

Programme

# A strong Europe in a changing world

July 1 – December 31, 2025



**Danish  
Presidency**  
Council of the  
European Union

The EU is facing a new international order marked by uncertainty, global strategic and economic competition, and rising levels of conflict.

That is why the EU must be able to act in its own right. The EU's strength lies in European unity, a solid economic foundation, stable democracies, and socially balanced societies, among other things. This strength must be developed further and used to promote and defend both European interests and the international legal order.

The Danish EU Presidency will work for a strong and resolute EU that takes responsibility for its own security and for strengthening its competitiveness. This calls for the EU to match words with action and deliver on the challenges it faces. The green transition is essential to building a more secure and competitive Europe.

## 1) A secure Europe

International developments require the EU to become a stronger geopolitical actor. By 2030, the EU must be able to defend itself. This means **taking responsibility for its own and Euro-Atlantic security**, working closely and in complementarity with NATO. Russia's war against Ukraine has shown the urgent need for the EU to speed up development of the European defence industry and production. The EU must also better address critical capability gaps in Europe. The Danish Presidency will work to ensure that the EU is able to protect European interests by strengthening its resilience, robustness, and deterrence against complex and hybrid threats.

The war of aggression against **Ukraine** is an attack on Europe. Supporting Ukraine's fight for peace and freedom will be a priority for the Danish Presidency. The EU must provide political, economic, civilian, and military support to Ukraine, including supporting the buildup and strengthen the cooperation with the Ukrainian defence industry.

The flow of irregular migrants towards Europe must be reduced and the EU's external borders must be secure. Irregular migration cannot be allowed to threaten European cohesion. We must stop dangerous journeys to Europe and ensure that people without legal residence are returned. The Danish Presidency will work on **new and innovative solutions to control irregular migration and reduce arrivals** into the EU. This includes making progress in negotiations on new legislation in the area of asylum and returns, and amending the rules on safe third countries. The Presidency will also focus on further implementing the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum and strengthening the EU's external borders.

The EU must increase **democratic resilience** through initiatives such as a European Democracy Shield. This involves promoting digital literacy, securing a strong framework for free and trusted media, and regulating tech giants to ensure that they take responsibility. This applies to fighting misinformation and disinformation, as well as protecting children and young people online.

The Danish Presidency will seek to strengthen the EU's geopolitical influence and global relations by **building comprehensive and equal partnerships** with third countries. This requires better coordination among Member States and closer links between the EU's policies and tools, so that the EU's strengths are reflected in its global influence at a level that – as a minimum – matches its weight in the world.

Current geopolitical developments highlight the need for **EU enlargement**. An ambitious, merit-based enlargement should guarantee a strengthened EU geopolitically. This especially applies to Ukraine, where the Danish Presidency will prioritise significant progress, but also to Moldova and the Western Balkans. This also requires the EU to be united and prepared for enlargement through the right internal reforms. Upholding the **European community of values**, including human dignity, freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for fundamental rights such as equality and human rights, as well as defending European democracies, will also be central to the Presidency.

The EU must strengthen **economic security** by improving understanding of specific risks related to critical infrastructure, dependencies, supply chains, technology security, and information leaks, as well as work to reduce these risks. This is an agenda that the Presidency will focus on.

## 2) A competitive and green Europe

Rising global competition calls for targeted joint and national action to boost the EU's competitiveness. This includes reforms that improve conditions for businesses to grow and strengthen their prerequisites for innovating and investing in new technology, skills, production and jobs. The green transition can and should drive growth, and climate and energy policies should continue to be closely linked to competitiveness policy. Similarly, the life science sector promotes both health and growth in the EU.

A competitive and resolute EU calls for a fresh look at **the EU's multiannual budget**. The Danish Presidency will work for a financially responsible EU budget that delivers a focused, simple, and effective response to the EU's strategic challenges.

To strengthen long-term competitiveness, **burdens on businesses, citizens, and authorities must be reduced**. This means simplifying current laws and ensuring that future regulation is clearer and more targeted. The Danish Presidency will give high priority to the Commission's simplification proposals and promote measures to ensure better regulation across Council configurations, with a stronger focus on implementation and improved impact assessments.

The Presidency will contribute to **strengthening the Single Market, encouraging innovation, and developing the Savings and Investment Union** to increase the supply of risk capital and mobilise private investments. This will help support European economies. Europe's digital competitiveness must improve, and its capabilities in digital technologies must grow.

The Presidency will support **sound economic policies and reforms** in Member States, which are vital for the EU's competitiveness and ability to prioritise core interests.

The Danish Presidency will work to ensure that the jobs of tomorrow are created in Europe. The EU must ensure **free and fair movement**, decent working conditions, and a safe and healthy working environment.

The EU's **trade policy** must remain open, contributing to further market access and the diversification of supply chains. The Danish Presidency will work to expand the EU's network of trade agreements with strategic partners and safeguard the rules-based trading system, including the WTO. At the same time, the EU must defend itself against unfair trade practices, dumping, and economic coercion from other actors. This includes taking firm and proportionate measures when needed.

**The green transition** must be continued in a way that maintains the level of ambition while also supporting EU competitiveness, security of supply, and ensuring Europe's independence from Russian energy. The EU must deliver on the transition to climate neutrality by 2050. Among other things, this requires a cost-effective climate and energy framework that supports European clean energy production.

The Presidency will work to improve the competitiveness of European businesses and strengthen the EU's economic foundation by securing better access to clean and affordable **energy** in much larger quantities than today. This requires a solid framework to increase the share of renewable energy, including expanding and reinforcing European energy infrastructure and production capacity. Faster, more efficient approval processes and suitable financing frameworks are essential, and so too is a cost-effective transformation of European industry that provides greater certainty about the demand for clean energy.

New technologies, such as **biotechnology and bio-based solutions**, can create new revenue opportunities while supporting the green transition.

The Presidency will also work to reach an agreement on the **2040 climate target**. This is important to give European businesses certainty about the long-term direction and to show European leadership ahead of COP30.

# Contents

General Affairs . . . . .	7
Foreign Affairs . . . . .	11
Economic and Financial Affairs . . . . .	17
Justice and Home Affairs . . . . .	22
Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs. . . . .	27
Competitiveness . . . . .	31
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy . . . . .	34
Agriculture and Fisheries . . . . .	38
Environment . . . . .	41
Education, Youth, Culture and Sport . . . . .	44

# General Affairs

Further enlargement of the EU is a geopolitical necessity. This is the only way for the EU to effectively contribute to stabilising the European continent and strengthening the resilience of countries vulnerable to unwanted external influence.

The Danish Presidency will therefore work ambitiously to promote a merit-based enlargement of the Union and prepare the EU for enlargement through internal reforms. Accordingly, the Danish Presidency will advance the enlargement negotiations with Ukraine, Moldova and the Western Balkans. Enlargement is closely linked to efforts to uphold the EU's fundamental values of democracy and the rule of law.

Strengthening the EU's resilience to handle current and future crises will also be a central focus for the Presidency. To reinforce EU competitiveness, the Presidency will focus on the simplification agenda and the need for better and simpler EU legislation. It will also work to strengthen and deepen the EU's relationship with the UK and other Western European non-EU countries.

The initial phases of the negotiations on the proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) will be key to securing a competitive EU that is ready to deliver on future challenges. As part of this, the Presidency will work to advance negotiations on a more modern and effective European cohesion policy for the period after 2027.

## Enlargement and reforms

The intensified security situation has led to increased attempts by third countries to influence and destabilise several of the EU's neighbours. Without EU involvement, a power vacuum would risk emerging. This has placed enlargement higher on the agenda. As part of its geopolitical strategy, the EU must strengthen ties with neighbouring countries and provide a clear and credible path to membership.

The Danish Presidency will steer the enlargement process through ongoing political dialogue and in line with the Copenhagen criteria and a merit-based approach. To ensure a successful enlargement process, it is important that the EU supports candidate countries' efforts to implement the necessary reforms.

To prepare the EU for enlargement and ensure that future enlargements strengthen the Union, the Presidency will continue the work on internal reforms. The aim of these reforms is also to ensure that the EU is able to act independently and resolutely in today's geopolitical landscape and pursue the political goals set out in the European Council's strategic agenda. These efforts will, in particular, draw on the Commission's upcoming policy reviews of pre-enlargement reforms, providing a fact-based, analytical foundation for further steps. The EU's values, policies, budget, and decision-making processes will all be carefully reviewed to identify necessary adjustments across the four reform areas.

## Protecting and strengthening EU values: Rule of law and democracy

The fundamental values of democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights constitute a founding pillar of the EU. These principles also clearly distinguish the EU from the autocratic regimes of the world. Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, their importance has only increased.

The Danish Presidency will continue the work towards promoting and ensuring respect for the EU's fundamental values. This shall include exploring how existing tools can be strengthened. Based on the Commission's annual Rule of Law Report, the Presidency will continue the Rule of Law Dialogue in the Council with Member States and selected candidate countries. A horizontal rule of law dialogue as well as a country-specific dialogue are being planned during the Presidency. It is important that candidate countries are actively supported in their reform efforts in this area and that Member States are held responsible for their commitments to EU's values. The Presidency will also, in a constructive manner, continue work in the Council regarding the ongoing Article 7 procedure.

In light of geopolitical developments, the resilience of European democracies has become even more crucial. The Danish Presidency will promote efforts to defend Europe's democracies, and it will do so partly within the framework of the Commission's upcoming Democracy Shield. The Presidency will also continue working on the proposal for a directive on interest representation by third countries as part of the Defence of Democracy package.



## **The Multiannual Financial Framework**

The Danish Presidency will stand ready to open discussions on the Commission's proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027, setting an ambitious and financially responsible course for the Council's work. The Presidency aims to deliver a first draft negotiating box to guide further negotiations.

## **Crisis preparedness and resilience**

The EU must be able to handle current and future crises and disasters, given the changing threat landscape.

The Danish Presidency will continue to implement the EU's Preparedness Union Strategy, following the recommendations in the Niinistö report to strengthen the Europe's civilian and military preparedness and readiness. Central elements in this include an integrated approach to all threats and risks, as well as the ambition to involve whole-of-government and whole-of-society. The EU must also increase civil-military cooperation and work alongside NATO where possible. The work will include a cross-sectoral follow-up on the initiatives in the EU's Preparedness Union Strategy. The Danish Presidency will facilitate the Council's work in regard to the individual initiatives as they are presented, focusing on reaching agreement on the Council's position regarding strategic security of supply, based on the Commission's forthcoming EU stockpiling strategy.

## **Relations with the United Kingdom and other Western European non-EU countries**

It is important for the EU to maintain strong and constructive relations with like-minded Western European countries.

Building on the EU-UK summit of 19 May 2025, the Danish Presidency will support the continued positive development of the EU's relationship with the UK with a focus on achieving concrete results. Strengthening foreign, security and defence cooperation will remain a priority, alongside continuous assessment of the overall relationship and the delivery of summit outcomes. The Presidency will continue to ensure full compliance with existing agreements, which are the cornerstone of a close, well-functioning and orderly relationship with the UK.

The Presidency will also work to advance the processing of the current package of agreements between the EU and Switzerland, which, through cooperation in several areas, contributes to strengthening and future-proofing the EU-Switzerland relationship.

The Presidency will also work to reinforce relations with the EEA countries and further develop cooperation in selected areas, in part through a successful EEA Council.

## **Economic, social, and territorial cohesion**

The Danish Presidency will be ready to start negotiations on the Commission's proposal for cohesion policy after 2027, with a view to ensuring effective and results-based deployment that supports common European priorities, is closely linked to reforms under the European Semester, and ensures compliance with the rule of law.

## **Simplification and burden reduction**

To strengthen EU competitiveness, the simplification and burden reduction agenda will be a central priority during the Danish Presidency. To support the greatest possible progress, the Presidency will prioritise negotiations on the Commission's omnibus packages and other proposals aimed at simplification. The first omnibus package, centred on sustainability reporting, will be given particular priority. Focus will also be on the fourth package which introduces a new business category (SMC) as well as amendments to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Presidency will work to ensure an efficient negotiation process that offers legal clarity for businesses, reduces unnecessary administrative burdens, and increases transparency in reporting obligations for investors.

## **Integrated Maritime Policy**

The Danish Presidency will work towards Council conclusions on a European Oceans Pact aimed at establishing an effective framework for maritime governance, including improved coherence between the EU's various maritime policies and initiatives.

# Foreign Affairs

In the face of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and a changing geopolitical landscape characterised by uncertainty, global strategic competition, a technological race and increased conflict, the Foreign Affairs Council will work towards a more robust and resilient EU that takes greater responsibility for its own security. The goal is for Europe to be able to defend itself by 2030. This will also constitute a credible contribution to Euro-Atlantic security.

The European defence industry must be strengthened. Political, military, economic and civilian support for Ukraine, as well as the EU's policy of maintaining pressure on Russia – including through sanctions – must continue.

The EU should strengthen its geopolitical influence by pursuing mutually beneficial global partnerships. This should include trade policy agreements, economic cooperation, and the mobilisation of financing. The EU must continue to safeguard the international rules-based order and effective multilateralism.

The EU must strengthen its economic security and be prepared to defend its economic interests against unfair trade practices and economic coercion by using defensive trade instruments to ensure a level playing field.

As instability and uncertainty grow, supporting green, fair and sustainable development in developing countries, including preventing and responding to crises and conflicts, will remain a priority.

The Danish Presidency will cooperate closely with the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to develop these priorities.

## Ukraine

Russia's illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine is in its fourth year. The Ukrainian people continue to defend their security and European values, including democracy and freedom. EU support remains vital to Ukraine's defence. The Danish Presidency will work to keep Ukraine at the top of the political agenda and to ensure the continuation of strong EU support, including military, civilian, economic and political.

The Presidency will work to ensure that the EU maintains its leading role in providing generous, predictable, and coordinated support to Ukraine. This will include promoting EU efforts to ensure that Ukraine receives sufficient international support in 2026 and beyond, including through the use of extraordinary interest revenue from immobilised Russian assets. The Presidency will work to ensure that the EU continues to provide civilian support to Ukraine that encourages economic growth, infrastructure development and reforms that bring the country closer to EU membership. Support for Ukraine's civilian security sector through the EU Advisory Mission (EUAM Ukraine) will remain a priority.

Military support remains essential for Ukraine to be able to maintain a position of strength and to continue its resistance against Russia's full-scale invasion. It is also critical to strengthen Ukraine's long-term deterrence, including after a potential ceasefire or peace agreement. The Presidency will therefore prioritise efforts to increase the overall military support provided by the EU and its Member States to Ukraine. This includes joint procurement and the reimbursement of Member States' military contributions through the European Peace Facility (EPF). The Presidency will support an ambitious continuation of the EU's Military Assistance Mission (EUMAM Ukraine) and will seek closer coordination with NATO on training efforts through the NATO Security Assistance and

Training for Ukraine (NSATU) initiative. It will also aim to strengthen the European and Ukrainian defence industries and improve integration between them, including through continued investment in Ukraine's defence sector.

The extensive destruction caused by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine will require continued support and sustained attention from the EU and international partners for many years to come.

The Presidency will continue to work to maintain and adopt the toughest possible sanctions against Russia. The Presidency will also work to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of sanctions throughout the EU and a common effort against circumvention of sanctions.

## Security and defence

Europe is facing a fundamentally changed security landscape, marked by war and heightened geopolitical tensions. It is therefore essential that Europe strengthen its ability to defend itself by 2030 at the latest, also as a credible contribution to Euro-Atlantic security. This requires the development of critical defence capabilities, a more robust and resilient European defence industry, including enhanced production and supply chains, and deeper EU-NATO cooperation.

The Danish Presidency will work to make the EU more secure, robust, and resilient in addressing the most pressing shared challenges – and this shall include expanding and strengthening partnerships with third countries.

To strengthen the European defence technological and industrial base, the Presidency will prioritise concluding negotiations with the European Parliament on the European Defence Industry

Programme (EDIP) and focus on implementing initiatives under the ReArm Europe Plan and the White Paper on European Defence Readiness 2030.

In strengthening the European defence industry, the Presidency will work to promote closer pan-European cooperation on the development and procurement of defence equipment, and on the integration of Ukraine's defence industry into the European defence industry.

It will also be vital to support optimal framework conditions for building a competitive and innovative industrial base, with particular focus on access for small and medium-sized enterprises, mobilising private investment, and addressing existing barriers and regulatory burdens. The Danish Presidency will prioritise the simplification agenda and the simplification omnibus in the defence sector, as well as initiatives under the ReArm Europe Plan and the White Paper on European Defence Readiness 2030.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts related to EU actions in the defence industry, in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

The Presidency will assist the European External Action Service (EEAS) in ambitiously concluding the strategic review of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), including the negotiation of the concrete legal acts.

To strengthen the EU's defence against hybrid threats, the Presidency will prioritise greater use of the hybrid toolbox as well as geographical hybrid sanctions regimes. Additionally, the Presidency will pursue an ambitious approach in the continued work on countering hybrid threats emanating from Russia, as well as the further operationalisation of the Hybrid Rapid Response Teams.

The Presidency will also work towards a more strategic deployment of the EU's cyber diplomacy toolbox, with increased focus on deterrence, sanctions, and cooperation with the private sector.

To strengthen the EU's overall resilience to all types of threats, including by ensuring complementarity between the EU and NATO, the Danish Presidency will promote enhanced civil-military cooperation. This work will build on the Niinistö Report, the White Paper for European Defence – Readiness 2030, the Internal Security Strategy, and the Preparedness Strategy. As part of this effort, the Presidency will work to strengthen coordination across Council configurations.

The Presidency will maintain the EU's strong focus on maritime security, particularly in the Red Sea and off the coasts of Africa, by encouraging greater synergies between EU maritime operations.

Furthermore, the Presidency will work to ensure that EU counter-terrorism policy continuously adapts to developments in the global terrorist threat and that the EU asserts its role in related multilateral fora.

The Presidency will also work for an ambitious and well-coordinated EU approach to multilateral negotiations, notably on the open, secure and free internet and the implementation of the Global Digital Compact, providing a shared, positive vision for a responsible technological future.

## External relations

The situation in the Middle East remains marked by ongoing tension and unpredictability. The Danish Presidency will continue the EU's efforts towards de-escalation in the region, including support for a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine and the development of a coherent EU approach to Syria following the fall of the Assad regime. The Presidency will also work to maintain European pressure on Iran to change its destabilising behaviour in the Middle East and in relation to the war in Ukraine.

The Presidency will support the implementation and further development of the strategic partnership between the EU and Gulf countries. Advancing the EU's cooperation and partnerships with the Southern Neighbourhood, notably through a new Mediterranean Pact, will remain a priority.

Strengthening equal and mutually beneficial partnerships with African countries will be another focus. The Presidency will prioritise thorough preparation of the upcoming EU-AU Summit and EU-Africa Business Forum, in close consultation with African partners. Enhancing EU efforts through the Global Gateway will be a key focus. The Presidency will also prioritise the swift implementation and ratification of the Samoa Agreement.

The Presidency will work to strengthen EU partnerships across the Indo-Pacific region, following the framework of the EU's 2021 Strategy and considering the EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum. Notably, emphasis will be placed on sustaining momentum for an ambitious strategic agenda for EU-India relations, with a potential EU-India Summit in 2025 serving as an important milestone, alongside increased utilisation of EU initiatives through the Global Gateway.

The Presidency will also seek to maintain a determined approach to deepening EU relations with Latin America and the Caribbean. Specifically, focus will be on reinforcing the EU's efforts through the Global Gateway, following up on the EU-CELAC Summit Declaration of 2023, ensuring a well-prepared and successful EU-CELAC Summit in 2025, and on supporting the ratification of the EU-Mercosur Agreement and the updated EU-Mexico Partnership Agreement.

Amid growing geostrategic competition and a complex security landscape, the EU's technological capabilities and digital diplomacy are vital to its foreign and security policy. The Presidency will aim to secure Council conclusions on advancing the EU's International Digital Strategy, establishing the goal of stronger EU leadership in global digital and technological matters, including priority areas like artificial intelligence and quantum technology. This also applies to dialogue with strategic partners, where cooperation can be broadened and deepened, with active involvement from the European tech industry.

The Danish Presidency will work to strengthen EU climate diplomacy, international partnerships, and cooperation on climate issues. This includes supporting the development and implementation of ambitious National Determined Contributions (NDCs) aligned with the 1.5 degree target and fulfilling commitments under the first Global Stocktake (GST), as well as assisting the poorest and most vulnerable developing countries in adapting to climate change.

Supporting the EU's commitment to a strong and effective multilateral system and upholding international rule of law will also be priorities during the Danish Presidency. In this context, priority will be given to strengthening cooperation between the EU and the UN to develop joint

solutions to the global challenges facing the world.

Alongside this, efforts will be made to ensure a stronger and more coherent EU voice within the UN. This will take the form of active and constructive EU engagement in implementing the Pact for the Future and the UN80 reform initiative, which was launched by the UN Secretary-General in March 2025. The initiative aims to support a more contemporary, inclusive, and effective multilateral system that delivers for all and helps rebuild trust across regions and generations.

The Presidency will also support the upholding of international law, the international legal system, and strong, independent legal institutions, including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

## Trade

The Danish Presidency will prioritise an open and even more robust and strategic trade policy. This will significantly contribute to strengthening the EU's growth, competitiveness, resilience, economic security, and strategic partnerships.

The Danish Presidency will prioritise an ambitious, assertive, and rules-based trade agenda, with a strategic focus on advancing and concluding negotiations with countries in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, while expediting the ratification and implementation of previously negotiated agreements, including in Latin America. Furthermore, the Presidency will work to strengthen other forms of economic cooperation with relevant international partners, including those in developing countries. It will also be a priority to ensure continued trade policy support for Ukraine.

The Presidency will pursue constructive EU-US cooperation on trade and investment, economic

security, supply chains, and technology, and support EU unity on the basis of the Commission's firm and proportionate approach, as required.

The Presidency will work to ensure a level playing field in the internal market and globally, and it will work to strengthen European competitiveness and economic security. This will be achieved by using trade defence instruments to enforce trade commitments, ensure fair trade practices and counter economic coercion through rules-based, WTO-compliant actions. Additionally, the Presidency will facilitate discussions with a view to strengthening the Union's economic security.

To increase safety and ensure a level playing field in the internal market, the Presidency will continue negotiations on revising the regulation on the framework for screening foreign investments in the EU, aiming for final adoption.

Additionally, the Presidency will work towards a more effective and coordinated approach to export controls on dual-use items, aiming to update the EU common control list promptly with products and technologies that are currently being blocked in the multilateral regimes.

The Presidency will prioritise preparing for the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) in Cameroon in early 2026, alongside promoting ongoing multilateral and plurilateral negotiations through active EU involvement.

The Presidency will work to finalise the revision of the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP), aiming to further integrate the EU's partner countries into global trade and to support their sustainable economic development.

Strategic work aimed at determining the EU's common investment policy will continue.

## Development

In a time of geopolitical upheaval and uncertainty, the EU must rethink its strategic approach to development cooperation to secure stronger global partnerships.

The established global development order is transforming. Rather than simply filling the gaps left by others moving away from development cooperation, the EU should chart its own course. The Presidency will work to ensure that the EU acts where the impact is greatest, standing firm as a reliable and credible partner amid geopolitical and development challenges.

The Danish Presidency will uphold equal and mutually beneficial partnerships that support sustainable development. Coordination across policy areas will be essential. Countries and regions differ, from fragile and unstable to growing and transitioning, requiring tailored interventions using a broad range of tools. Devising integrated programmes to tackle the increasing number of global crises is necessary and will also strengthen coordination among the EU's foreign policy instruments.

The Presidency will support coordinated EU action in partner countries through the Team Europe approach, with a focus on delivering Global Gateway projects of mutual interest within defined priority areas: climate and energy, digitalisation, transport, health, education, and research. The focus will be on mobilising public and private funding, and this will include the strengthening of incentives for European businesses. Additionally, the Presidency will work to ensure broad-based ownership of the Commission's Global Gateway Green Shipping Corridor initiative across the Commission, the Member States, financing institutions, the private sector and partner countries.

The Presidency will prioritise negotiations on a revised approach to the EU's Global Gateway flagship projects, including a possible new list for 2026, and encourage a more targeted focus on the most geostrategically important and emblematic initiatives.

The Presidency will work to advance EU deliverables in the ongoing reform process of the International Financial Architecture (IFA).

The Presidency will ensure that the EU maintains its prominent role in the humanitarian field through timely and effective crisis responses in accordance with humanitarian principles. Furthermore, the EU must work to promote respect for international humanitarian law and human rights.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for the EU's future development collaboration and international partnerships in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.



# Economic and Financial Affairs

The Economic and Financial Affairs Council will work to ensure sound economic policies in the EU, strengthen European competitiveness and productivity, and reinforce Europe's defence and security in a changing world and international economy.

The Danish Presidency will work to ensure robust and resilient European economies with fiscal space for political priorities. Efforts will focus on national structural reforms, the implementation of EU fiscal rules, burden reduction and simplification, improving framework conditions for European businesses, and the mobilisation of private investment, including progress towards an integrated European Savings and Investment Union. This calls for economic reforms as well as sound and sustainable economic policies.

The Presidency will place focus on the work related to the mobilisation of financing for a stronger European defence. This includes advancing the ReArm Europe Plan and maintaining financial support for Ukraine, with consideration to the country's long-term reconstruction after Russia's illegal full-scale invasion.

## Economic policies

A central priority for the Danish Presidency will be to strengthen the EU's economic resilience by ensuring sound and sustainable public finances, which are necessary to meet political priorities, including a swift and cost-effective reinforcement of European defence.

The Danish Presidency will focus on the effective implementation of EU fiscal rules, including the adoption of Council implementing decisions on new or updated medium-term fiscal-structural plans, as well as any decisions taken under the excessive deficit procedure.

Strong European economies form the basis of a secure and resilient Europe that is able to defend itself. The Presidency will focus on establishing solid framework conditions for European defence readiness through the mobilisation of financing and the development of the European defence industry. The Presidency will continue work on the Commission's REARM Europe package, including the new financial instrument (SAFE) to support defence investments by Member States, and on making fiscal rules more flexible to allow increased defence spending.

Economic cooperation in the EU must support efforts to strengthen competitiveness and growth across Member States.

The Presidency will therefore place focus on supporting national structural reforms that strengthen economic structures and productivity and reduce harmful macroeconomic imbalances. This includes cooperation on structural reforms within the European Semester, the implementation of medium-term fiscal-structural plans and the continuation of work to meet the agreed milestones and targets for reforms and investments under the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

The Presidency also stands ready to work on new proposals to strengthen the EU's competitiveness. This will include initiatives announced under the Commission's Competitiveness Compass, such as a possible proposal for a tool to support the coordination of competitiveness measures, as well as a proposal to establish a new Competitiveness Fund within the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

The Presidency will work to make progress on the simplification agenda to reduce burdens on businesses and strengthen European competitiveness. This will include a strong focus on both reducing existing burdens and minimising new burdens in future proposals, with an increased emphasis on robust impact assessments that make realistic estimates of both the benefits and costs of EU legislation.

The Presidency will prepare a discussion on the European Fiscal Board's (EFB) annual report, following up on the EFB's reflections and recommendations regarding, among other things, the fiscal position in the EU and the euro area, as well as the implementation of EU fiscal rules.

## Economic and financial consequences of Russia's aggression against Ukraine

EU financial support for Ukraine, in response to Russia's full-scale invasion, will be a priority during the Danish Presidency. The Presidency will closely monitor the situation, address any financing needs and continue discussions on the economic and financial developments in Ukraine following the invasion. The Presidency will also attach priority to the sanction regimes against Russia and Belarus.

## Regulation of the financial sector – the Savings and Investment Union

To strengthen EU competitiveness and mobilise more private capital, the Danish Presidency will prioritise work on the Savings and Investment Union (SIU) and focus on reducing burdens and creating a simpler, more proportionate regulation of the financial sector. The Presidency will also work to ensure there is transparency around the impact of legislative proposals when making major decisions about our future.

The mobilisation of private investments is key to EU competitiveness. This requires efficient and integrated capital markets across Europe. Europeans hold substantial savings that could and should be directed into capital markets and invested across borders in companies, new technologies, and innovation. The Danish Presidency will work to advance initiatives that strengthen common capital markets and increase private investment in the EU.

The Presidency will thus give particular priority to new Savings and Investment Union initiatives, including the upcoming proposal to revise the securitisation framework to strengthen the lending capacity of banks and address expected recommendations for European savings and investment accounts.

The Presidency will be ready to begin negotiations on other upcoming initiatives in the Commission's SIU communication, including the proposal for more integrated and efficient supervision.

Measures that focus on improving the business environment by advancing the EU's simplification agenda and supporting national reforms to boost business productivity are also important to SIU as they will make European companies more attractive to investors.

Additionally, the Danish Presidency will continue to advance current proposals to develop the Capital Markets Union and Banking Union, which will also support the new Savings and Investment Union.

The Presidency will facilitate trilogue negotiations with the European Parliament on revising the framework for crisis management of failing credit institutions and national deposit guarantee schemes (CMDI). This aims to ensure greater uniformity and consistency across the EU, creating a more integrated and resilient banking sector. According to the Euro Group Declaration of 16 June 2022, a final agreement on the CMDI will be prerequisite to advancing the broader agenda on the deepening of the Banking Union.

The Presidency will also seek to advance negotiations on the Retail Investor Strategy (RIS) to encourage greater levels of retail investor participation in financial markets and a regulation to establish a framework for financial data sharing (FIDA), ensuring a more open and transparent financial sector, while also giving priority to the simplification of these matters.

The payment services market has the potential to become more competitive and efficient. To reduce burdens for payment services within the internal market, strengthen consumer protection, and combat fraud, the Presidency will advance negotiations on the Payment Services Directive and Regulation to modernise the payments sector.

The Presidency will also work towards adopting the legal framework for a faster and more efficient securities settlement cycle to strengthen EU competitiveness.

To ensure a simple, secure, and low-cost digital payment method in the euro area and support the EU's strategic autonomy, the Presidency will prioritise negotiations on the legal framework

for introducing a digital euro in line with the ambitions of euro area Member States.

The financial sector is crucial to the green transition. Clear and effective regulation is therefore essential. The Presidency will begin negotiations on revising the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR) to ensure clear requirements on integrating sustainability risks, addressing negative sustainability impacts, and improving the transparency of sustainability information for financial market participants and their products.

## Taxation

The Presidency aims to advance, and possibly conclude, negotiations on revising the Energy Taxation Directive. The revision will bring energy product taxation in line with EU energy and climate policies and encourage the use of renewable energy sources.

The Danish Presidency will prioritise initiatives to counter tax evasion and tax avoidance to promote and ensure fair taxation at an international level.

This includes updating the EU list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions and further developing the tools used by the Code of Conduct Group to identify harmful tax competition. The Presidency will also support a continued strengthening of administrative cooperation, including revising or expanding the Directive on Administrative Cooperation (DAC). A revision will improve rules and procedures for information exchange between tax authorities and encourage good governance within and beyond the EU.

To strengthen European competitiveness, the Presidency will back the EU's tax simplification agenda to reduce burdens on businesses and authorities. It will work to ensure governance and

Member State involvement in simplifying existing and future tax rules.

The Presidency will prioritise a strengthening of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) regulation which aims to prevent carbon leakage and thereby support the green transition and European competitiveness.

The Presidency is also ready to support a revision of the Tobacco Taxation Directive if a proposal is tabled. An amendment should aim to further harmonise tobacco levies and limit negative health effects on children and young people.

## Customs Union

The Danish Presidency will continue negotiations on the Customs Reform package to reach a final agreement with the European Parliament. The reform will among other things address the growing challenges of e-commerce.

## EU budget

Following the fixed budget cycle, the Danish Presidency will lead negotiations on the EU's 2026 budget, with a view to reaching an agreement with the European Parliament.

## Own resources

As part of the negotiations of the next Multiannual Financial Framework, the Danish Presidency will continue talks on a possible revision of the Council Decision on own resources.

## Economic relations with countries outside the EU

In the face of geopolitical tensions and geo-economic fragmentation, a strong and resilient European economy underpins the EU's continued leadership in multilateral cooperation.

To safeguard the EU's interests, the Danish Presidency will facilitate discussions on the EU's strategic role in global economic cooperation, focusing on reinforcing its competitive position and deepening partnerships with third countries, including in addressing global challenges. The Presidency will support strategic coordination of EU positions, including in drafting joint Terms of Reference for G20 meetings finance ministers and central bank governors, and of a common EU statement for the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC). The Presidency will also prioritise EU coordination and contributions to advancing reform of the international financial architecture.

The Presidency will also work towards the adoption of Council conclusions on international climate finance ahead of the COP30 Climate Change Conference in November 2025. The focus will be on how the EU can contribute constructively to a coherent global approach to climate finance, incorporating all private and public sources and delivering financing at the necessary scale.

# Justice and Home Affairs

The Justice and Home Affairs Council will work to ensure a safe and stable Europe. During the Danish Presidency, priority will be given to tackling irregular migration and ensuring effective control of the EU's external borders. The Presidency will support the Council's continued efforts to identify new and effective approaches to managing irregular migration.

The Presidency will also continue the work both internally in the EU as well as externally to fight serious and transnational organised crime, with strong emphasis on the fight against drug-related crime and other crimes committed by organised criminal networks, which have significant human and societal impacts.

The technological development has brought with it new opportunities and new challenges. The Presidency will focus on strengthening the abilities to make use of the digital development for law enforcement when fighting serious crime, while also addressing the misuse of new technologies for criminal or harmful purposes.

The Presidency will work to ensure the protection of fundamental rights as well as cooperation and protection in the area of civil matters.

The Danish Presidency will work to strengthen the EU's internal security and resilience so that the EU is better equipped to deal with current and future crises, disasters and other security threats.

## The combating of irregular migration

The adoption of the Pact on Migration and Asylum in 2024 marked a major step forward in tackling shared challenges linked to irregular migration. The Pact reinforces external borders and streamlines asylum procedures. Supporting Member States in implementing the Pact will be a central focus of the Danish Presidency, in line with the Commission's Common Implementation Plan for the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

To build on this foundation, the Presidency will explore new solutions to break the incentive structures behind irregular migration and dangerous journeys to Europe.

This will include advancing negotiations on the proposals concerning amendment of the concept of a 'safe third country' and the establishment of a list of safe countries of origin at Union level in the Asylum Procedure Regulation in order to support a broader use of the rules by Member States in addressing irregular migration.

Effective border control remains essential. The Presidency will continue efforts to strengthen the EU's external borders and counter the threat of the instrumentalisation of migrants.

Preventing and combating migrant smuggling – a serious cross-border challenge - is essential to dismantling the billion-euro trafficking industry and addressing the incentives that fuel dangerous journeys to Europe. It will therefore be a priority for the Danish Presidency to advance negotiations on the Regulation on combating migrant smuggling, as well as on the Directive establishing minimum rules to prevent and combat migrant smuggling.

The EU's success in preventing irregular migration to Europe depends heavily on constructive cooperation with partner countries along migration routes. The Danish Presidency will

therefore maintain the EU's focus on mutually beneficial, comprehensive, and strategic partnerships with key third countries in the area of migration.

It is vital to secure sustainable solutions to the EU's challenges in returning third-country nationals residing illegally in the EU. The Danish Presidency will seek to advance negotiations on new legislation and shared European ambitions for an effective and modern return policy, providing Member States with concrete tools to return third-country nationals without legal stay in the EU.

## A well-functioning Schengen area

Effective external border control is vital to protecting free movement in the EU. The Danish Presidency will prioritise the implementation of the Entry/Exit System (EES) and other major IT systems, as well as the strategic use of the EU visa policy.

## Attracting skills and talent under fair and just conditions

The Danish Presidency will also support initiatives that improve opportunities to recruit international labour within EU shortage occupations under fair and just conditions, and this will include advancing the adoption of the regulation establishing an EU talent pool.

## Displaced persons from Ukraine

The Danish Presidency will also facilitate discussions on the future of displaced persons from Ukraine.

## Serious cross-border and organised crime

Organised and transnational crime committed by gangs and criminal networks remains a significant challenge with serious human and societal impacts.

The Danish Presidency will prioritise the fight against serious cross-border and organised crime, focusing on drug trafficking and the growing threat of synthetic drugs, including opioids. Supporting the work of relevant EU agencies and strengthening cooperation within the EU and with third countries in the fight against organised crime will also be important priorities.

The Presidency will follow up on the implementation of the EU Roadmap to Fight Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime, and the evaluation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan 2021–2025. It will also prioritise work on a new strategic framework to tackle drug dissemination in the EU and advance the 11th round of mutual evaluations on the combatting of cross-border drug-related crime within the EU.

Additionally, the Presidency will focus on combating firearms and begin work within the Council on a new directive targeting illicit trafficking of firearms.

The Presidency will also continue work on the proposed anti-corruption directive.

Priority will be given to the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), a cornerstone of operational cooperation against organised and cross-border crime. This applies to both the finalisation of the current cycle and preparation for the 2026–2029 cycle.

Persons behind serious cross-border crime often take residence in third countries. The Presidency

will therefore focus on judicial cooperation with third countries regarding the extradition of persons suspected or convicted of committing organised crime for the purpose of criminal prosecution.

Finally, the Presidency will work to improve rights for victims of crime, including children requiring specific age-appropriate support and protection, by continuing the work on the proposal for a directive on minimum standards for victims.

## Technology as a platform for crime

Technological development has brought significant benefits and is central to Europeans' daily lives. However, it also creates challenges, as criminals increasingly exploit the internet, online communication services, and other digital tools for criminal and harmful activities.

Further action is needed to address this concerning trend. The Danish Presidency will work to strengthen judicial protection and law enforcement authorities' ability to fight online criminal activities. Online service providers must also be held more accountable for content on their platforms.

The sexual abuse and exploitation of minors taking place and being spread online is on the rise. A clear and harmonised legal framework is needed to prevent and combat the sexual abuse and exploitation of children and child sexual abuse material. The Presidency will give the work on the Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Regulation and Directive high priority.

Furthermore, law enforcement authorities must have the necessary tools, including access to data, to investigate and prosecute crime effectively. This



applies to both online offences and serious crime planned or carried out by organised criminals using modern technology and communication methods. The Presidency will therefore focus on access to data for effective law enforcement and the obligations of providers to process data for law enforcement purposes.

There is also a need to further strengthen cooperation on data exchange with international organisations and third countries. The Presidency will support the EU's efforts to negotiate and conclude agreements on exchange of data with these partners.

## Internal security

The security landscape in the EU is complex and constantly evolving, impacting citizens, societies and economies. The Danish Presidency will take a holistic approach to EU internal security and resilience, and follow up on the implementation of the EU Internal Security Strategy.

The Presidency will continue efforts and dialogue to address the consequences of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East. Preventing and combating terrorism will also be a priority.

Focus will be placed on strengthening crisis preparedness and resilience through a comprehensive approach across authorities that will involve both citizens and private companies. This aims to tackle the changing risk and threat landscape, including the changing security situation and the increased risk of extreme weather events. The Presidency will place focus on advancing discussions in relation to the Commission's proposal for a revised Union Civil Protection Mechanism, aiming at improving the EU's response to more frequent, severe, and complex crises and disasters.

It is essential to strengthen the protection and monitoring of critical underwater infrastructure through strengthened EU cooperation. The Commission, together with the European External Action Service, has launched an action plan to strengthen cable security in the EU. During the Danish Presidency, focus will remain on advancing the implementation of this plan, involving all relevant actors across sectors, and promoting cooperation across the EU and NATO to protect critical underwater infrastructure.

## Cooperation and protection in civil matters

The EU is founded on shared values and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms. Protecting and promoting these rights is an ongoing and vital task. The Danish Presidency will build on the Council's efforts to uphold and strengthen respect for these principles.

The Danish Presidency will continue work on the EU's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

In addition, the Presidency will advance negotiations on the proposal for a directive harmonising certain aspects of insolvency law, in order to support efforts to further integrate EU capital markets.

To reduce challenges faced by adults needing decision-making support in cross-border cases, the Danish Presidency will continue negotiations on a proposed regulation on the protection of adults.

To ensure swift recognition of parenthood in cross-border situations, the Presidency will progress discussions on the regulation on parenthood.

## **Framework for future cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs**

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts in the area of Justice and Home Affairs in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

# Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council will support a more competitive Europe by ensuring labour markets that are competitive and provide decent and fair working conditions, where jobs are safeguarded and the right skills for the future labour market are available.

In a time marked by global uncertainty and complex health challenges, the Danish Presidency will place focus on life science and preparedness aiming to strengthen supply security and innovation capacity in the EU, promote access to medicines across Member States and boost the resilience of the healthcare system against manmade crises and natural disasters. The Presidency will promote this balance in negotiations on matters such as the pharmaceutical package and the regulation on critical medicines.

The Presidency aims to promote social cohesion, combat social exclusion, and ensure inclusion for all citizens. The Presidency will work to ensure that rights, equality, and truly equal opportunities are realised for everyone.

## Employment and Social Policy

### Competitiveness

A more competitive EU needs sufficient access to skilled labour. The Danish Presidency will therefore place focus on free and fair movement, decent working conditions, upskilling and reskilling, and a healthy and a safe working environment, all of which are essential for increasing productivity across the EU.

Building on this, the Presidency will engage with the European Semester, the Commission's Quality Jobs Roadmap, and the Commission's Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights. These initiatives aim to retain skilled workers and advance employment and social progress across Member States, while respecting national labour market and welfare models, as well as the role and autonomy of social partners. The Presidency will also promote the revision of the Regulation on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers with the aim of reaching an agreement within the Council.

### Free and fair movement

Free movement of workers is a cornerstone of EU cooperation. It is essential that this happens on fair and decent terms. Digitalisation can simplify social security coordination within the EU, improve enforcement and control of existing rules, and support free and fair movement.

The Danish Presidency will follow up on the pilot project on the European Social Security Pass (ESSPASS). It will also address challenges and explore solutions related to free and fair movement, including conditions for posted workers – both EU citizens and third-country nationals – who are often vulnerable in European labour markets.

### Healthy and safe working lives

Too many Europeans fall ill due to exposure to hazardous substances at work. Following the EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021–2027, the Danish Presidency will focus on strengthening health and safety measures for workers. This includes advancing the sixth revision of the directive on carcinogens, mutagens and reprotoxic substances at work as much as possible.

To ensure proper frameworks for traineeships across the EU and to prevent competition on wages and poor working conditions, the Presidency will promote the recommendation on a reinforced Quality Framework for Traineeships as well as the proposed directive on better working conditions for trainees.

### Social dialogue

Social dialogue at national and European levels plays a vital role in shaping policy and turning political agreements into tangible results for workers, businesses, and European competitiveness. Building on the new Pact for European Social Dialogue, the Danish Presidency will work to strengthen dialogue between social partners.

The social partners are also key to ensuring quality jobs in the EU, and the Presidency looks forward to engaging actively with the forthcoming Quality Jobs Roadmap.

### Equal treatment

The Danish Presidency will seek unanimity in the Council to adopt the directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment if the proposal remains on the table. If withdrawn, the Presidency will initiate political discussions on the best ways for the EU to strengthen efforts against discrimination based on religion or belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation.

The European Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities needs to be updated as its flagship initiatives are expected to be implemented by 2025. Consequently, the Presidency will seek approval of Council conclusions outlining priorities for an updated strategy, focusing on how Member States can best ensure independent living.

As part of this strategy, the Commission issued guidance in 2024 on how Member States can best support independent living. The Presidency will collaborate closely with Danish and European civil society organisations to encourage independent living, including support for living in one's own home.

### Social inclusion

Through the 2030 goals, the European Pillar of Social Rights, and targeted strategies, Member States have committed to enhancing cohesion and social inclusion for the most vulnerable citizens. The Danish Presidency will support knowledge-sharing across Member States to advance this work.

Within the framework of the European Child Guarantee, and through knowledge sharing, the Presidency will work to improve conditions for vulnerable children, with a particular focus on providing support to children in care and foster families, and on ensuring quality in the placements.

In parallel with the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness, the Presidency will promote improved conditions for EU citizens experiencing homelessness through dialogue and knowledge exchange.

In line with the European Care Strategy, the Presidency will prioritise the future of ageing and long-term care, ensuring quality, accessibility, and improved working conditions.

### Housing

Many Europeans face difficulties finding affordable housing, affecting vulnerable groups and labour mobility. Additionally, there is a pressing need for the green transition of the European building stock.

The Presidency will focus on delivering sustainable and affordable housing for ordinary citizens, considering the roles and tools available to the EU, Member States, and cities.

In response to these housing challenges, the Presidency will propose Council conclusions addressing the Commission's Affordable Housing Plan.

### Health and well-being

The Danish Presidency will work to conclude negotiations with the European Parliament on the pharmaceutical package. Adoption of the proposal will improve patient access to medicines, encourage innovation across the EU, and streamline approval processes for new treatments.

The Presidency will also initiate and prioritise a review of the Commission's proposal regarding critical medicines, aiming to enhance security of supply for essential medicines as part of a wider strategy to reduce reliance on third countries and prevent medicine shortages in the EU.

The Danish Presidency will also place focus on the Commission's strategies for life science and medical countermeasures with a view to strengthening innovation in the EU and promoting the resilience of healthcare systems against manmade crises and natural disasters.

Under the auspices of the WHO, the Presidency will conduct negotiations in relation to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (COP11) and on the Pandemic Convention.

## Gender equality

The Danish Presidency will work to realise the ambition of the European Union as a Union of Equality. Rights, gender equality, and real equal opportunities must be a reality for all.

Continuing the implementation of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 and the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020–2025 will be a priority. The Presidency will also support the development and launch of new and ambitious strategies to advance equal opportunities across EU institutions and Member States.

Sexual and gender-based violence remains a challenge across Member States. It has profound effects on victims, children who witness violence in the family, and society as a whole. It is a violation of human rights and hinders both gender equality and the attainment of full and equal participation in society.

The Presidency will follow up on the Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence, seeking ways for the EU and Member States to strengthen prevention, early detection, and intervention against gender-based violence.

To achieve real gender equality, men and boys must be included in equality efforts – not only as allies supporting the rights of women and girls, but also by recognising their own gender-specific challenges, including exposure to unrealistic ideals of masculinity and misogynistic content online. The Presidency will encourage dialogue and knowledge sharing to strengthen the role of men and boys in gender equality efforts.

# Competitiveness

Building on the European Competitiveness Compass, the Competitiveness Council will pursue actions that bolster the EU's long-term competitiveness. Strengthening Europe's economic foundations is crucial to strengthening resilience, securing stable supply chains, improving economic security, reinforcing the EU's global position, and creating growth opportunities through research-based innovation.

The Danish Presidency will champion the green transition as a key growth driver, focusing on decarbonising industry and establishing the right framework conditions to ensure access to essential raw materials and affordable energy.

The Presidency will place focus on regulatory simplification and better regulation in the EU to ease daily operations for businesses and other stakeholders. Furthermore, the Presidency will advance an industrial policy that promotes green strengths, investment, and technology development across Europe. To strengthen competitiveness and succeed in the green transition, businesses must benefit from simpler regulations and clarity on the impact of legislative proposals when making major future decisions.

Closing Europe's innovation gap in critical technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum technology, biotechnology, and space technology is essential. The Presidency will therefore prioritise creating an optimal framework for excellent research and innovation, while simultaneously encouraging cooperation between public and private sectors.

Finally, the Presidency will work to promote a competitive European space sector that supports Europe's open strategic autonomy, competitiveness, the green transition, and security.

## Internal market and industry

The Single Market Strategy is fundamental, as it is the EU's primary asset and the source of significant historic gains in prosperity. It must be updated and adapted to unlock growth potential while safeguarding Member States' essential protections.

The Danish Presidency will advance negotiations on a voluntary digital declaration for the posting of workers, aiming to genuinely reduce administrative burdens for European companies while upholding and enforcing workers' rights.

Discussions will be prioritised on the forthcoming evaluation of the public procurement directives, setting the direction for their future revision.

In company law, the Presidency will focus on how a future 28th regime could create favourable conditions and reduce burdens for innovative European businesses.

In intellectual property rights, the Presidency will seek to conclude negotiations on regulations for supplementary protection certificates for pharmaceutical and plant protection products, providing companies with an effective and harmonised system for patents. Furthermore, the Presidency will strive for successful coordination of the EU's participation in the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), and finalise discussions on the EU's accession to the Design Law Treaty.

As part of the technical harmonisation agenda, the Danish Presidency will finalise negotiations on the targeted revision of the Measuring Instrument Directive.

In competition policy, the Presidency will steer discussions on the Commission's future state aid rules for social and affordable housing.

To safeguard competition, the focus will be on closing merger loopholes effectively and efficiently.

### The green transition

Maintaining the EU's commitment to the green transition is crucial, while maximising the opportunities it offers to strengthen European competitiveness.

The Danish Presidency will prioritise further discussions under the Clean Industrial Deal, strengthening competitiveness through deeper industrial decarbonisation. In addition, to ensure that there is a continued focus on clean growth in the EU, the Presidency will begin negotiations on the Industrial Decarbonisation Accelerator Act.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts supporting the Single Market in the context of the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) post-2027.

### Consumer policy

In the consumer area, the Danish Presidency will launch discussions on the upcoming Consumer Agenda 2025–2030 to lay out an ambitious vision that strengthens consumer rights and ensures improved levels of protection and enforcement. Special focus will be placed on protecting minors who are particularly vulnerable online.

The Presidency will also aim to conclude trilogue negotiations on the revision of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Directive, ensuring a clear scope and adaptation to increasing market digitalisation.

Work on the Package Travel Directive will be advanced under the Presidency.



### Technology

The quantum sector is gaining global prominence and holds the potential to become a new European strength. It is therefore crucial that the EU establishes a supportive framework to enable the growth of the European quantum ecosystem. In this context, the Danish Presidency will advance discussions on the European quantum strategy.

While artificial intelligence presents new opportunities for generating creative content, it also poses challenges. Copyright law must evolve alongside technological advances to ensure clear rules and a fair, efficient market that encourages innovation, creativity, investment, and the creation of new content. The Presidency will support efforts that aim to address the challenges relating to copyright and artificial intelligence.

## Research and space

### Research

Research and innovation play a vital role in tackling Europe's major challenges and are fundamental to advancing key policy agendas.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts related to EU research and innovation efforts in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

The Presidency will be ready to negotiate the Commission's proposed amendments to the EuroHPC Council Regulation.

The Presidency will prioritise several forthcoming strategies, including the EU Life Sciences Strategy, which seeks to unlock the sector's research and growth potential to strengthen healthcare systems and European competitiveness. It also includes the EU Start-up and Scale-up Strategy and the EU Strategy for Research and Technology

Infrastructures, which sets clear objectives to strengthen the ecosystem and boost European competitiveness.

### Space

Satellites and satellite services are critical infrastructure, essential to numerous societal functions. Developing European space assets further is key to strengthening EU security, open strategic autonomy, and competitiveness.

The Danish Presidency will be ready to begin negotiations on the EU's first Space Act, which will aim to improve the safety, resilience, and sustainability of space activities while simultaneously establishing a genuine single market for the European space industry through the harmonisation of rules and standards.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts concerning EU space initiatives in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

# Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council will continue efforts to strengthen and future-proof Europe's transport sector, digital infrastructure, telecommunications, and the internal energy market.

In transport, the Danish Presidency will focus on boosting competitiveness, cutting administrative burdens, and driving the green transition.

In telecommunications, the focus will be on making critical telecom infrastructure more robust and resilient. The Presidency will also work to strengthen the EU's digital competitiveness and technological sovereignty, while addressing the protection of children and young people online.

In relation to energy, the Presidency will work to advance initiatives and measures that can strengthen Europe's security of supply, competitiveness and green transition. This include a continued focus on ensuring a sufficient production of clean, affordable energy, and working towards an EU that is independent of Russian energy.

## Transport

### Green transition of transport

Advancing the green transition in European transport is essential for achieving the climate goals of the EU. The Danish Presidency aims to reach a general approach on the Weights and Dimensions Directive and secure a final agreement with the European Parliament on the accounting of greenhouse gas emissions for transport services regulation. The Presidency also looks forward to discussing the forthcoming Sustainable Transport Investment Plan to support the green transition of the transport sector.

A revision of the vehicle inspection rules shall ensure that vehicle inspections keep pace with technological developments, with a particular focus on improving emissions controls to support the green transition. The Presidency will work towards a general approach on the proposals in the Roadworthiness Package to ensure up-to-date regulation.

### Transport cooperation with Ukraine and Moldova

Continued EU solidarity and support for Ukraine remain vital. The Danish Presidency will prioritise discussions on extending the road transport agreements with Ukraine and Moldova, in support of their economies and with a view to helping stabilise global food prices.

The Presidency will also focus on the revision of the Treaty establishing the Transport Community to ensure the full integration of Ukraine and Moldova into the current cooperation with the EU and the Western Balkans.

### Cross-border mobility

A well-functioning and connected European transport sector is essential for the development of the single market.

The Danish Presidency will work to reach a final agreement with the European Parliament on the rail infrastructure capacity regulation.

Cross-border passenger rights are an important element in ensuring European mobility. The Presidency will work towards transparent and clear passenger rights for all modes of transport and seek to start negotiations with the European Parliament on the air passenger rights proposal. In addition, the Presidency will begin trilogue negotiations on the proposal concerning enforcement of passenger rights in the EU.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals legislative acts concerning the transport sector in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

The UN Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) General Assembly will be held in autumn 2025. The General Assembly sets the direction for future work on international aviation regulation. The Presidency will ensure coordination of the European position at the Assembly.

### Maritime transport

To maintain the EU's global leadership, the Danish Presidency will support efforts to strengthen a sustainable, innovative, and competitive maritime transport sector and industry. In light of the Commission's burden reduction programme, the 2030 climate target, and the need to boost competitiveness, the Danish Presidency will continue discussions on the Maritime Industrial Strategy.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in shipping is essential both to achieving the EU's climate targets and to strengthening European competitiveness. The Presidency will support

the adoption of the IMO Net-Zero Framework in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in October 2025 and start work on an effective implementation of the global climate regulation.

To support ambitious progress of European ports towards EU climate goals, increased security, military mobility and technological innovation, the Presidency will start discussions on the ports strategy. It will further work to set the framework for ongoing discussions focused on strengthening competitiveness and private investment, in interaction with the maritime industrial strategy.

## Telecommunications

The EU's digital regulatory framework will be tested in the daily lives of Europeans, where challenges such as protecting children and young people from harmful online content, addictive algorithms, screen consumption, unethical business models and extensive data harvesting and profiling are high on the political agenda. The Danish Presidency will focus on enforcement of existing rules and future legislation in this area.

Strengthening the EU's technological sovereignty and digital competitiveness requires building capabilities in key digital technologies. This calls for better framework conditions, innovation and investments in areas including artificial intelligence, cloud and data. The Presidency will propose Council conclusions on strengthening digital competitiveness, following up on the Commission's artificial intelligence strategy and European Data strategy.

The Presidency will follow up on the Commission's digital package on the simplification of rules, which places particular focus, among other things, on cybersecurity and data protection rules, including data protection. In relation to cyber security, there will be a focus on reducing

administrative burdens, especially in regards to the reporting obligations and regulatory oversight.

The Danish Presidency will begin negotiations on the European Business Wallet proposal, aimed at simplifying data exchange between companies and authorities.

It will also be ready to start negotiations on the Digital Networks Act proposal, which updates and simplifies the existing Telecoms Code.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts on EU digital initiatives in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

The Presidency will prepare for and stand ready to begin negotiations on the revision of the Cybersecurity Act (CSA) which is expected to be presented as a part of the digital package. The revision will take into account the need to strengthen the mandate of the EU's Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) and improve the European framework for cybersecurity certification schemes, including the speed at which certification schemes come into effect. In addition, there will also be a potential focus on introducing further security obligations in relation to supply chain security.

Furthermore, the Presidency will prioritise clarity and efficiency in the EU cyber ecosystem, with a particular focus on coordinating responses to cyber incidents. In relation to this, the Presidency will be ready to implement and exercise the EU's Cyber Blueprint.

Additionally, the Presidency will seek to strengthen civil and military cooperation in cyberspace, especially concerning the next phase of the establishment of the European Cyber Defence Coordination Centre (EUCDCC).

Moreover, the Presidency will work towards a thorough and effective implementation, and streamlining, of the recently adopted cybersecurity legislation, including the Cyber Resilience Act (CRA), the Cyber Solidarity Act (CYSOL), and the NIS 2 Directive.

Going forward, the work on consolidating the Commission's action plan on the cybersecurity of hospital and healthcare providers will also be promoted during the Presidency.

## Energy

The geopolitical situation has underscored the importance of a Europe that is able to produce sufficient amounts of clean energy at affordable prices for both citizens and businesses.

### EU energy security

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has underlined the importance of ensuring a European Union whose security of supply is completely independent of Russia. Supporting Ukraine's energy security, as well as the restoration of the country's energy infrastructure, is also central in this context. Against this backdrop, the continued phase out of Russian energy at the EU level will remain a key priority for the Danish Presidency.

The Presidency will work to advance concrete measures to strengthen EU energy independence, notably through the Commission's REPowerEU Roadmap, paving the way for a full phase-out of Russian energy in Europe. The Danish Presidency will prioritise and aim to finalise negotiations on the REPowerEU proposal to phase out Russian gas.

### A well-functioning internal energy market to strengthen EU competitiveness

The EU's energy policy plays a central role in strengthening European competitiveness, security of supply, and the green transition.

The Danish Presidency will work towards a more energy-independent Europe which is able to provide affordable energy to both citizens and businesses. This will require reinforced infrastructure development and connectivity, as well as an increased generation of affordable and clean energy, ultimately supporting a well-functioning internal energy market. Moreover, a flexible, integrated energy system that can enable a European optimisation of energy resources, and thereby enhance security and cost-efficiency, will also be key.

In this context, the Presidency will follow up on the Commission's Affordable Energy Action Plan. This will include initiating discussions on an updated EU energy infrastructure framework. Under such a framework, the focus will be on reinforced grid development, simplification of approval procedures for sustainable energy projects and infrastructure, and ensuring an enabling investment framework.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts on EU energy initiatives in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

To improve the framework conditions for sustainable projects and investments in Europe, the Presidency will also prioritise the electrification agenda, alongside initiatives to strengthen the investment environment and support cost-effective clean energy production.

# Agriculture and Fisheries

The Agriculture and Fisheries Council will work towards making daily life easier for farmers, fishers, and food producers. Therefore, the Danish Presidency will focus on simplification and better regulation within the EU's agriculture, food, and fisheries policies.

To accelerate the green transition and ensure a robust, market-oriented sector, a policy framework driving innovation and development in food and agriculture is essential.

Timely adoption of fishing opportunities for 2026 will be a priority to maintain a sustainable and competitive sector.

## **A green, simple and market-oriented Common Agricultural Policy**

The Danish Presidency will focus on ensuring a green, simple and market-oriented Common Agricultural Policy that supports climate and environmental measures while strengthening competitiveness and innovation. The Presidency will seek to conclude negotiations on the agricultural simplification package.

The Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on the Common Agricultural Policy, setting the framework for the development of the agricultural sector after 2027. The future Common Agricultural Policy must support rural development, organic farming, generational renewal, and animal welfare, while ensuring greater coherence with sectoral legislation, including climate and environmental regulations.

## **An innovation-friendly and competitive agriculture and food sector**

The European agriculture and food sector is evolving to provide diverse products for different consumers. The Danish Presidency will emphasise the importance of continued product development while ensuring a level playing field in the EU. This goes beyond the EU's borders and requires robust integration into the global food trade. The Presidency will organise a Council discussion on simplification and better regulation in the agriculture and food sector.

New genomic techniques can play a central role in the development of resilient crops and contribute to a more sustainable food production. The Presidency will work to conclude negotiations on proposals regarding plants developed by new genomic techniques, forest reproductive material, and advance negotiations on plant reproductive material.

Bioeconomy and bio-based solutions also hold significant potential in relation to sustainable agricultural and food production. Greater focus should be placed on finding science-based solutions that can also support opportunities for new earnings. The Presidency will therefore place focus on the upcoming EU Biotech Act. Innovation within the bioeconomy requires flexibility, the reduction of administrative burdens, and regulatory simplification, and these will be addressed during the Presidency.

## **A sustainable food system and a strong internal market**

The Danish Presidency will strengthen the position of farmers in the food supply chain by concluding negotiations on unfair cross-border trade practices and on proposed amendments to the Common Market Organisation for agricultural products. Focus will be placed on attaining a well-functioning EU food chain based on a single market with a level playing field.

European protein supply is vital for the development of plant-based foods, raw materials for the livestock sector, and the diversification of supply sources. It is also an important element in the transition towards a more sustainable food system. The Presidency will focus on the potential of a common EU action plan for plant-based foods and a common EU protein strategy.

## **A single market focused on animal, human and plant health**

European animal welfare legislation needs modernisation in line with the latest scientific advice and consumer expectations.

The Danish Presidency will place animal welfare high on the agenda. This includes advancing negotiations on the proposal relating to the protection of animals during transportation and negotiating the proposal relating to the welfare and traceability of dogs and cats with the European Parliament.

Antimicrobial resistance poses a major threat to European citizens and animal welfare must therefore be addressed with a One Health approach, linking animal and human health.

European farmers face increasing outbreaks of communicable animal diseases and new plant pests, threatening farming operations, finances, public health, and international trade. The Danish Presidency will focus on identifying potential solutions to these challenges.

## **A sustainable European fisheries sector prepared for the challenges of the future**

European fishers face pressure from external factors affecting both stocks and the economy of the sector. Sustainable and competitive fishing is a cornerstone for European fishers. Fisheries decisions should be based on the best available scientific advice, including socio-economic conditions.

The Danish Presidency will work for the timely adoption of fishing opportunities for 2026 to ensure clarity from the start of the fishing year. The EU's negotiations with the UK and Norway have

become especially important following the UK's exit from the EU. The Presidency will emphasise full respect for the provisions of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement on access to UK waters. Focus will also be placed on fishing opportunities in the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea, which face several challenges.

The Presidency will continue work on the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy, focusing on simplifying legislation to allow green considerations to guide future sustainable development of European fisheries.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts on EU fisheries actions in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

Central to this work is advancing the green transition of the European fishing fleet and promoting sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development under the Common Fisheries Policy, including the facilitation of low-impact fishing gear. The next period must also focus on better regulation and implementation to ensure a level playing field for European fishers across borders.



# Environment

The Environment Council will work to ensure that the green transition contributes to a stronger, resilient, and competitive Europe, reducing environmental consumption footprints and better protecting natural resources, while securing continued greenhouse gas reductions across all sectors.

Building on the Green Deal, the Clean Industrial Deal, and the eighth Environment Action Programme, the Danish Presidency will advance European solutions to key challenges related to the climate, resources, pollution, nature, and biodiversity. Particular emphasis will be placed on negotiations for an EU 2040 climate target, supporting the EU to reach climate neutrality by 2050.

In the global context, the Danish Presidency will work to ensure that the EU paves the way for ambitious environmental, nature and climate policies, particularly in relation to international negotiations under the UN Environment Assembly, conventions on nature, plastic pollution, the UN Climate Convention, and COP30.

## EU commitment to climate action and growth

The EU must continue its leadership on the climate agenda by staying on course to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest, while simultaneously encouraging other global partners to meet their commitments. The Danish Presidency will prioritise negotiations on the revision of the European Climate Law to set an EU 2040 climate target, offering clear guidance for climate action, investments, and industrial competitiveness.

In 2025, all parties to the Paris Agreement must submit new nationally determined contributions (NDCs) for the period up to 2035. The Presidency will work to ensure that the EU submits its NDC well before COP30 in Brazil on 10–21 November 2025, including a 2035 target derived from the EU's 2040 target and aligned with the Paris Agreement's long-term temperature goal.

It is essential that the EU maintains unity in a global context and upholds its leadership in the multilateral efforts to mitigate climate change to encourage all parties to meet their commitments. The Presidency will define the EU position for COP30 through Council conclusions, including the need to advance all negotiation tracks while safeguarding human rights, gender equality, and the rights of Indigenous Peoples in global climate action.

The Presidency will initiate negotiations on revision of the INSPIRE directive to ensure a more accessible and cost-effective tool for geographical environmental data exchange.

Additionally, the Presidency will initiate and conclude discussions on technical updates of the agreement linking the EU and Swiss Emissions Trading Systems.

## An environmental policy that fortifies the EU in an uncertain world

The Danish Presidency will encourage sustainable production and consumption where economic growth does not depend on the increased consumption of resources. European citizens must be able to live well within planetary boundaries, both now and in the future, while also supporting the EU's security of supply, competitiveness, and strategic autonomy.

In the light of the European Environment Agency's report on Europe's Environment 2025, the Presidency will initiate discussions on the EU's environmental policy towards 2030.

The Presidency will prioritise negotiations to strengthen the circular economy and increase the EU's strategic autonomy by improving security of supply of key natural resources. It will work to ensure the Council reaches agreement with the European Parliament on the regulation on end-of-life vehicles, so that the six million cars scrapped annually in the EU can be better recycled. The Presidency will also support the adoption of a new, legally binding UN agreement to end plastic pollution.

Water is a precious resource facing pressure from pollution, climate change, and inefficient use. The Presidency will work towards Council conclusions on the European Water Resilience Strategy, setting the direction for protecting the EU's water supply and quality, strengthening resilience, and encouraging investment in water technologies.

Finally, the Presidency will be ready to start negotiations on the European chemicals legislation (REACH), aiming to modernise and simplify it to better support sustainable production and consumption of chemicals, while ensuring European consumers products free from hazardous chemicals and unnecessary PFAS.

## Green transition and competitiveness in the use of natural resources

Nature is under pressure in Europe and globally. The exploitation of land and water is causing crises for food production, biodiversity, the marine and aquatic environments, and the climate. It is crucial to reverse this negative trend and ensure the green transition strengthens competitiveness.

Integrated solutions are needed for the green transition of land use and natural resources such as water, forests, and biodiversity. The Presidency will address this and share experiences on partnerships in the green transition.

The bioeconomy and bio-based solutions hold great development potential, and the Presidency will prioritise political discussions on the upcoming EU bioeconomy strategy.

In addition, the Presidency will aim to conclude negotiations on the regulation for monitoring European forests.

It will also encourage strong international cooperation on biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the Global Biodiversity Framework and other nature conventions, while supporting EU compliance with these through the Nature and Water Directives.

The environmental condition of European seas remains poor in many areas. The Presidency will work to improve conditions for marine life conditions by prioritising discussions on the European Oceans Pact and conclude negotiations on the directive on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity (the BBNJ Agreement).

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts on EU action on nature and other relevant green transition topics in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

# Education, Youth, Culture and Sport

The Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council will strengthen European cooperation in the area of education, and this will include a revision of the strategic framework for the European Education Area.

The Danish Presidency will work towards a new declaration on European cooperation in vocational education and training to highlight the need for attractive vocational education and training offerings.

In the area of culture, the Presidency will emphasise the broader societal role of culture and encourage further work on the media aspects of a European Democracy Shield that can protect democracies from disinformation and foreign interference through free, pluralistic, and reliable media.

In the area of sport, democratic principles will also be at the centre, particularly in promoting greater transparency and democratic decision-making in international sport.

## Education and training

Erasmus+ has become the key programme for mobility and cooperation in education, youth, and sport in Europe, playing a major role in strengthening European integration, identity, and values among young people.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts on EU action in education, youth, and sport in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

The strategic framework for European cooperation in education aims to improve quality, equity, inclusion, mobility, lifelong learning, as well as digital and green education. The Presidency will advance the revision of the strategic framework for the European Education Area towards 2030.

In many Member States, there is a shortage of skilled workers. Attractive vocational education and training offerings are essential to meeting these challenges. The Presidency will work towards a new declaration on European cooperation in vocational education and training, succeeding the Osnabrück Declaration which will expire in 2025. The new declaration will take into account ongoing national efforts and include relevant new themes.

## Young people

The EU Youth Dialogue is key to ensuring that young people's voices are able to influence policy, and to promoting democratic participation and youth-friendly solutions. The Danish Presidency will focus on creating a solid framework for concrete and meaningful youth involvement in discussions on future EU programmes relating to education, youth, and sport.

## Culture

Amid growing geopolitical uncertainty, Europe must safeguard its values. The Danish Presidency will highlight the intrinsic value of culture as well as its broader role in supporting democratic values and resilience.

The Danish Presidency will be prepared to commence negotiations on possible proposals for legislative acts on culture and media in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2027.

Independent and reliable information is fundamental to vibrant and resilient democracies. Geopolitical and technological changes heighten the need to ensure citizens have access to reliable news. The Presidency will promote further work on the media-related aspects of a European Democracy Shield that can protect our democracies against disinformation and foreign interference. Efforts will focus on ensuring fair conditions for independent, pluralistic, and editorially responsible media, including public service media. The Presidency will also facilitate a discussion on the updating of EU regulatory frameworks, such as the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, to reflect the digital media landscape and promote trusted, diverse media.

## **Sport**

At a time of greater geopolitical uncertainty and significant commercial interests, the Danish Presidency will promote efforts to strengthen the European Sport Model. This model is based on European values such as democracy, transparency, solidarity, and human rights, which help to ensure fairness and openness in sports competitions, including in the allocation of hosting rights for international sporting events. The Presidency will initiate a political discussion on how the EU can support and collaborate with international sports federations to ensure increased democracy and greater transparency in sports, thereby preserving and strengthening the constructive role of sports in society.

