Gas supplies by Russia to Ukraine and the EU

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The presidency briefed the Council on how it plans to handle the issue of energy security, following the crisis stemming from the recent interruption of gas supplies from Russia via Ukraine to the EU.

The presidency outlined areas where it intends work to be speeded up and given the highest priority.

The Commission confirmed its intentions regarding interconnection and infrastructure projects to be proposed for EU funding under the economic recovery plan approved in December by the European Council.

The Council held an exchange of views, emphasising urgency in seeking solutions to problems that were highlighted during the gas crisis.

The presidency identified four areas on which it intends to focus:

1. **internal energy market**: reaching an agreement by the end of March on a proposed package, including on market transparency;
2. **interconnection and infrastructure projects**: reaching an early agreement on the Commission's proposals;
3. **supply crisis response mechanisms**: adjustments to directives on the security of supply of oil and gas, and measures to improve access to and investment in gas storage;
4. **external energy policy**: developing policy so as to reduce the EU's vulnerability and avoid new disruptions of supply.