

Foreword

Thirteen years after its last EU Presidency in 2011, Hungary will once again face an important but challenging period as it takes over the six-month rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union in July 2024.

The work of the Hungarian EU Presidency will be greatly influenced by the challenges of the past decade and a half, and in particular by the pandemic, the Russian–Ukrainian war, the financial and energy crises, as well as their impact on current EU policy, European integration and the individual Member States. Another equally important challenge will be the transformation taking place in the EU’s institutional cycle following the 2024 European elections that will also be held during the Hungarian EU Presidency. On the one hand, this will restrict the Hungarian EU Presidency’s leeway in facilitating EU legislation; yet on the other hand, it will provide Hungary with a unique opportunity to carry out not only policy tasks, but also policy coordination responsibilities at the highest level. Taking this into account, one may conclude that while holding the rotating presidency always involves important responsibilities, Hungary will face particularly demanding challenges under the current circumstances.

As the leading Hungarian higher education institution for post-graduate education in the civil service, Ludovika University of Public Service will contribute to the realisation of the government’s objectives through its education and research capacities in an effort to ensure the success of the Hungarian EU Presidency in the second half of 2024. The role of the institution is defined in the strategic cooperation framework between the Ludovika University of Public Service and the Government of Hungary, including the Ministry for European Union Affairs. That strategy includes the training of officials who will be involved in implementing the Presidency, providing staff for domestic events taking place during the Presidency, conducting research relevant to the Hungarian EU Presidency, and organising academic conferences and events. The Europe Strategy Research Institute also has a notable role in this work. Since the summer of 2022, it has published several scholarly works in both English and Hungarian, arranged professional and academic conferences and issued policy analyses on a daily basis. In September 2023, as part of its work, the Institute published a volume of studies entitled *Úton a magyar uniós elnökség felé*, and an English translation: *On the Way to the Hungarian EU Presidency*, at the Ludovika University Press. The volume was presented in Budapest and Brussels, and plays an important role in the preparation for the Hungarian EU Presidency.

The Institute is now issuing a new and more detailed collection of studies: *The 2024 Hungarian EU Presidency*, which will be available both in English and Hungarian. The volume is divided into two main sections: in the first, politicians, policy-makers, diplomats, professors and researchers involved in the Hungarian EU Presidencies of 2011 and 2024 describe the political and policy challenges that the Hungarian Presidency faces, the political and institutional context and the operational tasks of the preparation of the

Presidency. The second part of the volume focuses on the most important policies and policy issues from a Hungarian perspective, with contributions from renowned Hungarian researchers and experts in the field.

The aim of the volume is to provide readers with a comprehensive overview of the Hungarian Presidency and give insights into its most relevant political and policy issues. The essays outline the current context of the issues discussed, reflecting on how they may affect the Hungarian EU Presidency and, where appropriate, the authors make concrete recommendations on the issues and the implementation of different policies. This volume is a valuable contribution, responding to the key challenges of the future in a clear, accessible style, following a logical structure and providing new perspectives on the issues discussed.

Readers of this volume, whether they are politicians, experts, or members of the public curious to understand the key policy issues, political and implementation contexts of the 2024 Hungarian EU Presidency are definitely holding the best possible resource in their hands.

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