

# European Union

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## Latvia's priorities in European Union matters

Currently, the EU's priority directions are determined by the [EU Strategic Agenda for 2019-2024](#) adopted by the Member States.

The agenda focuses on four main priorities:

### Strengthening security

Russia's groundless, unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine has radically changed the security environment in the region and wider Europe. In order to thwart Russia's ability to sustain aggression, the EU has adopted several rounds of sanctions against Russia affecting the financial, energy, trade, transport, media, and other sectors, as well as sanctioning a number of Russian natural persons and entities. With Russia's military aggression against Ukraine ongoing, the EU will continue working to adopt new restrictive measures against Russia.

Soon after Russia unleashed its aggression against Ukraine, the EU began actively using a recently established off-budget funding mechanism aimed at enhancing the EU's ability to prevent conflicts, build peace and strengthen international security – the European Peace Facility. Under the mechanism, military assistance measures have been provided reimbursing EU Member States for their in-kind military support to Ukraine. The EU thereby supports the capabilities of Ukraine's armed forces and promotes the country's resilience in defending its territorial integrity and sovereignty and protecting civilians against Russian military aggression.

### Strengthening energy independence

Strengthening of energy independence assumes an increasingly important strategic role both on the national scale and at EU level. The need for energy independence has been especially heightened by Russia's military aggression against Ukraine and the emerging uncertainty as to energy supplies. The strengthening of energy independence will enable an increased security of energy supplies.

The main lines of action to promote energy independence are an increase in the use of renewable energy resources, promotion of energy efficiency, and building new interconnections. It is important for energy independence to be promoted together with other Baltic States, including through various cross-border cooperation projects.

### Climate change policy

The mitigation of climate change and its consequences will remain among top priorities in the EU's long-term policy. In order to address the negative consequences caused by climate change, more ambitious climate policy goals will have to be set, which include seeking solutions to the reduction of harmful emissions and greenhouse gasses in all the sectors of economy.

It is crucial to exploit the opportunities offered by climate-friendly policies for economic growth and increasing the quality of life among society, as well as for the creation of new technological solutions that would speed up transition to climate neutrality by 2050. In addition, climate change should be viewed in close connection with environmental policy issues, including the preservation of biological diversity.

### COVID-19 coordination and recovery of EU economy

EU Member States are working closely together to limit the spread of COVID-19. Further coordination and exchange of

information between Member States on measures restricting travel must continue, while maintaining the functioning of the Single Market and the integrity of Schengen during the pandemic. Member States also cooperate in combatting COVID-19 vaccine-related misinformation.

2021 saw the putting in place of the EU Digital COVID Certificate to facilitate safe travel. Agreements were also achieved on proposals from the European Health Union to enhance EU agencies' contribution to addressing health crises and strengthen the EU's preparedness and response mechanisms for health emergencies.

Member States are already receiving first investments from EU funds under the Economic Recovery Package adopted in 2020, which includes two components: the EU's multi-annual budget for 2021–2027, and the Economic Recovery Instrument. A further flow of investment from EU funds depends on how Member States meet their previously approved targets.

## The EU – a stronger global player

In security and defence cooperation, work is to continue on the implementation of the EU Strategic Compass to reinforce the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and build capabilities to pursue that policy. In the context of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, particular attention is paid to the strengthening of the EU's resilience and its defence industry. It is also essential to facilitate military mobility within the EU, implement PESCO, and fight hybrid threats (including disinformation) and cyber-attacks, including in cooperation with NATO.

The multilateral and rules-based international order needs to be further strengthened along with the EU Enlargement Policy through the EU integration process based on individual approaches and the fulfilment of criteria.

Coordination of the European Union Affairs in Latvia

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