

# **PRIORITIES AND PROGRAM OF THE POLISH EU PRESIDENCY IN THE SECOND HALF OF 2011**

## **Information material**

On July 21 2010 the Council of Ministers adopted a document provisionally elaborating the plans of the Polish Presidency. They will evolve in line with the process of national consultations as well as talks with EU states, institutions and partners within the Poland-Denmark-Cyprus trio. The final list of priorities and the program of the Polish Presidency in the European Union will be unveiled in June 2011.

### **Polish Presidency program in context**

The plans of the Polish Presidency will depend on the long-term EU agenda, with particular importance attached to the 2011 program of works of the European Commission, which will be presented in December 2010. Furthermore, they will be significantly impacted by the economic situation and the progress of the European economy in emerging from the crisis and also the scope and directions of the relevant actions we take jointly within the EU. The plans of the Polish Presidency will also depend on the new mode of operation of the European Union as defined in the Lisbon Treaty. Poland will consult its plans with the President of the European Council, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Parliament. In the case of certain policies, the Treaty has given a clear impulse for greater engagement by the European Union — and Poland wants to tap this possibility. The global context, increasingly present in EU policy, will also influence the Polish Presidency since more and more challenges are of a global character (international trade and access to third-country markets, financial regulations and climate change) and a growing number of decisions is taken at the global level (G20+, WTO).

### **General priorities**

#### **1. Internal market**

As the European Union seeks to address the crisis and find sources of economic growth, Poland will advocate strengthening of the internal market, which carries untapped development potential. Furthermore, the adoption of that priority is indicated by the EU

agenda: the latter half of 2011 will coincide with the fulfillment of many initiatives that are the subject of ongoing works by the European Commission; meanwhile, the Poland-Denmark-Cyprus trio will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the internal market.

Polish actions relating to the internal market might concentrate on the implementation of European Commission proposals stemming from the Monti report on the future of the internal market, financial sector regulations, mobility issues, free transfer of expertise and innovation and the removal of existent barriers in intra-Union trade.

## **2. Relations with the East**

In collaboration with the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Poland will promote Eastern policy issues. In relations with countries covered by the Eastern Partnership we will strive for the conclusion of association agreements, adoption of mandates for negotiations on free-trade areas with the EU and the finalization of such talks with Ukraine, progress on visa and trade liberalization, and intensification of economic cooperation. In October 2011 we are planning to hold in Poland an Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

## **3. Strengthening of the EU's external energy policy**

Poland proposes an in-depth discussion on new legislative and non-legislative solutions designed to preserve the competitiveness of the European energy sector in a changing external environment. Debate will be conducted on the present solutions and new directions of action by the European Union in the energy market sphere, with the goal of elaborating new mechanisms for a solidary and competitive energy policy compliant with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty.

## **4. Common Security and Defense Policy**

The Polish Presidency will work to upgrade EU efficiency in the area of crisis management, deepen defense cooperation among Member States and ensure partnership with NATO in the context of the new possibilities created by the Lisbon Treaty. At national level, the implementation of these plans will enhance our defensive potential and civil capabilities.

## **5. Negotiations on the 2014-2020 financial framework**

That is one of the most important tasks facing the Polish Presidency and the whole Poland-Denmark-Cyprus trio. The Polish Presidency will coincide with the period of in-depth analysis of European Commission proposals and identification of the main negotiation issues.

The talks on the subject will begin in mid-2011 and its formal conclusions will take place in the second half of 2012, which will require a political agreement in the European Council in the first half of 2012, during the Danish Presidency. First and foremost, it will be the objective of the Polish Presidency to conduct efficient negotiations while advancing the negotiations as far as possible, including allowing all the member states to articulate their interests.

#### **6. Full utilization of Europe's intellectual capital**

The Polish Presidency intends to launch concrete initiatives, in collaboration with the European Commission, to stimulate the growth of intellectual capital. We will work towards that goal by enhancing cohesion and synergy between EU policies and initiatives leading to a better utilization of the EU's intellectual resources. The initiative will be congruent with the realization of the economic development strategy Europe 2020 and will boost Europe's competitive advantage.

#### **Presidency plans in the respective areas**

##### **Economic and financial issues**

In this area Poland will focus on the challenges facing the Union economy in consequence of the economic and financial crisis and the crisis of public finances. Strengthening of the EU's economic governance and consolidation of public finances will be the top priorities of the Polish Presidency. Poland intends to actively support actions enhancing long-term stability of public finances and, as a result, stable and sustainable economic growth.

Since the Polish Presidency will coincide with the implementation of the long-term goals that will be prepared by the task force on economic governance reform, Poland will also chair works on the fulfillment of the first cycle of a European economic semester. The Polish Presidency will also seek efficient adoption of the annual EU budget. The actions in the area of financial services will also be attuned to undertakings stemming from G20 decisions. The Polish Presidency will strive for the elaboration of a coordinated , unified EU position in the above forums.

##### **Forestry and fisheries**

The Polish Presidency will focus on reform of the direct payments system, future of the rural development policy, support for the development of renewable energy investments in rural areas and fundamental change of the principles of the Common Agricultural Policy.

As concerns reform of the direct payments system, Poland will seek agreement on a new system of direct payments. As regards the future of rural development policy, Poland will strive for agreement in the framework of strategic and legislative works, highlighting the significance of complementary use of CAP instruments and cohesion policy for rural development, as well as the substantial role of these areas in the context of new challenges (climate issues, protection of biological diversity, water management, public goods etc).

### **Cohesion policy**

Poland wants the Agenda of the General Affairs Council for the latter half of 2011 to include strategic issues concerning the future of cohesion policy in the context of the debate on cohesion policy draft regulations for the years 2014-2020. The Polish Presidency will seek the broadest possible compromise in areas that boost the effectiveness of cohesion policy in attaining EU development goals.

### **Transport, telecommunications and energy**

One of the key questions for the Polish Presidency will be revision of the guidelines concerning the Trans-European Transport Networks, including the principles of financing investments in TEN-T. The European Digital Agenda will be important since the implementation of many undertakings and initiatives it contains is scheduled in the second half of 2011. Also, Poland will assign priority to the challenges facing the e-administration.

In the context of strengthening the EU's external energy policy, Poland will strive for the elaboration of a coherent EU position on regional and global energy-related problems. Also on energy, the Presidency will work to put in place a mechanism for financing small and dispersed investments to enhance energy efficiency, using cohesion funds in such sectors as building, local heating, heat and electricity distribution networks, local public transportation and electricity production. Poland will also build on the work of earlier presidencies relating to the Energy Infrastructure Package.

### **Justice and home affairs**

Protection of the rights of European Union citizens will be a priority of the Polish Presidency in the justice sphere. Poland will concentrate on initiatives relating to judicial cooperation in civil cases (e.g. regulations concerning inheritance and the establishment of the European inheritance certificate) and penal cases (including discussion on the new Commission draft concerning victims' rights and the judicial rights of suspected and accused persons).

On home affairs, the Polish Presidency will assign priority to the protection and management of borders, development of the Eastern dimension of the Global Approach to Migration, development of the Eastern dimension of the initiatives on police cooperation and countering illegal migration, and stronger cooperation concerning the security of mass public events. An important role will be played by the visa liberalization policy towards Eastern Partnership states.

On border protection and management, the most important tasks will include conclusion of works on updating the Schengen Border Code, strengthening of the protection of minors crossing borders and continuation of works on IT systems. As regards police cooperation, works on the new Anti-Drug Strategy will be of key importance. On customs policy, Poland intends to focus on elaborating a new strategy for customs service cooperation, and the strengthening of the cooperation of customs services with the police, among others. As regards the protection of civil population, works will be launched on updating the Community Mechanism for Civil Protection and the Civil Protection Financial Instrument. Regarding asylum policy, we intend to continue works on the adoption of legislation constituting a second stage of the Common European Asylum System. As regards migration policy, emphasis will be placed on legislative works regarding legal migration.

### **Competitiveness**

Importance will be assigned to the debate on industrial policy in the context of the economic crisis and its effect on the condition of enterprises. The Polish Presidency might turn out to be the right time to collectively review the actions Member Countries committed themselves to conduct in 2008, in support of the action plan elaborated on the basis of the Small Business Act. We plan to address innovation and space policy, continue works on the establishment of the European patent, and legislative works concerning technical harmonization.

Improvement of the regulatory environment policy, i.e. the Smart Regulation initiative, will be important during the Polish Presidency, with particular reference to its bearing on the development of enterprise and improvement of the competitiveness of the European economy.

Poland intends to continue the review of the law relating to consumer rights, support the strengthening of consumer product safety and boost market supervision with regard to products that pose a potential threat.

An important place will be assigned to the enhancement of tourist industry competitiveness through an analysis of the role of innovation in tourism, assessment of new threats and of the progress in implementing the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism.

Moreover, works will continue to regulate the problem of orphan works and collective management of copyright and related rights. The Polish Presidency will also be responsible for coordinating and presenting the EU position at the World Intellectual Property Organization.

The Polish Presidency will coincide with works on the tenets of the 8<sup>th</sup> Framework Program for research and technological development. In that area, the main Presidency initiatives and actions will focus on enhancing the accessibility of the 8<sup>th</sup> FP to SMEs, small research teams and convergence regions, better coordination of research at the European, supra-national and national levels, and deeper integration within the European Research Area. Moreover, Poland seeks to boost the synergy between cohesion policy and the 8<sup>th</sup> Framework Program, striving to ensure complementarity between structural fund instruments and Framework Programs, to support the establishment of European clusters, create a mechanism for using funds from the 8<sup>th</sup> FP to finance the construction and operation of a regional research infrastructure and integrate regional and national policies in the RDI area.

### **Environment protection**

Debate on the development of environment policy will be assigned an important place. The Presidency will work to detail future goals of the policy and to launch another Community Action Program for the Environment. Protection of biological diversity will be a priority. Presidency works will focus on the adoption and implementation of an EU strategy concerning invasive foreign species and on the relevant draft legislation. The Presidency will advocate an in-depth discussion on ways of coupling nature protection with tangible effects of eco-systemic services and spatial planning.

The Presidency will continue works on a global climate accord during the Convention conference in the South African Republic in December 2011, which will imply the resolution of such issues within the EU as the reduction-goal ambitions, the future of the Kyoto protocol and climate financing.

The Presidency will work to reinvigorate the UN ECE initiative "Environment for Europe", which constitutes a unique forum for horizontal pan-European cooperation. The Presidency

tasks will concentrate on defining future reforms aimed at improving the environment conditions and quality of life of the process beneficiaries.

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### **Employment, social policy, health and environment protection**

On social policy and employment, the Polish Presidency will focus on ways of reconciling professional and private life, stimulating professional activation in view of the demographic challenges, promoting pro-active attitudes in the labor market and an active social integration policy, promoting diverse forms of cooperation between the government administration, local governments and NGOs for the fulfillment of social and employment policy goals.

On health and consumer protection, Poland intends to emphasize the improvement of public health, with particular reference to the narrowing of differences in the health situation of EU countries and countries of the Eastern Partnership. A review of the health policies of the EU states will be a significant goal of the Presidency. It will also assign importance to the early detection, prevention and treatment of non-infectious respiratory diseases, with particular reference to adolescents.

### **Education, youth and culture**

On culture, the leading subjects of the Polish Presidency will include development of social innovation and intellectual capital (through investment in culture, support for participation in culture and promotion of cultural and artistic education of persons of all ages) and negotiations on further editions of the Culture and Europe for Citizens programs.

Poland intends to address the issue of digitalization in connection with such projects as the European Digital Library Europeana, European cinema in the digital age and continuation of the Media 2007 program.

In the area of education, Polish Presidency priorities will include the development of pupil, student and teacher (including academic teacher) mobility, also in relations with the East, including countries of the Eastern Partnership, support for the education of migrants' children, enhancement of the policy to improve competencies of key importance in the context of elaborating European cooperation priorities in the spheres of education and training (ET 2020), and the modernization of universities.

In the sphere of youth affairs, Poland will prioritize youth mobility in the framework of non-formal education and volunteer activity, with particular reference to cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries.

In the area of sports, the adoption is scheduled of a European Sports Program for the years 2012-2013. In this context, Poland will highlight the social and economic aspects of sport.



## **Foreign affairs**

Under the Lisbon Treaty it is the High Commissioner for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy who is responsible for the EU's external relations, so the Presidency efforts to implement the EU's foreign policy priorities (with the exception of the common trade policy, where the Presidency will continue to take the lead) will require cooperation with High Representative C. Ashton.

In addition to such foreign policy topics of strategic importance to the Polish Presidency as relations with the East, the CSDP and energy security, we intend to take up issues of a horizontal character: the EU's development policy and its effectiveness, security policy — particularly in the context of combating terrorism, energy policy — with special emphasis on its external dimension and security, consular matters, including visa facilitation agreements in the framework of the Eastern Partnership, and the common trade policy.

In the enlargement field Polish Presidency aims at achieving tangible results i.e. adopting Council conclusions in response to the Commission's "enlargement package": the Enlargement Strategy 2011-2012. During the Polish Presidency the accession negotiations with Iceland are likely to advance further and the process of Croatia's accession to the EU will likely be in the final phase (ratification of the Accession Treaty). Poland will aim at continuing the accession negotiations with Turkey and at bringing the Western Balkans closer to the EU.

The Presidency will deal with issues pertaining to practically every region of the world, though particular emphasis will be placed on the Transatlantic links and relations with Russia.

On trade policy, the WTO Ministerial Conference will be the major event of horizontal character. It is likely to produce decisions on the most crucial questions involved in the DDA WTO round of multilateral trade negotiations.

The Polish Presidency might also see the finalization of Russia's accession to the WTO and the elaboration of a strategy to restrict or phase out protectionist measures introduced during the crisis. We also intend to address the increasing restrictions in international trade, facilitate commercial operations and transit, and conduct works on a new system of EU customs preferences for the developing countries.

The Polish Presidency might see the finalization of the EU's free trade accords with India, Singapore, Ukraine and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. There might also be the

finalization of other trade agreements (EU-Mercosur Association Agreement) and of the talks on free trade accords with Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand, as well as implementation of the EU's agreements with countries of Central America and the Andean Community.

### **Important events during the Polish Presidency**

In addition to the above general priorities of the Polish Presidency and its actions in the respective areas of EU policy, the Presidency will be also marked by noteworthy socio-economic initiatives connected with events planned in the latter half of 2011, including the European Year of Volunteering, the European Culture Congress, the European Congress of People with Disabilities and the Internal Market Forum. Those events and the related initiatives are meant to enhance Poland's political promotion and its image as a modern, creative and dynamic nation, receptive to the best examples and eager to benefit from the common European market. The Polish Presidency will also coincide with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the OECD and the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Polish membership of that organization.