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The Netherlands EU Presidency and Trio Priorities¹

The Netherlands will hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union from 1 January to 30 June 2016.

The Dutch Presidency's focus will be on the follow-up of the Strategic Agenda that was adopted by the European Council of June 2014 and strengthening the EU's role as "an innovator and creator of jobs in Europe". The Presidency's other policy priorities are as follows; comprehensive approach to migration and international security; sound and future-proof European finance, a robust Eurozone and a forward-looking policy on climate and energy.

During its term the Netherlands will concentrate on what is important for European citizens and businesses. Efforts will be made to foster prosperous, free and secure Europe and also to remove obstacles, modernise and simplify rules so that the rules really work for citizens and companies throughout the EU.

Finalisation of the Visa-Liberalisation process and acceleration of accession negotiations with Turkey, refugee crisis, counterterrorism and the future of the UK's EU membership are the other topics on the Presidency's agenda.

The implementation of EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan which was agreed during the Turkey-EU Summit of 29 November 2015 and the management of Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey will be important issues of the Presidency.

The start of the Netherlands' presidency also marks the beginning of the new trio for the Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta. The Netherlands-Slovakia-Malta which took over the trio from Italy, Latvia and Luxembourg will hold the successive presidencies for the next 18 months and hand it over to the next trio of UK, Estonia and Bulgaria.

The current trio's work programme is in line with the European Commission's priorities which are based on the 5 pillars of EU's Strategic Agenda. These priorities are as follows; "A Union of Jobs, Growth and Competitiveness", "A Union that Empowers and Protects All Its Citizens", "Towards an Energy Union with a Forward Looking Climate Policy", "A Union of freedom, security and Justice" and "The Union as a Strong Global Actor".

Particular attention of the current trio will also be devoted to the work on the future development of the Common European Asylum System; efforts on relocation and resettlement, return and readmission; border management; stepping up the fight

¹ <http://english.eu2016.nl/documents/publications/2015/12/14/state-of-the-european-union-presidency-edition>



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against human smuggling and taking forward work in relation to legal migration which are the main areas that were highlighted during the EU Summit of December 2015.