

**DOC-BOARD-22-11-09**

## **Council Presidencies**

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### **Document for information and discussion**

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#### **Purpose of this item**

The purpose of this item is to update the Board on our and the members' work on the Council and its Presidencies, both the current and upcoming ones.

#### **Questions for the Board**

- Do you have any additional points on the Council and its Presidencies?
- Do you have any feedback on your work or the work of EDF with the Council and its priorities?

#### **Introduction**

The Council has increased its work on some dossiers related to disability, both through the French and the current Czech Presidencies. Nevertheless, this progress follows the impulse given by the Commission to particular files and events, such as the Prague Conference on employment inclusion and the Disability Employment Package. The ongoing and future measures to be developed according to the European Strategy of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, such as AccessibleEU or the EU Disability Card are raising the interest of upcoming Presidencies.

#### **Current presidency- Czech Republic**

The [closure of the French Presidency](#) brought some relevant advances, such as the [Minimum Wage Directive](#), the [Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive \(CSRD\)](#) and the Digital Markets Act (DMA), but also failed to address disability rights in the [Digital Services Act \(DSA\)](#). The Czech Presidency took over the task to deliver important measures relevant for persons with disabilities contained in the programme, [analysed by EDF](#):

- The integration of people fleeing Russia's war against Ukraine, and its impact on labour markets and social protection schemes.
- The prevention and elimination of energy poverty.
- The implementation of the European Child Guarantee.
- Quality working conditions and protection of workers.

Of these files, the only one that has really had a considerable advance is the last one. Coordinated with the presentation of the Disability Employment Package by the Commission, the Czech Presidency started its work on [Council Conclusions on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market](#), currently being followed by EDF. It is expected to be approved in December.

Regarding the elimination of energy poverty, Council discussions have followed directions of the European Council, focused, hence, on the wide approach to the pricing of gas and electricity problems in European markets, rather than developing concrete support measures for the most disadvantaged at national level. Nevertheless, there are recent Commission proposals for Member States on funding resources to develop these later measures.

The Czech Presidency also covered the presentation of the [European Care Strategy](#), in September, and it's working on the EU ratification of the [Istanbul Convention, on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#), and the [EU Directive of Pay Transparency](#), currently on trialogues.

### **Future presidencies- Sweden and Spain**

The year 2023 entails the end of the current Presidency trio, with Sweden, and the start of the one conformed by Spain-Belgium-Hungary. The Swedish presidency comes in uncertain times, as the recent elections brought a government change that will probably modify the original proposals for the development of political and legislative measures as understood by the previous government.

Spain, on the other side, has already expressed its interest in advancing on many social procedures, being particularly interested in the AccessibleEU launch, and the future EU Disability Card.

The main legislative procedures that will cover the period of both presidencies, Sweden and Spain, are:

- Horizontal Non-Discrimination Directive (COM 2008/426): The proposal is still blocked in the Council. There has been little movement under the French and Czech presidencies.
- Disability Employment Package: 2023 will see the launch of measures 3, 4 and 6 of the Package, that is Guidelines on Reasonable Accommodation, a manual for managing chronic diseases and preventing the risk of acquiring disabilities and a study and recommendations on improving the employment for persons with disabilities through quality sheltered employment models.
- AccessibleEU: The new center will probably be launched in the first semester of 2023.
- EU Disability Card: The [proposal for a European Disability Card](#), whether a Directive or Regulation, will be launched in the second semester of 2023, during the Spanish presidency. The call for evidence will be published in November-December, and the consultation will be opened in the first quarter of 2023.
- The Proposal for a Regulation laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence, also known as [Artificial Intelligence Act](#), will continue to be addressed by the Parliament and Council in 2023, with high chances of it being approved.

## Resources

For those who would like to refresh their knowledge on how to work with the Council Presidencies you can find more information in a webinar for EDF members we organized in 2020. A [recording and transcript](#) are now available on the EDF website.

See also our [Guide on Council Presidencies](#) which was published in 2021.

## ANNEX- Next Presidencies of the Council of the EU

Country	Semester	Year
<b>Sweden<sup>1</sup></b>	January-June	2023
<b>Spain</b>	July-December	2023
<b>Belgium</b>	January-June	2024
<b>Hungary</b>	July-December	2024
<b>Poland</b>	January-June	2025
<b>Denmark</b>	July-December	2025
<b>Cyprus</b>	January-June	2026
<b>Ireland</b>	July-December	2026
<b>Lithuania</b>	January-June	2027
<b>Greece</b>	July-December	2027

<sup>1</sup> End of Trio, preceded by France and Czech Republic.