



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 8 December 2015
(OR. en)

14173/15

LIMITE

PV/CONS 64

DRAFT MINUTES¹

Subject: **3427th** meeting of the Council of the European Union (**GENERAL AFFAIRS**) held in Brussels on 17 and 18 November 2015

¹ Information on Council legislative deliberations, on other cases of Council deliberations open to the public and on public debates may be found in [Addendum 1](#) to these minutes.

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1. **Adoption of the provisional agenda**
13824/15 OJ/CONS 64

The Council adopted the above agenda.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

2. **Approval of the list of "A" items**
13825/15 PTS A 87

The Council adopted the list of "A" items as listed in 13285/15.

The documents on item 9 should read as follows:

Item 9: 13404/15 PECHE 388
+ ADD 1 REV 1
13403/15 PECHE 387
+ COR 1
+ COR 2 (et)
+ COR 3 (bg)
+ COR 4 (de)

Statements to item 9. are set out in the Addendum.

3. **Resolutions, decisions and opinions adopted by the European Parliament at its part-sessions in Strasbourg from 5 to 8 October 2015 and from 26 to 29 October 2015, and in Brussels on 14 October 2015**
13318/15 PE-RE 8

The Council took note of the resolutions, opinions and decisions adopted by the European Parliament at its above mentioned part-sessions, which have been or would be taken into consideration when the relevant issues were examined.

4. **Preparation for the European Council meeting on 17 and 18 December 2015**
= Annotated draft agenda
13570/15 CO EUR-PREP 43

The Council took note of the annotated draft agenda for the European Council on 17 and 18 December 2015.

5. Ensuring respect for the rule of law

= Dialogue and exchange of views
13744/15 JAI 821 FREMP 243
+ COR 1 (nl)

The Council held its first annual rule of law dialogue. All Member States were invited to share one best practice and one challenge together with a possible solution in the field of rule of law at national law. Member States were also invited to react to the Presidency paper on rule of law in the era of digitalisation. The Netherlands delegation will organise a second dialogue in May 2016. The Slovakian delegation will evaluate during its Presidency the experience acquired on the basis of this dialogue, as foreseen in the 2014 conclusions of the Council and the member states meeting within the Council on ensuring respect for the rule of law.

The Commission presented the outcomes of its first annual colloquium on fundamental rights.

6. Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Regulation

= Exchange of views

The Presidency informed the Council on the state of play of the negotiations on an agreement between the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council on better regulation.

Ministers provided guidance in view of finalising the negotiations with the Parliament and the Commission.

7. Annual programming - Commission's work programme for 2016 ²

= Presentation by the Commission and exchange of views
13486/15 CODEC 1426 INST 376 POLGEN 157 PE 175
+ ADD 1 to ADD 6

Ministers heard a presentation by Vice-President Timmermans on the Commission work programme for 2016.

² Public debate - Article 8(3) of the Council's Rules of Procedure.

8. European Semester 2016

- = European Semester roadmap 2016
 - Presentation by the Presidency and the incoming Presidency
13677/15 CO EUR-PREP 48 POLGEN 160 ENV 669 MI 685 COMPET 491
IND 171 ECOFIN 828 SOC 638 EDUC 290 EMPL 420

The Council took note of a presentation by the Luxembourg and forthcoming Netherlands Presidencies of the roadmap for the 2016 European Semester.

9. Any other business

No issues were raised under this item.

Meeting on 18 November 2015

10. Shift towards a low-carbon economy: contribution of cohesion policy and more generally the European Structural and Investment Funds

- = Exchange of views
- = Draft Council conclusions
 - Adoption
13701/15 FSTR 73 FC 73 REGIO 88 SOC 639 AGRISTR 74 PECHE 410
CADREFIN 70 ENV 697 CLIMA 128

The Council had an exchange of views and adopted Council Conclusions on: The shift towards a low-carbon economy: the contribution of Cohesion Policy and more generally of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), as set out in doc. 14261/15.

11. 25 years of Interreg: its contribution to the cohesion policy goals

- = Exchange of views
- = Draft Council conclusions
 - Adoption
13705/15 FSTR 75 FC 75 REGIO 90 SOC 641 AGRISTR 76 PECHE 412
CADREFIN 72

The Council had an exchange of views and adopted Council Conclusions on 25 years of Interreg: its contribution to the cohesion policy goals, as set out in doc. 14265/15.

Hungary made a statement as set out in the Annex.

12. Simplification: priorities and requirements of the Member States as regards the European Structural and Investment Funds

- = Exchange of views
 - = Draft Council conclusions
 - Adoption
- 13703/15 FSTR 74 FC 74 REGIO 89 SOC 640 AGRISTR 75 PECHE 411
CADREFIN 71

The Council had an exchange of views and adopted Council Conclusions on Simplification: priorities and requirements of the Member States as regards the European Structural and Investment Funds, as set out in doc. 14266/1/15 REV 1.

13. Any other business

No issues were raised under this item.

STATEMENTS FOR THE COUNCIL MINUTES

- Ad "B" item 11:** **25 years of Interreg: its contribution to the cohesion policy goals**
= **Exchange of views**
= **Draft Council conclusions**
 – **Adoption**

STATEMENT BY HUNGARY

"Hungary firmly believes that the objectives of cohesion policy are firmly anchored in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and these objectives remain valid even at the time of the migration crisis. Therefore it is clear that cohesion policy resources, including those of the European Territorial Objective goal, should first and foremost contribute to these Treaty objectives, as well as to the European Strategy for growth and jobs, and not tackling the symptoms of the migration crisis."
