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**DRAFT MINUTES**

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION  
(Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space))  
22 and 23 May 2025

## MEETING ON THURSDAY 22 MAY 2025 (09:30)

### **1. Adoption of the agenda**

The Council adopted the agenda set out in document 8712/25.

### **2. Approval of "A" items**

#### **Non-legislative list**


9041/25

The Council adopted all "A" items listed in the document above, including all linguistic COR and REV documents presented for adoption.

## INTERNAL MARKET AND INDUSTRY

### Legislative deliberations

**(Public deliberation in accordance with Article 16(8) of the Treaty on European Union)**

- 3. Regulation on a public interface connected to the Internal Market Information System for the declaration of posting of workers and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012**  8659/25 + ADD 1  
*General approach*

The Council reached a general approach on the Regulation on a public interface connected to the Internal Market Information System for the declaration of posting of workers and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012.

Germany, Luxembourg, Spain, Belgium, France and Italy presented statements, as set out in the Annex.

### Non-legislative activities

- 4. Boosting competitiveness - making EU policies better tailored for traditionally strong industries**  8647/25 + COR 1  
*Policy debate*

The Council held a policy debate.

5. **Single Market Strategy** [2] 8654/25  
*Presentation by the Commission*  
*Exchange of views*

The Council took note of the presentation by the Commission and held an exchange of views.

6. Public procurement – strategic goals and way forward 8638/25  
*Policy debate*

7. **Council as a red tape filter – how to achieve business-friendly regulations during the legislative process from its very beginning** [2] 8649/1/25 REV 1  
*Policy debate*

The Council held a policy debate.

### **Any other business**

8. a) **Current legislative proposals** (Public deliberation in accordance with Article 16(8) of the Treaty on European Union) [1][C]
- i) **Regulation on combating late payment in commercial transactions** 12976/1/23 REV 1
- ii) **Directive on European cross-border associations** 12800/23
- iii) **Regulation on compulsory licensing for crisis management and amending Regulation (EC) 816/2006** 8901/23 + ADD 1
- iv) **Regulation on the safety of toys** 12234/23 + ADD 1
- v) **Regulation on detergents and surfactants, amending Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 648/2004** 8904/23 + ADD 1  
*Information from the Presidency*


The Council took note of the information provided by the Presidency.

- vi) **The need to continue discussions on the Commission's proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on standard essential patents and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/1001**  
*Information from Czechia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain*

8655/1/25 REV 1


The Council took note of the information provided by Czechia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain.

- b) **Call for a swift implementation of the Action Plan for the European automotive industry, including support for the European battery value chain**  
*Information from France*

 8955/25

The Council took note of the information provided by France.

- c) **Mobilising funding for industry and the EU's strategic autonomy, at European and national level**  
*Information from France*

 8956/25

The Council took note of the information provided by France.

- d) Exchange of information – Increase in customs duties by the US authorities, in particular the measures in place to establish a monitoring and to guard against the risks of redirection of overcapacity flows toward the European market  
*Information from Belgium and France*

9053/25

- e) Work programme of the incoming Presidency  
*Information from Denmark*

**Non-legislative activities**

**RESEARCH**

9. **Mid-term evaluation of Horizon Europe: lessons learned and looking forward to the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP 10)** [2] 8496/25  
*Policy debate*

The Council held a policy debate.

10. **Council Recommendation on the European Research Area Policy Agenda 2025-2027** [2][C] 8469/25  
(\*) + ADD 1  
(Legal basis proposed by the Commission: Article 292 TFEU)  
*Political agreement*

The Council reached a political agreement on the Council Recommendation on the European Research Area Policy Agenda 2025-2027.

Bulgaria and Hungary presented statements, as set out in the Annex.

11. **Conclusions on Artificial Intelligence in science** [2] 8390/25  
*Approval*

The Council approved the text of conclusions as set out in the document above.

**SPACE**

12. **Conclusions on the use of satellite data, in particular from Earth observation constellations, for civil protection and crisis management** [2] 8343/25  
*Approval*

The Council approved the text of conclusions as set out in the document above.

13. **Space-based data for enhancing resilience, security and crisis management in the EU<sup>1</sup>** 8344/25  
*Exchange of views*


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<sup>1</sup> In the presence of the Executive Director of the European Union Space Programme Agency (EUSPA).

## Any other business

### Research

14. a) **The Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area beyond 2027**

 8794/1/25 REV 1

*Information from Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain*

The Council took note of the information provided by Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain.

b) Work programme of the incoming Presidency  
*Information from Denmark*

### Space

c) Work programme of the incoming Presidency  
*Information from Denmark*

d) Space for resilience, security and crisis management<sup>2</sup>  
*Information from the Presidency*

8436/25



First reading



Public debate proposed by the Presidency (Article 8(2) of the Council's Rules of Procedure)



Item based on a Commission proposal



Item on which a vote may be requested

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<sup>2</sup> Presentation by the Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA).

**Statements to the legislative "B" items set out in doc. 8712/25****Ad "B" item 3:****Regulation on a public interface connected to the Internal Market  
Information System for the declaration of posting of workers and  
amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012***General approach***STATEMENT BY GERMANY**

“The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany gives its approval to the current proposal for a Regulation on a common EU-wide registration portal for the posting of workers on the basis of a uniform standard form, the e-declaration, which Member States can introduce on a voluntary basis. At the same time, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany believes that further adjustments are possible and are absolutely needed to attain further reductions in bureaucracy and efficient, modern processes.

The proposal for a Regulation essentially dovetails well with the EU strategies to boost competitiveness, simplification and digitalisation. Reducing the administrative burden for service providers and competent national authorities, while ensuring adequate working conditions and social and data protection, is the stated aim of the proposal.

For this to be achieved, it is indispensable that service providers based outside the European Union are also able to issue a posting declaration via the common EU-wide registration portal. Only then will the competent authorities of the Member States be in a position to work with just a single portal in the medium term. Otherwise, the Member States will be forced in the long term to operate at least two registration portals and thus multiple structures: one portal for EU companies and one portal for companies based outside the EU. According to the European Commission report entitled ‘Posting of Workers – Collection of data from the prior declaration tools: Reference year 2023’, this could affect up to 21 Member States, all of which require a posting declaration from companies based outside the EU and thus help to ensure, via effective checks on companies based in non-Member States, that those companies do not enjoy more favourable treatment than companies based in other Member States.

In order to implement the EU’s simplification and digitalisation strategies and, via the common EU-wide portal, also reduce the administrative burden and costs for enforcement authorities, it is essential to include posting declarations from companies based outside the EU. In the medium term it is vital to avoid a situation in which two parallel systems create duplicate structures and additional financial and administrative burdens for enforcement authorities.

The more Member States that participate voluntarily in the proposal, the better it will be for companies, too. For years, companies have been saying that the bureaucracy involved in the declaration of posting of workers is a barrier to the single market for services. The differing declaration systems in the 27 Member States create considerable challenges for companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. Transparent and more uniform rules for posting declarations will also be easier for companies to comply with. In addition, efficient work by the authorities in the Member States will help to ensure the functioning of the single market and to boost competitiveness with market participants based in non-Member States. Also, the availability of data will improve – a precondition for policy decisions that also take companies based outside the EU into account.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany therefore strongly advocates that a solution for the registration of service providers from third countries be found as quickly as possible. The text of the Regulation should pursue a more ambitious approach. The Federal Government assumes that the further trilogue negotiations will take this matter into account.”

## **STATEMENT BY LUXEMBOURG**

“Luxembourg fully supports the Commission's efforts to improve the internal market, including through the simplification of administrative procedures. However, the current proposal does not achieve these objectives, and it does not justify the use of Article 114 TFEU.

In its current form, the instrument relies on the voluntary participation of Member States and it does not reduce the existing fragmentation. In the absence of harmonisation and by giving each Member State the choice to stop using the instrument anytime even consolidates the current legal fragmentation and risks creating a multiple-speed Single Market.

Luxembourg is convinced that joint action by the 27 Member States is the only way to attain the objectives of the proposal both in terms of simplification as well as deepening the Single Market.

Despite the Presidency's efforts, Luxembourg is therefore unable to support the proposal as it stands.”

## **STATEMENT BY SPAIN**

“Spain reaffirms its commitment to building a fair, inclusive, and socially responsible internal market.

In the negotiations on the proposed Regulation for a European common interface for the posting declaration of workers, Spain has participated actively and constructively, aiming to strike a genuine balance between administrative simplification and the effective protection of labour rights.

Spain firmly upholds that the freedom to provide services must be exercised under conditions of fair competition, which requires ensuring full respect for the working conditions and rights of posted workers.

To achieve this, it is essential to preserve national competences in the control of posting, enabling Member States to implement monitoring mechanisms tailored to the specificities of their labour markets in order to ensure effective protection in particularly sensitive sectors.



Spanish legislation, which rigorously transposes Directive 2014/67/EU, lays down specific information obligations regarding posting, designed to protect groups of posted workers who are particularly vulnerable.

Spain welcomes the objective of enhancing administrative cooperation and facilitating regulatory compliance, provided that simplification takes national realities into account, avoids situations of lack of protection, and respects the *acquis* on the posting of workers, preserving the current levels of requirements. It is also necessary to consider the protection of workers posted by companies established outside the EU/EEA area.

The success of this initiative will largely depend on all Member States ultimately using the interface. For this to happen, the standard form must accommodate national specificities reflected in the national transposition rules of the directives, as well as its future openness to declarations made by companies established in third countries, which will enhance its practical utility.

Spain will continue to work constructively in the upcoming stages of the legislative procedure, with the goal of consolidating a balanced framework that strengthens both the functioning of the internal market and the European social model.”

## **JOINT STATEMENT BY BELGIUM, FRANCE AND ITALY**

“The e-declaration regulation proposal was published by the European Commission with the aim of simplifying the companies’ procedures when posting workers in another Member State. While fully supporting the objective to create a common and voluntary digital tool at EU level to support companies and in particular SMEs to comply with the requirements for posting of workers, it is of the utmost importance that we achieve this objective in full respect of the EU *acquis* to protect posted workers’ rights and combat fraud. Given that *acquis*, one of the key elements of the discussion has been to focus on respecting national prerogatives.

Indeed, Member States all across the EU can be in very different situations when it comes to posting: some of them are mainly sending posted workers, others are mainly receiving them, while a third category of Member States both send and receive posted workers. In that context, the level of requirements towards companies set up at national level can diverge within the EU. This explains why, within the frame of directive 2014/67, it is up to the Member States to decide what administrative requirements and control measures should be implemented at national level to ensure effective monitoring of compliance with the obligations set out in Directive 2014/67/EU and 96/71/EC, provided that these are justified and proportionate according to Union law.

A standard form at a European level represents an opportunity for the companies to use a common tool. The text proposed to the Council today makes it clear that it will be used by Member States on a voluntary basis, and that the information requirements set up in national laws should be reflected in the common list of information.

As we are particularly vigilant when it comes to the quality of postings and the conditions in which posted workers are working, we remain watchful for the coming steps of the negotiations that the responsibility of Member States towards the implementation of the EU *acquis* should not be undermined in any way. Additionally, the committee procedure should be clear and aligned with the EU *acquis*. The decision of Member States in terms of information requirements to allow factual controls should not be jeopardized by this regulation.”

**Ad "B" item 10:**

**STATEMENT BY BULGARIA**

“The Republic of Bulgaria attaches great importance to the promotion and protection of human rights. The country is and will remain dedicated to its human rights commitments, including combating harassment in the workplace.

In 2018, the Bulgarian Constitutional Court adopted a decision according to which the Council of Europe’s Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (‘Istanbul Convention’) promotes legal concepts related to the concept of ‘gender’ that are incompatible with the fundamental principles of the Bulgarian Constitution. In 2021, the Constitutional Court further clarified that the concept of sex used in the Constitution should be understood, in the context of the national legal order, in its biological sense (men and women) only.

In line with the abovementioned decision by the Constitutional Court, the Republic of Bulgaria declares that the country cannot accept either the concept of ‘gender’, or the gender-based approach of the Council of Europe’s Convention or any other document that seeks to distinguish between ‘sex’ as a biological (women and men) category and ‘gender’ as a social construct.

Bulgaria agrees with the need to strengthen gender equality in the European Research Area, where progress can be made by implementing the relevant structural policy of the European Research Area under the European Research Area Policy Programme 2025-2027. However, Bulgaria wishes to underline that it will interpret all terminology related to gender in the abovementioned Council Recommendation strictly within the framework of the binary concept of sex. In addition, the term ‘cross-sectoral approach’ will be understood exclusively in the context of the discriminatory grounds recognised by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.”

**STATEMENT BY HUNGARY**

“Hungary recognises and promotes equality between men and women in accordance with the Fundamental Law of Hungary and the primary law, principles and values of the European Union, as well as commitments and principles stemming from international law. Equality between women and men is enshrined in the Treaties of the European Union as a fundamental value. In line with these and its national legislation, Hungary interprets the term ‘gender’ as a reference to ‘sex’ in the Recommendation on the European Research Area Policy Agenda 2025-2027.”

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