



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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LIMITE

PE-QE 737

**PRELIMINARY DRAFT REPLY TO WRITTEN QUESTION
E-5495/08 by Hans-Peter Martin (NI)**

from : General Secretariat of the Council
to : Permanent Representations of the Member States

Subject : **" Transparency of the Council II "**

1. Delegations will find attached:
 - the text of the above Written Question;
 - a preliminary draft reply prepared by the General Secretariat.

2. If no comments have been received from delegations by **17.00 on 13 November 2008**, this preliminary draft reply will be submitted to the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1) and to the Council for approval.

Any comments received will be examined by the Working Party on General Affairs.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5495/08
put to the Council
by Hans-Peter Martin (NI)

Subject: Transparency of the Council II

What proportion of the total travel expenses available for delegates attending Council meetings and sittings of the Council's preparatory bodies in 2005, 2006 and 2007 were paid to individual Member States (in euros)?

In 2005, 2006 and 2007 the total number of Council meetings was 69, 76 and 67 respectively. At how many of these sittings were the ministers of the individual Member States present?

How many items were there on the agenda at the 74 Council meetings in 2006 and the 68 meetings in 2007? How many of these agenda items were discussed publicly in 2006 and in 2007?

In 2005, 2006 and 2007 the total number of Council meetings was 69, 76 and 67 respectively. How many votes were taken in each of these years? How many times was the result of a vote automatically made public? How many times was the result of a vote not automatically made public, but rather made available to the public at the request of a member of the Council? How many times was the result of a vote not made public?

REPLY

to Written Question E-5495/08

by Hans-Peter Martin (NI)

Provision for delegations' travel expenses is made in Section II – Council (Title 2, Chapter 22, Article 220) of the EU budget. In the 2005 budget, EUR 29 162 000 was earmarked for travel expenses, followed by EUR 30 779 000 in 2006 and EUR 34 637 000 in 2007. This total amount is shared among Member States on the basis of a percentage resulting from an allocation scale based, amongst other things, on the distance from the Member State to Brussels, the average cost of an airline ticket or, in some cases, a railway ticket, etc.

With regard to ministers' presence at Council meetings, it should be noted that each Council member must constitute its delegation as it thinks fit. In addition, an attendance list giving the name and position of Member States' representatives is published by the General Secretariat of the Council in the press release drawn up after every Council meeting. These press releases are published on the Council Internet site (www.consilium.europa.eu, under "Press", section "Press releases", subsection "Council meetings").

For the number of items on the Council agenda in 2006 and 2007, the Honourable Member is invited to consult these agendas, which are accessible on the Council Internet site (under "Documents", section "Legislative Transparency", subsection "Timetables and agendas").

With regard to public debates in 2006 and 2007, according to data compiled by the General Secretariat of the Council, in 2006 and 2007 respectively, the Council held 174 and 148 public debates on legislative acts under the codecision procedure, and 7 and 4 public debates on legislative acts to be adopted under other legislative procedures. In 2006 the Council held 56 public debates on specific issues or on programmes and priorities. In 2007 it held 36 such debates.

As regards voting practices in 2005, 2006 and 2007, the Council would refer the Honourable Member to the reply already given to Parliamentary Question P-3445/07. In addition, the Honourable Member is invited to consult the monthly summaries drawn up by the General Secretariat of the Council, which are also accessible on the Council Internet site (under "Documents", section "Legislative Transparency", subheading "Summary of Council Acts"). These list legislative and non-legislative acts of the Council including the results of votes, explanation of voting and statements in the minutes, when the Council is acting in its capacity as legislator within the meaning of Article 7 and in accordance with the provisions of Article 207(3) of the TEC.

As regards the number of legislative acts adopted (with publication of the results of votes, in accordance with Article 9(1) of the Council's Rules of Procedure) in 2005, 2006 and 2007, these amount to 154, 236 and 179 respectively. The number of non-legislative acts (where publication of the results of votes is not mandatory) adopted over the same period was 292 in 2005, 327 in 2006 and 335 in 2007.

Lastly, as regards votes by Council members on the adoption of non-legislative acts, these are made public at the request of the Council member concerned in the press release drawn up following the Council meeting. However, the Council does not have any statistics to show how many times the result of a vote not automatically made public was not in fact made public.
