



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 5 December 2012

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NOTE

from:	Irish Delegation
to:	Working Party on Consular Affairs
Subject:	Programme of the Irish Presidency in the field of Consular Affairs

Delegations will find annexed the programme of the Irish Presidency for the Working Party of Consular Affairs (COCON).

Draft Programme of the Irish Presidency for COCON, January-June 2013

1. Programme of COCON meetings:

Friday, 11 January 2013

Friday, 12 April 2013

Friday, 14 June 2013

2. Seminars:

Friday, 22 February, 2013, Brussels: Seminar on the Consular Aspects of the Death Penalty.

Thursday, 13 June 2013, Brussels: Seminar on Forced Marriage-Consular issues.

3. Review of Lead State Concept

The Irish Presidency will lead a review of the Lead State Concept with a view to preparing a list of countries where this should be possible. In parallel an exercise looking at possibility of devising a Lead State “Light” model will be undertaken to see where it may be possible to produce a lighter administrative model for this to encourage greater sharing/coordination in some locations. Ireland is grateful to our colleagues from the Netherlands for agreeing to work with on this initiative.

4. Proposal for a Council Directive on consular protection for citizens of the Union abroad

The Irish Presidency will continue to advance the discussions on the draft proposal for a Council Directive on consular protection for citizens of the Union abroad. We will pay particular attention to the bureaucratic and financial aspects together with role of the EEAS in this process.

5. Bilateral consultations

The Irish Presidency will maintain the programme of bilateral consular dialogue with USA and seek to extend and establish regular dialogue with Canada and Australia.

6. Discussions at COCON

The Irish Presidency will stimulate further discussion at COCON on practical consular topics including for example, the use of social media for consular purposes, developments by MSs of ICT in the area of consular services, assistance issues in specific circumstances or in particular countries. Delegations are welcome to contact us with suggestions of areas where we might consider sharing expertise or experiences or with items that they consider might be of practical benefit for COCON to have a discussion on.

7. Reorganisation of Services

Many Foreign Ministries are facing having to operate on reduced resources and while consular as a front line service may have been spared some of these cuts the likelihood is that they may continue for some time, at least for some MSs. In this regard it might be useful to have some discussion around services that we do/do not provide and to get examples where it has been decided that it is no longer necessary to provide specified services. Some discussions around fees charged might also be worthwhile in this context. A discussion on Honorary Consul Service (role, duties, training etc) may also be useful.

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Contact details for coordination of the seminar on the consular aspects of the death penalty are:

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