

The background of the slide features a low-angle shot of the Eiffel Tower on the left side, reaching towards the top. The right side is dominated by the intricate, dark branches of a tree with sparse, light-colored leaves. The sky is a clear, pale blue. A solid red diagonal bar is visible in the top-left corner, and another red diagonal bar is in the bottom-right corner.

FRENCH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU:

KEY ISSUES TO WATCH

January 2022

cicero/amo
strategic advisors

INTRODUCTION

From 1 January until 30 June 2022, France holds the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

This is an opportunity to **set the EU's policy agenda for six months**, offering the chance to prioritise specific issues and steer negotiations. The French government will also be holding formal and informal events across different French cities, with many being open to participation from external stakeholders.

President Macron announced key priorities, including **Europe's recovery from COVID-19, supporting socially-just digital and climate transitions**, as well as achieving European **"strategic sovereignty" on various issues** (e.g. health, industry, digital).

The Presidency comes at a critical time for France, with its presidential elections scheduled for 10 and 24 April. As the electoral campaign heats up, expect the spotlight to be increasingly shone on the progress of the Council Presidency and President Macron's successes at the EU level.

The below offers an overview of key highlights the Presidency included in its [programme](#), grouped by policy area. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

GET IN TOUCH...



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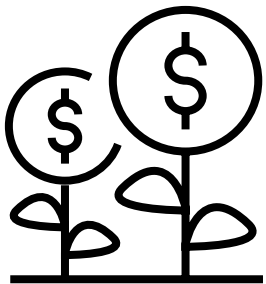
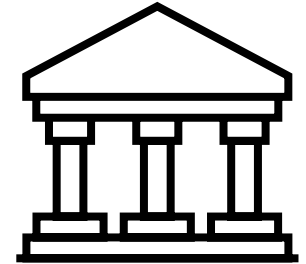
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The Presidency's [programme](#) is structured around three pillars:

- **"A more sovereign Europe"** – A greater focus on strengthening EU's borders, building up its security and defence capabilities, deepening its relationship with its neighbours (notably Africa and the Western Balkans), as well as addressing global challenges.
- **"A new European model for growth"** – A drive for economic growth based on innovative industries that are aligned with the EU's social and climate objectives. For the digital space, cultivating European digital players alongside the EU setting its own rules.#
- **"A more human Europe"** - Listening to the outcomes of the Conference on the Future of Europe, defending European values (e.g. rule of law), fighting discrimination, as well as protecting European culture and trust in science and expertise. Underpinning all of this is the aim of ensuring a better future for the next generation.

Financial Services

- Advance the **Capital Markets Union**, notably on the **Single Access Point** for financial and non-financial information, the **Long-Term Investment Funds** framework and the **review of the Alternative Investment Fund Managers Directive**.
- Accelerate discussions on the **Consumer Credit Directive**, start work on the revision of the **Directive on Distance Marketing of Consumer Financial Services**.
- Carry forward negotiations on **banking and insurance prudential Regulations** (Solvency II and Basel III) and deepen the **Banking Union** in relation to progress made in the Eurogroup.
- Accelerate the harmonised regulation of digital finance, through the Markets in Crypto Assets Regulation (**MiCa**) and the Digital Operational Resilience Act (**DORA**); whilst introducing stronger safeguards in anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (**AML/CTF**).

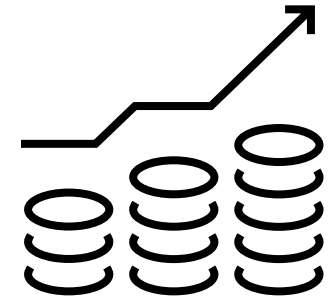


Taxation, Green Finance and Corporate Social Responsibility

- Implement the **OECD Pillar Two agreement on minimum taxation** at the EU level, working on the Commission proposal from December 2021. Entry into force set for 1 January 2023.
- Appraisal of the **changes to the EU's e-commerce VAT rules** that took place in July 2021, in view of discussing necessary next steps.
- Prioritise work on the **Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)**.
- Push for the final adoption of the **EU green bond standard** under the French Presidency.
- **Key events:** Ministerial conference on sovereignty in the face of financial crime (21 Jan).

Recovery and Growth

- Ensure **recovery funds** are allocated swiftly to the Member States according to their national recovery and resilience plans, seeking a coordinated strategy for investments and structural reforms.
- Continue discussions on a **review of the EU's economic governance framework**, including fiscal rules, and the macroeconomic imbalances procedure.
- Launch discussions on a targeted revision of the **EU Financial Regulation**, aligning it with the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework.
- Continue work on **new own resources** linked to the climate transition, as proposed by the Commission in 2021.
- **Key events:** Debate on economic governance at Economic and Financial Affairs Council meeting (March); European Council summit on a 'new European growth and investment model' (10-11 Mar).

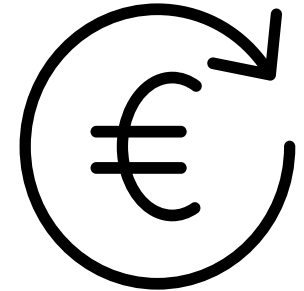


Digital

- Progress negotiations of the revision of the **Network and Information Security Directive (NIS II)** and the proposed **Regulation on Artificial Intelligence**.
- Support work on the proposed revision of the **ePrivacy Regulation** and initiate discussions on the upcoming **Data Act**.
- Continue negotiations on an **EU digital identity (eID)** and commence work on the **revision of the Broadband Cost Reduction Directive** when published.
- Strengthen **European cooperation** based on the **Commission's programme for digital policy** and upcoming interinstitutional agreement setting out the **EU's principles for digital policy**.
- **Key events:** Ministerial conference on digital sovereignty (early Feb); Digital Assembly (end Jun).

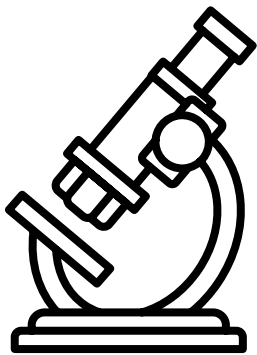
Internal Market and Industry

- Continue deepening the internal market and start discussions on the **single market emergency instrument**.
- Negotiations on the **Digital Markets Act (DMA)** and **Digital Services Act (DSA)** prioritised.
- Advance discussions on the revision of the **General Product Safety Directive**.
- On standardisation, continue work on **Directive on a common charger**, the **Machinery Regulation**, and **Construction Products Regulation**.
- Support accelerating work towards a **Unified Patent Court** at the EU level.
- Hold initial talks on a proposed **Regulation on short-term rental (STR) accommodation**.
- **Key events**: informal meeting of tourism ministers (26-27 Jan).



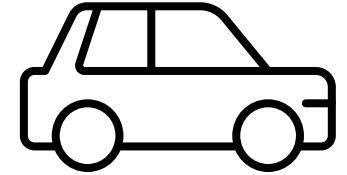
Strategic Autonomy, Research, and Innovation

- Enhance the EU's strategic autonomy, advancing **Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEIs)** in key sectors (e.g. cloud technology, hydrogen, health) alongside other European instruments.
- Begin work on the **European Chips Act** once published, as well continue discussions on the proposed **Regulation on foreign subsidies distorting the internal market**.
- Through the **European Innovation Council (EIC)**, support research into emerging technologies, as well as an **Accelerator Pilot** and a **scale-up fund** for SMEs and start-ups.
- Support the continued rollout of the **Horizon Europe research programme**, endeavour to launch new public-private partnerships under an updated format.
- **Key events**: Conference on Europe as a leader in breakthrough innovation (11 May).



Transport

- Work to implement the actions set out in the **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy**.
- Continue progress on the **'Fit for 55' package**, notably on the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR), as well as "Fuel EU Maritime", and "ReFuel EU Aviation"
- Start work on the "Efficient and Green Mobility" package, including the revisions of the **Trans-European Network for Transport (TEN-T) Regulation** and the **Intelligent Transport Systems Directive**.
- Follow work on legislative proposals establishing a harmonised framework for access to **in-vehicle data** and **new emissions standards for new vehicles** (Euro 7). Commission publication upcoming.
- In aviation, pursue reforms of the **Single European Sky**, along with advancing aviation agreement discussions with third countries.



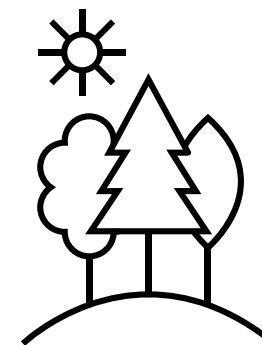
Energy

- Continue progress on the **'Fit for 55' package**, notably the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II), the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED), Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), and the Energy Tax Directive (ETD).
- Start discussions on the **Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)**.
- Begin negotiations on the proposed revision to the **Gas Regulation** and **Gas Directive**, as well as the proposed Regulation on the reduction of methane emissions in the energy sector.
- Continue efforts to **tackle energy prices** in the EU.
- Ensure **nuclear** energy remains a viable energy source under EU law.
- **Key events**: Ministerial conference on nuclear and decarbonisation (early Mar); Ministerial conference on housing (early Mar).



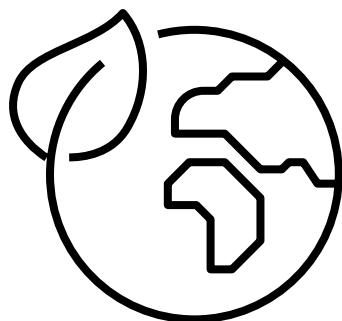
Climate Change and Biodiversity

- Continue progress on the **'Fit for 55' package**, ensuring it remains “socially acceptable”. Files include: EU Emissions Trading System (ETS); the Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR); Land use and forestry (LULUCF) Regulation; Social Climate Fund; Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).
- Advance discussions on the **Regulation addressing imported products linked to deforestation** and the Regulation on establishing a legal framework for restoring healthy ecosystems.
- Prepare for upcoming **international conferences**, (e.g. COP27, COP15 Biodiversity, CITES).
- **Key events**: Ministerial conference on nature and biodiversity in cities (end Jan); 30th anniversary of the Natura 2000 network (end Feb).



Circular Economy and a Healthy Environment

- Accelerate interinstitutional negotiations on the **Batteries Regulation**.
- Examine the revision of the **Transboundary Waste Shipments Regulation**.
- Kick off negotiations on the **Sustainable Products Initiative**.
- Make progress on the **EU's Sustainable Textiles Strategy**.
- At the **international level**, prepare for the 5th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), as well as international conventions on chemicals and waste.
- Start discussions on initiatives expected under **EU chemicals policy** (e.g. on endocrine disruptors, pesticides, emissions of pollutants, waste management). Start initial work on the **Regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases** and the **Regulation on Ozone-depleting substances**.
- Continue work started at the end of 2021 on **persistent organic pollutants**.
- **Key events**: Ministerial conference on the circular economy (early Mar); Ministerial conference on management and negative impacts of chemicals (May).



Get in touch...

If you would like to speak to us about this document or how we can support your organisation, please contact a member of the EU Public Affairs team:



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