing efficient mechanisms for improving the security of the EU citizens
- ✓ Strengthening border control and procedures for security checks at the borders and inside the EU
- ✓ More effective management of migration processes and increasing the efficiency of the return policy
- ✓ Improving the interoperability of the information systems and data bases of the EU in the area of security and fighting crime and terrorism, as well as drafting uniform standards

- ✓ Completion of the reform of the Common European Asylum System based on the principles of responsibility and true solidarity
- ✓ Intensive and goal oriented work on the priorities of the Common Security and Defence Policy in order to implement the EU Global Strategy for Foreign Policy and Security
- ✓ Efficient, quick and fair justice
- ✓ Establishing a stable Energy Union and enhancing the potential of regional cooperation
- ✓ Active role in practical application of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) for strengthening the European security and defense

Important files

- 1) Interoperability and exchange of information between law enforcement and security services
- 2) Cooperation with countries of origin and transit in the field of migration, in particular to improve returns and readmission
- 3) Institutionalisation of the European Public Prosecutor's office (EPPO)
- 4) Enhancing the cross-border access to e-evidences

Important files

- 5) Draft Regulation on the jurisdiction, recognition and enforcement of judgements in matrimonial matters in the area of parental responsibility and international child abduction (Brussels IIa)
- 6) Improving the mechanism for the exchange of information on the conviction of third-country nationals and strengthening measures for combating fraud and counterfeiting of non-cash means of payment
- 7) Proposals for Internal market for electricity
- 8) Draft Regulation on Governance of the Energy Union

- ✓ A deeper and fairer Internal Market
- ✓ Free movement of workers for the smooth functioning of the Single Market
- ✓ A competitive and fair Digital Single Market
- ✓ Promoting Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation
- ✓ A sustainable and Future-oriented Environment

- ✓ A better environment for the development of social economy, with a focus on social innovation
- ✓ ‘Women in the Digital World’
- ✓ Taking into account the role of legal migration in the development of the European economy
- ✓ ‘The Future of Work’ in identifying the right skills for new jobs with a focus on youth employment, skills and competences needed for the 21st century

- 1) Strategy on Common Industrial Policy of the European union
- 2) Package of proposals on Mobility
- 3) Package of proposals on services, to improve the conditions for cross-border provision of services, especially by SMEs
- 4) Package of proposals on electronic communications
- 5) Draft Regulation to establish a Single Digital Portal

- 6) Package of proposals on Cybersecurity
- 7) Draft Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market (DSM)
- 8) Draft Regulation on the EU free flow of non-personal data in the EU
- 9) Draft Directive on EU E-communications Code
- 10) Draft Regulation the body of EU Regulators of e-communication (BEREC)

- 11) 5G Action Plan
- 12) Draft Regulation on E-privacy
- 13) Fair taxation of the digital economy
- 14) Circular Economy Action Plan
- 15) Draft Directive on Posting of Workers
- 16) Draft Regulation on the coordination of social security systems
- 17) Council Conclusions on healthy eating amongst children

Logistic





Official opening





Calendar - main events

SUMMIT

1

**INFORMAL
COUNCILS**

12

**HIGH-LEVEL
EVENTS**

over 25

**POLITICAL
AND EXPERT
LEVEL
EVENTS**

over 200

**PARLIAMENTARY
DIMENSION
EVENTS**

6

Summit

28+6

**EU AND BALKAN
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**



17 MAY 2018



NATIONAL PALACE OF CULTURE



Informal Councils

**Justice and Home
Affairs
25-26.01.2018**

**Competitiveness
(Internal market,
research and
innovation)
31.01-02.02.2018**

**Foreign Affairs-
Defence
4-5.05.2018**

**Gymnich
15-16.02.2018**

**Foreign Affairs-
Trade
26-27.02.2018**

**Education, Youth,
Culture and Sport -
Culture
28.02.2018**



Informal Councils

Environment
10-11.04.2018

**Employment and
Social Policy**
17-18.04.2018

Energy
18-19.04.2018

Health
22-23.04.2018

**Economic and
Financial Affairs**
27-28.04.2018

Agriculture
03-05.06.2018



High-level events

Before the
Presidency

- Conference of the Presidents' Commissions of the European Parliament: 20-21.11.2017
- Informal meeting of the EU State Secretaries and Secretaries General: 30.11-01.12.2017

February
2018

- Conference on GDPR: 05.02.2018
- High-level conference on Eco-Innovation for air quality: 05-06.02.2018
- High Level Ministerial Conference - "Tourism and economic growth": 13.02.2018
- Conference "Consumer Rights Protection by Monopoly: National and European context": 26.02.2018



High-level events

**March
2018**

- ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting: 01-02.03.2018
- Conference on the future Multiannual Financial Framework: 09.03.2018
- International Conference "Cybersecurity Challenges": 26.03.2018
- Conference on the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO): 26-27.03.2018



High-level events

April
2018

- LeaderSHE@digital conference: 12.04.2018
- International High-Level Conference on Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship: 16-17.04.2018
- High level conference “Clean Energy - the road towards reaching a political compromise“: 19.04.2018
- Conference “Education to Do: From Digital Consumers to Digital Creators“: 19-20.04.2018
- AGRI-Digital Conference - 20.04.2018
- ASEM Finance Ministers’ Meeting: 25-26.04.2018
- Eurofin Financial Forum: 25-27.04.2018



High-level events

**May
2018**

- EU - USA Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting: May 2018
- Smart Specialization and Technology Transfer as Innovation Drivers for Regional Growth: 04-05.05.2018 (12-13.04.2018/07-08.05.2018)
- Second Investors Roundtable Balkan Gas Hub:05.05.2018
- E-justice Conference:14.05.2018



High-level events

June
2018

- Global Women Leaders Forum 2018:03-05.06.2018
- High-level conference “EU Cohesion Policy: post 2020 perspectives for convergence and sustainable regions”: 08.06.2018
- Meeting of the tourism ministers of the BSEC member countries, Varna: 14.06.2018
- Digital Assembly: 25-26.06.2018
- WEB IT: 27-28.06.2018

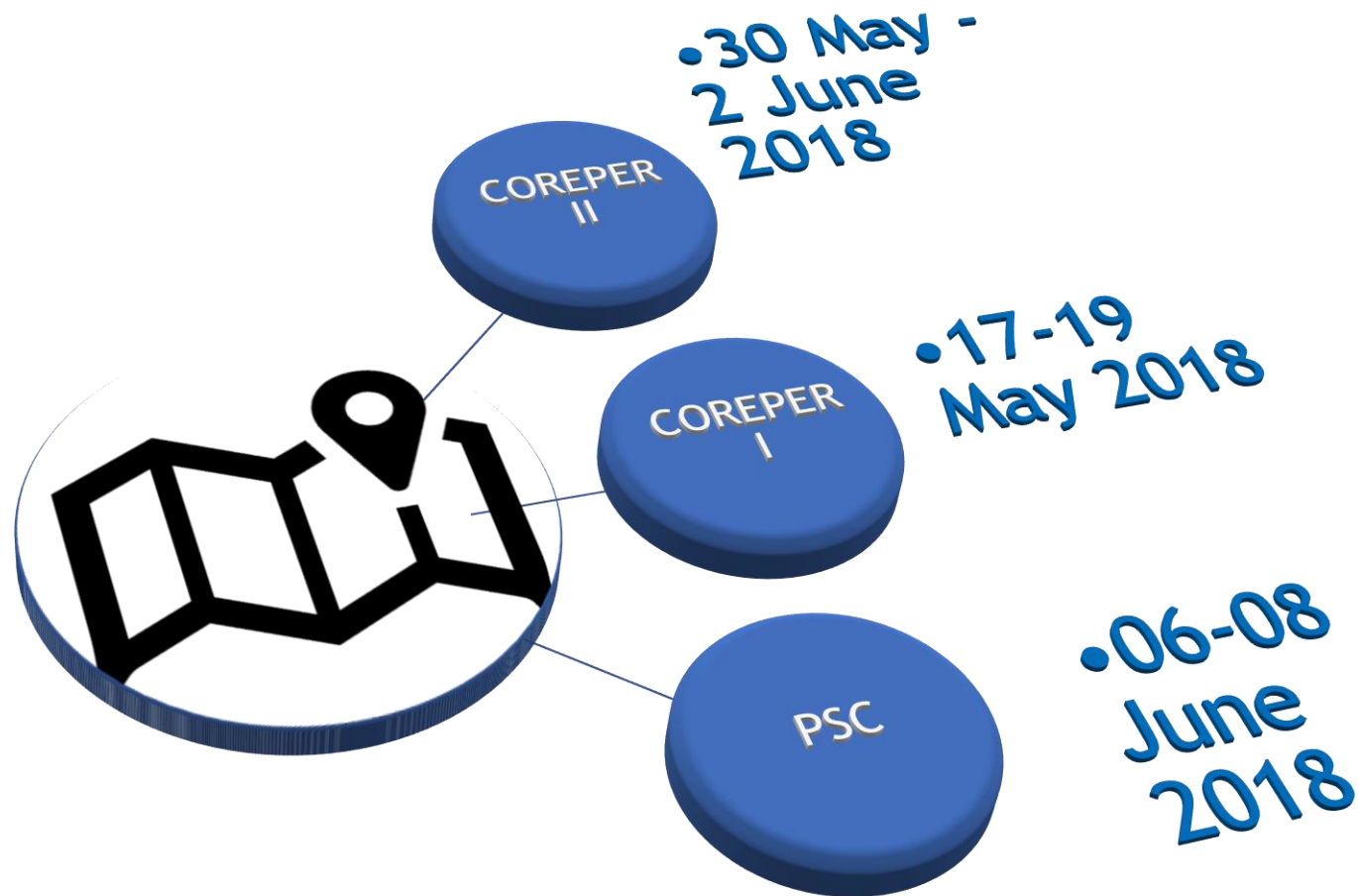


Parliamentary dimension

<p>Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC</p> <p>21-22.01.2018</p>	<p>Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP)</p> <p>16-17.02.2018</p>	<p>Interparliamentary Conference under Article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (Brussels)</p> <p>19-21.02.2018</p>
<p>Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on EUROPOL</p> <p>18-19.03.2018</p>	<p>Meeting of the Chairpersons of Energy Committees of the Parliaments of the European Union</p> <p>13-14.05.2018</p>	<p>Plenary COSAC</p> <p>17-19.06.2018</p>



Trips





Liaison Officers

MFA

Liaison Officers, contact points for the Embassies, accredited in Bulgaria

**MBPCEU
2018**

Liaison Officers, accompanying the delegations of A level events

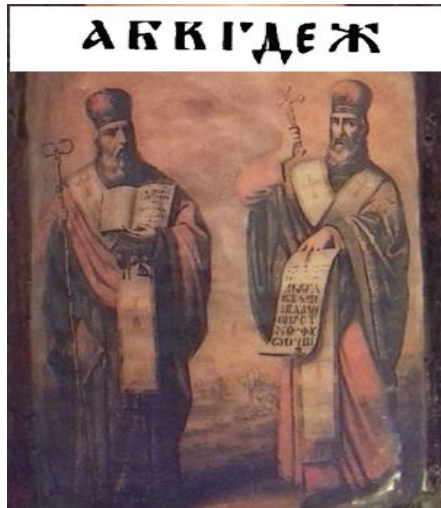
**MBPCEU
2018**

Volunteers for the information desks

CULTURAL PROGRAMME



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Cultural Programme

Leading institution- Ministry of Culture, supported by:

- Mayor of Sofia;
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mandatory events:

- Official opening and closing ceremony in Bulgaria;
- Official opening and closing ceremony in Brussels;
- Cultural Programme for high-level events and events of the Parliamentary dimension;
- Events, organized by the diplomatic missions of Bulgaria abroad on the occasion of the national holiday, anniversaries and other important international events

Cultural Programme- external dimension

Special focus events in:

- Brussels, Vienna, Rome, Berlin, Paris, New York
- Events, organized by other EU Member States
- Western Balkans Countries
- Third countries where Bulgaria would be holding the local presidency
- Countries - strategic partners of Bulgaria
- Events organized in the European Parliament, European economic and social committee etc.

Ministry for the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU 2018

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