



Third EU-wide Foresight Network of Ministers for the Future

Joint Note by the Council Presidency and the Commission

The **third meeting of the EU-wide Foresight Network of 27 Ministers for the Future** will take place on 21 February 2023, chaired by **Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič** and organised in close cooperation with the **Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union**, represented by **Minister for EU Affairs Jessika Roswall**.

The discussion will focus on the upcoming **2023 Strategic Foresight Report on ‘sustainability at the heart of the EU’s open strategic autonomy’**, to be adopted by the Commission on 28 June 2023. The aim of the ministerial debate is to help answer the crucial question of **what strategic decisions need to be made to ensure a socially and economically sustainable Europe with a stronger role in the world in the coming decades**.

This question is connected with the ongoing discussions and decision-making, in the EU institutions and Member States alike, on **necessary short- and long-term measures to boost EU competitiveness and productivity**. The close link to this highly topical debate, which is a priority for the Swedish Presidency and aims to **secure the growth necessary for Europe to meet future challenges**, will make the discussion of the EU-wide Foresight Network even more relevant in steering today’s policies – which is the core of a truly *strategic* foresight.

As will be developed in the 2023 Strategic Foresight Report, the European Union is engaged in a profound transition towards sustainability, preserving the wellbeing, security and prosperity of its citizens. Achieving **sustainability could represent a major source of competitive advantage for Europe**, by spurring innovation, attracting investments, creating new job opportunities, and fostering inclusive growth and intergenerational fairness. This is crucial to underpin Europe’s **open strategic autonomy** going forward.

At the same time, the endeavour towards sustainability can be costly and pose long-term challenges that require a future-oriented approach. Looking towards 2050, the future of the EU is tied to navigating a world of permacrisis and polycrisis, including a ‘new geopolitics’ of deep changes in the international order and in prevailing instruments of power. In this context, the EU must reflect on how to ensure a **position of global leadership in the social and economic dimension**, also by securing its own sustainability. As the EU has committed to climate neutrality by 2050, the challenge ahead is to develop policy tools that pay more attention to the *interactions* between the economic, social, and environmental systems, including measuring sustainable and inclusive wellbeing beyond GDP.

The 2023 Strategic Foresight Report shall propose **areas of action**, as in the past editions, inspired by the strategic foresight process and guiding the decisions to take to ensure a socially and economically sustainable Europe. It will also build on the results of the three annual Strategic Foresight Reports already adopted under this Commission, respectively on resilience, open strategic autonomy, and twinning the green and digital transitions.