

A YEAR TOGETHER

EPP ACTIVITY REPORT

"2020 - a year together" EPP activity report

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European People's Party.

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FOREWORDS

"It has now been over a year since our political family gathered for the EPP Congress in Zagreb to outline our vision for Europe, confronting challenges such as climate, digitalization and migration. Leaving Zagreb none of us could have known what was ahead. The pandemic has been a challenge like no other. 2020 has been a year like no other. A year where we have paused, a year where we have come together by staying apart. All across Europe, we have re-discovered community and redefined what it is to be a hero, whether that's somebody checking in on an older neighbour, our healthcare professionals and frontline workers. In Belarus, the courage of protestors in fighting for a future that is democratic and free reminds us of the importance of cherishing our own freedoms. Now, thanks to the dedicated work of scientists and researchers, an end to the pandemic and the possibility of returning to a more normal life is perhaps in sight. The pandemic made us reassess some of the most basic assumptions on which our Union is founded but from this crisis we emerge united in resolve. The European People's Party remains committed to building a Union founded on values, that serves the needs of every citizen."



Donald TUSK
EPP President



Antonio LÓPEZ-ISTÚRIZ
EPP Secretary General

"The year 2020 has been marked by the outbreak of COVID-19. A pandemic that has disrupted our lives taking us into a whole new situation.

We at the EPP are committed to our work whatever the circumstances and quickly adapted to the new working conditions. The EPP family remained a pillar, stepping up to the challenges and intensifying our coordinating role amongst political stakeholders. We came out with initiatives, bringing solutions and connecting our political family. We were not only able to stay fully operational but also to increase the exchange of information, the number of meetings and communication actions.

The EPP family should be proud. Together with our municipal, regional and national leaders, as well as those in the European institutions, we have once again shown that the EPP is a responsible political force, capable of providing concrete solutions for our citizens. We are the force behind the European Recovery Plan. A plan not only to take us out of the crisis, but to prepare Europe for the future.

In challenging times, our commitment remains the same - to serve our members and work together for the well-being of the European people."

EPP SUMMITS

Statutory Summits are limited to the representatives of the Member States of the European Union, while the Enlarged Summits are also open to EPP leaders from non-EU countries. During these informal and confidential meetings, EPP leaders try to seek consensus within the EPP political family in an effort to tackle common problems and develop common positions at the European Council. Prior to the meetings of the European Council, the EPP presidents of the European institutions, EPP heads of state and government, deputy prime ministers, ministers and opposition leaders – one per country – as well as the EPP Presidency meet for customary Summits which are hosted by the EPP President **Donald TUSK**.

SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

01 Statutory Summit

Video Conference, 23 April 2020

Convened for the first time by videoconference because of the pandemic, the summit focused on the importance of quickly agreeing a common EU health and economic strategy to tackle the coronavirus situation, as well as on the need to protect democracy, individual freedoms and rule of law from authoritarian tendencies, fake news and propaganda.

03 Eastern Partnership Leaders Meeting

Video Conference, 17 June 2020

The discussions focused on the threats to security, internal democracy and fundamental freedoms faced by our EaP partners which have been aggravated by the pandemic. In a statement, the leaders stressed the need for a clear, concrete and tailor-made EU strategy to continue the success story of the Eastern Partnership.

02 EU-Western Balkans Leaders Meeting

Video Conference, 6 May 2020

In a joint statement, EPP leaders emphasised the need for unity and solidarity to tackle the common challenge represented by the pandemic, reiterated their support for the region's EU perspective, welcomed the revised enlargement methodology and the opening of negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia.

04 Statutory Summit

Video Conference, 17 June 2020

EPP leaders welcomed and exchanged views on the Commission's proposals for the EU Multiannual Budget and the Recovery Plan. The need for a coordinated approach towards the pandemic and faced with Turkey's provocations, solidarity towards Greece and Cyprus was also highlighted.



05 Statutory Summit

Video Conference, 16 July 2020

The discussions on the financial package put forward to face the COVID-19 crisis was discussed in this meeting, stressing both progress and stumbling blocks, as well as the need for a rapid agreement. The situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and the state of Brexit negotiations also raised concern.

06 Statutory Summit

Video Conference, 23 September 2020

A wide range of topics were on the agenda: mainly external issues such as migration, the situation in Belarus and relations with China, Russia and Turkey, but also the future of the single market, digital transformation and climate change.

08 Statutory Summit

Video Conference, 9 December 2020

At the last EPP Summit of 2020, participants discussed finalising Brexit, linking rule of law to the MFF and Recovery Fund, the pandemic and the need for clear, rational communication on vaccines. EPP's full support for Cyprus and Greece in relation to Turkey was once again expressed.

07 Statutory Summit

Brussels, 15 October 2020

For the first and only time this year, the EPP Summit was convened in a hybrid format, in order to discuss the EU's actions to tackle the COVID-19 crisis, the stalling of Brexit negotiations, as well as the European Green Deal and relations with Africa. Once again, the issue of Turkey's aggressive policy in the Eastern Mediterranean was raised.

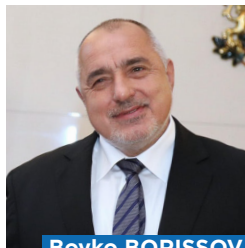


EU LEADERS

As of January 2021, the EPP has 11 out of 28 EU heads of State and Government, who meet at the EPP Summit meetings in preparation for the European Council.



Nicos ANASTASIADES
Cyprus, DISY



Boyko BORISOV
Bulgaria, GERB



Klaus IOHANNIS
Romania



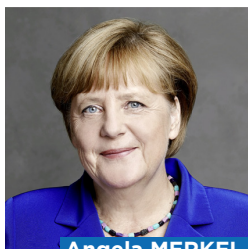
Janez JANŠA
Slovenia, SDS



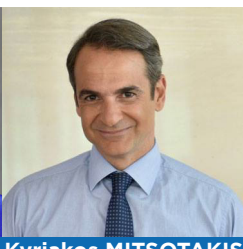
Krišjānis KARIŅŠ
Latvia, Vienotība



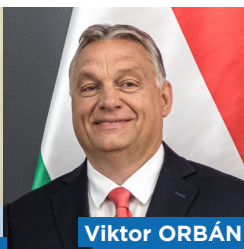
Sebastian KURZ
Austria, ÖVP



Angela MERKEL
Germany, CDU



Kyriakos MITSOTAKIS
Greece, ND



Viktor ORBÁN
Hungary, FIDESZ*
*member party under suspension as of March 2019



Andrej PLENKOVIĆ
Croatia, HDZ



Ingrida ŠIMONYTĖ
Lithuania

NON-EU LEADERS

The EPP has 5 non-EU heads of State and Government, who are invited to attend the Enlarged EPP Summit meetings.



Šefik DŽAFEROVIĆ
Bosnia-Herzegovina, SDA



Avdullah HOTI
Kosovo, LDK



Maia SANDU
Moldova, PAS



Erna SOLBERG
Norway, Høyre



Aleksandar VUČIĆ
Serbia, SNS

MINISTERIAL MEETINGS

Throughout this difficult year, the value of EPP coordination in the framework of the ministerial meetings became ever more evident – with a total of 60 meetings organised in 2020 mostly via video-conference. The number of EPP ministerial meetings is almost triple that of the previous year (up from 21 in 2019).

While the response to the impacts of the coronacrisis as well as the lockdown measures, such as the restrictions on free movement within the Single Market, was tackled within all EPP ministerial formations, the newly established EPP Health Ministers Meeting, chaired by **Jens SPAHN**, German Federal Minister for Health, played a crucial role in exchanging the latest information and coordinating the response to the ongoing challenges while strengthening the EU's resilience to any future ones. The active participation of **Stella KYRIAKIDES**, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, and **Margaritis SCHINAS**, European Commission Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, as well as key EPP Group MEPs dealing with public health policy, contributed to the success of these meetings.

ECOFIN:

Co-Chairs:

- **Paschal DONOHOE**, Ireland, Fine Gael, Minister of Finance, President of the Eurogroup
- **Valdis DOMBROVSKIS**, Latvia, Unity, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission for an Economy that Works for People

GENERAL AFFAIRS:

Co-Chairs:

- **Karoline EDTSTADLER**, Austria, ÖVP, Federal Minister for European Affairs
- **Helen McENTEE**, Ireland, Fine Gael, Minister for European Affairs (until June 2020)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS:

Co-Chairs:

- **Simon COVENEY**, T.D., Ireland, Fine Gael, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence
- **David McALLISTER**, Germany, CDU, MEP, EPP Vice President, Chairman of the AFET Committee

AGRICULTURE:

Chair: **Elisabeth KÖSTINGER**, Austria, ÖVP, Federal Minister for Agriculture, Regions and Tourism

HEALTH:

Chair: **Jens SPAHN**, Germany, CDU, Federal Minister of Health

INTERIOR:

Co-Chairs:

- **Pieter DE CREM**, Belgium, CD&V, Minister of Security, Interior and Foreign Trade (until September 2020)
- **Esteban GONZALEZ PONS**, Spain, PP, MEP, EPP Group Vice-President

DEFENCE:

Chair: **Juri LUIK**, Estonia, ISAMAA, Minister for Defence

TRADE:

Chair: **Leo VARADKAR**, Ireland, Fine Gael, Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment

POLITICAL ASSEMBLIES

The Political Assembly defines the positions of the Party between each Congress, decides on membership applications and finalises political guidelines.



01 Political Assembly

Brussels, 3-4 February 2020

An extraordinary EPP Congress in 2021 was announced to reflect on a new political vision, matching citizens' expectations and the changed political landscape, without compromising on EPP's fundamental values. Due to lack of sufficient progress, the Assembly maintained the suspension of FIDESZ. Delegates discussed the situation in Georgia, the Middle East and adopted resolutions on Belarus and Lebanon. Support for medical research was reiterated in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. Combating radicalisation was deemed crucial in view of the latest terrorist attacks. The EPP Deputy Secretaries **Christian KREMER** and **Luc VANDEPUTTE** were unanimously re-elected. Ingo Friedrich and Leif Hallberg were also unanimously re-elected as EPP internal auditors.

02 Political Assembly

Video Conference, 28 September 2020

The Assembly reflected on the COVID-19 pandemic with its dramatic consequences on society as a test for Christian democrats in their effort to protect the rule of law and fundamental freedoms. Delegates discussed the ongoing political situation in Belarus and Albania, hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh, expressed support to Greece and Cyprus facing Turkish aggression, adopted policy paper on China - redefining the EU's relationship and recognising the challenge; and resolution on the EU Recovery Fund – to build fair and resilient societies including all generations. The members received an update on Brexit negotiations from EU Chief Brexit negotiator **Michel BARNIER** and expressed concerns about the significant breaches of trust by the UK.

03 Political Assembly

Video Conference, 8 December 2020

The members of the Political Assembly discussed the need for coordinated management of the coronavirus pandemic until vaccines are widely available, outlined the conditions for reaching a deal on a future EU-UK trade agreement, adopted a resolution on Albania stressing the importance of free and fair elections, discussed the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and in Venezuela and welcomed the election of **Maia SANDU** as the first female president of Moldova. It was approved that the next EPP Congress would take place in the Netherlands in November 2021.

WORKING GROUPS

Working Groups are the backbone of the EPP's political work, where representatives from the EPP member parties, groups and associations develop common positions and strategies on major policy areas and submit specific recommendations to the Political Assembly for final approval. A Working Group can also be given a specific mandate for preparatory work for EPP Congresses, as well as for organising conferences, roundtable discussions and other important events.

1

WORKING GROUP **European Policy**
Chair - **Esther DE LANGE**, MEP, EPP
Vice-President (CDA, Netherlands)

The focus of the Working Group was to prepare a comprehensive party document dealing with the post-pandemic challenges in Europe. The drafting process was carried out in close cooperation with the member parties and associations, who have been contributing to updating the EPP's positioning in the 21st century's political arena. This document will be presented at the Congress in 2021.

2

WORKING GROUP **Economic Policy and Digital Europe**
Co-Chairs – **Mariya GABRIEL**, EPP Vice-President and European Commissioner (GERB, Bulgaria) and **Siegfried MUREȘAN**, MEP, EPP Vice-President (PNL, Romania)

The Working Group met in August 2020 to discuss with experts the impact of the pandemic on two critical sectors, mobility and tourism, and to consider the growing field of eHealth. In October, it partnered with Working Group 4 for a joint initiative aiming to rethink the EPP position on EU trade policy as a strategic tool for defending and promoting European interests and values in a multilateral world.

3

WORKING GROUP **EPP Membership**
Chair - **Paulo RANGEL**, MEP, EPP
Vice-President (PSD, Portugal)

In its two meetings, the Working Group focused on the Western Balkans, with input from the European Commission in view of its annual progress reports; and on Tunisia, with a virtual study visit with international experts preparing the ground for the EPP to reach out to potential partner parties. The membership application of OĽaNO, Slovakia's governing party, was discussed and the overall applications list updated.

4

WORKING GROUP **Foreign Policy**
Chair - **Antonio LÓPEZ-ISTÚRIZ**, MEP, EPP Secretary General

The new Working Group was established to delve deeper into EU-related foreign affairs. During 7 meetings it covered EU-Turkey relations, challenges with China and opportunities in the Middle East, and a debate with UAE's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs **H.E. Dr. GARGASH** ahead of the Abraham Accords. With friends from the U.S., the situation before the presidential elections was analysed; and two discussions were held with Russia's opposition leader, **Alexei NAVALNY** — before and after his poisoning. The meeting also hosted Interim President of Venezuela **Juan GUAIDÓ** prior to the fraudulent elections.

EXPERT GROUPS

The EPP expands its policy work also through the newly established Expert Groups and other meeting formats.

The Expert Group on Environment and Climate Change (chaired by **Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE**, Spain, PP) worked on the European Green Deal initiatives; the Expert Group on Migration and Integration (chaired by Vice-President **Petteri ORPO**, Finland, KOK) reviewed the New Pact on Migration and Asylum; Campaign Managers Meeting (co-chaired by Secretary General **Antonio LÓPEZ-ISTÚRIZ** and Deputy Secretary General **Christian KREMER**) analysed recent and upcoming parliamentary elections in Croatia, Lithuania and Romania; the Western Balkan Roundtable (presided by President **Donald TUSK**) discussed the current challenges in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Montenegro; and the Expert Group on Addressing Disinformation (chaired by Secretary General **Antonio LÓPEZ-ISTÚRIZ**) focused on fake news and the infodemic that threaten democracies.



A window of opportunity: the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

adopted by the EPP Presidency on 07 December

EPP Position Paper: The future of EU transport: achieving sustainable, smart and resilient mobility

adopted by the EPP Presidency on 07 December

EPP Position Paper: EU-China Relations in a COVID-19 World and Beyond

adopted by the EPP Assembly on 28 June 2020

EPP supports the European Recovery Instrument: Growing stronger out of the crisis

adopted by the EPP Presidency on 11 June 2020

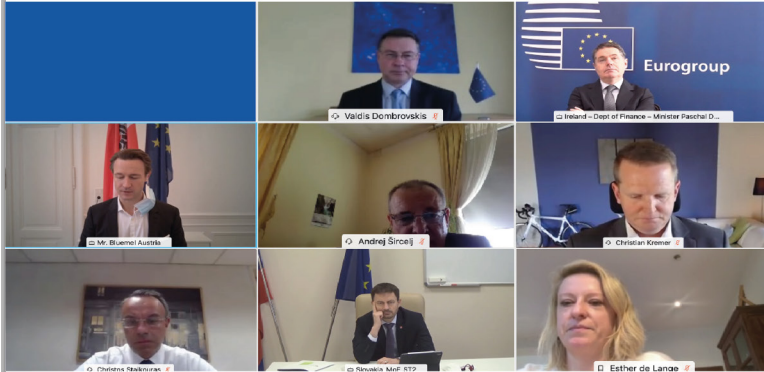
EPP proposal on the COVID-19 challenge: Calling for EU Health Sovereignty

adopted by the EPP Presidency on 11 June 2020



SCAN ME TO
READ PAPERS

3 NOVEMBER



EPP ECOFIN Ministerial Meeting

18 NOVEMBER



EPP Working Group 4

27 NOVEMBER



EPP Working Group 3

23 NOVEMBER



EPP Expert Group on Environment and Climate Change

19 OCTOBER



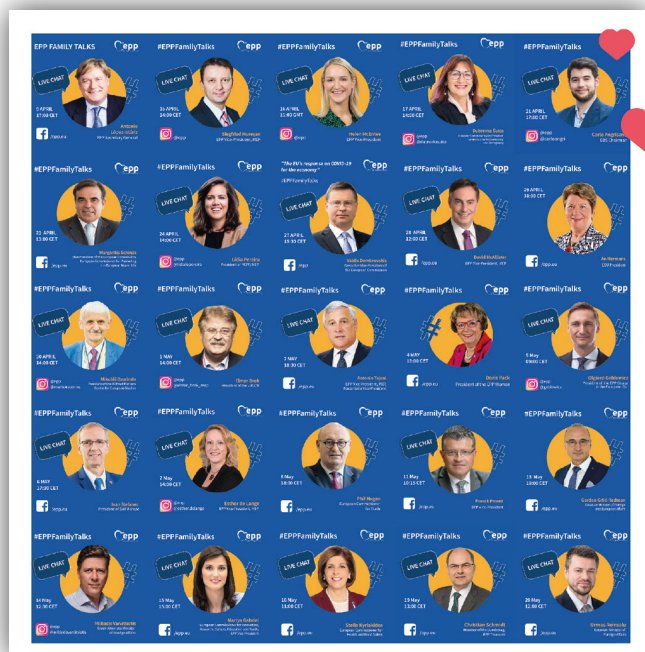
EPP Health Ministerial Meeting

COMMUNICATIONS

The COVID-19 pandemic has also been a great challenge for communication. Despite the changed scenario, we've managed to find new and digital ways to communicate our activities and to promote new initiatives which highlight our work and values.

We've launched a series of online interviews "EPP Family Talks" that involved leaders of our political family. Next to that, we've also inaugurated our "European People's Podcast" which featured interviews and "explainers" of our political activities.

A new, innovative website has been launched with the aim to connect more with our stakeholders at different level. Finally, other projects have been the video series on disinformation "Breaking Fake News" and the series "It's a Match!".



FINANCES AND HR

10 European Political Parties were funded by the European Parliament. EPP received 11,1 million euro contributions. This constitutes 90% of our income. The rest is generated through the Membership Fees. The pandemic forced us to cancel all in-person meetings and replace them with videoconferences from March onward. In doing so EPP managed to save EP subventions. The Financing Regulation allows us to carry over the unused subventions to the next and the following years.

This carry-over will be welcome in view of the challenging and costly years ahead with three EPP Congresses: November 2021 (EPP Values Congress), end of 2022 (Statutory Congress) and end of 2023 or beginning of 2024 (Spitzenkandidaten Congress).

The EPP accounts are audited by Ernst & Young, the Authority, EP DG Finances and our internal auditors. An international staff of 33 people is employed at the EPP HQ.

EPP HEADQUARTERS

In normal times the EPP HQ is the true Brussels meeting point for the EPP family. Because of the Corona crisis all in-person meetings were cancelled and no visitor groups were allowed.

The EPP Staff was empowered with modern communication tools to continue to fulfill their tasks from home via teleworking. We took up the challenge presented by the Corona crisis and turned it into an opportunity by investing in new state-of-the-art videoconference technology in all meetings rooms.

The EPP HQ are now perfectly equipped to face the 'new normal'.



EPP FAMILY

EUROPEAN INSTITUTION AND
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES



Ursula VON DER LEYEN

President



Valdis DOMBROVSKIS

Executive Vice-President
*An Economy that Works
for People*



Dubravka ŠUICA

Vice-President
*Democracy and
Demography*



Margaritis SCHINAS

Vice-President
*Promoting our European
Way of Life*



Johannes HAHN

Commissioner
*Budget and
Administration*



Mariya GABRIEL

Commissioner
*Innovation, Research,
Culture, Education
and Youth*



Stella KYRIAKIDES

Commissioner
Health and Food Safety



Adina VĂLEAN

Commissioner
Transport



Mairead McGUINNESS

Commissioner
*Financial services, financial
stability and Capital
Markets Union*



Olivér VÁRHELYI

Commissioner
*Neighbourhood
and Enlargement*



Manfred WEBER

Chairman of the EPP Group
in the European Parliament



Apostolos TZITZIKOSTAS

President of the European
Committee of the Regions



Olgierd GEBLEWICZ

President of the EPP Group in the
European Committee of the Regions



Aleksander POCIEJ

Chairman of the EPP/CD
Group in the Council
of Europe PA



Margareta CEDERFELT

Chairwoman of the EPP
and likeminded Group
in the OSCE-PA



Karl A. LAMERS

Chairman of the EPP
and associated Group in
the NATO-PA



Ivan KRULKO and Andrius KUBILIUS

Co-Presidents of the EPP EURONEST

EPP FAMILY

ASSOCIATIONS AND
FOUNDATIONS



Lídia PEREIRA
President of the Youth
of the European People's
Party (YEPP)



**Carlo Giacomo
ANGRISANO GIRAUTA**
President of the European
Democrat Students (EDS)



An HERMANS
President of the European
Senior's Union (ESU)



Elmar BROK
President of the European
Union of Christian Democratic
Workers (EUCDW)



Ivan ŠTEFANEC
President of the Small
and Medium Entrepreneurs
of Europe (SME Europe)



Doris PACK
President of the Women
of the European People's
Party (EPP Women)



Mikuláš DZURINDA
President of the Wilfried
Martens Centre for
European Studies

PRESIDENCY

As of 1 January 2021.

The EPP is led by the Presidency, the executive body of the EPP. The Presidency is elected every three years by the EPP Congress. The last election was held during the 2019 Zagreb Congress.

* Vice Presidents are in alphabetical order.

PRESIDENT



Donald TUSK
Poland – PO

SECRETARY
GENERAL



Antonio LÓPEZ-ISTÚRIZ
Spain – PP

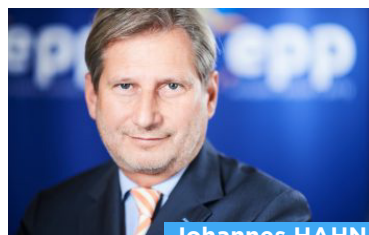
VICE
PRESIDENTS



Esther DE LANGE
Netherlands – CDA



Mariya GABRIEL
Bulgaria – GERB



Johannes HAHN
Austria – ÖVP



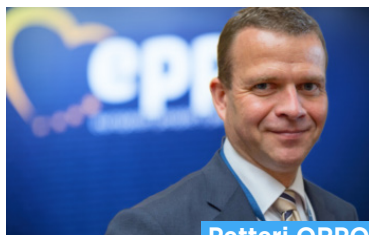
Helen McENTEE
Ireland - Fine Gael



David McALLISTER
Germany – CDU



Siegfried MUREȘAN
Romania – PNL



Petteri ORPO
Finland – KOK



Franck PROUST
France – Les Républicains



Paulo RANGEL
Portugal – PSD

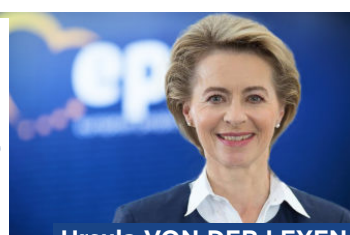


Christian SCHMIDT/Treasurer
Germany – CSU



Antonio TAJANI
Italy – FI

EX OFFICIO
VICE
PRESIDENT



Ursula VON DER LEYEN
Germany - CDU



Manfred WEBER
Germany - CSU

EPP STAFF

As of 1 January 2021.

An international
staff of 33 people is
employed at the
EPP HQ.



Christian KREMER
Deputy Secretary General



Luc VANDEPUTTE
Deputy Secretary General



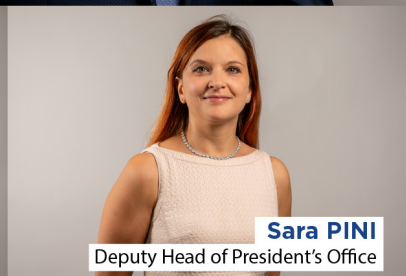
Paweł GRAŚ
Chief of Cabinet of the President



Emilia SUROWSKA
Head of President's Office



Beata TURSKA
Press and Communications
Adviser to the President



Sara PINI
Deputy Head of President's Office



Hamda M'RAD DALI
Assistant at the President's Office



Luis Fernando BLANCO
Chief of Cabinet of the
Secretary General



Pilar SANTAMARÍA
Head of Press and Communications
of the Secretary General



Maite ZABALETA
Assistant to the Secretary General



Karine MILHEIRO
Head of Press Department



Alexandra HENMAN
Press Adviser



Gareth GREGAN
Press Assistant



Patrick VOLLER
Secretary of External Relations



Galina FOMENCHENKO
Senior Political Adviser



Juan MAGAZ
Political Adviser



Eva PALACKOVÁ
Senior Political Adviser



Ajla HOTIC
Political Adviser



Nathan SHEPURA
Senior Political Adviser



Claudia MASI
Political Adviser



Julia LISENS-ZALUTSKAJA
Political Adviser



Yelba TORRES
Officer for Ministerial Meetings and
Working Groups



**Pavlína
HEYMANS-ŠPAČKOVÁ**
Officer for Ministerial
Meetings and Archive Manager



Martin HARANGOZO
Assistant to the Deputy-Secretary
General Christian Kremer



Teresa ALONSO
Assistant



Daphné LAMAL
HR and Finance Manager



Kristina ILIEVSKA
HR and Finance Assistant



Charlotte FRIZBERG
Event Officer



Matteo ALBANIA
Senior Communication and
Marketing Adviser



Moritz KREIS
Video editor



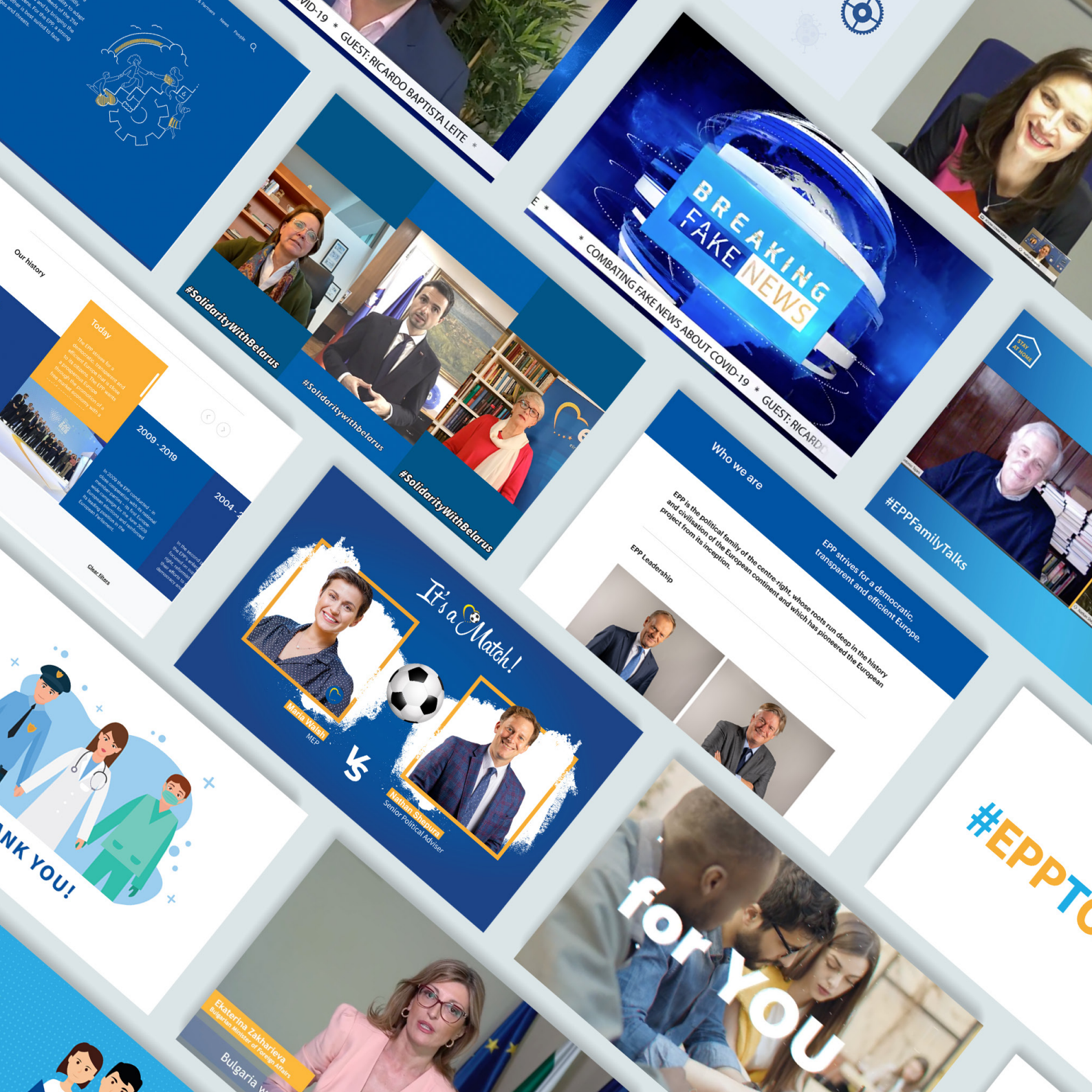
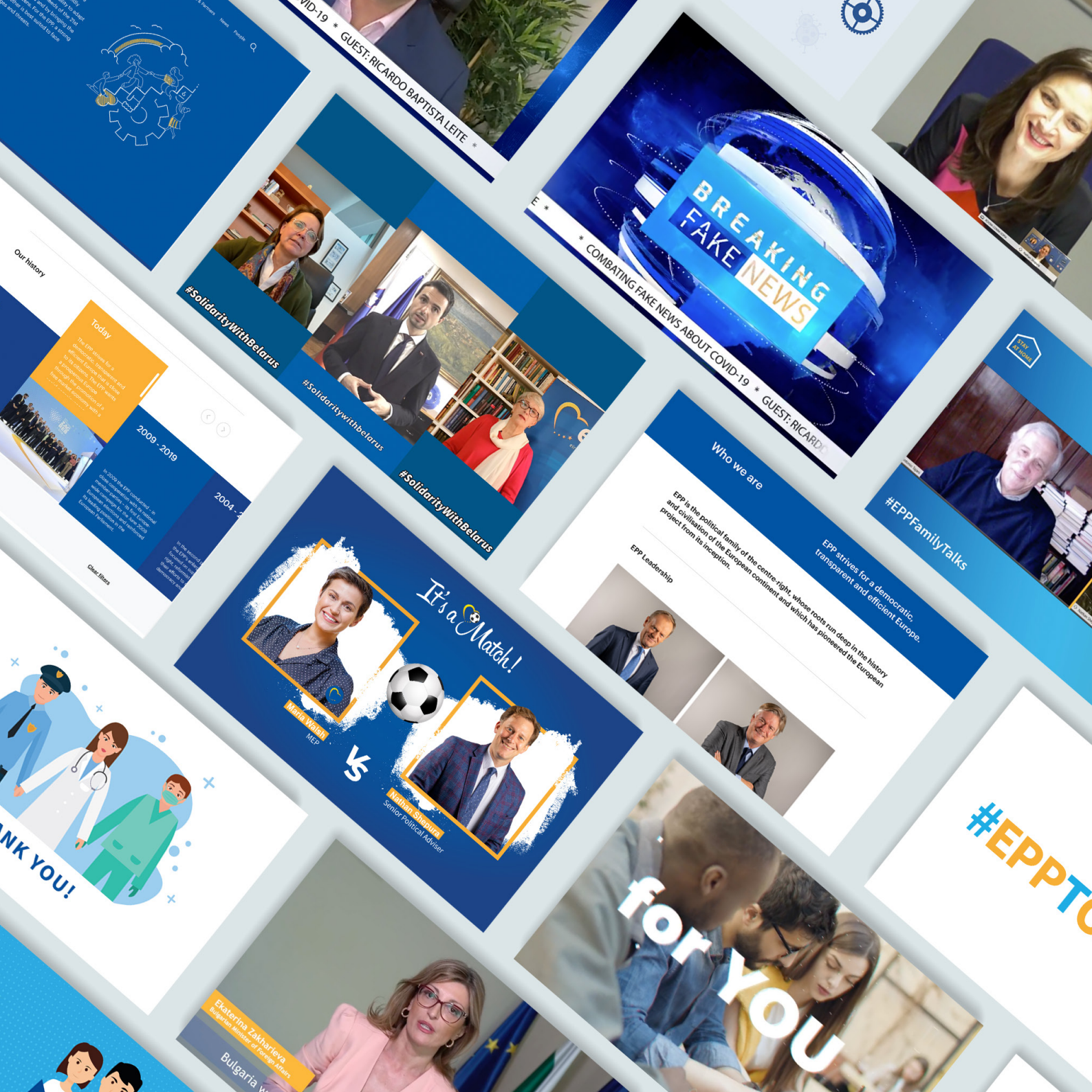
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Manager of Informatics & Internet



Fedi MEJRI
Trainee





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