



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 23 January 2014
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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 21 January 2014
To: Delegations

Subject: Outcome of proceedings of the Working Party on Information meeting 14
January 2014

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda set out in document CM 5611/13 was adopted. Under item 4. sub items a), b) and c) were added.

2. Transparency/access to documents

a) Revised reply to confirmatory application No 04/c/01/11 following the judgment of the General Court in Case T-331/11

Doc. 5021/14

The Council Legal service informed delegations that, by its judgment of 12 September 2013 in Case T-331/11 (Leonard Besselink v Council of the European Union), the General Court annulled the Council's Decision of 1 April 2011 which contained a reply to a confirmatory application made by Mr Leonard Besselink requesting access to document 9689/10.

In its judgment, the General Court held that the Council had not fulfilled its obligation to limit its refusal solely to the information covered by the exception on which it relied.

Following the judgment, the Council is required to take a new decision on the confirmatory application in the light of the judgment of the Court of Justice.

The General Secretariat of the Council had carefully assessed the document in the light of the judgment. It had also taken into account that a draft Agreement on the Accession of the European Union to the ECHR has meanwhile been agreed at negotiators' level, which draft Agreement has been made available to the public. On that basis, and although the Decision authorising the signature of the Agreement has not yet been submitted to the Council for adoption, it was recommended - on balance - to grant full public access to the document at this point in time.

The Working Party agreed to follow the recommendation to now grant access to the document in its entirety.

The draft reply will be submitted to Coreper and the Council on 22 and 28 January 2014, respectively.

b) Confirmatory applications No 01/c/01/14 and No 02/c/01/14

– **Information of the General Secretariat of the Council**

Docs 5046/14

5049/14

The General Secretariat informed delegations that after finalisation of the draft replies, informal written emails consultations of the Working Party will be launched to seek agreement on the proposed replies to these confirmatory applications. The draft replies will then be submitted to Coreper and the Council for approval on 5 and 10 February 2014, respectively.

3. Communication / information policy

a) Greek Presidency, first semester 2014

A representative from the Greek General Secretariat for Information and Communication

outlined the main elements of the Hellenic Presidency's communication strategy: challenges in which the mandate starts (economic crisis, European elections crucial deadline for European and national political systems, citizens' discontent, loss of confidence in European and national authorities, and growing euro-scepticism); key messages (a Presidency for all European citizens; "promoting the European democratic project"; "communicating the image of Greece as a country in recovery"); objectives ("European in content", "simple in execution", "effective and efficient").

A wide variety of communication activities and events have been planned to reach out to wide public as well as to specific audiences.

The Presidency's webmaster presented the main features of the Presidency's website (<http://www.gr2014.eu/>) which provides information in four languages (EL, EN,FR and DE). The Presidency will also be very active with the social media (Twitter account #GR2014EU).

b) On-line re-design project (including new visual identity)

The General Secretariat of the Council presented the renovated visual identity which will be applicable to the whole "Council family" (European Council and its President, the Euro Summit and its President, the Council and its rotating Presidency, the Eurogroup and its President).

This review took place against the following background:

- The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the extension of the "Council family" of institutions and entities served by the GSC;
- A growing list of technical shortcomings of the existing visual identity: the current graphic charter pre-dates many digital applications, and the font used does not exist in all EU languages;

Other important factors such as the construction of the EUROPA building.

In July 2013 a contest was launched to produce a new graphic charter. The companies participating in the contest were invited to propose a renovated logo. These were assessed by a jury of GSC senior managers and an external consultant. The design was chosen for its simplicity and symbolism inspired by the Europa building and is aligned with the logo's of the other EU institutions.

The GSC representative explained how the new logo could be used by future Presidencies for "co-branding". The implementation will start on 1 July 2014 with the launch of the re-designed public website.

The presentation given by the GSC representative on the state of play of the On-line redesign project built on the previous presentation to the WPI in July 2013. He reported in particular on the global information architecture chosen. It had been decided to have one integrated site for two institutions (the Council and the European Council) and related entities comprising the "Council family". This allowed both for an improved user experience and for improved resource efficiency for the GSC. This information architecture would also create a space for the rotating presidencies within the future web environment: for future presidencies this offered potential benefits both in terms of more integrated, coherent communication and more efficient use of resources. The GSC would intensify its contacts with future presidencies in the weeks to come in order to discuss in more detail the model for future cooperation. The next steps in the on-line re-design project involved design of the new site, definition of content priorities and the drafting and translation of content).

The Chair stressed that, with regard to the proposal to integrate the website of future presidencies into the re-designed environment, it is important that the message reaches the people competent in this matter. The General Secretariat of the Council will approach future presidencies individually in this regard.

c) Communication strategies in the field of research and innovation: perspectives for 2014 and beyond

The European Commission (DG Research and Innovation) presented its communication strategy, focusing in particular on "Horizon 2020", the new EU programme for research and innovation for the period 2014-2020 ⁽¹⁾.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/>.

The overall communication strategy for Horizon 2020 consists of two elements: a media relations campaign and a stakeholder campaign running in parallel.

The implementation started well in advance compared to the official launch of the programme and, with the aim to inform all citizens reasonably in advance, raising awareness and interest not only in the specialized audience, but also in general, in non-specialised stakeholders, and with the view to involve also "new users" as a key factor to help acquire more potential for innovation.

The 18-month pan-European media relations campaign, which ends in July 2014, has a €1.4M budget. It was built in the light of an ex-ante evaluation (journalists and social media audit) and is complemented by a social media strategy to maximise outreach.

This campaign is also part of the DG COMM corporate communication plan for 2013. It involves a contractor selected within a DG COMM framework contract with local offices in each member state, who works with the Commissions Representations to localise and disseminate relevant information including success stories. It also involves directly the "Share Europe on-line" social-media project.

The stakeholder campaign (€350.00) runs in parallel and targets stakeholders (both old and potentially new). Coordination is ensured through stakeholder networks and the National Contact Points (NCPs), the latter being national structures established and financed by the Member States and the other countries associated to the framework programme.

NCPs provide personalised support on the spot and in the applicants' own languages. The NCP systems can vary from one country to another (from highly centralised to decentralised networks, and with a number of very different players, from ministries to universities, research centres and special agencies to private consulting companies.) ⁽²⁾. Support is also provided at regional level by the Enterprise Europe Network ⁽³⁾.

² See the relevant page of the Horizon 2020 web portal:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal4/desktop/en/support/national_contact_points.html

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/enn.html>

The Greek Presidency recalled the launch of Horizon 2020 on 10 January in Athens at the 'Demokritos' National Centre for Scientific Research. The event was organized under the auspices of the President of the Hellenic Republic, Karolos Papoulias who attended it. On that occasion, the European Commission presented and discussed synergies between "Horizon 2020" and the EU Structural Funds, potential impact on SMEs and the role of "smart specialization" in regional development and cohesion.

Delegations welcomed the detailed presentation provided by the Commission DG RTD.

The German delegation recalled the importance of the topic which has relevant political implications in the Council agenda with regard to Research and Competitiveness, as well as in the field of Education which falls under the competence of the Länder.

The German delegation informed the WPI on the communication strategy and on-going and planned implementation activities in Germany in the framework of Horizon 2020. The main communication tool for stakeholders is the website: <http://www.horizont2020.de>. National contact points have been appointed and are tasked to reach out to stakeholders.

The Belgian delegation highlighted the importance of Horizon 2020 in boosting economic growth and combating unemployment. It also underlined that communication towards small and medium enterprises (SMEs) should be more clear and transparent and asked whether Horizon 2020 would provide for a "start kit" for young people in order to explain them how to set up a company.

The Commission representative indicated that this information can be found on the participants' portal of the Horizon 2020 website ⁽⁴⁾, which has been revamped in particular in specific key areas, such as the SMEs. In future a link will be made with the COSME programme (the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises).

The Polish delegation explained briefly the promotion of the Horizon 2020 programme in Poland. The responsibility lies with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The National contact points (at regional and local level) are duly coordinating the information flow on this programme which is strongly supported by the national authorities for its impact on growth and employment.

⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html>

4. Any Other Business

d) Personal data of applicants who have made a confirmatory applications

– Information by the General Secretariat

General Secretariat does not mention the personal data of applicants wishing to submit a confirmatory application in any official Council documents unless the applicant has given his/her explicit consent to do so. However, personal data of the applicants has so far been mentioned in internal documents related to the confirmatory application and distributed to delegations. In order to fully comply with data protection rules, the General Secretariat proposed delegations not to mention the applicants' personal data in documents of the latter kind either.

Delegations had no comments to this proposal. As a result and as from now on, personal data of applicants will neither be indicated in official documents related to the confirmatory application, nor in any other documentation prepared by the General Secretariat and distributed to delegations unless the explicit consent of the applicant has been obtained.

e) Own-initiative inquiry OI/6/2013/KM by the European Ombudsman concerning the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission

– Information by the General Secretariat

Doc. 5219/14

The General Secretariat informed delegations that by letter dated 11 December 2013, the new European Ombudsman, Ms Emily O'Reilly, had informed the Council that she had decided to open a new own-initiative inquiry relating to the respect of time limits provided in Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission.

The deadline for the Council to reply to this own-initiative inquiry is 31 March 2014.

**f) Decision of the European Ombudsman closing her inquiry into complaint
1854/2012/KM against the Council**

– Information by the General Secretariat

Doc. 5265/14

The General Secretariat informed delegations that by letter dated 9 January 2014, the European Ombudsman informed the Council that she had decided to close her inquiry into complaint 1854/2012/KM against the Council. The Ombudsman concluded that the Council had settled the case to the complainant's satisfaction.
