

Programme and Priorities of the Hungarian Presidency of the EU (1 July – 31 December 2024)

On 1 July 2024 Hungary will take over from Belgium to run the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the next six months. The Presidency's priorities are also, for a major part, in line with the European Commission's work programme for 2024. These priorities also follow on from the achievements of the Belgian Presidency. The Hungarian Presidency will be followed by Poland. The trio (Spain-Belgium-Hungary) has developed a joint trio programme for the period from 1 July 2023–31 December 2024. The Hungarian Presidency will be marked by a new European Parliament, a new Commissioners team and the appointment of personalities who will take the EU's top jobs (President and Vice President of the European Commission; President of the European Council; High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy).

Key priorities of the Hungarian Presidency

The Hungarian Presidency has set out seven priorities:

- A New European Competitiveness Deal
- The reinforcement of European defence policy
- A consistent and merit-based enlargement policy
- Stemming illegal migration
- Shaping the future of cohesion policy
- A farmer-oriented EU agricultural policy
- Addressing demographic challenges

The priorities on the specific areas that are important for our sector are outlined below.

Priorities in the field of transport

In the field of transport, the Hungarian Presidency will pay particular attention to the promotion of better connectivity, both by geographically extending European networks and by creating better links between modes of transport, the greening of the sector, and the improvement of transport safety.

Greening of transport

Negotiations will continue within the Hungarian Presidency for several key files that are elements of the Greening Freight Transport package, namely:

- **Proposed revision of the Weights & Dimensions Directive for heavy-duty vehicles**
- **Proposed revision of the directive on calculation of external costs savings and generation of aggregated data (combined transport directive)**

Road safety

Work will continue to get final adoption of all the legislative files that are part of the Road Safety Package. Indeed, negotiations are still underway for the following two legislative proposals:

- ✓ **Proposed Directive on execution of driving disqualifications with a Union-wide effect**
- ✓ **Proposed revision of the Directive facilitating cross-border exchange of information on road-safety-related traffic offences**

Connectivity

Improving connectivity, extending transport networks North-South and creating new intermodal hubs will contribute to economic development, it may result in improving transport links and economic integration between regions. These will also help to improve the competitiveness of transport, which will have a positive impact on both industrial development and the demographic challenges of rural depopulation. In respect of connectivity, the informal ministerial meeting on transport will focus on enhancing connectivity to the Western Balkans. The Hungarian Presidency will promote better intermodal transport connections by pursuing the discussions about the revised Passenger Rights Regulations (Omnibus Regulation) and the Multimodal Passenger Rights Regulation.

Priorities in the field of environment

The priorities of the Presidency are to contribute to a healthy and pollution-free environment, achieve progress in the transition to a circular economy, fight against climate change, and protect biodiversity in such a way that the EU does not lose its economic competitiveness.

Climate policy

The priority of the Hungarian Presidency is to contribute to the process of defining an ambitious, yet achievable, intermediate 2040 climate goal that guarantees that no citizen or Member State is left behind while ensuring the competitiveness and the security of energy supply of the EU throughout the green and just transition. It will continue to support action in the mitigation of emissions, adaptation, and climate financing on the path towards climate neutrality while emphasizing the importance of strengthening resilience. At the same time, the Hungarian Presidency aims to closely monitor the implementation of the 2030 "Fit for 55" package as the cornerstone of achieving climate neutrality by 2050. In this context, the Hungarian Presidency strives to discuss the challenges and share good practices of the various Member States. In addition, the Presidency is also committed to promoting smoother cooperation between the Member States and the European Commission on the National Energy and Climate Plans.

On the international scene, one of the top priorities of the Hungarian Presidency is to adopt the COP29 Council conclusions that form the basis of the European position at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29). In representing the coordinated position of the EU and its Member States at COP29, the Hungarian Presidency will strive to put as much emphasis as possible on encouraging climate action by third countries, as well as to take into account the security aspects of climate change, and to facilitate that the conference delivers a tangible, ambitious, and realistic result.

Protection of biodiversity

During the Hungarian Presidency, a number of high-profile international events will take place in relation to the preservation of biodiversity, where the Presidency's task is to prepare, organise, and ensure the representation of the EU and its Member States. Of these, special mention must be made of the **16th session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP16)**. At CBD COP16, the Hungarian Presidency intends to do everything in its power to support the implementation of the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**, as well as to achieve progress with regard to such important topics as the Framework's monitoring and reporting system, the mobilization of resources for biological diversity conservation, and the establishment of a mechanism for ensuring fair and equitable benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information related to genetic resources.

A healthy and pollutant-free environment

Pollution not only harms our health and the environment, but it is also a direct cause of the most serious illnesses and premature deaths, particularly, but not exclusively, among children, people suffering from certain diseases, and the elderly. Taking action against pollution is just as important as combating climate change or preserving biodiversity. For the Hungarian Presidency, the quantitative and qualitative protection of surface and underground waters, action against droughts, the sustainable use of available water resources, the provision of clean, healthy, and accessible drinking water and sanitation for all, as well as the development of resilient water management are also of particular importance.

As a result, the Hungarian Presidency intends to take further steps towards the vision of zero pollution by 2050 through promoting ongoing negotiations on legislative proposals submitted during the current mandate of the Commission in order to minimize pollution. We aim to make significant progress on legislative proposals on microbeads, soil monitoring, priority substances in surface and groundwater, as well as the One Substance One Assessment (OSOA) package.

Circular economy

The Hungarian Presidency pays special attention to promoting circular economy. The transition to a circular economy will reduce the pressure on natural resources and contribute to achieving climate neutrality and zero pollution goals, as well as addressing biodiversity loss. The circular economy offers an answer to both the problems caused by waste generation and the unsustainable use of raw materials. The Presidency will do everything in its power to support the increase of competitiveness and the protection of nature in the European Union as a whole by encouraging reuse and developing a system of quality waste collection and utilization based on new, innovative solutions. When promoting the green transition, it is of crucial importance that the global competitiveness of European enterprises, especially micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises is not reduced. Therefore, it is necessary to aim for the adoption of targeted measures that lessen the difficulties of enterprises during the transition and promote more efficient access to solutions.

During the Presidency negotiations will continue for the **Waste Framework Directive** and the **End-of-Life-Vehicle Regulation** with the objective to reach a compromise agreement.

Maintaining the leading role of the EU in global environmental protection

The Hungarian Presidency intends to follow a holistic approach in order to explore synergies between different policy areas to promote greening the economy, ensure a level playing field, and foster European leading position in the global green technology market. The Presidency continues to nurture and develop the Union's relations with its international partners on green initiatives and calls for increased global ambition.

Priorities in the field of energy

Geothermal energy is considered as a priority under the Hungarian Presidency, as making it more widespread may play a key role in ensuring energy autonomy and security as well as in meeting climate goals. The Hungarian Presidency plans to adopt Council Conclusions on the promotion of geothermal energy and reducing related financing risks in the context of the decarbonisation of the energy sector. The Hungarian Presidency considers it important that consumers in the internal market are guaranteed affordable energy prices for all energy sources, which is one of the most important contributors to the EU's competitiveness. **Nuclear energy** is one of the pillars of the success of the green transition, and the Hungarian Presidency will support initiatives in this area. In order to strengthen energy security, the Hungarian Presidency will support the promotion of access to targeted EU funding for **natural gas** infrastructure projects that enhance source and route diversification. With regard to the Regulation on the

governance of the Energy Union and climate action, together with State of the Energy Union report, the Hungarian Presidency plans to have discussions in multiple fora on the implementation of the energy policy objectives in the National Energy and Climate Plans of the Member States and the “Fit for 55” package, focusing on decarbonisation, energy security, renewable energy, energy efficiency, competitiveness and R&D, for the assessment of progress. The Hungarian Presidency will also host several highlevel EU energy policy events, including the SET (Strategic Energy Technology) Plan conference planned for autumn 2024. Furthermore, the Hungarian Presidency will devote particular attention to **electricity grid development** in order to enhance the security of supply, with policy debates on the issue.

Priorities in the field of telecommunications

The priorities related to telecommunications throughout the Hungarian Presidency will include the discussion on the **future of the European telecommunications sector**. This includes adopting **Council conclusions that reflect on the white paper of the European Commission** and reviewing the experiences gained from numerous legislative and policy initiatives in recent years.

The Hungarian Presidency will continue the initiatives commenced by the Belgian Presidency on the external dimension of European digital policies and **digital diplomacy**, placing significant emphasis on coordinating the actions of the Union in relevant international organisations and ensuring a coordinated approach by Member States.

To advance **European and international standardization activities**, the Hungarian Presidency aims to showcase and better understand the work of European organisations involved in telecommunications standardisation. These preparations will support coordinated actions at the **ITU World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (WTSA-24)** scheduled for October.

The Hungarian Presidency plans to strengthen ties with the **Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC)** by organising a **conference on the future of the telecommunications sector**. This event will include bringing together leaders of telecommunications regulatory authorities, telecom attachés, and industry players.

Priorities in the field of digitalisation

The priority of the Hungarian Presidency in the field of digitalisation is to facilitate a joint European-level **discussion on emerging technologies and their potential impact on competitiveness and sustainability**. The agenda will also include an evaluation of the implementation of the **Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act**. Additionally, the Presidency will focus on the preparations for the **implementation of the AI Act** by initiating consultations and exchanges of experience through thematic events.

The European Digital Identity Regulation (“eIDAS 2”), the Interoperable Europe Act, and the Single Digital Gateway Regulation are particularly important for enabling and enhancing cross-border digital public services. The Presidency will initiate measures to support their implementation, involving Member States and the European Commission. Through a series of thematic events, the Presidency will explore measures for digital policy implementation and explore ways to make governance models more effective.

Priorities in the field of cybersecurity

The Hungarian Presidency is committed to continuing the community dialogue for high-level European cybersecurity. In light of the anticipated review of the Cybersecurity Act, it intends to conduct a comprehensive debate to ensure coherence in the EU regulatory framework.

Since the publication of the Commission’s recommendation on coordinated response to large-scale cybersecurity incidents and crises in 2017, numerous EU actions have been undertaken in this area, though

they do not necessarily present a comprehensive overview. Therefore, it is timely to conduct another horizontal discussion, potentially laying the groundwork for the review of the 2017 recommendation. In the external dimension of cybersecurity (cyber diplomacy), the Presidency aims to emphasize the importance of shared situational awareness and focus on capacity building in the Western Balkans.

Priorities in the field of competitiveness

Industrial policy: the Hungarian Presidency wishes to embrace the need for a new, common industrial strategy with the broad involvement of industry players. In this context, it intends to explore the need for targeted, European-level intervention to strengthen the competitiveness of businesses.

In order to maintain the development of the European automotive industry, putting essential measures on the agenda that support the market for electric vehicle production will be of utmost importance during the Hungarian Presidency, taking into account the European climate goals, the significant impact of European production on EU growth, and the growth of the internal market for electric cars.

The European manufacturing ecosystem of net-zero energy technologies should be reinforced, including by stimulating investment, facilitating market access for new technologies and implementing skills and innovation programmes.

A skilled workforce is key to ensuring successful transition, supporting the competitiveness of European industry, and creating quality jobs.

Efforts to ensure secure and adequate access to clean energy at competitive prices in the internal market will be central to better positioning the industrial strengths of the EU during the transition.

The Hungarian Presidency intends to address the issue of new technologies with a horizontal, cross-industry approach. The development of a technology-neutral industrial strategy requires continuous consultation with industry players.

State aid policy: due to the crises of recent years, the State aid framework has changed. The aim of the Hungarian Presidency is to initiate a debate about reconsidering State aid rules in order to protect European competitiveness and healthy industrial development.

Programme of the trio (Spain-Belgium-Hungary) for period 1 July 2023-31 December 2024

The trio of Presidencies allows for continuity of work over a period of eighteen months and prevents projects from being suspended every six months. Belgium and Hungary hold the presidency in 2024. Spain, Belgium and Hungary have adopted a [joint programme](#) outlining the common priorities of the trio. It includes the following key points:

- Reinforcing the EU's global competitiveness by strengthening our industrial base in line with the accelerated twin green and digital transitions and making use of innovation.
- Ensuring the twin transitions are fair, just and inclusive by enhancing the social dimension of Europe, including by addressing the demographic challenge the EU is facing.

Useful documents and weblinks:

[Website of the Hungarian Presidency](#)

[Full Programme of the Hungarian Presidency](#)

Key events in the transport, environment, energy, telecommunications & digital fields, to be held under the Hungarian Presidency:

- ✓ **Opening session and workshop on international climate change issues**, 2-3 July
- ✓ **Informal Council meeting of environment ministers**, 11-12 July

- ✓ **Informal Council meeting of energy ministers**, 15-16 July
- ✓ **Informal Council meeting of transport ministers**, 19-20 September
- ✓ **2nd Budapest Geothermal Energy Summit**, 20 September
- ✓ **Tech Week – Forum for Competitiveness and Technology**, 30 September-2 October
- ✓ **Attachés trip – Conference on the future of telecoms**, 2-4 October
- ✓ **Conference on Electricity Grid Development**, 14 October
- ✓ **EU Environment Council**, 14 October
- ✓ **EU Transport Council**, 5 December
- ✓ **EU Telecommunications Council**, 6 December
- ✓ **EU Energy Council**, 16 December
- ✓ **EU Environment Council**, 17 December

[Full calendar of events organised under the Hungarian Presidency](#)