

Meeting of the COSAC Chairpersons, Bucharest, 20-21 January 2019



Priorities of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Background Note

Between 1 January and 30 June 2019, Romania takes over for the first time the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

In this capacity, Romania will mainly have the responsibility to advance the Council's negotiations on EU legislation, to ensure the continuity of the EU agenda and the good cooperation between the Member States and the European institutions - the Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Council.

Romania will hold the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union in a context marked by multiple challenges that have an impact on both citizens' lives and Member States' governments.

The priorities of the Romanian Presidency will focus on four main pillars: (a) Ensuring sustainable and equitable growth for all Member States through enhanced convergence, innovation, digitization and connectivity; (b) maintaining a secure Europe; (c) strengthening the EU's global role and (d) promoting solidarity as a shared value of Europe. In preparing and exercising the Presidency, Romania will intensify sectorial dialogue with the European Commission to help achieve these ambitious goals.

Pillar 1: „Europe of convergence”

The Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union will aim to bring a contribution to ensuring convergence and cohesion in Europe, in order to achieve sustainable and equal development opportunities for all citizens and Member States, through increasing competitiveness and reducing development gaps, promoting connectivity and digitalization, stimulating entrepreneurship and consolidating the European industrial policy.

Main objectives:

- taking forward the negotiation process on the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework
- developing the EU social dimension, through the enforcement of the European Pillar of Social Rights
- advancing the EU agenda in the economic and financial fields, in order to stimulate growth and investment, to deepen the Economic and Monetary Union, as well as to support structural reforms
- promoting research and innovation, digitalization and connectivity, in order to increase the competitiveness of the European economy and industry.

Pillar 2: „A safer Europe”

The Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union will aim at consolidating a safer Europe through increased cohesion among EU Member States in dealing with the new security challenges that threaten the safety of citizens and through supporting the cooperation initiatives in the field.

Main objectives:

- strengthening the internal security, by boosting cooperation among Member States and increasing the interoperability of the EU security systems, protecting the safety of the citizens, companies and public institutions in the cyberspace and improving the overall resilience of the Union to cyber-attacks.
- continuing the fight against terrorism
- facilitating the operationalization of the European Public Prosecutor's Office
- giving further attention to migration issues, based on a comprehensive approach to action within the EU and on promoting cooperation with countries of origin and transit, as well as facilitating the dialogue among Member States with a view to finding solutions for an effective and sustainable EU migration and asylum policy.

Pillar 3: „Europe, as a stronger global actor”

During its mandate as Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Romania will support further consolidating the global role of the EU through promoting the enlargement policy, the European action in its neighbourhood, further implementing the Global Strategy, ensuring the necessary resources for the EU, and implementing all of the EU's global commitments.

Main objectives:

- promoting the strengthening of EU's defence and security capabilities in strong connection with the similar processes within NATO, with a special emphasis on consolidating the Strategic EU-NATO Partnership
- supporting further development of actions in the field of Common Security and Defence Policy, mainly by consolidating the current mechanisms while ensuring the synergy of the new instruments, such as: Coordinated Annual Review on Defence, European Defence Fund, and Permanent Structured Cooperation
- advancing the enlargement process of the EU in order to ensure more internal and external security
- promoting coordinated and coherent actions in the EU's neighbourhood, while celebrating 10 years since the launch of the Eastern Partnership, through reaffirming the importance of the Black Sea on EU agenda, including from the perspective of reinvigorating the Black Sea Synergy
- promoting the European commercial interests through both the consolidation of multilateralism and the modernisation of the multilateral trade system and through the enlargement of the Economic and Free Trade Partnership Agreements.

Pillar 4: „Europe of common values”

The Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union aims at stimulating the solidarity and cohesion of the EU through promoting policies on combating discrimination, ensuring equal chances and equal treatment between men and women, as well as through increasing the involvement of the citizens, in particular the youth, in the European debates.

Main objectives:

- promoting the efficient countering of racism, intolerance, xenophobia, populism, antisemitism and discouraging hate speech
- promoting the countering of online misinformation and fake news through better media literacy and the development of European mechanisms to share good practices in countering misinformation
- promoting and supporting the legislative initiatives focusing on social progress and reducing development gaps, equal opportunities between men and women, as well as ensuring access to education and training for disadvantaged categories
- countering gender discrimination in the labour market and business environment as well as the pay gaps between men and women.

