



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
On:	30 November 2016
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Working Party on Information of 25 November 2016

The meeting took place in the new EUROPA building. It was the first meeting of a Council's preparatory body held in the new facility.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in document CM 4920/16.

2. Communication / Information Policy

a) European Council: information on working methods

The Spokesperson of the President of the European Council outlined Donald Tusk's ideas for new working methods as set out at the last meeting of the Heads of State or Government on 20 and 21 October 2016.

Reviewing a number of organisational aspects should enable the European Council to provide quicker responses to the recent crises. In doing so, there is a need to take due account of the following principles of the Bratislava Declaration:

- better and clearer communication with citizens, focusing on their expectations and contrasting rising populist forces;
- better management ;
- refrain from mutual blame game and confirm loyal cooperation among Member States and between MS and the institutions, and *vice versa*.

Content-wise, there will also be a more consistent review of the implementation of the decisions taken at the European Council.

The proposed changes will also affect the practical handling of European Council meetings (one day only meetings; earlier time of press conference, better synchronised with national debriefings; and new practicalities for the photographic services).

b) "Europa" building: update

The General Secretariat of the Council recalled some key elements of the new building of the European Council and informed the WPI of the latest arrangements regarding the organisation of press activities (this part was complemented with a guided tour of the relevant press areas).

Moreover, the General Secretariat of the Council informed delegations about upcoming communication activities, including press and communication material to be released (a video to be released in 2017; a factsheet in all the EU languages etc.) and initial events foreseen in the new facility (a press visit on 7 December and guided tours for the general public on 10 December).

3. Transparency

a) Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory Transparency Register

- State of play

The WPI was informed that on 18 November 2016 the General Affairs Group discussed the draft reply to the letter of First Vice-President Frans TIMMERMANS addressed to Mr Ivan KORČOK, President in Office of the Council (14209/16). There were no objections from the delegations, therefore, the reply letter should be submitted to Coreper for endorsement on 30 November.

b) Questionnaire on LIMITE documents

- Information from the General Secretariat of the Council

14352/16 INF 194 API 115

The General Secretariat presented document 14352/16 summarising the main elements and results of the questionnaire on issuing LIMITE documents sent to GSC departments in June.

The General Secretariat also informed delegations that, as part of a broader reflexion exercise on Transparency currently pursued by the General Secretariat, an examination on whether and at what point in time a "LIMITE" document could be released to the public is being conducted.

The Chair concluded that this item will be included in the WPI agenda at one of the its next meetings.

c) Council Open Sessions - Statistics on Open Sessions held during the Netherlands Presidency (January - June 2016)

- Information from the General Secretariat of the Council

14353/16 INF 195 API 116

The General Secretariat gave a presentation on statistics related to Council Open Sessions held during the Netherlands Presidency.

d) Confirmatory applications

i) Confirmatory application no 19/c/01/16

11733/16 INF 146 API 86

117734/16 INF 147 API 87

ii) Confirmatory application no 23/c/08/16

13477/16 INF 179 API 104

13478/16 INF 180 API 105

Confirmatory application no. 19 concerns a request for access to all documents regarding the Council Directive laying down rules against tax avoidance practices (abbreviated "ATAD").

Confirmatory application no. 23 concerns a request for access to documents from the Code of Conduct on Business Taxation related to the period 2009-2015.

The delegations discussed the two draft replies. The final deadline for submitting the vote is 30 November. In case of agreement to the draft replies, both texts will be listed on the agenda of Coreper II on 7 December 2016 and submitted to the JAI Council for Agreement on 8 December 2016.