



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

Brussels, 14 June 2021

WK 7260/2021 REV 1 ADD 6

LIMITE

ASIE
COASI
CCG
TRANS
COEST
ASEM
ENER
CYBER
ENV

DIGIT
CLIMA
DEVGEN
SUSTDEV
ECOFIN
COMPET
EDUC
RECH
CULT

WTO
RELEX
OCDE
AVIATION
FIN
FISC
POLGEN
TOUR
MIGR

WORKING PAPER

This is a paper intended for a specific community of recipients. Handling and further distribution are under the sole responsibility of community members.

CONTRIBUTION

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Asia-Oceania Working Party
Subject:	Revised draft Council Conclusions - A Globally Connected Europe - FI comments

Delegations will find attached comments from Finland on the above.

11/06/2021

Finland would like to thank for the Draft Council Conclusions on Globally Connected Europe (WK 7260/2021 REV1), the discussion in COASI meeting on 10 June 2021 and the opportunity to comment. Finland is pleased to submit the following comments. Changes are indicated in ***bold italic***.

1. ***The Council, recognizing the need to step up investment to meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to hasten transition into green economy to fulfil the commitments of the Paris Agreement, and acknowledging increasing geostrategic and geoeconomic competition, states its firm intention to enhance and expand the EU's offer of cooperation with partner countries in sustainable connectivity on a global basis, thus contributing to the objective of building back better after the Covid-19 pandemic and addressing the continued investment gap in connectivity and infrastructure, particularly in the developing world.*** The Council considers that ***developing the EU's own approach to cooperation in connectivity will have long-term implications*** for advancing the EU's economic, foreign and security interests and promoting EU values. It therefore highlights the importance of ***stepping up*** the implementation the EU connectivity ***strategy and bringing it to the global level***.

Justification: We have to lay out the rationale and intent in the opening paragraph.

2. The Council recalls the ***fundamental principles of the EU's approach to connectivity***, which ensures [...] environmental, social, economic and fiscal sustainability and ***contributing to the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change and a level playing field for businesses***. The Council emphasises the EU's comprehensive, rules-based and human-centric approach to connectivity, which covers transport, energy, digital and human dimensions, and affirms the importance of both regulatory and physical infrastructure, ***as laid out in the EU strategy 'Connecting Europe and Asia'***. The Council strongly welcomes that connectivity has been identified as a key component in ***numerous EU regional strategies***¹.

Justification: Technical adjustments on align with the definition of sustainability laid out in the strategy 'Connecting Europe and Asia'.

6. The Council values the EU's important role as a norm setter and underlines the need for all international connectivity initiatives and actions to apply ***high international standards, norms and principles*** [...]. ***The Council considers*** the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment (G20 QII Principles) and G20 sustainable financing guidelines to be the basic standard, to be observed in all circumstances. Strong and reliable norms and standards are also key to securing a level playing field, needed to attract large-scale private and public investment in sustainable connectivity.

Justification: References to the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development are in the wrong place and should be in the beginning as part of the strategic rationale.

8. The Council welcomes the EU's partnerships with Japan (September 2019), and India (May 2021), as well as the EU-ASEAN joint Ministerial Statement on connectivity (December 2020), which paves the way towards strengthening practical connectivity cooperation with ASEAN. The Council encourages the

Commission and the High Representative to further such international cooperation on connectivity, **including with the transatlantic partners and** also within the G7 and G20 and to **pursue further connectivity** partnerships with like-minded partners.

Justification: Trans-Atlantic cooperation is currently not mentioned in the text and the intent should be laid out more clearly.

12. The Council invites the Commission and the High Representative to quickly proceed with the implementation of aforementioned steps, **and to start work on a Joint Communication on an EU Strategy on a Globally Connected Europe, with a view of its presentation by the end of 2021**. The Council will revert **to the question at that time**.

Justification: Self-explanatory.
