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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2)/Council
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Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions " Harnessing talent in Europe's regions" - Approval

1. On 17 January 2023, the General Secretariat of the Council received the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions "Harnessing talent in Europe's regions".

2. The Commission presented the communication at the meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee on 18 January 2023 and at the meeting of the Working Party on Structural Measures and Outermost Regions of 24 January 2023.

4. Draft Presidency conclusions were examined at the meetings of the Working Party on Structural Measures and Outermost Regions of 13 February[1], 28 February 2023[2] and 14 March[3]. Delegations agreed to the draft Council conclusions as set out in the Annex[4] to this note.

5. The Permanent Representatives Committee is therefore invited to recommend to the Council to approve, as an "A" item at a forthcoming meeting, these Council conclusions as set out in the Annex to this note.

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1 WK 1270/2023 INIT.
2 WK 1270/2023 REV 1.
3 WK 1270/2023 REV 2.
4 WK 1270/2023 REV 3.

ANNEX

DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS
on Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions "Harnessing talent in Europe's regions"

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

(1) WELCOMES the Communication COM(2023) 32 final from 17 January 2023 by the European Commission (hereafter referred to as "the Commission") and its focus on the importance of boosting the development of talents to mitigate the asymmetric impact of the demographic transition in European regions, notably those facing additional challenges from a sharper reduction of their working age population and a reduction of the share of tertiary educated persons or young people;

(2) ACKNOWLEDGES the Communication as a positive sign to start the European year of skills;

(3) RECOGNISES the importance of talent to enable, inter alia, the green and digital transitions;

(4) HIGHLIGHTS, however, that demographic challenges of various natures and with different impacts concern all EU regions, including subregions, and may trigger new and growing territorial disparities, hampering their resilience and competitiveness, if left unaddressed;

(5) WELCOMES Commission's intention to support regions facing or at risk of facing a talent development trap, and NOTES the plan to launch a Talent Booster Mechanism;

(6) AGREES with the Commission that targeted measures to promote, retain and attract talent are necessary to transform impacted regions into dynamic talent-driven locations and that development and implementation of place-based policies, including smart specialisation strategies, as well as the bottom-up approach, are essential in this respect;

(7) In this regard, UNDERLINES the importance of coordination, without added administrative burden, of EU funding programmes and sources, and of holistic strategies aimed at supporting economic revitalisation and competitiveness of regions facing or at risk of facing a talent development trap, by tackling inefficiencies in education and the labour market, in housing, healthcare, sustainability measures, connectivity and other important services that influence the attractiveness of a region;

(8) STRESSES the importance of capacity building for stimulating the ability of regions facing or at risk of facing a talent development trap to attract highly skilled persons, and EMPHASISES the need to share good practice, in particular from the pilot projects, to the benefit of all;

(9) CALLS on the Commission to implement and monitor activities included in the Communication, without increasing the administrative burden, and INVITES the Member States and stakeholders to explore the possibilities offered by the Communication, notably when implementing existing and designing future EU initiatives and policies in cooperation with the Commission.