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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Permanent Representatives Committee

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Subject: **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL (GENERAL AFFAIRS) ON 18 MARCH  
2025: PREPARATION**  
Legislative programming  
- Joint Declaration on the EU legislative priorities for 2025

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**Joint Declaration of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the  
European Commission on**

**EU legislative priorities for 2025**

Last year, a record number of citizens cast their vote in the European elections, turning to the EU for joint solutions to the global challenges that define this era. From rising geostrategic competition, a volatile global security environment, the devastating effects of climate change, the pressures of irregular migration and the assaults on our democracy, to the challenges and opportunities of rapid technological developments and the all-important need to boost our future prosperity and competitiveness; we will work on joint responses at EU level.

We will work to preserve the EU's global influence and protect and defend our fundamental rights and values, democracy and the rule of law within our Union and beyond. We will continue standing by Ukraine as it fights Russia's war of aggression and support its reconstruction and the pursuit of a just and lasting peace. We stand ready to act and react rapidly to new challenges, including by making sure the EU and its Member States are playing their role in major geopolitical shifts.

The strategic vision for the Union, enshrined in our three institutions' Joint Conclusions on policy objectives and priorities for 2025-2029, will guide our action in these tumultuous times. Our actions will be framed with an urgency mindset and will focus on strengthening our competitiveness while retaining our unique social market economy model, reinforcing our security architecture and defence capabilities, becoming more innovative and achieving digital leadership, achieving a far-reaching simplification of EU rules to ensure efficient delivery of our policy objectives, protecting nature and gaining climate neutrality in the Union by 2050.

Drawing on the Commission work programme for 2025, the three institutions agree to give the utmost priority to the following key policy objectives:

1. We will usher in a **new era for European defence and security** to face the increasingly volatile global and domestic security environment. We will work towards a surge in investment in defence to enhance the EU's defence capabilities and production, and take forward our work on common procurement ensuring the supply of European defence products and boosting our European technological and industrial base. We will strengthen our readiness to face various types of crises by working on an EU Preparedness Union. We will also strengthen our cyber defence capabilities as part of a broader exercise to bolster European defence. Furthermore, we will provide a holistic response to threats to internal security as well as cross-cutting and hybrid challenges based on an EU Internal Security Strategy. We will continue addressing irregular migration in a comprehensive way, ensuring the swift implementation of adopted EU legislation, expanding on our partnerships with third countries, and by taking forward a common approach to returns and safe countries.

2. To boost **Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness**, we will address high energy prices and further reduce our energy dependency, deepen our Single Market, support European strategic sectors and SMEs, ensure digital tech diffusion, promote quality jobs and turbo-charge public and private investments. By doing so, we will promote strong, competitive industries and European businesses that become leading global innovators, particularly in Artificial Intelligence. We will stay the course to climate neutrality in the Union by 2050 while committing to a just transition promoting social cohesion and equity. Working jointly on a range of measures across different sectors, we will pursue our common goal of making EU rules simpler and less burdensome as a matter of urgency. We will do so without compromising agreed policy objectives, preserving the scope of simplification initiatives without reopening other parts of the legislation, to provide maximum and swift relief to companies.
3. To **support people, strengthening our societies and our social model**, we will continue to ensure that our clean and digital transitions will go hand-in-hand with a strong social agenda, and address the pressing issues of poverty and affordable housing in the EU. Framed by a new action plan, we will continue to make progress in implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights and work towards intergenerational fairness. We will reinforce our engagement to advance gender equality and women’s rights in all areas of life, from the fight against gender-based violence to equal pay, economic empowerment and political participation. We will continue our efforts to safeguard equality and fundamental rights, help attract people with the right skills to match our labour market needs and address adverse effects of digital services on the health and well-being of citizens. We commit to promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion and supporting the development of thriving, sustainable, and inclusive regions and cities.
4. To **sustain our quality of life**, we will aim to strengthen the rules on the protection of nature, including the ocean and the seas, and to better manage our resources and notably the EU’s water resilience. We will acknowledge, promote and reward farmers and fishers to ensure our food security and for preserving nature to help us reach our biodiversity and climate targets.

5. To **protect our democracy and uphold our values and defend the rule of law**, we will work on a variety of areas to counter foreign information manipulation and interference online and disinformation. We will strengthen our engagement to restore trust in democratic processes and pursue our work on strengthening civil society.
6. To **leverage our power and partnerships**, we will continue to closely coordinate with like-minded partners on a range of issues including climate policy, trade, energy, migration, legal pathways into the EU, security and resilience. To this end, we will strengthen our ties with our partners around the Mediterranean, as well as with Africa and India. We remain committed to the Union's enlargement as an investment in peace, stability and prosperity. We will work towards reforming our policies and procedures to prepare ourselves for the future in an enlarged Union. We will ensure that the EU and Member States continue to be one of the leading humanitarian aid donors.
7. To make these ambitions a reality, we will start discussions on the **new long-term budget** (Multiannual Financial Framework) and its financing, which must be flexible to address the challenges the EU is facing, more focused on our priorities, including the Rule of Law conditionality mechanism, simpler and more impactful. We will continue to work towards the introduction of new own resources.

The three institutions commit to work on these shared 2025 priorities guided by the principles of mutual trust, respect and a collaborative spirit. We will prioritise legislative proposals aiming to simplify legislation and reduce burden and step up efforts to ensure proper implementation and enforcement of existing legislation.

We, as Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, will closely monitor the timely and effective implementation of this Joint Declaration.

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