



## Brussels Agenda – July to December 2011

### European Council

Poland will take on the [Presidency](#) of the European Council for the duration of six months from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011. This means they will chair meetings, negotiate deals and set agendas for all European Council meetings until the end of December. The Presidency has set out its [work programme](#) which has three overarching priorities;

- European integration as a source of growth
- Secure Europe – food, energy and defence
- Europe benefiting from openness

### EU Budget

The Polish Presidency will kick off the discussion on the EU Budget 2014-2020. Otherwise known as the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020, the Commission published its proposals on June 29<sup>th</sup>. The package of measures included a proposal for a new MFF, a proposal for a new own-resources package and a proposal for a new Inter-institutional agreement on sound financial management and cooperation in budgetary matters. The Polish Presidency has stated that its role during the next six months will be to facilitate discussions, to ensure all Member States present their positions and to move forward with as much of the technical work as possible behind the scenes.

### Future of CAP

Following a Commission communication on the future of the CAP post-2013 in November, Presidency Conclusions on the same topic in March and a report agreed by the Parliament in June, the Commission will release four legislative proposals on October 5<sup>th</sup>. The package will include legislative proposals on direct payments, the single CMO, rural development and a fourth on CAP funding. Debates on the future CAP will therefore enter a decisive stage during the Polish Presidency with a lively discussion expected at the October Agriculture Council and debates at the November and December Councils. The Presidency aims to identify a basis for agreement on a new system of direct payments and to work on an agreement for a strong second pillar. They will also pay special attention to developing renewable energy in rural areas.

### Biodiversity

Protection of biological diversity is highlighted as a priority for the Environment Council in the work programme. The Presidency will continue to work on the Biodiversity Action Plan and to discuss funding for biodiversity conservation. It also intends to develop 'instruments' that will help prevent the loss of biodiversity and notes that it is 'most effective' to integrate biodiversity into different aspects of the economy, including agriculture.

### Agriculture product quality

This wide ranging package aims to promote the high quality standards of EU produce, including geographical indications, and will also set out the legal basis for place-of-farm labelling. This will be on the Council agenda for a 1<sup>st</sup> reading in October.

### Animal Welfare

The Commission is likely to present its report on the implementation of the animal transport regulation in October and the Polish will facilitate discussions on this topic. As the Commission's plans for a new EU Animal Welfare Strategy are due to be adopted by the end of the year they are likely to be presented to Parliament during the Polish Presidency.

### Energy Taxation Directive

The Presidency intends to continue work on the Energy Taxation Directive but it is unclear whether any genuine progress can be made.



## Trade

Despite recent reports that WTO negotiations had stalled, the Presidency aims to progress talks. By the end of 2011 it hopes to have helped the Commission put together a roadmap to conclude negotiations 'including modalities on market access for goods and services'. Similarly, despite reports that a deal with Mercosur is unlikely the Presidency says it will support the finalisation of negotiations.

## Milk and milk products

The Presidency aims to continue discussions on the dairy package with an agreement in the October Council.

## EU Plant Health Strategy

With the Commission due to present a new Plant Health Strategy the Polish will develop discussions among Member States and host a conference on the legal protection of plant varieties.

## Research and Development

The Presidency aims to support activities which lead to a simpler and more harmonised EU Research Framework Programme.

## Enlargement

The objectives under this heading include signing the Accession Treaty with Croatia, continuing accession discussions with Turkey and making 'meaningful progress' in negotiations with Iceland. It is also hoped that a new framework for cooperation between the EU and Russia will be established.

## Other

The Presidency has specifically said that it is not inclined to progress some policy areas over the next six months including the Soil Framework Directive and the GMO cultivation proposals.

### Key dates in Council

11-12 July	Environment Council	Brussels
18-19 July	Agriculture Council	Brussels
11-13 September	Informal Agriculture Council	Wroclaw
19-20 September	Agriculture Council	Brussels
10 October	Environment Council	Luxembourg
17-18 October	European Council	Brussels
20-21 October	Agriculture Council	Luxembourg
14-15 November	Agriculture Council	Brussels
9 December	European Council	Brussels
15-16 December	Agriculture Council	Brussels

## **European Parliament**

You will find a copy of the 2011 MEP calendar [here](#). MEPs are in Brussels in the 'pink' and 'blue' weeks (committee and group meetings), in Strasbourg during the 'red' weeks for plenary and in their constituency in the 'green' weeks. Members should take the opportunity to lobby their MEPs particularly during constituency weeks.

The Parliament will continue to work on a number of key agricultural dossiers during the second half of 2011. Among other things the [Agriculture Committee](#) will work on the future of CAP, the [Environment Committee](#) will work on the 2020 biodiversity strategy and low carbon economy roadmap and the [Budget Committee](#) will develop a report on the MFF 2014-2020. MEPs will also develop non-legislative positions on issues including farm inputs in the supply chain and a resource efficient Europe. The full Parliament will vote on a number of reports at plenary including the dairy package, research and innovation funding, honeybee health and agriculture product quality.