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Sport
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P R E S S

CONTENTS¹**ITEMS DEBATED**

YOUTH.....	5
New approaches in youth work.....	6
Young Europeans at the centre of a modern European Union.....	7
Any other business	10
– Work programme of the incoming presidency	10
EDUCATION	11
New Skills Agenda.....	11
New Opportunities for Adults.....	13
Preventing violent radicalisation.....	14
Fostering and developing talent in young people	15
Other business	18
– European student card	18
– Work programme of the incoming presidency	18
CULTURE AND AUDIOVISUAL.....	19
European Year of Cultural Heritage	21
European Capitals of Culture	23
International cultural relations	24

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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.

Other business	27
– Reform of the European copyright framework	27
– European Capitals of Culture in 2020	27
– Facing crisis in Europe: Investing in Culture	28
– Work programme of the incoming presidency	28
SPORT	29
Sports diplomacy.....	29
Impact of sport on personal development	30
Other business	32
– World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) meetings.....	32
– Specific features of the organisation of European sport	32
– Work programme of the incoming presidency	32

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

– VAT derogation - Poland	33
– Non-cleared OTC derivatives - Bank capital requirements	33

TRADE

– Iceland - protection of geographical indications.....	34
---	----

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

– Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund - delegated act.....	34
---	----

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

– EUPOL Afghanistan.....	35
--------------------------	----

DEVELOPMENT

– <i>Protocole d'accord de coopération EU-Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie</i>	35
--	----

ENLARGEMENT

– Kosovo 35

– Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina..... 36

TRANSPORT

– Satellite navigation: cooperation agreement with ASECNA..... 36

ITEMS DEBATED

YOUTH

Before starting with the formal agenda items, the presidency briefly outlined the outcome of the informal meeting with representatives of young people's organisations. The meeting had taken place over breakfast and addressed the issue of how young people see the role of governments and society.

Youth representatives indicated that they are optimistic about their future. However, they highlighted difficulties in developing their full potential. Therefore, there is a need to build bridges between young people and European societies.

The presidency stressed the importance of the "structured dialogue" as a valuable tool for informing policy makers about the real-life situation of young people and their views on youth policies.

New approaches in youth work

The Council adopted conclusions on promoting new approaches in youth work to uncover and develop the potential of young people ([13621/16](#)). Youth work can help young people to develop competences, including skills and positive attitudes.

The conclusions highlight the importance of youth work in reaching out beyond the formal structures to young people of different backgrounds, including those who are marginalised and disadvantaged. They also stress the need for youth work policies to take into account the new settings where young people increasingly spend their time, such as modern city infrastructure (for instance shopping centres) and virtual space.

They therefore call for the use of innovative tools in youth work practice, in the fields of education and training, sport and culture, social services, and information and communication technologies.

Furthermore, they invite member states to work closely with the representatives of regional and local authorities, youth councils, youth work organisations and other actors in the youth field so that the messages contained in the conclusions are widely put into practice at regional and local level.

Young Europeans at the centre of a modern European Union

Ministers exchanged views on how to reconnect young people with the European project, in part as a follow-up to the debates at the Bratislava informal summit in September 2016. One of the objectives set out in the [Bratislava Declaration and Roadmap](#) was to "create a promising economic future for all, safeguard our way of life and provide better opportunities for youth".

The terrorist attacks in Europe, the referendum in the UK and possible Brexit, the migration crisis, the rise of nationalist parties in many member states and the still high rate of youth unemployment have all deeply affected European citizens. It is crucial to involve the younger generation in the European project, and to promote fundamental European values such as democracy, non-discrimination, tolerance, solidarity and the rule of law.

Two external guest speakers were invited to launch the debate:

- Mr Jean-Paul Philippot, President of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU)
- Ms Madiana Asseraf, European Broadcasting Union (EBU), Young Audiences Unit

They presented the main findings of a European Broadcasting Union (EBU) survey entitled "Generation WHAT?" (<http://www.generation-what.eu/en/#>), which was completed by 90 millions of young Europeans. According to the survey, the lack of a sense of security and justice, poor integration, and a lack of opportunities and prospects for a better future for young people are major concerns of Europe's youth. In addition, radicalisation and violent extremism, the rise of ultra-right and ultra-left wing parties, and recent waves of migration have contributed to greater polarisation of society and the rise of xenophobia.

The survey also shows that most young people feel that they are European but are often disenchanted with European institutions and policies.

The Commission highlighted that young people want more opportunities to get involved in European policies and actions, and recalled the importance and popularity of ERASMUS+, which is a powerful tool for strengthening the European identity. It also drew attention to the importance of the structured dialogue.

Furthermore, Commissioner Navracsics put the spotlight on two initiatives: the European Voluntary Service in the framework of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps – part of the new European Youth Initiative – which will offer people under 30 in Europe the chance to support a non-governmental organisation (NGO), local authority or private company active in addressing difficult situations across the European Union.

Both seek to promote core European values among young people and will build on current EU youth programmes.

Ministers welcomed in general the statements of the guest speakers and outlined several initiatives and concrete measures already being put in place at national level to address the above issues.

Ministers generally agreed on:

- improving communication with young people using the communication tools young people use themselves
- increasing possibilities for mobility and volunteering, as they foster personal development (new skills) and can also enhance employability
- promoting active civic actions so that European values (solidarity, tolerance, etc.) can be better recognised
- fostering social cohesion, making young people feel that European projects help to improve their lives; in this regard, making the best use of Erasmus+ and other EU programmes

- supporting the Kosice youth conference joint recommendations
- further developing youth work and speeding up the validation of non-formal and informal learning (soft skills)
- increasing digital competences of youth workers
- extending and deepening the structured dialogue, taking into account the diversity of young people

ensuring broad cross-sectoral cooperation between member states

The presidency intends to report on the outcome of the debate to President Tusk before the European Council meeting of 15-16 December 2016.

Any other business

– *Work programme of the incoming presidency*

The Council took note of the incoming Maltese presidency's main priorities in the field of youth for the coming six months, which will focus on:

- the role of young people in the current skills agenda
- implementation of the main recommendations of youth conferences
- the fifth cycle of the structured dialogue
- mid-term review of the Youth Strategy

EDUCATION

New Skills Agenda

The Council adopted a resolution on a "New Skills Agenda for an inclusive and competitive Europe" ([13413/16](#)) in response to the Commission's communication on the strategic importance of skills for sustaining jobs, growth and competitiveness.

The New Skills Agenda covers areas such as skills development, the mutual recognition of qualifications, and support for both vocational education and training and higher education, as well as ways of exploring the full potential of the digital economy. It aims to promote "lifelong investment in people".

The resolution highlights the aspects that the Council considers as most important, in particular:

- the fact that education and training should not only prepare people for the labour market, but should also contribute to social inclusion and to the development of engaged and active citizens
- the need for excellent teachers and trainers
- closer links between education and training and the world of work
- development of the flexible mindsets and curiosity needed to adapt to future needs
- efficient and effective coordination at EU level in the area of education
- adequate EU funding for actions under the New Skills Agenda

The resolution also emphasises that the measures outlined in the New Skills Agenda should be carried out in coherence with the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020)¹, as it brings together all forms of learning, offers a useful platform to support member states' policies and fosters EU-level cooperation.

Commissioner Thyssen stressed that in a fast-changing global economy, acquiring and developing the right skills are key factors for promoting growth and competitiveness, as well as social cohesion. She expressed the view that skills mismatch is a serious problem that needs to be tackled urgently.

The Commissioner also highlighted the key role that social partners at all levels could play in putting the New Skills Agenda into practice, as well as the importance of partnerships between central and local authorities and the public and private sectors.

Commissioner Navracsics emphasised the dual nature of skills, which must include not only technical but also civic competences, critical thinking and entrepreneurship skills.

In the framework of modernising higher education in Europe, a topic on which the Commission intends to present an initiative in 2017, the Commission will also present a "graduate tracking" initiative aimed at finding out how graduates progress in the labour market, thus allowing students to make informed choices about their future.

¹ OJ C 119, 28.5.2009

New Opportunities for Adults

The Council reached political agreement on a recommendation establishing "**Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults**" (formerly the "Skills Guarantee"). It aims to provide opportunities for low-skilled adults to acquire a set of skills, knowledge and competences relevant for the labour market and active participation in society.

Training opportunities for adults would be implemented through:

- **skills assessments**
- **tailored and flexible learning offers** according to the target groups identified and local, regional and national labour market needs
- **validation and recognition of the skills and competences acquired**, including learning at work
- encouraging their **certification in the form of a qualification**, taking into account the Council recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning
- **coordination and partnership among relevant public and private actors** in education and training, employment, social, cultural and other relevant policy areas, including cross-border and regional cooperation
- **follow-up and evaluation** through appropriate measures at national level

The Commission is also invited to support the use of current and future European funding programmes in the area of skills development, in particular the European Structural and Investment Funds, and Erasmus+, for the implementation of the recommendation.

Commissioner Thyssen welcomed the political agreement on the recommendation, which she considered an important contribution to the implementation of the "New Skills Agenda", one of the Commission's priorities.

Preventing violent radicalisation

The Council adopted conclusions on the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism ([13611/16](#)). The conclusions are founded on a cross-sectoral approach with a particular focus on preventive "soft" measures such as education, voluntary and cultural activities, and youth work.

They stress the need to undermine and challenge existing violent extremist ideologies and counterbalance them with appealing non-violent alternatives, and to support parents, siblings, peers and others in contact with young people at risk of violent radicalisation, providing them with information on existing support systems and counselling possibilities.

They also recommend cooperation between education and training institutions, local communities, local and regional administrations, the wider family, youth field actors, volunteers and civil society to enhance inclusion and strengthen a sense of belonging and positive identity in young people.

They encourage the involvement of and cooperation with service providers in the fight against illegal hate speech online, in full respect of freedom of expression, in view of the role of social media as a prime vehicle for targeting, grooming and triggering potential radicals to commit violent acts.

Furthermore, the conclusions stress that the prevention of radicalisation should be supported through actions funded notably by Erasmus+, European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020, Creative Europe, Europe for Citizens, the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme and the Internal Security Fund.

The Commission informed the meeting that funding from the Erasmus+ programme had already been mobilised for projects that foster inclusion and promote fundamental European values, fully in line with the objectives of the March 2015 Paris declaration of education ministers, which highlighted the need to promote democracy, equality, non-discrimination, tolerance, solidarity and the rule of law.

The Commission indicated that 28 new projects would be launched in this area in 2017 and that the E-twinning initiative (<https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/index.htm>), a platform for teachers and schools, would be extended to neighbouring countries.

Fostering and developing talent in young people

Ministers discussed which policies would be the most appropriate for discovering and bringing out the best in young people ([13631/16](#)).

The presidency highlighted that there is evidence showing that young people, particularly those who are disadvantaged and marginalised, often lack the opportunity to make the most of their talents (if they ever become aware that they have them). Encouraging passion and commitment is equally important in developing talent to the fullest extent.

Talent is not necessarily taught as such, but educators and educational systems – ranging from early childhood, basic schooling, youth work, and vocational to higher education – can strive to help discover it and to provide the effort, support and opportunities needed to foster and develop it.

In December, the Commission will present a new youth initiative, which aims to tackle youth unemployment and related issues through a global approach. The Commission expects it to be a milestone in youth policies but emphasised that this will require the involvement of all actors in the field (not only schools, but also parents, local organisations and business).

Commissioner Navracsics acknowledged the role of "soft skills" but considered that they need to be better defined and structured. He stressed the importance of entrepreneurship education and of thinking creatively.

Ms Sharon McCooey, Senior Director of International Operations at LinkedIn, launched the debate, pointing out that:

- by 2020 five million jobs will disappear; this is the fourth industrial revolution, it is evolving at an unprecedented speed, based on advanced technology, and it will cause major disruption to our economy

- we will not have time to adapt skills to these major changes, as we did before
- education policies must take into account real insights into the labour market
- identifying macroeconomic trends is crucial, allowing for supply and demand balancing
- 6 of the top ten skills requirements in current jobs offers are technical/digital skills, such as statistical analysis and data presentation
- the life span of current digital skills is on average five years!
- education curricula need adapting; lifelong learning is the only way to cope with the rapid changes

Ministers stressed that all children, regardless of their background, must be given the same chances, but that it is also important to detect specially gifted children early on. The main outcomes from the debate were the following:

- importance of establishing lifelong learning
- need to reform vocational training
- reinforce inclusion, through validation of informal and non-formal learning
- encourage mobility in the EU through mutual recognition of qualifications
- develop entrepreneurship education

- increase cooperation between schools and universities
- need to ensure the excellence of European higher education
- introduce systematic career guidance
- flexible and tailor-made curricula to favour inclusion and stimulate particularly talented children
- curricula to include cultural, artistic and sports activities and education for citizenship

Sharon McCooley concluded with three suggestions:

- make sure that the right jobs are in the right place
- bring education near industry
- keep pace with innovative reforms

The Commission reminded ministers that talent education and skills education are not the same thing. It also recalled that limited resources must be used efficiently and stressed the importance of infrastructure in education.

The Commission also announced that it would present several initiatives in this field, such as an EU benchmark for excellence, a talented children project, a Europe's got talent initiative and mobility for unemployed youth.

Other business

– *European student card*

The Council took note of information from the French delegation on the project for a European student card.

Some EU member states, in particular France and Italy, have been cooperating on this initiative since 2013. The European student card would encourage cooperation between higher education institutions, allowing for access to services addressed to students in any EU state adopting this card.

The French delegation intends to propose the idea of a European student card to the 47 member countries of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) as one of the priorities to be adopted at the next Bologna ministerial conference, to be organised by France in 2018.

The Commission supported the project, which could become a "one stop shop" for mobile students.

– *Work programme of the incoming presidency*

The Council took note of the incoming Maltese presidency's main priorities in the field of education for the coming six months, which will focus on:

- promoting inclusion and diversity for a high-quality education for all
- the New Skills Agenda for Europe
- work on the European qualifications framework (EQF)
- work on the Europass framework

CULTURE AND AUDIOVISUAL

The Council took note of a progress report on the [proposal for a revised directive on audiovisual media services \(AVMS\)](#). The modernisation of the EU audiovisual regulatory framework is an essential component of the Digital Single Market strategy.

The proposal aims to better align the AVMS directive with the digital age, taking into account the speed of technological progress, the emergence of new business models and changing consumption patterns, in order to foster the competitiveness of European audiovisual industry.

At the same time, the directive seeks to ensure the protection of general public interests, such as the protection of minors, media pluralism, cultural diversity, and consumer protection.

Although progress has been made, at this stage divergences remain on some issues with some member states wishing for a more restrictive approach, while others would be willing to be flexible on some of these subjects:

- extension of the directive's scope to video-sharing platforms and the extent of their regulation,
- quantitative rules on TV advertising,
- obligations for on-demand service providers to promote European works,
- alignment of rules between linear and on-demand services,
- jurisdiction
- role of the European body of national regulators (ERGA).

Commissioner Oettinger stressed the need to progress quickly given the speed of technological developments and the new forms of on-line services that are regularly proposed to citizens. The Commission proposal offers considerable flexibility since the European audiovisual landscape is very diversified but there is an urgent need to harmonise and clarify certain rules in order to ensure the competitiveness of the European audiovisual industry.

Member states in general welcomed the main objectives of the proposal. However, they recalled that, along with strengthening the internal market and competitiveness, promoting the cultural and linguistic diversity of Europe and protecting consumers, in particular minors, have been and should remain key objectives of EU audiovisual policy.

European Year of Cultural Heritage

The Council adopted a general approach regarding the proposal for a decision on a European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018) ([11856/16](#)). Since 2014 the Council and the European Parliament have been very supportive of and committed to developing this initiative.

The general aim of the proposal is to raise awareness of the richness and diversity of European cultural heritage and the opportunities it can offer and to share common European values and ideals embedded in cultural heritage.

This is particularly important in the context of the political, societal and economic challenges the EU is facing, such as an identity crisis, massive migration, the questioning of the fundamental values and principles on which the European Union was built, the reductions in public spending, and the rise of extremism in our societies.

At the same time, the decision seeks to draw attention to the challenges that cultural heritage is facing, namely the impact of the digital shift, environmental and physical pressure on heritage sites, and illicit trafficking of cultural objects.

The specific objectives of the European Year of Cultural Heritage are the following:

- promote cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and social cohesion;
- highlight the economic contribution of cultural heritage;
- emphasize the role of cultural heritage in EU external relations, including post-conflict, reconciliation, conflict prevention and the rebuilding of destroyed cultural heritage.

The Commission does not propose a specific budget to the European Year. Instead, it proposes to obtain the necessary budgetary resources from existing EU programmes.

The Council introduced several changes in the Commission proposal aiming, in particular ,at:

- promoting a bottom up approach with the involvement of civil society
- reinforcing cooperation with international organisations, such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO
- increasing the use of media and social networks in promoting the European Year, including via Europeana, the EU digital platform for cultural heritage

The Council is now in position to enter into negotiations with the European Parliament on this file during the Maltese Presidency.

European Capitals of Culture

The Council reached political agreement on a proposal amending the decision establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033. The aim of the amendment is to allow EFTA/EEA countries (Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein).access to the action as well.

The European Capitals of Culture action is one of the EU's flagship initiatives in the area of culture.

It brings people together and celebrates the richness and diversity of European cultures, while reinforcing common bonds, and creating a platform for dialogue and mutual understanding. Moreover, it has a positive impact in terms of local development, tourism, the economy, investment in cultural infrastructure and boosting local cultural and creative sectors.

Decision 445/2014/EU sets out the framework for selection, designation and monitoring of the cities to be awarded the title of European Capitals of Culture from 2020. In addition to member states, candidate countries and potential candidates can also participate in the action provided that they take part in the Creative Europe Programme. -

Given the UK vote on leaving the EU and the need to start preparations for hosting a Capital of Culture six years in advance (i.e. in 2017 for the UK) the UK has entered a parliamentary reservation as to its participation in the action which is planned for 2023.

The Council is now in position to enter into negotiations with the European Parliament on this file during the Maltese Presidency.

International cultural relations

Culture is increasingly acknowledged in diplomatic relations as "soft power" given its capacity to establish relations and contacts with third countries when traditional policies fail. The development of a strategic approach in international cultural relations has for quite some time now been a priority for the Council.

Ministers discussed how the EU and its member states can cooperate effectively to bring about a more strategic and global approach in this field. The debate was guided by the five main principles for EU action outlined in the joint communication "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations" ([10082/16](#))

- promoting cultural diversity and respect for human rights,
- fostering mutual respect and inter-cultural dialogue,
- ensuring respect for complementarity and subsidiarity,
- encouraging a cross-cutting approach to culture,
- promoting culture through existing frameworks for cooperation.

Mr Francesco Bandarin, Assistant Director-General for Culture at UNESCO, was invited to launch the debate. His contribution was preceded by a short video on the emotional reactions of people from different countries to their cultural heritage. In this regard, Mr Bandarin stressed that heritage is not only about sites or objects, it is also about people.

He outlined the many actions developed by UNESCO in different areas, from awareness raising, and combatting illicit trafficking of cultural objects, to monitoring, preservation and rehabilitation of cultural heritage in conflict and disaster areas.

In particular, he mentioned the Observatory of Syrian Cultural Heritage which is monitoring the situation and preparing for post- conflict recovery. It is financed by the EU and was established in cooperation with several member states. He also called for increased cooperation between UNESCO and the EU.

UNESCO believes culture is a strategic tool for sustainable development and a factor of identity and therefore social cohesion and can make a major contribution to conflict prevention.

Ministers agreed in general with the main messages from Mr Banderin and stressed that culture is the cornerstone and the cement of Europe. They also outlined some of the measures and actions they have already implemented or are planning to implement at national level in this field.

Several ministers welcomed the intention of the Commission to propose in 2017 legislation to regulate import of cultural objects to the EU.

The main outcomes from the debate were the following:

- Combat illicit trafficking of cultural heritage.
- Address international cultural relations also in Foreign Affairs ministers meetings
- Establish clear priorities in EU external cultural relations with a clear division of tasks between the EU, its member states and international organisations.
- Highlight the economic and symbolic value of heritage
- Promote the mobility of artists including through visa facilitation
- Develop tourism as a means of preserving of cultural sites and benefitting local populations

- Establish partnerships with third countries based on reciprocity, dialogue and cooperation on equal footing
- Enhance cross-sectoral cooperation at local and regional level, involving civil society
- Reinforce links with UNESCO and Council of Europe

The Commission also argued in favour of stronger cooperation in cultural diplomacy and agreed that the EU is a “soft power”.

Commissioner Navracsics stressed that culture is democratic: its richness is not directly linked to the size of the territory or the size of the population.

Other business

– *Reform of the European copyright framework*

The Council took note of information from the French delegation on this issue ([14153/16](#)), in the context of the copyright modernisation package presented by the Commission in September, in the framework of its Digital Single Market strategy. The objective is to promote cross-border circulation of copyrighted works, while respecting the territoriality of rights.

The French minister argued that the modernisation of the European copyright framework is not just a digital single market issue. Rather, it should be incorporated into a genuine European strategy for culture in the digital age.

The EYCS Council should therefore play an active role in the reform, to contribute to shaping the future of policies on funding creative ventures and supporting cultural diversity.

Commissioner Oettinger stated that it is not easy to reconcile copyright, intellectual rights and making culture available to higher education institutes, researchers, schools and citizens. Everything cannot be free, creators must be fairly rewarded and the European copyright needs to be modernised and harmonised for the digital era.

– *European Capitals of Culture in 2020*

The Irish and Croatian delegations briefly presented to the Council their Capitals of Culture for 2020, respectively the cities of Galway and Rijeka ([14154/16](#)).

This will be the first time that European Capitals of Culture are designated under the new decision adopted in 2014. Instead of the Council formally designating the Capitals of Culture as it was the case until 2019, from now on designation is done by the member state that holds the title.

In order to keep the visibility of this action which is very important to member states at the highest political level, Ireland and Croatia have nevertheless decided to maintain the tradition of presenting their Capitals of Culture at the EYCS Council.

– *Facing crisis in Europe: Investing in Culture*

The Council took note of information from the Italian delegation proposing both to increase the human and financial resources allocated by the Commission to the cultural sector and to invest in the potential of the cultural and creative sectors to generate quality employment, in particular for the young generation, while contributing to strengthening social cohesion. ([14404/16](#))

– *Work programme of the incoming presidency*

The Council took note of the incoming Maltese Presidency's main priorities in the field of culture and audiovisual for the coming six months, which will focus on :

- Progressing on the audiovisual media services directive
- Extending of the entitlement period of EU-Korea audiovisual agreement
- Continuing work on international cultural relations
- Finalising work on the European Year of Cultural Heritage and on the European Capitals of Culture

SPORT

Sports diplomacy

Before starting with the formal agenda items, the presidency briefly outlined the outcome of the informal meeting with representatives of sports organisations, also addressing sports diplomacy. Representatives stressed that:

- positive sporting values must be systematically promoted: fair play, team work, tolerance and mutual respect
- sports events and sports role models can have a positive impact on a country's image
- sport can also ease tensions between countries
- sports diplomacy and specific sporting events can enhance the image of a country abroad

The presidency stressed the importance of the "structured dialogue" as a valuable tool for informing policy makers of sport representatives' views, which can usefully contribute to the establishment of sport policies.

The Council adopted conclusions on sports diplomacy ([13645/1/16 REV 1](#)) which refer to the use of sport as a means to influence diplomatic, intercultural, social, economic and political relations. The issue was also addressed in the framework of the structured dialogue meeting.

The conclusions encourage cooperation between public authorities and the sports movement in order to make the best use of the potential of sport in foreign policy.

They also invite member states to better explore the potential of sport at national level, in particular through education and the involvement of well-known athletes as messengers, to promote positive sporting and European values.

Furthermore, the conclusions call for enhanced relations with relevant sports organisations and international governmental organisations through the EU structured dialogue on sport, at Council meetings and through the EU Sport Forum and similar structures.

The Commissioner supported the idea of integrating sports issues in international contacts and promoting sports ambassadors. He stressed that both measures could be supported through Erasmus+. He also suggested opening up the European Week of Sport to third countries.

Impact of sport on personal development

Alongside important values for personal development, such as fair play, respect for diversity, friendship, tolerance and mutual understanding, involvement in sport also offers important personal benefits, in particular enhanced self-confidence, academic involvement and success, teamwork and social skills.

This topic is also closely linked to the skills package proposal (New Skills Agenda for Europe), as non-formal and informal learning are becoming important elements in the learning process.

Danka Barteková, elite shooter and IOC member, and Matej Tóth, Olympic and world champion in athletics (50 km walk) and member of the IAAF Athletes' Commission, launched the debate.

The main messages from both athletes were the following:

- sport is a collective effort and teaches you discipline; it increases confidence and develops leadership competences and social skills
- excellence, friendship and respect are essential values of the Olympic charter: respect for yourself, your public, your team and your opponents
- sport broadens horizons since it requires many contacts and travelling, particularly at elite level
- sport is not only a physical activity; it is also an important part of education and culture

Ministers stressed that sport itself has an intrinsic value but can also make a major contribution to society and the economy.

The main outcomes of the debate were the following:

- development of specific educational programmes combining education and sport
- need to ensure dual careers for elite athletes
- lifelong learning for trainers and coaches
- sport can develop transversal skills that are increasingly valued in the labour market and contribute to social inclusion
- sports organisations must also be involved in and committed to promoting positive values; violence, discrimination and intimidation do not belong in sport and must be strongly addressed in cooperation with families and local communities
- volunteering plays an important part in sport, particularly in grassroots sports
- funding from European programmes must be efficiently used

The Commission declared that it is ready to complement and support member states' actions through ERASMUS+, which can contribute to improving education in and through sport in order to address issues such as racism, sexual harassment and doping.

Other business

– *World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) meetings*

The Council was briefed by the EU representatives (BE, MT, UK) on the outcome of the WADA meetings which took place in Glasgow on 19 and 20 November 2016. The meetings mainly addressed issues relating to the 2017 draft budget, the code of compliance, the single testing authority and the challenges to the current anti-doping system.

There was a clear message of support for the role of WADA in the fight against doping but a suitable budget is required to cover its new tasks.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (www.wada-ama.org), set up in 1999, is a private-law body whose mission is to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against doping in sport in all its forms. Its key tasks include scientific research, education, the development of anti-doping capacities and monitoring of the World Anti-Doping Code.

A new World Anti-Doping Code was approved by the WADA Foundation Board at the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Johannesburg in November 2013. It came into force on 1 January 2015.

– *Specific features of the organisation of European sport*

The Council took note of information from the French delegation on the need to address this issue by providing exemptions or giving European sport and sports clubs specific treatment ([14173/16](#)). With the emergence of new actors and increasing financial implications, sport needs a clear legislative framework. The delegation also urged that this be included as one of the priority themes in the next Work Plan for Sport.

– *Work programme of the incoming presidency*

The Council took note of the incoming Maltese presidency's main priorities in the field of sport for the coming six months, which will focus on:

- social inclusion and volunteering in sport
- the EU Work Plan on Sport

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

VAT derogation - Poland

The Council adopted a decision authorising Poland to increase, from €30 000 to €40 000, the annual turnover threshold by which it exempts very small businesses from VAT ([13843/16](#) + [13842/16](#)).

The measure concerns an existing derogation granted under directive 2006/112/EC on VAT until 31 December 2018. 24 000 additional companies could potentially make use of the derogation.

Non-cleared OTC derivatives - Bank capital requirements

The Council decided not to object to the following Commission regulations:

- regulation supplementing regulation 648/2012 on over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives, central counterparties and trade repositories with regard to regulatory technical standards for risk-mitigation techniques for OTC derivative contracts not cleared by a central counterparty ([13629/16](#) + [12914/16](#));
- regulation supplementing directive 2013/36/EU on bank capital requirements with regard to regulatory technical standards for benchmarking portfolio assessment standards and assessment sharing procedures ([13985/16](#) + [13751/16](#)).

The regulations are delegated acts pursuant to article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. They can now enter into force, unless the European Parliament objects.

TRADE

Iceland - protection of geographical indications

The Council adopted a decision to sign an agreement between the EU and Iceland on the protection of geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs. It also agreed to request the consent of the European Parliament for its conclusion.

[Agreement between the European Union and Iceland on the protection of geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs](#)

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund - delegated act

The Council confirmed that it does not intend to object to a Commission delegated regulation on the common monitoring and evaluation framework provided for in regulation (EU) No 514/2014 laying down general provisions on the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and on the instrument for financial support for police cooperation, preventing and combating crime, and crisis management. [\(12874/16\)](#)

This implies that, unless the European Parliament objects to it, the delegated act will be published and enter into force in accordance with article 58 of regulation (EU) No 514/2014.

According to article 58(5) of regulation (EU) No 514/2014, the delegated regulation will enter into force only if no objection is expressed either by the European Parliament or by the Council within two months of its notification. The period may be extended by two months at the initiative of the European Parliament or the Council. The Commission notified the delegated regulation to the Council on 3 October 2016.

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

EUPOL Afghanistan

The Council approved the liquidation of the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) as of 1 January 2017.

DEVELOPMENT

Protocole d'accord de coopération EU-Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie

The Council endorsed a *Protocole d'accord de coopération* to be concluded between the European Union and the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*. The protocol is expected to be signed on 26/27 November 2016 on the occasion of the 16th *Sommet de la Francophonie* in Madagascar.

ENLARGEMENT

Kosovo

The Council established the EU's common position ahead of the first meeting of the EU-Kosovo* Stabilisation and Association Council, to be held in Brussels on 25 November 2016.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Council adopted a decision on the signing and provisional application of the protocol to the stabilisation and association agreement between the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina, to take account of the accession of Croatia to the EU.

The Council also decided to request the consent of the European Parliament on the conclusion of the above protocol.

The Council adopted a decision so that the European Commission can, on behalf of the European Atomic Energy Community, conclude the protocol to the EU-Bosnia and Herzegovina stabilisation and association agreement, to take account of the accession of Croatia to the EU.

TRANSPORT

Satellite navigation: cooperation agreement with ASECNA

The Council authorised the signing, on behalf of the EU, of a cooperation agreement with the Agency for Aerial Navigation Safety in Africa and Madagascar (ASECNA) on the development of satellite navigation and the provision of associated services in ASECNA's area of competence for the benefit of civil aviation (decision on signing: [13520/16](#); agreement: [13661/16](#)).
