



Competitiveness Council Brussels, 22-23 May 2023

Internal market and industry (Monday 22 May)

The meeting of ministers responsible for internal market and industry will start at 9.30.

During the meeting, ministers are invited to adopt a general approach on the Ecodesign regulation.

Ministers will discuss the Compet Council's follow-up on the communications on the long-term competitiveness and the single market at 30, as well as the critical raw material act.

Before the lunch, there will be a celebration for the Unitary Patent System, which will come into force on 1st June. The informal lunch discussion will focus on the "single market at 30 and beyond".

The first day of the Council will conclude with a press conference led by Ebba Busch, Minister for Energy, Business, and Industry, Commission's Executive Vice-President Vestager and Commissioner Breton.

Chair: Ebba Busch, Minister for Energy, Business, and Industry

Press conference: Monday 22 of May at +/- 17.20 (JUSTUS LIPSIUS press room)

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Research (Tuesday 23 May - Morning)

The Council will resume on Tuesday at 10.00.

In a morning session, ministers responsible for research are expected to adopt conclusions on Scholarly Publishing. Ministers will then have a policy debate about knowledge security and responsible internationalisation. During lunch, there will be an informal debate on science denial.

The research part of the Council will conclude with a press conference led by Mats Persson, Swedish Minister for Education, Ministry of Education and Research and Commission's vice-president for Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight, Maroš Šefčovič.

Chair: Mats Persson, Minister for Education, Ministry of Education and Research.

Press conference: Tuesday 23 May at +/- 14.30 (JUSTUS LIPSIUS press room)

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¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the Press Office.

Space (Tuesday 23 May - Afternoon)

The last session of the Competitiveness Council will start at around 15.00. Ministers are expected to adopt Council Conclusions on Fair and Sustainable Use of Space. Then they will hold an exchange of views on EU Space Policy in a new Geopolitical Landscape.

The Council will conclude with a press conference led by Mats Persson, Minister for Education, Ministry of Education and Research with the Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry Breton

Chair: Mats Persson, Minister for Education, Ministry of Education and Research

Press conference: Friday 2 December at +/- 17.00 (JUSTUS LIPSIUS press room)

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[Competitiveness Council \(Internal market and industry\) – meeting page](#)

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

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

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Internal market and industry

Regulation on machinery

Among other A-items, ministers are expected to make the final approval of the regulation on machinery. This session will be public.

This regulation for machinery products aims at promoting the free movement of machinery within the single market and ensures a high level of safety for EU workers and citizens. The final text of the regulation sets the safety criteria according to the level of risk. The political agreement between council and Parliament was reached on 15th of December 2022. Once published in the Official Journal, Member States and economic operators will have 42 months before the rules of the new regulation will apply.

[European Commission proposal for a regulation on machinery products](#)

[Council and European Parliament agree on new safety requirements for machinery products \(press release, 15 December 2022\)](#)

Ecodesign regulation

Ministers are expected to adopt a general approach on the Ecodesign regulation. This session will be public.

The proposal, presented by the Commission on 30 March 2022, aims at making sustainable products the norm in the EU and is a key proposal from the EU Commissions' Circular Economy Action Plan.

The proposal builds on the 2009 Ecodesign Directive (2009/125/EC), which only covers energy-related products, and transforms it into a regulation, applicable to almost all categories of products. It establishes a harmonised framework for setting of ecodesign requirements for specific product groups to make products more durable, reliable, reusable, upgradable, repairable, recyclable, easier to maintain, energy and resource-efficient and to facilitate such products movement on the Single Market.

A new "Digital Product Passport" will provide information about products' environmental sustainability. It will help consumers and businesses to make informed choices when purchasing products and help public authorities to better perform checks and controls. The proposal also establishes provisions regarding transparency and prevention of destruction of unsold consumer products.

[Commission's proposal for a Regulation on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products](#)

Long-term competitiveness

Ministers will have a debate on long term competitiveness, one of the Swedish presidency main priorities. This session will not be public.

In the December 2022 and February 2023 European Councils, EU leaders called the Commission put on the table short- and long-term solutions to tackle global challenges, and in particular the growth and innovation gap between Europe and its competitors. As a response to the calls from the leaders, the Commission published its Communication on the 'Long-term competitiveness of the EU: looking beyond 2030' on 16 March. The communication defends the European model for inclusive and sustainable economic growth and proposes nine drivers, with key performance indicators, to boost European competitiveness: the single market, access to private capital and investment; public investment and infrastructure; research and innovation; energy; circularity; digitalisation; education and skills; and trade and open strategic autonomy.

The March European Council (23-24 March 2023) discussed again the topic of EU's competitiveness and invited "the Council and the Commission to take work forward on all these aspects, and to report on progress ahead of its June 2023 meeting".

[Communication on Long-term competitiveness of the EU: looking beyond 2030](#)

Any other business

Before the lunch, there will be a first set of AOB points. Both items will be public.

1) **Net-Zero Industry Act, presented by the Commission.**

The Commission will provide an overview of the Net-Zero Industry act proposal, which was presented on 16th March, and identifies eight strategic net-zero technologies: solar photovoltaic and solar thermal / wind turbines / batteries / heat pumps / renewable hydrogen / biomethane / CO2 capture / grid technologies. The proposal sets out the overall benchmark to ensure that, by 2030, the European production achieves 40% of the EU's annual needs in these technologies, to meet the EU's 2030 climate and energy goals.

[Commission's proposal on the Net-Zero Industry Act](#)

2) **An information point on the Unitary Patent Court System**

The presidency plans to use this AOB on the Unitary Patent to celebrate its entry into force next 1st June, after a long and complex process that started in 2012. The Unitary Patent System will make the access to the European patent system easier and less costly, and will improve the level of patent protection, by making it possible to obtain uniform patent protection in all the participating EU Member States.

[The Unitary Patent System – Note from the presidency](#)

Single Market at 30 and beyond: Lunch debate (*This session will not be public*)

During the lunch, Ministers will hold an informal discussion on the "single market at 30 and beyond" with the participation of a special guest: Mr Mario Monti – Italian senator and professor; former Prime Minister and Commissioner for Internal Market. The discussion will complement the debate on the "long-term competitiveness" that will take place in the morning.

On the COMPET council of 2 March, ministers already had a first discussion on the issue based on a note of the presidency. This second dialogue comes after the Commission's publication of the Communication 'Single market at 30' on 16th of March 2023.

[Commission's communication 'Single Market at 30'](#)

Critical Raw Materials Act

The afternoon session is planned to start at 15.00, with the policy debate on critical raw materials act, in public session.

Ministers will be invited to debate on the measures proposed of the Critical Raw Materials act and on the environmental, social and economic impact of these measures. The main objective of this regulation is to ensure the Union's access to a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials, with a number of concrete objectives. These include:

- the local extraction of at least 10% of the Union's annual consumption of strategic raw materials
- strengthen the European processing capacity to be able produce at least 40% of the Union's annual consumption
- reinforce the recycling capacity to produce at least 15% of the EU's annual consumption from recycled goods
- measures to diversify the Union's imports to avoid that one single third country provides more than 65% of the Union's annual consumption of a given raw material.
- Monitoring and mitigation measures to reduce supply risks, while ensuring the free movement of critical raw materials, and a high level of environmental protection.

[Commission proposal for a Regulation establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials \(Critical Raw Materials Act\)](#)

Any Other Business

The first day will be wrapped up with the remaining AOBs.

1) EU regulation on design protection (*This session will be public*)

The Commission will inform ministers about the review of the EU directive on design protection which will update the 20-year-old EU system of design protection. The package, presented on 29th November 2022, include a regulation and a directive that actualizes the current legislation.

[Commission's proposal for a directive on the legal protection of designs](#)

[Commission's proposal for a regulation amending Council Regulation \(EC\) No 6/2002 on Community designs and repealing Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 2246/2002](#)

2) A presentation of the work programme by the incoming Spanish Presidency (*This session will not be public*)

Research

Conclusions on Scholarly Publishing

Ministers are invited to adopt conclusions on Scholarly Publishing. The session will be public.

The text submitted to the approval of the Ministers highlights that open access to scholarly publications is one of the core elements of an open science system and calls for action to ensure it. These conclusions are a top priority for the Swedish Presidency in the field of research.

[Draft Council conclusions on Scholarly Publishing](#)

Policy debate on knowledge security and responsible internationalisation

The council will continue with a policy debate on knowledge security and responsible internationalisation. The session will be public.

Knowledge security is about protecting open research environment from any form of malicious activity, while Responsible internationalisation refers to the process of fostering global cooperation in a way that promotes the sharing of knowledge and expertise, while safeguarding the EU's interests and values. Ministers will be invited to share best practices and national challenges in addressing these two issues.

[Presidency note on "Knowledge security and responsible internationalisation"](#)

Any other business

a) Information point by the Commission on the Seal of Excellence

The Seal of Excellence is awarded to project proposals above the quality thresholds but not funded due to limited budget. The Commission will inform about the Seals of Excellence awarded to the European Innovation Council (EIC); Accelerator and Transition projects and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Postdoctoral Fellowships and COFUND.

b) Information point from the Italian delegation on the candidacy of Rome to host EXPO 2030

c) Presentation of the work programme of the incoming Spanish Presidency of the Council (*This session will not be public*)

Lunch debate

Ministers for Research will then convene for an informal lunch dedicated to Science Denial.

Space

Conclusions on Fair and Sustainable Use of Space

In a public session, ministers are invited to adopt conclusions on Fair and Sustainable Use of Space.

The conclusions will recall that the EU considers space as a Global common, underlining that current space policy should meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations. The conclusions also recall that space orbits are rapidly becoming congested due to the increasing amount of space objects. They reiterate the importance of an EU approach on space traffic management, as the safety, security and sustainability of space activities are essential to achieve a fair and sustainable use of space.

[Draft Council conclusions on “Fair and sustainable use of space”](#)

Policy debate on EU Space Policy in a new Geopolitical Landscape

Ministers will have an exchange of views on EU Space Policy in a new Geopolitical Landscape. This session will not be public.

The debate comes after the joint publication by the Commission and the High Representative of the EU Space Strategy for Security and Defence and after the adoption of the Regulation on Secure Connectivity programme, IRIS2. The debate will focus on the articulation between the EU Space programmes and the EU Space Strategy for Security and Defence.

[European Union Space Strategy for Security and Defence](#)

Any other business

a) Incoming presidency programme

Finally, ministers will be informed, in closed session, on the work programme of the incoming Presidency.
