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**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
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Subject:	Sponsorship of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union: guidance on best practice

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Delegations will find in the annex the latest version of the draft “Guidance for Presidency best practice on the use of sponsorship”. It is expected that the latest tweaks of the text, done in an effort to meet all concerns expressed so far by delegations, will lead to its unanimous endorsement by delegations at the next meeting of the Working Party on Information on 29 June.

As stated before, this text aims to provide Member States holding the rotating presidency of the Council with general guidance in their relations with sponsors. It encourages Member States to establish clear and transparent rules on certain aspects of such sponsorships, while acknowledging that the final responsibility for their concrete implementation rests with each Member State holding the presidency.

**Draft Guidance for Presidency best practice on the use of sponsorship**

The Member State holding the six-monthly Presidency is responsible for the costs not covered by the Council's budget, in particular as regards the organisation of informal meetings, seminars, and social and cultural events on the occasion of the Presidency, and chooses autonomously how it will finance such costs.

Member States holding the six-monthly Presidency that consider using private sponsorships to cover some costs of the above-mentioned activities are advised to carefully consider the possible impact of the choice of sponsors on the reputation of the Council or the EU.

Should the Member State holding the six-monthly Presidency decide to use private sponsorship to cover some costs, it should put in place all measures necessary to avoid any conflict of interests and any possible reputational risks for the Council or the EU arising out of the sponsorship.

The sponsorship cannot affect, or be seen to affect, the decision-making of the Council in any way or be provided in exchange for specific visibility for the sponsors in relation to the policy-making of the Council. In particular, the Council's name or logo cannot be used by the sponsor in its activities.

Member States holding the six monthly Presidency are encouraged, at their discretion, to establish clear and transparent rules, based on best practice, on sponsor selection criteria as well as on the terms under which sponsorships are awarded. Member States are also encouraged to publish, where appropriate, the list of selected sponsors.