



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Summary of discussions at the informal videoconference of the members of the Working Party on Information (Transparency) of 21 January 2022

Delegations will find attached the summary of discussions at the informal videoconference of the members of the Working Party on Information (Transparency) of 21 January 2022.

Summary of discussions at the informal videoconference of the members of the Working Party on Information on 21 January 2022

1) Adoption of the agenda - introductory session

The agenda was adopted as in CM 1148/1/22 REV 1, with an additional AOB item "Transparency Pledge - follow-up" (as requested by DE, DK and NL).

The French delegation outlined the new presidency's priorities (European sovereignty, a new European growth model and a more 'human-sized' Europe).¹

2) Confirmatory applications

- a. no. 42/C/03/21 - The Council Legal Service representative outlined the approach suggested in the draft reply (document 5108/22). Delegations agreed with the draft reply and with the publication of the votes.
- b. no 43/c/02/21 - The General Secretariat outlined the sensitive nature of the requested documents as described in the draft reply (document 5215/22). The majority of delegations agreed with the draft reply (the Dutch, Finnish and Swedish delegation voting against and issuing a joint statement).
- c. no 44/c/01/21 - The General Secretariat summarised the main elements of the draft reply (document 5023/22). All delegations expressed their agreement, with the exception of the Austrian delegation who abstained.

The three draft replies will be submitted to COREPER, with a view to the Council's adoption by written procedure.

¹ <https://presidence-francaise.consilium.europa.eu/en/news/the-priorities-of-the-french-presidency-of-the-council-of-the-european-union/>

3) Ombudsman files (complaints 1703/2021/AMF and 1499/2021/TE)

The General Secretariat reported on the state of play. The follow-up recommendations from the European Ombudsman should be received soon.

4) Transparency Register

The General Secretariat outlined the state of play and the technical/administrative challenges of the Council's implementation of the Transparency register² entered into force on 1st July 2021.

5) Internal guidelines on the occasional attendance of third parties, including interest representatives, at meetings of the Council or its preparatory bodies

The General Secretariat outlined the procedural and substantial provisions of the guidelines of 22 July 2021.

6) AOB

a. Transparency Pledge

The Dutch delegation announced a side event organised by Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, foreseen in March 2022 at the margin of the plenary meeting of the Conference of the Future of Europe, which will focus on the follow-up to the transparency pledge subscribed in October 2021. Additional details will be shared at the coming meetings of the General Affairs Group.

b. Ombudsman file 360/2021/TE

The General Secretariat debriefed delegations on the positive outcome of this inquiry (the Ombudsman found no maladministration by the Council in refusing to grant full access to documents containing the negotiating strategy of the Council on provisions of the draft legislative text for which no agreement has yet been reached in the trilogue negotiations).

The Chair concluded the meeting informing delegations that the next WPI meeting (transparency configuration) is foreseen on 28 April 2022.

² <https://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/homePage.do?redir=false&locale=en>