

BELGIAN PRESIDENCY

OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE EUROPEAN
UNION

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01

Context of the EU Council Presidency



On January 1st, Belgium took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first half of 2024. The Presidency will be dominated by the EU elections, which will take place from June 6th to 9th. The Belgians will therefore have little time to set their own priorities but rather continue and finalise legislative proposals that have already been started.

A number of important legislative proposals were adopted under the Spanish Council Presidency by December; now it is a matter of finalising the details and ratification. Among other things, the final text of the new budgetary rules will have to be negotiated with the European Parliament. Essentially, the aim is to give countries greater flexibility for investments and for reducing debt and deficits. The reform of the asylum system and the EU AI Act, the technical details of which are still to be negotiated, also need to be formally approved.

Belgium will have a special role to play as a mediator to resolve Hungary's blockade of providing further assistance to Ukraine. The specific issue is the new €50 billion aid package

for 2024-2027 and the increase in the EU budget to pay for it. European leaders will, therefore, meet for an extraordinary European Council meeting on 1 February. The aim is once again to demonstrate the unity of the European Union and its ability to act.

Belgium's Prime Minister Alexander De Croo has chosen 'Protect, strengthen, prepare' as the motto for his presidency. Accordingly, he intends to focus on big-picture issues and discuss EU reforms. Another focus will be to prepare for the enlargement of the Union to include new member states.

In any case, time is short for Belgium. The European Parliament will hold its last plenary session before the elections at the end of April. What has not been completed by then will have to be taken up by the next parliament and a newly formed EU Commission in the autumn. It's going to be an exciting spring, particularly for Belgium, which is holding its national elections on the same Sunday as the EU elections.

If you want to know more about our German perspective on politics, have a look at our weekly bit "[**In a Krautshell**](#)".



DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION¹

11.7 million (2022)

POPULATION GROWTH²

0.9 % (annual 2022)

LIFE EXPECTANCY³

82.5 years (average)



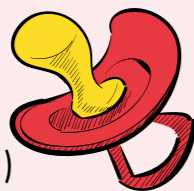
84.5 years



80.4 years

BIRTH RATE⁴

1.6 children (2022)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES⁵DUTCH, FRENCH,
GERMAN

ECONOMY

CURRENCY⁶ EURO

GDP

€ 552,446.4 million

↑ +3.2%

annual GDP (2022)⁷GDP growth
(annual)
(2022)⁸

€ 46,336.5

GDP per capita
(2022)⁹TRADE¹⁰

€ 524 billion in exports (2022)

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS¹¹GERMANY
THE NETHERLANDS
FRANCE
USAECONOMIC SECTORS BY REVENUE¹²

- Services (68.26%)
- Industry (20.72%)
- Agriculture (0.66%)

MAIN INDUSTRIAL SECTORS¹³

- Pharmaceutical industry (20.4%)
- Food and Beverage industry (15.3%)
- Chemical industry (15%)
- Manufacture of basic metals and fabricated metal products (11%)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE¹⁴

5.6 % (2022)

POLITICAL SYSTEM¹⁵

Belgium is a **Parliamentary Monarchy**. King **Philippe** has been Head of State since July 21st, 2013.



Since 1970, Belgium has undergone a transformation from a central state to a federal state through several state reforms. It now consists of **three regions** (Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels-Capital) and culturally and linguistically defined "communities" (French, Flemish, German), each forming **their own government**.

The three regions of Belgium, Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels, also each have **their own parliament and government**, which means that Belgium currently has **six different parliaments and governments**.

Most **legislative powers**¹⁶ lie with the regions and communities, including their representation at international and European level.

The current national governing coalition under **Prime Minister Alexander De Croo** was formed in October 2020 and is made up of seven parties that are both French- and Flemish-speaking. The federal parliament, consisting of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, is based in Brussels and is elected for five years.

The next elections to the Chamber of Deputies will take place on **June 9, 2024**. The Chamber is responsible for general legislation, budgetary law and government oversight.

The Senate represents the regions and communities in the federal legislative process and is involved in constitutional amendments. It has an advisory role and acts as a mediator between the various regions and communities.

MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES¹⁷

- **Vooruit** (Flemish centre-left social-democratic)
- **Parti Socialiste "PS"** (French centre-left social-democratic)
- **Open Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten "VLD"** (Flemish liberals)
- **Mouvement Réformateur „MR"** (liberal party of the center-right and right-wing voters in Wallonia and Brussels)
- **Groen** (Flemish Green party, progressive, leftists)
- **Ecolo** (French Green party)
- **Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams "CD&V"** (Flemish Christian-democrats)
- **Les Engagés** (French centrists/conservatives)
- **Parti du Travail de Belgique / Partij van de Arbeid van België "PTB-PVDA"** (marxist socialists)
- **Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie "N-VA"** (nationalist conservatives)
- **Vlaams Belang** (far-right, Flemish separatists)
- **DéFI** (abbreviated translation of "challenge": centrist party based in Brussels)

HISTORY¹⁸

- **1815** ● Belgium (the Southern Netherlands) and Holland (the Northern Netherlands) are united under King William I to form a single state.
- **1830** ● Revolution breaks out in Brussels and Belgium finally declares its independence.
- **1831** ● The monarchy is established. Leopold I, Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, becomes the first King of the Belgians on 21 July 1831.
- **1865** ● Leopold II becomes King of the Belgians.
- **1885** ● The Belgian parliament authorizes Leopold II to become the Head of State of Congo.
- **1908** ● The administration of Congo is transferred to the Belgian state.
- **1909** ● Albert I becomes King of the Belgians.
- **1911** ● A census in the Congo shows that around 25 million Congolese had died during the 23 years of Leopold II's rule.
- **1914-1918** ● Although Belgium adhered to the policy of neutrality, the country was not spared the First World War.
- **1934** ● Leopold III becomes King of the Belgians.
- **1940** ● German troops invade Belgium again. After 18 days, King Leopold III (1934–1951) surrenders to the Germans.
- **1949** ● Belgium joins NATO.
- **1951** ● Due to this decision Leopold II abdicates the throne. His son Baudouin I becomes king.
- **1957** ● Belgium founds the European Economic Community together with Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.
- **1960** ● Congo gains its independence.
- **1993** ● Albert II becomes King of the Belgians. Belgium becomes a fully-fledged federal state.
- **2002** ● Euro replaces Belgian franc.
- **2013** ● Philippe becomes King of the Belgians.
- **2016** ● Islamist attacks in Brussels severely impact Belgium.
- **2024** ● Belgium takes over the presidency of the EU.

FUN FACTS

In **2019/2020**¹⁹ Belgium broke its own previous world record by taking more than 600 days to form a federal government.

There are over **1000**²⁰ different types of beer brewed in Belgium.

The Smurfs²¹ come from Belgium.

Belgian computer scientist **Robert Cailliau**²², together with his English colleague Berners-Lee, invented the hypertext system for accessing documentation, which eventually led to the creation of the World Wide Web.



03

Priorities for the Presidency

Priority 1

DEFENDING RULE OF LAW, DEMOCRACY, AND UNITY

Defending the principles of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights will be an essential element in the work of the Belgian Presidency of the Council. The Presidency will strengthen the empowerment and inclusion of citizens, with a special focus on youth participation, as well as work on the European education area, quality of education, lifelong learning, mobility and sport. It will promote democratic values by reinforcing media freedom and pluralism, stimulating the digital transformation of the cultural and creative sectors, and exploring the links between culture, heritage, and European identity.

Priority 2

STRENGTHENING THE EU'S COMPETITIVENESS

The Belgian Presidency will work to strengthen the EU's internal market and industrial future and continue the work to complete the capital markets union and the energy union. Particular attention will be given to enhancing Europe's economic security, reducing harmful dependencies, and promoting technological leadership in critical sectors. The Presidency aims to enhance the role of research, development, and innovation to become a frontrunner in developing and commercializing tailored solutions that boost key EU value chains' resilience and competitiveness.

Priority 3

PURSUING A GREEN AND JUST TRANSITION

Carrying on with the Green Deal, the Belgian Presidency will place the energy and climate transition at the heart of its priorities. To reduce vulnerabilities to climate change, the Presidency will strive to enhance the Union's circular economy and adaptive and preparedness capacities. It will also promote sustainable water management. An accelerated and inclusive energy transition should deliver affordable energy to citizens and companies, ensure strong and reliable security of supply, and contribute to the objective of climate neutrality.

Priority 4

REINFORCING THE EU'S SOCIAL AND HEALTH AGENDA

Building on the European Pillar of Social Rights, the Belgian Presidency aims to equip the EU with an ambitious social agenda to foster a European society that is more inclusive, gender-equal and fair for all. Among other things, the Presidency will seek to strengthen social dialogue at all levels, promote fair labour mobility, mental health at work as well as access to sustainable social protection. Furthermore, the Presidency will support the evaluation of the EU's crisis preparedness, strengthen the security of medicines supply, and develop a strategy to boost the EU's health and care workforce.

Priority 5

PROTECTING PEOPLE AND BORDERS

The Presidency aims to address all remaining legislative files associated with the new European pact on migration and asylum. It will work to strengthen the external dimension of migration and asylum, especially by working closely with the African partners, and will also pay particular attention to the fight against organized crime, preventing and tackling terrorism and violent extremism, and bolstering the EU's resilience to crises and new and hybrid challenges.

Priority 6

PROMOTING A GLOBAL EUROPE

Since the multilateral system and the rules-based international order face increasing strain from geopolitical confrontation, the Presidency will vigorously pursue the efforts made by the EU to strengthen its resilience and autonomy and defend its interests and values. The Presidency will also emphasize that openness, dialogue, and cooperation are at the heart of the EU's conception of its interests. To achieve its foreign policy goals, the EU must fully mobilize its economic, security, and defense capabilities, as well as its development and humanitarian assistance capacity. This includes an ambitious and balanced trade policy that is open, sustainable, and assertive.



04

Program of the Belgian Presidency

” **Protect.
Strengthen.
Prepare.**

GENERAL AFFAIRS

The Belgian Presidency is committed to protecting democracy, strengthening the rule of law, and promoting free and fair European elections. It will continue the work on transparency and integrity in the EU institutions and bodies and will foster EU-citizen engagement. Moreover, the Presidency will strengthen the relations with non-EU Western European countries and work on the correct and timely implementation of all existing agreements. Guided by the roadmap on strengthening crisis anticipation, preparedness, and response, the Presidency will continue the process of evaluation and improving the Council’s role in EU crisis management. Regarding the EU elections, the Belgian Presidency will ensure a smooth transition to the next institutional cycle. It will help prepare the Strategic Agenda 2024–2029 and engage Member States and institutions in further reflections on the future of Europe. The Belgian Presidency is committed to enlargement and supports candidate countries in their efforts to join the European Union. Furthermore, it will emphasize the role of Cohesion policy as a driver of transformation, investment, and convergence and as cement for the European Union. During its term, the Belgian Presidency will lead political debates on the future of Cohesion policy after 2027.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

In the context of evermore emerging crises worldwide, the Belgian presidency strives to strengthen the EU’s resilience and autonomy. The presidency will prioritize offering steadfast political, economic, military, humanitarian, and legal support to Ukraine. Additionally, it will sustain the Council’s initiatives

concerning sanctions against Russia including frozen assets, and work towards updating pertinent sanction frameworks. As the EU pursues its enlargement, it is reconsidering its decision-making process. The Belgian presidency aims to facilitate an inclusive dialogue concerning Qualified Majority Voting in the Common Foreign and Security Policy. This discussion will consider the fundamental interests of all Member States alongside the EU’s requirement for effective decision-making.

The recent surge of violence in Israel and Palestine has underlined the pressing necessity for the EU to address longstanding conflicts. A primary focus of the Belgian presidency lies in achieving an immediate cessation of hostilities, addressing urgent humanitarian requirements, and attending to the immediate aftermath of the events in Gaza. Additionally, the presidency will direct efforts toward fostering agreement within the EU and extending beyond the region to revive a political process aimed to advance a negotiated two-state solution.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

As the legislative term nears its end, the Belgian presidency will focus on key priorities. This includes finalizing the Union’s economic governance review, continuing financial support for Ukraine, and advancing legislation for the Banking Union and Capital Markets Union. Efforts will also target narrowing the VAT gap, establishing the EU’s resources, and revising regulations for cross-border teleworking. The presidency’s main focus will be concluding the legislative agenda, emphasizing negotiations with the European Parliament to strengthen the Capital Markets Union and the Banking Union and enhancing the internal market. Additionally, building upon the EU’s resilient economic foundation, the Belgian presidency aims to continue work on the economic governance review initiated by previous presidencies. Facilitating legislative proposals for new EU resources and finalizing the mid-term review of the Multiannual Financial Framework will also be key priorities.



JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

During the Belgian Presidency, pivotal priorities center around the reform of the migration and asylum system, emphasizing a resilient Schengen zone and intensifying efforts to combat organized crime, terrorism, and violent extremism. The overarching goal is to ensure the security and well-being of European citizens while upholding shared values, rights, and freedoms. Security priorities include addressing organized crime, focusing on drug and human trafficking, preventing terrorism, and enhancing travel intelligence capabilities. Initiatives against corruption, gender-based violence, and child sexual abuse are prominent, alongside cross-border concerns like recognizing parenthood and implementing the General Data Protection Regulation. Cross-border cooperation is a key focus, with plans to enhance legal integration in police cooperation and efficient access to digital data. The Presidency will co-chair a High-Level Group with the European Commission to shape future policy and legislation. Judicial cooperation will be strengthened, particularly through digitalization and the enforcement of sentences. The Presidency actively supports a reinforced EU Civil Protection Mechanism. In asylum and migration, the Presidency aims to address legislative files related to the Common European Asylum System and the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. Emphasis is on building trust among Member States, providing clarity, and managing migration effectively. The Pact seeks swift responses to migration crises, improving legal pathways, and addressing issues like return, reintegration, and integrated border management. Strengthening the EU's external actions involves collaborations with priority countries. Evidence-based policymaking, coordination, and operational convergence are key themes, along with a follow-up on the evaluation of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCGA) Regulation.

HEALTH

The Belgian Presidency post-COVID-19 pandemic will focus on enhancing the EU's health emergency preparedness, including efforts to conduct large-scale clinical trials. Priorities include negotiating an international pandemic treaty, reinforcing work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and strengthening Member States' health systems. The Presidency aims to address pharmaceutical legislation for faster access to safe and affordable medicines, emphasizing health security and strategic autonomy. Additionally, it seeks to finalize the EU Health Data Space, complete any remaining work on Substances of Human Origin regulation, and advance negotiations on pharmaceutical legislation. The Presidency will take a cross-cutting approach by emphasizing health in all policies, covering mental well-being,

equitable access to healthcare, global health, and research and development for pandemic preparedness in various Council formations.

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY

The Belgian Presidency in employment and social policy prioritizes an ambitious social agenda, focusing on socio-economic governance, social rights, inclusiveness, gender equality, and fairness. Key initiatives include advancing legislation for platform workers, EU social security coordination, a European disability card, the Equal Treatment Directive, and equality body standards. Non-legislative efforts target mental health, social economy, traineeships, and social security digitalization. In socio-economic governance, the Presidency seeks policy coherence across economic, fiscal, environmental, employment, social, and education policies. It aims to enhance economic governance, revisit fiscal frameworks, and increase visibility for the social convergence framework. The focus is on effective monitoring, rectification of social imbalances, and dialogue with stakeholders during the European Semester. For a more inclusive society, the Presidency aims to strengthen the European Pillar of Social Rights in the 2024-2029 Strategic Agenda. Objectives include an interinstitutional declaration, initiatives for a just, green, and digital transition, and support for equal opportunity, gender equality, and non-discrimination. Commitments extend to achieving Porto targets, addressing in-work poverty, implementing Council recommendations, and supporting the social economy. The Presidency also focuses on gender equality, disabilities, LGBTIQ+ rights, and Anti-Racism Action Plans.

INTERNAL MARKET AND INDUSTRY

The Belgian Presidency prioritizes a rapid and equitable twin transition, focusing on a resilient green and digital shift. It targets a robust single market and industrial competitiveness, addressing crises through the single market emergency instrument (SMEI) and conducting a comprehensive review for 2024-2029. The Presidency finalizes directives on corporate sustainability and forced labor prohibition, evaluating instruments like IPCEI for inclusive industrial policy. It advances open strategic autonomy through the Green Deal Industrial Plan, aiming for a Net-Zero Industry Act, circular economy, and SME support. In the intellectual property realm, the Presidency modernizes the framework, supports IP harmonization, and raises awareness of safety initiatives. It empowers consumers by finalizing directives on goods repair, environmental claim substantiation, and digital product labeling. The Presidency fosters a socially



responsible gambling framework and evaluates legislative tools for better lawmaking. Tourism promotes a digital shift, finalizing regulations on short-term accommodation data. Committed to the „European Agenda for Tourism 2030“, it emphasizes nature tourism and integrated local offers for prosperity. Overall, the Belgian Presidency prioritizes a joint EU approach, advancing a sustainable and inclusive economy for effective global competition.

RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND SPACE

The Belgian Presidency emphasizes the pivotal role of research and innovation in fortifying and modernizing European industries, striving for strategic autonomy in health, clean-tech, food, and digitalization. It focuses on key enabling technologies, such as AI and life-science technologies, crucial for the green transition and digitalization. The Presidency aims to bridge the gap between research and industry, enhancing the valorization of research results to stimulate industrial recovery. Emphasizing interdisciplinary evidence-informed policymaking and science communication, the Presidency seeks to connect science, industry, policy, and society. It closely monitors the European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, fostering international cooperation and promoting common standards. Additionally, the Presidency prioritizes advancing research and innovation in the nuclear field, including solutions for radioactive waste and support for medical applications. In the space sector, cyber resilience, climate change mitigation, and coordination for EU strategic autonomy are core priorities. The Belgian Presidency supports actions to enhance the resilience of space systems, strengthen EU-ESA relations, and secure Europe's autonomous access to space.

TRANSPORT

The Belgian Presidency aligns with the EU's robust environmental agenda, particularly emphasizing the green transition in transportation to meet the Paris Agreement and Green Deal objectives. Priorities include advancing the Greening Freight Transport Package, promoting modal shift initiatives for sustainable mobility, and reducing air pollution. Additionally, the Presidency focuses on smart transport advancing digitalization in the sector, and supporting innovations in connected and automated mobility. Social responsibility and improved working conditions for transport workers are central to addressing the human aspect of the transition. Safety remains a priority, with initiatives to enhance road and maritime safety, including updated driving license requirements and cross-border

enforcement. The Presidency continues to work on revising the Single European Sky framework.

DIGITAL, CYBER, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The Belgian Presidency is committed to advancing the green and digital transition in the EU, aligning with the goals of climate neutrality and digital leadership. Prioritizing a human-centered approach to digital transformation, it focuses on algorithmic transparency and virtual identity protection, particularly in artificial intelligence and data markets. Efforts include finalizing the remaining work on the AI Act and emphasizing digital inclusivity.

In line with the Digital Decade Policy Programme, the Presidency concentrates on negotiations for the Gigabit Infrastructure Act, shaping Europe's digital infrastructure and secure networks. It promotes sharing digital solutions among EU public administrations, accelerates the digital transformation of the public sector, and evaluates the Digital Europe and Horizon Europe Programmes.

To enhance cyber resilience and trust in the digital domain, the Presidency advocates a joint approach to active cyber protection, reinforcing measures against security breaches. It seeks to finalize amendments to the Cybersecurity Act and the Cyber Resilience Act, fostering mutual solidarity in cyberspace and concluding work on the Cyber Solidarity Act.

Dedicated to strengthening international cooperation, the Belgian Presidency integrates cyber diplomacy into foreign policy, defense, and development agendas. It promotes collaboration with NATO, engages with the private sector, and supports EU digital and cyber diplomacy globally, with a particular focus on Africa. The Presidency aims for effective multilateral cooperation and strengthens EU collaboration with the United States, the United Kingdom, and other key partners through mechanisms like trade and technology councils and cyber dialogues.

ENERGY

The Belgian Presidency prioritizes finalizing legislative initiatives, fostering the exchange of best practices, and laying the groundwork for the future EU energy agenda. The focus is on advancing sustainable energy infrastructure with an emphasis on cross-border and cross-vector energy flows. The Presidency assesses the effectiveness of the current European framework in planning, building, and financing infrastructures, especially for hydrogen import, CO₂ transport, and offshore renewable energy.



Specific attention is given to achieving offshore renewable energy targets and developing an integrated offshore grid. The goal is to adopt Council conclusions on integrated cross-border onshore and offshore infrastructure, benefiting all of Europe. The Presidency is dedicated to facilitating international hydrogen trade by promoting a credible certification system, market platforms, and collaboration with the European Commission on initiatives like the hydrogen bank.

Recognizing the potential for emission reductions in the building sector, the Belgian Presidency stimulates discussions on overcoming barriers to the renovation wave. This includes organizing a Renovation Week, focusing on sharing information, and best practices, and exploring new technologies. Additionally, the Presidency is committed to securing the supply of medical radioisotopes and reinforcing European leadership in their production and reimbursement, advancing the European SAMIRA action plan and the European Commission's 'European radioisotope valley initiative.' Stakeholder meetings will address the security of radioisotope supply.

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

The Belgian Presidency is dedicated to ensuring a sustainable and resilient agri-food and fisheries sector within the framework of a harmonized European food policy. Key priorities include reducing the EU's dependency on third countries for strategic resources, implementing common agricultural and fisheries policies (CAP and CFP), and reflecting on a post-2027 framework for CAP. The Presidency emphasizes a holistic approach, considering supply and demand sides, and closely monitoring agricultural markets. Circular economy, innovation, and the integration of new technologies are highlighted, along with ongoing discussions on genomic techniques, sustainable use of plant protection products, and plant reproductive material.

The Presidency aims to enhance the sustainability of the food system, emphasizing economic, social, and environmental perspectives. It seeks fair compensation for farmers and fishers, promoting a level-playing field, harmonizing regulations, and ensuring safety and transparency throughout the food chain. Initiatives include finalizing breakfast directives and encouraging sustainable food production by sharing best practices among Member States.

In the context of resilient forests, the Belgian Presidency focuses on forest monitoring, implementing the EU forest strategy, and participating in multilateral forums. Animal health and welfare, under the 'One Health' initiative, are prioritized, with a focus on biosecurity, vaccination, and revising animal welfare

legislation to align with societal expectations and technological advancements. The welfare of companion animals is also highlighted in the Presidency's agenda.

ENVIRONMENT

The Belgian Presidency will carry on the work on the EU's Green Deal, which has placed the green transition at the heart of all EU policy proposals. It will ensure that all policies are crafted and executed in line with environmental and climate objectives while embracing the 'One World, One Health' approach and taking forward this endeavor in the next Strategic Agenda. It will also drive the debate on Europe's green agenda beyond 2024. In doing so, it will explore suitable approaches to address climate change, circular economy, biodiversity, and pollution nexus for the years ahead. The Belgian Presidency will make further efforts to build towards a just transition to a climate-neutral and resilient society and will also give special consideration to the role of SMEs in the just transition, given their importance in greening the economy. In international negotiations, the Presidency will promote Europe's green ambitions on the global stage and address global and cross-cutting challenges in an ambitious manner, including at the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly.

EDUCATION, YOUTH, CULTURE AND SPORT

The Belgian Presidency wants to strengthen the European Education Area (EEA) and the strategic framework of European cooperation in education and training. As the world is constantly changing, creating a learning society has become more important. Therefore, the Presidency will encourage lifelong learning and work towards improving its quality, visibility, and accessibility for all. It aims to ease mobility for learners and educators across Europe and initiate discussions on the forthcoming higher education package. Digital education and teacher shortages will be addressed, while youth participation, empowerment, and inclusion will be emphasized. The Presidency will review and refine youth strategies, including a Council resolution on youth work policy. In the cultural area, the Belgian Presidency is committed to implementing the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 and highlighting the role of heritage, culture, and European identity. Furthermore, it will finalize any remaining work on the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) and aims to adopt Council conclusions on the support for influencers and online content creators. The Presidency will also focus on the digital transformation of the media sector and media innovation in the context of the Media and Audiovisual Action Plan (MAAP).



05

Who is Who?

European Council	
Chair	BE Representative
	 Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats
CHARLES MICHEL President of the European Union	ALEXANDER DE CROO Prime Minister of Belgium

COUNCIL CONFIGURATIONS

AGRIFISH	Agriculture and Fisheries
COMPET	Competitiveness
ECOFIN	Economic and Financial Affairs
ENVI	Environment
EPSCO	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs
EYCS	Education, Youth, Culture and Sport
FAC	Foreign Affairs
GAC	General Affairs
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
TTE	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

FAC				
Foreign Affairs Permanent Chair	Foreign Affairs Representative	Defence Representative	Development Representative	Trade Chair
	 Reformist Movement	 Socialist Party	 Vooruit	 Reformist Movement
JOSEP BORRELL FONTELLES High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy	HADJA LAHBIB Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Federal Cultural Institutions	LUDIVINE DEDONDER Minister of Defence	CAROLINE GENNEZ Minister of Development Cooperation and of the Major Cities Policy	HADJA LAHBIB Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Federal Cultural Institutions








Who is Who?






GAC				
General Affairs	Cohesion	Urban Development	Territorial Planning	Housing
				
Reformist Movement	Socialist Party	Socialist Party	Reformist Movement	Socialist Party
HADJA LAHBIB Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade and the Federal Cultural Institutions	ELIO DI RUPO Minister-President of the Government of Wallonia	RUDI VERVOORT Minister-President of the Brussels-Capital Region	WILLY BORSUS Vice-President of Wallonia and Minister of Economy, Foreign Trade, Spatial Planning and Agriculture	CHRISTOPHE COLLIGNON Minister of Local Government and Housing of Wallonia

COREPER		JHA		
Ambassador	Deputy	Justice	Home	Migration
				
		Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats	Christian Democrats & Flemish	Christian Democrats & Flemish
WILLEM VAN DE VOORDE Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the EU	PIERRE CARTUYVELS Deputy Permanent Representative	PAUL VAN TIGCHELT Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and the North Sea	ANNELIES VERLINDEN Minister of the Interior, Institutional Reform and Democratic Renewal	NICOLE DE MOOR State Secretary for Asylum and Migration, added to the Minister of Home Affairs, Institutional Reform and Democratic Renewal



Who is Who?

ECOFIN		TTE		
ECOFIN	Budget	Transport	Tele-communications	Energy
				
Christian Democratic and Flemish	Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats	Ecolo	Groen	Groen
VINCENT VAN PETEGHEM Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance	ALEXIA BERTRAND State Secretary for the Budget and Consumer Protection, added to the Minister of Justice and the North Sea	GEORGES GILKINET Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mobility	PETRA DE SUTTER Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Public Administration, Public Enterprises, Telecommunications and the Postal Service	TINNE VAN DER STRAETEN Minister of Energy

EYCS				
Compulsory Education	Higher Education	Youth	Culture	Media
				
Socialist Party	Reformist Movement	Christian Democratic and Flemish	New Flemish Alliance	Christian Democratic and Flemish
CAROLINE DÉSIR Minister of Education, Wallonia-Brussels Federation	FRANÇOISE BERTIEAUX Minister for Higher Education and Youth, Wallonia-Brussels Federation	BENJAMIN DALLE Minister for Media, Youth and Brussels in the Flemish Government	JAN JAMBON Minister-President of Flanders	BENJAMIN DALLE Minister for Media, Youth and Brussels in the Flemish Government



Who is Who?

EYCS

Sport



Reformist Movement

PIERRE-YVES JEHOLET

Minister-President of the Government of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels

AGRIFISH

Agriculture

FISH



Reformist Movement

DAVID CLARINVAL

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for the Self-Employed, SMEs and Agriculture, Institutional Reforms and Democratic Renewal



Christian Democratic and Flemish

HILDE CREVITS

Vice-Minister-President of the Government of Flanders and Minister for Economy, Innovation, Work, Social economy and Agriculture

ENVI

Agriculture



Ecolo

ALAIN MARON

Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, in charge of the Climate Transition, Environment, Energy, Social Affairs and Health

EPSCO

Social
Employment



Socialist Party

PIERRE-YVES DERMAGNE

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy and Employment

Social Affairs



Vooruit

FRANK VANDEN- BROUCKE

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health

Social Inclusion

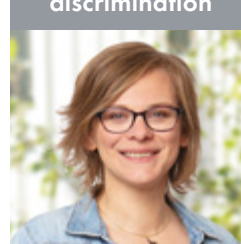


Socialist Party

KARINE LALIEUX

Minister of Pensions and Social Integration, in charge of Persons with Disabilities, Combating Poverty and Beliris

Gender
equality, non-
discrimination



Ecolo

MARIE-COLLINE LEROY

State Secretary for Gender Equality, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, added to the Minister of Mobility

Health



Vooruit

FRANK VANDEN- BROUCKE

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health



Who is Who?

COMPET				
Market Industry	Industry	Tourism	Research & Innovation	Space
				
Socialist Party	Christian Democratic and Flemish	Reformist Movement	Reformist Movement	Socialist Party
PIERRE-YVES DERMAGNE	JO BROUNS	VALÉRIE DE BUE	WILLY BORSUS	THOMAS DERMINE
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy and Employment	Flemish Minister of Economy, Innovation, Work, Social Economy and Agriculture	Minister for the Civil Service, Tourism, Heritage and Road Safety, Wallonia-Brussels Federation	Vice-President of Wallonia and Minister of Economy, Foreign Trade, Spatial Planning and Agriculture	State Secretary for Economic Recovery and Strategic Investments, in charge of Science Policy, added to the Minister of the Economy and Employment





ERSTE LESUNG

**UNDERSTANDING POLITICS
ENVISIONING THE FUTURE
ANALYSIS, STRATEGY,
POSITIONING**

Further Information

OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

www.belgium24.be

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