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SUMMARY RECORD
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE
11, 13 and 16 March 2026

COREPER (PART 1)

Statements to the “II” item set out in doc. 6998/26

Fisheries

3. Regulation on European fisheries and aquaculture statistics and repealing Regulations (EC) No 1921/2006, (EC) No 762/2008, (EC) No 216/2009, (EC) No 217/2009 and (EC) No 218/2009  6885/26
Mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament

Statement by Austria

”Austria fully supports the objective of establishing a coherent and streamlined EU statistical framework. Reliable data are indispensable for evidence-based policymaking and for a well-functioning internal market. At the same time, the European Union has set itself the clear and urgent objective of simplifying legislation, reducing administrative burden and strengthening Europe’s competitiveness. Austria strongly supports this agenda.

We therefore welcome the Presidency’s revised text in Article 4(3), providing for an exemption from certain administrative obligations for Member States with low aquaculture production volumes, such as Austria. This proportionate approach is essential to avoid undue burdens on micro and small family-run businesses, while safeguarding the quality and representativeness of EU statistics.

The revised text constitutes a solid basis for addressing issues related to small production volumes at regional level in the implementing act. The transition from enterprise-level to establishment-level (pond-level) reporting may now be proportionately specified for relevant variables and dimensions.

Nevertheless, Austria notes that certain aspects of Articles 7 and 9, particularly on data quality and confidentiality, may require further clarification in order to ensure full alignment with Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and the fundamental principles of European statistics.

In the spirit of compromise, Austria supports the compromise proposal.”

Statement by Germany

“Zum Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über europäische Statistiken über Fischerei und Aquakultur sowie zur Aufhebung der Verordnungen (EG) Nr. 1921/2006, (EG) Nr. 762/2008, (EG) Nr. 216/2009, (EG) Nr. 217/2009 und (EG) Nr. 218/2009

Dok. 6472/26 PECHE STATIS

Deutschland dankt der zyprischen Ratspräsidentschaft für ihre intensiven Bemühungen um einen fairen Kompromiss und um die Berücksichtigung der Anliegen der Mitgliedstaaten. Deutschland begrüßt insbesondere die Bestrebungen, den Kommissionsvorschlag zu den Statistiken der Aquakultur zu verbessern und den zu erwartenden Anstieg des bürokratischen Aufwands für die betroffenen Unternehmen zu begrenzen.

Es muss jedoch darauf hingewiesen werden, dass der bürokratische Aufwand für Aquakulturbetriebe im Vergleich zum Status quo steigen wird. Deutschland ist überzeugt, dass neue statistische Anforderungen nur dann eingeführt werden sollten, wenn dies durch den Verzicht auf statistische Anforderungen in anderen Bereichen kompensiert wird. Dies ist auch unerlässlich, um die EU-Ziele zum Bürokratieabbau zu erreichen.

Im weiteren Verlauf wird Deutschland weiterhin auf ein ausgewogenes Kosten-Nutzen-Verhältnis und die Begrenzung des bürokratischen Aufwands für die betroffenen Wirtschaftsakteure hinarbeiten.”

Courtesy translation

“Germany thanks the Cypriot Presidency for its intensive efforts to reach a fair compromise and to address the Member States’ concerns. Germany appreciates in particular the attempts to achieve improvements to the Commission's proposal regarding aquaculture statistics and to limit the expected increase in the bureaucratic burden for the companies concerned.

However, it must still be noted that the bureaucratic burden for aquaculture farmers will increase compared to the status quo. Germany is convinced that new statistical requirements should only be implemented if this is compensated for by foregoing statistical requirements elsewhere. This is also essential in order to achieve the EU's bureaucracy reduction targets.

In the further proceedings, Germany will continue to work towards achieving a balanced cost-benefit ratio and limiting the bureaucratic burden for the economic actors concerned.”

Statement by Portugal

”Portugal can support the Presidency’s compromise text on the Proposal for a Regulation mentioned above. However, it expresses concerns regarding article 9 (Transmitting to international, intergovernmental and regional fisheries management organisations).

The provisions in article 9 exceed the scope of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European Statistics, by establishing a legal basis for transmitting confidential statistical data by Eurostat to international, intergovernmental and regional fisheries management organisations, even if subject to the explicit written authorization of the Member State concerned.

Statistical confidentiality is a fundamental principle enshrined in both Union and national statistical legislation and further developed in the European Statistics Code of Practice. This principle is essential to maintaining the trust of data providers and ensuring the credibility of official statistics at the European and national levels. Strict rules are in place to guarantee the confidentiality and security of individual statistical information collected for the development, production and dissemination of official statistics, including mechanisms to prevent and penalise any breaches of statistical confidentiality.

International, intergovernmental and regional fisheries management organisations are not bound by Union or national statistical legislation and, therefore, cannot be held accountable for compliance with statistical confidentiality. This lack of enforceable accountability raises concerns about the risk of breaches, as these organisations are not subject to sanctions in the event of non-compliance.

Furthermore, it is not feasible to establish a single model for processing confidential data across these organisations, which could lead to discrepancies in statistical results.

In light of these considerations, Portugal is concerned that the proposed provisions in Article 9 may undermine the reputation and integrity of the European Statistical System.”

Statement by Slovenia

“Slovenia is concerned that the Presidency compromise on the Proposal for a Regulation of the European parliament and of the Council on European fisheries and aquaculture statistics is not in full compliance with the principle of statistical confidentiality laid down by the Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics. The proposed Regulation in its present form would establish a legal basis for the transmission of confidential statistical data to international, intergovernmental and regional fisheries management organisations.

Statistical confidentiality is essential for maintaining the trust of data providers and the credibility of European statistics. Any extension of access to confidential data beyond the European statistical system requires particularly careful consideration and strict adherence to the provisions on statistical confidentiality stipulated in Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics.

Slovenia underscores that international, intergovernmental and regional fisheries management organisations that are not subject to EU law or the national laws of EU Member states can not be legally bound by the rules on compliance with statistical confidentiality nor can they be held accountable through sanctions in the event of a breach.

Against this background, Slovenia is unable to support the Presidency compromise.”

COREPER (PART 2)

Statements to the “I” item set out in doc. 7127/1/26 REV 1

EU positions for international negotiations

69. Council Decision on the EU position in the EU-Ukraine Association Council as regards the establishment of the Public Administration Reform Sub-Committee and the endorsement of the establishment of the Joint Consultative Committee
Adoption
- ☐ 6457/26 + COR 1
6296/26 + ADD 1
COEST

Statement by by Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden

“Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden recall that Ukraine is an EU candidate country and reaffirm the steadfast support for Ukraine’s path towards EU membership, and welcome the significant progress Ukraine has achieved so far under the most challenging circumstances. We recognise that the Public Administration Reform (PAR) is a fundamental pillar of the enlargement process, and strengthening capacities of the public institutions will be crucial for Ukraine to advance on its EU integration path. Dialogue and cooperation between local authorities in the European Union and those in Ukraine may provide an integral contribution to the integration of Ukraine into the Union.”

Statement to the “II” items set out in doc. 7127/1/26 REV 1

General Affairs

19. Meeting of the Council (General Affairs) on 17 March 2026:
Preparation

- b) Amendment to the European Electoral Act
Agreement in principle
Request for the consent of the European Parliament
- ☐ 6792/26
6708/26

Statement by the Netherlands and Denmark

“The Netherlands and Denmark underline the importance of establishing an arrangement that enables Members of the European Parliament to participate in plenary voting during pregnancy and in the months following childbirth. In this context, the Netherlands and Denmark welcome today’s adoption of the Council decision amending the Electoral act, which will allow Members to temporarily delegate their vote so that they may focus on their private and family life.

At the same time, the Netherlands and Denmark would have preferred a broader scope for the proposal, notably covering situations such as paternity leave and long-term illness. In addition, the Netherlands and Denmark note that a temporary replacement scheme would have the potential to capture the full scope of the duties of a Member of the European Parliament.

The Netherlands and Denmark therefore regard today's proposal as a positive first step and stand ready to continue working with the European Parliament, Council and Commission on further steps related to parental leave arrangements for members of the European Parliament.

The Netherlands and Denmark also note that the principle of a free mandate and voting without binding instructions is firmly embedded across the European Union and in the EU Electoral Act. It is essential that elected representatives are not bound by voting instructions and are able to vote freely. The Netherlands and Denmark wish to emphasise that the proposal on the transfer of voting rights does not entail any derogation from the principle of the free mandate, as laid down in the second sentence of Article 6(1) of the EU Electoral Act."

Statement by Hungary

"Hungary recognizes and promotes equality between women and men 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.

Furthermore, equality between women and men is enshrined as a fundamental value in the Treaties of the European Union, in particular in Article 2 of the TEU and Article 8 of the TFEU.


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 reference to the "equality between women and men".

Regarding the equality of opportunity and social inclusion, Hungary supports the bottom-up approach in empowering under-represented groups instead of the top-down quota-based access.

Statement by Sweden

"Depending on how childcare responsibilities for newborn children are shared within a family, both male and female Members of the European Parliament may find their ability to participate in parliamentary work impeded. Sweden would therefore have preferred a broader amendment that, in addition to mothers who have recently given birth, also covers the other parent of a newborn child. Nonetheless, Sweden welcomes today's decision as a positive step towards promoting gender equality and family-friendly working conditions for Members of the European Parliament.

26. Omnibus VII: Regulation amending Regulations on the simplification of the implementation of harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Digital Omnibus on AI)
Mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament

 6969/26 REV 1

Statement by Belgium

“La Belgique salue les avancées majeures du Digital Omnibus AI, issues de débats constructifs, et réaffirme son attachement à un équilibre entre simplification et protection des droits fondamentaux, équilibre qui a pu être trouvé dans ce texte de compromis que nous soutenons donc.

Nous soulignons en particulier l'importance de l'amendement visant à interdire les systèmes d'IA capables de générer des contenus sexuellement explicites non consentis. Il s'agit d'une problématique importante sur laquelle il est nécessaire d'agir, notamment afin d'offrir une protection ex ante adéquate dans la matière. Cette mesure est un prérequis à notre adhésion et s'inscrit pleinement dans les valeurs européennes.

Par ailleurs, nous souhaitons revenir sur 2 points que nous regrettons :

Premièrement, si la période de grâce pour le marquage des contenus générés par IA s'explique par des défis techniques, nous regrettons le report de cette obligation. La Belgique considère que cela soulève des questions majeures quant à la protection des individus et à la transparence face aux deepfakes, des enjeux qui ne peuvent être différés sans risque considérable.

Deuxièmement, la Belgique accueille favorablement les précisions apportées sur la détection des biais, mais regrette que la notion de stricte nécessité ne soit pas davantage clarifiée et que le recours à des solutions alternatives, comme les données synthétiques, ne soit pas davantage encouragé pour garantir une approche équilibrée et responsable.”

Statement by Germany

1. Deutschland verfolgt seit Beginn der Verhandlungen zum KI-Omnibus ambitionierte Anpassungen, die die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Innovationskraft unserer Unternehmen entfesseln, das Skalierungspotential von KI erschließen und echte Vereinfachungen des Rechtsrahmens bedeuten, ohne dabei das Schutzniveau der KI-Verordnung zu reduzieren. Der von der Ratspräsidentschaft als Verhandlungsmandat vorgelegte Text ist vor dem Hintergrund inakzeptabel. Er wird dem Ambitionsanspruch Deutschlands, aber auch der Union selbst nicht gerecht. Er reduziert die erhebliche Rechtsunsicherheit am Markt nicht. Darüber hinaus merkt Deutschland an, dass es angesichts der Bedeutung der KI-Regulierung für den Europäischen Standort einer hinreichenden Beratungszeit bedarf, um tatsächlich spürbare Erleichterungen zu erreichen.

2. Deutschland hat Vorschläge für einen ambitionierten Omnibus vorgelegt. Es hat wiederholt Änderungen eingebracht, die dem Anspruch der Simplifizierung gerecht würden. Sie wurden von der Präsidentschaft nicht berücksichtigt. Um die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Innovationskraft der EU spürbar zu steigern, sind für Deutschland die folgenden Punkte zentral. Sie müssen im Trilog adressiert werden:

- **Better Alignment Paket für Rechtssicherheit und Kohärenz:** Klarstellungen zum Geltungsbereich der KI-VO, zu entscheidenden Definitionen und im Zusammenspiel zwischen KI-VO und anderen sektorspezifischen Harmonisierungsvorschriften der regulierten Industrien, insbesondere zur Vermeidung doppelter oder widersprechender Anforderungen für Hoch-Risiko KI Systeme und unnötiger Bürokratie;
- **Realistische Fristen:** Angesichts von Verzögerungen bei Standards, insbesondere für Transparenzanforderungen an KI-Systeme im industriellen Kontext;
- Maßnahmen, die einen **Flaschenhals bei notifizierten Stellen** abwenden;
- Gewährleistung **praxistauglicherer Leitlinien**.

3. Deutschland unterstützt die Aufnahme eines Verbots von KI-Systemen, die sexuell eindeutige Inhalte oder Material über sexuellen Kindesmissbrauch generieren, verändern oder reproduzieren. Ziel muss es sein, schwerwiegendes und besonders verwerfliches Verhalten zu verbieten. Gleichzeitig weist Deutschland auf die Gefahr unbeabsichtigter Konsequenzen hin: Aufgrund der sehr hohen Strafandrohungen verlangt der Verhältnismäßigkeitsgrundsatz einen bestimmten, eng gefassten Anwendungsbereich. Der Verbotstatbestand muss daher so gefasst sein, dass die Entwicklung und der Betrieb völlig unbedenklicher KI Systeme nicht behindert werden. Dies wird durch den von der Ratspräsidentschaft vorgeschlagene Text zur Ergänzung von Artikel 5 nicht erreicht. Danach soll bereits die Nutzung („use“) von KI-Systemen verboten sein, die in der Lage sind („capability“), entsprechendes Material zu erzeugen, zu manipulieren oder zu reproduzieren. Zudem kann aufgrund eventuell bestehender nationaler Strafvorschriften, die über eine Strafbarkeit der Herstellung von kinderpornographischen oder sonstigen Deepfakes die Nutzer entsprechender Systeme bereits sanktionieren, im Einzelfall ein Verstoß gegen das unionsrechtliche Doppelbestrafungsverbot drohen. Entscheidend ist deshalb eine Begrenzung der Verbotsvorschrift auf Anbieter und juristische Personen sowie rechtlich bestimmbare und eingrenzbar Kriterien (zB „Zweckrichtung“ oder „angemessene Schutzvorkehrungen“).

4. Deutschland kann dem vorliegenden Text in seiner jetzigen Form nach alledem deshalb nicht zustimmen.

Courtesy translation

“1. Since the beginning of the negotiations on the AI Omnibus, Germany has pursued ambitious adjustments that would help to unleash the competitiveness and innovative strength of our companies, tap the scaling potential of AI, and implement real simplifications of the legal framework without reducing the level of protection of the AI Regulation. Against this background, the text submitted by the Presidency of the Council as a negotiating mandate falls far short of Germany's ambition, but also of the Union's own. Furthermore, Germany notes that the temporal and substantive dimension of the process steered by the Presidency does not do justice to the importance of AI regulation for the European location and makes a substantive debate on tangible improvements impossible.

2. Germany has submitted proposals for an ambitious omnibus. It has repeatedly introduced changes that would meet the claim of simplification. These were not taken into account by the presidency. To significantly increase the competitiveness and innovative strength of the EU, the following points are central for Germany. They must be addressed in the trilogue:

- **Better Alignment Package for legal certainty and coherence:** Clarifications on the scope of the AI Regulation, on decisive definitions, and in the interaction between the AI Regulation and other sector-specific harmonization provisions of the regulated industries, in particular to avoid double or conflicting requirements for high-risk AI systems and unnecessary bureaucracy;
- **Realistic deadlines:** Given delays in standards, particularly for transparency requirements for AI systems in the industrial context;
- Measures to **prevent a bottleneck at notified bodies;**
- **Ensure more practical guidelines.**

3. Germany supports the inclusion of a ban on AI systems that generate, alter, or reproduce sexually explicit content or material involving child sexual abuse. The aim must be to prohibit serious and particularly reprehensible behaviour. At the same time, Germany points to the danger of unintended consequences: Due to the very high penalties, the principle of proportionality requires a certain, narrowly defined scope of application. The prohibition must therefore be formulated in such a way that the development and operation of completely harmless AI systems are not hindered. This is not achieved by the text proposed by the Presidency of the Council to amend Article 5. Under its wording, the mere use of AI systems that are capable of generating, manipulating, or reproducing such material should be prohibited. Moreover, due to possibly existing national criminal provisions that already sanction users of such systems for the production of child pornographic or other deepfakes, there may be a risk of violating the Union law principle of ne bis in idem in individual cases. Therefore, it is critical to limit the prohibition to providers and legal entities as well as legally determinable and delimitable criteria (e.g. "purpose" or "appropriate protective measures").

4. Germany cannot agree to the current text in its present form for all these reasons.”

Statement by Greece

“Extension of obligation – Article 111 (new paragraph 4)

Despite our interventions in earlier versions of the text, paragraph 30b of the proposal, which concerns Article 111 (new paragraph 4), remains in the text.

We strongly object to this and remain of the opinion that no further extension should be provided for, given that this is an obligation of major importance, directly linked to trust in information and the protection of the democratic process.”

29. a) 14th World Trade Organisation Ministerial Conference
(Yaoundé, 26-29 March 2026)

- i) Conclusions at the start of the ministerial conference
Approval

6975/26

Statement by Hungary

“Hungary will not consider the text in paragraph 9 of the Council conclusions to be adopted by the Council at the start of the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference about the war in Ukraine as an agreed Union policy, which thus is not to be replicated as agreed language in future EU documents.”

- iii) Council Decision on the position to be taken on
behalf of the European Union
Adoption

5539/26

Statement by Hungary

“Hungary will not consider the text in recital 8 of the Council Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference about the war in Ukraine as an agreed Union policy, which thus is not to be replicated as agreed language in future EU documents.”

Economic and Financial Affairs

32. Regulation establishing the Union Customs Code and the European Union Customs Authority 🗳️ 6556/26 + COR 1
6557/26
Preparation for the trilogue

Statement by the Commission

- “Once established in the Union Customs Code, the Union handling fee will constitute a traditional own resource (TOR) within the meaning of Article 2(1)(a) of [current Own resources decision] Council Decision (EU, Euratom) 2020/2053 of 14 December 2020 on the system of own resources of the European Union, because it is an amount to be established by the institutions of the Union in respect of trade with third countries.
- Accordingly, under the current Own Resources Decision, Member States retain 25% of TOR whereas the rest is EU budget revenue
- However, Article 13(9) of the Commission Proposal for the new Own Resources Decision¹ introduces a transitory measure under which the handling fee shall not be made available to the Union budget until the end of this MFF², Should this provision be agreed, it would mean that the Member States would be the beneficiaries of the revenue generated by the fee until the end of 2027.
- The details of implementing such an agreement will be laid down in the Making Available Regulation proposal.”
- Until this provision is agreed by the Member States and enters into force, the provisions of the ORD currently in force apply. It is hence in the clear interest of the Member States to agree on the new Own Resources Decision as soon as possible.”

¹ Proposal for a Council Decision on the system of own resources of the European Union and repealing Decision (EU, Euratom) 2020/2053 (COM/2025/574 final).

² Article 13(9): “In the period between [1 November 2026] and 31 December 2027, by derogation from paragraph 3 of Article 9 and the rules adopted pursuant to point (b) of Article 10 of Decision (EU, Euratom) 2020/2053, amounts of traditional own resources related to the handling of the release for free circulation of goods sold in distance sales shall not be made available and the rules related to controls, supervision and reporting shall not apply to those amounts.

Other items

34. Renovation of the Justus Lipsius building: financing options³ 7109/26
Guidance for further work IMM
FIN

Statement by Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands and Slovenia

- “The inclusion of a **budgetary provision** in the draft estimate of the Council and the European Council for 2027 shall finance only a **preliminary study** (rather than the so called “in-depth architectural and engineering study”, which will be **possibly** approached - based on the results of the **preliminary study**).

The **preliminary study** shall draw a clear picture of the **rationale, key objectives/parameters of the possible renovation** and shall contain **key elements**, such as *i)* legal & regulatory compliance, *ii)* technical feasibility assessment, *iii)* financial viability analysis, *iv)* risk assessment & mitigation, *v)* programme & delivery strategy, *vi)* sustainability aspects, etc.

For the purpose of the **best possible cost efficiency**, all the relevant **key elements of the preliminary study**, mentioned above, shall be **outlined for each** of the following **scenarios**:

- consequences in the event that renovation works are **not carried out** (so as to provide evidence that no renovation works would lead to non - compliance with legal obligations and estimate the correspondent financial impact);
- renovation works required to ensure exclusively and solely **compliance with legal obligations**;
- **profound** renovation.

The **procurement documents** for the **preliminary study** shall include all the **mentioned elements** (in the **tender specifications**, including the **technical specifications**). The **General Secretariat of the Council** shall **inform COREPER** about their implementation before starting the tender.

The **General Secretariat of the Council** shall **revert to the Council** once this **preliminary study** is delivered for the **Council to decide on the way forward** and, if necessary, the extent of renovation works to be carried out.

- The discussion on the financing options for the renovation will take place in COMBUD to prepare a decision by COREPER after the determination of the extent of the renovation works based on the outcome of the preliminary study. In order to prepare a decision in the context of the MFF 2028-2034, the discussion on the means provided for the Justus Lipsius project in heading 4 will take place in the ad hoc working party on the next multiannual financial framework.

The decision on the amount provided for in the next MFF may have to be taken before the preliminary study is available and the use of the financial means provided for in heading 4 for the possible renovation will depend on the final decision by the Council after the study has been analysed. Therefore, it has to be ensured that if the scenario chosen by the Council proves to be less costly than provided, the remaining financial means cannot be used for other purposes.”

³ In closed session.

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- First reading
 - Special legislative procedure
 - Item based on a Commission proposal
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