

To: Public Affairs & Communications Committee, SIU PG  
From: Simplification Team  
cc:  
Date: 12-03-2026  
Reference: PAC-26-072

Subject: EU Simplification Agenda: European Council Priorities and Policy Reflections by Petra Hielkema

## Summary

Members are invited to note recent developments in the area of simplification in the run-up to the European Council of 19–20 March.

Should members have any questions please write to [simplification@insuranceeurope.eu](mailto:simplification@insuranceeurope.eu)

### ***Council conclusions ahead of the March European Council***

According to **leaked draft European Council conclusions reported by POLITICO** ([here](#)) **ahead of the 19–20 March European Council**, EU leaders are expected to emphasise simplification and burden reduction.

The document outlines key areas of focus including Ukraine, competitiveness and Single Market, European defence and security, and energy. With regard to simplification, under the Competitiveness and Single Market, the draft conclusions emphasise the need to reduce administrative burdens at EU, national and regional levels. **Co-legislators should agree on all pending omnibus packages by the end of 2026**, while **the European Commission (EC) is invited to launch additional simplification initiatives**, including further omnibus proposals and an in-depth regulatory review to eliminate outdated EU law provisions. The EC is also encouraged to guarantee that future EU legislation is in line with the **“simplicity-by-design” and better regulation principles**, including **prioritising regulations over directives**.

Other suggested measures on relevant areas, include:

- The introduction of **‘One Europe, One Market’ agenda**, to be implemented by the end of 2027.
- The conclusion of negotiations on **securitisation, supplementary pensions** and the **market integration and supervision package** by the end of 2026, guaranteeing a true **Savings and Investment Union (SIU)** with a fully integrated capital market.
- The launch of a **28th regime**, to be agreed by co-legislators by the end of 2026.
- Improving conditions needed for businesses to scale and compete globally, particularly regarding financial services, defence, energy, space, and telecommunications.

### ***Op-ed by Petra Hielkema published in InsuranceERM***

In a recent [op-ed](#), published in Insurance ERM, Petra Hielkema reflects on the challenges of achieving regulatory simplification in the EU, highlighting structural trade-offs in four main areas:

- **Regulatory speed vs thorough analysis**. While the EU’s legislative process is frequently criticized for its slowness, faster procedures could result in shorter consultation periods and a greater risk of missing important details.

- **Principle-based vs prescriptive regulation.** A principle-based approach may lead to greater regulatory and supervisory fragmentation, requiring stronger EU-level supervisory tools to tackle inconsistencies.
- **Harmonisation vs Member State discretion.** While minimum-harmonisation can lead to divergent national practices, maximum-harmonisation may increase complexity when trying to cover every Member States' national demands. To address these challenges, priority should be given to centralisation where appropriate, as well as to harmonisation and to the use of regulations rather than directives.
- **Promoting competitiveness vs maintaining regulatory safeguards.** Competitiveness is not synonymous with fewer rules; robust, stable and credible regulatory frameworks are essential to sustaining it.

The op-ed concludes that advancing simplification and competitiveness will require **clear political choices on these trade-offs and stronger commitment to deeper Single Market integration.**

#### Next steps

The Secretariat will keep monitoring any relevant developments and inform Members as appropriate.