



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



14681/06 (Presse 300)

PRESS RELEASE

2759th Council Meeting

Economic and Financial Affairs

Brussels, 7 November 2006

President

Mr. Eero HEINÄLUOMA
Minister of Finance of Finland

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi 175 B – 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6083 / 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/Newsroom>

14681/06 (Presse 300)

1
EN

Main Results of the Council

*The Council adopted a regulation on the tracing of fund transfers with the aim of better countering the **financing of terrorist groups**.*

*It authorised member states to continue applying **reduced VAT rates** for certain labour-intensive services, in accordance with a directive adopted earlier this year.*

*The Council adopted conclusions on **statistical governance** issues and on the sustainability of **public finances**.*

*It also established an instrument to provide financial assistance for the **promotion of stability** under the EU's external relations policy.*

CONTENTS¹

PARTICIPANTS.....	6
ITEMS DEBATED	
MANAGEMENT OF THE EU BUDGET.....	8
– Court of Auditors' annual report.....	8
– Financial regulation.....	8
STATISTICS - <i>Council conclusions</i>	9
THE SUSTAINABILITY OF PUBLIC FINANCES - <i>Council conclusions</i>	11
TAXATION.....	13
– Minimum excise duty rates on alcoholic beverages.....	13
– Duty-free allowances for travel from third countries.....	13
OTHER BUSINESS.....	14
– VAT on on-line media services.....	14
MEETINGS IN THE MARGINS OF THE COUNCIL.....	15
– Eurogroup.....	15
– Ministerial meeting on the economic situation.....	15
– Meeting with EFTA finance ministers.....	15
– Meeting with the European Parliament.....	15

¹

- 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.
- The documents whose 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 abovementioned Council Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED*ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS*

– Money laundering and terrorist financing - Tracing transfers of funds *	16
– Reduced rates of VAT - Labour-intensive services	16
– Slovenia - Introduction of the euro	17

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

– Instrument for stability	17
– Democratic Republic of Congo - Extension of deadline for commitment of funds.....	18
– International tropical timber council.....	18
– 7th EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council.....	19
– Temporary reception of certain Palestinians.....	19
– Relations with Azerbaijan - Strategic partnership in energy	19
– Relations with Kazakhstan - Cooperation in energy.....	19
– Bulgaria - Industrial products.....	19

TRADE POLICY

– Anti-dumping measures - China - Bicycles	20
– Anti-dumping measures - China - Synthetic staple fibres of polyesters	20
– Anti-dumping measures - China, Indonesia and Malaysia - Coumarin	20

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

– Agreement with Liechtenstein to combat fraud.....	20
---	----

AGRICULTURE

– Control of San José scale	21
– Glucose and lactose	21

ENVIRONMENT

– UN convention on industrial accidents	21
---	----

FISHERIES

– Agreement with Gabon.....	22
– Management of fishing fleets in the EU's outermost regions	22

PUBLIC ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

DECISIONS TAKEN BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE

– Accession of Vietnam to the WTO.....23

PARTICIPANTS

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Jan DE BOCK

Permanent Representative

Czech Republic:

Mr Tomáš ZIDEK

Deputy Minister for Finance

Denmark:

Mr Per CALLESEN

Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Germany:

Mr Thomas MIROW

State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Finance

Estonia:

Mr Aivar SÕERD

Minister for Finance

Greece:

Mr Georgios ALOGOSKOUFIS

Minister for Economic Affairs and Finance

Spain:

Mr Pedro SOLBES MIRA

Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economic Affairs and Finance

France:

Mr Pierre SELLAL

Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Brian COWEN

Minister for Finance

Italy:

Mr Ignazio ANGELONI

Director, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance

Cyprus:

Mr Michalis SARRIS

Minister for Finance

Latvia:

Mr Eduards STIPRAIS

Permanent Representative

Lithuania:

Mr Zigmantas BALČYTIS

Minister for Finance

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER

Mr Jeannot KRECKÉ

Prime Minister, "Ministre d'Etat", Minister for Finance
Minister for Economic Affairs and Foreign Trade,
Minister for Sport

Hungary:

Mr János VERES

Minister for Finance

Malta:

Mr Lawrence GONZI

Prime Minister, Minister for Finance

Netherlands:

Mr Gerrit ZALM

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Finance

Austria:

Mr Karl-Heinz GRASSER

Federal Minister for Finance

Poland:

Mr Jacek DOMINIK

Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Finance

Portugal:

Mr Alvaro MENDONÇA E MOURA

Permanent Representative

Slovenia:

Mr Andrej BAJUK

Minister for Finance

Slovakia:

Mr Ján POČIATEK

Minister for Finance

Finland:

Mr Eero HEINÄLUOMA
Mr Pertti RAUHIO

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Finance
State Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Sweden:

Mr Anders BORG

Minister for Finance

United Kingdom:

Mr Gordon BROWN

Chancellor of the Exchequer

Commission:

Mr Siim KALLAS
Mr Joaquin ALMUNIA
Mr László KOVÁCS

Vice-president
Member
Member

Other participants:

Mr Philippe MAYSTADT
Mr Xavier MUSCA
Mr Joe GRICE

President of the European Investment Bank
Chairman of the Economic and Financial Committee
Chairman of the Economic Policy Committee

The Governments of the Acceding States were represented as follows:

Bulgaria:

Mr Plamen Vassiler ORESHARSKI

Minister for Finance

Romania:

Mr Sebastian VLĂDESCU

Minister for Public Finance

ITEMS DEBATED**MANAGEMENT OF THE EU BUDGET*****– Court of Auditors' annual report***

The Council took note of the presentation by the president of the Court of Auditors, Mr Hubert Weber, of the Court's annual report on implementation of the EU's budget, covering the 2005 financial year.

The Council noted that, once again, the Court's statement of assurance (DAS) is qualified for a significant proportion of transactions, and that further work remains to be done in order to ensure optimal management of EU funds. It considered that particular attention should be paid to the DAS methodology and that progress should be made on the Commission's action plan for an integrated internal control framework.

The Court's report will serve as the basis for preparation of the Council's recommendation to the European Parliament on the discharge to be given to the Commission for implementation of the 2005 budget. The Council is expected to adopt a recommendation at its meeting on 27 February 2007.

– Financial regulation

The Council approved, without discussion, a draft regulation aimed at amending regulation 1605/2002 on the financial regulation applicable to the EU's general budget.

The draft will be forwarded to the European Parliament with a view to reaching agreement on the text before its adoption by the Council. The Council suggests that the conciliation meeting be held in the margins of the Ecofin (Budget) Council's meeting on 21 November.

STATISTICS - Council conclusions

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council endorses the 2006 EFC Status Report on Information Requirements in EMU, and in particular:

- WELCOMES progress made on the availability and quality of Principal European Economic Indicators (PEEIs) which enables a more timely and reliable assessment of the euro area and the EU economy;
- Recognising the positive developments and enhanced efforts by the National Statistical Institutes, CALLS FOR further improvements in areas where the implementation of PEEI targets, particularly related to timeliness and other quality features, has not yet been completed in the light of the original deadline of end 2005; and NOTES that progress should be achieved especially in the area of services and labour market statistics in the context of the objective of an overall reduction in the administrative burden;
- WELCOMES the promising findings on best national practices for producing high quality PEEIs to enable further improvements in timeliness, coverage, consistency and other quality features of statistics both at European and national level; and INVITES Member States to undertake concrete steps to implement earlier estimates benefiting from other Member States' experience; and
- WELCOMES the improvements and timeline required for the PEEIs and CALLS FOR a closer coordination of national statistics on processes as identified in the ECOFIN conclusions of 8 November 2005 and as specified further in the recommendations of the 2006 EFC Status Report;
- INVITES Eurostat and the ECB to review progress achieved as well as on the main outstanding issues concerning the implementation of the EMU Action Plan by Autumn 2007, and the EFC to prepare a new Status Report in 2007; and NOTES that high quality statistics are needed for structural analyses of economic policy and progress in this area should also be reviewed in 2007.

The Council furthermore:

- NOTES that ways should be considered to ensure a coherent approach as regards the public communication of major statistical revisions in Member States and, to this end, INVITES the Committee for Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payments statistics (CMFB), by mid-2007, to examine this issue and put forward a proposal;

- NOTES that important progress has been made during the past year by Eurostat in providing advice to Member States on planned transactions; and WELCOMES the recent guidelines for ex-ante advice by Eurostat, as well as the fact that timetables for consultation are being clarified in the CMFB procedure; and
- LOOKS FORWARD to the forthcoming Commission Communication for a strategic approach on the reduction the statistical burden and will RECALL this issue at its forthcoming meeting. "

THE SUSTAINABILITY OF PUBLIC FINANCES - Council conclusions

The Council held a policy debate on the long-term sustainability of member state public finances. It adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council welcomes the Commission's comprehensive sustainability assessment of Member States' public finances, on the basis of the new age-related expenditure projections, released in February 2006, for pensions, health care, long-term care, education and unemployment transfers for the period 2004 to 2050.

The Council notes that several Member States have implemented structural reforms in recent years, allowing for a reduction of the projected increase in age-related expenditure and thus contributing to long-term sustainability. Other countries are in the process of doing so, which is welcome. Ensuring sustainability of public finances remains a major challenge and EU Member States are encouraged to undertake further substantial reforms to address this where needed. Delaying further policy action could be costly.

In the Commission's assessment, based on a no-policy-change scenario, the EU-wide sustainability gap, i.e. the gap between the structural budgetary position in 2005 and a sustainable budgetary position, stood at about 3½% of GDP and would lead to an EU-wide debt-to-GDP ratio of almost 200% of GDP in 2050. In the absence of further reforms and relying only on fiscal adjustment to ensure sustainability of public finances would mean that the 2% of GDP structural deficit observed in the EU in 2005 should be transformed into a surplus of 1½% of GDP.

Even before considering the impact of ageing populations, the initial budgetary position in about half of the Member States is not sufficiently strong and contributes in itself to the risks of unsustainable public finances. On the assumption that the medium-term budgetary objectives (MTO) are attained in 2010 by all Member States, the EU-wide sustainability gap would be more than halved, to 1½ % of GDP, and the debt-to GDP ratio brought to 80% of GDP. This would be an important step, but it is not sufficient.

This points to the need for further structural reforms and/or budgetary consolidation, in line with the three-pronged strategy to ensure sustainability decided by the Stockholm European Council in 2001, i.e. (i) reducing debt at a fast pace; (ii) raising employment rates and productivity; and, (iii) reviewing and, where appropriate, reforming pension, health care and long-term care systems.

There are however large variations between Member States, both in terms of risks and appropriate policy responses. The Council notes that: the appropriate combination of policies in the three-pronged strategy will depend on the reasons behind the sustainability challenges and Member States' policy priorities. In this respect, the Council considers that the risk categorisation used in the sustainability report, introduced in the last round of assessments of Stability and Convergence Programmes, provides an important tool to assess the sustainability challenges that Member States are facing.

The Council:

- will continue to assess developments of the sustainability of public finances in the Member States in the context of the annual examination of the Stability and Convergence Programmes;
- considers that the multi-annual assessment by the Commission, the sustainability report, updated with missing data from several countries, should be the basis for the annual examination of the Stability and Convergence Programmes, while taking into account all other relevant information given in the programmes, including the starting budgetary positions. A new sustainability report should be prepared by the Commission when new common age-related expenditure projections become available in 2009;
- invites the EPC and the Commission to explore further improvements in the methodology in dealing with the impact of ageing on government revenues over the long-term, including the feasibility and value-added of more detailed projections."

TAXATION

– Minimum excise duty rates on alcoholic beverages

The Council examined a compromise proposal presented by the presidency on the adjustment of minimum excise duty rates applied by the member states on alcoholic beverages in order to counter the effects of inflation. (14132/06)

It agreed to continue work on the dossier with a view to reaching an agreement at its meeting on 28 November, while noting that an automatic solution for future inflation adjustments of the minimum rates would be desirable.

The proposed adjustment to directive 92/84/EEC provides for a 31% increase in the minimum excise duty rates on alcohol, intermediate products and beer, in order to restore their real value to the levels at which they were set when they were introduced on 1 January 1993. The aim is to ensure greater convergence between the rates applied by the member states in order to prevent distortions of competition and fraud.

The principal issues that remain to be resolved concern the inflation adjustment for beer and for certain intermediate products and alcohol.

– Duty-free allowances for travel from third countries

The Council examined a compromise proposal presented by the presidency on allowance exemptions from value-added tax and excise duties on goods carried by persons entering the European Union from third countries.

It agreed to continue work on the dossier with a view to reaching an agreement at its meeting on 28 November.

The proposal is aimed at revising and replacing directive 69/169/EEC on traveller allowances, whilst adapting it to the enlarged EU, restructuring it and simplifying certain provisions. It provides for an increase in the limit on duty-free allowances, in particular to cater for the effects of inflation since they were last revised in 1994.

The principal issue that remains to be resolved concerns the monetary limit on duty-free allowances (currently EUR 175) for persons entering the EU.

OTHER BUSINESS***– VAT on on-line media services***

The Council took note of remarks by the French delegation regarding the rate of value-added tax charged on on-line media services.

Whereas current EU rules allow member states to apply a reduced VAT rate (minimum 5%) to sales of newspapers and periodicals, they require the standard VAT rate (minimum 15%) to be applied to the on-line press.

The French delegation considers that the distinction is hindering the development of the on-line press at a time when the industry is adapting to the digital environment. It has requested EU rules to be amended in order to enable member states that so wish to apply a reduced rate to the on-line press.

MEETINGS IN THE MARGINS OF THE COUNCIL

– *Eurogroup*

Ministers of the euro area member states attended a meeting of the eurogroup on 6 November.

– *Ministerial meeting on the economic situation*

Ministers held a breakfast meeting, which included:

- presentation by commissioner Joaquín Almunia of the Commission's autumn economic forecasts;
- a briefing on the eurogroup's deliberations at its meeting on 6 November;
- a presentation by Rodrigo Rato, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, of his intentions for the second stage of the reform process of the IMF.

– *Meeting with EFTA finance ministers*

Ministers met with finance ministers from countries of the European Free Trade Association: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. The meeting focused on energy policy.

– *Meeting with the European Parliament*

The presidency troika met with a delegation from the European Parliament.

*

* *

Over lunch, ministers discussed the renewal of the European Investment Bank's external lending mandates, for which the presidency's aim is to reach agreement by the end of the year;

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS****Money laundering and terrorist financing - Tracing transfers of funds ***

The Council adopted by qualified majority a regulation laying down rules on information on the payer to accompany transfers of funds for the purposes of the prevention, investigation and detection of money laundering and terrorist financing (*PE-CONS 3630/06, 14023/06 ADD*). The German and French delegations abstained.

The regulation transposes into Community legislation a special recommendation issued by a G7 financial action task force (FATF) in 2001, following the terrorist attacks in the United States. It is aimed at ensuring traceability of payments so as to prevent the financing of terrorists, by imposing identification requirements on payers and verification requirements on payment service providers. The regulation is intended to complement directive 2005/60/EC on money laundering and terrorist financing (OJ L 309, 25.11.2005, p.15).

The regulation will be applicable by the member states as from 1 January 2007, which is the target date set by the FATF.

Reduced rates of VAT - Labour-intensive services

The Council adopted a decision authorising certain member states to (continue to) apply reduced rates of value-added tax for certain labour-intensive services until 2010, in accordance a directive on reduced VAT rates adopted earlier this year (*13916/06*).

The decision implements the provisions of directive 2006/18/EC (OJ L 51, 22.2.2006, p. 12), which extends an experiment, launched in 1999, of reduced VAT rates for labour-intensive services until 31 December 2010 and allows all member states to take part in the experiment under the same conditions.

In accordance with the directive, member states may apply a reduced rate to district heating and two (or in exceptional cases three) out of the following five services: small repair services, the renovation of private dwellings, window cleaning and private household cleaning, domestic care services and hairdressing, on condition that they requested authorisation to do so by 31 March 2006.

The decision will apply from January 2006 (retroactively) until December 2010.

Under Community law, the minimum VAT standard rate is 15% and the minimum VAT reduced rate is 5%.

Slovenia - Introduction of the euro

The Council adopted a regulation amending regulation 974/98, in order to take account of the introduction of the euro in Slovenia (*13872/06*).

Introduction of the euro requires extension to Slovenia of the provisions set out in regulation 974/98.

The Council adopted on 11 July 2006 a decision allowing Slovenia to join the euro area as from 1 January 2007, when euro banknotes and coins will become legal tender, making it the first to adopt the euro out of the ten member states that joined the EU in May 2004.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Instrument for stability

The Council adopted a regulation establishing an instrument to provide financial assistance during the 2007-13 period for the promotion of stable conditions for human and economic development and the promotion of human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms under the EU's external relations policy (*PE-CONS 3634/06*).

The Council approved all amendments voted by the European Parliament following an agreement reached with the Parliament in first reading.

A total of EUR 2,06 billion over seven years will be provided from the Community budget for implementation of the regulation, which will involve development cooperation measures, as well as financial, economic and technical cooperation measures with third countries in the form of:

- assistance in response to situations of crisis or emerging crisis;
- assistance in the context of stable conditions for cooperation.

The regulation will apply as from 1 January 2007.

Democratic Republic of Congo - Extension of deadline for commitment of funds

The Council adopted a decision extending until 31 December 2007 the deadline for the commitment of funds allocated under decision 2003/538/EC, in order to take account of delays in preparations for the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Council decided in July 2003 to provide an additional allocation of EUR 105 million for the implementation of operations in DRC with the aim of ensuring the country's democratic transition with free and transparent elections, strengthening State structures, contributing to the reconstruction of the country and setting up a programme of demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants.

International tropical timber council

The Council adopted a decision regarding the position to be taken by the EU within the international tropical timber council, which will be to vote in favour of extending of the 1994 international agreement on tropical timber (ITTA 1994) until the provisional or definitive entry into force of the successor 2006 agreement (*14500/06*).

A decision on the extension will be taken at the 41st international tropical timber council meeting, in Yokohama (Japan) on 6 and 11 November 2006.

The ITTA 1994 entered into force in January 1996. It is due to expire on 31 December 2006, after two periods of extension. The European Community and 15 of its member states are currently members of the organisation established by this agreement.

For more information, see also www.unctad.org.

7th EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council

The Council approved the EU position in view of the seventh meeting of the EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council, to be held in Brussels on 8 November 2006.

Temporary reception of certain Palestinians

The Council adopted a common position extending for one year the validity of national permits allowing Palestinians who were evacuated from Bethlehem following the siege of the Church of the Nativity by Israeli forces in 2002 to stay in the EU (13942/06).

For more details see press release 9017/02.

Relations with Azerbaijan - Strategic partnership in energy

The Council endorsed a memorandum of understanding on a strategic partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of energy.

Relations with Kazakhstan - Cooperation in energy

The Council endorsed a memorandum of understanding on co-operation between the European Union and the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of energy.

Bulgaria - Industrial products

The Council adopted a decision authorising the signature of an additional protocol to the Europe association agreement with Bulgaria on conformity assessment and acceptance of industrial products.

The protocol is aimed at facilitating the elimination of technical barriers between the parties to trade in industrial products with the progressive adoption and implementation by Bulgaria of national law which is equivalent to EU law.

TRADE POLICY**Anti-dumping measures - China - Bicycles**

The Council adopted a regulation terminating the partial interim review of the anti-dumping measures applicable to imports of bicycles originating in China (13894/06).

Anti-dumping measures - China - Synthetic staple fibres of polyesters

The Council adopted a regulation terminating the new exporter review of Council Regulation (EC) No 428/2005 imposing definitive anti-dumping duties on imports of synthetic staple fibres of polyesters originating, inter alia, in China (14071/06).

Anti-dumping measures - China, Indonesia and Malaysia - Coumarin

The Council adopted a regulation extending the definitive anti-dumping duty imposed by Regulation (EC) No 769/2002 on imports of coumarin originating in China to imports of coumarin consigned from Indonesia or Malaysia, whether declared as originating in Indonesia or Malaysia or not (13770/06).

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**Agreement with Liechtenstein to combat fraud**

The Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations for an agreement between the European Community and Liechtenstein in order to combat fraud and other illegal activities that are to the detriment of their financial interests.

AGRICULTURE

Control of San José scale

The Council adopted a directive (codified version) on the minimum measures to be taken by the member states to control San José scale, which is one of the organisms most harmful to woody dicotyledonous plants (*Quadraspidiotus perniciosus* Comst.), and to prevent it from spreading (13450/06).

The directive codifies and repeals Directive 69/466/EEC on control of San José scale, substituting the various acts incorporated in it by bringing them together with only such amendments as are required by the codification exercise itself.

Glucose and lactose

The Council adopted a regulation on glucose and lactose (codified version) (12847/06).

The regulation codifies and repeals regulation no 2730/75 on glucose and lactose, substituting the various acts incorporated in it by bringing them together with only such amendments as are required by the codification exercise itself.

ENVIRONMENT

UN convention on industrial accidents

The Council adopted a decision providing that at the fourth conference of the parties to the UN convention on the transboundary effects of industrial accidents, which will take place in Rome on 15 and 17 November, the Commission will support, on behalf of the Community an amendment regarding categories and named hazardous substances for the purpose of defining hazardous activities (13962/06).

The convention applies to the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial accidents at sites where hazardous activities take place that are capable of causing transboundary effects. EU directive 96/82/EC, as amended by directive 2003/105/EC, is considered to be the legal and technical instrument fulfilling the Community's obligations under the Convention.

FISHERIES

Agreement with Gabon

The Council adopted a decision approving the provisional application of a protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the agreement with Gabon on fishing off the coast of Gabon for the period from 3 December 2005 to 2 December 2011 (*13616/06*).

The fishing opportunities provided for in the protocol are expressed in vessel numbers (24 freezer tuna seiners and 16 surface longliners) and concern Spain, France, and Portugal.

The Community's financial compensation amounts to EUR 860 000 per year (comprising an annual amount of EUR 715 000 equivalent to a reference tonnage of 11 000 tonnes per year and a specific amount of EUR 145 000 per year for the support and implementation of initiatives taken in the context of the Gabonese sectoral fisheries policy).

Management of fishing fleets in the EU's outermost regions

The Council adopted a regulation extending derogations allowed under regulation 639/2004 for the management of fishing fleets registered in the Community outermost regions (*13575/06*).

The regulation amends regulation 639/2004 following adoption by the Council of a regulation on the EU's Fisheries Fund. This was accompanied by a joint statement by the Council and the Commission concerning the fleets of these regions in order to take account of the particular structural, social and economic situation in the fisheries sector in the outermost regions, and the difficulty of regularising what is a large informal sector in some of these regions.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

The Council adopted:

- the reply to confirmatory application 35/c/01/06, with the Danish, Portuguese, Finnish and Swedish delegations voting against (*13680/1/06 REV 1*).

DECISIONS TAKEN BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE

Accession of Vietnam to the WTO

The Council adopted a decision on the position to be taken by the EU's member states within the General Council of the World Trade Organisation, approving the accession of Vietnam to the WTO.
