

Praesidens

Anyone who has seen the Monty Python film *The Life of Brian* will know that Latin is not an easy dead language. The scene around “Romani ite domum”, or “Romanes eunt domus”, or “Romans go home”, is one of the best moments in the film.

The Latin equivalent of president is *Praesidens*. Etymologically, it is composed of two parts: *præ* (in front) and *sidens* (who sits). So the word “presidency” implies leadership, being at the forefront. However, it consists of a passive and an active element; to sit and to go forward. Which one then: sit or go? This is the Hamlet question.

The Hungarian EU presidency starts on 1 July, 2024. It’s been a long time since we’ve been in a situation like this, but we’re starting to feel a bit *déjà vu*. The European Parliament’s attempt to delay the Hungarian presidency has not succeeded, yet it leaves a bad taste in the mouth, even though the presidency has not even started. What is more, there may still be *intermezzos* later as well. It seems that the era of calm diplomacy is over for good.

Browsing through the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the reader may be struck by the first paragraph of Article 3, which states that “[t]he Union’s aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples”. In our view, all Europeans can identify with this goal to the furthest reaches, and are on pins and needles waiting for it to be achieved. Perhaps, under the Hungarian EU Presidency, we will be closer to the actual realisation of the declared goal of moving forward.

However, there is more to the TEU: its preamble makes it clear, that in the development of the Union, decisions are taken at the level closest to the citizen, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.

The *European Mirror* naturally wants to contribute to the success of both the Hungarian EU Presidency and the EU. In 2023/2024, we will publish five special issues on different topics, of which this issue will focus on subsidiarity.

There are few concepts in EU law that are so high on the agenda, yet so marginalised in every respect. The precise observance of competences and respect for contractual guarantees to protect them are, beyond argument, a matter of capital importance. This is not only in the interest of the Member States, but of the Union as a whole and ultimately of its citizens.

Boglárka Bólya, Péter Budai, Ferenc Csibor, Péter Gottfried, Endre Orbán, Lénárd Sándor, Tamás Simon and István Szent-Iványi will explore this topic, combining past and present, from near and far, in their exciting and no less thought-provoking writings.

“Respect the past to understand the present and work for the future.”

Krisztián Kecsmár
Editor-in-Chief