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PRESSE 5
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OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3791st Council meeting

Foreign Affairs

Items approved by written procedure between 23 March and 6 May 2021

Brussels, 6 May 2021

President

Josep Borrell Fontelles
High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security
Policy

P R E S S

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none

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
 - Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
 - Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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ITEMS DEBATED

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED***Temporary derogation from the Council's rules of procedure***

Owing to exceptional circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, on 23 April 2020 the Council agreed on a temporary derogation from its rules of procedure to make it easier to take decisions by written procedure. The temporary derogation is currently in force until 21 May 2021 ([2021/454](#)). It may be renewed, if justified by a continuation of the current exceptional circumstances.

The derogation allows member states' EU ambassadors sitting in the Committee of Permanent Representatives (Coreper) to decide to use the written procedure in accordance with the voting rule applicable to the adoption of the act itself. It means that the requirement for unanimity for all decisions adopted using the written procedure no longer applies. The objective is to facilitate the use of the written procedure to help ensure the continuity of Council business.

For more information on the temporary derogation, see the [press release](#).

As the latest formal Council meeting was held on 22 March, the results of written procedures concluded between 23 March and 6 May 2021, which would otherwise have been communicated in Outcomes of Council meetings, are presented below. The results which have been communicated by means of a Council press release might have not been included.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS**Council extends the mandate of Operation IRINI until 2023 (2260/21)**

The Council today extended the mandate of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) military operation in the Mediterranean - EUNAVFOR MED IRINI - until 31 March 2023. The decision was taken in the wake of the Strategic Review of the operation carried out by the Political and Security Committee. In this context, the Council has defined more precisely the practical arrangements for the disposal of items seized by the operation when implementing the UN arms embargo on Libya.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Council decision concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina - renewal

The Council adopted a decision extending the application of the decision until 31 March 2022.

Council implementing regulation concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya

The Council decided not to maintain Khalifa Ghwell, former prime minister and defence minister of the internationally unrecognised General National Congress of Libya, on the list of individuals and entities subject to EU restrictive measures in view of their role in acts that threaten the peace, stability and security of Libya, or that obstruct or undermine the successful completion of its political transition.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Somalia: EU adds three people to Al-Shabaab sanctions list

The Council decided to add three persons to the EU sanctions regime against Al-Shabaab and persons, groups, undertakings and entities associated with them in line with the United Nations' decision of 26 February 2021 pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) . The sanctioned persons are: Abukar Ali Adan, deputy leader of Al-Shabaab, Maalin Ayman and Mahad Karate.

EU fight against terrorism: one person added to the ISIL/Da'esh and Al-Qaida sanctions list

The Council decided to add one person to the EU sanctions regime against ISIL/Da'esh and Al-Qaida and persons, groups, undertakings and entities associated with them. The sanctioned person, Mesut Sekerci, will now be subject to restrictive measures including a travel ban and an asset freeze. In addition, EU persons and entities are forbidden from making funds available to him.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Promoting the European network of independent non-proliferation and disarmament think tanks in support of the implementation of the EU Strategy against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

The Council adopted a decision extending until 17 May 2022 the implementation of a European network of independent non-proliferation and disarmament think tanks in support of the implementation of the EU strategy against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Council Decision on EU support to activities of the ATT Secretariat to support Arms Trade Treaty implementation

The Council adopted a decision allowing the EU to support three projects of the ATT Secretariat in Geneva with a contribution of EUR 1.37 million. The aim is to help states parties to the treaty to strengthen their national arms export control systems. Export control systems are key instruments for preventing the diversion of and illicit trade in arms, and contribute to more responsible trade in military equipment and technology.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Council decision concerning restrictive measures against the Central African Republic - UN update of a listing

The Council adopted an implementing decision implementing decision 2013/798/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Central African Republic. The new implementing decision updates the information relating to one person subject to restrictive measures, in line with the UN decisions of 22 February 2021.

Council conclusions on the EU's integrated strategy in the Sahel

The Council approved conclusions reaffirming the importance of a solid and long-term partnership between the EU and the Sahel, and of stepping up that partnership through an ambitious EU strategy setting the framework for its policies and actions in the region.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Memorandum of understanding between the EU and the Republic of Panama on bilateral consultations

The Council approved the signing on behalf of the EU of the Memorandum of understanding between the EU and the Republic of Panama on bilateral consultations.

The two parties decided to consult bilaterally to promote cooperation on, and a common understanding of, all issues on the Panama-EU agenda, and on any other issues of mutual interest without duplication of, or prejudice to, committees, mechanisms of consultation or decision-making processes that exist or that might be established in the future.

Council decision authorising the opening of negotiations to amend the International Cocoa Agreement 2010

The Council adopted a decision authorising the opening of negotiations to amend the International Cocoa Agreement 2010 and related negotiating directives ([7335/21](#) + [ADD1](#)).

Council decision and implementing regulation concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Myanmar/Burma

The Council decided to sanction 10 individuals and two military-controlled companies, Myanmar Economic Holdings Public Company Limited (MEHL) and Myanmar Economic Corporation Limited (MEC), in relation to the military coup staged in Myanmar/Burma on 1 February 2021, and the ensuing military and police repression against peaceful demonstrators. The decision was taken by written procedure.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Council conclusions on an EU Strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific

The Council approved conclusions on an EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, setting out the EU's intention to reinforce its strategic focus, presence and actions in this region of prime strategic importance for EU interests. The aim is to contribute to regional stability, security, prosperity and sustainable development at a time of rising challenges and tensions in the region.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Council conclusions on a renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood – a new Agenda for the Mediterranean

The Council approved conclusions affirming the EU's determination to renew and strengthen its strategic partnership with its Southern Neighbourhood. The objective is to address common challenges, take advantage of shared opportunities and unlock the region's economic potential for the benefit of its people.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Council conclusions on Team Europe

The Council approved conclusions reaffirming Team Europe's full commitment to the global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and its health, social, economic, humanitarian, security and political impacts.

With this approach, the EU is showing leadership, responsibility and solidarity with those most affected by the pandemic.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

2020 Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's instruments for financing external actions in 2019

The Council approved conclusions welcoming the Annual Report on the implementation of the European Union's instruments for financing external actions in 2019. The report is an important means of communication to inform citizens and stakeholders, as well as to enhance transparency and accountability on the implementation and results of EU external action and its contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), along with the Paris Agreement.

Restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya

The Council adopted an implementing decision implementing decision (CFSP) 2015/1333, and an implementing regulation implementing Article 21(2) of regulation (EU) 2016/44 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya, deleting one person from the list of individuals subject to restrictive measures as he is deceased.

Council decision and implementing regulation concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Myanmar/Burma

The Council prolonged the restrictive measures in view of the situation in Myanmar/Burma for one year, until 30 April 2022.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Council conclusions on the European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 2/2021: 'EU humanitarian aid for education: helps children in need, but should be longer term and reach more girls'

The Council adopted conclusions taking note of European Court of Auditors Special Report No 2/2021, 'EU humanitarian aid for education: helps children in need, but should be longer term and reach more girls', which examined projects in Jordan and Uganda in 2017 - 2019 in order to assess the efficiency of EU humanitarian aid for education.

Council decision appointing the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process

The Council appointed Mr Sven Koopmans as the EU's Special Representative (EUSR) for the Middle East Peace Process from 1 May 2021 to 28 February 2023.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

Council implementing decision and implementing regulation concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in the Central African Republic

The Council adopted an implementing decision implementing decision 2013/798/CFSP, and an implementing regulation implementing Article 17(3) of regulation (EU) No 224/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in the Central African Republic, removing one entity from the list of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures in line with the UN decision of 5 April 2021.

Council decision on the security of systems and services under the Union Space Programme which may affect the security of the Union

The Council adopted a decision on the security of systems and services deployed, operated and used under the Union Space Programme which may affect the security of the Union, repealing decision 2014/496/CFSP.

Union support for activities leading up to the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

The Council adopted a decision amending decision (CFSP) 2019/615 on Union support for activities leading up to the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), extending the implementation period until 15 October 2021.

Iran: Council concludes annual review of the EU's Iran human rights sanctions regime

The Council decided to extend its restrictive measures responding to serious human rights violations in Iran until 13 April 2022, and to add eight persons and three entities to this sanctions list in view of their role in the violent response to the November 2019 demonstrations.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**Hague convention on the protection of children**

The Council approved the line to be taken by the EU concerning the accession of Costa Rica to the 1996 Hague convention on the protection of children, which is not to raise an objection to the accession ([6293/21](#)).

The Council approved the line to take concerning the late reservations made by Nicaragua on the 1996 Hague convention on the protection of children ([6291/21](#), [6466/21](#)).

Europol - deputy executive director

The Council appointed Jean-Philippe Lecouffe as deputy executive director of Europol for the period from 1 May 2021 to 20 April 2025 ([6341/21](#), [2579/21](#)).

Schengen evaluation mechanism

The Council adopted conclusions on the functioning of the Schengen evaluation and monitoring mechanism ([7939/21](#)).

In its conclusions, the Council reiterates that the peer-to-peer review foundation is a key element of the evaluation mechanism. The Council highlights the need to put more focus on ensuring the swift remedy of deficiencies identified during the evaluation process, especially those that constitute a risk for the functioning of the Schengen area. To this end, it stresses the need to further reinforce the follow-up mechanism in order to ensure the effective and timely implementation of the recommendations.

The Council invites the Commission to include in its announced proposal for the revision of the mechanism initiatives to streamline and clarify, where necessary, the evaluation process. It also invites the Commission, in consultation with member states, to reflect on a reorganisation of the evaluations and restructuring of the reports with a view to improving efficiency in the functioning of the Schengen area. The Commission's announced proposal should ensure that the evaluation mechanism remains flexible and adaptable to the evolving circumstances.

Schengen evaluation Slovenia

The Council adopted an implementing decision setting out a recommendation on addressing the deficiencies identified in the 2019 evaluation of Slovenia on the application of the Schengen acquis in the field of police cooperation ([8211/21](#)).

Rights and values programme

The Council approved a joint declaration of the European Parliament and the Council on financing the Union values strand in 2021 ([2888/21](#)).

UN convention against corruption

The Council endorsed the statement of the EU under the implementation review mechanism of the UN convention against corruption, as well as the internal rules for the review (7342/1/21, [7341/1/21 REV 1](#)).

EU-US informal expert group

The Council approved the entering into negotiations with the US authorities on the terms of reference of the EU-US informal expert group and the text of the internal EU rules ([2586/21](#)).

The EU-US informal expert group aims to further improve the functioning of the EU-US agreements on mutual legal assistance and on extradition.

ECONOMIC AND MONETARY AFFAIRS

Capital Markets Recovery Package – securitisation

On 30 March 2021, the Council adopted two regulations forming part of the Capital Markets Recovery Package, amending

- Regulation (EU) 2017/2402 laying down a general framework for securitisation and creating a specific framework for simple, transparent and standardised securitisation ([PE-CONS 70/20](#));
- Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 as regards adjustments to the securitisation framework ([PE-CONS 73/20](#)).

To facilitate securitisation, the existing EU framework for simple, transparent and standardised (STS) securitisations is extended to cover synthetic securitisations. Synthetic securitisations are an important credit risk management tool for banks as they enable them to transfer the credit risk of a set of loans, typically large corporate loans or SME loans, to investors.

The agreed changes will free up bank capital for further lending and allow a broader range of investors to fund the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. In order to encourage the use of the STS label, preferential risk weights are introduced for senior tranches retained by the originator, while the European Banking Authority will closely monitor the market for such products to ensure that this does not lead to excessive leveraging of banks.

The new rules also remove regulatory obstacles to the securitisation of non-performing exposures (NPEs). This is done by broadly aligning NPE rules with international standards and ensuring their prudential soundness, while at the same time allowing originating banks to use risk-sensitive modelling practices.

This will help banks to better manage their balance sheets when dealing with the economic fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic, to secure their lending capacity in the medium term and to share risks more broadly with the non-bank financial sector.

International meetings

On 2 April 2021, the Council approved the EU Terms of Reference for the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting on 7 April 2021 (6683/21) and the EU statement for the IMFC Annual meeting on 8 April 2021 (6684/21).

Single Resolution Mechanism

On 6 April 2021, the Council approved conclusions on the European Court of Auditors' special report 1/2021 "Resolution planning in the Single Resolution Mechanism" ([7339/1/21 REV 1](#)).

The EU established the Single Resolution Mechanism in 2014 to ensure the orderly resolution of failing banks with minimal burden to taxpayers. The Court of Auditors assessed the appropriateness of the policy framework and the organisational setup of resolution planning, as well as the quality and timing of the resolution plans adopted for banks.

In its conclusions, the Council welcomes the special report. It acknowledges the Court of Auditors' assessment that the Single Resolution Mechanism, and in particular the Single Resolution Board, has made considerable progress since the audit conducted in 2017, and since the current audit in early 2020. The Council stresses, however, that a number of findings and recommendations in the special report point to further necessary improvements in the following areas:

- policy design, steering and implementation
- full compliance of resolution plans with the Single Rulebook requirements and adoption timing of such plans
- organisational set-up of the Single Resolution Mechanism
- criteria for timely supervisory action

The Council invites the Single Resolution Board to further examine and possibly implement the relevant recommendations in cooperation with the Commission, the ECB (Banking supervision) and National Resolution Authorities, and to report regularly on progress in this regard.

Common Transit Convention

On 12 April 2021, the Council adopted a decision on the EU position in the EU-CTC Joint Committee, established by the Convention of 20 May 1987 on a common transit procedure, as regards amendment of Appendices I and III to the Convention ([6124/21](#) + [6126/21](#)).

The position will be taken within the Joint Committee either during its 33rd meeting or a subsequent meeting, or by means of a written procedure.

Pericles IV programme

On 13 April 2021, the Council adopted its position at first reading on the draft regulation establishing the 'Pericles IV' programme, as well as the statement of the Council's reasons ([6164/1/21 REV 1](#) + [ADD 1](#)).

The Pericles IV programme will replace the Pericles 2020 programme for the period 2021-2027. It aims to protect euro banknotes and coins against counterfeiting and related fraud. The programme supports and supplements the measures undertaken by the member states. In addition, it assists the competent national and EU authorities in their efforts to develop among themselves and with the Commission a close and regular cooperation and an exchange of best practice, where appropriate including third countries and international organisations.

Capital Requirements Directive – regulatory technical standards

On 19 April 2021, the Council confirmed that it had no intention to object to the Commission delegated regulation of 25 March 2021 supplementing Directive 2013/36/EU with regard to regulatory technical standards:

- setting out the criteria to define managerial responsibility, control functions, material business units and a significant impact on a material business unit’s risk profile, and
- setting out criteria for identifying staff members or categories of staff whose professional activities have an impact on the institution’s risk profile that is comparably as material as that of staff members or categories of staff referred to in Article 92(3) of that directive ([7375/21](#)).

This means that, if the European Parliament also confirms that it has no intention to object to this delegated act, it will be published and enter into force.

Export credits

On 20 April 2021, the Council adopted a decision on the EU position regarding the envisaged decision of the Participants to the Arrangement on Officially Supported Export Credits to increase official support for export credits in the form of local costs ([7201/21](#) + [7202/21](#)).

The decision is expected to be adopted by the Participants to the Arrangement in the written procedure.

SURE

On 23 April 2021, the Council adopted six implementing decisions amending implementing decisions granting temporary support under regulation (EU) 2020/672 to Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania and Malta ([7499/21](#) + [7498/21](#) + [7497/21](#) + [7495/21](#) + [7496/21](#) + [7494/21](#)).

The implementing decisions provide additional assistance of €3.7 billion to the six member states concerned to mitigate unemployment risks in the emergency following the COVID-19 outbreak.

Following the adoption of these decisions, the Council has approved a total of €94.3 billion in financial support to 19 member states under SURE. SURE is a €100 billion instrument designed to protect jobs and incomes affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Green bonds

On 23 April 2021, the Council approved conclusions on Next Generation EU green bonds ([7817/21](#)).

In these conclusions, the Council welcomes the Commission's target that up to 30% of Next Generation EU proceeds will be mobilised through the issuance of NGEU green bonds. This is based on a robust and credible framework and is aligned with prevailing market standards.

This framework will include a requirement to report on the use of proceeds raised through NGEU green bonds. The Council agrees that member states will make the relevant information on eligible Recovery and Resilience Fund expenditures available to the Commission on a regular basis. In particular, for measures in the Recovery and Resilience Plan that have received a positive climate marker under the methodology in the RRF Regulation, member states will regularly report on the expenditure of each individual reform and investment.

Countering illicit trade

The Council adopted by written procedure the Irish language version of the Council Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the OECD Public Governance Committee and the OECD Council on the draft Recommendation on Countering Illicit Trade: Enhancing Transparency in Free Trade Zones.

BUDGETS

Draft amending budget No 2/2021

On 23 April 2021, the Council adopted its position on draft amending budget (DAB) No 2 to the EU budget for 2021, accepting the Commission proposal without any changes ([7873/21](#)).

The purpose of DAB No 2/2021 is to provide additional funding for the prevention, preparedness and response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular for:

- preparatory work for digital green certificates to facilitate free movement during the COVID-19 pandemic
- strengthening the capacity of member states to detect and monitor new variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus ('sequencing')
- the development, evaluation and adjustment of new reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) assays for each new emerging variant of the COVID-19 virus before the tests are rolled out, while ensuring sufficient testing capacity in the member states
- the monitoring of SARS-CoV-2 and its variants in wastewaters

The DAB also provides room under the Emergency Support Instrument (ESI) for the potential budgetary impact of further European initiatives related to the COVID-19 response.

Other changes to the 2021 budget include technical adjustments stemming from the political agreements reached on sectoral legal bases following the adoption of the multiannual financial framework in December 2020.

The net impact of the DAB on expenditure in the 2021 budget is €260.7 million in commitments and €252.6 million in payments.

Mobilisation of the EU Solidarity Fund

On 23 April 2021, the Council approved a decision on the mobilisation of the European Union Solidarity Fund ([7876/1/21 REV 1](#)). The fund aims to enable the EU to respond in a rapid, efficient and flexible manner to emergency situations. The aim is to show solidarity with the population of regions struck by major or regional natural disasters or a major public health emergency.

In accordance with the decision approved by the Council, for the EU budget for the financial year 2021, Greece will receive from the EU Solidarity Fund €3.3 million in relation to the floods in Sterea Ellada, €21.6 million in relation to cyclone Ianos and €2.5 million in relation to the earthquake in the islands of Samos, Chios and Ikaria. France will receive €59.3 million in relation to storm Alex.

In addition, in relation to the major public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the following allocations are made:

- €0.9 million to Albania
- €31.8 million to Austria
- €37.3 million to Belgium
- €17.4 million to Czechia
- €3.6 million to Estonia
- €91.4 million to France
- €13.6 million to Germany
- €4.0 million to Greece
- €13.1 million to Hungary
- €20.5 million to Ireland
- €76.3 million to Italy
- €1.2 million to Latvia
- €2.8 million to Lithuania
- €2.9 million to Luxembourg
- €0.2 million to Montenegro
- €18.0 million to Portugal
- €13.9 million to Romania
- €12.0 million to Serbia
- €36.6 million to Spain

Budgetary procedure in 2021

On 23 April 2021, the Council approved the joint statement on the dates for the budgetary procedure and provisions for the functioning of the Conciliation Committee in 2021 ([7865/21](#)).

Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund – Estonia

The Council adopted a decision mobilising €4.5 million under the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) in relation to redundancies and cessations of activities in the tourism industry in Estonia, which have a serious impact on employment and the national economy ([8045/21](#)).

The EGF provides support for workers made redundant and self-employed persons whose activity has ceased because of major structural changes in world trade patterns owing to globalisation, a continuation of the global financial and economic crisis, or a new global financial and economic crisis. The help of the EGF consists in co-financing measures such as job-search assistance, careers advice, tailor-made training and re-training, mentoring and promoting entrepreneurship. The fund also provides one-off, time-limited individual support, such as job-search allowances, mobility allowances and allowances for participating in lifelong learning and training activities.

EU own resources

On 30 April 2021, the Council adopted a regulation laying down implementing measures for the EU system of own resources ([10045/20](#)) and amendments to regulation (EEC, Euratom) No 1553/89 on the definitive uniform arrangements for the collection of own resources accruing from value added tax ([12843/20](#)).

In addition, the Council adopted a regulation concerning the new own resource based on non-recycled plastic packaging waste ([13142/20](#)). The regulation lays down rules on calculating this own resource, on making it available to the Commission, on the measures to meet cash requirements, and on specific effects on the calculation of the applicable uniform call rate of the own resource based on gross national income (GNI).

GENERAL AFFAIRS

Public access to documents - Annual report

The Council adopted its nineteenth annual report on the implementation of regulation 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents.

The report shows that over 440 000 original-language documents were listed in the public register on 31 December 2020. Of these documents, more than 71% are public and available for download.

For more details, see the [press release](#).

TRADE POLICY

EU-US: green light for the signing of the Agreement on the modification of post-Brexit WTO tariff rate quotas

The Council adopted a Decision on the signing of the Agreement between the European Union and the United States of America relating to the modification of concessions on all the tariff rate quotas, included in the EU Schedule CLXXV, as a consequence of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union and a proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of this agreement. After the signing, the draft Decision on the conclusion and the Agreement will be formally forwarded to the European Parliament for its consent.

EU-Argentina: green light for the signing of the Agreement on the modification of post-Brexit WTO tariff rate quotas

The Council adopted a Decision on the signing of the Agreement between the European Union and Argentina relating to the modification of concessions on all the tariff rate quotas, included in the EU Schedule CLXXV, as a consequence of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union and a proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of this agreement. After the signing, the draft Decision on the conclusion and the Agreement will be formally forwarded to the European Parliament for its consent.

INTERNAL MARKET

Single Market Programme

On 13 April 2021, the Council adopted, by written procedure, its first reading position on the draft regulation establishing the EU Single Market programme for the years 2021 to 2027 ([14281/1/20 REV 1](#), [14281/1/20 REV 1 ADD 1](#)).

For more details, see the [press release](#).

SPACE

Union Space Programme and the European Union Agency for the Space Programme

On 19 April 2021 the Council adopted, by written procedure, its first reading position on the proposed regulation establishing the EU space programme for the years 2021 to 2027 ([14312/20 + ADD 1](#)).

For more details, see the [press release](#).

TRANSPORT

Inland navigation standards

On 31 March 2021, the Council adopted, by written procedure, two decisions on positions to be taken on behalf of the EU in the European Committee for drawing up standards in the field of inland navigation and in the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine. The positions relate to the adoption of standards concerning harmonised river information services ([7055/21](#)) and professional qualifications in inland navigation ([7140/21](#)).

Transport Community

On 16 April 2021, the Council approved the consultation document on the EU position regarding the revision by the Regional Steering Committee of Annex I to the Treaty establishing the Transport Community ([7681/21 + COR1](#)).

ENERGY

Agreement between Euratom and KEDO

The Council adopted a Decision authorising the opening of negotiations with the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation for the renewal of the Agreement between the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO).

The Commission is authorised to negotiate, on behalf of Euratom, with KEDO the renewal of the Agreement between the European Atomic Energy Community and the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation with a view to renewing Euratom membership of KEDO beyond 31 May 2021.

ENVIRONMENT

EU proposal to add chlorpyrifos to international list of chemicals to eliminate

The Council adopted a decision on the submission, on behalf of the European Union, of a proposal for the listing of chlorpyrifos in Annex A to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent organic Pollutants.

Chlorpyrifos is an organophosphate chemical that has been phased out in the European Union but is still used as a pesticide and dispersed in the environment outside the Union. With this Decision, the European Union will submit a proposal to list chlorpyrifos in Annex A to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Parties to the Convention must take measures to eliminate the production and use of the chemicals listed under Annex A to the Convention. Specific exemptions are available in Annex A and apply only to Parties that have registered for them ([6921/21](#)).

International Convention on Mercury

The Council adopted, by written procedure, a decision on the submission, on behalf of the European Union, of proposals to amend Annexes A and B to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, regarding mercury-added products and manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used.

The proposals to amend Annex A to the Convention aim to extend its scope of application to additional mercury-added products with associated phase out dates or mercury regulating measures. The proposal to amend Annex B to the Convention aims to broaden its scope of application by introducing a phase-out date for a mercury process covered by that Annex.

The European Parliament will be informed of the adoption in accordance with Article 218(10) TFEU ([7534/21](#)).

Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution

The Council adopted, by written procedure, a decision on the submission, on behalf of the European Union, of a proposal for an Executive Body decision regarding the methodology for updates to reflect changes in the membership of the Union, with a view to the 41st session of the Executive Body of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, and on the position to be taken on behalf of the Union in that session.

The EU has emission baselines and emission reduction commitments set out in tables 2 to 6 of Annex II to the amended Gothenburg Protocol. Owing to changes in the membership of the EU, these commitments need to be updated, and a methodology to account for these changes needs to be adopted. Therefore, at the 41st session of the Executive Body of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, the EU will propose that the executive body adopts a decision on a methodology, based exclusively on a mathematical calculation, using only information that is already set out in those tables. The aim is to ensure that the Union values in those tables can be updated to correctly reflect the total sum of Member States' emission baselines and emission reduction commitments, following changes in the membership of the Union ([7682/21](#), [7683/21](#)).

EU's international climate change commitments

The Council approved the authorisation to the Commission to intervene on behalf of the Union before the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in the case Duarte Agostinho and Others v. Portugal and Others.

These proceedings before the ECtHR were launched in September 2020 by six young people from Portugal against 33 States (the 27 EU Member States, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the UK). The applicants allege violations of Article 2 (right to life), Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) of the European Convention on Human Rights and failure of the defendant States to comply with their commitments under the 2015 Paris Agreement. The applicants seek a binding decision obliging the defendant States to a level of emissions reduction of at least 65% compared to 1990.

FISHERIES

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Denmark and Greenland.

The Council adopted, by written procedure, two decisions: one on the provisional application of a sustainable fisheries partnership agreement between the EU on the one hand and Greenland and Denmark on the other; the second decision is on the conclusion of the above-mentioned agreement. The Council also took note a statement by the Commission in doc. 7004/21 ADD 1.([6565/21](#), [6566/21](#)).

Joint declaration on marine protected areas in the Southern Ocean

The Council authorised, by written procedure, the signature of the joint declaration on behalf of the EU on the designation of marine protected areas in the Southern Ocean with Australia, Norway, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and possibly other third countries ([7889/21](#)).

Certain fishing opportunities for 2021

The Council adopted, by written procedure, an amending regulation as regards certain fishing opportunities for 2021 in Union and non-Union waters. All delegations voted in favour, except for Croatia, Cyprus, Greece and Italy that abstained ([7401/21](#) + [COR 1](#)).

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Globalisation Adjustment Fund: Council adopts position*

The Council adopted, through a written procedure, its position (in first reading) on a draft regulation on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF). The adoption confirms the agreement between Council and Parliament on a common position from December 2020.

Through the EGF, the EU supports measures to improve the skills and employability of workers who lost their jobs because of the impact of globalisation and technological and environmental changes. EGF money may be used when major restructuring effects at least 200 workers or self-employed person. Measures the fund can finance include training, job-search assistance or aid for self-employment. The fund will run from 2021 to 2027. ([5532/21](#)).

HEALTH

Amendment of regulation (EC) No 1234/2008 on variations to the terms of marketing authorisations for medicinal products

The Council decided, through a written procedure, not to object to a Commission delegated regulation ([7360/21](#)) concerning the examination of variations to the terms of marketing authorisations for medicinal products for human use and veterinary medicinal products. This delegated regulation amends Commission regulation No 1234/2008 by adding provisions to deal with variations to the active substance of authorised COVID-19 vaccines.

EDUCATION

Erasmus+: Final Council adoption*

The Council adopted, through a written procedure, its position (in first reading) on the Erasmus+ Programme. The draft regulation will now be transmitted to the Parliament for a final vote. The adoption formalises the agreement between the Council and Parliament of December 2020.

Erasmus+ is a well-known EU programme which - for more than 30 years - has helped people to study, work or volunteer abroad. The programme, which has now been adopted by the Council, will be running from 2021-2027 and can rely on a budget of more than EURO 24 billion. ([14148/20](#))

For more information: [Erasmus+ 2021 2027: Council reaches a provisional agreement with the European Parliament - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

CULTURE

Council adopts position on the Creative Europe Programme

The Council adopted, through a written procedure, its position (at first reading) on the 2021-2027 Creative Europe Programme. The draft regulation will now be transmitted to the Parliament for a final vote. The adoption formalises the agreement between the Council and Parliament of December 2020.

The programme will finance projects in the cultural and creative sectors. Its budget amounts to EUR 1 842 000 000 in current prices and an additional allocation of EUR 600 000 000 in 2018 prices. The programme's goal is to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage, and to increase the competitiveness and the economic potential of the cultural and creative sectors, in particular the audio-visual sector ([14146/20](#)).

For more information: [Creative Europe programme 2021-2027 - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

YOUTH

Council adopts European Solidarity Corps Programme*

The Council adopted its first-reading position, by written procedure, on a draft regulation to establish a European Solidarity Corps Programme (2021-2017). The adoption comes after Council and Parliament reached an agreement in December 2020.

The programme's aim is to boost the engagement of young people and organisations in solidarity and humanitarian aid activities which present a clear European added-value. The budget of the programme exceeds €1 billion and will allow 350,000 young people to participate. People aged 18 to 35 can register in an online portal. Activities include supporting socially-excluded people, helping the elderly and aiding victims of disasters ([14153/20](#)).

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency - Public access to documents

On 8 April 2021, the Council adopted by written procedure the reply to:

- confirmatory application No 06/c/01/21 (6425/21 + COR 1 and 7651/21);
- confirmatory application No 07/c/01/21 (6418/21);
- confirmatory application No 08/c/01/21 (6727/21 + COR 1).

On 19 April 2021, the Council approved, by written procedure, the reply of the Council providing additional observations in the context of the inquiry of the European Ombudsman in complaint 360/2021/TE (7091/21).

On 27 April 2021, the Council adopted, by written procedure, the reply to confirmatory application No 09/c/01/21 (7047/21).