

# Poland assumes the Presidency of the Council of the European Union



July 1, 2011, marked the beginning of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. During the second half of the year Poland will have the duty of efficiently leading the passage of legal acts with ministers of the 27 members of the EU. The Polish Presidency will concentrate on three fundamental priorities: integration, security and openness.

## European integration as a source of growth

The Polish Presidency will foster economic growth through the further development of the EU's internal market, use EU budget funds to design and develop a competitive Europe, and pursue free trade agreements. Poland plans to introduce legislation on e-commerce, intellectual capital, the European patent system, reducing roaming fees and increasing access to capital for small and medium-sized enterprises. The Presidency will oversee the launch of negotiations on the multiannual EU budget linked to the Europe 2020 strategy. Investments in infrastructure and human capital will be prioritized and the role of cohesion policy and the Common Agricultural Policy will be discussed. Poland hopes to oversee the completion of free trade negotiations with Canada, Ukraine, India, Singapore and Malaysia, commencement of negotiations with Moldova and Georgia and progress in Doha Development Round negotiations.

## European security

The Polish Presidency believes that European security can be improved by expanding the EU and pursuing a new European Neighbourhood Policy. Accession negotiations with Turkey will continue. The Presidency supports

progress in negotiations with Iceland and the European aspirations of the Western Balkans. An Eastern Partnership summit in Warsaw should deepen multifaceted cooperation between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The Presidency supports the democracy movements in North Africa and a new strategy for EU relations with the Arab world.

## Europe benefiting from openness

Energy security, the Common Foreign and Security Policy and food security are areas of primary interest during the Polish Presidency. The EU's external energy policy will be analyzed and reconsidered while recommendations will be developed to strengthen common EU energy policy. Developing the Common Foreign and Security Policy should strengthen the EU's capabilities to plan and implement crisis management operations, strengthen EU operational capabilities and increase EU-NATO cooperation. The future of the Common Agricultural Policy will be discussed. The effective use of EU funds and the maintenance of market orientation for commodities remain priorities.



Chopin Statue, considered the world's best Chopin monument, stands in Warsaw.

## About Polska

Since its accession to the EU in 2004, Poland has been considered a dynamic and ambitious country that is advancing European policy. The country is experiencing the biggest economic boom in its history. Poland is today widely perceived as a leader in the region and an excellent place to invest and develop business, particularly in the area of manufacturing and services. Based on its experience, Poland is prepared to lead during difficult

economic times. Committed to further European integration, Poland has a vision of a Europe united in solidarity to address problems affecting the continent.



Palace on the Water in Łazienki Park, Warsaw.

Political, economic, military and cultural relations between Poland and Canada are exceptional. Political exchanges since Poland regained its independence in 1919 often involve broad, high-level contacts. Both countries are interested in increasing bilateral trade and investment and support the completion of negotiations on the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the EU. Poland and Canada, which believe that effective military cooperation is a crucial part of their relationship, agree that the traditional role of NATO remains significant and the Alliance is fundamental to their security policies. Academic relations programs between the two countries are growing, resulting in considerable cultural exchange among students and young professionals.

Thirteen million foreigners visit Poland every year to experience the country's renowned hospitality, culture and cuisine. The cities of Warsaw, Cracow, Poznan, Wroclaw and Gdansk are bustling cultural and commercial centres that have something for everyone. Poland's historic landmarks, beautiful parks, expansive museums and distinctive nightlife are unforgettable. As soccer is a national pastime, Poland is co-hosting the UEFA Euro 2012 with Ukraine. The tournament, which will see 16 European nations compete between June 8 and July 1, would be the perfect time to visit Poland and take in everything that the country has to offer.

Contact the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ottawa at: [ottawa.press@msz.gov.pl](mailto:ottawa.press@msz.gov.pl) or visit: [ottawa.polemb.net](http://ottawa.polemb.net)



# The European Union in Canada



When Poland and nine other countries joined the European Union in 2004, European integration was already well underway.

The groundwork was laid some 60 years ago by former French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman whose declaration on 9 May 1950, now Europe Day, led to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The main idea behind it was to control production of the strategic materials that could be used for military equipment and thus prevent any future conflict in Europe. Afterwards, the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and later the European Economic Community (EEC) were created, which established free movement of goods, services, people and capital among the six founding Member States: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

Today, the EU family counts 27 nations with Croatia poised to become the 28th Member State. These democratic countries have opted to pool their resources, building a political and an economic union whose partnership goes far beyond the scope of a multinational trade bloc. EU citizens enjoy the benefits of a single market (with a common currency - the Euro - for 17 of its Member States), which facilitates trade, improved workers' rights and free movement of people (travellers in Europe benefit from a borderless, passport-free Schengen zone throughout 25 countries – three of which are non-EU Member States).

Over the years, the EU has become an important player in international affairs. Most recently, with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009, the EU is even better equipped to reinforce and support our fundamental values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law, within its borders as well as in multinational fora. The newest EU institution,



Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and First Vice-President of the European Commission

the EEAS (European External Action Service) under the leadership of Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and First Vice-President of the European Commission, has been created to strengthen the Union's role in the international arena.

## EU-Canada relations

While trade and economic relations are at the heart of our transatlantic dialogue, both partners cooperate on a number of strategic issues ranging from environment and climate change, energy security and regional stability to higher education and academic exchanges.



EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht and EU Ambassador Matthias Brinkmann

In recent years, EU-Canada relations have intensified significantly with regular EU-Canada summits and other frequent high-level contacts.

In particular, negotiations for an ambitious Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), which were launched in October 2009 and are set to be concluded in 2012, provide for a unique opportunity for both economies to reinforce their cooperation even further.

## The EU's face in Canada

The EU maintains strategic partnerships with key international players and is deeply engaged with emerging powers around the globe. The EU has diplomatic relations with nearly all countries in the world and is represented abroad by a network of 136 EU Delegations, including the Delegation in Ottawa, which have similar functions to those of an embassy.

In 1976, the EU opened its Delegation in Ottawa - a fully-fledged diplomatic mission, whose Head of Delegation is now formally accredited as the official representative of the European Union to the Government of Canada with the rank of Ambassador.

The Delegation promotes the EU's positions in the areas of political, trade and economic affairs. It is also very active in public affairs and provides information to the Canadian public on EU policy.

Since the Lisbon Treaty came into force, the Delegation, in close collaboration with Member State diplomatic missions, also assumes the role and functions of the EU Presidency concerning local coordination, representation and consular protection of EU citizens abroad.

For more on the EU's mission in Canada visit [eeas.europa.eu/delegations/canada](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/canada) or contact our Press Officer at [Diodora.BUCUR@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:Diodora.BUCUR@eeas.europa.eu)

