



Brussels, 20 July 2016  
(OR. en)

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## OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
On: 20 July 2016  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Working Party on Information - 14 July 2016 AM

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### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in document CM 3434/1/16 REV 1, with an additional transparency item under AOB .

### 2. Transparency

#### a) Confirmatory applications

Confirmatory application no. 10/c/01/16

Doc. 8159/16 INF 64 API 4

On the basis of the indications received from delegations, the Chairman concluded that a majority of 15 delegations were opposed to release the requested documents at this stage of the legislative procedure, whereas 10 delegations could agree to a full release of all requested documents and 3 delegations abstained.

The Legal Service recalled the relevant case-law, that clarifies the principle of transparency with regard to legislative procedures.

The Chair informed delegations that a new draft reply to the confirmatory application would shortly be submitted to delegations for written consultation. Following this consultation, a formal written procedure would be launched in view of the final approval of the reply by Coreper/Council.

### **3. Communication / Information Policy**

#### **a) Presidency's communication strategy and web site**

The Presidency outlined its communication principles underpinning its work: "Achieving tangible results", "Overcoming fragmentation" and "Focusing on the citizen" and indicated that this semester is a big opportunity to communicate Europe clearly, proactively and attractively to have a concrete impact on public opinion.

To this end, it identified target audiences through an advance segmentation and prioritization process and envisages to take due account of digital technologies.

The Presidency also summarised the initiatives to communicate with the press : briefings, academic-type visit, field trips, accreditation procedures and connections through social networking.

#### **b) "Europa" building: practical arrangements and communication**

The Chairman's presentation focused on practical arrangements of particular relevance for the WPI members' profile as spokespersons and press attachés, sharing information on the press and communication activities which will precede the inauguration of the new facility.

The "Europa" building will be operational in January 2017 and is expected to host its first European Council meeting in March 2017.

An update on work in progress is foreseen after the summer break.

### **4. A.O.B.**

#### **a) Transparency**

- **Decision of the European Ombudsman to close own-initiative inquiry OI/8/2015/JAS on transparency in trilogues.**

The Council Legal Service informed delegations about the European Ombudsman's decision closing her own initiative inquiry concerning the transparency of trilogues OI/8/2015/JAS.

In her decision, the Ombudsman recognised that trilogues had proven to be an extremely effective and efficient means of reaching agreement between the Council and the European Parliament and stressed that the interest in legislative transparency should be balanced with the institutions' need to have a privileged negotiating space.

The European Ombudsman emphasised that her decision does not touch upon the organisation of the legislative process which is a prerogative of the co-legislators. A series of proposals aiming at increasing the information provided by the institutions with regard to the holding of trilogues are not based on any findings of maladministration, but should rather be considered as contributions to the institutions' reflections on the issue.

The Council Legal Service would shortly prepare an information note for Coreper on the European Ombudsman's proposals and observations.

## **b) Communication/Info Policy**

### **i) Outgoing Presidency's communication activities**

The Netherlands delegation briefly commented on the information material and statistics circulated beforehand on the semester's achievements and on the implementation of its communication strategy and thanked the General Secretariat of the Council for its cooperation and its continuous support.

The Chairman, thanking the outgoing Presidency for its detailed information and statistics shared with delegations, expressed his appreciation in particular for the successful "Diplohack" event organised jointly with the Council Secretariat at the end of April, as well as for having hosted the spring plenary of the Club of Venice on 26 and 27 May in The Hague.

**ii) Deployment of the Agora and Delegates' portal**

The General Secretariat of the Council presented the Delegates' Portal which replaces the former Extranet as new document distribution system. Delegations and Council staff are being assisted to ensure smooth migration.

**iii) EU Open Day**

The General Secretariat of the Council outlined the success of the EU's Open Day of 28 May and welcomed the increased number of visitors, in spite of heightened security concerns and transportation strikes. It also thanked delegations for their support to the joint stand of Member States, which gave a colourful and engaging expression of the "Unity in diversity" represented in the Council and the European Council.

The General Secretariat looks forward to contacting the delegations well ahead of the 2017 edition of the Open Day, as soon as a date is agreed by the institutions, since it wishes to collect their feedback and suggestions with a view to repeating this very informative and enjoyable initiative. One important novelty for next year will be the EUROPA building, which is expected to generate even more interest among the public.

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