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'A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Council
Subject:	Draft REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on establishing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans (first reading) - Adoption of the legislative act = Statements

Statement by Bulgaria

Bulgaria recognises and promotes equality between women and men in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and the national legislation, in line with the principles and values of the European Union as enshrined in the Treaties, and the commitments and principles arising from the international law.

In line with the abovementioned and its domestic legislation, Bulgaria interprets the concept of 'gender' as reference to 'sex' (male/female) and the concept of 'gender equality' as 'providing equal chances and opportunities for women and men' in the Regulation on establishing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans.

Statement by Hungary

Hungary recognises and promotes equality between men and women in accordance with the Fundamental Law of Hungary and the primary law, principles and values of the European Union, as well as commitments and principles stemming from international law. Equality between women and men is enshrined in the Treaties of the European Union as a fundamental value. In line with these and its national legislation, Hungary interprets gender as providing equal chances and opportunities for women and men. In line with these and its national legislation, Hungary interprets the concept of 'gender' as reference to 'sex' and the concept of 'gender equality' as 'providing equal chances and opportunities for women and men' in the Regulation on establishing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans.

Statement by the Republic of Lithuania

The Republic of Lithuania supports European integration of the Western Balkans. Merit-based and qualitative enlargement process guides the aspirants through the preparation for a fully-fledged membership.

In the discussions on the Regulation on establishing Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans the Republic of Lithuania has consistently supported ensuring an active role of the Council in the governance of the Facility. Taking into consideration that the compromise text of the Regulation offers a rather limited role for the Council, the Republic of Lithuania abstains in the voting on the proposed text.

Statement by the Commission on full budgetary transparency on budgetary matters in the framework of the Western Balkans Facility

Recognising the importance for the European Parliament and Council to be in a position to discharge their responsibility as budgetary authorities in a well-informed manner, the Commission will make available to the budgetary authority information on budgetary commitments and payments both affected and planned under the Western Balkans Facility per beneficiary on a bi-monthly basis.

Statement by the Commission on the potential implications of joint declaration by the European Parliament and the Council on the budgetary nomenclature for the Western Balkans Facility

The Commission takes note of the statement by the European Parliament and the Council on the budgetary nomenclature for the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans which could potentially affect the implementation of the Facility. In any case, it would unduly interfere with the proper conduct of the budgetary procedure. The Commission considers that this should not constitute a precedent.
