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THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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3177th Council meeting

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs

Luxembourg, 21 and 22 June 2012

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P R E S S

Main results of the Council

Employment and Social Policy affairs

*The Council held a policy debate on the **Europe 2020 strategy** and the **European Semester 2012** in the field of employment and social policy and on the Commission's **employment package**.*

*It took note of a progress report on **posting of workers** and reached a partial general approach on the **EU programme for social change and innovation**.*

*It also took note of a progress report on the **European Globalisation Adjustment Fund** regulation and on directives regarding **electromagnetic fields** and the principle of **equal treatment**.*

*The Council endorsed the main messages of the report on **pension adequacy** and adopted conclusions on **demographic challenges** and on **gender equality and the environment**.*

Health and Consumer affairs

*Ministers agreed a partial general approach on the third multi-annual **EU programme in the field of health for the period 2014-2020**. Ministers held an orientation debate on a draft decision on **serious cross-border threats to health**. Furthermore, they adopted conclusions on the impact of **antimicrobial resistance** in the human health sector and in the veterinary sector.*

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Mr László ANDOR

Member

.....
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Ms Irena ANDRASSY

Minister for Health
Deputy Permanent Representative

ITEMS DEBATED**EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY AFFAIRS****Europe 2020 strategy and the European Semester 2012**

The EPSCO Council held a policy debate and approved the employment-related aspects of the country-specific recommendations (CSRs). The following delegations made declarations for the minutes of the Council: Cyprus, Poland, Belgium and Bulgaria.

The Presidency summarized the debate stating that there was a general approval for the CSRs, and that although member states did not always fully agree with the Commission proposals, there was a broad agreement in terms of those issues that represent a challenge for the EU and its member states. They pointed out that, when drafting the CSRs, the Commission should work more closely with the member states so as to fully take into account the different national contexts.

Regarding the employment package, ministers highlighted several areas where further work could be undertaken with a view to boosting job creation: effective measures to combat youth unemployment and labour market segmentation, improve access to the labour market, increase the employment rate for disadvantaged groups, strengthen the role of the social partners, investing in education and training, in particular in green economy.

Delegations commented on the CSRs and more particularly on the cross-cutting issues, such as pensions, wage policies and the tax wedge on labour, which are also being addressed by the ECOFIN Council, expressing the need for the EPSCO Council to fully retain ownership of these issues of common concern.

Ministers acknowledged the difficult situation Europe was facing. They stressed that reforms were needed, some reiterated that it was up to the member states to decide on and implement them. The CSRs were considered to be more balanced than last year and useful for identifying and analysing policy responses to the labour market challenges faced by the different member states.

While recognising progress in a number of areas, the CSRs 2012 cover to a large extent similar policy areas compared to those of 2011. They reflect persistent labour market challenges and the need for member states to make additional progress within the fields identified. This relates in particular to increasing employment rates and participation, increasing investment in required skills and qualifications, providing for more efficient active labour market policy and work incentives, as well as supplementary inclusion strategies for the most vulnerable groups.

The CSRs – in combination with the more targeted multilateral surveillance – are key to the Council's efforts to strengthen the overall implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy. In addition, increased use of qualitative and quantitative tools and statistical data may also help to make the employment and social aspects of the joint EU efforts to promote economic recovery more visible.

The Council endorsed the **joint opinion** of the Employment Committee (EMCO) and the Social Protection Committee (SPC) ([10886/12](#)), which shows that the implementation of recommendations is progressing. Member states recognise the severity of the situation and are pushing forward with reforms that address key challenges. However, structural labour market reforms are often far-reaching in nature, and thus take time to implement and to produce effects. In addition, ownership of all stakeholders, in particular the social partners, should be sought in order for reforms to be successful.

In addition, the Council had its first discussion on the **employment package**, which the Commission presented in April at the informal EPSCO meeting in Denmark ([9309/12](#)). The objective of the employment package is to put forward a set of measures to boost jobs and allow for a job-rich recovery. It sets out ways for member states to encourage hiring by reducing taxes on labour and supporting business start-ups. Other aspects concern increased mobility and higher qualifications and the identification of the areas with the biggest job potential for the future such as the green economy, health services and ICT.

The Council also endorsed the **employment performance monitor** prepared by the EMCO ([10884/1/12 REV 1](#)). The monitor can be used to identify at a glance the main employment challenges for the EU and for each member state.

Posting of workers and the right to collective action

The Council took note of a progress report regarding enforcement of the posting of workers directive and the right to collective action regulation ([10571/12](#) + [COR 1](#)).

The **posting of workers** proposal is intended to clarify and improve the implementation, application and enforcement of directive 96/71/EC in practice. In particular, the proposal aims to:

- set more ambitious standards for informing workers and companies of their rights and obligations;
- establish clearer rules for cooperation between national authorities in charge of posting;
- clarify the elements of the concept of posting;
- clarify the possibilities for applying national control measures and define the modalities of national inspections;
- improve the enforcement of rights, including the handling of complaints and the introduction of a limited system of joint and several liability at EU level;
- facilitate cross-border enforcement of administrative fines and penalties imposed for non-compliance with the posting of workers directive by introducing a system of mutual assistance and recognition.

For its adoption, the ordinary legislative procedure is applied.

From the discussions in the Council's working party, it seems that delegations recognise the added value of the proposal for an enforcement directive and have positive views on its overall objectives.

Except for the issue of cross-border enforcement of administrative fines and penalties (chapter VI), substantive discussions have taken place on most parts of the proposal and considerable progress has been made in the discussions on some of the issues.

There is a need for further examination of chapter VI, and for further in-depth discussion on the issues of national control measures, the length of the deadlines, as well as the proposed system of joint and several liability.

As regards the other main outstanding articles, many aspects have been dealt with in detail and there therefore seems to be a sufficient basis for making substantive progress on some of these issues in the near future also with a view to implementation of the Single Market Act.

The proposal on the **right to collective action** confirms the fundamental right to collective bargaining and to take collective action, including the right to strike, and economic freedoms of equal importance. It lays down general principles with respect to the exercise of the right to strike within the context of the freedom of establishment and the freedom to provide services. It also sets out a new alert mechanism for industrial conflicts in cross-border situations.

Its adoption requires unanimity and the consent of the European Parliament.

Many delegations have expressed reservations about the added value of this proposal or have raised concerns regarding the content during discussions in the Council's working party.

The Commission consulted the national parliaments. On 22 May, at the expiry of the eight-week deadline for consultation, 12 national parliaments/chambers had forwarded reasoned opinions to the Commission.

According to protocol N° 2 to the TEU on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, Commission will have to review the proposal and may subsequently decide to maintain, amend or withdraw it.

Programme for social change and innovation

The Council reached a partial general approach on a regulation on the EU programme for social change and innovation – partial because this programme is part of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) package and all budgetary and financial decisions are being negotiated horizontally ([10211/1/12 REV 1](#)).

The programme is part of the draft legislative package framing cohesion policy for 2014-2020, which was adopted by the Commission in October 2011 and integrates three existing programmes Progress, Eures and the European progress microfinance facility. This proposal should complement and reinforce the European Social Fund and increase the consistency of EU action in the employment and social areas.

Under the Progress programme, the new proposal extends its coverage further to social innovation, and in particular social experimentation. Unlike now, the microfinance facility will also provide support for social enterprises. The new programme also aims at promoting worker's geographical mobility by more quality support services, such as the improved EURES portal.

Out of the total allocation for the programme, the Commission proposal provides for 60% for the Progress axis, 15% for the EURES axis, 20 % for the microfinance and social entrepreneurship axis, with the remaining 5% to be apportioned among the axes on an annual basis in line with policy priorities.

During the examination of the regulation by the Council's working party on social questions, a broad agreement was reached, with the following important changes being made:

- sub-dividing the Progress axis into three strands with minimum allocations corresponding to the current Progress programme;
- setting the threshold for access of social enterprises to microfinance at 30 million;
- adding specific provisions on co-financing;
- distributing the 5% reserve among the different axes;
- amending the definition on social enterprises to take into account different EU texts dealing with the issue of social enterprises.

European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (2014-2020)

The Council took note of a progress report regarding the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) ([10490/12](#) + [COR 1](#)).

The Commission proposal foresees maintaining the EGF during the next MFF programming period (2014-2020) as a means for expressing solidarity in view of the ongoing crisis.

The objectives of the proposed fund have been extended compared to the current EGF and now encompass the following: contribute to economic growth and employment by enabling the EU to demonstrate solidarity with workers made redundant due to globalisation, trade agreements impacting upon the agricultural sector, or an unexpected crisis, and to provide financial support for their rapid reintegration into employment, or for changing or adjusting their agricultural activities.

Discussions of the proposal in the Council's working party can be summarized as follows:

Some delegations welcomed the Commission proposal, considering the EGF to be a very important instrument of solidarity that was of proven merit.

A large number of delegations expressed their scepticism concerning the proposal:

- The major issue was the extension of the EGF's scope to agriculture. Too many aspects were left to the discretionary powers of the Commission with the risk that the Commission was negotiating trade agreements at the expense of the agricultural sector;
- The high amount to be reserved for the agricultural sector was also called into question;
- Doubts were expressed about the added value of the fund;
- Concerns were also voiced about the co-financing rate, the link to cohesion, the fact that the fund seems to be more and more permanent and to be becoming purely sectoral;
- Doubts were expressed about the excessive use of "delegated acts" in determining the modalities for triggering the EGF.

As to the MFF process, the latest version of the presidency's MFF negotiating box of June 2012 provides for only one option, i.e. the discontinuation of the EGF.

Electromagnetic fields

The Council took note of ongoing work on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from the physical agents (electromagnetic fields) directive ([10690/1/12 REV 1](#) + [COR 1](#)). This new directive amends the directive from 2004 (2004/40/EC), which has never entered into force due to problems with its implementation.

The current text has been examined by the Council working party for almost a year now and, in principle, a compromise has been reached on the layout of the annexes, subject to further non-substantial editorial amendments. Broad support has been expressed for the derogations, in particular the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) derogation.

In April 2012, the Danish presidency presented its first compromise proposal on annexes II and III and on article 3. The compromise reached since then concerns annexes II and III containing the values and exposure limits and article 13 on the Commission guide, listing the required information. The member states broadly supported the presidency compromise proposal on article 3 with a special provision for the MRI sector and a general derogation for other industry sectors and the armed forces (NATO), but there was a consensus that article 3 should be further worked on under the Cyprus presidency.

The European Parliament has not yet finalised its internal planning on the procedures; however, it has indicated unofficially that it is awaiting the Council's position, in particular on the technical aspects of the directive.

Equal treatment

The Council took note of a progress report ([8724/12](#)) on the equal treatment directive whose aim is to outlaw discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

The proposed directive, submitted by the Commission in July 2008, would prohibit discrimination on the above-mentioned grounds in the following areas: social protection, including social security and healthcare; social advantages; education; and access to goods and services, including housing.

During discussions in the Council's working party, a large majority of delegations welcomed the proposal in principle, many endorsing the fact that it aims to complete the existing legal framework by addressing all four grounds of discrimination through a horizontal approach.

Most delegations have affirmed the importance of promoting equal treatment as a shared social value within the EU. In particular, several delegations have underlined the significance of the proposal in the context of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. However, some delegations would have preferred more ambitious provisions with regard to disability.

While emphasizing the importance of the fight against discrimination, certain delegations have maintained general reservations, questioning the need for the Commission's proposal, which they see as encroaching on national competence for certain issues and conflicting with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

Certain other delegations have also requested clarifications and expressed concerns relating, in particular, to the lack of legal certainty, the division of competences, and the practical, financial and legal impact of the proposal.

The proposal has been under examination in the Council since 2008. Despite the well-known difficulties, efforts have continued in order to clarify the various issues that have arisen. During the Danish presidency, the experts have focused on age discrimination.

The discussion has advanced to some extent, improving the clarity of the text. A great deal of work still needs to be done however.

Pension adequacy report

The Council endorsed the main messages ([10488/12](#)) of the 2012 report on pension adequacy (2010-2050), which was prepared jointly by the Commission and the SPC ([10488/12 ADD 1](#)).

The main messages are a very useful complement to the conclusions adopted by the ECOFIN on 15 May on the sustainability of public finances in the light of the ageing populations. In particular, they stress that tackling the challenge of pension adequacy will require determined efforts to promote longer and healthier working lives through employment and industrial relations policies.

The EU's ability to achieve its goal of reducing the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 20 million by 2020 will very much depend on the extent to which pension systems will continue to help prevent poverty among older people.

The aim of the pension report is to strengthen EU's capacity to assess the current and future adequacy of pension systems and to identify policy strategies that can lead to the most cost-effective delivery of adequate pensions and social benefits in ageing societies.

The report looks at the pension adequacy analysis from a broader and more multi-dimensional perspective. It focuses on the current and future capacity of pension systems to provide a decent standard of living for the elderly and to reduce poverty in old age.

It also takes a first look at how pension policy interacts with other policy areas in the creation of reasonable conditions for people after retirement.

Demographic challenges

The Council adopted conclusions on responding to demographic challenges through enhanced participation by all in the labour market and society ([11639/12](#)).

These conclusions are intended to ensure that active policies and innovative measures are defined and implemented in a number of key policy areas with a view to investing in the human capital of all generations in order to secure economic growth and reduce inequalities so as to strengthen social cohesion.

The key priorities areas are: investing in education and training to foster youth employment; developing gender equality policies; combating the intergenerational transmission of poverty and social exclusion; increasing the labour market participation of older persons; promoting equal opportunity measures supporting better conditions for families and child raising; developing non-discrimination policies; and promoting the effective use of available budget and financing instruments in order to ensure the greatest value for money.

Gender equality and the environment

The Council adopted conclusions on "gender equality and the environment: enhanced decision-making, qualifications and competitiveness in the field of climate change mitigation policy in the EU" ([11638/12](#)).

The conclusions are based on a report of the European Institute for gender equality ([8876/12 ADD 1](#)). Today's and tomorrow's environmental policy is intimately bound up with the economy. As research undertaken by the gender institute shows, much more has to be done so that women can use their talents in the so-called "STEM" fields, i.e science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Both women and men must be allowed a say in environmental decision-making, especially in the context of climate change policy. And this is all related to the broader issue of the emerging green economy, a sector that is vital for employment and growth. Both women and men should be able to contribute to the development of the green economy.

The conclusions include a set of indicators for measuring progress in improving gender equality at all levels of climate change decision-making and in the relevant educational fields. This exercise takes place in the context of the Beijing Platform for Action, the United Nations agenda for women's empowerment, and has broad implications. If all citizens are allowed to contribute, regardless of whether they are women or men, Europe will have stronger environmental policies, a stronger economy and a stronger green sector.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Results in the field of employment, social affairs and gender equality during the Danish presidency

The Danish presidency informed the Council about various conferences and other events organised during its term ([11373/12](#)).

National Roma integration strategies

The Commission briefed the Council on its communication as set out in document [10226/12](#).

Ratification and implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities

The Council took note of the information provided by the Commission ([11171/12](#)).

G20 - meeting of labour and employment ministers

The presidency and the Commission reported to the Council on the G20 - meeting of labour and employment ministers which took place on 17-18 May in Mexico.

Work programme of the incoming presidency

The Council took note of the information provided by the Cyprus delegation.

HEALTH AFFAIRS

Health and growth programme 2014-2020

The Council agreed a partial general approach¹ on the third multi-annual EU programme in the field of health for the period 2014-2020 ([10769/12](#)).

The programme aims to encourage innovation in healthcare and increase the sustainability of health systems, to improve the health of EU citizens and protect them from cross-border health threats.

These general objectives will be pursued through actions grouped under four specific objectives:

- (1) innovative and sustainable health systems,
- (2) increased access to better and safer healthcare,
- (3) prevention of diseases and promotion of good health and
- (4) protection from cross-border health threats.

The general approach is partial since the budget to be made available for the next EU public health programme will depend on the outcome of the negotiations on the next multiannual framework. The Commission proposed to support the new programme with an amount of EUR 446 million (in current prices).

The new health programme is also a related part of the Europe 2020 strategy. It emphasizes the potential of the health sector as a driver for economic growth and a generator of jobs.

The proposed programme builds on the ongoing programme, which runs until the end of 2013, and focuses on fewer concrete actions that offer clear EU added-value.

¹ A general approach is a political agreement of the Council pending the first-reading position of the European Parliament.

Serious cross-border threats to health

Ministers held an orientation debate on a draft decision aimed at strengthening EU capacities and structures for effectively responding to serious cross-border health threats ([18509/11](#) + ([10770/12](#)).

Member states stressed the importance of preparedness against serious cross-border threats to health, and considered that it could be achieved through coordination and the exchange of information between member states within the health security committee (HSC), rather than an obligation for prior consultations or recommendations by the Commission. This was regarded important in order to respect national competencies in the field of health and to be in line with article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

Ministers supported the Commission proposal to provide a legal mandate to the health security committee. As regards the composition of this committee, most ministers argued for a standing committee of high representatives nominated by public health authorities with the possibility of inviting experts on a case-by-case basis.

Member states confirmed their wish to delete article 12 of the Commission proposal which envisages the possibility of binding common temporary public health measures at EU level. Instead they shared the view that member states should deal with urgent cases of cross-border health threats through the HSC.

The discussion gave guidance for future work on this file that will continue during the incoming Cyprus presidency.

Serious cross-border threats to health can be events caused by communicable diseases, biological agents responsible for non-communicable diseases, as well as threats of chemical, environmental, or unknown origin, including threats of malicious intentional origin. Threats deriving from the effects of climate change (i.e. heat waves, cold spells) would also be included in the scope of the decision.

The objective of the Commission proposal ([18509/11](#)) is to:

- strengthen the epidemiological surveillance in the EU and the early warning and response system;
- allow the joint procurement of medical countermeasures (e.g. vaccines) by several EU member states;
- give a legal basis to the functioning of the health security committee.

Antimicrobial resistance

The Council adopted conclusions on the impact of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the human health sector and in the veterinary sector ([10347/12](#)), calling upon member states to develop and implement national strategies or action plans for countering AMR. These national strategies or action plans should, amongst others, include the following elements:

- national guidelines on the treatment of humans and animals with antimicrobial agents;
- communication guidelines and programmes for education and training of professionals;
- enforcement of national legislation preventing all illegal sales of antimicrobials including illegal sales over the internet;
- limitation of the use of critically important antibiotics to cases where microbiological diagnosis and susceptibility testing has determined that no other type of antimicrobials will be effective;
- limitation of prophylactic use of antimicrobials to cases with defined clinical needs;
- limitation of prescription and use of antimicrobials for herd treatment of animals to cases with a clear clinical or epidemiological justification.

The conclusions also call upon the member states and the Commission to examine the conditions of prescription and sale of antimicrobials in order to ascertain whether practices in human and animals healthcare may lead to over-prescription, overuse or misuse of antimicrobials. The Commission is invited to expedite the review of legislative acts in order to take antimicrobial resistance better into account. This applies notably to directive 90/167 laying down the conditions governing the preparation, placing on the market and use of medicated feedingstuffs in the EU and directive 2001/82 on the EU code relating to veterinary medicinal products.

The Commission informed that preparatory work for some of the actions to which it is invited has already been started.

The conclusions take into account the outcome of the conference on "Combating Antimicrobial Resistance - Time for Joint Action" organised by the Danish presidency in Copenhagen on 14-15 March 2012.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO)¹ about 440 000 new cases of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) emerge annually, causing at least 150 000 deaths. A high percentage of hospital-acquired infections are caused by highly resistant bacteria such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).

¹ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs194/en/>

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Results of the Danish presidency

The Danish delegation informed the Council on the results that had been achieved in the field of health during its presidency ([10790/12](#)).

European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing

The Commission informed the Council on its communication entitled "Taking forward the Strategic Implementation Plan of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing" ([7293/12](#)).

Supply of raw materials for pharmaceuticals

Supported by the Belgian, Rumanian and Polish delegations the Luxembourg and French delegations informed the Council on the situation concerning the supply of pharmaceutical raw materials, such as active substances, in the EU ([10795/12](#)).

MediCrime Convention

The French delegation invited member states to ratify the MediCrime Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products, which was signed in Moscow on 28 October 2011 under the aegis of the Council of Europe ([10796/12](#)).

Work programme of the forthcoming presidency

The Cyprus delegation informed ministers on its work programme in the field of health and consumer affairs as the incoming Presidency of the Council of the EU.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

EMPLOYMENT

Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for technical assistance

The Council adopted a decision mobilising EUR 730 000 under the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) to cover technical assistance relating to the EGF. The objective of the technical assistance to be provided by the Commission is to finance activities related to monitoring, communication and information exchange, and to conduct a final evaluation of the EGF.

COMPANY LAW

Review of accounting requirements for companies

The Council agreed on a general approach¹ for the review of the accounting rules applicable to EU companies ([11442/12](#)).

The agreement paves the way for the start of negotiations with the European Parliament with a view to its swift adoption.

The key objectives of the review are:

- the reduction of administrative burden and the application of simplified accounting rules, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);
- to increase the clarity and comparability of financial statements; and
- to enhance transparency on payments made to governments by the extractive industry and loggers of primary forest.

For more information see press release [11710/12](#).

¹ A general approach is an agreement on the essential elements of a legal act, pending the opinion of the European Parliament.

CUSTOMS UNION

Tariff quotas for certain agricultural and industrial products

The Council adopted a regulation amending regulation 7/2010 opening and providing for the management of autonomous tariff quotas of the Union for certain agricultural and industrial products ([10149/12](#)).

Duties on industrial, agricultural and fishery products

The Council adopted amendments to regulation 1344/2011 suspending the autonomous common customs tariff duties on certain industrial, agricultural and fishery products ([10150/12](#)).

FOOD LAW

Food additives and flavourings

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of the following four Commission regulations:

- a regulation authorising the use of Benzoic acid - benzoates (E 210-213) as preservative in alcohol-free counterparts of wine by amending annex II to regulation 1333/2008 ([8859/12](#));
- a regulation authorising the use of Polysorbates (E 432-436) in coconut milk by amending annex II to regulation 1333/2008 ([8931/12](#));
- a regulation on transitional measures concerning the EU list of flavourings and source materials set out in annex I to regulation 1334/2008 ([9739/12](#));
- a regulation authorising the use of Talc (E 553b) and Carnauba wax (E 903) on unpeeled coloured boiled eggs and the use of Shellac (E 904) on unpeeled boiled eggs by amending annex II to regulation 1333/2008 ([9975/12](#)).

The Commission regulations are subject to the so-called regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt the regulations, unless the European Parliament objects.

FISHERIES

Partnership agreement between EU and Solomon Islands - Negotiations on new protocol

The Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the EU for a new protocol to the fisheries partnership agreement with Solomon Islands.

The fisheries partnership agreement between the EU and Solomon Islands was signed by decision 2010/397 of 3 June 2010 and has been provisionally applied since 9 October 2009.

The objective of the negotiations is to conclude a new protocol to the fisheries partnership agreement between the EU and Solomon Islands, in line with the 19 March 2012 Council conclusions on a Commission communication of 14 July 2011 on external dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy.

TRADE POLICY

Anti-dumping measures - Furfuraldehyde - China

The Council adopted a regulation terminating the interim review of the anti-dumping measures on imports of furfuraldehyde originating in China and repealing those measures ([10395/12](#)).

Anti-dumping - Iron or steel pipes and tubes - Ukraine

The Council adopted a regulation amending regulation 954/2006 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of certain seamless pipes and tubes, of iron or steel originating in Croatia, Romania, Russia and Ukraine ([10307/12](#)).

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council

The Council approved the draft agenda for the 22nd EU-GCC Joint Council and ministerial meeting, to be held on 25 June in Luxembourg. It also adopted the EU position on draft "elements for co-chairs' statement/joint communiqué".

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Prospectus directive

The Council did not oppose to a Commission regulation aimed at amending regulation 809/2004 as regards information on the consent to use of the prospectus, information on underlying indexes and the requirement for a report prepared by independent accountants or auditors ([10789/12](#)).

Regulation 809/2004 implementing directive 2003/71/EC ("the prospectus directive") as regards information contained in prospectuses as well as the format, incorporation by reference and publication of such prospectuses and dissemination of advertisements sets out in detail the information for different kinds of securities which must be included in a prospectus.

Adopted in 2003, the prospectus directive is an essential instrument for the achievement of the internal market, facilitating the widest possible access to investment capital on a Union-wide basis by granting a single passport to issuers. The directive was amended in November 2010 to further strengthen the framework's original objectives of ensuring investor protection and market efficiency.

The new Commission regulation is a delegated act. The Council has not expressed any objections, and so it will enter into force if the European Parliament does not object.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Cooperation with Turkey

The Council adopted [conclusions](#) on developing cooperation with Turkey in the areas of Justice and Home Affairs.

2011 CEPOL Report

The Council took note of and endorsed the CEPOL (European Police College) 2011 annual report (Strengthening police cooperation through learning). The report ([10020/12](#)), which includes a summary of activities, as well as CEPOL projects and external relations, among other issues, is forwarded to the European Parliament and the Commission for information and made public.

Europol's 2011 report

The Council took note of and endorsed the general report on Europol's activities in 2011 ([10036/12](#)) and sent it to the European Parliament for information.

This report is prepared each year by Europol's Management Board and describes Europol's activities during the previous year, including the results achieved on the priorities set by the Council.

APPOINTMENTS

Judges and advocates-general at the Court of Justice

On 20 June, the representatives of the governments of the member states reappointed Mr Antonio TIZZANO and Mr Paolo MENGOZZI (Italy) for a further term of office as judge and advocate-general respectively at the Court of Justice, for the period from 7 October 2012 to 6 October 2018.

They also appointed Mr Christopher VAJDA (United Kingdom) as judge at the Court of Justice for the same period.

Eleven judges and three advocates-general of the Court of Justice were already appointed on 25 April 2012 (*see press release [9179/12](#), page 23*).

The Court of Justice is composed of 27 judges and eight advocates-general. They are appointed for a term of office of six years, which is renewable. The judges of the Court of Justice elect one of themselves as president for a renewable term of three years.
