



Priorities of Greek Presidency of the Council
Jan. - June 2014

Cohesion Policy
Territorial Cohesion & Urban Development

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Greek Presidency logo



The Greek Presidency logo is austere and concise, extending a note of realistic optimism. It depicts a sailboat in full sail, formed by the initials of the European Union.

The background of the logo is the sea: a fundamental element of Greek identity, but also a pivotal component of Europe's past and future. The sea has historically united people and is nowadays a generator of growth and jobs across Europe thus, forming a horizontal thematic running through the Greek Presidency's priorities



The sailboat symbolizes our collective decision as Europeans to sail together towards a common future overcoming hardships and storms. The journey is the symbolic essence of the logo's narration: a shared course of democracy and participation, a common quest for prosperity through growth and employment, a vessel of mobility and security for the future. These ideals forged our past and are now the common inspiration that leads our course. This is the Greek Presidency's message to Europe and to the world: Europe is our common quest and journey

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Fifth time that Greece will hold the EU Presidency since its accession to the European Communities in 1981.

FRAMEWORK OF GREEK PRESIDENCY

Greece is assuming the Presidency of the Council of the European Union at a critical transitional juncture for Europe. The economic crisis forced the adoption of fiscal constraint policies aimed at ensuring financial stability and returning the economy to health. The extent and intensity of the crisis, as well as the resulting recession and unemployment undermined the trust of a significant number of European citizens in the ability of the European edifice to implement credible and effective policy for a return to prosperity, economic recovery and high levels of employment.



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FRAMEWORK OF GREEK PRESIDENCY

At the same time, facing up to the crisis by implementing policies of strict fiscal discipline has strongly impacted social cohesion, particularly in countries directly affected by the crisis. As such, the great challenge for prosperity and stability in the EU lies in reaffirming of the EU's mission in the hearts and minds of European citizens. In this context, Europe is currently being called upon to respond to the challenge of the economic crisis, to safeguard the common currency by deepening and reinforcing the EMU, while promoting direct policies tackling recession and unemployment by stimulating growth. European Parliament elections during the Greek Presidency are an additional factor determining the framework of this Presidency.



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**MAIN
PRIORITIES**

Growth – Jobs - Cohesion

Further Integration of the EU - eurozone

Migration-Borders-Mobility

Maritime Policies



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In a period when unemployment has reached record-high rates in most EU member-states, affecting especially the young, and when recession is a constant threat to European economies, growth cannot but figure as a matter of overriding importance for the Greek Presidency, in our common goal to remove European economies from recession. From the Greek perspective, Jobs and Growth are structurally and inextricably connected. Within this framework, the initiatives and actions for halting unemployment and boosting job creation are absolutely necessary in order to avert the danger of “jobless growth”. The main objective is to balance the timetable of fiscal consolidation with the implementation of a substantially enhanced and realistic [Compact for Growth and Jobs](#) that can be transformed into a diverse European investment programme, modeled after the cohesion policy, with a focus on employment.



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Tackling the financial and economic crisis in the Eurozone and completing the new European Monetary Union architecture will certainly remain priorities for the EU rotating presidencies of the coming years, including the Greek presidency. The main objective is to safeguard the stability of the common currency, the euro, by advancing the deepening of the EMU integration and the ex ante coordination of national fiscal and economic policies.

In this framework, progress on the following building blocks will be emphasized:

- The promotion of the banking union. This remains essential to the improved functioning of the EMU and a prerequisite for increased confidence to the European economy.



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- Agreement on the principles of the reinforced budgetary and economic integration frameworks. The aim is to ensure the effective implementation and further integration of the new EU/Eurozone economic governance mechanisms so as to enhance synergies between member-states in a growth- and jobs-friendly way
- Special emphasis will be attached to the social dimension of the EMU, as one of the pillars for its further deepening. At the same time, we will need to lay the foundations for an institutional structure that would ensure enhanced transparency, accountability and representation for the whole exercise.



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Instability in the European periphery and the persistence of the causes that lead to immigration flows into Europe increase these flows and place an extra burden on EU member states during a period of economic crisis when all forces and efforts should be focused on reforms aimed at safeguarding stability and revitalizing growth. This burden falls mainly on the EU member-states that are on Europe's external borders, as well as on those heavily affected by recession and unemployment. In this context, the Greek Presidency will concentrate its efforts on highlighting the positive aspects of a comprehensive migration management to the benefit of boosting growth and will spare no effort in promoting all dimensions of migration and mobility policies, within the context of [EU's Global Approach to Migration](#). At the same time, action is envisaged to tackle the problems arising from illegal migration in economy, social cohesion and political stability.



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Being a traditionally maritime country, Greece recognizes the huge benefits of marine and maritime activities for the EU economy as a whole. At the same time, obvious strategic interests underline the urgency of bringing to the fore and dealing with security problems of sea border management.

In this context, Greece introduces a horizontal thematic that will run through all three of the presidency's priorities, namely the EU [Maritime Policy](#). The main idea is to redefine and restart EU Maritime Policy in all its aspects, not confining it solely to issues of growth and development ([Limassol declaration](#))



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Cohesion Policy In the wake of the ongoing economic recession in Europe and as member states that experienced a persistent crisis are striving to return to growth, Cohesion policy assumes another importance : It has become a key instrument in supporting the main aims of Strategy Europe 2020 towards achieving a balanced and decentralized development that will eliminate regional disparities and promote interregional cooperation in the EU.



Under the circumstances, Europe must initiate the debate for an ambitious and integrated European Development Plan, designed so as to absorb the consequences of the crisis and enable the creation of sustainable jobs, according to Strategy 2020.



Cohesion Policy The Greek Presidency will devote its efforts in making the implementation of the framework of the legislative package of Cohesion Policy as effective as possible.

Therefore the decision to hold an Informal Meeting with the participation of Ministers competent for the Cohesion Policy (**24-25 April 2014**) signals the priority we attach to this policy and the contribution of this policy in fighting recession and unemployment. The Greek Presidency wishes this meeting to be an actual workshop where obstacles identified by Member-States' and proposals regarding how to make better use of the new regulation can be addressed.



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Cohesion Policy The Greek Presidency will devote efforts in making the joint initiative of the EIB and the Commission to fund SMEs to become operational. Modifications to make it more attractive to MS will be examined in due course after we all have a better idea of what was the response of MS so far to the initiative

Presidency will explore with MS and COM additional initiatives to reduce unemployment and boost job creation. In the eve of EU elections, Europe needs to avoid giving the wrong signal to citizens of “growth without employment”



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Cohesion Policy Macro-regional strategies under European Territorial Cooperation will also be brought in the spotlight, as the Presidency is co-organising with the Commission a Conference to form a strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region.



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The Conference will present the findings of an extensive stakeholder consultation on the upcoming Strategy that is took place in the Region from September to December 2013, and aims to promote a debate with the participants on the future challenges and opportunities that can be tackled following a macro-regional approach. An effective Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region will increase co-operation between all the countries involved, help boost jobs and growth, and will also contribute to the EU integration of the candidate/ potential candidate countries in the Region.



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The Presentation of the Communication on the EU Strategy for the Adriatic – Ionian Region is scheduled for the G.A.C of 24 June 2014



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Cohesion Policy The urban dimension within EU Policies and emphasis on the importance of investments in urban areas and cities as agents for delivering EU policy objectives will also be brought in the spotlight, as the Presidency is co-organising with the Commission a forum that will consult key urban stakeholders across Europe on the need for an EU Urban Agenda, what it should contain and how it should be implemented. The forum will also discuss Europe's role in global urban development as well as the role of business in the development of our cities.



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Cohesion Policy The Presidency at the forum will also stress Urban poverty and social exclusion phenomena that are rising in many European Cities, mainly in Metropolitan areas, deprived neighborhoods and deprived historical and economic centers of the cities .



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The Cohesion Report will consists of a short Commission Communication (10 pages) and a long staff working document (SWD) of 100-150 pages. The SWD covers the analytical and descriptive work. The more political elements are part of the Communication.

The Communication will follow the structure below:

- Introduction
- Lessons from 2007-2013 period
- Key reforms of 2014-2020 period
- Preliminary analysis of new programmes and opportunities/challenges ahead



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Greek Presidency and Territorial Dimension

“Blue Growth”, exploring the different aspects. Emphasis will be given on issues of accessibility and attractiveness of the “blue areas”, utilising the “smart specialization strategy”

Our basis:

Territorial Agenda 2020 and Road Map (follow up)

“Europe 2020” Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

Previous Presidencies

Key Aspects:

Territorial diversity and potential

Endogenous growth utilizing the place – based approach

Functional Areas



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MAIN EVENTS PLANNED FOR TERRITORIAL AND URBAN ASPECTS

Network Territorial Cohesion Contact Point (NTTCP) Athens 27 Feb

Urban Development Group (UDG) Athens 28 Feb

General Directors for Territorial Cohesion and Urban Development meeting Athens 3 April

ESPON Week (MC, NCP, Seminar) Nafplion, 2-5 June 2014

URBACT Conference, Pilot Project Workshop, MC - Thessaloniki, 11-13 June 2014



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OTHER EVENTS PLANNED SO FAR

General Directors of Cohesion meeting Athens 4 April

INFORMAL MINISTERIAL 24-25 (Athens) – EESC Participation

Evaluation Network in Athens 15-16 May 2014

State Aid Network (pending)



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LEGISLATIVE WORK



Regulation for Solidarity Fund

The Fund was set up to respond to major natural disasters and express European solidarity to disaster-stricken regions within Europe. The Fund was created as a reaction to the severe floods in Central Europe in the summer of 2002. Since then, it has been used for 56 disasters covering a range of different catastrophic events including floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and drought. 23 different European countries have been supported so far for an amount of more than 3.5 billion €.



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LEGISLATIVE WORK



Implementing & Delegated Acts for CPR 2014-2020



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LEGISLATIVE WORK

Acts to accommodate issues related to
RUP



Following Dates for SAWP:

10 Jan. 20 Jan. 31 Jan.

7Feb. 21 Feb. 28 Feb

14 Mar. 31 Mar

4 Apr. 11 Apr.

**LEGISLATIVE
WORK**

INFORMAL SWAP 27 evening -30 afternoon (Athens)

12 May

3 and 27 June



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We welcome cooperation

With European Economic and Social Committee we will cooperate on a set of Opinions:

- Towards an EU strategy on sustainable development and on tackling the consequences of the economic crisis
- Community Led Local Development (CLLD) as a tool of Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 for local rural, urban and peri-urban development
- An enhanced role for the European Investment Bank in the recovery with the support from the European Central Bank
- Youth Employment measures – Best Practises



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Greek Presidency on

Web: <http://www.gr2014.eu>

Twitter: @gr2014eu



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We are open to your ideas and suggestions



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Thank You For Your Attention

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