



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 7 December 2012

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Delegations
Subject: Outcome of proceedings of the Working Party on Information on 30 November
2012

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda set out in document CM 5229/1/12 REV 1 was adopted.

2. Transparency / access to documents

a. Complaints 1854/2012/KM by Mr Lorand Bartels and 1649/2012/RA to the European Ombudsman

The chair presented doc. 16755/12, a draft letter to the Ombudsman on the procedure allowing the Ombudsman to consult documents in the context of his inquiries.

The Working Party agreed to the draft reply. Coreper will consequently be asked in one of its next meetings to confirm the letter.

The chair recalled that the new procedure followed as from August 2012 for substantive replies to the Ombudsman's inquiries (cf. doc. 12902/12) is without prejudice to keeping the Council or the European Council informed of Ombudsman enquiries and of replies, or to consulting them - at the appropriate level - before finalising a reply.

3. Communication / information Policy (*)

a. Interinstitutional communication priorities: communication strategy for the European elections 2014

The European Parliament (EP) outlined its communication strategy for the European elections 2014.

The information campaign is focusing on values (= what Europe stands for; e.g. fundamental rights and freedom) and policies (= what the institutions do - and highlight

the importance of EP's decisions in citizens' daily life).

To maximize the impact, the campaign will be adapted as much as possible to the local realities. Cooperation among institutions and with Member States will be crucial to convey credible and coherent messages to all audiences. The key players should also make utmost use of the campaign for the European Year of Citizens in 2013 to raise awareness and interact with citizens and multipliers by all means.

The EP asked Member States (MS) to designate a contact point in the Permanent Representations as well as in the capitals, in order to make a joint effort to cooperate in the smooth implementation of the EP communication strategy for the European elections as from the beginning. The EP political authorities are envisaging to send a letter to the MS governments in the coming weeks.

The General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) expressed its appreciation for the very timely start of the EP campaign and invited delegations to provide the EP with the necessary contact details.

b. Nobel Prize: communication plan

The General Secretariat of the Council gave an overview of the interinstitutional communication plan to communicate on the Nobel Prize award ceremony taking place in Oslo on 10 December 2012.

The plan is based on a commonly shared visual identity representing "peace" and comprises a variety of information activities: a contest to designate 4 young Europeans who will attend the award ceremony, a dedicated interinstitutional webpage, audiovisual material and a press communication package (background documents, details on the ceremony and on the main events organised EU-wide).

The General Secretariat of the Council will provide delegations with detailed information on the main events foreseen and, as requested, on the organisations which will benefit from the Nobel Peace Prize amount.

The European Parliament informed the WPI about a ceremony foreseen in the Strasbourg hemicycle on 12 December and other events organised in the margins of the December EP plenary session. The ceremony will be broadcasted by Euronews/EbS. A detailed programme will be circulated within the next few days.

The European Commission outlined the activities planned by the Commission Representations in the Member States, the majority of the events being organised in cooperation with the MS) and the EP Information Offices by means of the management partnerships. A great number of communication activities will highlight the EU's commitment in the field of human rights, peace promotion and development.

Several delegations shared details on the communication events foreseen in the Member States, which will indistinctly address all audiences and will be carried out through traditional media as well as through social media and schools.

c. Club of Venice: spokespersons' seminar (14 November 2012) and plenary meeting (15-16 November 2012)

The General Secretariat of the Council informed the Working Party about the outcome of the government spokespersons' seminar held on 14 November. The main purpose of the seminar was to establish a closer relationship and cooperation among government spokespersons that is crucial in the handling of the crisis and in all other circumstances.

The seminar focused on the communication on the financial crisis and economic recovery. It enabled the participants to explore options for the reinforcement of peer-to-peer networking and communication channels among the capitals and with the Permanent Representations in Brussels, sharing orientations and facilitating early-warning mechanisms.

The plenary meeting on 15 and 16 November 2012 started with a debate on how to communicate about the financial crisis (introduced by a wrap-up of the seminar held the day before), followed by a thorough exchange of views on government communication in Europe (capacity building in the UK, NL and Montenegro and communication projects in Hungary and Italy on EU's added value, citizens' dialogue and citizens' consultation). Discussions also covered the information campaign for the European elections 2014 and the implementation of the European Year of Citizens 2013.

The next meetings of the Club of Venice will take place in Vienna (1 February 2013, seminar on partnership agreements in the field of communication) Brussels (21 March, joint seminar on web communication) and Estonia (6-7 June, spring plenary meeting).

4. Any Other Business

a. **Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC/Euratom) No 354/83, as regards the deposit of the historical archives of the institutions at the European University in Florence**

The chair explained that the proposal was on the agenda as an information point, as a legal issue on the possibility to give supervisory powers to the European Data Protection Supervisor over the handling of personal data by the European University Institute remained to be resolved.

The Commission reported back from the meeting of the Interinstitutional Archives Group of 27 November 2012 where it presented the state of play of the proposal.

Delegations asked for further information on the modalities of the proposed cost sharing and for some clarifications on the treatment of personal data in digital archives.

The chair concluded that in the light of the comments from the delegations that a revised text would be prepared for the next meeting.