



General Affairs Council Brussels, 27 May 2025

Chair: Adam Szłapka, Minister for the European Union of Poland

The meeting will start at **10:30**.

The Council will start preparations for the 26-27 **June 2025 European Council** by discussing an annotated draft agenda.

In public session, the Council will be invited to adopt a general approach on a revised regulation regarding the EU's **carbon border adjustment mechanism** (CBAM), as part of the Commission's 'Omnibus I' simplification package.

The Council will then discuss the request by Spain to include Catalan, Basque and Galician in **regulation No 1/1958**, which governs the EU's language regime.

The Council will also discuss conclusions on strengthening **EU democratic resilience** prepared as an input to the upcoming European Democracy Shield.

Ministers will hold the eight hearing of Hungary as part of the **Article 7 procedure** triggered by the European Parliament's reasoned proposal of September 2018. They will also hold a country-specific discussion in the framework of the **annual rule of law dialogue**, focusing on the rule of law situation in Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and Belgium.

Under any other business, the Czech delegation will present an item on termination of financing of **Radio Free Europe**.

In an informal breakfast, ministers will hold an exchange of views on the **future of Europe**, and, over an informal lunch, they will discuss how to strengthen EU **democratic resilience**. A press conference will take place after the meeting (**+/- 18:00**).

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

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

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

Preparation of the June European Council

The Council will start preparations for the European Council meeting of 26-27 June 2025 by discussing an annotated draft agenda. EU leaders are expected to discuss:

- Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine
- latest developments in the Middle East
- European security and defence
- EU in the world
- competitiveness, and
- migration

The preparatory work will continue at the next General Affairs Council on 24 June 2025.

[European Council, 26-27 June 2025, annotated draft agenda](#)

Carbon border adjustment mechanism

Ministers responsible for European affairs will be invited to adopt a general approach on simplifying the regulation on the EU's **carbon border adjustment mechanism** (CBAM), as part of the Commission's so-called 'Omnibus I' simplification package.

The proposal seeks to provide simplification and **cost-efficient compliance improvements** to the CBAM regulation, without compromising its climate goals, as about 99% of embedded emissions in the imported CBAM goods would remain covered. The overall aim is to reduce the **regulatory and administrative burden**, as well as compliance costs for EU companies, especially SMEs.

[Regulation amending Regulation \(EU\) 2023/956 as regards simplifying and strengthening the carbon border adjustment mechanism, Commission proposal, 26 February 2025](#)

[Omnibus I and II packages \(Commission background information\)](#)

Catalan, Basque and Galician

The Council will discuss the request by Spain to include Catalan, Basque and Galician in **regulation No 1/1958**, which governs the EU's language regime.

The issue was discussed several times in 2023 during the Spanish Presidency. On 9 May 2025, Spain requested to include on the agenda of the GAC meeting of 27 May the adoption of amendments to Regulation 1/1958.

Article 7 procedure concerning Hungary

As part of the Article 7(1) TEU procedure regarding Hungary, the Council will hold a hearing. This will be the **eighth hearing** of Hungary as part of this procedure. It will cover all the issues raised in the European Parliament's reasoned proposal of September 2018, which triggered the procedure. The aim is to provide the Council an up-to-date picture of the situation in Hungary.

The seven previous hearings of Hungary were held in the Council on 16 September and 10 December 2019, on 22 June 2021, on 23 May and 18 November 2022, on 30 May 2023, and on 25 June 2024.

In its **reasoned proposal**, adopted on 12 September 2018, the European Parliament presents issues in several areas that, in its view, justified the triggering of the Article 7 procedure:

- (1) the functioning of the constitutional and electoral system,
- (2) the independence of the judiciary and of other institutions and the rights of judges,
- (3) corruption and conflicts of interest,
- (4) privacy and data protection,
- (5) freedom of expression,
- (6) academic freedom,
- (7) freedom of religion,
- (8) freedom of association,
- (9) the right to equal treatment,
- (10) the rights of persons belonging to minorities, including Roma and Jews, and protection against hateful statements against such minorities,
- (11) the fundamental rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, and
- (12) economic and social rights.

[General Affairs Council, 25 June 2024 \(main results\)](#)

[Reasoned proposal triggering the Article 7 procedure for Hungary](#)

[Interim report of the European Parliament](#)

[2024 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter Hungary](#)

[2023 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter Hungary](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 24 April 2024 on ongoing hearings under Article 7\(1\) TEU regarding Hungary to strengthen the rule of law and its budgetary implications](#)

[Standard modalities for hearings referred to in Article 7\(1\) TEU](#)

[Rule of law \(background information\)](#)

Annual rule of law dialogue

As part of the annual rule of law dialogue, ministers will discuss the rule of law situation in **Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and Belgium**.

This will be the twelfth round of country-specific discussions after the ones held in November 2020, April and November 2021, April and December 2022, March and October 2023, January, May, and November 2024, and January 2025. For each member state, the Commission will present the main findings of the respective country specific chapter in its 2024 rule of law report. The member state concerned will then be asked to present **key national developments** and particular aspects of their national rule of law framework. This will be followed by a round of comments and questions in which other delegations can share their experiences and best practices in relation to the developments mentioned.

The Council's annual rule of law dialogue was initiated by the Council conclusions of 16 December 2014. Its aim is to allow for an open exchange of comments and best practices based on the Commission's annual rule of law report, while ensuring objectivity, non-discrimination, and equal treatment of all member states. Since 2020, the dialogue is organised in two different types of political discussions: a horizontal discussion covering general rule of law developments in the EU, and country-specific discussions addressing **key developments in each member state**.

The presidency conclusions of 12 December 2023 consolidated the approach to the Council's annual rule of law dialogue followed since 2020, including its structuring into horizontal and country-specific discussions. They also envisaged three country-specific discussions per year, each focusing on the situation in four member states. This is the **second country-specific discussion held under the Polish presidency**, following the one at the General Affairs Council of 28 January 2025.

[General Affairs Council, 28 January 2025 \(main results\)](#)

[2024 Rule of law report \(European Commission\)](#)

[Rule of law report 2024: with the fifth edition, the EU is better equipped to face rule of law challenges \(European Commission press release, 24 July 2024\)](#)

[Evaluation of the Council's rule of law dialogue – Presidency conclusions \(Council press release, 12 December 2023\)](#)

[Rule of law \(background information\)](#)

Conclusions on strengthening EU democratic resilience

The Council will be invited to approve the text of conclusions on strengthening EU democratic resilience prepared as an input to the upcoming European Democracy Shield.

The conclusions aim at reinforcing EU's capacity to address current challenges to democratic resilience. They highlight importance of the whole-of-society approach, stress the crucial role of civil society organisations and underline the need for appropriate funding for measures to strengthen democratic resilience. Other elements of the conclusions include the need to support democracy via civic education programs, cyber and media literacy campaigns and independent media, the importance of fair elections and the need for measures to actively respond to foreign information manipulation and interference, including disinformation. The text aims to contribute to the upcoming Commission's European Democracy Shield initiative.

Any other business

- ***Termination of financing of Radio Free Europe***

Under any other business, the Czech delegation will address the current situation in the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, which is facing a funding shortfall.

Future of Europe and EU democratic resilience

In an informal breakfast, ministers will hold an exchange of views on the future of Europe, and, over an informal lunch, the Council will discuss how to strengthen EU democratic resilience.
