



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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PRESS RELEASE

2802nd Council meeting

Education, Youth and Culture

Brussels, 24-25 May 2007

President

Mr Bernd NEUMANN

Minister of State in the Federal Chancellery,
Federal Government Representative for Culture and Media

Ms Anette SCHAVAN

Federal Minister for Education and Research, and

Ms Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Federal Minister for Family
Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
of Germany

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi 175 B - 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 8716 / 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/Newsroom>

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Main results of the Council

*The Council reached political agreement on a draft directive on the coordination of certain provisions concerning the **audiovisual media services** (television without frontiers).*

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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.

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PARTICIPANTS

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

Belgium:

Mr Bert ANCIAUX
Mr Geert BOURGEOIS

Mr Olivier PAASCH

Flemish Minister for Culture, Youth, Sport and Brussels
Flemish Minister for Administrative Affairs, Foreign
Policy, the Media and Tourism
Minister for Education and Scientific Research, German-
speaking Community

Bulgaria:

Ms Vanya Yordanova DOBREVA
Ms Ina KILEVA

Deputy Minister of Education and Science
Deputy Minister of Culture

Czech Republic:

Mr Marek MORA

Deputy Minister for Education, Youth and Sport with
responsibility for the European Integration and
International Relations Section
First Deputy Minister for Culture

Mr Jalomír TALÍŘ

Denmark:

Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM-MIKKELSEN

Deputy Permanent Representative

Germany:

Ms Annette SCHAVAN
Ms Ursula VON DER LEYEN

Mr Bernd NEUMANN

Ms Ute ERDSIEK-RAVE

Federal Minister of Education and Research
Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth
Minister of State in the Federal Chancellery, Federal
Government Representative for Culture and Media
Minister of Education and Women's Issues of the Land
Schleswig-Holstein

Estonia:

Mr Tõnis LUKAS
Ms Laine JÄNES

Minister for Education and Science
Minister for Culture

Ireland:

Mr Kenneth THOMPSON

Deputy Permanent Representative

Greece:

Ms Marietta GIANNAKOU
Mr Theodoros ROUSOPOULOS

Minister for Education and Religious Affairs
Minister of State and Government Spokesman

Spain:

Ms Aurora DOMÍNGUEZ
Mr Cristóbal GONZÁLEZ-ALLER
Ms Anxela BUGALLO

Ms Laura SANCHEZ

Ms Micaela NAVARRO

Under-Secretary for Labour and Social Affairs
Deputy Permanent Representative
Minister for Culture and Sports of the Autonomous
Community of Galicia
Minister for Education and University of the Autonomous
Community of Galicia
Minister for Equality and Social Welfare of the
Autonomous Community of Andalusia

France:

Mr Xavier DARCOS
Ms Christine ALBANEL

Minister for National Education
Minister for Culture and Communication, Government
Spokesperson

Italy:

Mr Vincenzo GRASSI

Deputy Permanent Representative

Cyprus:

Ms Olympia STYLIANOU

Secretary General

Latvia:

Ms Helēna DEMAKOVA
Mr Ainars BAŠTIKS

Minister for Culture
Minister for Children and the Family

Lithuania:

Ms Roma ŽAKAITIENĖ
Mr Jonas JUČAS
Ms Violeta MURAUSKAITE

Minister for Education and Science
Minister for Culture
Undersecretary, Ministry of Social Security and Labour

Luxembourg:

Ms Mady DELVAUX-STEHRES
Mr Jean-Louis SCHILTZ

Minister for Education and Vocational Training
Minister for Cooperation and Humanitarian Action,
Minister for Communications, Minister for Defence

Hungary:

Mr István HILLER

Minister for Education and Culture

Malta:

Mr Louis GALEA

Minister for Education, Youth and Employment

Netherlands:

Mr Peter W. KOK

Deputy Permanent Representative

Austria:

Ms Claudia SCHMIED
Mr Johannes HAHN
Ms Doris BURES

Federal Minister for Education, Arts and Culture
Federal Minister of Science and Research
Federal Minister for Women, Media and Civil Service

Poland:

Mr Roman GIERTYCH
Mr Kazimierz Michał UJAZDOWSKI

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for National Education
Minister for Culture and National Heritage

Portugal:

Mr Pedro SILVA PEREIRA
Ms Maria de Lurdes RODRIGUES
Ms Isabel PIRES DE LIMA
Mr Augusto SANTOS SILVA
Mr Manuel HEITOR
Mr Jorge PEDREIRA

Minister for the Prime Minister's Office
Minister for Education
Minister for Culture
Minister for Parliamentary Affairs
State Secretary for High Education
State Secretary for Education

Romania:

Mr Cristian ADOMNIȚEI
Mr Virgil-Stefan NIȚULESCU

Minister of Education, Research and Youth
Secretary General of the Romanian Ministry of Culture
and Religious Affairs
President of the National Authority for Youth

Mr Károly BORBÉLY

Slovenia:

Mr Milan ZVER
Mr Vasko SIMONITI

Minister for Education and Sport
Minister for Culture

Slovakia:

Mr Ján MIKOLAJ
Mr Marek MAĎARIČ

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education
Minister for Culture

Finland:

Ms Sari SARKOMAA
Mr Stefan WALLIN

Minister for Education
Minister for Culture and Sport

Sweden:

Ms Lena ADELSON LILJEROTH
Ms Nyamko SABUNI

Minister for Culture
Minister for Integration and Equal Opportunities

United Kingdom:

Mr Bill RAMMELL

Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and
Higher Education
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Creative
Industries and Tourism

Mr Shaun WOODWARD

Commission:

Ms Viviane REDING
Mr Ján FIGEE

Member
Member

ITEMS DEBATED

CULTURE

Cultural and creative sectors - *Council conclusions*

Following the intervention of numerous delegations underlying the crucial role of the cultural and creative sectors for the achievement of the Lisbon objectives, the Council adopted conclusions on this topic (9021/07).

(See the full text of the conclusions at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st09/st09021.en07.pdf>).

AUDIOVISUAL

TV without frontiers

The Council reached, by unanimity, political agreement on a draft directive on the coordination of certain provisions concerning the audiovisual media services (9132/07+ ADD1).

The text agreed by the Council has been pre-negotiated with the European Parliament, in accordance with the *joint inter-institutional declaration on practical arrangements for the co-decision procedure*. It is, therefore, expected that the common position formalising today's political agreement will be adopted by the European Parliament with no amendments.

The draft directive seeks to address the significant technological and market developments of recent years while ensuring a competitive level playing field between media service providers. It establishes common minimum rules for all audiovisual media services irrespective of the transmission platform used for their delivery.

Within the notion of audiovisual media services, the text distinguishes between "linear" television broadcasts (e.g. scheduled broadcasting via traditional TV, the internet or mobile phones) which "pushes" content to viewers and on-demand services ("non-linear"), such as video on demand, which the viewer "pulls" from a network. Only the common minimum rules would apply to on-demand services (inter alia protection of minors and human dignity, qualitative rules on advertising), whilst additional rules, including the quantitative rules on advertising, would apply to television broadcasts.

Like the existing directive, the political agreement uses the principle of the country-of-origin to determine jurisdiction between Member States. However, the text agreed includes a Community mechanism allowing a "destination" Member State, in limited circumstances, to take measures against a provider established in another Member State. Co-operation between Member States in their handling of services provided across frontiers is also mandatory.

The draft directive would modernise and simplify the quantitative rules on advertising by giving more flexibility to television broadcasters. However, it would not increase the hourly amount of admissible advertising of 12 minutes per hour and it would continue to limit possible interruptions for cinematographic works, television films and news programmes.

Specific restrictions on advertising interrupting children's programmes are also retained. In addition the Directive will encourage the development of codes of conduct on the advertising of unhealthy foods addressed to children.

The draft directive forbids, in principle, product placement, except for certain categories of programmes, subject to strict conditions to protect the viewer.

The draft directive introduces a EU-wide right of broadcasters to have access to events of high interest to the public for the purpose of short news reports. It also seeks to improve access for people with disabilities to programmes.

Legal basis proposed: Articles 47 and 55 of the Treaty – qualified majority required for a Council decision; co-decision procedure with the European Parliament applicable.

EDUCATION

Indicators and benchmarks - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted conclusions on a coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training.

(See the full text of the conclusions at:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st10/st10083.en07.pdf>)

Evidence-based policy making

The Council held an exchange of views on *evidence-based policy making in the field of education*, covering, in particular, the following topics:

- *action that could be taken by Member States:*
 - a) *to further develop capacity in educational research;*
 - b) *to reinforce the use of such research and other evidence in educational policy and practice.*
- *the possibility of supporting such action at EU level.*

Delegations underlined that, for long-term policies in the field of education and training to be effective, they must be based on solid evidence.

A culture of evaluation was required within education and training systems. To enable Member States to fully understand and monitor what was happening in their systems, they needed channels for producing and accessing relevant research, a statistical infrastructure capable of collecting the necessary data, and mechanisms to assess progress as policies were implemented.

The debate provided input to the forthcoming Commission communication on the subject, which is expected shortly.

The delegations also emphasised the importance, at EU level, of peer learning and the exchange and dissemination of research results.

YOUTH

Equal opportunities for all young people - *Resolution*

The Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted a Resolution on "Creating equal opportunities for all young people – full participation in society" (8770/07).

(See the full text of the Resolution at
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st08/st08770.en07.pdf>*)*

Future perspectives for youth policy - *Council conclusions*

The Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted conclusions on future perspectives for European cooperation in the field of youth policy (8771/07).

(See the full text of the conclusions at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st08/st08771.en07.pdf>).

Following the adoption of the conclusions, the Council held an exchange of views covering, in particular, the following topics:

1. *The way ahead*

Further development of the Council proposals; further discussion on future perspectives for European cooperation in the field of youth policy.

2. *Youth Report*

European youth report describing the general situation of young people in Europe, European cooperation in the field of youth policy and the further development of youth policy; elements figuring in such a report; entities involved in producing the report and in what way.

3. *Exchange framework*

Development of an exchange framework for those involved in local and regional youth policy; role of European, national and local levels and of young people; recording of results.

As an outcome from the debate, it was possible to note a large consensus on the initiative of elaborating regular reports on the measures taken at national, regional and local levels in favour of youth.

Informal forum with youth representatives

In the margins of the Youth Council, young people from Germany, France, Portugal, Slovenia and Finland, representatives from the Rome Youth Summit, the Cologne Youth Event and the European Youth Forum met and discussed with Youth-Ministers from Germany, France, Portugal, Slovenia and Finland and with Commissioner Figel about “Youth and the future of Europe” as well as about the topic “Equal opportunities and participation in society”.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Council also addressed the following items:

- (a) European capitals of culture event
 - The Council selected Ireland and Greece as the Member States that will designate the two experts whom the Council will nominate for the selection panel;
- (b) Work Plan for Culture - State of play
 - Information from the Presidency (8772/07);
- (c) Communication from the Commission on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world
 - Presentation by the Commission (9496/07);
- (d) Expert conferences organised by the German Presidency in the field of culture
 - Information from the Presidency (8773/07);
- (e) Facilitate the access of European youths to State subsidised cultural houses for a symbolic amount (e.g. one euro)
 - Intervention by the Belgian delegation, supported by the Romanian delegation (9129/07);
- (f) Candidature of Wroclaw to EXPO 2012: The Culture of leisure in World Economies
 - Intervention by the Polish delegation;
- (g) Expert conference: "More trust in content": the potential of co- and self-regulation in digital media (Leipzig, 9-11 May 2007)
 - Information from the Presidency (8914/07);

- (h) EU policy on the communication of EU activities: creation of a European Observatory on communication and "One minute for Europe" on TV
 - Intervention by the Greek delegation, supported by the Cypriot and Italian delegations (9219/07);
- (i) Proposal for a Regulation establishing the European Institute of Technology: state of play
 - Information from the Presidency;
- (j) Proposal for a Recommendation on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning: state of play
 - Information from the Presidency;
- (k) Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Education and Research (Cairo, 18 June 2007)
 - Information from the Presidency (9098/07);
- (l) Possible inter-institutional declaration on a European Year to promote links between creativity, culture and education (2009)
 - Information from the Commission;
- (m) Access to higher education in the EU
 - The Austrian and the Luxembourg delegations asked for a debate on this item at a forthcoming Council (9443/07); the Portuguese delegation confirmed its intention to deal with this item during its Presidency;
- (n) Communication from the Commission "A coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training"
 - Presentation by the Commission (6672/07);
- (o) Communication from the Commission to the Council on the Framework for the European survey on language competences
 - Presentation by the Commission (8387/07).

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**EXTERNAL RELATIONS****EU-Algeria Association Agreement - Accession of new EU member states**

The Council decided to forward to the European Parliament, for its assent, a draft decision on the conclusion of the Protocol to the EU-Algeria Association Agreement to take account of the accession of ten Member States to the EU in May 2004.

The Protocol to the EU-Algeria Association Agreement was signed on 24 April in Luxembourg.

EU-Lebanon Association Council

The Council adopted decisions on Community positions to be adopted within the EU-Lebanon Association Council on :

- the implementation of Article 75 of the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement, laying down the rules of procedure of the Association Council and the Association Committee (8906/07); and
- the implementation of Article 80 of the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement, setting up subcommittees of the EU-Lebanon Association Committee (8277/07).

The EU-Lebanon Association Agreement (OJ L 143, 30.5.2006, p. 2.) was signed on 17 June 2002 and entered into force in April 2006. The agreement envisages the gradual liberalisation of trade and the establishment of a free trade area over a transitional period not exceeding 12 years from its entry into force. The agreement also provides for an appropriate framework for political dialogue and for the promotion of cooperation in particular in economic, social, cultural, financial and monetary matters.

TRADE POLICY**Brazil and Thailand - Concessions on poultry meat**

The Council adopted a decision authorising the conclusion of agreements with Brazil and Thailand with a view to modifying trade concessions with respect to poultry meat products (salted poultry meat, prepared turkey meat and cooked chicken meat) (8488/07), as well as a regulation for implementing the agreements (9280/07).

TRANSPORT

Third railway package - Convening the conciliation committee

The Council decided not to accept all the European Parliament's second reading amendments to three legislative proposals, which form a so-called third railway package:

- proposal for a directive amending Council directive 91/440/EEC on the development of the Community's railways;
- proposal for a directive on the certification of train crews operating locomotives and trains on the Community's railway network;
- proposal for a regulation on international rail passengers' rights and obligations.

It accordingly decided to convene the Parliament-Council conciliation committee with a view to negotiating a joint text.

The Commission presented these proposals in March 2004 with a view to making rail transport more competitive and more attractive.

ENVIRONMENT

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

The Council adopted a decision on the position to be adopted on behalf of the EU with regard to certain proposals submitted to the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES will take place in the Hague, Netherlands, from 3 to 15 June 2007.

STATISTICS

Structure and activity of foreign enterprises

The Council adopted a regulation establishing a framework for the production of Community statistics on the structure and activity of foreign affiliates, with a view to carrying out adequate assessments of the impact of foreign-controlled enterprises on the EU economy (3603/2/07 REV 2).

The new common framework for the systematic production of statistics in this field is intended to provide a more reliable basis in order to measure the effects of foreign control on employment, wages and productivity.

APPOINTMENTS

Economic and Social Committee

The Council adopted a decision appointing Mr MEIJER and Ms VAN WEZEL members of the European Economic and Social Committee, in place of Mr SLOOTWEG and Mr ETTY, for the remainder of their term of office, which runs until 20 September 2010 (8629/07).

Committee of the Regions

The Council adopted a decision appointing Ms Evelyne HUYTEBROECK, Minister for the Environment, Energy, Tourism and Welfare of the Brussels Capital Regional Government, an alternate member of the Committee of the Regions in place of Mr CEREXHE for the remainder of his term of office, which runs until 25 January 2010 (8794/07).
