



Results of the Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union

January-June 2013

FOR STABILITY, JOBS AND GROWTH

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Introduction: A Presidency of results – for stability, jobs and growth

When we published our policy programme in January, we said that the 2013 Irish Presidency would be about real and tangible decisions to secure stability and encourage jobs and growth. In short, it would be about action, not words. As the Presidency concludes, this report outlines what has been achieved in partnership with our fellow Member States, our colleagues in the EU Institutions and other stakeholders.

Our test all along when selecting our policy priorities involved one simple but important question - will this make a difference? A six-month Presidency cannot alone transform the Union but a number of significant decisions have now been taken, many of them crucially supported by the €960,000,000,000 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the EU for 2014 to 2020.

With growth levels in the EU still too low and unemployment far too high, the decisions made under the Irish Presidency offer a mix of short-term impact and longer-term value. We achieved this with up to 200 policy commitments including more than 80 legislative instruments.

Real results – for stability

Major results were recorded in the drive to stabilise European economies and design a safer, stronger, better regulated banking system. These included:

- » Banking stability through the Single Supervisory Mechanism, the Capital Requirements Directive (CRD IV) and the Bank Resolution and Recovery legislation
- » 'Two Pack' economic governance measures agreed with the Parliament
- » Effective operation of the European Semester

Real results – for jobs and growth

Major results that contributed to jobs and growth included:

- » The 2014-2020 EU Budget (MFF): a €960 billion investment programme across infrastructure, cohesion, education, research, agriculture and other key areas
- » Particular focus on youth unemployment: the agreed Youth Guarantee recommendation and, for the first time, up to €8bn dedicated to tackling this issue, to be frontloaded into the early years of the 2014-2020 budget
- » Progress on trade agreements, a key growth driver: EU-Japan negotiations underway and a negotiating mandate agreed for a historic EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)
- » Agreement on most of the legislative programmes which will deploy MFF funding, including Horizon 2020, the Common Agricultural Policy, the Connecting Europe Facility, LIFE, COSME and Erasmus+
- » Better access to public procurement opportunities for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the EU's €2 trillion public contracts market
- » Focus on high-potential sectors such as the digital sector, with major progress on data protection and e-identification legislation

The Presidency applied a jobs and growth focus across every single policy area and Council formation, as the detailed results outlined in the following pages will demonstrate.

We take this opportunity to thank all those who helped the Irish Presidency in its important task and wish our successors in the Trio Presidency – Lithuania and Greece – the very best in their work at this important time for the Union.



Taoiseach and Tánaiste greet President of the European Council Herman van Rompuy at the beginning of the Presidency in January



European Parliament President Schulz and Minister for European Affairs Creighton



PART I
SUMMARY OF
ACHIEVEMENTS



Days of
the Irish
Presidency

200



Estimated number of
policy commitments
achieved, including
more than 80
in legislative form.

13,914



Twitter followers of the
Presidency twitter accounts
[@eu2013ie](#) and [@IrelandRepBru](#),
the most followed Presidency to
date on Twitter

1. Securing stability in Europe

The Irish Presidency was determined to secure a strong and stable banking system to underpin job creation and sustainable economic growth in Europe. The Presidency achieved the following measures to deliver on this commitment:

- » Key Banking Union measures: the **Single Supervisory Mechanism, and two Regulations (ECB, EBA), the Capital Requirements Directive (CRD IV:** stronger banks, with limits on bankers' bonuses) and political agreement on **Bank Resolution and Recovery (BRR)**
- » **"Two Pack"** economic governance measures
- » A streamlined **European Semester Process**
- » **Financial Regulation**, including the **Markets in Financial Instruments (MIFID/MIFIR) measures**, the **Mortgage Credit Directive, Transparency, Market Abuse Regulation** and **Packaged Retail Investment Products (PRIPIs)** providing greater certainty to consumers
- » **A package of taxation measures including on tackling tax fraud and evasion**
- » Efficient and effective management of **EU annual budget** developments

Banking Union: Supporting Stability and building confidence

A healthy banking sector is essential to promote stability, security, confidence and growth in the European economy, and is critical to savers and investors alike. The Presidency made Banking Union a key priority of its term in office, in order to prevent a recurrence of the mistakes made in the past, to better protect savers and taxpayers and to ensure that EU banks can support the EU's economic recovery.

Agreement with the European Parliament on the establishment of the Single Supervisory Mechanism: ECB regulation and amended EBA regulation

The lack of coordination between supervisory authorities in Member States was seen as a significant contributing factor to the banking crisis. The agreement reached under the Irish Presidency with the European Parliament on the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) is one of the main pillars of Banking Union and will provide for the European Central Bank (ECB) to act as supervisor for banks throughout the Union. The package of measures, the ECB regulation conferring supervisory tasks on the ECB, and the amended European Banking Authority (EBA) regulation, will lay the foundations of a new and more effective system of supervision for all the participating Member States. The new system will not duplicate the work of national supervisors, but will incorporate them into a more powerful architecture centred on the ECB. At the same time it will make full use of the resources and skills of the national authorities. The EBA will preserve its role in preparing draft regulations and will see an increase in its powers, particularly regarding the assessment of the resilience of our banking systems.

Agreement with the European Parliament on the Capital Requirements Package (CRD IV)

The Capital Requirements Package (CRD IV) includes new rules that will help ensure that European banks hold enough good quality capital to withstand future economic and financial shocks. The agreement secured by the Presidency with the European Parliament on CRD IV also includes restrictions on bankers' pay to make sure that pay practices do not encourage excessive risk-taking. The package also includes new provisions to make European banks more transparent.

General Approach agreed on Bank Resolution and Recovery (BRR)

With agreement on SSM and CRD IV reached, the Presidency turned its focus to measures aimed at avoiding future bank bail-outs by European taxpayers and made good progress on key elements of the BRR process which will ensure that regulatory authorities can intervene at an early stage if problems arise in financial institutions to minimise damage and to resolve issues. If a bank does fail, the BRR framework ensures that the cost of restructuring and resolving

the bank will fall to the bank's owners and creditors and not the taxpayer. This essential pillar of Banking Union, agreed in June, will see a 'bail-out' replaced with a 'bail-in'. The agreement also sets out effective resolution rules that will help avoid and better weather any future banking crises. The agreement will now allow negotiations to start with the European Parliament on BRR.

Economic Governance

As Presidency, Ireland also sought to strengthen economic policy coordination between Member States to support healthy public finances and to underpin a return to sustainable economic growth and job creation in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Agreement with the European Parliament on the 'Two-Pack' economic governance proposals

The 'Two-Pack' is designed to enhance economic governance among euro area Member States with the aim of improving oversight of public finances. The 'Two-Pack' regulations introduce budgetary coordination in the euro area and contain rules for enhanced economic and fiscal surveillance. A First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament was secured in February. The two Regulations were adopted by the Council in May and subsequently came into force on 30 May. The Regulations will result in a change in Budget day for euro area states.

European Semester

The European Semester process is at the heart of the EU's stronger post-crisis economic governance arrangements. The aim of the Semester process is to develop and implement jointly agreed priorities to support growth and jobs, underpinned by the Stability and Growth Pact and the Europe 2020 Strategy. This means restoring competitiveness and ultimately unlocking new investments in EU-wide growth that is smart, sustainable and inclusive. Effective management of this third European Semester cycle was therefore an important focus for the Irish Presidency. Guided by the Irish Presidency Roadmap for the Semester process which was presented to the General Affairs Council in December 2012, the Presidency was pleased that the June

European Council concluded European Semester 2013 by endorsing clear country specific recommendations for the national budget cycles across the Union during the second half of 2013, while promoting full national ownership and preserving social dialogue.

Strengthening Financial Regulation

The Presidency also sought to improve financial regulation to avoid a repeat of mistakes made in the past, and most importantly, to protect consumers and investors.

Provisional Agreement with the European Parliament on the Mortgage Credit Directive

Provisional agreement was reached with the European Parliament on the proposed Mortgage Credit Directive in April with final agreement expected shortly. The agreement on the new Mortgage Credit Directive will mean more information and better protection for consumers in relation to mortgages.



Minister Noonan with Eurogroup Chair Dijsselbloem

2,477

Meetings and events were chaired by the Presidency across Europe



374

Trilogues were held with the European Commission and European Parliament



Council meetings chaired by Irish Ministers during the Presidency



Hours were spent by the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Irish Ministers in European Parliament

The new rules will also help to improve comparability of mortgage products leading to a more level playing field across Europe and the development of a cross-border mortgage market.

General Approach on the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) and Council Conclusions on Regulation (MiFIR)

The aim of the 2007 Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) was to further the integration of a single European market for financial services by establishing a framework for the provision of investment services such as financial brokerage, advice and dealing within the EU. Since its introduction MiFID has increased competition, reduced costs and provided greater choice for investors. However, in light of market and technological advances as well as the financial crisis, new legislation was proposed that will level the playing field for those participating in the market, and reduce costs while also improving the global competitiveness of the EU financial services industries. The breakthrough achieved by the Presidency among Member States will result in new rules to make financial markets more efficient, resilient and transparent and strengthen the protection of investors.

Progress Report on Central Securities Depositories (CSDs)

The CSD Regulation seeks to improve the settlement of securities throughout the Single Market by introducing rules in areas such as the harmonisation of settlement periods and common rules for CSDs. The Irish Presidency made significant progress on this file and issued a Progress Report in June.

Agreement with the European Parliament on the 'Transparency Directive'

Companies that are more transparent and socially responsible will be better able to contribute to sustainable economic growth and creating employment. This is why the Presidency worked intensively to secure agreement with the European Parliament on the Transparency Directive. The Directive applies to all companies listed on EU exchanges and aims to encourage European companies to be more open, including requiring firms involved in mining and extractive industries to detail their financial relationships with governments around the

world. The agreed proposal also removes the requirement for listed companies to publish quarterly reports which means they will be better able to focus on long-term sustainable growth rather than short-term profitability.

Agreement with the European Parliament on the Market Abuse Regulation (MAR)

Market abuse harms the integrity of financial markets and public confidence in securities and derivatives. The Market Abuse Regulation (MAR) strengthens and harmonises market abuse regimes across the EU and provides for tougher administrative sanctions on those who breach these rules. The agreement secured with the European Parliament will ensure better protection for investors and consumers and will ultimately provide for greater stability in financial markets.

General Approach on Packaged Retail Investment Products (PRIIPs)

The General Council Approach for the PRIIPs Regulation agreed by the Irish Presidency will introduce new rules to ensure that consumers are informed about financial investment products in a short, easily understandable and standardised document, known as this 'Key Information Document' (KID). Every manufacturer of investment products (e.g. investment fund managers, insurers, banks) will have to produce a KID for each packaged retail investment product.

Taxation

Agreement on negotiating mandate for agreements with Third Countries

The proposed amendments to the Savings Tax Directive aim to strengthen cooperation among tax authorities in Member States in the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion. They also extend the scope of the Directive from interest on bank accounts to income from certain other financial products such as life insurance. Agreement was reached by the Presidency with partners in May on the negotiating mandate for the European Commission to update related savings taxation agreements with third countries. The agreement is an important step towards agreeing the Directive and tackling international tax fraud and evasion.

Agreement with the European Parliament on the Fiscalis 2020 Regulation

The European Commission estimates that tax fraud accounts for an annual loss of 2-2.5% to the EU's GDP. Fiscalis is a cooperation programme which enables tax authorities in Member States and candidate countries to exchange information and expertise with the goal of reducing tax fraud. In May the Presidency reached agreement with the European Parliament on the Fiscalis Regulation.

Progress Report on the Directive Implementing Enhanced Cooperation in the area of a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT)

The proposed Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) will be applied on certain transactions between financial institutions. At the first meeting of Finance Ministers chaired by the Irish Presidency in January, agreement was secured by the Presidency to proceed with discussions on FTT using the enhanced cooperation procedure.



Minister Noonan at Informal meeting of finance ministers, Dublin

VAT

The Presidency forged political agreement on three key VAT files. The agreement on the **VAT Reverse Charge Mechanism Directive** will allow for Member States to combat certain forms of VAT fraud, in particular carousel schemes where goods are rapidly traded a number of times without payment of VAT. Such schemes can result in a loss of VAT receipts of several billion euro over the course of a year. The Directive will permit Member States to shift the liability for the payment of VAT from the supplier, as is normally required under EU legislation, to the customer.

Political Agreement was also secured on a **Directive on the VAT Quick Reaction Mechanism**. This will allow for Member States to take immediate measures in cases of sudden and massive VAT fraud. Previously, such incidents were addressed through processes which took several months.

Agreement was also secured on an **Implementing Regulation governing VAT rules for cross-border services**. The Presidency prioritised this file and the agreement secured marks the first time that a tax file has been opened and completed by the same Presidency. The agreement will ensure consistency in the application of the new VAT rules across Member States in respect of telecommunications, broadcasting and e-Services which are supplied cross-border. Under the new VAT rules, which are due to come into effect on 1 January 2015, the place of taxation of these services will shift from the place of the supplier to the place of the consumer. This will provide certainty for business and for Member States in identifying the location of the consumer as well as ensuring that opportunities for non-taxation or double taxation will not arise.

Tax fraud, tax evasion and aggressive tax planning

The Irish Presidency was active in facilitating discussions on concrete actions on tax fraud and evasion and aggressive tax planning. The main focus of these discussions was the Commission's Action Plan and two associated Recommendations ('the Commission package') which were published in December 2012. Following detailed discussions at official level, the issue was discussed at the Informal meeting of ECOFIN Ministers in Dublin where a strong desire for consensus was evident. As a follow-up to the discussion at the Informal meeting, a joint letter was issued by Ireland's Minister for Finance and the Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union to their colleagues.

The joint letter identified seven key areas which had not yet been agreed at EU level, and sought early agreement on these in order to demonstrate the EU's determination to tackle tax fraud and evasion. Comprehensive Council Conclusions were agreed at the May ECOFIN Council.

EU budget

As well as delivering the Presidency's planned EU annual budget programme, the Irish Presidency also successfully handled significant EU budget issues which arose during its term. Such issues included Draft Amending Budget No. 1 to Budget 2013 to facilitate Croatian accession, and Draft Amending Budget No. 2 to Budget 2013 to address a shortfall in EU budget payments. The political agreement reached on the Amending Budget at the ECOFIN Council in May focused spending on policies and programmes that promote economic growth and jobs.



Taoiseach Enda Kenny speaking at the European Parliament

2. Investing in sustainable jobs and growth

In parallel with its legislative programme for economic stability, the Irish Presidency worked on an ambitious agenda for jobs and growth. With 26 million Europeans unemployed and an acute problem of youth unemployment, there was no time to lose. A top priority was agreement on the €960 billion Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), Europe's budget for 2014–2020 and its biggest single tool for investment in jobs and growth. At the end of June, the Presidency concluded lengthy and challenging negotiations with the Parliament. With the Parliament's consent, this agreement will ensure the programming and delivery of EU spending for the 2014 to 2020 period. Finalisation of the MFF will allow the Union to provide the resources necessary for investment to create the jobs and growth.

The Presidency delivered on key measures and programmes to promote jobs and growth. These included:

- » A **Youth Guarantee**, with up to €8bn focused on youth employment
- » The **Horizon 2020** programme of research and innovation grants (provisional agreement)
- » Programmes **improving European transport, energy and digital networks**
- » The **Erasmus+ Programme** to support learning and education exchanges
- » Strong progress on the **Cohesion** package which promotes growth and development among Europe's regions through structural and investment funds
- » Investment in Europe's valuable natural resources, including agriculture and rural development, with **CAP and CFP reformed**
- » **Focus on SMEs**, including the **€2 billion COSME** programme, improved access to research funding and to **public procurement**, and simpler accounting with agreement on the **Accounting Directive**

€960bn

Agreed amount for the 7 year
EU Budget (MFF)

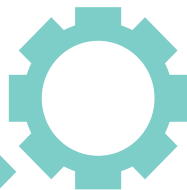


€30bn

for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)
targeting enhancements in transport,
energy and telecoms networks

Erasmus+
programme for
education and
training

€16bn



Up to €8bn to tackle
youth unemployment



€3bn

for the LIFE programme
to fund projects in the
environmental area

- » Focus on the high-potential digital sector, with major progress on **data protection, e-identification** and **web accessibility** along with agreements on the **European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)** and **on re-use of public sector information**
- » Further work to complete the **Single Market**, including the **Union Customs Code** and **modernised state aid rules**

€960 Billion investment in jobs and growth: Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020

Agreement on the EU's MFF was a top priority for the Irish Presidency. The European Council in February agreed the €960 billion budget to be focused on competitiveness, jobs and growth measures. The Irish Presidency then launched negotiations on behalf of EU Member States with the aim of getting the European Parliament's consent. A deal was reached in the final days of June with the leadership of the European Parliament. The MFF package was welcomed by the European Council on 27 June.

From January 2014, investment will start flowing, including in the following areas:

- » Up to €8 billion specifically for tackling youth unemployment, underpinning the European Youth Guarantee agreed under the Presidency in February
- » €70 billion in research and innovation grants for researchers throughout Europe
- » €30 billion for improving European transport, energy and digital networks
- » €19 billion for the Erasmus+ Programme to support student exchanges
- » €325 billion for building cohesion among Europe's regions through structural funds
- » €373 billion to be invested in Europe's valuable natural resources, including agriculture and rural development



Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore

Progress on the Cohesion Package

The hugely positive effects of the EU's Cohesion policy are visible in communities right across the Union. The Presidency achieved significant progress in negotiations with the European Parliament on the Cohesion legislative package due to come into force on 1 January 2014. Agreement has been reached on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Territorial Co-operation (ETC) and Cohesion Fund (CF) regulations and on the amending European Grouping of Territorial Co-operation (EGTC) regulation while some 90% of the key Common Provisions Regulation has been agreed. In addition, significant progress has been made with the European Parliament on the ESF Regulation, including a key agreement on the ESF minimum share, which will facilitate the final conclusion on the regulation. The new regulations will ensure that €325 billion of Cohesion funding will continue to play a critical role in reducing socio-economic disparities between and within Member States, and in supporting jobs, growth, new infrastructure, and sustainable development at local and regional level in Europe.

Strengthening the Digital Single Market: towards a Single Market of the future

The Presidency made progress on a range of dossiers to boost the Digital Single Market and to deliver long-term benefits that will help both consumers and business. The Presidency worked to ensure that the EU is ready to seize the potential of the digital market to create jobs and growth. The Presidency hosted the eHealth and Digital Agenda Assembly events in Dublin, focused on Europe's digital future.

Progress Report on key aspects of Data Protection Package

As part of its focus on the Digital Agenda, the Presidency placed a high priority on advancing the negotiations in the Council on the Data Protection Reform Package. These measures are intended to ensure that citizens have more control over their personal data. It will help to create the levels of trust and confidence which will support the growth of the Digital Single Market.

The Presidency completed a first technical examination of the proposed Data Protection Directive and significantly advanced the negotiations on the proposed Data Protection Regulation. Following intensive negotiations with the Member States, an updated draft of Chapters I-IV of the Regulation was presented to the Justice and Home Affairs Council in June. The Presidency achieved broad support from Member States for the overall approach of the draft which seeks to balance increased transparency for individuals with the introduction of a 'risk-based' approach (which will take account of the nature, scope, context and purposes of the processing operations and levels of risk arising for data subjects) in order to calibrate the compliance burdens on business.

Agreement with the European Parliament on Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI)

A wide variety of information is held by public bodies in all Member States, ranging from demographic and economic data to historical documents. The agreement reached by the Irish Presidency will facilitate access to, and re-use by, the private sector of data held by public sector bodies, including for the

first time, museums, many libraries and archives, at low or no cost. This will allow for the development of innovative products and services, supporting the growth and jobs agenda and strengthening the knowledge-based economy.

Agreement with the European Parliament on European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)

The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) was established in 2004 to help combat the growing threat to EU security, infrastructure and the economy from cyber incidents. Building on the strong progress made by the Cyprus Presidency, the Irish Presidency reached agreement with the European Parliament on the proposal which provides for a new seven year mandate for ENISA and a more efficient management structure for the agency. This will allow it to play a more effective role in strengthening network and information security within the EU. It will also contribute to Member States' development of enhanced capabilities in this area. The agency will help to ensure that the digital economy can continue to grow in a secure environment, generating jobs and growth while maintaining high standards of online consumer protection.

Council Conclusions on Cyber Security

Users of online services in Europe need to know that their information is safe and secure. Recent cases of online hacking have underlined the need for coordinated action and the cross-border nature of this threat. The Council Conclusions secured by the Presidency on the Cyber Security strategy will advance the development of an integrated and coherent approach to online security in all Member States. The very great potential of the Digital Single Market to deliver economic growth and create jobs also underscores the importance of action to ensure that users can, in complete confidence, avail of the benefits that online services offer.

Progress Report on Electronic Identification (e-ID) and Electronic Trust Services (e-TS)

Citizens and businesses must be able to have confidence in the online marketplace in order for it to work effectively. This is why the Irish Presidency attached a high priority to making progress on this proposed Regulation which

aims to provide a pan-European framework for electronic authentication and recognition of e-signatures and is a key Single Market Act file. Mutual recognition and acceptance of electronic identification (e-ID) has the potential to facilitate access for citizens to public services across EU borders in areas such as health, social welfare, taxation, employment and education. The Presidency's work on electronic identification and mutual recognition will serve as a solid basis for further progress by incoming Trio partners.

Progress Report on Web Accessibility

Better accessibility to online services can allow real social and economic gains for all citizens. User-friendly websites should be made available to all citizens, including those with disabilities. The proposed single set of accessibility rules will also deliver benefits for business, as developers can offer their products and services across the whole EU without extra adaptation costs. The European web accessibility market, estimated at €2 billion, is currently only reaching 10% of its potential, offering significant scope for future growth and job creation. The Presidency has made good progress on this proposal, which is a first step in a process that aims to remove barriers to accessing internet products and services in the Single Market.



Taoiseach Kenny, Lord Puttnam, European Commission Vice President Kroes and Minister Rabbitte

Progress Report on reducing the costs of high speed broadband

The progress report by the Presidency will advance this proposal which aims to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed networks across the EU. This will facilitate access for consumers and business and also enhance the EU's global competitiveness.

Progress Report on Trans-European Telecommunications Networks (TEN-Tele)

The progress report by the Presidency is aimed at strengthening broadband and digital service infrastructures in the field of telecommunications to better connect and serve business and consumers in the EU within the context of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). The report will contribute to the development of networks that will allow all Europeans to contribute to, and benefit from, the information society. The investment envisaged in key projects will also improve the competitiveness of the European economy, promote interoperability of national and regional networks, and support the development of a digital single market.

Smart Growth: promoting research and innovation

Agreement on Horizon 2020 - the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (subject to final approval by the institutions)

A well-funded research and innovation sector is a core driver of sustainable future competitiveness and growth in Europe. The Presidency prioritised efforts to ensure a dynamic European innovation sector through support for researchers and innovators in the EU. In June, agreement with the European Parliament was secured on the Horizon 2020 programme, which will provide €70 billion to fund European research and innovation over the next seven years. By simplifying and facilitating access to EU funding in the research and innovation sector, Horizon 2020 can contribute to smart and sustainable economic growth and job creation well into the future, including through increased SME access to programme supports and funding.

Agreements on the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and on the amendment of the 2008 Regulation establishing the EIT

(subject to final approval by the institutions)

The EIT is the EU's flagship educational institute designed to assist innovation, research and growth in the European Union and was established to address Europe's innovation gap. The agreements brokered by the Presidency with the European Parliament on the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the EIT and on the amendment of the 2008 Regulation establishing the EIT will ensure the provision of over €2bn for the EIT to fund innovation projects over the next seven years. They will ensure that the EIT can better support and contribute to shaping and driving innovation across the Union in the 2014-2020 period, promoting smart jobs and sustainable growth.

Council Conclusions on the European Research Area (ERA)

The Presidency attached strong importance to the creation of a European Research Area (ERA) to create a unified research area within the Single Market in which researchers, technology and innovation can circulate freely. The Presidency agreed Council Conclusions to endorse the new strategy for developing international cooperation in research and innovation, as proposed in the Commission's ERA Communication 'Enhancing and focusing international cooperation in research and innovation'.

Council Conclusions on High Performance Computing

High Performance Computing (HPC) is an important asset for the EU's innovation capacity. It has a strategic importance for the EU's industrial and scientific capabilities as well as its citizens, by supporting the development of innovative industrial products and services, increasing competitiveness, and helping to address societal and scientific challenges more effectively. The Presidency secured Council Conclusions emphasising the importance of deploying and maintaining a world-class and sustainable HPC infrastructure as an integral element of the EU's future smart and sustainable economic development.

Progress on the Creative Europe programme

Strong progress was made by the Presidency on the Creative Europe programme proposal. The finalisation of the negotiations on this important file will be carried forward by Ireland's Trio partner, Lithuania. Once agreed the programme will support artists and others working in the creative sector to embrace the digital economy by facilitating access to funding and training. The scheme will also help artists to reach new audiences, thus supporting growth and job creation in Europe's diverse arts, culture and creative sectors.

EU space policy

Investment and research on space-related issues contributes to tackling future challenges including environmental issues, and supports the development of new and innovative products and employment across the EU. The Irish Presidency secured Council Conclusions on both **EU Space Industrial Policy** and on **the establishment of appropriate relations between the EU and the European Space Agency (ESA)**. Progress was also made on the proposal for a **Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST)** support programme. This is to ensure the security of satellite data for all sectors and users of such services. The work of the Irish Presidency will contribute to the development of a strong and competitive European space industry.

Unlocking the potential of SMEs and European businesses

Agreement with the European Parliament on the Company Law (Accounting) Directive

The rules relating to company law and good corporate governance, as well as harmonisation of accounting and auditing, are essential for the creation and management of a single market for financial services and products, and for the effective functioning of dynamic economies. The Company Law (Accounting) Directive will reduce the heavy administrative burden for SMEs and introduce a simplified set of accounting rules. The Directive also introduces mandatory requirements of disclosure for payments of enterprises to Governments in the extractive and logging of primary forest industries. In April, the Irish Presidency

brokered agreement with the European Parliament on this file which is intended to reduce the administrative burden on European businesses, in particular SMEs, and to strengthen the Single Market.

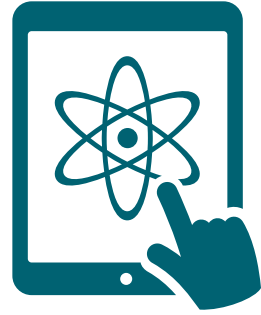
Agreement with the European Parliament on the Union Customs Code (UCC)

The Presidency reached agreement with the European Parliament on the Union Customs Code (UCC), which simplifies and modernises customs procedures in support of the jobs and growth agenda. The modernisation of customs procedures and the increased use of IT systems will facilitate more efficient clearance procedures and reduce costs for business while ensuring safe and secure trade of goods in the EU. The new agreement will make it easier for exporters to trade and invest internationally and will help reinforce the EU as a competitive global economy.



Minister Bruton at the Trade Council in Brussels

The 7 year EU budget (MFF) also included:



€70bn

Horizon2020 programme for research and innovation



on a reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

€2bn

for the COSME programme to boost competitiveness of the EU's 20 million SMEs



Agreement with the European Parliament on COSME (Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs)

As part of its commitment to assisting the SME sector to expand their businesses and create employment, the Presidency worked to ensure that SMEs get more and better access to credit and research funding. The agreement reached with the European Parliament on the COSME programme is an important step. COSME, with a fund in excess of €2 billion over the next seven years, helps SMEs access finance to develop their businesses more easily and assists small businesses to access new markets outside their home countries.

Provisional Agreement with the European Parliament on the Public Procurement Package (subject to final approval by the institutions)

The Presidency completed negotiations with the European Parliament and achieved a provisional agreement on the Public Procurement Package (Classic Directive, Utilities Directive and Concessions Directive). The agreement will make it easier for businesses and SMEs to tender for procurement contracts. Administrative burdens will be reduced, procurement procedures simplified, and costs related to tendering lowered by making procurement systems more transparent. The use of e-procurement will also simplify the processes and foster greater cross-border competition. The agreement will strengthen the generation of jobs and growth, given that public authorities across the European Union spend approximately €2 trillion per annum (some 19% of EU GDP) on the procurement of goods, services and works.

General Approach on key elements of State Aid Modernisation

State Aid to companies and industries by Member State Governments is scrutinised by the European Commission. Public authorities must follow agreed rules to ensure that they do not give a company an unfair competitive advantage over their competitors through provision of State Aid. Agreement has been reached in Council on key parts of the Commission's proposals to reform the State Aid framework. The agreement will ensure more efficient and transparent monitoring of State Aid by the Commission, enhanced data-gathering processes and improved co-operation between the Commission and Member States' national courts. The reforms will also enable the Commission to focus on large and potentially distortive State Aids, while simplifying the procedures for 'good aid'.

Council Conclusions on follow-up actions to the Smart Regulation agenda

The regulatory environment in which businesses operate influences their competitiveness and their ability to grow and create jobs. The Council Conclusions on Smart Regulation underline the importance of regulation taking into account the concerns of small businesses and SMEs, as well as a number of agreed follow-up actions to two Commission Communications on Smart Regulation. This will contribute to creating a regulatory environment that is simple, effective, and easy to understand.

Agreement on the Unified Patent Court

Building on the work of previous Presidencies, the signature by 25 Member States of the Unified Patent Court Agreement (UPC) took place under the Irish Presidency in February. This will provide innovative European businesses with a single point of access for registering and protecting patents within the EU. The agreement is also a key element of the establishment of a Unitary Patent System for Europe and will make it less expensive for innovators to protect their intellectual property and enforce patents throughout Europe.

European Account Preservation Order to facilitate cross-border debt recovery in civil and commercial matters

The European Account Preservation Order is a debt recovery measure which will make it easier for businesses operating across EU borders to recover money owing to them. Under the Irish Presidency, Justice Ministers approved a series of principles carefully designed to balance the interest of creditors and debtors. These principles are an essential basis for future technical work which we hope will pave the way for a political agreement soon.

Political guidelines on Insolvency Proceedings (recast)

As business activity becomes increasingly cross-border, there must be adequate provisions to deal with instances where a business with operations in more than one Member State becomes insolvent. At the June Justice and Home Affairs Council, the Presidency secured agreement on political guidelines

to inform the continuing negotiations on the Regulation on Insolvency proceedings. This proposal aims to modernise the existing insolvency rules to facilitate an EU 'rescue and recovery' culture for companies and individuals in financial difficulties. The proposal will also make cross-border insolvency proceedings more efficient and effective.

Empowering Europe's Youth: tackling youth unemployment, promoting training & education

Council Recommendation on the Youth Guarantee and €8bn for Youth Employment

Providing opportunities for young people in order to avoid the creation of a 'lost generation' was a key element in the Irish Presidency's overall theme of stability, jobs and growth and one which the Presidency was determined to address head-on. Following discussions by Ministers at the EPSCO informal Ministerial meeting in Dublin, the Presidency brokered agreement on a Council Recommendation on the Youth Guarantee aimed at ensuring that young people, up to the age of 25, who are not working or studying, receive an offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or completing their studies. The Recommendation aims to ensure a smooth transition between education and work. The European Council in February agreed on a Youth Employment Initiative fund of some €6bn. The June European Council agreed on a comprehensive approach to combat youth unemployment and agreed on immediate actions, including the mobilisation of up to €8 billion in support of youth employment.

Agreement with the European Parliament on Erasmus+ programme

Erasmus+ brings together the current EU schemes for education, training, youth and sport into one programme. The Presidency agreement with the European Parliament could fund Erasmus+ to provide support to over 4 million Europeans for education and training opportunities abroad between 2014 and 2020, doubling the current number of participants. The new Erasmus+ programme replaces seven existing schemes with one, making it easier for students and other participants to apply for grants. The programme will not

only ensure that participants reach their potential but will also contribute to improving the skills of citizens across Europe to find work or to develop their own business and create employment.



Minister Quinn and Commissioner Vassiliou



European Commission Vice President Kroes and Minister Burton

Supporting improved employment prospects through up-skilling and re-training

Agreement on the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) Programme (subject to final approval by the institutions)

The Presidency secured political agreement with the European Parliament on the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme (originally proposed as the Programme for Social Change and Innovation-PSCI). The new funding instrument will have an indicative budget of €815 million from 2014-2020 and will support skills development and employment placement. The programme will also extend support to providers of microcredit under the European Progress Microfinance Facility and boost investment to develop and expand social enterprises, creating jobs in communities across the EU.

General Approach on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund

A key element of the Presidency's drive for sustainable growth and job creation was the need to train and re-skill of workers who recently lost their jobs, due to global trends. The Irish Presidency made strong progress in advancing the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGAF), securing a general approach among the Member States. The scope of the EGAF encompasses career advice and guidance, education and training programmes, and enterprise supports, such as mentoring and grant aid, to assist workers recently made redundant to find new jobs or become job-ready.

Promoting mobility

Agreement on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications

The Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive will facilitate greater labour mobility for skilled workers seeking employment in other Member States and will also reduce the time and resources spent on bureaucracy for both workers and employers. The amending Directive makes provision for a new European Professional Card that will make it easier for qualifications to be recognised outside their own country.

Progress Report on Posting of Workers

The Presidency placed a strong emphasis on the new Enforcement Directive to improve the implementation of the 1996 rules for the Posting of Workers. The Presidency achieved agreement within Council on a number of elements of this proposal, which will assist future Presidencies in finalising this file. Once agreed this proposal will provide greater protection for workers posted by their company to work in another Member State. It will also ensure much-needed clarity for services providers.

General Approach on Pensions Portability

The free movement of workers is a key element of the Single Market and is an important driver of growth. The Presidency secured a General Approach within Council in June on the Directive on improving the Portability of Supplementary Pension Rights. This proposal aims to remove obstacles to ensure that citizens can choose, with confidence, to live and work anywhere in the EU without fear of losing their pension entitlements.



Minister Bruton, Commissioner Andor and Minister Burton

Progress on entry to EU and residency for seasonal workers, intra-corporate transfers, students and researchers

To ensure that Europe's knowledge economy grows it is important to attract seasonal workers, managerial and qualified employees of multinational companies and students and researchers from across the world. The Presidency engaged extensively with the European Parliament and made significant progress in the negotiations on the rules for entry and residence to the EU for seasonal workers and for managerial and qualified employees of multinational companies. In particular, the Presidency has reached agreement on almost all of the Seasonal Workers Directive and has put forward compromise proposals in relation to the outstanding issues with a view to agreement being reached under the Lithuanian Presidency. The Presidency also completed an initial examination of the proposed Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies and other purposes.

A clean, green and sustainable future for Europe

Agreement on the 7th Environment Action Programme

The 7th Environment Action Programme builds on the achievements of 40 years of previous programmes which have been a key vehicle for advancing environmental improvements in the European Union. The programme agreed by the Presidency with the European Parliament sets out the priority objectives for the EU's environment policy to 2020 with the aim of transitioning Europe towards a resource-efficient, low-carbon and environmentally-friendly economy in which natural capital is protected and enhanced, and the health and well-being of citizens are safeguarded.

Agreement on the Directive on Priority Substances in Water

The Directive on Priority Substances in Water controls emissions, losses and discharges of substances which pose a risk to the aquatic environment by establishing environmental quality standards which must be met. These substances include chemicals, certain metals, biocides, plant protection products and dioxins, the presence and concentration of which in water must be monitored and controlled. The legislation also aims to completely phase-out



Commissioner Hedegaard and Minister Hogan at the Environment Council in Brussels

substances classified as priority hazardous substances. In April the Presidency reached agreement with the European Parliament on the proposals to monitor and control additional substances, with the aim of making Europe's water safer and cleaner.

Agreement on the Programme for Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) Regulation (subject to final approval by the institutions)

The Programme for Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) is the EU's funding instrument for environmental and nature conservation initiatives. The conclusion of the Presidency's agreement with the European Parliament, which is subject to final approval by the institutions, secures funding for the LIFE programme for 2014-2020, ensuring critical support for projects that contribute to the protection of the environment for this and future generations.

Agreement on the Batteries Directive

The agreement reached by the Irish Presidency with the European Parliament aims to reduce the negative environmental impact of batteries and accumulators while also harmonising market requirements. The Directive

sets out measures to prohibit the marketing of batteries containing hazardous substances. The removal of the exemption for certain batteries containing mercury and cadmium will result in the development of safer, more energy-efficient batteries that will benefit both human health and the environment. The agreement also provides industry with the necessary scope for further technological development in this area.

Progress Report on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive

The new draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive will strengthen existing provisions concerning the quality of the EIA process, with the aim of achieving greater environmental protection before decisions are made on projects that are likely to have significant effects on the environment. The Irish Presidency presented a progress report to the June Environment Council to provide a basis for further work by the Lithuanian Presidency.

Global legally binding agreement on Mercury

Mercury is recognised as a chemical of global concern due to its long-range transport in the atmosphere, its persistence in the environment, its ability to bioaccumulate in ecosystems and its significant negative effect on human health and the environment. In January the text of a new global legally binding agreement on mercury was agreed, marking the culmination of over four years work by the UN, national Governments and key stakeholders. The European Union played a key role in the final negotiations of the treaty, improving the lives of many across the world, as well as protecting our environment.

UN Conventions on Chemicals and Waste (Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions)

Chemicals and hazardous waste can cause serious pollution in the regions in which they are released and also, because they are transported over long distances, they can cause serious human health and environmental problems in regions located very far from their sources. To reduce this harmful global impact, three UN conventions have been established that regulate chemicals

and hazardous waste at a global level. The Irish Presidency ensured effective EU input in the decisions taken at the Conferences on the Conventions.

27th Session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme/Global Ministerial Environment Forum

The Irish Presidency led the EU's participation at the 27th Session which took place in Nairobi in February. Environment Ministers backed decisions designed to ensure a strengthened and upgraded institution that will be able to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century. In addition a number of other decisions were agreed including on sustainable consumption and production, green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, chemicals and waste and UNEP's Programme of Work and Budget.

Council Conclusions on the Internal Energy Market Communication

The June Energy Council adopted Council Conclusions in support of the Commission's Communication 'Making the internal energy market work' which seeks complete implementation of Internal Energy Market rules across the EU, to allow consumers and businesses to take full advantage of lower energy prices and to benefit from a more efficient, secure electricity and gas supply. The Conclusions adopted emphasise the significant contribution that the Internal Energy Market will make to all three pillars of the EU's energy policy - sustainability, competitiveness and security of supply - and to the EU's jobs and growth agenda. The Internal Energy Market will also contribute to the EU's energy and climate targets and to the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Progress Report on the Revised Energy Tax Directive

The Irish Presidency presented a Progress Report to the June ECOFIN Council on the Revised Energy Tax Directive. The Revised Directive is an important Single Market file that will aid the functioning of the Internal Market by avoiding a patchwork of national taxes, thus providing legal certainty and reduced compliance costs. More importantly it will aid energy efficiency and help the EU meet its climate change targets.

Safeguarding health and safety

General Approach on the Tobacco Products Directive

Tobacco consumption is the largest avoidable health threat in the EU. Every year 700,000 European citizens die from tobacco-related illnesses. The proposal tabled by the European Commission seeks to improve public health across the EU by reducing tobacco consumption. The proposal contains provisions to make tobacco products less attractive, including by increasing the size of health warnings on products and banning certain tobacco products with characterising flavourings. The Irish Presidency afforded the highest possible priority to the task of building consensus, facilitating agreement among the Member States and significantly progressing the proposal.

Agreement on the Decision on addressing Serious Cross-Border Threats to Health

Agreement was secured with the European Parliament on a Decision which will help Member States prepare and protect citizens against possible future pandemics and environmental disasters. It also strengthens risk preparedness and response planning, improves access to vaccines for Member States, and



Commissioner Borg, Minister Reilly and Minister of State White at the Health Informal in Dublin

will result in clearer risk and crisis communication to the public and healthcare professionals. The EU will also now be able to trigger pandemic vaccine production itself, ultimately leading to faster availability of vaccines to protect citizens in the event of an emergency.

Agreement on the Safety of Offshore Oil and Gas Operations Directive

The Presidency-brokered agreement with the European Parliament on the Safety of Offshore Oil and Gas Operations is aimed at preventing safety failures and major environmental hazards. Under the proposal, offshore oil and gas operators must implement safety standards and procedures to avoid major accidents and improve response mechanisms to any such accidents. The agreement also clarifies operators' liabilities in relation to environmental damage in the event of such an accident.

Agreement with the European Parliament on health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from physical agents (electromagnetic fields) Directive

The Presidency secured an agreement which sets out minimum health and safety requirements to protect workers across Europe from the risks associated with working with electromagnetic fields including in areas such as healthcare.

Agreement reached on the text of the Basic Safety Standards Directive (Radiation Protection)

The agreement reached on the text of the Basic Safety Standards Directive represents a major step forward in the protection from harmful effects of exposure to ionising radiation.

Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) Package

Marine transport is a critical element of the EU's infrastructure for goods and passengers. The MLC provides for rights and protection for the more than 1.2 million seafarers throughout the world as well as ensuring through fair

competition the security of the significant economic interests for international trade. The Irish Presidency brokered two first reading agreements with the European Parliament as part of this package. The first is the Port State Control Directive which allows for the inspection of ships harboured in EU ports. This will ensure that ships using EU waters and EU ports are properly constructed and maintained which will improve the safety of this industry. The second agreement on the Flag State Control Directive contains a number of provisions that require Member States to carry out appropriate inspections to guarantee that ships flying MLC flags in EU waters and in EU ports are fully compliant. The agreements will enhance safety for workers and passengers and will improve environmental standards in the industry.

Agreement on the Ship Recycling Regulation

Over 1,000 ships a year are recycled worldwide, but much of the work is carried out in facilities that lack sufficient safety measures or environmental protection for workers which leads to high accident rates and extensive pollution as many older ships contain hazardous chemicals. Under the new rules, agreed by the Presidency with the European Parliament, ship owners from EU states will have to provide an inventory of dangerous chemicals on board before European ships are recycled at approved facilities that are capable of processing these wastes and that are safe for workers and the environment. It is also intended that this European Regulation will provide a much needed stimulus to raise standards for recycling all ships.

Ensuring the safety and sustainability of Europe's agriculture, food and fisheries and its rural and coastal communities

Recognising this sector as a fundamental pan-European contributor to jobs and growth, the Irish Presidency has worked intensively to drive forward measures aimed at building a more modern and competitive agriculture and fisheries sector, thereby helping to ensure a safe, sustainable and secure future for Europe's food sector.

Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

The agreement on the reform of the CAP is one of the most significant achievements of the Irish Presidency and was identified as a key priority in Ireland's Presidency programme. The agreement will secure strong and sustainable growth in the agriculture and food sectors into the future. The EU agrifood sector contributes enormously to Europe's economy as a major export sector and employer of millions of people. This ambitious reform will contribute to delivering a sustainable future and ensuring that Europe maintains a safe and cost-effective food supply. The reform brokered by the Presidency will also support rural communities across the EU.

The deal represents an equitable and balanced package of measures that will set the framework for the development of the EU agrifood sector up to 2020. A key area of concern for Member States relates to the distribution of direct payments and this agreement provides the necessary flexibility for Member States to choose options that address their individual circumstances. The deal also endorses the European Commission's aim to give a stronger environmental focus to direct payments through adoption of greening measures. Specific measures relating to market support mechanisms in the agrifood sector and focused provisions for rural development are also included in the agreement.

Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)

The reform of the CFP secured with the European Parliament is another major achievement for the Irish Presidency and was identified as one of the main priorities of the Presidency programme. As an island state Ireland has always attached great importance to fisheries policy and this radical reform will support the rebuilding of fish stocks in European waters and will allow for significant quota increases for fishermen as the wasteful practice of discarding fish is phased out.

The main elements of this reform place long-term sustainability at the core of fisheries policy with annual fishing quotas based, in future, on sound scientific advice. Other significant elements are a commitment to a more regionalised approach to tailored decision-making and a strong commitment to protect juvenile fish and to develop and strengthen biologically sensitive areas. This will bring renewed prosperity to the fisheries sector over time by creating new and long-term opportunities for economic growth in coastal areas. The reform

will also promote a more transparent and competitive market. It will empower fishermen by giving them a more central role in the decision making for their fisheries thereby supporting a vital and vibrant industry and healthy fishing stock into the future.

Action Plan for a Maritime Strategy in the Atlantic Area

The Irish Presidency secured the adoption and European Council endorsement of an Action Plan for the Atlantic Strategy. This will support smart, environmentally sustainable and inclusive growth in coastal regions, drive forward Europe's 'Blue Economy' and unleash opportunities for coastal communities including in fisheries and coastal tourism and in emerging areas such as aquaculture, renewable marine energy, deep sea minerals excavation and marine biotechnology. As a first step in internationalising the Atlantic Strategy, the EU signed the Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation launching a research alliance between the EU, Canada and the USA which aims to deepen our common understanding of the Atlantic ecosystem.

Agreement on non-commercial movement of pet animals order ('Pet Passports')

The Presidency achieved agreement on the non-commercial movement of pet animals order now more commonly as the 'pet passport' regulation. This agreement will make it easier for citizens to take their pets to other EU Member States when on holiday or when moving between countries, while still preserving the highest levels of public safety and animal health. This agreement also entails clear and easily-accessible information on identification requirements and vaccinations for pets when travelling.

Cleaner, greener and safer transport for Europe

Agreement on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)

The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) lays down the general rules for granting the Union financial aid in the field of the trans-European transport, energy and telecommunication networks, replacing the existing legal bases. With a budget of almost €30bn, the CEF is a key instrument for targeted infrastructure

investment at European level to ensure the smooth functioning of the Single Market and boost sustainable growth, jobs and competitiveness across the European Union. In the field of transport, the CEF will address missing links, bottlenecks and improve connectivity across the EU as set out in the Trans European Transport Guidelines which were also agreed during the Irish Presidency.

In the energy field, the CEF will provide financial assistance for the modernisation and expansion of Europe's energy infrastructure in order to complete the internal energy market, link isolated regions and facilitate the development of renewables. The Regulation supports the recently finalised trans-European energy infrastructure guidelines, which set out procedures to implement key projects of common interest along trans-European priority corridors and areas covering electricity, gas, oil and CO₂. The CEF, therefore, enables the EU to meet its broader climate and energy goals, while ensuring security of supply and solidarity among Member States.

Agreement on Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)

TEN-T is a set of guidelines and requirements for the development of a comprehensive and sustainable European transport network over the decades to 2050. Transport infrastructure is fundamental to the operation of the internal market. The mobility of persons and goods contributes to promoting greater economic and territorial cohesion in the EU. The Irish Presidency brokered this agreement which aims to establish a core transport network by 2030 and a comprehensive network by 2050 aimed at improving cross-border connections, reducing costs and delays and making moving throughout the EU more environmentally friendly, easier, smarter and safer.

General Approach on Marine Equipment Directive & Agreement on Recreational Craft

The Presidency secured a Council General Approach on the revised **Marine Equipment Directive** which aims to streamline and update procedures for approval of equipment to be installed on board EU ships. This will mean that manufacturers will need only one authorisation from one notified body to install equipment on EU ships. This will help to reduce costs and increase the safety of EU ships through an agreed set of manufacturing standards. The

First Reading Agreement secured with the Parliament on the **Recreational Craft Directive** will serve to improve exhaust emission standards from the water-based craft engaged in sports and leisure activities and increase the competitiveness of European producers exporting to third-country markets.

Agreement on the Tachograph Directive & General Approach on Roadworthiness Package

The Irish Presidency secured a Second Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the **Tachograph Directive** which provides for the development and deployment of a 'smarter' tachograph. The agreement will protect working conditions for drivers in the European road haulage sector and will result in safer conditions for all road users. The Council General Approach secured on the **Road Worthiness Package** will ensure that all motor vehicles (and their trailers) registered in an EU country must keep their vehicles in a roadworthy condition and undergo road worthiness tests. A common set of minimum standards for all EU countries for both private and commercial motor vehicles will increase road safety, encourage fair competition as well as ensuring the higher levels of environmental protection.

General Approach on rail interoperability

Europe has many national railway systems and their technical standards are often different so there is a real need to harmonise the different infrastructures such as platform heights and signaling systems. The Council General Approach reached in relation to the **interoperability elements of the Fourth Railway Package** will improve cross-border rail transport both within the EU and non-EU countries. This harmonisation will increase competitiveness within the Single Market, reduce economies of scale, guarantee a very high level of safety for all users of the rail network and secure the long-term future of European railways.

General Approach on Occurrence Reporting in Civil Aviation

The Council General Approach on **Occurrence Reporting in Civil Aviation** seeks to maintain the high safety levels in European skies by improving the ways in which aviation authorities collect, collate and analyse data on safety occurrences.

Satellite navigation systems: Agreement with the European Parliament on Galileo

Global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) are now used in all forms of transportation from ships and airplanes to trucks and taxis as well as by millions of individual citizens on their mobile phones or in their motor vehicles. Up to now users of GNSS had to depend on US GPS or Russian Glonass signals. Galileo now offers an alternative which is run by civil and not military authorities. The Irish Presidency secured agreement on the development of Galileo which will see the establishment of a new financial and governance framework for the two European satellite navigation programmes Galileo and the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay System (EGNOS). It will provide an independent, highly accurate and guaranteed global position service under civilian control which will ensure the protection of financial and communication activities as well as commercial, humanitarian and emergency services (and make it much harder for any of the EU's 500 million citizens to get lost!).



Minister Varadkar at the Transport Council in Brussels

3. Europe and the World

As part of its jobs and growth focus, the Irish Presidency placed a particular emphasis on the enormous potential for Europe of external trade agreements. Major steps forward were taken with the agreement of a mandate for the start of negotiations on an EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, the agreement of a mandate for the start of negotiations on a Trade in Services Agreement and the launch of EU-Japan trade negotiations.

Since its foundation, the EU has been a force for peace and democratisation in Europe, in Europe's neighbourhood and in the wider world. In recognition of this, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2012. During its Presidency, Ireland sought to strengthen this legacy, working in close cooperation with the EU External Action Service and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and with the European Commission. The Presidency also placed a strong focus on helping the world's poorest communities.

Promoting jobs and growth through external trade

Trade will be at the core of the EU's economic recovery and increasing exports from the EU to new markets will drive growth and job creation across the Union. This is why the Presidency placed a strong emphasis on promoting external trade.

EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership: Agreement on negotiating mandate

The Irish Presidency worked intensively during its six months in office to secure a mandate for the start of negotiations between the EU and US on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The conclusion of such a deal can offer major opportunities to export firms across the EU to supply the US market, boosting the EU's GDP by 0.5% per annum and creating some 400,000 jobs in Europe. The agreement reached by the Irish Presidency

provides the European Commission with a mandate to start negotiations with US counterparts on the TTIP and offers a new future for transatlantic trade.

Advancing trade with Asian partners

In March negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement and Investment Agreement with Japan were formally launched under the Irish Presidency. The Presidency also oversaw the agreement of a mandate and the launch and first round of negotiations on a free trade agreement with Thailand. Progress was also made in trade negotiations with other ASEAN partners including Singapore and Vietnam. The Presidency also started Council consideration of the Commission's recommendation for a mandate to open EU negotiations with China on an Investment Agreement.

Trade with the EU's regional partners

Negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with Morocco began in April and further focus on trade with Europe's Southern Neighbours was overseen by the Irish Presidency which held preparatory meetings on trade agreements with Jordan and Tunisia. The text of a DCFTA agreement with Moldova was also agreed during the Irish Presidency and further progress was achieved in creating a Visa Liberalisation accord.

Trade Omnibus I and II

The Presidency secured Second Reading Agreements with the European Parliament on amending certain regulations relating to the common commercial policy to update how trade-related legislation is adopted by the EU, following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. The agreements on Omnibus I and II are key markers of the Presidency's success in trade legislation.

Supporting peace and democracy in Europe and Europe's neighbourhood

Enlargement policy is the EU's most effective tool in promoting and protecting security, democracy, stability, human rights and prosperity across Europe, and this is why furthering the enlargement process was an important focus for the Irish Presidency. During the course of the Presidency progress was achieved on the accession paths of a number of countries.

In May, the Irish Presidency hosted a high-level conference in Dublin coinciding with the tenth anniversary of the EU-Western Balkans Summit which sought to assess the evolution of the accession process over the last decade, and make suggestions on how it can be strengthened to support all the aspiring members of the Western Balkans region.

Securing Croatian accession

The Irish Presidency secured Council Conclusions that formally welcomed the Commission's final monitoring report and cleared the way for Croatia to become the 28th member of the EU on 1 July 2013. The Irish Presidency warmly welcomed the conclusion of this process; the European Council confirmed Croatia's candidate country status under the stewardship of Ireland's last Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2004.

Serbia/Kosovo: Bilateral Agreement and Council Conclusions

The Belgrade-Pristine Dialogue culminated in an agreement between Serbia and Kosovo in April, illustrating the value and importance of the enlargement process in supporting peace and stabilisation in the Western Balkans and in Europe. Following evidence of ongoing implementation of the agreement, the June European Council decided to advance relations with both countries, agreeing that the EU would open accession negotiations with Serbia and begin work on a negotiating mandate. The Council also agreed to open negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo, the first step on the path to EU membership.



Hunger, Nutrition, Climate Justice Conference in Dublin Castle

Opening of a New Chapter in Accession Talks with Turkey

The Presidency worked to reinvigorate the accession process with Turkey and secured agreement in June on opening the chapter on regional policy with Turkey, the first to be opened in three years.

Opening of a New Chapter in Accession Talks with Montenegro

During the Irish Presidency a further accession negotiation chapter on education and culture was opened with Montenegro.

European Neighbourhood Policy: Finalisation of Association Agreements with Armenia, Georgia and Moldova

In collaboration with the EEAS, the Presidency saw negotiations of the Association Agreements for Armenia, Georgia and Moldova finalised as part of the Eastern Partnership process. These assist the implementation of the

European Neighbourhood Policy to support and promote stability and economic prosperity on the EU's Eastern and Southern borders. The Agreements also contribute to promoting democratic reform and strengthening economic development to the east and south of the Union.

Conciliation agreement with the European Parliament on the Decision providing Macro-Financial Assistance to Georgia

EU Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA) provides financial support to non-EU countries which are experiencing short-term balance-of-payments or budget difficulties. MFA complements longer-term funding by the EU and international institutions such as the IMF in order to assist structural reforms and increase stability in third countries. In May the Irish Presidency secured agreement to provide €46 million in MFA to Georgia. The Decision on Georgia was accompanied by a declaration laying down a wider framework to ensure sound and effective decisions on Macro-Financial Assistance to third countries.

Supporting global peace and security

The Irish Presidency provided active support to the EU External Action Service (EEAS) and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, representing the High Representative at a number of high-level dialogues and councils with third countries and regional organisations, and reporting to the European Parliament on the outcome of discussions at the Foreign Affairs Council.

Highlighting the humanitarian dimension in Council Conclusions on Syria

As Presidency, Ireland consistently sought to ensure that EU political and security discussions on the Syria conflict were also informed by an analysis of the serious and escalating humanitarian dimensions of the crisis.

In January the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees participated in an important debate on Syria at the informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers in Dublin. Discussions also took place in Council which addressed actions that can be taken to alleviate the plight of refugees and displaced persons in the region.

Focus on EU-Africa relations

The Irish Presidency placed a particular emphasis on the development and strengthening of EU-Africa relations, in the context of preparations for next year's EU-Africa Summit and review of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. The Presidency prioritised efforts to find a solution to the deteriorating security situation in Mali. This included the hosting of a meeting of EU Development Ministers in Dublin in February, at which a decision was taken to resume EU development cooperation assistance.

Ensuring that the EU speaks with one voice to strengthen its positive role in international organisations

Working with the EEAS to promote greater effectiveness and coherence in EU external policies with the UN and other multilateral organisations, was a priority for the Irish Presidency. In the context of Ireland's current membership of the UN Human Rights Council, the Presidency sought to ensure the EU's effective engagement on human rights issues. This included working closely with the EU delegation in Geneva to ensure the adoption of four EU-led resolutions – on the DPR Korea, Myanmar/Burma, Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Rights of the Child – at the 22nd session of the Human Rights Council. Ireland led the EU engagement in negotiations at the 57th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, resulting in the successful adoption of Agreed Conclusions on the elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls.

Promoting peace, disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons

As Presidency, Ireland helped to shape EU policies and positions in respect of key disarmament and non-proliferation discussions, including at the Third Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention in The Hague in April. The Presidency also worked closely with the EEAS during the negotiations at the UN in March on an Arms Trade Treaty, which was successfully adopted on 2 April in New York.

Promoting human rights

The Presidency worked to advance the human rights agenda including the effective implementation of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights. Three sets of human rights guidelines were adopted by the

Foreign Affairs Council during the Presidency which will guide the work of the EU internationally on specific human rights priorities: on the Death Penalty, on the Freedom of Religion or Belief, and guidelines to Promote and Protect the enjoyment of all human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons.

Strengthening the EU's capacities in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution

Building both on Ireland's experience of the Northern Ireland peace process and the Chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2012, the Irish Presidency placed a particular emphasis on strengthening the EU's capacities in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution. This included working closely with the EEAS and the European Parliament on the organisation of a joint conference in Brussels in May on "the EU as a Peacemaker". The Conference brought together experts from the EU, the United Nations and civil society, to examine how the EU's capacities in the areas of conflict prevention and mediation can be strengthened.

Common Security and Defence Policy

In the defence area, the Irish Presidency has pursued an ambitious programme to ensure the continued development of the EU's capacity to act in support of peace and security in the wider world through the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Working closely with the EEAS, the European Commission and the European Defence Agency, the Irish Presidency has engaged international organisations such as the UN, African Union and NATO with a view to enhancing the capacity of the EU and EU Member States to support peacekeeping operations.

Supporting crisis management operations

At an extraordinary meeting on 17 January to discuss the deteriorating situation in Mali, the Foreign Affairs Council authorised the launch of a European Union military mission to contribute to the training of the Malian Armed Force (EUTM Mali). The May Foreign Affairs Council authorised the opening of negotiations with Libya for an agreement on the status of the EU integrated border management assistance mission in Libya (EUBAM Libya).

Accession of EU to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR)

The Treaty of Lisbon provides for the EU to accede to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). This will mean that actions by the EU institutions will be required to be in conformity with the ECHR and individuals affected by such actions will be able to utilise the option of individual complaint to the European Court of Human Rights if it is considered that their rights have not been respected. The Presidency concluded an agreement on the text of the Accession Agreement.

International Development and Humanitarian Policy

The EU and its Member States collectively provide over half of global development assistance to poor countries: a constant challenge is to ensure that financial assistance is as effective as possible in transforming the lives of people in developing countries. During its Presidency Ireland worked in close cooperation with the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to advance the fight against poverty and hunger, and to promote peace, respect for human rights and justice in the EU's development policy.



Minister of State for Trade and Development Costello in Brussels

Council Conclusions on Food and Nutrition Security in External Assistance

Fighting global hunger was at the core of the Presidency's development aid agenda. In May the Presidency secured agreement with partners on Council Conclusions that endorsed a new EU Nutrition Policy to enhance maternal and infant nutrition in EU external assistance. The Conclusions also endorsed an ambitious new EU Food and Nutrition Security Implementation Plan which sets out how the EU and its Member States will implement policy priority commitments on hunger and nutrition.

Fighting the effects of climate change on world hunger

In April the Presidency co-hosted an international Conference in Dublin on Hunger-Nutrition-Climate Justice, together with the Mary Robinson Foundation-Climate Justice which brought together policy makers and people who are facing the realities of rising food prices, failed crops, under-nutrition and hunger due to the effects of climate change. The Conference placed those worst affected at the centre of the policy process currently underway to develop the new post-2015 international development framework.

Council Conclusions on the EU approach to Resilience

The meeting of Development Ministers in Dublin in February discussed how to better link work on emergency relief, rehabilitation and development, with a particular focus on the situation in the Horn of Africa. The new approach adopted in the Council Conclusions focuses on building the resilience of the most vulnerable families and communities in the poorest developing countries. The aim is to implement a policy which helps build the capacity of affected communities and countries to withstand and recover from the impact of economic, social, humanitarian and political crises, and to avoid recurring crises.

Council Conclusions on the overarching post-2015 agenda

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), have had a major impact in the fight against global poverty, but reach their conclusion date in 2015. At the Development Informal in February, Ministers had the

first substantive exchange of views on planning for a post-2015 agenda taking into consideration the outcomes of the Rio +20 Summit on Sustainable Development in 2012. In June, the Council adopted a unified position on the post-2015 agenda following endorsement by both Development and Environment Ministers. The Conclusions present an open, coherent and responsive EU position ahead of the UN High-Level Event on the MDGs which takes place in New York in September 2013 and for the EU's engagement in all the fora relating to the post-2015 framework.

Fighting the effects of climate change

The Presidency also worked to progress solutions to mitigate and fight climate change by focusing on advancing legislation aimed at reducing emissions and supporting a greener future both within the EU and globally.

Agreements on CO₂ emissions from cars and vans (subject to final approval by the Institutions)

Cars and vans contribute approximately 13.5% to the EU's emissions of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) polluting the atmosphere. The two agreements brokered by the Presidency with the European Parliament in June (subject to approval from the institutions) will reduce CO₂ emissions from cars and vans, with both regulations requiring manufacturers to produce vehicles that meet stricter CO₂ emissions targets. The Directives will benefit both the environment and innovation.

Council Conclusions on the EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

Adopted at the June European Council, the EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy aims to contribute to a more climate-resilient Europe and enhance the preparedness and capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change at local, regional, national and EU levels by promoting and facilitating knowledge-sharing between EU Member States and regional bodies. The strategy also emphasizes the importance of mainstreaming adaptation into all relevant policies at all levels of government, as well as ensuring that insurance companies work with their customers to reduce the risks associated with climate change.

Agreement on the Decision to 'Stop the Clock' on the aviation emission trading system

The EU's Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) came into force in 2005 to promote cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and it is an important element of the EU's commitment to tackle climate change. The United Nations International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is attempting to reach a deal on a global market-based measure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation and plans to outline a timetable to secure such an agreement at the ICAO assembly later this year. In March the Irish Presidency reached agreement with the European Parliament on the 'Stop the Clock' proposal which suspends the EU ETS for intercontinental flights for one year (until April 2014) as a gesture of goodwill and to allow ICAO negotiations to progress.

Progress Report on Fluorinated gases (F-Gases) Regulation

Fluorinated gases (F-gases) are man-made gases used for their industrial applications. F-gases are strong greenhouse gases and contribute to global warming. The progress report presented at the June Environment Council by the Irish Presidency will advance efforts to reduce the use of F-gases and mitigate the negative effect on the environment.

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The EU has a key role to play in advancing solutions to the global threat of climate change, including through its participation in negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Under the Irish Presidency the EU continued its active and positive role in the negotiations, to deliver on a new global agreement applicable to all Parties by 2015 and to increase mitigation ambition in the period before 2020, both aimed at keeping global temperature increases to below 2°C. Progress was also made on implementing agreements already in place, including in relation to developing a better understanding of how to manage the role of agriculture and of forests in the context of climate change.



External dimension of Justice and Home Affairs policy

Agreement on a Common European Asylum System

The Presidency secured agreement on the two remaining elements of the Common European Asylum System, the **Asylum Procedures Directive** which provides for minimum standards on procedures for granting and withdrawing refugee status; and the **Eurodac Regulation** which concerns the system for comparing fingerprints of asylum seekers and some categories of illegal immigrants.

Agreement on the creation of a European border surveillance system (EUROSUR)

The Presidency reached provisional agreement with the European Parliament on the Regulation establishing a European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR). The Regulation will establish a mechanism for Member States' border surveillance authorities to share operational information and to cooperate with each other to reduce the number of illegal immigrants entering the EU. The system will also assist in the prevention of cross-border crimes, such as trafficking in human beings, as well as drug smuggling.

Regulations on establishing funds in the Justice and Home Affairs Area

The Presidency has made good progress and provided a good foundation for agreement to be reached on the following funds:

- » Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Asylum and Migration Fund
- » Proposal for a Regulation establishing as part of the Internal Security Fund, the instrument for financial support for external borders and visas
- » Proposal for a Regulation laying down general provisions on the Asylum and Migration Fund and Internal Security Fund

Visas and Readmission Agreements

The Presidency made significant progress in negotiations on proposed amendments to the 2001 Visa Regulation which lists the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement.

Visa facilitation agreements with Moldova and Ukraine were adopted under the Presidency while facilitation and readmission agreements with Cape Verde and Armenia were signed during the Presidency and are awaiting completion of necessary formalities for adoption. In addition, the Presidency made significant progress on the EU-Russia visa facilitation agreement.

A safer Europe - Countering serious crime and terrorism

The Presidency ensured a continuing dialogue in relation to the fight against terrorism and organised crime. At the informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers in Dublin in January, Ministers pledged to continue to take strong action to counter both terrorism and organised crime.

The Presidency has also worked on the issue of radicalisation. At the June Council, Ministers had an in-depth discussion on the issue of foreign fighters and returnees from a counter-terrorism perspective, in particular with regard to Syria. On both occasions, the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator was tasked with follow up action and work has already commenced on those actions.

The Presidency also secured Council Conclusions calling for an update of the EU Strategy to combat radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism and on strengthening the internal security authorities' involvement in security-related research and industrial policy.

In relation to the fight against organised crime, and following publication of the first Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) by Europol in March, the Presidency secured agreement on the crime priorities for Europol in this area for the second EU policy cycle against organised crime 2014 to 2017. The priorities will be combating illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings, counterfeit goods, MTIC (VAT) and Excise Fraud, Synthetic Drugs, heroin and cocaine, firearms, cybercrime and organised property crime.

The Presidency, working with the Cyprus Presidency, also produced a manual of best practices in the fight against financial crime.

Furthermore, the Presidency secured agreement on Council Conclusions on the European Information Exchange Model which will facilitate law enforcement authorities of one Member State accessing information held by law enforcement authorities in another Member State.

Developing a European-wide system of enhanced cooperation in relation to the confiscation of proceeds of crime in the EU was a priority for the Presidency. Following the orientation vote in the European Parliament on 7 May on the Directive on Confiscation and Recovery of Criminal Assets, the Presidency immediately engaged in negotiations with the Parliament. It is hoped that this will provide a platform for the early adoption of the Directive.

Adoption of EU Action Plan on Drugs (2013-2016)

In June, the Justice and Home Affairs Council agreed on a four year Action Plan on Drugs (2013-2016). The Action Plan sets out a wide range of concrete actions that will be implemented to achieve the objectives of the EU Drugs Strategy under the two policy areas of drug demand reduction and drug supply reduction. Issues of coordination, international cooperation and information, research, monitoring and evaluation are also addressed by the Action Plan which seeks to tackle the devastating consequences that drugs can have on individuals, families and communities.

Agreement on Drugs Precursors

The Irish Presidency secured a First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on an amending Regulation on drug precursors. These are chemicals widely used to make everyday products such as detergent, but which can be used for the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs. The new agreement will improve and reinforce harmonised measures for the control and monitoring of these dual-use substances within the EU to fight the production of, and trade in, illegal drugs.

Action programme for customs in the European Union for the period 2014-2020 (Customs 2020)

The Irish Presidency secured a First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on this Regulation which aims to strengthen the functioning of the Customs Union and the EU's Single Market by supporting cooperation between customs authorities and other stakeholders through networking, competency

building and IT capacity building. The Customs 2020 Action Programme promotes the efficient and uniform application of customs legislation and will contribute to the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Provision of Information on the Rights of Victims of Trafficking in human beings

Arising from the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016, the EU Commission prepared a document entitled 'The EU Rights of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings'. This document presents a user-friendly overview based upon existing EU instruments within the area of victim protection and supports. Following on from this, the Presidency secured agreement at the June JHA Council on conclusions on an EU Framework for the Provision of Information on the Rights of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings.

Adoption of a new Regulation on the customs enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

The violation of intellectual property rights in the trade of goods is a global problem which affects businesses and consumers alike. The Irish Presidency brokered agreement with the European Parliament on a new regulation on customs enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). The Regulation will simplify and strengthen measures to combat the trade in counterfeit goods, through the destruction of products suspected of infringing intellectual property rights. Through the protection of IPR, the jobs of workers making legitimate product are protected, as are the rights and safety of consumers purchasing those products.

General Approach on the Directive on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law

In 2010 the European Commission estimated that over €600 million of fraud was committed against the Union's financial interests. While the EU has agreed legislation to combat money laundering and corruption, rules and sanctions differ widely between Member States. The Irish Presidency reached agreement with Member States on a General Approach on this draft Directive

which aims to strengthen legal arrangements already in place to protect the EU's financial interests when crimes such as fraud, corruption or money laundering are committed.

Establishment of the Internal Security Fund, to provide financial support for police cooperation, preventing and combating crime, and crisis management

This proposal lays down rules for disbursement of Union funds in relation to police cooperation, internal security and crisis management matters to contribute to ensuring a high level of security in the EU. The Fund aims to enhance the capacity of Member States and the Union to effectively manage security-related risks and crises, to contribute to crime prevention, to combat cross-border serious and organised crime, and to reinforce coordination and cooperation between law enforcement authorities of Member States. The Presidency resolved outstanding technical issues relating to this dossier.



Commission Vice President Reding and Minister Shatter

Schengen

Agreement on the Schengen Governance Package

A breakthrough agreement for the Presidency was reached on the Schengen Governance Package. These Regulations will ensure consistency and proportionality on the temporary re-introduction of border controls in exceptional circumstances and will create a more robust and rigorous system to oversee the implementation of the Schengen acquis. The agreement also enabled renewed progress on several other files in the Home Affairs area on which negotiations had been suspended since June 2012. The Governance Package will enhance the security and stability of the Schengen border-free arrangements for the benefit of the many millions of citizens who avail of them each year.

Agreement on the Schengen Borders Code Regulation

This Agreement will improve clarity and address practical problems that have arisen during the first years of the Schengen Borders Code. It also provides for an explicit legal framework for bilateral agreements related to joint border checks on road traffic. Arising from the breakthrough by the Presidency on the Schengen Governance Package, the measure was formally adopted.

Commencement of Schengen Information System (SIS II)

The Presidency oversaw the successful commencement of the Schengen Information System (SIS II) on 9 April. This is an indispensable component of the Schengen free travel area and facilitates the exchange of information between police and border authorities in the Member States.

4. Europe for citizens

The European Year of Citizens 2013, with its focus on the rights we enjoy as citizens of the European Union, was formally launched in Dublin in January by the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and European Commission President Barroso.

The citizen was at the heart of the Presidency's work across all policy areas, from major economic measures to those with more immediate effect on daily lives from employee safety to consumer protection and public health to legal and human rights.

The decision-making process of the European Union must have the citizen at its centre. In January, an informal meeting of European Affairs Ministers was held in Dublin to discuss the implications of closer economic and budgetary integration for democratic legitimacy and accountability. The meeting considered how to improve communication with citizens and how to ensure that the European Parliament and National Parliaments play their full role in the decision-making process. In June, this discussion continued when representatives of National Parliaments and EU Institutions were hosted by the Irish Parliament (Oireachtas).

Council Conclusions on the Social Investment Package

The Presidency led discussions in Council to agree conclusions on the Social Investment Package. This far-reaching package guides Member States to more effective spending on social protection to achieve lasting and positive social outcomes including high employment and reduced levels of social exclusion and poverty. The package encompasses a broad range of policy areas from childcare and healthcare, through education and training, to employment activation and re-skilling, reflecting the Presidency approach which was people-centred and makes a difference.

Agreement reached on the Europe for Citizens programme

The EU needs to listen more closely to citizens and to fully ensure that their views and opinions on the future developments in Europe are taken into account. During the European Year of Citizens, the Presidency reached agreement among the Member States on the Europe for Citizens programme which supports democratic engagement, civic participation and European remembrance through projects ranging from NGO information programmes to town-twinning projects, volunteering and exchanges. This agreement is now subject to consent by the European Parliament.

Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Protection Measures in Civil Matters Directive

The Regulation providing for the mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters ('Civil Protection Order') was formally adopted by ministers at the Justice and Home Affairs Council on June 2013. The Regulation forms part of a legislative package (the European Commission's 'Victims Package') which aims to substantially strengthen and protect the rights of victims in the EU. This means that a civil protection order, such as a barring order for domestic violence, can still be enforced if the victim travels, or moves, from one EU Member State to another.

Agreement on the Right of Access to a Lawyer in Criminal Proceedings Directive

Both the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights enshrine the right to a fair trial and also the rights of the defence. The Directive agreed with the European Parliament in June guarantees those suspected or accused of a crime the right to access a lawyer and to have a third party informed when they have been detained. It is a further step in a series of measures to ensure minimum rights to a fair trial anywhere in the EU.

Progress report on Women on Company Boards

The proposed Directive requires Member States to take steps to ensure that at least 40 per cent of all directors of the boards of listed companies (other than SMEs) would represent each gender by 2020. The Presidency completed a first reading of the proposal for a Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures. The Presidency circulated a revised draft of the proposed Directive to Member States in late June and this will provide a solid basis for the Lithuanian Presidency to progress the measure.

Fighting discrimination

The Presidency presented a Progress Report on proposed legislation implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons, irrespective of racial or ethnic origin in employment, the provision of goods and services, education and social protection. Commission proposals aiming to ensure that the rights of migrant workers and their families moving within the EU are respected and upheld were also advanced in Council by the Presidency.

Tackling racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and homophobia

Enhancing fundamental rights in the EU has been a key focus of Ireland's Presidency in the area of justice and home affairs. A debate on the need to tackle the problem of racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and homophobia was initiated by the Presidency at the informal meeting of Ministers in Dublin in January. At the Justice and Home Affairs Council in June, the Council adopted Conclusions on fundamental rights and rule of law and on the Commission 2012 Report on the Application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Among these conclusions, the Council undertook to give further consideration at its forthcoming meetings to the possible need for and possible shape of methods or initiatives to better safeguard fundamental values, in particular the rule of law and the fundamental rights of persons in the Union, and to counter extreme forms of intolerance, such as racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and homophobia.

Proposal establishing the Justice Programme (2014-2020)

The proposal replaces three existing programmes and aims to promote effective, comprehensive and consistent application of Union legislation in the areas of judicial co-operation in civil and criminal matters, to foster access to justice. The Presidency resolved outstanding technical issues relating to this dossier.

Proposal establishing the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme

The Proposal aims to combat violence against women and children and to promote citizenship rights, the rights of the child, non discrimination, data protection and consumer protection in the internal market. The Presidency resolved outstanding technical issues relating to this dossier.



PART II

THE RESULTS OF THE IRISH PRESIDENCY BY COUNCIL FORMATION

General Affairs (GAC)

- » Intergovernmental conference with Montenegro: opening and provisionally closing accession negotiation chapter 26 (Education and Culture)
- » Agreement in the Council on opening accession negotiations with Serbia
- » Agreement in the Council on opening Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations with Kosovo
- » Agreement to open an accession negotiation Chapter 22 (Regional Policy) with Turkey
- » Agreement with the European Parliament on the revision of Staff Regulations
- » Council Conclusions on Cyber Strategy
- » Council Conclusions on Integrated Maritime Policy
- » Council Conclusions on Bulgaria and Romania: Cooperation and Verification Mechanism
- » Council Conclusions welcoming progress and looking forward to Croatia's accession to the EU
- » Council Conclusions on "The overarching Post-2015 agenda"
- » Council Agreement reached on the text of the Basic Safety Standards Directive (Radiation Protection)



Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore at Informal meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs

- » Adoption of the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response arrangements
- » Adoption of technical amendments relating to the accession of Croatia
- » Adoption of Decision issuing directives to the Commission for the negotiation of the review of the Convention on Nuclear Safety
- » Adoption of Decision increasing the number of Advocates-General of the Court of Justice.
- » Approval of the Galway statement for the launch of the Ocean Research Alliance with Canada and the USA, providing for Atlantic Ocean research cooperation
- » Progress Report on Cohesion Policy Legislative Package

Foreign Affairs Council (FAC)

Foreign Affairs

- » Council Decision launching an EU Training military mission to contribute to the training of the Malian Armed Forces (EUTM Mali)
- » Council Decision to ease EU sanctions against Syria, including the oil embargo, with a view to helping civilians and supporting the opposition in the country
- » Council lifted EU sanctions against Burma/Myanmar, with the exception of the arms embargo and the sale of equipment that could be used for internal repression
- » Council Decision establishing a European Union Integrated Border Management Mission in Libya (EUBAM Libya)
- » Council reinforced EU restrictive measures against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and condemned in the strongest terms the nuclear test conducted by DPRK
- » Council authorised EU Member States to sign, in the interests of the European Union, the Arms Trade Treaty
- » Adoption of EU support for sustainable change in transition societies
- » Adoption of revised guidelines on the death penalty
- » Adoption of EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief
- » Adoption of EU Guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons

External Trade

- » Second Reading Agreement reached with the European Parliament on the Omnibus I & II dossiers, involving regulatory changes to EU decision-making procedures for trade policy.
- » Council Agreement on a mandate for the negotiation of a comprehensive trade and investment agreement with the United States.
- » Council Agreement on a mandate for the negotiation of Trade in Services Agreement in Geneva
- » Conclusion of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with Moldova
- » Negotiations launched on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with Morocco
- » Start of negotiations on an EU-Japan trade agreement
- » Started initial Council consideration of an EU-China investment mandate
- » Provisional application of Free Trade Agreements with Peru and Colombia
- » Facilitation of the choice of a single EU preference in the selection process for the Director General of the World Trade Organization
- » Agreement on a compromise on the Market Access Regulation in March, which was endorsed by the Council and the European Parliament in May.
- » Council Decision authorising the Commission to start negotiations with Thailand on a Free Trade Agreement and the subsequent launch of those negotiations.
- » Council Decision establishing the European Union position within the TRIPS Council of the World Trade Organization on the request for an extension of the transition period under TRIPS
- » Reinstatement of Myanmar-Burma to the Generalised System of Preferences.

Development

- » Council Conclusions on “The overarching Post-2015 agenda”
- » Council Conclusions on the “EU approach to Resilience”
- » Council Conclusions on “Food and Nutrition Security in External Assistance”
- » Council Conclusions on “Annual Report 2013 to the European Council on EU Development Aid Targets”
- » Council Conclusions on the “European Court of Auditors Special Report on 17/2012: the European Development Fund (EDF) contribution to a sustainable road network in sub-Saharan Africa”

- » Council Agreement on the Internal Agreement of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) and ACP-EU Council Agreement on the New Financial Protocol for the 11th EDF for the period of 2014-2020
- » Extended access to EU markets for African, Caribbean and Pacific exporters
- » ACP-EU Council Agreement on the accession of the Federal Republic of Somalia to the Cotonou Agreement.
- » Adoption of recommendations on the discharge to be given by the European Parliament to the Commission for implementation of operations of the 8th, 9th and 10th European Development Funds for 2011
- » Agreement on a Council position on the Regulation for a new EU Aid Volunteer Initiative
- » Resumption of development aid to Mali

Defence

- » Formal launch of the EU Military Training Mission in Mali
- » Launched the preparatory discussions with Member States on identifying key priorities for the European Council on Defence in December 2013
- » Strengthened relations between the EU and UN through facilitating increased EU engagement
- » Development of a more coherent approach to securing and defending the EU's maritime strategic interest, in particular via the Maritime Security and Surveillance elements of the Council Conclusions on Integrated Maritime Policy
- » Progress in the provision of deployable military capabilities for Common Security and Defence Policy among Member States under the European Defence Agency's "Pooling and Sharing" initiatives
- » Raised awareness in the Cyber Security domain across all sectors through the hosting of a seminar in Brussels

European Neighbourhood Policy

- » Association Agreement finalised for Armenia
- » Association Agreement finalised for Moldova
- » Association Agreement finalised for Georgia

Economic and Financial Affairs (ECOFIN)

- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the establishment of the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) package – ECB regulation and amended EBA regulation
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Capital Requirements Package (Regulation and Directive) (CRD IV)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the “Two Pack” Regulations to strengthen the economic and fiscal pillars of the Economic and Monetary Union by strengthening budgetary and economic surveillance and introducing budgetary coordination in the euro area.
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on updated transparency requirements for issuers of securities admitted to trading on a regulated market
- » First Reading Agreement on the Fiscalis 2020 Regulation
- » Provisional First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Mortgage Credit Directive
- » Conciliation Agreement on Macro-financial assistance to Georgia
- » Agreement with the European Parliament on Market Abuse Regulations (MAR)
- » General Approach on Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID)
- » General Approach on Directive on Banking Recovery and Resolution (BRR) – Framework for recovery and resolution of credit institutions and investment firms
- » General Approach on Packaged Retail Investment Products (PRIIPs) Regulations
- » Political Agreement on the Implementation Regulation governing VAT rules for cross-border services
- » Political Agreement on Draft Amending Budget No. 2 for EU’s 2013 budget
- » Political Agreement on the Quick Reaction Mechanism (QRM) against VAT Fraud
- » Political Agreement on the Reverse Charge Mechanism (RCM) on VAT
- » Political Agreement on Implementing Regulation governing VAT rules for cross-border services
- » Council Conclusions on the Markets in Financial Instruments Regulation (MiFIR)
- » Council Conclusions on tax evasion and tax fraud
- » Council Conclusions on macro-economic imbalances following reviews of imbalances in 13 Member States
- » Council Conclusions on the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA)

- » Council Conclusions on Climate Finance - fast-start finance
- » Council Conclusions on the quality of public spending
- » Council Conclusions on its priorities for EU budget 2014
- » Endorsement of the official report on fast-start financing by the EU and its Member States for 2012
- » Adoption of a Directive aimed at reducing the over-reliance by three types of investors on credit ratings when making their investments
- » Adoption of a Directive and Regulation amending the EU's rules on credit ratings agencies
- » Adoption of a decision authorising 11 Member States to proceed with the introduction of a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) through enhanced cooperation
- » Adoption of a mandate for the Commission to negotiate updated savings tax agreements with Switzerland, Lichtenstein, Monaco, Andorra and San Marino
- » Adoption of Council's Recommendation to the European Parliament on the discharge to be given for the EU's general budget for 2011
- » Progress Report on the Energy Tax Directive
- » Progress Report on Central Securities Depositories (CSD) Regulation



Taoiseach Enda Kenny speaking at the Lisbon Council

Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)

- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on a Regulation on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Common European Asylum System (Asylum Procedures Directive and Eurodac Regulation)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Schengen governance legislative proposals (Regulation on the establishment of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen Acquis and an amendment to the Schengen Borders Code as regards the rules for the temporary reintroduction of border controls at internal borders in exceptional circumstances)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Regulation providing for technical amendments to the Schengen Borders - the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) and the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement
- » Political Agreement with the European Parliament on a Directive on the right of access to a lawyer in criminal proceedings
- » Political Agreement with the European Parliament on the proposal for a Regulation establishing the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR)
- » General approach on the Directive relating to the protection of the financial interests of the European Union.
- » Council Position and commenced discussions with the European Parliament on the Proposal for a Decision on a Union civil Protection Mechanism
- » Commencement of the Schengen Information System II (SIS II)
- » Signature of readmission agreements with Cape Verde and Armenia
- » Signature of visa facilitation agreements with Cape Verde and Armenia.
- » Establishment of a multiannual framework for the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights for 2013-2017
- » Completion of negotiations on the proposed accession of the EU to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR).
- » Council Conclusions on fundamental rights and rule of law and on the Commission's 2012 Report on the Application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU
- » Council Conclusions on an EU Framework for the Provision of Information on the Rights of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings

- » Council Conclusions on strengthening the internal security authorities' involvement in security-related research and industrial policy
- » Council Conclusions on setting the EU's priorities for the fight against serious and organised crime between 2014 and 2017
- » Council Conclusions calling for an update of the EU Strategy to combat radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism
- » Council Conclusions following the Commission Communication on the European Information Exchange Model
- » Council Conclusions relating to follow up to Schengen evaluations of Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Italy conducted between 2011 and 2012
- » Council Conclusions on Schengen evaluation of SIS/SIRENE Bureaux in Denmark, Iceland and Norway
- » Agreement on the operation and strategic cooperation between Liechtenstein and Europol
- » Agreement on EU wide ban on the manufacturing and marketing of the psychoactive substance 4-methylamphetamine – so called 4-MA
- » Agreement on new technical arrangements to allow the continued functioning of the Visa VISION system, resulting from the migration from SIS 1+ to SIS II
- » Adoption of Action Plan on Drugs 2013 – 2016
- » Adoption of Decisions on the conclusion of agreements between the EU and the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine amending arrangements on the facilitation of the issuance of visas
- » Signature of a Joint Declaration establishing a Mobility Partnership between the Kingdom of Morocco and the European Union and its Member States
- » Adoption of Report on the implementation of Article 102A of the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement during the years 2010 and 2011
- » Progress Report on key aspects of the Data Protection Package

Agriculture and Fisheries (AGRIFISH)

- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Regulation on the non-commercial movement of pet animals (Pet Passports)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Directive regarding the health requirements governing intra-Union trade in and the imports into the EU of dogs, cats and ferrets
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the “Breakfast Omnibus” Directives
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the proposal for the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN)
- » Political Agreement with the European Parliament establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under the common agricultural policy
- » Political Agreement with the European Parliament establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural
- » Political Agreement with the European Parliament on the financing, management and monitoring of the Common Agricultural Policy
- » Political Agreement with the European Parliament on support for rural development by the EAFRD
- » Second Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Basic Regulation of the Common Fisheries Policy
- » Second Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Common Organisation of the Markets in Fisheries and Aquaculture Products Regulation
- » Adoption of Council Regulation fixing aids and refunds related to the common organisation of markets in agricultural
- » Adoption of a Decision on the signing on behalf of the EU of a protocol setting out fishing opportunities between the EU and the Republic of the Cote d’Ivoire
- » Adoption of a Decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the EU for a new protocol to the fisheries partnership agreement (FPA) with the Republic of the Seychelles
- » Adoption of a Regulation for the protection of juveniles of marine organisms
- » Adoption of a Regulation regarding the fixing of certain fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in EU waters and, for EU vessels, in certain non-EU waters
- » Discussions continued on the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Kingdom of Morocco



Minister Coveney and Chair of European Parliament Agriculture and Rural Development Committee de Castro

- » Presentation and initial examination of a proposal on a regulation concerning multi-annual recovery plan for bluefin tuna in Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean
- » Council Conclusions on a framework on the future direction of organic farming in the EU
- » Presidency led EU position at UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), in Istanbul 8-19 April
- » Agreement in principle at technical level on the Aromatised Wine file, which will enable swift adoption
- » Council Decision 2013/138/EU to extend the authorisation of the Commission to vote in favour of extension, for a further two years, of the Grains Trade Convention 1995 at the International Grains Council
- » Council decision 2013/139/EU to extend the authorisation of the Commission to vote in favour of extension, for a further two years, of the International Sugar Agreement 1992 at the International Sugar Council

Competitiveness (COMPET)

- » First Reading Agreement and voted through the European Parliament on the Company Law (Accounting) Directive
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on Modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on Horizon 2020 (subject to final approval by the institutions)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the European Institute of Technology (EIT) and on the amendment of the 2008 Regulation establishing the EIT (subject to final approval by the institutions)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Union Customs Code (recast)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an action programme for customs in the European Union for the period 2014-2020 (Customs 2020)
- » First Reading Agreement on amending Regulation 273/2004 on Drug Precursors (intra-Community control and monitoring of certain substances used in the manufacture of narcotic drugs)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Pyrotechnic Articles Directive (part of a package of nine measures of technical harmonisation Directives that make up the New Legislative Framework (NLF) Alignment Package. Agreement on other eight proposals subject to one outstanding comitology issue)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Programme for the Competitiveness of enterprises and SMEs (COSME) 2014-2020, improving access to finance for SMEs and to strengthen their competitiveness and sustainability
- » First reading examination of the EU Directive on Collective Rights Management in Council with the result that COREPER is now close to achieving a political mandate to enter negotiations with the European Parliament
- » Provisional Agreement with the European Parliament on the three Directives under the Public Procurement Package (subject to final approval by the institutions)
- » Council Conclusions on follow-up actions to the Commission's Smart Regulation Communications "EU Regulatory Fitness" and "Responding to the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises"

- » Council Conclusions on “EU Space Industrial Policy – releasing the potential for economic growth in the space sector”
- » Council Conclusions endorsing a new EU strategy on “Enhancing and focusing international cooperation in research and innovation: a strategic approach”
- » Council Conclusions related to the Commission Communication on “High Performance Computing: Europe’s place in a global race”
- » Council Conclusions on establishing appropriate relations between the EU and the European Space Agency
- » Council Conclusions on Strengthening the Security of the Supply Chain and Customs Risk management
- » Council Conclusions on the European Research Area (ERA)
- » General Approach agreed on the Commission’s proposal (revised Procedural and Enabling Regulations) to reform the EU State Aid framework under the State Aid Modernisation (SAM) initiative
- » Council Decision enabling the signing by the EU of the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances
- » Council Decision on the signing of an Agreement between the European Union and the Russian Federation on drug precursors progress
- » Council Decision on the signing of an Agreement between the European Union and Canada on customs cooperation with respect to matters related to supply chain security
- » Signing of Unified Patent Court Agreement by 25 Member States
- » Signing of a co-operation agreement between the EU and the Swiss Federation on competition issues
- » Political discussion at the informal and formal Competitiveness Councils on copyright-related issues to progress the copyright modernisation agenda
- » Political discussion at the Informal Competitiveness Council on proposals for Mutually Agreed Contracts for Competitiveness and Growth
- » Political discussions at the Informal and Formal Competitiveness Councils on EU industrial policy, in particular manufacturing and the Key Enabling Technologies (KETs) and access to finance
- » Progress Report and Orientation Debate on a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on specific requirements regarding statutory audit of public-interest entities and a proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2006/43/EC on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts
- » Progress Report on a Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council – Establishing a Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST) Support Programme

- » Adoption of Directive on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and a Regulation on Online Dispute Resolution (ODR)
- » Adoption of a regulation laying down new safety and environmental requirements for tractors and other agricultural/forestry vehicles
- » Adoption of Regulations on European venture capital funds and European social entrepreneurship funds
- » Adoption of a Council Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 450/2008 laying down the Community Customs Code (Modernised Customs Code) as regards the date of its application
- » Adoption of a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 1344/2011 suspending the autonomous Common Customs Tariff duties on certain agricultural, fishery and industrial products
- » Adoption of a Council Regulation opening and providing for the management of autonomous tariff quotas of the Union for certain agricultural and industrial products
- » Adoption of a Council Regulation on the waiver from the requirement to submit entry and exit summary declarations for Union goods that are moved across the Neum corridor
- » Adoption of a Regulation concerning customs enforcement of intellectual property rights
- » Successful conclusion and signature of WIPO Intellectual Property Treaty on access to published works by Visually Impaired Persons
- » Coordination of EU position for various international meetings such as WCO, JCCC, ASEM and bilateral meetings between the EU and Third countries
- » First read through of the proposal on consumer product safety (part of SMA II package)
- » First read through of the proposal on market surveillance (part of SMA II package)

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO)

- » Adoption after First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament of the Directive on the health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from physical agents (Electromagnetic fields)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Regulation to protect citizens against serious cross-border health threats
- » Political Agreement with the European Parliament on the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme (originally proposed as the Programme for Social Change and Innovation (PSCI))
- » General Approach on a Directive on minimum requirements for enhancing worker mobility by improving the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights
- » General Approach on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund
- » General Approach on Directive on Tobacco Products
- » General Approach on Decision authorising Member States to ratify ILO (Chemicals) Convention 170
- » General Approach on Decision authorising member States to ratify, in the interests of the European Union, the Convention concerning decent work for domestic workers, 2011, of the International Labour Organisation
- » Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee
- » Council Conclusions on Communication: Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion
- » Council Conclusions on advancing women's roles as decision-makers in the media
- » Declaration on eHealth Action Plan for innovative cross-border health care
- » Council Agreement on EU Guidelines for the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers meeting to be held in Moscow on 18-19 July
- » Progress Report on the Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services
- » Progress Report on the Regulation on the Fund for European Aid for the Most Deprived.
- » Progress Report on the Proposal for a Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures

- » Progress Report on the proposal for a Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (anti-discrimination Directive)
- » Progress Report on proposal for Regulations on general and in-vitro medical devices proposal
- » First Read through and Progress Report on proposal for a Regulation on clinical trials on medicinal products for human use
- » Council Agreement on EU Guidelines for the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers meeting

European Semester

- » Council Conclusions on the Annual Growth Survey 2013
- » Adoption of the 2013 Joint Employment Report
- » Adoption of a decision approving the guidelines for the employment policies of Member States for 2013
- » Approval of Draft Council Recommendations on the National Reform Programmes 2013 to each Member State, including Macro-economic Imbalance Procedure (MIP)
- » Endorsement of the opinions of the Employment Committee and of the Social Protection Committee regarding examination of the National Reform Programmes (2013) and the implementation of the 2012 Country-Specific Recommendations
- » Noting of the reports of the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee regarding assessment of the 2013 package of Council Recommendations, including cross-cutting issues
- » Endorsement of the Employment Performance Monitor (prepared by the Employment Committee)

Environment (ENVI)

- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on 'Stop the Clock' Emission Trading Scheme (Aviation) proposal
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Priority Substances in Water Directive
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Batteries Directive
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Ship Recycling Regulation
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Programme for Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) Regulation (subject to final approval by the institutions)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the CO2 from Cars Regulation (subject to final approval by the institutions)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on CO2 from Vans Regulation (subject to final approval by the institutions)
- » Council Conclusions on the EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change
- » Endorsement of Council Conclusions on "The overarching Post-2015 agenda"
- » Progress Report on the recast of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive
- » Progress Report on the Fluorinated gases (F-Gases) Regulation
- » Progress Report on the Indirect Land Use Change (ILUC) Directive
- » Progress Report on the Regulation on Access and Benefit Sharing
- » Joint discussion held between the Environment and Energy Ministers on the Commission's 2030 Energy and Climate Policy Framework
- » Adoption of a Decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations on linking the EU emissions trading scheme with an emissions trading system in Australia

Representing the EU

The Presidency has successfully led negotiations for the EU in a number of areas, including: -

- » reaching agreement on a global, legally-binding treaty on mercury to be called the 'Minamata Convention on Mercury'
- » taking forward work on Sustainable Development Goals at the UNEP Governing Council (the first meeting of the Governing Council with universal membership)
- » the first ever back-to-back Conferences of the Parties to the UN (Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm) Conventions on Chemicals and Waste, leading to over 40 important decisions towards improved environmental protection
- » climate negotiations at the UNFCCC, preparing the ground for COP19 in Warsaw in November
- » in relation to the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution
- » The Aarhus Convention on Access to Information & Justice on Environmental Matters
- » the UN Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances
- » the Espoo Convention on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) leading to agreement on a range of actions
- » reaching agreement on a series of resolutions at the 24th session of the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT in Nairobi
- » the adoption of key decisions for the protection of endangered species, in particular on marine issues, in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wildlife Fauna and Flora (CITES) Convention
- » the UN General Assembly Working Group on the regular process for the assessment of the global marine environment
- » the meeting of the UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, focusing on the effects of ocean acidification
- » the UN General Assembly process on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction

The Presidency has successfully led negotiations for the EU in a number of areas, including:

- » at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) International Labour Conference, dealing with: employment and social protection in the new demographic context; sustainable development, decent work and green jobs; and social dialogue
- » at the European Regional meeting of 51 European and Central Asian ILO Member States leading to the agreement of the Oslo Declaration: Restoring Confidence in Jobs and Growth

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (TTE)

- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the re-use of public sector information (PSI)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Directive on the safety of offshore oil and gas operations
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Regulation for a renewed mandate for the workings of the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Regulation on the implementation and exploitation of European satellite navigation systems (Galileo and EGNOS)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Port State Control Directive (part of the Maritime Labour Package)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Flag State Directive (part of the Maritime Labour Package)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on Directive on recreational craft and personal watercraft
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Transport European Transport Network Guidelines (TEN-Transport)
- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on the Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the Connecting Europe Facility
- » Second Reading Agreement on a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 3821/85 on recording equipment in road transport and amending Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council (Tachograph)
- » Council General Approach agreement on the Interoperability Directive (recast) (part of the 4th Railway Package)
- » Council General Approach agreement on the Occurrence Reporting Directive
- » Council General Approach agreement on the Marine Equipment Directive
- » Council General Approach agreement on directive on the technical roadside inspections of commercial vehicles (part of the Road Worthiness Package)
- » Council General Approach agreement on a revision of the 1999 directive on the vehicle registration documents (part of the Road Worthiness Package)
- » Council Agreement on a revised Regulation on the Notification of Investment in Energy Infrastructure Projects
- » Council Conclusions supporting the launch by the Commission of a European Innovation Partnership titled “Smart Cities and Communities”

- » Council Conclusions adopted on the Commission Communication “Making the Internal Energy Market Work”
- » Progress report on the Directive on indirect land-use change (ILUC) amending the Renewable Energy and Fuel Quality Directives
- » Progress Report on Electronic Identification (e-ID) and Electronic Trust Services (eTS)
- » Progress Report on Web Accessibility
- » Progress Report reducing the costs of high speed broadband
- » Policy Debate on the EU Commission’s Communication on Energy Technologies and Innovation, which will contribute to the ongoing reflection on priorities for research, development and innovation in energy until 2020 and beyond
- » Policy Debate on Commission’s Clean Power for Transport package
- » Adoption of a Council Decision on the conclusion by the EU of a protocol on the implementation of the Convention on the protection of the Alps (Alpine Convention) in the field of transport
- » Joint discussion held between Energy and Environment Ministers on the Commission’s Communication on a 2030 Energy and Climate Policy Framework

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (EYCS)

Education

- » First Reading Agreement with the European Parliament on 'Erasmus+', the new European programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport
- » Council Conclusions on 'Investing in education and training - a response to Rethinking Education: investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes and the 2013 Annual Growth Survey
- » Council Conclusions on the social dimension of higher education
- » Launch of U-Multirank, a new University ranking system

Youth

- » Council Conclusions on maximising the potential of youth policy in addressing the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy
- » Council Conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people

Culture

- » Council Agreement on Europe for Citizens
- » General Approach on a proposal for a Decision on a Union action for European Capitals of Culture from 2020-2033
- » Stock take of 2008 Council Conclusions on Architecture
- » Discussion on reform of format of the Council of Culture Ministers
- » Designation of European Capitals of Culture for 2017 and 2018

Sport

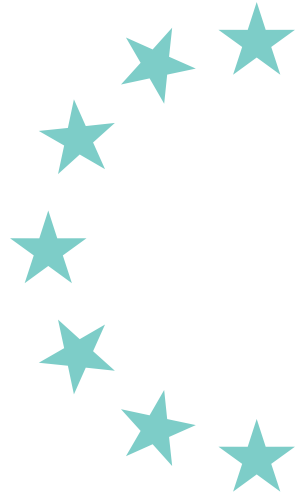
- » Council Conclusions on dual careers for athletes
- » Adoption of a Recommendation for a Council Decision authorising the European Commission to participate, on behalf of the EU, in the negotiations for an international convention of the Council of Europe to combat the manipulation of sports results



929



Presidency Culture Programme (Culture Connect) Events took place around the world



420

International Culture Connect events in other EU Member states, Croatia, Australia, Bosnia, Serbia, China, Norway, Switzerland, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Hong Kong



175,000



509

Presidency Culture Programme Events took place across Ireland

Visitors to the Eileen Gray exhibition in Paris, an average of 2,200 per day



PART III

PRESIDENCY CULTURAL PROGRAMME

During the Irish Presidency, from West Cork to Western Australia, people had the opportunity to avail of a variety of art forms including film, music, visual arts and literary activities, bringing our Irish artistic strengths to the fore.

Highlights include:

The Poetry Project – Online

A special online collaboration between Irish poets and visual artists designed to mark the Irish Presidency. This initiative attracted close to 50,000 visits to the site www.thepoetryproject.ie and almost 100,000 page-views.

40th Anniversary of EU membership, National Archives – Dublin

The National Archives launched an exhibition celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Ireland's accession into the EU which is now on display in the National Museum Collins Barracks. The exhibition will be on tour around the country to the end of 2013.

Kaleidoscope Exhibition – Dublin

For many centuries, Ireland has had strong historic cultural connections to Europe and our Presidency offered an opportunity to celebrate and build on these connections.

Contemporary Art from EU Member States is an exhibition of a selection of contemporary art works from the twenty seven Member States of the European Union.

The works in this exhibition reflect the current art practice of contemporary artists of many European nationalities, across a variety of media – video, drawing, sculpture, print and painting. The unique vision of each artist reflects the diversity of new work being created throughout Europe.



Skylum, art installation by Andrew Kearney in Justus Lipsius atrium in Brussels

Skylum – Brussels

Award-winning artist, Andrew Kearney was selected to create an installation in the headquarters of the Council of the European Union, the Justus Lipsius building, for the duration of the Presidency. Skylum was designed to be stimulating and visually engaging and to capture the attention of people passing through the atrium space.

It is estimated that more than 100,000 people had the opportunity to view the Skylum installation.

The Formal Opening Concert – Brussels

In early January traditional supergroup, The Gloaming, formally launched Culture Connects in Brussels, with a special concert for 700 invited guests. The concert was live-streamed through the Culture Ireland and EU Presidency websites.

Jim Sheridan Retrospective – Brussels

The Irish Film Institute International in collaboration with Cinematek in Brussels, presented an in-depth retrospective of Jim Sheridan. The programme, curated by the Director himself was presented across a number of venues in Brussels and attracted strong interest.



Presidency cultural events in Ireland and across Europe

Fabulous Beast Dance Theatre on Tour – France and Austria

The production of Rian by Fabulous Beast Dance Theatre toured to France and Austria. The show in Theatre de la Ville in Paris in March sold out many months in advance and was seen by over 5,000 people.

Gerard Byrne Solo Exhibition – London

This exhibition in London's Whitechapel Gallery traced Byrne's work from 2003 to today and included seven film installations, a series of photographs and the UK premiere of his latest multi-screen installation, A man and a woman make love (2012). Over 48,000 visitors to the Whitechapel Gallery saw this exhibition. Gerard Byrne was nominated for The Times (UK) South Bank Breakthrough Award.

Eileen Gray Exhibition – Paris

A major exhibition at the Centre Pompidou devoted to the work of Eileen Gray ran from February to May. The exhibition covered the legendary figure's multi-faceted career, ranging from the elegant Art Deco furniture and lacquered screens from her first period to her daring, modern design and architectural experiments of the 1920s and 1930s. Around 175,000 visitors viewed this exhibition, more than 2,200 visitors per day.

Centre Culturel Irlandais – Paris

Centre Culturel in Paris celebrated the work of Dundalk born Peter Rice who worked as an engineer on some of the world's most iconic buildings of the second half of the twentieth century, including the Sydney Opera House, Centre Pompidou and the Louvre Pyramid.

Fête de la Musique which featured Irish musicians, including The Gloaming and Delorentos attracted an audience of around 2,000. The Nobel Laureate, Seamus Heaney was among the many Irish artists participating in Marché de la Poésie and sa Périphérie.

Bologna Book Fair – Bologna

Ireland Literature Exchange and Children’s Books Ireland curated an exhibition of Irish authors, including John Boyne, at one of Europe’s most prestigious literary events in March.

Richard Mosse – Venice

Artist and photographer Richard Mosse was selected to represent Ireland at the Venice Art Biennale which opened at the end of May and has already attracted significant international interest and media. The Biennale attracts around 400,000 visitors.

Chaoyang Festival - Beijing

Ireland was designated as ‘country of honour’ at the Chaoyang Festival in Beijing which took place over the Chinese New Year period in February. Half a million Chinese citizens had the opportunity to see Irish music, dance, street theatre and exhibitions over a six day period and to be introduced to Ireland as a place to visit, to study and to do business.



Richard Mosse exhibition: “The Enclave”



PART IV

THE PRESIDENCY IN NUMBERS

181	Days of the Irish Presidency
200	Estimated number of policy commitments achieved, including more than 80 in legislative form.
€960bn	Agreed amount for the 7 year EU Budget (MFF) including: Up to €8bn to tackle youth unemployment €360bn on a reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) €70bn Horizon2020 programme for research and innovation €30bn for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) targeting enhancements in transport, energy and telecoms networks €16bn Erasmus+ programme for education and training €2bn for the COSME programme to boost competitiveness of the EU's 20million SMEs €3bn for the LIFE programme to fund projects in the environmental area
2,477	Meetings and events were chaired by the Presidency across Europe including...
374	Trilogues were held with the European Commission and European Parliament
54	Council meetings chaired by Irish Ministers during the Presidency
185	Presidency events in Ireland
24,000+	Visitors brought to Ireland
11	Informal Council meetings held in Ireland
97%	of delegates visiting Ireland in April for the Presidency rated experience as very good or good
37%	of delegates in the same survey had never visited Ireland before
111	Hours were spent by the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Irish Ministers in European Parliament
76	European Parliament debates in which Irish Ministers participated

- 141** Presidency speeches by the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Irish Ministers
- 11** Record hours of European Parliament debate in a single sitting, set by Minister for European Affairs, Lucinda Creighton
- 36** Record hours spent chairing Council discussions, set by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney



106	Associated Presidency events (average of 4 per week) held across Ireland and Europe
120,000	Miles traveled by Minister Creighton as she visited 44 countries
1,042	Litres of tea and coffee consumed in the Media Centre during Dublin ECOFIN informal alone
55,000	Stamps commemorating Ireland's 40 years of EU membership were sold
517,322	Visits to eu2013.ie as of Friday 28 June
1,536,582	Pages viewed on eu2013.ie
213	Number of countries recorded by website analytics as visiting eu2013.ie
349	Press releases published on eu2013.ie in 4 languages
13,914	Twitter followers of the Presidency twitter accounts @eu2013ie and @IrelandRepBru, the most followed Presidency to date on Twitter
14,000	Votes cast for the Irish Presidency logo
100	European Year of Citizens events in Ireland where...
30,000	People participated in European Year of Citizens discussions
929	Presidency Culture Programme (Culture Connect) Events took place around the world of which...
509	Cultural Events took place across Ireland
420	were International Culture Connect events in other EU Member states, Croatia, Australia, Bosnia, Serbia, China, Norway, Switzerland, the Russian Federation, Turkey & Hong Kong
175,000	Visitors to the Eileen Gray exhibition in Paris, an average of 2,200 per day

€960 billion EU investment budget for 2014-2020

- €8 billion for EU youth employment •

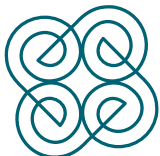
Mandate for jobs-boosting EU-US Trade Agreement

- €2 billion fund for SMEs • Focus on the high-potential digital sector • Reformed Common Fisheries Policy •
- Reformed Common Agricultural Policy •

Recognition of professional qualifications across the EU • Safer, stronger and better-regulated banks

- Restricted bankers' bonuses • Atlantic Ocean research alliance • A new EU environment strategy •
- Better chances for SMEs in the EU's €2 trillion public procurement market • Employee safety measures •

New guidelines for EU transport investment • €30 billion infrastructure fund • Domestic violence: new EU Civil Protection Order • New Mortgage Credit Directive • Pet passports • Focus on hunger and climate justice • €70 billion support for Europe's innovators • Protection against health pandemics • €16 billion Erasmus+ fund for education & training mobility • €3 billion fund to support environmental projects • Stricter tobacco rules



Uachtaránacht na hÉireann ar
Chomhairle an Aontais Eorpaigh
Irish Presidency of the Council
of the European Union

eu2013.ie