

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION



15368/08 (Presse 317)

PRESS RELEASE

2905th meeting of the Council

Education, youth and culture

Brussels, 20 and 21 November 2008

Presidents Christine Albanel

Minister for Culture and Communication of France

Bernard Laporte

Minister of State with responsibility for Sports, Youth and

the Voluntary Sector of France

Xavier Darcos

Minister for National Education of France

Valérie Pécresse

Minister for Higher Education and Research of France

PRESS

EN

1

Main results of the Council

The Council adopted conclusions on the **promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue** in the external relations of the Union and its Member States, and a Resolution on a **European strategy for multilingualism**.

The Council adopted conclusions on the development of legal offers of online cultural and creative content and on combating piracy.

The Council also adopted conclusions on **youth mobility** and on **an agenda for European cooperation on schools**.

Without debate, the Council adopted a Decision proclaiming 2009 as the "European Year of Creativity and Innovation".

CONTENTS¹

PARTICIPANTS	5
ITEMS DEBATED	
CULTURE	8
European heritage label	8
Architecture's contribution to sustainable development	8
Promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the external relations of the Union and its Member States	13
Multilingualism and translation	13
AUDIOVISUAL	13
European digital library EUROPEANA	13
Legal offers of online cultural and creative content and the prevention and combating of piracy in the digital environment	13
YOUTH	14
Health and well-being of young people	14
Mobility of young volunteers in Europe	14
Action at European level in the area of youth policy	14
EDUCATION	16
Multilingualism	16
Enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training	16
Lifelong guidance in education and training strategies	16
European cooperation on schools	16
 Youth mobility	idicated

OT	HER BUSINESS	17
ОТ	HER ITEMS APPROVED	
ED	UCATION, YOUTH AND CULTURE	
_	"Culture", "Lifelong learning", "Europe for citizens" and "Youth in Action" programmes	19
_	European Year of Creativity and Innovation.	19
EUI	ROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY	
_	Security Sector Reform – deployable European expert teams	20
EXT	TERNAL POLICY	
_	Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the Andean Community	20
EN	VIRONMENT	
_	Protection of migratory species	20
DE	VELOPMENT COOPERATION	
_	World AIDS Day	21
_	Central Africa – Economic Partnership Agreement – ACP countries	21
TRA	ADE POLICY	
_	Republic of Moldova – Autonomous trade preferences.	22
STA	TISTICS	
_	Plant protection products	22
API	POINTMENTS	
_	Committee of the Regions	23

PARTICIPANTS

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

Belgium:

Mr Frank VANDENBROUCKE Vice-Minister-President of the Flemish Government and

Flemish Minister for Work, Education and Training Minister for Culture and the Audiovisual Sector

(French Community)

Mr Marc TARABELLA Minister for Youth and Further Education (French

Community)

Bulgaria:

Mr Yavor Todorov MILUSHEV Deputy Minister for Culture

Czech Republic:

Ms Fadila LAANAN

Mr Václav JEHLIČKA Minister for Culture

Mr Ondřej LIŠKA Minister for Education, Youth and Sport

Denmark:

Mr Jens KISLING Deputy Permanent Representative

Germany:

Mr Siegfried SCHNEIDER Minister with special responsibilities, Head of State

Chancellery, Bavaria

Mr Andreas STORM Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for

Education and Research

Estonia:

Mr Laine JÄNES Minister for Culture

Ireland:

Mr Seán HAUGHEY

Minister of State at the Department of Education and

Science and at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (with special responsibility for Lifelong

Learning and School Transport)

Greece:

Mr Evripidis STYLIANIDIS Minister for Education and Religious Affairs

Spain

Mr César Antonio MOLINA SÁNCHEZ Minister for Culture

Ms Mercedes CABRERA CALVO-SOTELO Minister for Education, Social Policy and Sport

Ms Bibiana AÍDO ALMAGRO Minister for Equality

Ms Milagros LUIS Minister for Education, University, Culture and Sports of

the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands Minister for Culture and Tourism of the Principality of

Asturias

France:

Ms Encarnación RODRÍGUEZ

Mr Xavier DARCOS Minister for National Education

Ms Christine ALBANEL Minister for Culture and Communication

Mr Bernard LAPORTE Minister of State with responsibility for Sports, Youth and

the Voluntary Sector

Ms Valérie PECRESSE Minister for Higher Education and Research

Italy:

Ms Mariastella GELMINIMinister for Education, Universities and ResearchMr Francesco Maria GIROState Secretary for Cultural Assets and Activities

Cyprus:

Mr Andreas DEMETRIOU Minister for Education and Culture

Latvia:

Mr Ainars BAŠTIKS Minister for Children and the Family

Ms Helēna DEMAKOVA Minister for Culture

Ms Tatjana KOĶE Minister for Education and Science

Lithuania:

Ms Diana PAKNYTE State Secretary at the Ministry of Culture

Mr Dainius NUMGAUDIS State Secretary at the Ministry of Education and Science

Luxembourg:

Ms Mady DELVAUX-STEHRES
Ms Octavie MODERT
Minister for Education and Vocational Training
State Secretary for Relations with Parliament, State

State Secretary for Relations with Parliament, State
Secretary for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural
Development, State Secretary for Culture, Higher

Education and Research

Hungary:

Mr István HILLER Minister for Education and Culture

Malta:

Mr Clyde PULI Parliamentary Secretary for Youth and Sport in the

Ministry of Education and Culture

Mr Francis BORG Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture,

Youth and Sport

Netherlands:

Mr Ronald PLASTERK Minister for Education, Culture and Science

Austria:

Mr Walter GRAHAMMER Deputy Permanent Representative

Poland:

Ms Monika SMOLEŃ Undersecretary, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage

Mr Krzysztof Piotr STANOWSKI Undersecretary, Ministry of Science and Higher Education

Portugal:

Ms Maria de Lurdes RODRIGUES Minister for Education

Mr José MARIANO GAGO Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education

Mr José António PINTO RIBEIRO Minister for Culture

Romania:

Ms Corina CHERTES

Mr Andras DEMETER State Secretary, Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs

Undersecretary for Higher Education, Ministry of

Education, Research and Youth

Slovenia:

Ms Veronica TOVŠAK PLETERSKI Deputy Permanent Representative

Slovakia:

Mr Ján MIKOLAJ Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education

Mr Ivan SEČÍK State Secretary at the Ministry of Culture

Finland:

Mr Stefan WALLIN Minister for Culture and Sport

Sweden:

Ms Lena ADELSOHN LILJEROTH Minister for Culture

Ms Amelie VON ZWEIGBERGK State Secretary to the Minister for Education

United Kingdom:

Mr Alun Ffred JONES Minister for Heritage (Welsh Assembly)

.....

Commission:
Ms Viviane REDING Mr Ján FIGEL Mr Leonard ORBAN

Member Member Member

ITEMS DEBATED

CULTURE

European heritage label

The Council held an exchange of views and adopted conclusions on the creation of a European heritage label by the European Union; see 14397/08.

Architecture's contribution to sustainable development

Following an exchange of views, the Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. Having regard to:

- the Treaty establishing the European Community;
- the Council Resolution of 12 February 2001 on architectural quality in urban and rural environments¹, which affirms that architecture is a fundamental feature of the culture and the fabric of life of each of our countries;
- the Council conclusions of 24 May 2007 on the contribution of the cultural and creative sectors to the achievement of the Lisbon objectives², which point out that cultural activities and creative industries, including architecture, play a critical role in boosting innovation and technology and are key engines of sustainable growth in the future;
- and the Council Resolution of 16 November 2007 on a European agenda for culture³ which, further to the Commission communication of 10 May 2007⁴, brings out the cross-cutting role of culture;

_

OJ C 73, 6.3.2001, p. 6.

OJ C 311, 21.12.2007, p. 7.

³ OJ C 143, 10.6.2008, p. 9.

⁴ 9496/07 + ADD 1.

2. Taking note of:

- the renewed European Union Sustainable Development Strategy¹, adopted by the European Council of 15 and 16 June 2006, the overall aim of which is to identify and develop actions to enable the EU to achieve continuous improvement of quality of life both for current and for future generations, through the creation of sustainable communities able to manage and use resources efficiently and to tap the ecological and social innovation potential of the economy, ensuring prosperity, environmental protection and social cohesion;
- the Leipzig Charter on sustainable European cities², adopted on 24 May 2007 by the Ministers with responsibility for urban development, which underlines the importance of building culture and calls for the adoption of an integrated urban development approach covering the economic, social, ecological and cultural aspects of towns and cities, on the basis of cooperation between the different tiers of administrative and political responsibility and between public and private sector actors;

3. Welcoming:

• the work of the European Architectural Policy Forum on issues of architectural quality and sustainable development;

4. Pointing out that:

- architecture, as a discipline involving cultural creation and innovation, including a technological
 component, provides a remarkable illustration of what culture can contribute to sustainable
 development, in view of its impact on the cultural dimension of towns and cities, as well as on
 the economy, social cohesion and the environment;
- architecture is also an example of the cross-cutting nature of culture, being affected by a number of public policies and not just cultural policies;

5. Considering that:

• Europe's towns and cities today face major challenges: demographic change and its implications for urban sprawl, environmental issues and climate change mitigation, maintaining social cohesion, particularly against a background of economic and cultural change, and the protection and development of architectural and cultural heritage;

-

^{10117/06.}

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/download_docs/Mai/0524-AN/075DokumentLeipzigCharta.pdf

- the way to respond to those challenges is by means of sustainable urban development, a creative, integrated approach under which culture, economics, social affairs and the environment each play an equally important part;
- sustainable urban development means:
- paying particular attention to architectural quality and diversity as aspects of cultural diversity, to heritage conservation and enhancement and to the individual identity of natural or urban landscapes,
- contributing to the management of projects to use and convert land and buildings, in particular industrial wasteland, control energy resources in the context of climate change and reduce pollution,
- reflecting, through innovative approaches to architecture and urban planning, developments in population lifestyles, particularly issues of mobility and demographic change, as well as objectives of social cohesion, social mix, intercultural dialogue and civic involvement,
- encouraging high-quality architectural creation as an economic stimulus and tourist attraction for towns and cities;
- architecture can play an integrating and innovative role in implementing sustainable urban development, in particular by:
- reconciling the sometimes differing requirements of building and landscape conservation and contemporary creation or of inhabitants' legitimate aspirations and controlling urban sprawl,
- contributing, by its diversity, quality and creativity, to the urban population's cultural enrichment and quality of life and to the economic, commercial and tourism-related vibrancy of towns and cities, in particular by serving as a breeding ground for small and medium-sized businesses;
- sustainable urban development, lastly, provides an opportunity for creation, innovation, renewal architectural styles and the reappropriation and reinterpretation of traditional practice;

6. Noting with interest:

- initiatives by many European towns and cities, in particular as European cultural capitals, to use culture and especially architecture as a major means of regeneration;
- the emergence of creative towns and cities, whose sustainable urban development is based on new competitive factors, including urban infrastructure quality and interaction between culture and industry;
- 7. Calls on Member States and the Commission, within their respective spheres of competence and with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity, to:
- make allowance for architecture and its specific features, in particular its cultural aspects, in all relevant policies, especially in research, economic and social cohesion, sustainable development and education policies;
- devise for architecture, apart from technical standards, an approach involving overall economic, social, cultural and environmental objectives;
- encourage innovation and experimentation in sustainable development in architecture, urban planning and landscaping, particularly within the framework of European policies or programmes and when commissioning public works;
- improve knowledge of the architectural sector and its contribution to sustainable development, particularly in terms of statistics;
- raise public awareness of the role of architecture and urban planning in the creation of a high-quality living environment and encourage public involvement in sustainable urban development;
- consider the feasibility, in cooperation with professionals and in the light of experience in a number of Member States, of an annual European architecture "event";
- work together to ensure that these conclusions are acted upon and take stock of their implementation in 2012;

8. Calls on Member States to:

- endeavour to have architecture play an integrating and innovative role in the sustainable development process, beginning with the design stage of architectural, urban planning, landscaping and rehabilitation projects;
- help develop the economic growth and employment potential of architecture, as a creative, cultural industry;
- promote education in architecture and heritage, and in the living environment, in particular through artistic and cultural education;
- promote the initial and further training of architects, urban planners and landscapers as regards sustainable development;
- highlight architecture in implementing the European Year of Creativity and Innovation (2009);
- where appropriate, apply the open method of coordination for culture;

9. Calls on the Commission to:

- take architecture into account in preparing its Green Paper on cultural and creative industries;
- involve networks of public and private-sector architectural experts and practitioners, such as the European Architectural Policy Forum, in work and consultations on issues and/or matters relating to architecture;
- in cooperation with those networks and the European network of schools of architecture, encourage:
- the provision of information and sharing of good practice and research among architects, developers and users,
- the training of young architects, urban planners and landscapers in sustainable development,
 promotion of their work and access for them to public or private commissions."

Promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the external relations of the Union and its Member States

Following an exchange of views, the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted conclusions on the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the external relations of the Union and its Member States. These conclusions are set out in 16211/08.

Multilingualism and translation

The Commission presented its communication entitled "Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment" to the Council. In response, the Culture Council held an exchange of views on the "translation" part of the draft resolution on a European strategy for multilingualism, which was subsequently adopted by the Ministers for Education on Friday 21 November.

AUDIOVISUAL

European digital library EUROPEANA

On the occasion of the launch of the prototype of the European digital library Europeana, the Council held an exchange of views and adopted conclusions on the project; see <u>14870/08</u>.

Legal offers of online cultural and creative content and the prevention and combating of piracy in the digital environment

Following an exchange of views, the Council adopted conclusions on the development of legal offers of online cultural and creative content. Those conclusions are set out in <u>13605/08</u>.

YOUTH

Health and well-being of young people

The Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted a resolution on the health and well-being of young people. The text is set out in 14877/08.

Mobility of young volunteers in Europe

The Council adopted a recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union; see 14825/08.

Action at European level in the area of youth policy

The Council gave its views on certain aspects of action carried out at European level in the area of youth policy. The Presidency had suggested that Ministers state their views on one of the three topics below, replying to the following questions:

Mobility of young people in the European Union

Cross-border volunteer activities are one of the priorities of the European Union in the area of youth policy.

- How can the profile of the Council Recommendation on the Mobility of Young Volunteers across the European Union be raised so that it is implemented in full?
- How can we make sure that the volunteer activities carried out by young people in Europe have real effects on their social and professional integration?
- What partnerships should be developed with undertakings to develop the mobility of young people in Europe?

Several Member States stressed that voluntary activities played an important role in increasing the opportunities of young people on the labour market, and helping their social integration. In this context, the participation of underprivileged young people in volunteering is felt to be of particular importance. The exchange of information and experience between the Member States and increased public awareness of voluntary activities could help to promote cross-border voluntary work.

Future framework for cooperation/Structured dialogue

The structured dialogue plays a part in taking the views of young people into account in the process of drawing up the decisions that concern them. The framework for European cooperation on youth policy will be revised in 2009.

– How should an effective and constructive dialogue be promoted at European level with young people and their organisations?

The structured dialogue was generally described as a key tool of youth policy, both at national and European level, as it facilitates the active contribution of young people to the formulation and implementation of policies which concern them. On the other hand, clear objectives and structures are needed to make the structured dialogue more effective.

European Youth Pact

The European Youth Pact, in the context of the Lisbon Strategy, promotes the reconciliation of young people's professional and personal and family life.

- How can public policies establish a link between the quest for better employability of young people and their access to leisure and free creativity?

It was stressed that, thanks to their creative capabilities, young people are an important resource for achieving the objectives set by the Lisbon Strategy.

EDUCATION

Multilingualism

The Council adopted a Resolution on a European strategy for multilingualism. The Resolution is set out in <u>16207/08</u>.

Enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training

The Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted conclusions on the future priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training. The conclusions are given in <u>13593/08</u>.

Lifelong guidance in education and training strategies

Following a discussion, the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted a Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies. The Resolution is given in <u>15030/08</u>.

European cooperation on schools

The Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, held a discussion and adopted conclusions on preparing young people for the 21st century: an agenda for European cooperation on schools (see 14855/08).

Youth mobility

The Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, held a discussion and adopted the conclusions on youth mobility set out in <u>16206/08</u>.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Council took note of information concerning the following items:

Increased cooperation in the field of archives in Europe

The Chairwoman of the European Archives Group presented a progress report on the implementation of priority actions to increase cooperation in this field in Europe. This report is contained in the Communication from the Commission entitled: "Summary of the Progress Report to the Council on the implementation of Council Recommendation 2005/835/EC of 14 November 2005 on priority actions to increase cooperation in the field of archives in Europe, presented by the European Archives Group" (12405/08).

Protection of children using the Internet

The Presidency provided information on the state of play concerning the draft Decision continuing the multiannual Community programme on protecting children using the Internet and other communication technologies (Safer Internet). The Council welcomed the forthcoming adoption of this Decision which would allow it to enter into force on 1 January 2009.

Public service broadcasting and state aid rules

The Swedish delegation spoke on the basis of its note concerning the revision of state aid rules applicable to public service broadcasting ($\underline{15009/08}$). This contribution was supported by several delegations. In its note, Sweden in particular stresses the need for a cautious approach to the proposed revision.

Digital projection in cinemas in Europe

The German delegation provided information on the digitalisation of cinemas and its planned efforts to support such digitalisation.

European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)/European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (VET)

The Presidency gave a progress report on the two draft recommendations that the Commission proposed in spring 2008 (8288/08 and 8289/08). It intends to make every effort to achieve rapid agreement with the European Parliament at first reading.

Erasmus Mundus programme

The Presidency gave a progress report on the extension of the Erasmus Mundus action programme, which supports higher education programmes and grants mainly intended for students from third countries. This second phase of the Erasmus Mundus programme is broader and more extensive than the previous phase. The Council welcomed the fact that the forthcoming adoption of the programme should allow its entry into force on 1 January 2009.

Events in the sphere of education and higher education

The Presidency drew the Council's attention to the events organised in the sphere of education and higher education during the French Presidency.

EUROPA DIARY 2009

The Commission informed the Council about the EUROPA DIARY publication that it makes available to schools throughout Europe every year in order to inform young people of their rights (15010/08).

Joint Declarations of the Commission with Israel and India

The Commission provided information about the signing of these two declarations aiming at establishing a policy dialogue with Israel and India respectively (<u>15154/08</u>). The aim of the dialogue is to exchange and compare best practices in the sphere of education and culture.

"Learning to Learn" survey

The Commission informed the Council about a pilot survey carried out among 2 300 pupils in eight Member States in order to develop an indicator enabling the key skill of learning to learn to be measured (15011/08).

EuroSkills – review and prospects

The Commission gave information about the review and future prospects of EuroSkills – the competition in vocational skills held in Rotterdam in September 2008. (<u>15155/08</u>; www.euroskills2008.eu)

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

EDUCATION, YOUTH AND CULTURE

"Culture", "Lifelong learning", "Europe for citizens" and "Youth in Action" programmes

The Council adopted four decisions aiming to simplify and improve the functioning of the Community programmes "Culture" for the period 2007-2013 (3679/08), "Lifelong learning" (3677/08), "Europe for citizens" (3678/08) and "Youth in Action" (2007-2013) (3680/08).

The amendments made will make possible a more rapid and more efficient implementation of the decisions on which projects to finance, as the consultative procedure is replaced by a commitment by the Commission to inform the European Parliament and the Member States without delay of all measures taken without the assistance of the committees set up originally.

The decisions were adopted at first reading under the co-decision procedure.

European Year of Creativity and Innovation

The Council adopted a Decision declaring the year 2009 to be the "European Year of Creativity and Innovation" (3691/08).

The objective of this Decision is to support the efforts of the Member States to promote creativity, through education and continued vocational training, as a driver of innovation and an essential factor in the development of vocational and entrepreneurial skills.

In the context of existing programmes, the EU will contribute to the funding of European, national, regional or local measures which contribute to these objectives, including:

- conferences, events and initiatives designed to raise awareness of the importance of creativity and a capacity for innovation;
- information and promotion campaigns to disseminate key messages;
- identification of examples of good practice and dissemination of information about promoting creativity and a capacity for innovation;
- surveys and studies on a Community or national scale.

The decision was taken at first reading under the co-decision procedure. The European Parliament voted at first reading on 23 September 2008. As the Council had accepted all the European Parliament's amendments, the decision has now been adopted.

EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Security Sector Reform – deployable European expert teams

The Council approved a draft document concerning European expert teams which could be deployed on an EU mission in the field of Security Sector Reform (SSR) (14576/1/08).

The objective of this document is to increase the EU's capacity for external action in the field of Security Sector Reform (SSR) by establishing a community of experts familiar with this problem. The EU should increase its expertise in the civilian field, which could be based on civilian crisis response teams, and its expertise in the field of defence, including military defence, and of civilian and democratic monitoring of security structures.

EXTERNAL POLICY

Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the Andean Community

The Council authorised the Commission to negotiate the amendment of the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement between the Andean Community and the European Community in order to take into account the withdrawal of Venezuela from the Andean Community.

ENVIRONMENT

Protection of migratory species

The Council took a decision in favour of incorporating into the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals several species not yet listed in that Convention with the aim of guaranteeing them better protection.

The next meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention will be held in Rome from 1 to 5 December 2008.

The international Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (also known as "CMS" or "Bonn Convention") aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their range. The European Community has been a Party to the Convention since its entry into force in 1983.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

World AIDS Day

The Council approved a statement from the EU with a view to its dissemination on the occasion of World AIDS Day on 1 December 2008.

The statement should stress, among other things, the EU's firm commitment to tackle the crucial problem represented by the global HIV/AIDS pandemic through its long-term strategic plan that lays the basis for sustainable progress.

Central Africa – Economic Partnership Agreement – ACP countries

The Council adopted a Decision authorising the signature and provisional application of a stepping stone Economic Partnership Agreement signature with Central Africa (12122/1/08).

This stepping stone agreement establishes an initial framework comprising, on the one hand, commitments and, on the other hand, negotiations, with the aim of incorporating additional elements in order to arrive at a full Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in accordance with the Cotonou Agreement.

The general objectives of the stepping stone agreement are to:

- contribute to the reduction and eradication of poverty by establishing a consistent trade partnership;
- promote a regional economy that is more competitive and diversified, and stronger growth;
- foster regional integration, economic cooperation and good governance;
- promote the gradual integration of the Central Africa Party into the global economy;
- improve capacities in terms of trade policy and trade-related issues;

- establish and implement an effective, predictable and transparent regulatory framework for trade and investment in the region;
- strengthen existing relations between the Parties on the basis of solidarity and mutual interest;
- promote private-sector development and employment growth.

TRADE POLICY

Republic of Moldova - Autonomous trade preferences

The Council adopted a Regulation amending Regulation No 55/2008 which introduces autonomous trade preferences for the Republic of Moldova.

Regulation No 55/2008, which has applied since 1 March 2008, gives all products originating in the Republic of Moldova free access to the Community markets, except for certain agricultural products for which limited concessions have been given either in the form of exemption from customs duties within the limit of tariff quotas or of reductions of customs duties.

STATISTICS

Plant protection products

The Council adopted a common position with a view to the adoption of a Regulation concerning statistics on plant protection products (11120/08 and 11120/08 ADD 1).

The draft Regulation aims to establish a common framework for the collection and systematic analysis of Community statistics relating to the annual quantities of plant protection products placed on the market and used in agricultural activity.

The common position will be forwarded to the European Parliament in order to start a second reading under the legislative procedure of co-decision.

APPOINTMENTS

Committee of the Regions

The Council appointed to the Committee of the Regions, for the remainder of the current term of office, which runs until 25 January 2010:

(a) as members:

Mr Mircea COSMA, President of Prahova County Council,

Mr Răducu George FILIPESCU, President of Călărași County Council,

Ms Edita Emöke LOKODI, President of Mureş County Council,

Mr Gheorghe BUNEA STANCU, President of Brăila County Council,

Mr Ion PRIOTEASA, President of Dolj County Council,

Mr Tudor PENDIUC, Mayor of Piteşti municipality,

Mr Gheorghe FALCĂ, Mayor of Arad municipality,

Mr Decebal ARNĂUTU, Mayor of Târgu-Neamt town,

Mr Vasile SAVA, Mayor of Tăndărei town;

(b) as alternate members:

Mr Silvian CIUPERCĂ, President of Ialomiţa County Council,

Mr Mircea Ioan MOLOŢ, President of Hunedoara County Council,

Mr Árpád Szabolcs CSEHI, President of Satu Mare County Council,

Mr Liviu Nicolae DRAGNEA, President of Teleorman County Council,

Mr Gheorghe FLUTUR, President of Suceava County Council,

Mr Marian OPRIŞAN, President of Vrancea County Council,

Mr Gheorghe NICHITA, Mayor of Iaşi municipality,

Mr George SCRIPCARU, Mayor of Braşov municipality,

Mr Péter FERENC, Mayor of Sovata town,

Ms Mariana MIRCEA, Mayor of Cernavodă town,

Mr Adrian Ovidiu TEBAN, Mayor of Cugir town.