



Brussels, 24 July 2017  
(OR. en)

11479/17

API 90  
INF 134

## OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
On: 24 July 2017  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Working Party on Information 13th of July 2017

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### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in CM 3603/17.

### 2. Transparency items

- a) Own-initiative inquiry OI/2/2017/AB by the European Ombudsman concerning access to documents relating to Council preparatory bodies when discussing draft EU legislative acts
  - Examination of the draft reply

7420/17 API 28 INF 40 OMBUDS 4 JUR 133 INST 131

8808/17 API 65 INF 88 OMBUDS 6 JUR 223 INST 189

The Chair, following contacts with some delegations since the last meeting of the Working Party, suggested to delete the second paragraph of the reply to question 9.

Some delegations expressed their satisfaction. One delegation requested that the issue on possible change of the Council's rules of procedure to adapt them to the Access Info Europe ruling should be discussed in the near future. The Chair suggested that the WPI reverts to this issue after the summer break.

The General Secretariat suggested a few minor changes in the draft reply in order to take into account some delegations' comments. These changes were accepted by the Working Party.

The Chair indicated that the revised version of the draft reply will be issued and that a formal written procedure will be launched on Monday 17 July till Wednesday 19 July. He reminded the delegations that as it will be a formal written procedure, each delegation will have to reply.

b) Open Data

- Draft Council Decision on an open data policy for the General Secretariat of the Council

Examination of the draft decision

8627/17 + ADD 1

The delegations discussed the draft and made some modifications. Two delegations made a scrutiny reservation. The amended text will be circulated for information to all delegations and subsequently translated into all languages and then submitted for a review to the lawyer-linguists. It will then be submitted to the Coreper and to the Council for adoption.

c) Confirmatory applications

– For information

13/c/02/17

10331/17 INF 106 API 78

10332/17 INF 107 API 79

14/c/03/17

10386/17 INF 110 API 81

10388/17 INF 111 API 82

15/c/02/17

10800/17 INF 120 API 84

10801/17 INF 121 API 85

The delegations were informed about the state of play concerning the draft replies to these three confirmatory applications.

### 3. Communication/Information policy

a) Communication strategy and priorities of the Estonian Presidency

The Presidency outlined its citizen-oriented communication strategy linked to its four priorities: "An open and innovative European economy", "A safe and secure Europe", "A digital Europe and the free movement of data" and "An inclusive and sustainable Europe".

Moreover, the Presidency indicated that it will focus on:

- presence in all main social networks and smooth information flow through its portal <https://www.eu2017.ee/>
- facilitating the implementation of cross-border digital projects (seeking in particular digital solutions for the environment)
- the organisation of a Digital summit in Tallinn on 29 September 2017.

Finally, the Presidency indicated that, in the spirit of the Bratislava Declaration, it will promote inclusiveness and engage with wide public, think tanks and schools.

The French delegation welcomed the Presidency's presentation and its intentions to strengthen communication on the EU's values. It praised the multilingual aspects of the Presidency's web portal and its outreach efforts and assured its support to addressing citizens' protection and to the implementation of the Commission's White Paper and its reflection papers on the future of Europe.

**b) WPI's communication agenda for the second semester**

The Chair:

- underlined that the WPI is the competent Council body in charge of communication, a cross-cutting task differentiating it from other working parties in the different policy areas
- referred to the informal exchange of views held on 14 July 2016 to discuss with delegations how to revamp the WPI's communication agenda and improve the WPI's working methods, increase benefit to delegations and foster follow-up and cooperation

- recalled the main topics on which the WPI focused in the last year: crisis communication on migration, StratCom or the forward-looking communication agenda around the 60th anniversary of the Rome treaties.

The Chair indicated that he had recently reflected with the former and current presidency on how to continue to stimulate strategic communication discussions and analysis, to increasingly meet delegations' expectations.

Accordingly, he envisages that the WPI:

- continue focusing on crisis contingencies and topics of immediate relevance to the Council and European Council work and in line with the current presidency's priorities
- host exchanges of views and best practices on how MS are communicating Europe to their citizens and how to strengthen communication capacities, taking into account the ongoing digital transformation of the communication processes.

Along this line, twice a year (ideally in January and September), the WPI will be the delegations' forum to exchange information on the main lines of communication planned or executed on EU matters.

The Presidency agreed with the Chair's views on the WPI's agenda and will welcome further discussions and share of know-how, experiences and ideas, as they will enable presidencies to draw much inspiration for their work.

The Presidency also indicated that the communication session of the next WPI meeting on 26 September will focus on follow-up to the communication aspects of the Bratislava Declaration.

The Chair highlighted the politically clear, actionable language of the Declaration, which gave a clear tasking in stressing the need to improve mutual communication among Member States, EU institutions, and especially with our citizens. One year after, the WPI will look at what has collectively been done thus far to implement that tasking, and what remains to be done.

Several delegations intervened to support the Chair and the Presidency:

- welcoming the Chair's proposal to organise two WPI forum-type discussions per year and to focus the follow-up to Bratislava
- stressing the need to safeguard and reinforce the partnership instruments between Member States and the institutions in the field of communication
- underlining that communication on the EU should be nuanced to take due account of national sensibilities and priorities
- recommending focus on core issues such as countering Euro-scepticism and monitoring public opinion trends
- welcoming GSC initiatives in the field of media monitoring, visitor's policy, press' releases and audio-visual production
- recommending WPI early planning, advance circulation of work documents and more organic work on specific themes.

The Chair took note of the Estonian Presidency's and delegations' comments and suggestions and indicated that, by the end of July 2017, the General Secretariat will circulate a short paper to structure and facilitate discussion at the September meeting.

#### 4. AOB (communication)

The Swedish delegation announced a seminar on handling disinformation which will take place on 19 September 2017 in Brussels, in the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU. The event is organised in the framework of the Freedom of Speech and Transparency programme for 2017 of the MFA of Sweden.

Official invitations to delegations will follow in early September.

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