



COMPETITIVENESS COUNCIL

Brussels, 26 and 27 September 2019

On Thursday 26 September, the Council will deal with internal market and industry issues. On Friday 27 September, it will address research-related issues. The Thursday session will be chaired by Mr. Timo Harakka, Finnish minister of employment, whereas the Friday session will be chaired by Ms. Katri Kulmuni, Finnish minister of economic affairs.

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On Thursday, the meeting will start at 09.30 and will be concluded by lunchtime. Ministers will hold a policy debate (public session) on the future long-term strategy for sustainable growth. Over lunch, ministers will exchange views on the financing of sustainable growth, with Mr. Alexander STUBB, vice-president of the European Investment Bank, invited as keynote speaker.

On Friday, the meeting will also start at 09.30 and be concluded by lunchtime. Research ministers will in their turn debate (public session) the above mentioned strategy. They will also exchange views on possible synergies between Horizon Europe and other EU programmes. Over lunch, ministers will exchange views on the role of research and innovation on achieving climate targets.

Press briefing: Monday 23 September 2019 at 12.00

Press conferences:

Thursday 26 September at +/- 14.00 (JUSTUS LIPSIUS press room)

Friday 27 September at +/- 15.00 (JUSTUS LIPSIUS press room)

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[Competitiveness meeting page](#)

[Press conferences and public events by video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

Internal market and industry

Developing our economic base :

a) Vision for a long-term strategy on sustainable growth

b) Competitiveness "check-up"

On the basis of a presidency report, ministers will exchange views on the key policy objectives for a **long-term EU strategy on sustainable growth**. The strategy is expected to focus on a set of priority actions aiming at :

- i) a just transition to a climate neutral EU industry and services sectors,
- ii) strengthening an innovation-friendly Single Market with a more favourable business environment, in particular for SMEs, scale-up companies and services,
- iii) greater emphasis on investments in knowledge, uptake of research results and deployment of innovations,
- iv) making the EU a global leader in the digital economy,
- v) investing in education, continuous learning, reskilling, upskilling and new skills needed in a digital world, and
- vi) improving the global competitiveness of EU industries.

The strategy is part of the new EU Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 adopted by the European Council in June 2019. The presidency will report on the outcome of these discussions to the October 2019 European Council.

In the same context, on the basis of oral presentations by the Commission and by the chair of the high level group on competitiveness and growth, ministers will exchange views on the **external dimension of the EU's competitiveness** as part of the traditional competitiveness checkup exercise.

The 'competitiveness check-up' allows ministers to put forward priorities and respond to key issues and developments in the single market. It is a regular working method that was established in 2015 with the aim of improving the role of the Competitiveness Council as regards the analysis of horizontal and sectoral economic issues as well as the monitoring of competitiveness mainstreaming. In practice, it is based on a presentation by the Commission of the latest figures and trends related to single market integration and micro-economic issues, with ministers being invited to respond and provide input on possible implications for EU companies and citizens.

[Presidency report to the Council](#)

[European Council conclusions - A new Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 - 20 June 2019](#)

[Commission communication on "A renewed EU industrial policy strategy"](#)

[Commission communication on "The single market in a changing"](#)

Any other business

a) Real-driving emissions (RDE) regulation

The Council will be informed by the presidency of progress achieved so far regarding the proposed regulation. The regulation sets the conformity factors to be applied when measuring the real-driving emissions of light-duty vehicles. It also empowers the Commission to annually review these conformity factors in order to reflect technical progress in accuracy of the portable measuring equipment.

[Presidency note to the Council](#)

b) Call of SME Envoy Network for a vigorous and forward-looking EU policy for small businesses

The German delegation will draw the Council's attention to the call of the SME envoy network. The call pleads for a vigorous and forward-looking EU policy for small businesses.

[German delegation's note to the Council](#)

c) Outcome of a conference on support for SMEs

The Council will be informed by the Czech delegation of the outcome of a conference dedicated to state aids and the definition of SMEs, held in Brno on 29-31 May 2019.

[Czech delegation's note to the Council](#)

d) European Battery Alliance - building a strong strategic battery value chain in Europe

The Council will be informed by Commission Vice-President Šefčovič of the latest developments in the field of the European battery alliance project, launched in October 2017. The alliance aims to support the development of a competitive, sustainable and innovative battery value chain in the EU.

[Commission's note to the Council](#)

Research and innovation

Developing our economic base: Vision for a long-term strategy on sustainable growth

On the basis of a presidency report, research ministers will continue the exchange of views on the key policy objectives for a long-term EU strategy on sustainable growth. On this second day, ministers will mostly focus on actions needed for greater investment in knowledge, uptake of research results and deployment of innovations.

[Presidency report to the Council](#)

Horizon Europe package: Synergies with other programmes

On the basis of a presidency note, ministers will exchange views on the possible **synergies** between Horizon Europe and other EU programmes, such as structural funds, Erasmus etc.

Synergies between the various EU programmes are key to maximising efficiency and impact on society and economy at large. They usually require strategic coordination and complementarity in the design of the various programmes, as well as compatibility of financing rules and procedures.

Ministers will exchange views on what can be done at EU-level to best promote such synergies. They will also discuss how individual member states can make best use thereof.

The main goal is for the Council to provide guidance on these issues for the on-going Strategic Planning process and for advancing in the negotiations on Horizon Europe.

[Presidency note to the Council](#)
