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European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

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Subject: Managing demographic change in Europe
- Council conclusions (12 December 2023)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on managing demographic change in Europe, approved by the Council (General Affairs) at its meeting held on 12 December 2023.

Council conclusions on managing demographic change in Europe**CONSIDERING THAT:**

1. In its conclusions¹ of June 2023, the European Council invited the Commission to present a toolbox to address demographic challenges and notably their impact on Europe's competitive edge.
2. The Granada Declaration of 6 October 2023 emphasised the resolve to address demographic challenges as part of the efforts to build a stronger, more dynamic, competitive and cohesive Europe in a changing world.
3. The Commission's Communication of 11 October 2023 on "Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action"², was presented at the 24 October 2023 meeting of the Council of General Affairs, where Ministers called for a follow up to this initiative.

WELCOMING:

4. The Commission's Communication of 11 October 2023 on "Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action", including its analysis of the demographic challenges in the Members States and the call for a comprehensive approach to managing demographic change that empowers all generations to harness their talents and fulfil their aspirations by reconciling family and personal aspirations with paid work; supporting and empowering younger and older generations, including by facilitating their access to the labour market and affordable housing; attracting talent globally through targeted and mutually beneficial labour migration initiatives, where necessary.

¹ EUCO 7/23.

² 14191/23.

5. The Commission's commitment to take further steps to support Member States in managing demographic change through a set of policy tools available at EU level, notably with a view to reinforce the data and evidence base, emphasising the importance of investments, to support demography-related policies at all levels and to ensure that no region in the EU is left behind.

THE COUNCIL WELCOMES THE COMMISSION'S INTENTION TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOOLBOX BY:

6. Mainstreaming demographic concerns in relevant policy proposals at EU level and their accompanying impact assessments, where appropriate.
7. Reinforcing analysis on key themes and challenges posed by demographic change in order to provide an effective and coherent response. In this regard, the Council furthermore acknowledges the importance of support by scientific evidence-based analysis and policy advice, notably provided by relevant research establishments on the various aspects of population development within the European Union, Member States and regions.
8. Encouraging regular dialogues and exchanges with Member States on all dimensions of demography through dedicated structures and resources and, when applicable, designated national demography coordinators.
9. Ensuring that no citizen and no region in the EU is left behind, regardless of their size or degree of urbanisation, by reflecting on how EU policies could help Member States address demographic challenges, particularly in the context of the forthcoming release in early 2024 of the 9th cohesion report and the report on the implementation of the long-term vision for rural areas.

THE COUNCIL UNDERLINES THE NEED FOR FURTHER ACTION TO MANAGE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN EUROPE BY:

10. Undertaking continuous efforts to reflect demographic change and its impact on competitiveness, human capital and equality, in view of further discussions on a topic of such strategic importance for the Union.