

The Rapporteur

NEWS, VIEWS AND INSIGHTS FROM BRUSSELS

Q1-2
2025



RESETTING THE RELATIONSHIP
TOWARDS A NEW EU-UK
PARTNERSHIP

**EU-UK GREEN ECONOMY
PARTNERSHIP**
THE PATH TO A CLEAN
INDUSTRIAL DEAL

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'Security, First!'
Midway a Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU



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The Trump-Effect
The EU's Changing Transatlantic Relationship



TIMELINE OF APPOINTMENTS, SUMMITS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAY

12-13 May:
Education, Youth, culture
and Sport Council

15 May:
Foreign Affairs Council

20 May:
Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Affairs (Defence)

13 May:
Economic and Financial
Affairs Council

19 May:
EU-UK Summit

22-23 May:
Competitiveness Council

26 May:
Foreign Affairs Council
(Development)

JUNE

12-13 June:
Justice and Home Affairs
Council

17 June:
Environment Council

24-26 June:
NATO Summit in Hague,
Netherlands

30 June:
End of Polish Presidency

15-17 June:
G7 Summit in Kananaskis,
Canada

19 June:
Eurogroup

26-27 June:
European Council

JULY

1 July:
Start of Danish Presidency

8-11 July:
AI for Good Global Summit
2025, Geneva, Switzerland

29-31 July:
Global Conference on
Climate and Health, Brasilia,
Brazil

7-11 July:
World Summit on the
Information Society (WSIS),
Geneva, Switzerland

10-11 July:
Ukraine Recovery
Conference (URC2025),
Rome, Italy

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

9-23 September:
UN General Assembly in
New York, USA

16-17 September:
September European Research
and Innovation Days 2025

29 September - 3 October:
European Hydrogen Week,
Brussels, Belgium

10-11 September:
13th International
Conference on Sustainable
Development, UN-HABITAT,
Rome, Italy

24-25 September:
European Carbon Dioxide
Utilisation Summit, Antwerp,
Belgium



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear reader, a very warm welcome to the second edition of The Rapporteur, BritCham EU's magazine providing news, views and insights from Brussels. The magazine explores the work of the Chamber and of our members, who are very much at the centre of EU policy and EU-UK relations.

This edition is firmly focussed on engagements and briefings ahead of the EU-UK Summit on 19th May 2025, which will see Prime Minister Keir Starmer hosting European Commission and European Council Presidents, Ursula von der Leyen and António Costa in London.

The summit marks a significant development and demonstrable progress in EU-UK relations which very much lie at the heart of our mission here in Brussels. Looking ahead to more cooperation and collaboration between the EU and the UK can only be a positive given our intrinsically linked economies, common strategy objectives and shared values.

But this is both a moment of delicacy as well as opportunity for EU-UK relations with the geopolitical climate bringing challenges for the UK in its positioning whilst balancing priorities between its traditional trading partners and allies.

Ultimately, is it our belief that evolving global instability provides an unprecedented opportunity for closer cooperation with the EU whether a 'reset' or a re-alignment in this new world order.

At the forefront of EU-UK mutual interests lie BritCham's four policy priority areas: **Defence, Green Economy, Economic Security and Data & Technology**. These specific focus areas are where we can build to enhance the current relationship both within, but more importantly, beyond the scope of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

The EU-UK Summit in May is not a one-off, but part of an ongoing dialogue that holds great opportunity for improving relations, with our hope being that negotiations will not be protracted at the expense of critical decisions in relation to the defence of Europe, energy security and the resilience of critical supply chains.

Many thanks to our Members and team for their insightful contributions to this edition at this fascinating and pivotal moment in EU-UK relations.

Peter Bell
Managing Editor

In our next edition:

Springboard or damp squib?

The 19th May Summit in London holds great promise for the way ahead in EU-UK relations but will it live up to the billing or prove to be a disappointment to those who hoped for more?

We'll be looking back on the Summit and the ensuing months to review what progress was made and whether the opportunity for quick wins was taken or whether we're in for a long haul.



BRITCHAM
EU
At the centre of EU Relations

ABOUT

BritCham EU is the pillar of the British Chamber of Commerce EU & Belgium that focuses on all matters concerning EU policy and the evolving relationship between the EU and the UK.

Through our advocacy work, events, committee meetings, and engagement with policymakers on both sides of the Channel, BritCham EU represents the interests of its members in a wide range of policy areas.

THE RAPPORTEUR

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RESETTING THE RELATIONSHIP TOWARDS A NEW EU-UK PARTNERSHIP

Since Prime Minister Keir Starmer's election in July 2024, the new administration has laid the foundation for improved relations between the European Union and the United Kingdom. The Labour Party's manifesto set out a baseline of ambitions for what it has been calling a "reset" in EU-UK relations, which the Chamber is supporting through its advocacy for an improved EU-UK relationship.

The Labour Party's manifesto aimed at improving trade facilitation, through initiatives such as a **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS)** agreement and progress on **Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQs)**. Simultaneously respecting the terms of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) and the Windsor Framework Agreement (WFA). BritCham warmly welcomes this engagement and seeks better relations with our largest partner in trade, security,

and cooperation. Given recent turbulent geopolitical challenges with the United States, Ukraine and other issues, the imperative of fostering closer cooperation with our partners cannot be emphasised more. We look forward to the next steps both before, during and after the Summit.

The establishment of a dedicated Minister for European Union Relations, held by Nick Thomas-Symonds MP, symbolises this renewed focus. His regular dialogue with EU Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič has been instrumental in reviving trust and preparing the ground for the first EU-UK Summit since Brexit, scheduled for the 19th of May 2025.

In preparation, the Chamber is enacting its programme of meetings with key policymakers from the EU and the UK to understand the positioning from both sides and emphasise the role that the business community can play.

The road to the EU-UK Summit

With the EU-UK Summit only days away, this latest stepping stone to strengthening EU-UK relations is also working towards the **TCA review in 2026**, which will discuss functional and technical aspects with a view to improving areas of the agreement where possible. Special attention is expected to be paid towards enhancing **defence capabilities and cooperation**. While the White Paper of the European Commission, released on the 19th of March, only two months before the Summit, sets out defence priorities, and agendas for the EU's strategic direction, the upcoming Summit will provide a crucial platform to align all-encompassing security policies.

Economic security continues to be a critical priority. By working together, the EU and the UK can secure a more prosperous

and secure future in trade and economy. Notably, positioning itself between the EU and the US, PM Starmer's government must balance the interests of its citizens in nominal economic terms alongside the need for a security and cooperation dimension for both now and the years to come. Balancing those relationships will be crucial in addressing the challenges of the evolving landscape of economic security, such as digital trade, the green transition, energy dependencies and industrial cooperation.

The Chamber remains at the forefront of EU-UK relations and is at the heart of business in Europe for which we represent members' interests. We look forward to continuing engagement with our members and policymakers to work towards the best possible outcomes for both the Summit and TCA review in 2026.

New possibilities for cooperation

Since the UK's departure from the EU, the relationship between the two partners has been marked by many regulatory and economic challenges faced by both sides. While the lack of formalised high-level EU-UK dialogue has defined recent years, hindering political relations, the upcoming Summit marks a turning point. As a result, this creates an extraordinary opportunity for both EU and UK policymakers to rebuild the relationship for the benefit of European and British companies and citizens. The absence of avenues for political dialogue in recent years has meant that opportunities for mutually beneficial engagements were often missed. However, recent months have shown an increasing willingness

from both the EU and the UK to rethink existing realities and seek alternative solutions. Recognising the global shifts and geopolitical context that have occurred since the UK's exit from the EU demonstrates the need for unity.

Nick Thomas-Symonds, British Minister for European Union Relations, on the 10th of December 2024, underlined **two dimensions** of resetting relations with the EU, that will uphold and dominate the discussions during the Summit:

1. Foreign Policy and Security Cooperation: The European Commission's March 2025 White Paper underscores the urgency of enhancing defence collaboration and spending. As a former key player in EU security frameworks, the UK remains a critical partner. The Chamber believes that a structured security agreement should be a core outcome of the Summit. Closer cooperation on intelligence, defence supply chains, counterterrorism, and law enforcement are essential in the face of rising global threats.

2. Trade and Economic Growth: Discussions around an SPS agreement and MRPQs reflect the practical challenges businesses face, from disrupted supply chains to energy uncertainty. Progress here could pave the way for deeper economic integration and smoother market access, helping businesses on both sides of the Channel navigate the green transition, digital trade complexities, and evolving regulatory landscapes.

On other areas, the Summit offers a key opportunity for greater cooperation such as on a potential defence and security

pact, the ambition to link the EU and UK Emissions Trading Systems, reduce unnecessary trade barriers and the possibility of an EU-UK youth mobility agreement. With shared climate goals and economic ties, coordinated carbon pricing is both viable and necessary. Aligning ETS schemes would lower decarbonisation costs, shield consumers from price shocks, and position both sides as leaders in climate cooperation through a tangible, achievable step.

With the TCA review scheduled for 2026, this Summit serves as a platform for revisiting technical provisions and expanding cooperation where mutually beneficial. The Chamber sees this as a foundational step in rebuilding a durable and strategic partnership, one that transcends sectoral deals and fosters shared economic and security ambitions.

Looking ahead

The 19th of May marks more than a diplomatic calendar date, it is a chance for both the EU and the UK to choose cooperation over divergence. BritCham remains committed to ensuring that the voice of business is at the centre of these negotiations. The outcomes of the Summit and the TCA review in 2026 will shape the economic and political landscape of Europe for years to come.

Only through sustained political will, pragmatic engagement, and a clear vision for mutual benefit can this reset become a true reinvention of the EU-UK partnership.

By **Paul Wright**, Policy Officer
and **Katarzyna Gallon**, Committees Officer



G7 Conference between with Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, and Sir Keir Starmer, British Prime Minister
Photo: European Union, 02 October 2024

BRITCHAM SUMMIT INITIATIVES

PREPARING FOR THE 19TH OF MAY

BritCham is committed to seizing the opportunity that the EU-UK Summit brings on the 19th of May. This pivotal moment in shifting narratives poses great potential for economic growth, strengthening of security and redefining existing frameworks.

To fully advocate for the needs of industry, BritCham has prepared a comprehensive work plan that outlines strategic priorities and actionable recommendations; fostering economic ties, supporting industries and addressing needs on both sides.

Strategic Priorities

To leverage this opportunity, BritCham has programmed a series of all-encompassing activities, designed to align with the changing landscapes and ensure that key aspects of policies are effectively addressed.

Through **horizontal activities**, BritCham will focus on engaging with key political bodies to advocate the need for enhanced cooperation.

These activities aim to strengthen existing dialogue, by organising meetings with United Kingdom (UK) representatives to the European Union (EU) reinforcing constructive dialogues, as well as wider political advocacy through the engagement with the EU, where the concerns of business can be represented.

Pillar Specific Priorities

Apart from the overreaching advocacy efforts, BritCham is committed to intensifying actions that target our key priorities.

“The voice of industry must be heard and acknowledged in these discussions

Defence, as one of the Chamber's pillars, stands as one of the most pressing issues in future EU-UK relations. Therefore, the voice of the industry cannot be omitted from Summit negotiations. In parallel, BritCham has actively advanced advocacy through formal correspondence and engagement. This includes a letter, as mentioned in the Financial Times, written to the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Council, António Costa, and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, urging for a formalised partnership agreement on defence. Additionally, we have written a letter calling for a Green Economy Partnership (GEP) for closer EU-UK cooperation on ensuring a clean transition.

In other activities, BritCham has co-signed letters with industry on issues varying from strengthening EU-UK cooperation by linking the EU and UK Emissions Trading Systems (ETS) and on calling for a mutual recognition agreement on conformity assessment in the pursuit of economic growth. These joint communication efforts emphasise the need for harmonised approaches and strategic cooperation across critical sectors. Moreover, the Chamber helped support a recent visit of a delegation by the House of Lords to Brussels, discussing the upcoming reset with members of the European Affairs Committee, ensuring that key parliamentary voices are directly engaged with business in shaping the EU-UK dialogue.

Furthermore, having sustainability and environmental matters high on the agenda for both the EU and the UK, achieving net zero goals and furthering our Green Economy Partnership (see more on page 18) is critical. Therefore, the Chamber strongly advocates for green investments, regulatory alignment for climate initiatives and fostering sustainable solutions towards our shared goal of net zero.

Additionally, as geopolitical tensions increase, the Chamber recognises the need for more action in ensuring the economic security of both the EU and the UK, through resilient supply chains, mitigated investment risks and aligned regulatory frameworks, benefiting producers and consumers alike.

Lastly, Data & Technology are a part of the **vertical** streams ahead of the Summit, hosting discussions with our European and British government representatives to better understand the trajectory for regulation and cooperation between the EU and the UK.

The voice of industry must be heard and acknowledged in these discussions. Enhancing policy discussions is crucial to fully leverage the possibilities of institutionalised EU-UK cooperation that the Summit might bring. For this reason, the Chamber will continuously work towards the Summit to improve the position and representation of both British and European companies.

By **Katarzyna Gallon**
Committees Officer

RESET BRIEFING

FROM THE AMBASSADOR OF THE UK MISSION TO THE EU

In a moment marked more by a slow rapprochement of a “reset”, an upcoming high-level summit between the European Union and the United Kingdom has signalled a subtle yet significant shift in how both sides approach their evolving relationship. Against a backdrop of global uncertainty and economic strain, the event offers a glimpse into a more pragmatic phase of diplomacy under the Starmer government - one less defined by division and more by cooperation.

At its core, the Summit reflects a shared recognition: growth and competitiveness are paramount. **Ambassador of the UK Mission to the EU, H.E. Lindsay Croisdale-Appleby** joined us to discuss the approaches to the Summit, making it clear that economic growth, particularly through smoother trade flows, is a top priority. Rather than revisiting divisive issues or redrawing red lines, the focus is now on making the existing agreements work more effectively. The EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), while once a source of contention, is now being reframed not as a battleground, but as a platform for potential.

Key areas identified for progress include mutual recognition of professional qualifications, improved energy cooperation, technical work on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) standards, and mobility. In reducing these small frictions, this can help improve the economic and trading relationship between the EU and the UK, helping act as a foundation towards more cooperation in the future.

Security was another theme running throughout the conversation, with discussions ranging from defence



collaboration to maritime safety. These topics are crucial in ensuring better regional stability and shared standards, helping ensure increased collaboration.

A notable discussion point focused on the current state of global geopolitical tensions. In an increasingly multipolar world, both the EU and the UK are seeking to balance their national interests with international cooperation. Divergences are evident, particularly in digital regulation and trade policy, yet there is also an acknowledgment that continued dialogue, rather than confrontation, is important to forging a path forward.

When it comes to **economic resilience**, the UK appears especially mindful of its role in global supply chains, whether in green technology, automotives, or health security. **Collaboration, not isolation**,

seems to be the guiding principle, even if structural and regulatory hurdles remain.

Ahead of the upcoming EU-UK Summit, leaders look towards creating better dialogue and increasing cooperation between the two sides. Institutional changes have created space for a more constructive dialogue either side of the Channel. A story of cautious optimism and building momentum is key to addressing challenges in today's multipolar world, working with our closest partners is the only way to ensure better outcomes for everyone. At BritCham, we fully welcome progress towards closer cooperation and collaboration between the EU and the UK, we look forward to the Summit outcomes and continued engagement with policymakers and other relevant stakeholders.

By **Paul Wright**
Policy Officer



THE TRUMP-EFFECT

THE EU'S CHANGING TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP

The re-election of Donald Trump has sent shockwaves across the globe, prompting the European Union to accelerate its strategic responses in both trade and defence. Recent developments, including Trump's announcement of new tariffs on EU exports to the United States, affecting goods worth €380 billion, and his conditional support for Ukraine, have underscored the urgency for the EU to adapt swiftly. Heightened diplomatic tensions, exemplified by the televised exchange between JD Vance, President Trump, and President Zelenskyy, have further emphasised the need for the EU to reassess its global role and redefine its defence posture.

Rising Trade Tensions and Tariffs

This urgency has been amplified by President Trump's recent declaration of the so-called "Liberation Day" on the 2nd of April, a highly symbolic move marking the launch of sweeping tariffs to reduce US trade deficits with its trading partners. Framed as part of his "Make America Wealthy Again" agenda, the initiative aims to boost domestic manufacturing and correct longstanding trade deficits. Despite efforts from both the EU and the United Kingdom to avoid them, offering concessions such as increasing imports of American liquefied natural gas (LNG) and invoking the so-called "special relationship", the US has moved ahead with universal tariffs on all overseas products entering its borders.

While the tariffs initially went into effect on the 9th of April, Trump unexpectedly announced a three-month pause for all countries except China, which will now face an increased tariff rate of 125%. Other nations will see tariffs revert to a standard 10% rate. This abrupt shift underscores the unpredictability and the fragile state of transatlantic economic relations. For the EU, the message is clear: reliance on past diplomatic norms is no longer possible. A strategic recalibration, in both economic and geopolitical terms, is required.

During Trump's first term, the US threatened new tariffs on German cars and French wine. However, a small deal was ultimately struck instead, with the EU agreeing to import more US-produced LNG and soya, in addition to increasing cooperation at the

World Trade Organisation (WTO) to counter China on some of its non-market practices. Moreover, a micro deal eliminating tariffs on US seafood was also agreed, resulting in no additional American tariffs on European goods.

Europe's Shift Towards Strategic Independence

However, the second Trump administration's recent measures have not only radically transformed the EU's approach to trade with one of its until recently closest allies, but also its security policy. We have since seen the bloc moving towards greater independence in defence, driven by a desire to reduce its reliance on NATO's security umbrella. This is exemplified by the proposed ReArm Europe initiative, which aims to mobilise up to €800 billion to boost European defence capabilities through its funding. What is more, a second proposal will also provide €150 billion in loans for EU Member States to expand defence investment.

On the other hand, the US and UK are being excluded from this massive new defence spending plan. While much focus has been on the impact for Europe, such as potential tariffs and reduced support for Ukraine, the US could also suffer as the EU rethinks its

ties with a key security ally. Until now, about two-thirds of EU defence procurement has gone to American firms, this looks to soon change.

Therefore, this shift extends beyond defence to include economic policy. Many American companies rely on exports to the EU, but with Europe prioritising rearmament, securing supply chains, and strengthening economic security, the US could experience significant economic setbacks if the EU reduces its dependence on American imports.

Signs of this shift are already emerging. Emmanuel Macron has urged EU Member States to prioritise European, especially French, defence products over American alternatives. A key question remains whether the UK will continue to be excluded from this shift or if in the future it could play a role in fostering closer ties between the EU and its allies.

The Need for an EU-UK Reset

These developments in trade and defence, combined with the EU's exclusion from negotiations on Ukraine's future and the Trump administration's unpredictable stance towards allies, have underlined

the urgent need for an accelerated reset in EU-UK relations. The upcoming EU-UK Summit represents a crucial opportunity and first step towards closer cooperation between the EU and the UK.

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. Despite the UK's departure from the EU, the UK continues to be a leading European economy and defence actor, with one of the biggest and most prepared armies in the continent. For this reason, EU-UK trade and foreign policy, as well as the security relationship between them must be upgraded and aligned as part of the Summit negotiations.

In this regard, there are reasons to be optimistic ahead of the upcoming Summit held in May. As of recently, EU leaders are adopting a pragmatic approach, with Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Trade Chief Maroš Šefčovič prioritising swift trade deals over ambitious long-term goals. This strategy is evident in the EU's push to conclude long-stalled agreements with key regional partners such as Mercosur and Mexico while strengthening ties with like-minded partners like Canada.

By **Alejandro Staton**
Committees Officer

DEFENDING EUROPE

THE CURRENT STATE OF EU-UK RELATIONS IN DEFENCE

Interview with Philippe Lefevre
Clover Group

Growing geopolitical threats, ongoing Russian aggression on Ukraine, and the threat of a diminishing role of the United States in European defence, call for closer EU-UK cooperation. “Europe will struggle to be secure, and to establish real European Strategic Autonomy, without EU-UK Cooperation” - Philippe Lefevre of Clover Group and a Co-Chair of Defence & Security Committee at BritCham discusses the future of European defence.

2025 has started with high expectations amidst the proposals from both the United Kingdom's new Labour government, with Prime Minister Keir Starmer and the new Commission Cabinet of President Ursula von der Leyen, looking to increase defence capabilities. However, the situation is still far from perfect. In our interview with Philippe Lefevre, we discussed the current state of defence cooperation between the European Union and the UK, the challenges and frameworks that create unnecessary barriers, as well as the possibilities for further growth.

The Status-Quo: Much ado about nothing

The present conditions of the EU-UK defence discussion underline common misconceptions of that relationship. “It is necessary to distinguish between the UK's relationship with the European Union as an institution and between its bilateral agreements with EU Member States, as those two are much different”.

“The EU-UK cooperation, with the EU as an institutional body has reached a low point in recent years,” Philippe notes, “(...) post-Brexit, the UK's engagement in institutional EU defence initiatives decreased, but bilateral cooperation in defence with individual countries went up.”

Since 2021, the state of defence initiatives in the EU has experienced a clear shift of focus towards bilateral defence cooperation. The third-country status for the UK, indicates increased hardship in accessing the EU's initiatives, predominantly in EDIS (European Defence Industrial Strategy), EDIP (European Defence Investment Programme) or PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation).

However, the UK has maintained strong bilateral ties, through agreements with European countries including France, Poland, and Germany. All of them have recently announced vital commitments to increase the spending on defence and military capabilities.

According to Philippe, in the near future, the existing cooperation outside of the EU's regulatory frameworks will likely strengthen. “It is particularly evident in JEF, Joint Expeditionary Force, where the UK has a leading role alongside EU Member States, outside of the EU's institutional framework, and so far, this has shown promise”, Philippe notes, adding that the latter is the most likely direction of EU-UK cooperation in the near future.

EU-UK Security Pact

In recent months there have been many debates about the creation of a EU-UK Security Pact. Philippe notes, that “such agreement would be a most obvious deal between close partners, as the EU and the UK. Yet despite the most relevant topic in current politics, the short-termism of Member States and the EU is clearly limiting the prosperity of defence cooperation between the EU and the UK”. At present, the exclusion of the UK from EU investment programmes is negatively affecting both British and European industries, weakening the existing industrial ties and increasing

trade barriers for the reciprocal relationship.

Although as Philippe notes, our expectations towards the creation of such a Pact should be managed, he underlines that the actual resolutions of such an agreement would not be as meaningful as what it would signify to a wider, international audience.

“It would show the willingness of the EU and the UK to stand together and defend Europe. That's all it shows, and that's all that matters. There is no European security without UK, and they [the EU and the UK] should show they are aware of that.”

EU-UK Summit 2025

Planned for the 19th of May, the EU-UK Summit, aims to improve the relationship between the EU and the UK and seek the possibilities and opportunities for the future. The British Prime Minister has stated that the Summit would be an opportunity to deliver benefits for citizens of both the UK and the EU, given challenges in geopolitical contexts. However, any resolutions and future changes remain uncertain. Philippe notes that the Summit can lead to more formalised relations, through either regular meetings or summits, but discussions on the involvement of the UK in EU programmes, will be most likely limited. What was certain in his opinion, is that the future of Ukraine as well as a strong response towards Russia will remain a central part of the dialogue, and the leaders will further reflect on “How we can defend Ukraine better together?”, says Philippe.

Despite evident short-termism and institutional barriers in the relationship between the EU and the UK in previous years, the upcoming Summit is a significant milestone in advancing defence cooperation and ensuring the security of Europe.

By **Katarzyna Gallon**
Committees Officer



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EU (Belgium)



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USA



SECURITY FIRST! MIDWAY THROUGH THE POLISH PRESIDENCY

As the Polish Presidency has reached its midway point, after taking over the Council of the European Union on 1 January 2025, thirteen years after its first presidency, the priorities and programme focused around one motive – “Security, first!”. The Presidency comes at a particularly crucial moment for Europe as this year marks the third year of Russia’s full-scale invasion on Ukraine, which had an immense impact on the European security landscape. This in turn has led to the undermining of security, principles and values that the European Union (EU) has been built upon. The motto accompanying this Presidency could not have been more accurate in highlighting the urgent priorities of the EU, to reinforce security in all dimensions. Now with less than two months remaining, the Polish Presidency is accelerating crucial actions to further support defence, economic growth and strategic cooperation with global partners.

Over the course of past months, the Presidency has made significant progress in key areas of all-encompassing security matters. These efforts not only worked towards addressing the immediate needs but also aimed to build a lasting framework for stability and strategic partnerships.

Strengthening European Defence

Poland has been acting as an EU-Eastern border for years since its accession to the Union and has certainly recognised the urgent need to strengthen autonomous EU defence capabilities, especially in the current geopolitical climate. In March, the EU has announced new funding mechanisms that increase investment in production of military equipment and advocating for accelerated cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

(NATO) and other non-EU countries, such as the United Kingdom. The increase in defence spending marks a milestone, paving the way for greater security autonomy, and accelerated possibilities for defence industries in Europe.

People and Borders

Migration and security of the border remain crucial issues for the EU. While voices on migration matters are divided, the Presidency has been prioritising efforts to prevent hybrid threats, most significantly the instrumentalisation of migration.

Combating Disinformation & Cyberthreats

Furthermore, the Presidency has focused on prioritising countermeasures to disinformation and cyberattacks, that are used to disrupt the democratic processes of the EU. The increased spending in the artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity and digital skills within the EU demonstrates the development of its goals in digital transformation.

Economic Growth

Fostering economic growth is a core focus of the functioning of the EU. Advancing trade agreements, creating channels for cooperation with strategic partners and reinforcing industrial policies, the Presidency has helped lay out the foundations for long-term economic security.

Energy

Europe’s energy crisis, directly correlated with the war in Ukraine, has highlighted the need for more energy independence and autonomy of the EU. Focusing on renewable energy projects, the Presidency



has accelerated the EU’s efforts to achieve its green transition priorities.

Agricultural Resilience

Food security, farmers support and the need for agricultural subsidies has been a focus of the Presidency. Particularly, safeguarding the food supply chains has been a major part of the discussion in recent months. This comes ahead of the planned reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which will be a priority of the upcoming Danish Presidency.

Health Security

Past experiences of the global Covid-19 pandemic have forced the EU to accelerate its crisis response mechanisms, access to critical medicines and overall spearheaded initiatives improving the EU’s health security.

As the Polish Presidency reaches its final stretch, the upcoming Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union will certainly need to uphold the importance of security in the EU’s agenda. The imperative is clear, the EU needs to maintain the existing momentum of action and keep a strong, secure and united Europe. The Polish Presidency has set a unique strategic leadership in reacting to global challenges and advancing the EU’s strategic position. As the change of the Presidency approaches, the EU must build on the foundation developed in recent months and maintain the message to put security first.

By **Katarzyna Gallon**
Committees Officer

REGULATING INNOVATION THE EU AND UK’S FRAMEWORKS ON AI AND DIGITAL POLICIES



“Europe is now on its own and acutely aware of its dependencies, especially when it comes to digital infrastructures

During the delegation visit to Warsaw last autumn, members of the Digital Committee at BritCham witnessed how Poland braced itself for a potential return of Trump during their current Presidency of the Council of the European Union, hoping for the best but preparing for the worst in terms of disruptions. We were confronted with some hard truths about the rise in cyber threats and digital vulnerabilities in the face of a hybrid war that was already affecting our continent and EU Member States.

Despite this reality check, the first quarter of 2025 still shocked us all. While competitiveness and security were already defined as the two anchors of Ursula’s von der Leyen’s second term, they have been given impetus by the words and actions of Trump’s second administration. What a difference a few weeks make: Europe is now on its own and acutely aware of its dependencies, especially when it comes to digital infrastructures.

As the Atlantic distance has widened, the prospect of narrowing the Channel seems even more relevant. Indeed, alignment of policy agendas seems apparent in the face of new geopolitical realities. Necessity is the mother of invention, and

there is plenty of need to re-invent the relations between the European Union and the United Kingdom.

Steps to rebuild bridges between the EU and the UK’s policymakers have been steady but cautious since the start of the Labour government and new EU Institutional term. The wounds from the recent divorce are still mending and public sentiments remain fragile. This comes with a risk of passive regulatory divergence, also in the digital domain. How different and compatible are the approaches both parties are taking when it comes to digital and technology?

While the UK is rolling out its AI Opportunities Action Plan and aiming to pass the Data Use and Access Bill before the end of 2025, the EU is unveiling an ambitious but still to be defined agenda around simplification. Both are intended to foster growth and reduce dependencies, but will the combined outcomes succeed in delivering this for a business community that operates globally? There are many concerns and uncertainties that occupy the business community.

During a recent exchange between BritCham’s Digital Committee and the digital spokesperson from the Danish Permanent Representation, their aim to

drive the work of the EU to reduce red tape, improve the digital single market, enforce digital regulations, and simplify administrative processes through digitalisation was strongly emphasised. It can be achieved by taking a “*digital by default*” approach, drawing inspiration from Denmark’s automated business reporting framework, which helps reduce administrative burdens for businesses. At the same time Denmark wants to push for stronger online protections for users and consumers. This includes tackling dark patterns, preventing the profiling of vulnerable groups, and ensuring the proper enforcement of the Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act.

A first compatibility test of the Danish’s ambitions for growth and safety with the UK’s digital agenda will be assessed at the upcoming EU-UK Summit in May, ahead of the Danish Presidency of the EU Council. Although the outcomes will likely be very high-level, it should be a launchpad for more detailed policy alignment efforts. BritCham and its Digital Committee remains committed to support this process by facilitating discussions between the EU and the UK policymakers and the business community on both sides of the Channel.

By **Daniel Benjamins**
Chair, Digital Committee

ADVANCING EUROPE FIRST MONTHS OF THE NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION

“From day one, we stayed the course that we had laid out in the Political Guidelines, building on the three pillars – prosperity, security and democracy.”

President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen

Since the appointment of the new Commissioners of Ursula von der Leyen's cabinet, the European Commission has set bold initiatives to address Europe's most pressing challenges. From security to strengthening economic resilience and sustainable future, the Commission has embarked on an ambitious path. We present a snapshot of major developments from the past months, that will shape Europe's future:

ReArm Europe Plan

Firstly, the long-awaited acceleration in the European defence capabilities. ReArm Europe Plan, developed under the framework of the Readiness 2030 programme, addresses growing security uncertainties, given the ongoing challenges in the geopolitical contexts. The plan aims to support immediate actions, such as aiding Ukraine, addressing long-term defence investments and spending by European Union (EU) Member States.

The plan aims to mobilise €800 billion in defence investments, through national public funds, a new instrument Security Action for Europe (SAFE) and mobilisation of private capital. The initiative ambitiously outlined in the White Paper on Defence, published in late March 2025, represents the next step for autonomous European defence structures.

Competitiveness Compass

Building upon Mario Draghi's Report on the future of European competitiveness, the Compass provides strategic actions to boost Europe's economic growth. Acknowledging the need for the EU to step up its competitiveness on global scene, Draghi's report highlights three *“transformational imperatives”*.

Through **closing the innovation gap**, the Commission aims to create a supporting environment for start-ups and promote the adoption of advanced technologies across all businesses. Key initiatives include the launch of *AI Gigafactories*, targeted measures for quantum, biotech, robotics and other areas, and a new *EU Start-up and Scale-up Strategy*.

The Commission turns to address the high energy prices and ensure access to clean and affordable energy through the Clean Industrial Deal. This strategy promotes competitiveness-driven transition through actions that include the Affordable Energy Action Plan and the Industrial Decarbonisation Accelerator Act. Tailored actions are being further developed for sectors such as steel, metals and chemicals.

Furthermore, the Commission targets **economic security**, to reduce excessive dependencies on external partners and boost investments. The goal is to strengthen strategic partnerships and diversify supply chains. The Commission has launched a new Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships initiative to ensure access to critical resources, including raw materials, clean energy, sustainable fuels and clean technologies.

Clean Industrial Deal

In response to high energy costs and competition, the Clean Industrial Deal focuses on lowering energy prices and supporting energy-intensive industries. It also focuses on the clean-tech sector development as a driver of competitiveness, industrial transformation and circularity. It does not only accelerate decarbonisation but also reduces dependency on non-EU suppliers and support energy-intensive industries.

Key features of the Clean Industrial Deal includes:

- Affordable energy
- Boosting demand for clean products
- Supporting the clean transition
- Circularity and access to materials
- Creation of quality jobs



New College of Commissioners
Photo: © European Union 2024 - Source: EP

You can find more on Clean Industrial Deal on page 18.

Critical Medicines Act

Proposed in March 2025, the Critical Medicines Act addresses access and availability of critical medicines across the EU. It aims to reduce external dependencies by strengthening the EU's medicine supply and ensuring continuous access to critical medicines across EU Member States.

The Act will introduce a list of critical medicines while ensuring continuous availability of essential medicines for EU citizens.

In particular, the Act will include:

- Strategic projects for critical medicines and their ingredients
- Public and collaborative procurement between Member States to reduce access disparity of medicines
- International partnerships between countries
- State aid guidelines to support members in the development of such strategies.

Digital Europe Programme

The Digital Europe Programme aims to enhance the EU's critical digital capacities. The Commission will invest €1.3 billion over the next three years to support the deployment of critical digital technologies that are strategically important for the EU. It focuses on reducing technological dependencies and strengthening the digital resilience of European businesses and citizens in areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and advanced digital skills.

A new European cybersecurity reserve of reliable service providers will be established to provide a rapid response to incidents involving critical infrastructure, such as underwater cables or hospitals.

The Programme also supports digital skills training and strengthens Destination Earth, a digital model designed to prepare for environmental and climate challenges.

Digital Europe is the first funding programme entirely dedicated to digital transformation, highlighting the strategic importance of digital autonomy after Covid-19.

Preparedness Union Strategy

The Commission launched the Preparedness Union Strategy to support Member States and enhance Europe's response to emerging threats.

Considering the challenges and crises that the EU is facing in today's geopolitical landscape, from growing tensions and conflicts, cybersecurity threats to climate change, the EU needs to be ready to protect its citizens. It promotes stronger coordination between Member States, population preparedness, civil-military cooperation, and public awareness measures.

The last few months, despite overwhelming challenges for European security, economic prosperity and competitiveness, have marked a decisive start for the new European Commission – defined by bold and necessary initiatives. These proposals reflect the commitment to strengthen the EU's position on the global scene and lay groundwork for a more secure, resilient and sustainable Europe.

By **Katarzyna Gallon**
Committees Officer



EU-UK GREEN ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP

THE PATH TO A CLEAN INDUSTRIAL DEAL

The European Union (EU) and the United Kingdom (UK) share strategic common objectives on climate action, energy, and economic security, outlined within their respective industrial strategies.

Implementing the EU and the UK's climate objectives while ensuring effective industrial transformation is pivotal in supporting this transition, which will be one of the key tasks faced by the policymakers and industry. Both parties face the same challenges, such as: supply of low emission and secure energy, availability of net zero technologies, secure supply of the materials needed to make them, and access to finance and the skills necessary to drive these changes.

While acknowledging that both parties collaborate on these goals, they continue to address these challenges largely independently, even though the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) covers areas relevant to Net Zero 2050.

For this reason, the British Chamber of Commerce | EU & Belgium has organised

a series of workshops with over 70 industry organisations, NGOs, trade associations and think tanks to bring together a Report, which was launched on the 21st November 2024 with the participation of Caroline Read, Deputy Ambassador of the UK Mission to the European Union.

Our **EU-UK Green Economy Partnership Report (GEP)** highlights the urgent need for cooperation between the EU and the UK to meet net zero goals by 2050. It emphasises joint strategies in key areas such as energy, transport, carbon markets, capital markets, and research & innovation.

The report identifies challenges, such as the need for renewable energy development, resilient supply chains, and innovative clean technologies, and calls for a comprehensive partnership to tackle these issues.

Key recommendations include:

Energy Collaboration: Establish full UK membership in the North Seas Energy Cooperation (NSEC), align hydrogen and carbon standards, and improve infrastructure planning for renewable energy and carbon storage.

Transport: Develop tariff-free trade on green goods, set up a Critical Raw Materials (CRM) joint area, and expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Carbon Markets: Link EU-UK Emission Trading Systems (ETS) by 2025 to enhance carbon market efficiency and align Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) standards to reduce trade friction.



Download the GEP Report here

GREEN ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP

Capital Markets: Increase interoperability of sustainable finance frameworks, promote green investment via public-private partnerships, and streamline regulations for cross-border investments.

Research & Innovation: Strengthen the UK's association with Horizon Europe, expand funding for green technologies, and develop frameworks to address the green skills gap.

The report is a continuation of a Call for a Green Economy Partnership to supplement the EU-UK TCA, fostering closer cooperation on shared climate goals and economic resilience. Only together can the EU and the UK achieve their climate goals and ensure sustained European competitiveness.

Furthermore, in the context of soaring energy costs, aggressive and often unfair global competition, escalating geopolitical tensions, and sluggish economic growth, both the EU and the UK face the pressing challenge of maintaining industrial competitiveness while advancing their climate objectives.

The unveiling of the **European Commission's Clean Industrial Deal** on the 26th of February 2025 is particularly significant in this challenging environment. This initiative emerges at a critical juncture, as European manufacturers in key sectors argue that they are dealing with excessive regulatory burdens and high energy costs that hinder their competitiveness against counterparts in the United States (US)

and China. The US's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and China's state support for domestic industries further complicate the landscape, highlighting the urgent need for a coordinated EU-UK response to these competitive pressures.

The Clean Industrial Deal aims to restore EU competitiveness while positioning decarbonisation as a cornerstone for European industrial growth. It addresses recent challenges identified in Mario Draghi's Report by focusing on six pillars: lowering energy prices, creating demand, spurring investment, ensuring access to essential materials, fostering global partnerships, and reskilling workers.

The Deal provides a clear and simplified framework to offer certainty and predictability to businesses, addressing criticisms of excessive and often confusing sustainability rules. Central to this plan is a proposed **Buy European** requirement for climate-friendly industrial products, which will involve modifications to public procurement rules and the introduction of new low-carbon labels for industrial goods, starting with steel and expanding to other sectors.

Key elements of the plan include:

Funding: In the short term, the Deal will mobilise over €100 billion to support EU-made clean manufacturing. This amount will include an additional €1 billion guarantee under the current Multiannual Financial Framework.

Rules Simplification: It proposes to amend four key rules contained in the European Green Deal: the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), the EU taxonomy on sustainable investments and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).

Facilitating Investment Opportunities: The Commission also proposes amendments to simplify and optimise investment programs like Invest EU and European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). These changes aim to increase investment capacity by €50 billion through returns from past investments and optimised use of legacy funds. The proposal also simplifies administrative requirements, potentially generating €350 million in cost savings.

The Clean Industrial Deal proposals will be reviewed and approved by the European Parliament and the Council before becoming law and will then be published in the EU Official Journal. The Commission has requested prioritisation of certain aspects, such as adjusting CSRD and CSDDD deadlines.

Despite a generally positive response, some industry leaders have expressed concerns about the pace and scale of changes, with some even considering relocation outside of Europe. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen plans to revisit these discussions in Antwerp within a year.

By **Alejandro Staton**
Committees Officer

LOOKING BACK AT WESTMINSTER DELEGATION

Understanding the UK policymakers' perspectives on EU-UK relations

Our annual Westminster Delegation looks to meet with senior UK Ministers, MPs, Lords, and diplomats as part of our work to strengthen EU-UK relations. Looking back at our trip in February 2025, the Chamber had the pleasure of meeting with a wide range of MPs, Lords, and civil servants, engaging in high-level discussions on the evolving EU-UK relationship.

The Labour government and the European Commission are preparing to participate in the EU-UK Summit on 19th of May, with Starmer, von der Leyen, and Costa expected to attend. There was one clear message from our Delegation: there is growing recognition of the importance of strengthening collaboration and acknowledging the vital role businesses play in driving it.

Key Priorities ahead of the Summit

The delegation met with MPs and policymakers to discuss key priorities ahead of the EU-UK Summit. Topics discussed included energy, economic security, as well as trade facilitation, defence, financial services, data & technology.

A central focus of the discussions was on trade frictions, especially regarding Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS), Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQs), Emissions Trading System (ETS) alignment, youth mobility, and the Pan-Euro-Mediterranean Convention (PEM). Our delegation provided evidence that highlighted the issues businesses are



facing. This is both central to our work during the Westminster Delegation and to our wider mission at the Chamber.

We held meetings with members of the European Affairs Committee, including Lord Ricketts (Chair), Baroness Anelay of St Johns, and Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne; the EU Delegation to the UK, Isabell Poppelbaum, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to the United Kingdom, and the Vice-Chairs of the EU-UK Parliamentary Partnership Assembly, who convene to discuss issues relating to the working relationship between the EU and the UK.

These engagements helped reinforce the importance of business engagement in driving **economic security and innovation**. The importance of mutually beneficial outcomes was a consistent highlight throughout our delegation, as we helped

bridge the gap between Brussels and London looking ahead to the EU-UK Summit on the 19th of May.

The second day of discussions explored political party perspectives on the **future of EU-UK relations**, with a spotlight on business priorities in Europe. Both the upcoming Summit in May 2025 and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) review in 2026 represent opportunities for engagement and routes to increased collaboration and alignment between the EU and the UK to work closer together on a wide range of issues.

BritCham remains committed to ensuring the voice of business is heard in these vital discussions. With ongoing support from its members, we will continue to provide insights and leadership in shaping the next chapter of EU-UK relations.

By **Paul Wright**
Policy Officer

JOIN OUR STRASBOURG DELEGATION

21-23 OCTOBER 2025



Our visit during the Plenary in October is an opportunity to offer our members firsthand insights into the legislative and policy landscape, and to build relationships with key decision-makers and we explore the policies and politics of the EU through a variety of key themes.

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 Interested in joining or sponsoring the visit?
Contact us at elise.loncol@britcham.eu

BRITCHAM'S DELEGATION TO DENMARK

UNDERSTANDING THE PRESIDENCY PRIORITIES



In early April, a BritCham delegation visited Copenhagen to engage with Danish Ministers and Ministries ahead of Denmark's upcoming European Union Council Presidency, due to start in July 2025. With global tensions rising and political shifts reshaping Europe, Denmark's message was clear: it aims to lead with pragmatic ambition, focusing on competitiveness, green transition, digital sovereignty, and transatlantic cooperation.

Troubled Waters: The Case for Realism

Minister for Industry, Business and Financial Affairs, Morten Bødskov, offered a candid outlook on the challenges ahead. He referenced global economic uncertainty and diverging transatlantic views - especially on trade and tech regulation.

Denmark views responsible digital regulation as essential, despite criticism from parts of the United States. Legislation such as the Digital Markets Act and Digital Services Act will remain pillars of Europe's digital ecosystem. The task, said Bødskov, is managing these policies without undermining longstanding alliances.

Green Economy as Competitive Strategy

A key theme across ministries was the alignment of climate action with industrial strategy. Denmark is prioritising clean

energy leadership - particularly in offshore wind and water - alongside regulatory simplification. The goal is not deregulation, but to streamline frameworks like the **Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)** to help sustainability become a driver of growth. Life sciences and bio-solutions are central to this agenda, with new genomic techniques and green proteins positioned as climate-resilient tools for agriculture.

The Green Transition: Turning Vision into Action

The newly created Ministry for Green Transition is at the heart of Denmark's climate strategy. The Ministry outlined a package targeting:

- Carbon taxation on livestock
- Peatland restoration and afforestation
- Nitrogen reduction in farming

Importantly, revenues from carbon taxes will be reinvested into the agriculture sector to maintain competitiveness. Officials also stressed the importance of innovation - precision farming, resilient crops, and circular bio-economy solutions.

Strengthening EU-UK Ties

Denmark remains one of the EU's most constructive voices on United Kingdom relations. A positive sentiment that was felt was Denmark's renewed welcoming of the UK's engagement, which was consistent throughout our meetings and engagements. There is appetite for deeper collaboration across:

- Energy and food security
- Sanitary Phytosanitary (SPS) cooperation
- Joint R&D and defence innovation



The upcoming Summit in May will be a test of this reset. Danish ministries hope it will result in tangible steps towards cooperation on competitiveness, clean industry, and resilience - especially in the North Sea and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) contexts.

Honest Broker, Responsible Regulator

Denmark's Presidency promises to act as an "honest broker" amid a challenging political climate. The Ministry of Environment highlighted upcoming priorities like PFAS, REACH regulation, water policy, and gender-inclusive approaches to the circular economy.

One theme stood out across ministries: simplification without sacrificing standards. Whether in chemicals, agriculture, or digital, Denmark aims to simplify complex frameworks, enabling compliance and competitiveness while preserving environmental and consumer protections.

Digital by Default: Building a Competitive Tech Ecosystem

Under its reworked Ministry of Digital Affairs, Denmark is placing digital competitiveness at the heart of its Presidency. Denmark will chair the Telecom Working Party, host a major conference on digital investment, and organise an informal telecom council focused on innovation and competitiveness.

Officials made it clear: the goal is no longer to expand digital rules but to ensure they support growth and sovereignty. A simplified "VDL 2.0" approach is underway - emphasising capacity-building and open markets rather than overregulation.

Energy Leadership:

On climate and energy, Denmark is setting the pace. With a target of 100% renewable energy by 2030, the Presidency will back:

- Cross-border hydrogen pipelines with Germany
- Expansion of offshore wind in the North Sea and Baltic
- Development of green shipping corridors and Power-to-X hubs
- Major CCS (Carbon Capture and Storage) investments

Denmark's geological potential for CCS is vast - up to 1,000 times its emissions - and the state is actively supporting export capabilities and bilateral agreements. Policy wise, Denmark will push forward

the Clean Industrial Deal, the Affordable Energy Plan, and simplified frameworks for electricity interconnection, aligned with the Draghi Report.

A Presidency of Partnership and Progress

With geopolitical tensions rising, Denmark's upcoming Presidency is positioned to be pragmatic, forward-looking, and quietly ambitious. From leading in renewables to reshaping Europe's digital future, its focus is on enabling action - not just crafting statements.

For EU and UK stakeholders alike, this is a window of opportunity to collaborate on shared challenges - especially in energy, tech, and climate. The Chamber looks forward to opportunities for engagement with the Presidency in the near future as we work towards our strategic policy goals of defence, greening the economy, economic security and data and AI.

By **Paul Wright**
Policy Officer



POLICY HOTSPOT

ENHANCING EUROPEAN PHARMA AND BIOTECH COMPETITIVENESS

“

Between 2018 and 2020, only 24% of new biotech enterprises were founded in Europe, compared to 65% in the US.



Biotechnology has been recognised by the European Commission as one of the ten key technological sectors essential for Europe's economic security due to its transformative capabilities, dual-use potential in both civilian and military applications, as well as for the possible risks associated with its misuse for human rights violations.

In 2022, the gross value added (GVA) of the biotech industry reached €38.1 billion—number which nearly doubled since 2008. It is also one of the most productive sectors in Europe, generating €160,000 in GVA per employee, with healthcare biotechnology leading at €177,600.

The sector contributes significantly to the EU's global trade surplus, amounting to €51.7 billion in 2022—seven times higher than in 2008. Despite these progresses, Europe's biotech sector is losing ground to China and the United States (US), which are advancing more rapidly in pharmaceutical and biotech innovation. Between 2018 and 2020, only 24% of new biotech enterprises were founded in Europe, compared to 65% in the US. This decline in competitiveness stems from several factors.

One major issue is the EU's **slower regulatory processes**, which hinder innovation. In 2022, the median approval time for new medicines in Europe was 430 days, compared to 334 days in the US.

Additionally, the **regulatory environment remains fragmented**, with responsibilities divided across multiple Directorate-Generals (DGs) in the European Commission and between EU and Member State regulators.

This often results in contradictory and **incoherent policy initiatives** or regulations that do not reflect the specific needs of the biotech sector. Greater harmonisation and coordination among Member States, policymakers, and industry stakeholders are essential.

Another critical challenge is the limited **access to both public and private capital**. According to the Draghi Report, public sector research and innovation spending on pharmaceuticals in the EU is less than half that of the US, while private research and innovation investment stands at only a quarter. To reverse this trend, healthcare should be seen not as a cost but as a strategic investment in Europe's future, particularly considering its ageing population.

Fragmented financial markets pose yet another obstacle. European biotech firms have access to only around 20% of the funding available to their American counterparts. This funding gap makes it difficult to retain biotech start-ups in Europe. Strengthening financial instruments such as the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Capital Markets Union is essential. A regulatory framework that facilitates pension fund investment and cross-border capital flows would also support long-term competitiveness.

The upcoming **Biotech Act**, expected in 2026 as part of the broader EU Life Sciences Strategy, offers a crucial opportunity to address these challenges. Current legislation in this sector is nearly 20 years old and should reflect recent and future shifts in the innovation landscape. The new framework should not only govern but also provide investment incentives, targeted support for SMEs, and clearer policy guidance. Enhanced collaboration with stakeholders—especially on funding mechanisms like the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)—as well as a long-term vision for implementation, will be key to revitalising Europe's biotech ecosystem.

By **Alessandro Bucchioni**
Committees Officer

OPINION PIECE

LESS ROCKET SCIENCE, MORE SHOE LEATHER



James Stevens
Managing Partner
Rud Pedersen Public Affairs Brussels

Brussels may seem complex, but more than twenty years of doing public affairs in Europe's capital for companies large and small has taught me that lobbying is not rocket science. With some thought and more than a little shoe leather, most organisations can have an impact. To help you on your way, here's ten things I have learnt over two decades to help your company shape the policies that affect it.

1. Build your case

While arguments may be won on emotion, facts are still a necessary precondition to sway the Brussels machine. Build a case that stands up to questioning whether it be on the science, the socio-economic impact or general merits of your case. Ideally have some authoritative third parties to substantiate it.

2. Frame it in the right way

You may speak the language of Mars, but policymakers are from Venus. So instead of the “what's in it for me” focus on the “what's in it for them”. Couch

your arguments in terms of the Four Ps of Public Affairs. Principles – does it align with the tenets they hold dear? Policy – does what you are suggesting help them achieve what they've set out to do? Politics – does it help them beat whomever they see to be the other side? People – does it help them deliver for the people they care about?

3. Get in at the right time

If you are advocating towards the end of the legislative process, where have you been? This is still a consensus-based system and things only change on the margins after a Commission proposal.

The direction of policy is flagged in Political Guidelines, work programmes, consultations galore, impact assessments and public debate. And it's all online. The golden rule of advocacy is to get in early. Pay attention.

4. Speak to the right people

There may be around 32,000 Commission officials and 720 Members of the European Parliament, but you are lucky if there's thirty people that matter on your issue in the three institutions. They are mostly identifiable if you know the legislative process well and can use a telephone and computer. Most of them will meet you if you pitch it in the right way.

5. Build a coalition of interests

If you have a marginal ask on a larger file you may hold sway with a few meetings. But in all likelihood one of the other 24,000 organisations lobbying in Brussels will also have a point of view. To win the argument you will need friends. The weight of your friends – in advocacy, socio-economic standing and alignment with perceived public opinion – will need to be greater than those in opposition to whatever you want policymakers to do. Don't forget to build some allies.



6. Give before taking

You don't need to have relationships, though it is helpful. You just need to know how to build and maintain them. Giving before taking is a good start. You have lots to give; insights from the real world; examples from real people that come from where the policymaker comes from; a platform for them to connect with the same people. The list goes on. If you are struggling, try reading Adam Grant's Give and Take. Essential reading for all lobbyists along with Robert Cialdini's Influence.

7. Don't forget the mood music

For a town divorced from public opinion Brussels puts store in what it is perceived to be. It is seen through the prism of media clippings, advertisement hoardings in Metro stations, stakeholder events and what important others say. Brussels

doesn't seriously poll anyone. Armed with your reframed case, don't forget to win the battle of perceived public opinion, the more aligned you are with it the more likely you are to win.

8. Bring solutions

If you convince people they are likely to ask what you want them to do. What question do you want them to ask? What amendment should they table? Be prepared to offer a suite of solutions that they can pick from. Leaving a meeting with a warm feeling is not success. Action is. It's not the case that policymakers will have the answer. They will look to you to help. Co-create. Everyone likes that.

9. Keep going

Only the relentless lobbyist shall pass. This isn't a few meetings meeting and it's done. A legislative process takes on

average about thirty months. And there's several years of preparation before the proposal that starts that process comes out from the Commission. If you want to be successful shoe leather is as important as anything else. Never, ever stop.

10. Be transparent

It is accepted that lobbyists act in their own interest. We don't do this for the love of the game after all. Trying to hide your interest will only lead to rejection. Get your organisation registered in the European Transparency Register – not a legal obligation but de facto the price of entry.

As I said, not exactly rocket science. Just a little thought, lots of shoe leather. Combine those two things and you'll see that while Brussels may seem complex, you can shift how it thinks and acts in your favour.



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POLICY HOTSPOT

REACH REVISION AND PFAS: SIMPLIFICATION MUST NOT MEAN LOWERING STANDARDS

As the European Commission prepares for the long-awaited REACH revision at the end of this year, the debate surrounding PFAS regulation is emerging as a key test case. The **Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability** created political momentum to tighten controls on harmful substances. However, with growing recognition of the critical role of chemicals in supporting European competitiveness and resilience and the upcoming Chemical Industry Package, the way forward is anything but simple. The **PFAS Restriction Proposal**, submitted in 2023 by Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, exemplifies both the ambition and complexity of the coming regulatory changes.

PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are under intense scrutiny due to their identified adverse effects on human health and the environment. There have been calls for a complete ban, but not all PFAS are the same (fluoropolymers for example have a very different hazard profile) and many play essential roles in sectors like semiconductors, healthcare, defence, and green technologies. Substitutes are not always viable, and in many cases, don't yet exist.

BritCham has published a position paper warning that the proposed PFAS restriction, in its current form, is disproportionate and risks disrupting supply chains tied to strategic sectors. While the Chamber supports stronger regulation of hazardous substances, it calls for a **more pragmatic, risk-based approach**, one that considers the availability of alternatives, lifecycle impacts, performance trade-offs, and



Europe's broader competitiveness and security goals.

This debate ties directly into the broader REACH revision. While much of the public focus has been on banning harmful substances, the Commission has repeatedly emphasised **regulatory simplification** as a key goal. However, the term remains to be largely vague.

Having said this, simplification can take many forms. It can either take the form of digitalisation of data requirements, a more agile restriction procedure, greater use of Risk Management Option Analysis (RMOA) obligations, grouping of chemicals and extension of generic assessment or more generally strengthening risk based requirements. Without a clear and shared understanding of what simplification should entail, there's a danger of fragmented implementation and unintended consequences.

BritCham believes this is a critical moment to shape the debate. We are organising a **roundtable discussion** on "What Does Simplification Mean in the Context of REACH?", bringing together voices from industry, policymaking, and civil society.

The aim is to identify common ground, surface concerns, and develop a **position paper** ahead of the Commission's formal proposal.

All in all, PFAS substitution will also need focused attention. We propose a **British Chambers of Commerce-facilitated dialogue with key sectors** on the challenges of finding and scaling alternatives to PFAS. This would explore both technical and commercial barriers, and we will consult members on their interest and potential sponsorship opportunities.

Finally, in light of post-Brexit regulatory divergence, BritCham is planning a **session on UK REACH**. Understanding how UK and EU rules are evolving in parallel, and where they diverge, is critical for firms navigating compliance in both jurisdictions.

The REACH revision is not just a policy update, it's a strategic crossroads. PFAS regulation, simplification, and divergence all point to the need for clear, science-based, and economically viable solutions. BritCham is committed to ensuring that industry has a credible, informed voice in that process.

By **Tom Parker**
Co-Chair, Chemicals Committee

GENDER EQUALITY

AN AGENDA FOR ALL

Ahead of this year's International Women's Day, the European Commission unveiled its New Roadmap for Women's Rights alongside the 2025 Gender Equality Report.

At the heart of both documents is a clear message: gender equality is not just a social goal—it is a strategic necessity for a more competitive and resilient Europe. The Roadmap outlines the transformative economic potential of inclusion, estimating that achieving full gender equality could raise EU GDP per capita by 6.1% to 9.6% by 2050—equating to €1.95 to €3.15 trillion in gains. Nonetheless, it makes clear that without reinforced action, it could take another 60 years to close the gender gap in the EU—an urgent call for systemic action across all sectors.

Our International Women's Day event in March brought together professionals for a lunch with keynote speaker Ana Carla Pereira, Director for Equality and Non-Discrimination at DG JUST at the European Commission. Ms. Pereira highlighted the intersection of gender equality with today's complex geopolitical landscape, stressing that equality is not just a moral imperative, but a strategy for building a more competitive Europe. Her remarks touched on persistent challenges—violence against women, a lack of research in women's health issues, and overall underrepresentation in public and political life—while making a powerful economic case: women are not a minority



group, they are half of the population, and their full participation is critical to Europe's success.

The conversation with attendees further explored how to push back against global retrenchment on gender rights, how to better articulate the value of equity, and what concrete steps businesses, institutions, and individuals must take next.

Earlier this year, we also held a discussion on the power of career sponsorship—a tool often overlooked in diversity strategies. Unlike mentorship, sponsorship involves senior leaders actively using their influence to advocate for individuals from underrepresented groups, opening doors to opportunities, networks, and visibility. It is one of the most effective mechanisms to fast-track women's advancement into leadership and, by extension, create more inclusive corporate cultures.

These discussions, across our IWD event and beyond, highlighted a common theme: inclusion must be built through inclusion, with a spot for both men

and women at the table. When diverse perspectives are represented at every level of decision-making, organisations benefit from better governance, more innovation, and stronger financial performance. However, to sustain, scale and better highlight these benefits, we need to keep measuring what matters. That means not only collecting data on representation and outcomes but also rethinking the metrics we use to define progress. Data has the power to drive accountability, shape policy, and most importantly, show that inclusion is not just the right thing to do—it is the smart thing for businesses and societies alike.

Europe has made meaningful strides, but now, as this year's International Women's Day theme highlighted, is the time to Accelerate Action. With continued pressure from policymakers, support from business, and data to back it all up, we can continue to move from conversation to transformation. Make sure to read the full report detailing our IWD event and the key insights from the discussions.

By **Maia Larose Saldana**
Events & Comms Officer

THE EU-UK ANTI-TRUST AND MERGER CONTROL UNDERSTANDING DIVERGENCE AND MEANS FOR COLLABORATION

2025 promises to be an interesting year for the Competition Committee at BritCham EU with a spate of recent developments in antitrust legislation in both the European Union and the United Kingdom.

The new European Commissioner for Competition, Executive Vice President for Clean, Just and Competitive Transition, Teresa Ribera, was tasked by President Ursula von der Leyen to support a *new approach to competition policy* to “ensure [it] keeps pace with evolving global markets”.^[1]

Moreover, on the 4th of March, Ribera announced a plan to revise both the horizontal and non-horizontal merger guidelines, which were first adopted in 2004 and 2008 respectively. The announcement follows Mario Draghi’s Report calling for the Commission to be “more forward-looking and agile” in its review of mergers which considers innovation and future competition, enhancing overall competitiveness in the EU.^[2]

Ribera had already signalled a review of the Horizontal Merger Guidelines (HMG) noting in her written response to Parliament that it should have among its core drivers “innovation, investment, and resilience”. Furthermore, it should aim “to ensure that merger control gives the right weight to the EU economy’s needs and reflects overall policy objectives and market realities, including possible efficiencies”. This is in line with the recommendations in the Draghi Report, which identifies innovation and defence as “key elements

of a new approach to competition policy supporting a new industrial deal” with a view to allowing companies to scale up.^[3]

The Commission has signalled that it intends to initiate a **Call for evidence** from stakeholders in the upcoming months to start the process. Additionally, it is also aiming for expert economic support with the final guidelines to be finalised in 2027.

Beyond merger control, the European Commission is also reviewing Article 102 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which addresses exclusionary abuses of dominance. In August 2024, the Commission published draft guidelines for consultation. These aimed to reflect recent case law and enforcement practice, improve predictability and transparency, support companies in their self-assessments, and guide national authorities and courts.

The Commission’s enforcement priorities for exclusionary abuses, introduced in 2009, had introduced an effects-based economic approach. However, the new draft guidelines would move away from that approach towards a more formalistic framework that has been the subject of much debate and a fair degree of criticism.

In February 2025, BritCham joined with several industry and trade associations to deliver a statement to the Commission

setting out specific concerns and several constructive suggestions to improve the draft guidelines. The joint statement encouraged the Commission to:

- Maintain a robust, effects-based economic approach as the guiding principle
- Clarify key concepts by tying competition on the merits to anti-competitive foreclosure and consumer harm reflecting case law and economic analysis
- Reaffirm the as-effective competitor test being a central tool for assessing competitive effects
- Ensure a clear evidentiary framework for assessing exclusionary conduct
- Eliminate the overly broad discretion for the Commission to dismiss efficiencies arguments

These recommendations were shared by several other stakeholders who delivered similar feedback to the Commission. Whether or not the Commission takes these suggestions into account will become clear in the final guidelines, which are expected to be published by the end of 2025.

¹ Mission Letter from President of the European Commission to Executive Vice-President-designate for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition, 17 September 2024.

² Draghi Report, Part B, para. 299.

³ Draghi Report, Part B, para. 299.



An additional review is underway of the Commission’s regulation and guidelines, exempting restrictions of competition in technology transfer agreements and the prohibition of agreements that restrict competition under Article 101(1) TFEU.

Technology transfer agreements mean that one party authorises another to use certain industrial property rights (e.g., patents, design rights, software copyrights and know-how) to produce goods or services. Regulation No 19/65/EEC empowers the Commission to exempt certain categories of technology transfer agreements from the ban in Article 101(3) TFEU if they don’t restrict competition or if they create objective efficiencies that are passed on to consumers. This regulation expires on 30 April 2026.

As such, the European Commission is gathering evidence on the functioning of the Technology Transfer Block Exemption Regulation (TTBER) and the accompanying guidance regarding the assessment of technology transfer agreements. The Commission completed the first evaluation phase of its review in 2024. The evidence gathered indicated that the TTBER and the guidelines have met their objectives. Therefore, there continues to be a need for a block exemption regulation and guidance for applying Article 101 TTBER. Stakeholders

acknowledged that the rules could provide greater legal certainty in some areas, such as the application of the TTBER’s market share thresholds for technology markets.

The Commission launched the second and final phase of its review at the start of 2025, publishing a call for evidence and public consultation questionnaire on 31 January 2025.

Stakeholders can submit their feedback until 25 April 2025. After that, the European Commission will prepare draft revisions of the regulation and guidelines. The final rules will be adopted in April 2026, and the new TTBER will take effect on 1 May 2026.

Looking beyond the EU, 2025 looks set to lay the foundations for greater cooperation between the European Commission and the UK’s Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

The EU and the UK formally concluded technical negotiations on an EU-UK Competition Cooperation Agreement in October 2024, which is expected to enter into force this year. The agreement will allow the CMA to coordinate directly with the European Commission and national authorities in EU Member States. The overlooking goal is to ensure that important antitrust and merger investigations

are brought to each other’s attention. The agreement also aims to allow the coordination of investigations between the jurisdictions, when necessary, with clear principles established to avoid conflicts between them. Whilst the effects of the agreement in practice are yet to be seen, parties ought to anticipate a more consistent approach to investigations between the CMA and the Commission. With this comes the hope that transacting parties may face a reduced risk of divergence in decisions that have been seen in recent years in cases such as Microsoft & Activision Blizzard and Cargotec & Konecranes.

The Competition Committee will be keeping a close eye on how these developments play out in the coming months. To kick-start our 2025 series of events, we will be hosting a panel discussion ahead of the Summit dedicated to Developments in EU-UK antitrust and merger control cooperation. The event will bring together representatives from the CMA and Commission for an insightful panel discussion and moderated Q&A session focusing on the convergence and divergence between the EU and the UK in competition enforcement and merger control.

By **Keshara Hallock** and **Will Leslie**
Co-Chairs, Competition Committee



PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS FROM READINESS TO RESPONSE

Following the recent launch of the Preparedness Union Strategy, the European Commission adopted the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (HERA's) 2025 work plan on the 9th of April, outlining concrete steps to strengthen the European Union's readiness for future health emergencies. Priorities include joint procurement, strategic stockpiling, and supply chain resilience. HERA's allocated budget for 2025 stands at EUR 576 million, marking a significant reduction from the EUR 1.28 billion allocated in 2022.

Pandemics can affect countries on a vast scale and collaboration is essential for effective pandemic preparedness and response. This we all witnessed during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

CSL Seqirus has more than a century of experience in the development and industrial manufacture of innovative vaccine technologies. We supply approximately 100 million doses of seasonal influenza vaccines around the world each year and are contracted to provide influenza pandemic and outbreak preparedness and response to more than 30 government partners. We believe that influenza pandemic preparedness is as important now as it has ever been. Investing in global, regional and local surveillance mechanisms and maintaining rapid and unhindered access to pathogen biological materials and genetic sequences is critical in the response to emerging threats. This enables timely curation and development work with influenza strains of pandemic potential to assess their characteristics for vaccine

manufacture. Access to established and proven vaccine technologies such as registered pandemic and pre-pandemic (zoonotic) vaccines, coupled with ongoing manufacture and supply of seasonal influenza vaccines, provides ongoing readiness and a 'warm base'.

Pandemic preparedness is essential

Pandemic preparedness is a strategic and cost-saving investment in national resilience. The financial burden of preparing is a fraction of the health, economic and social costs caused by a pandemic. By acting on an ongoing basis, we strengthen our ability to protect lives, maintain stability, and safeguard the economy in future crises.

In particular, measures to mitigate the impact of a future influenza pandemic provide good examples. HERA has led joint procurement on behalf of the Member States to reserve pandemic vaccine capacity, ready to be activated in the event of an influenza pandemic. Furthermore, in response to the current avian influenza panzootic, which has impacted wild birds, poultry flocks and caused mammalian spill-over including human cases, HERA broadened the Member States' outbreak preparedness with a joint procurement contract awarded in 2024 for the supply of zoonotic (pre-pandemic) influenza vaccine to Member States.

The 'one health' approach, strongly advocated by the scientific community, considers both animal and human health matters and their interplay. Alongside investment in global surveillance, it has helped to increase our understanding of pandemics and risk. The current avian influenza panzootic shows how vital surveillance is in identifying and quantifying public health risks. It reminds

us of the risk presented by novel pathogens and the need to be prepared. Appropriate investments in preparedness are key and it is important that the public and private sector work in partnership to pave the way for robust, well financed and comprehensive pandemic and outbreak preparedness.

In an unpredictable world Europe should play a leading role in building our understanding of pandemic risks and limiting their impact - and by doing so bolstering the strategic autonomy and competitiveness of the Union.

Contributed by new BritCham member:

CSL Seqirus

Ray Longstaff

Director, Pandemic and Outbreak Commercial Strategy and Planning

Niels-Ulrik Amdal

Director, Public and Government Affairs Northern Europe & EU Pandemic Policy

Collaboration between public health agencies, regulators and industry is important to maintain the required R&D investments, regulatory activities and manufacturing scale to provide vaccines and help protect populations when needed. The most robust defence against e.g. an influenza pandemic is fostered in public-private partnerships where the technical capability, knowhow, and manufacturing capacities of companies are combined with the political will and adequate funding by the EU and Member States. Additionally, seasonal influenza vaccination programmes with high uptake rates not only help protect public health, but also help maintain manufacturing capacity and the ability to surge when needed.

As another pandemic is inevitable, the only question is what pathogen will cause it? HERA continues to work diligently putting in place countermeasures, including access to a diversified portfolio of manufacturing capacity within the region and procurement of vaccines to counter disease and risks such as COVID19, Mpox and avian influenza.



IMPROVING TRADE BETWEEN THE EU AND THE UK IN AGRIFOOD PRODUCTS

The EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) places the EU and the UK as independent (third party) trading partners to each other, with tariff and quota free access to each other's markets. However, despite the TCA going further than any other EU trade agreement, the movement of goods between the EU and the UK is subject to significant non-tariff barriers associated with customs facilitations and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) checks to ensure food safety, and animal/plant health. These checks carried out prior to trade or at the border can result in delays to consignments, additional bureaucracy, and barriers to just in time supply chains. Collectively, this trade friction is resulting in increased costs for traders and consumers, and barriers to trade which has a negative impact on potential UK and EU export growth.

The EU and the UK are each other's single largest trading partner for agrifood products with around 68% (by value) of UK agrifood exports destined for the EU, and around 70% of UK agrifood imports coming from the EU. However, since 2019, the value of UK agrifood exports to the EU has stagnated at around £15.8bn. Considering the significant food price inflation during this period, in volume terms there has been significant double-digit declines across almost all agrifood categories (see table).

For example, the volume of meat and meat preparation exports has fallen by more than a third to the EU, and dairy exports by more than 20%. While it is not possible to assign all this impact to changes brought about by the TCA, given the Covid-19 pandemic, the invasion of Ukraine and broader geopolitical trade disruptions, the period suggests that new

UK Agri-food Exports (volume)	Total Exports	EU Exports
	% change 2019-2023	% change 2019-2023
Food & live animals	-24.38%	-23.72%
00 Live animals other than animals of division	-10.52%	-9.57%
01 Meat & meat preparations	-32.47%	-34.69%
02 Dairy products & birds' eggs	-19.54%	-21.03%
03 Fish,crustaceans,molluscs & aq.inverts & preps thereof	-25.97%	-29.79%
04 Cereals & cereal preparations	-23.36%	-17.98%
05 Vegetables & fruit	-32.21%	-35.26%
06 Sugar, sugar preparations & honey	-52.49%	-51.38%
07 Coffee, tea, cocoa, spices & manufactures thereof	-22.11%	-24.23%
08 Feeding stuff for animals (not inc. unmilled cereals)	-17.45%	-23.77%
09 Miscellaneous edible products & preparations	-10.33%	-8.63%
Grand Total	-24.38%	-23.72%

trade frictions under the TCA are a key driver of these declines.

The Labour Party manifesto for the 2024 UK general election included a pledge to “*negotiate a veterinary agreement to prevent unnecessary border checks and help tackle the cost of food*”. Even under current provisions of the TCA, trade in goods could be considerably smoother and less costly (access to EU markets for UK seed potatoes is something of a cause celebre), so the government’s commitment is pushing in the right direction.

It would be to the benefit of both the EU and the UK to negotiate improved conditions for trade across the agrifood sector implying a broader SPS agreement covering plant health as well as food and veterinary issues. Better trading conditions will help micro and SME companies

who have most difficulty navigating the complex and costly procedures that currently exist, and who given the right conditions can be the engine room of growth and productivity.

Work is now taking place to prepare on the ground for the first EU-UK Summit on the 19th of May 2025, held in the UK. Whilst the main focus is likely to be on defence and security, the European agrifood sectors are united in their request to the EU and the UK to commit to launching a process to reduce the administrative and financial burden of agrifood trade. In this process, it’s important that the review recognises the high animal and plant health status that exists in the EU and the UK, whilst having at its core the ambition to reduce costs for operators and consumers and underpin European food security.

By **Robin Manning**
Co-Chair, Trade Policy Committee

BRITCHAM 2025 EVENTS

BritCham organises a variety of events throughout the year to help members engage on key issues. These events are driven by our Committees, which cover different sectors and policy areas, ensuring a diverse and relevant range of activities.

Jan 20
Meeting with Paul Speight

- Paul Speight, the Head of Unit for Safe & Sustainable Chemicals at DG Environment

Jan 27
The Power of Career Sponsorship: Rethinking how to Harness Diverse Talent and Drive Better Business

- Helen Tubb, Leadership & Diversity Advisor, INSEAD Researcher
- Jeremy Stockdale, CEO, Ylead

Feb 5-6
Visit to Westminster

- Meeting members of the UK Parliament to discuss upcoming UK policies

Mar 11
New Belgian Government - Legal & social implications Webinar

- Nele Gysemans, Attorney - Senior associate, Claey's & Engels
- Sylvie Dumortier, Tax Partner, Claey's & Engels

Mar 18
Integrating Healthcare into the EU Competitiveness Compass

- A panel discussion on how healthcare can be prioritised in the new Competitiveness Compass's initiatives

Mar 20
Business Priorities Ahead of the Belgo-British Conference

- A roundtable discussion on Belgian business priorities ahead of the Belgo-British Conference, exploring the evolving dynamics of Belgo-British relations and trade

Mar 25
Hearing from Industry: CSRD Reporting and Implementation

- Panel discussion to explore the practical aspects of Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive implementation

Mar 26
Lunch with Anna Carla Pereira European Commission

- A lunch shaping the debate on how to accelerate action for gender equality in Brussels

Mar 27
Beyond Borders: Navigating Cross-Border Teleworking

- Interactive Panel discussion to share best practices on how businesses operate and support staff working across borders

Mar 31 - Apr 2
Visit to Copenhagen

- Meeting policymakers involved in planning the 2025 Danish Presidency

COMING UP

May 12
Belgium as a Gateway to Europe - Port of Antwerp-Bruges and ECS, Visit to Zeebrugge

- Discussion on the Belgium-UK Trade relationship followed by an event with POAB and ECS on Belgium as a Gateway to Europe

May 13
Europe’s Response to Emerging Diseases

The H5N1 Threat, a Case Study

May 14
Nina Carberry MEP

Discussion on the EU-UK Trade Relationship

Q3
Cypriot Presidency: Delegation to Nicosia

- Visit to Cyprus to meet the government officials involved in planning the 2026 Cypriot Presidency of the EU

Q4
Visit to Strasbourg

Visit to strengthen relations with the European Parliament and gain insight on ongoing files



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