



Brussels, 3 December 2007

Background note¹
EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY AND HEALTH COUNCIL

Brussels, 5 and 6 December 2007

*The Council will start at 10.00 on both days, dealing on 5 December with the **employment and social policy** items and on 6 December with the **health** items. Furthermore, on the morning of 6 December, Employment Ministers will meet with Justice and Home Affairs Ministers, for a debate on **migration and employment**.*

*The Council will be chaired by Mr **José VIEIRA DA SILVA**, Minister for Labour and Social Solidarity of Portugal and by Mr **António CORREIA DE CAMPOS**, Minister for Health of Portugal.*

Employment and social policy:

The Council will seek to reach political agreement on draft Directives concerning:

- *the organisation of **working time**;*
- *working conditions for **temporary workers**;*
- *the acquisition and preservation of **supplementary pension rights**.*

*In the field of the **coordination of social security schemes**, the Council will reach partial general approaches on the following drafts:*

- ***an implementing Regulation**;*
- *a Regulation defining **Annex XI** to Regulation 883/2004.*

The Council will adopt conclusions relating to:

- *common principles of **flexicurity**;*
- *future prospects for the **European Employment Strategy in the context of the new cycle of the Lisbon Strategy***
- *inclusion of **people furthest from the labour market**;*
- *indicators on **women and poverty** in the context of the Beijing platform for action;*
- ***balanced roles of women and men** for jobs, growth and social cohesion.*

*The Council will adopt a Resolution on the follow-up to the **European year of equal opportunities for all** (2007).*

*The Council will hold a policy debate on **social services of general interest**.*

¹ This note has been drawn up under the sole responsibility of the Press Office.

Employment and JHA

The Council will hold a policy debate regarding "Migration, employment and the Lisbon Strategy".

Public Health:

The Council will adopt conclusions regarding:

- ***health and migration in the EU;***
- ***the EU health strategy;***
- ***organ donation and transplantation;***
- ***a strategy on nutrition-, overweight- and obesity-related issues.***

*The Council will be informed by the Presidency on progress achieved in the fight against **HIV/AIDS** within the EU and in neighbouring countries.*

On 6 December the topic to be discussed over lunch will be health services.

*
* *

A press conference will be held by the Presidency at the end of each day's session.

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY

Working time Directive (*public deliberation*)

The Council will seek to reach political agreement on a draft Directive aimed at amending Directive 2003/88/EC concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time² (15670/07+16061/07).

Directive 2003/88/CE establishes minimum requirements concerning the organisation of working time, inter alia in respect of daily and weekly rest periods, breaks, maximum weekly working time, annual leave and certain aspects of night work, shift work and patterns of work

The draft amending Directive currently under examination has a twofold objective:

- First, to prevent some of the consequences of the European Court of Justice's case law, in particular of the rulings in the SIMAP³ and Jaeger⁴ cases, which held that any on-call duty performed by a doctor, as long as he or she is required to be physically present in the hospital and even if he or she spends his or her time resting, must be regarded as working time. It is currently impossible for Member States to apply European case law strictly, without a huge impact on their medical structures and economies. To avoid those negative effects, the draft Directive would introduce a definition of "inactive part of on-call time".
- Secondly, to review some of the provisions of Directive 2003/88/EC concerning the possibility of not applying the maximum weekly working time (48 hours) if the worker agrees to work longer hours (the "**opt-out**" provision).

The key issues still to be resolved relate to the opt-out provision.

With a view to achieving agreement, the Portuguese Presidency tabled a set of proposals, built on previous Presidencies' compromise texts, and agrees to include this item in an overall package which also includes the *temporary workers*⁵ file.

The Presidency text provides for the possibility of the opt-out clause, with some elements being taken into account to guarantee the protection of health and safety of workers, in particular:

- the opt-out clause will be seen as an exception, the working week of a maximum of 48 hours being the general rule in the EU;
- implementation of the opt-out must be laid down by collective agreement, agreement between the social partners or by national law;

² Directive 2003/88/CE of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 (OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9).

³ Judgment of the Court of 3 October 2000 in case C-303/98, Sindicato de Médicos de Asistencia Pública (SIMAP) v. Conselleria de Sanidad y Consumo de la Generalidad Valenciana, ECR 2000, p. I-07963.

⁴ Judgment of the Court of 9 September 2003 in case C-151/02, reference for a preliminary ruling: Landesarbeitsgericht Schleswig-Holstein (Germany) in the proceedings pending before that court between Landeshauptstadt Kiel and Norbert Jaeger, ECR 2003, p. I-08389.

⁵ See below.

- employers and employees must consider other flexibility provisions – such as the longer reference period when counting working time – before making use of the opt-out provision;
- it will not be possible for a Member State to make use of both the longer reference period and the opt-out clause;
- an employee who refuses to work more than the average working time must not suffer as a result;
- an agreement signed at the beginning of the working contract will be null and void;
- a weekly limit of working hours will be set for workers who agree to the opt-out;
- there must be follow-up by the national authorities;
- a specific evaluation must be conducted at European level of the provisions concerning the opt-out and the implementation of longer reference periods; taking into account this evaluation the Commission may, if appropriate, submit a proposal to revise the Directive.

Legal basis proposed: Article 137(2) of the Treaty – qualified majority required for a Council decision; codecision procedure with the European Parliament applicable. The European Parliament delivered its first-reading opinion on 11 May 2005 (8725/05) and the Commission its amended proposal on 31 May 2005 (9554/05).

Temporary agency workers (*public deliberation*)

The Council will seek to reach a political agreement on a draft Directive on working conditions for temporary workers⁶.

Temporary work is seen as a key factor in meeting the requirements of the Lisbon Strategy, as it contributes to increasing both employment and competitiveness. There are considerable differences in the use, legal situation, status and working conditions of temporary agency work within the EU.

This draft Directive aims to establish, at European level, a common legal framework to regulate temporary agency work. It seeks to strike a balance between flexibility and job security. It completes a package of measures aimed at regulating working conditions for so-called "atypical" workers. It will, in its turn, be complemented by Directive 91/383/EEC of 25 June 1991⁷, supplementing the measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work.

The Directive would apply to workers who have an employment relationship with a temporary agency and who would perform temporary work under the supervision and direction of a user undertaking. It aims to ensure the protection of temporary workers and to improve the quality of agency work by ensuring, in particular, that the principle of equal treatment – in relation to workers recruited by the user undertaking to occupy the same job – is applied. Temporary agencies would be recognised as employers.

⁶ 7430/02 + 15098/02.

⁷ OJ L 206, 29.7.1991, p. 19.

The Council's debate will be based on a text resulting from the discussions of the preparatory bodies. The Presidency agrees to include this item in an overall package with the *working time*⁸ file.

The main outstanding issues may be summarised as follows:

- **prohibitions and restrictions** on temporary agency work, in particular, their review or removal;
- the **principle of equal treatment**, possible exceptions to that principle and the maximum length of assignments to which such exceptions can apply;

Legal basis proposed: Article 137(2) of the Treaty; qualified majority required for a Council decision; codecision procedure with the European Parliament applicable. The European Parliament delivered its opinion at first-reading in November 2002⁹.

Common principles of flexicurity

In response to the 2007 Spring European Council mandate¹⁰ and following the Commission communication: "Towards common principles of flexicurity"¹¹, the Council will endorse a joint opinion of the Employment and Social Protection Committees (15320/07) and adopt the conclusions set out in document 15497/07, defining common principles of flexicurity.

Future prospects for the European Employment Strategy in the new cycle of the Lisbon Strategy

On 10th anniversary of the European Employment Strategy, the Council will endorse an Employment Committee Opinion (15207/07) and adopt conclusions on the future prospects for the European Employment Strategy in the context of the new cycle of the Lisbon Strategy (15813/07).

It will also be informed by the Social Protection Committee's Chair on the report on mutual interaction between the common social objectives of greater economic growth and more and better jobs.

Social services of general interest

Following the Commission communication accompanying the communication on "A single market for 21st century Europe" – "Services of general interest, including social services of general interest: a new European commitment", the Council will hold a policy debate on the subject, on the basis of the following questions suggested by the Presidency (15668/07):

⁸ See above.

⁹ 14331/02.

¹⁰ "The European Council looks forward to the discussion on the Commission communication on flexicurity, which should be instrumental in preparing a range of flexicurity pathways to find the right mix of policies tailored to labour market needs including increased labour-market participation." (Par. 18, 7224/07)

¹¹ 10255/07.

- *How can a European framework contribute to maximising the potential of social services in promoting social cohesion, employment and economic growth? What specific issues should be the explicit concerns and objectives of such a framework?*
- *How are the specific features and nature of SSGI better addressed in the context of SGI? To what extent do the elements and approach included in the Commission Communication provide an adequate basis for that endeavour?*
- *Which further steps should be taken at the European level in this field?*

The relevance of social services has been the object of Europe-wide debates¹². It is clear that there is an increasing overall awareness of the specific characteristics, nature and decisive importance of social services of general interest (SSGI), which must be taken into account at the European level, while respecting national institutional traditions and policy options.

In particular, debates about SSGI¹³ have highlighted the need to develop a coherent framework which is able to clearly define the founding elements, principles and scope of social services and their relation to the broader framework of services of general interest and the internal market. This is precisely one of the main goals of the recent communication from the Commission¹⁴ on this topic.

A common understanding around such issues will be important for enhancing the role of social services at the European level, creating better conditions for supporting their quality, modernisation and adequacy in the future. The capacity for striking adequate and balanced solutions in this field will be crucial for successfully facing the new social risks and needs of EU citizens and the challenges faced by EU economies.

Coordination of social security systems (*public deliberation*)

- **implementing Regulation**
- **Content of Annex XI to Regulation (EC) No 883/2004**

Pending the European Parliament opinion at first reading, the Council will agree on partial¹⁵ general approaches concerning unemployment and family benefits in draft Regulations that will:

- a) implement Regulation (EC) No 883/2004¹⁶ (15512/07), and
- b) determine the content of its Annex XI (15514/07).

¹² A recent example is provided by the 1st Forum on Social Services of General Interest, organised, under the auspices of the European Parliament, by the Portuguese Presidency with the support of the European Commission, which took place in Lisbon (17 September 2007). It followed the recommendation of the European Parliament (Resolution A6-0275/2006 of 26 September 2006).

¹³ 9038/06. The consultation process included the launch of a questionnaire by the Social Protection Committee.
¹⁴ 15650/07.

¹⁵ Examination of the proposals will continue under the incoming Presidencies.

¹⁶ Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 166, 30.4.2004, corrigendum OJ L 200, 7.6.2004.

Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 was the first step in a process aimed at modernising and simplifying EU rules on the coordination of national social security systems, intended to allow EU citizens to move freely within Europe, while maintaining their rights to social security benefits (health, pensions, unemployment benefits, etc.). This process is being supplemented by the adoption of an implementing Regulation¹⁷, to replace Regulation (EEC) No 574/72 and of a Regulation which lays down provisions regarding specific aspects of individual Member States' legislation, which will form the content of Annex XI to Regulation (EC) No 883/2004¹⁸. Those proposals are currently under examination.

Owing to the complexity of the file, and in accordance with the approach already adopted in discussions on the basic Regulation, it has been decided to aim for agreement on a chapter-by-chapter basis: for now, agreement would concern Chapters V and VI of Title III and Chapter II of Title IV.

Legal basis proposed: Articles 42 and 308 of the Treaty – unanimity required for a Council decision; codecision with the European Parliament applicable.

Supplementary pension rights (*public deliberation*)

The Council will seek to reach political agreement on a draft Directive regarding the minimum requirements for enhancing working mobility by improving the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights (*15515/07+ADD1*).

In a context where pension schemes established in the framework of an employment relationship (supplementary pension schemes) are becoming increasingly important for covering the risks of old age in the Member States, the draft Directive aims to facilitate the free movement of workers both between and within Member States by improving opportunities for those who change employers to acquire and preserve supplementary pension rights.

Some of the issues that the Council must resolve in order to reach agreement on the text concern:

- the scope of the Directive

The current text provides that the Directive "shall apply only to periods of employment falling after its implementation and, in any event, no later than 1 July 2013" (Article 2(3)).

- the conditions governing vesting criteria

Article 4 currently provides that:

"The Member States shall take all necessary steps to ensure that:

- (a)
- (b) where the supplementary pension scheme stipulates a minimum age for the accrual by an active scheme member of vested rights, this age shall not exceed 23 years;
- (c) where the supplementary pension scheme stipulates a vesting period, this shall not exceed 2 years;
- (d) where an outgoing worker has not yet acquired vested pension rights when the employment relationship is terminated, the supplementary pension scheme shall reimburse the contributions paid by the outgoing worker or, where the outgoing worker bears the investment risk, the investment value arising from these contributions;
- (e) Member States shall have the option of allowing the social partners to lay down different provisions by collective agreement, to the extent that those provisions provide at least equivalent protection of the rights of the workers concerned..".

¹⁷ See Article 89 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

¹⁸ See Article 83 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

- the date of implementation

The current text provides for an implementation date of 1 July 2013.

Legal basis proposed: Articles 42 and 94 of the Treaty – unanimity required for a Council decision; codecision procedure with the European Parliament applicable. The European Parliament delivered its opinion at first reading on 20 June 2007¹⁹.

Active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market

Following the Commission communication entitled "Modernising social protection for greater social justice and economic cohesion: taking forward the active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market", the Council will adopt the conclusions set out in *15191/07*.

Inter alia, the Council invites the European Commission and Member States to promote the political visibility and high profile of social inclusion at the European level, as an important element of the strategic political instruments for economic and social development and the corresponding objectives, particularly in the context of the Lisbon Strategy. The European Commission is also invited to develop proposals for a deepening of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in social protection and social inclusion, addressing adequate income support, access to inclusive labour markets and quality social services, in view of the new OMC cycle, including a recommendation on the common principles

Beijing platform for action (*public debate*)

The Council will adopt conclusions on the review of implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions of the Beijing platform for action, accompanied by indicators in respect of *women and poverty*, which is one of the 12 critical areas for action (*13947/07 + ADD1*).

This is an annual exercise established by the Madrid European Council in 1995, following the United Nations 4th World Conference on women held in Beijing in September 1995.

The UN 4th World Conference on Women adopted a platform for action in order to achieve full and effective implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.

As early as December 1995, the European Council in Madrid decided that there should be yearly follow-up by the Member States and the Community institutions of national and European strategies in implementing the Platform For Action. It has since become a traditional exercise for the Presidencies in the second half of the year.

The specific themes dealt with in previous years were:

- women's participation in power and the decision-making process (1999),
- reconciliation of family life and working life (2000);
- unequal pay (2001);
- domestic violence against women (2002);
- representation of women and men in economic decision-making centres of the EU (2003);

¹⁹ 10933/07.

- sexual harassment (2004);
- 10 years of the platform for action (2005);
- institutional mechanisms (2006).

Follow-up to the European Year of Equal Opportunities for all (2007)

The Council will adopt the Resolution set out in *15383/07* on the follow-up to the European Year of Equal Opportunities for all (2007).

Balanced roles of women and men

The Council will adopt the conclusions on balanced roles of women and men for jobs, growth and social cohesion, set out in *14136/07*.

Among other topics, the Council calls on the European Commission to ensure the effective implementation of the existing Community legal framework on all aspects of the reconciliation of work, family and private life and to evaluate the possible need for their improvement. The Council also calls on the Commission to work with the Member States, the social partners and other stakeholders, in order to examine whether there is a need for further action at a European level on paternity leave.

Employment / Justice and Home Affairs

Migration, employment and the Lisbon Strategy

The Council will hold a policy debate on *migration, employment and the Lisbon Strategy*, on the basis of the following questions suggested by the Presidency:

- *How could legal migration contribute to meeting the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy? In this context, is there a need for categories of migrants other than those addressed in the 2005 Policy Plan on Legal Migration?*
- *In addition to active inclusion policies, what other efforts do you consider necessary to improve further the integration of migrants into the labour market? How can the social partners be best involved?*
- *Do you agree that sufficiently dissuasive sanctions and their effective enforcement are basic tools for a successful strategy against illegal employment which is a key pull factor of illegal immigration?*
- *Which other policies – information campaigns, measures to facilitate legal migration, encouragement of employers and employees to operate within the formal economy and regular employment etc. – can reduce the illegal employment of migrants?*

Since the 1990s, positive net migration has become the largest component of population change in most Member States, reaching – over the last 5 years – a total of close to 2 million net migrants per annum across the EU.

Europe is witnessing a broadening and diversification in the types of migrants, in their migration patterns and in the classification of sending and receiving countries. Some Member States have a long immigration history, while others have only recently changed from emigration to immigration countries and several other Member States are still experiencing significant population movements, both inward and outward.

Immigration flows towards Europe are not likely to diminish in the foreseeable future. On the one hand, “push” factors are due to the growing polarisation both of income distribution and population trends on a world scale. The ageing and rich North will continue developing next to a younger, poorer and – it is to be hoped – developing South. On the other hand, the “pull” factors within Europe are likely to increase. The overall socio-economic context of the EU is increasingly characterised by skill and labour shortages (already noticeable in a number of sectors), competition for the highly skilled in an ever-more-globalising economy and accelerating demographic ageing of the European population, resulting in just a few years in the shrinking of the EU workforce.

As a follow-up to the 2005 Policy Plan on Legal Migration, the Commission submitted two legislative proposals on 23 October 2007: a Directive on the conditions of admission to the EU for highly-skilled workers and a Directive on the rights of legal immigrants in employment. These proposals are aimed respectively at making the EU attractive for an increasingly-needed category of workers and at ensuring that all third-country workers enjoy a comparable level of rights throughout the EU. The latter proposal also provides for a single application procedure with a view to obtaining a single permit encompassing both a residence and work permit. Three further proposals will be submitted in autumn 2008 and will cover the admission of seasonal workers, intra-corporate transferees and paid trainees.

The Commission’s Communication on undeclared work of 23 October 2007 takes stock of the action undertaken in the Member States and illustrates the scope for mutual learning on the basis of successful practices. The analysis is supported by new data from a harmonised survey. Strengthened surveillance and sanction mechanisms are among the measures used to reduce undeclared work.

To reduce this pull factor, the Commission also submitted a proposal for a Directive providing for sanctions against employers of illegally resident third-country nationals in May 2007. The aim is to ensure that all Member States introduce similar penalties for employers of such third-country nationals and enforce them effectively. It is proposed to require employers to undertake checks before recruiting a third-country national and to require Member States to conduct a minimum number of inspections of companies established in each Member State.

HEALTH

Health and Migration in the EU (*public debate*)

The Council will hold a policy debate on health and migration in the EU on the basis of the following questions suggested by the Presidency (15608/07):

- *How can health and migration issues be integrated into Community and national policies, using the "Health in All Policies" approach?*
- *What paths are you already pursuing? What successes can you already claim and what kind of difficulties have you encountered?*

- *How do you suggest sharing knowledge, relevant experience, good practice and lessons learnt on effective intervention?*

It will also adopt the conclusions set out in 15609/07.

When implementing the national-health policy, the specific problems of migrants' health – women and children being the most vulnerable – must be taken into account.

Some groups of migrants are more at risk of certain types of infectious disease but are also more prone to non-transmissible illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, etc.

On 27 and 28 September 2007, the Portuguese Presidency held a conference "Health and Migration: Better health for all in an inclusive society" in Lisbon, the outcome of which forms the basis for the Council conclusions.

EU Health Strategy (public debate)

Following the Commission White Paper "Together for health – a strategic approach for the EU, 2008-2013"²⁰, the Council will hold a policy debate on the EU Health Strategy, focusing, in particular on the following questions suggested by the Presidency (15610/07):

- *How do Member States intend to take the EU Health Strategy's priority principles and themes into account when developing and implementing national health policy objectives?*
- *How can relevant experiences on priority setting, implementation and monitoring inspire the implementation process of the EU Health Strategy?*
- *How are we going to work together on identifying and implementing priority actions? What role would Member States like to play in this process?*

On 23 October 2007 the European Commission adopted a strategy on health entitled "Together for Health: A Strategic Approach for the EU 2008-2013" in order to establish a single framework which not only encompasses key health matters, but also the place of health in all policies as well as global health issues. It aims to set objectives for work at European level and to define a mechanism for implementing those objectives, in partnership with the Member States.

The new strategy focuses on four principles and three strategic themes for improving health in the EU. These principles consist in adopting an approach which is based on shared values, recognising that health and economic prosperity are interrelated, integrating health into all policies and strengthening the EU's voice in this area on the global stage. The strategic themes consist in promoting health in an ageing Europe, protecting citizens from threats to health and promoting dynamic health systems and new technologies.

At the end of the debate the Council should adopt the conclusions set out in 15611/07.

²⁰ 14689/07.

Organ donation and transplantation (*public debate*)

Following the Commission communication "Organ donation and transplantation: policy actions at the EU level"²¹, the Council will hold a policy debate and adopt the conclusions set out in *15332/07*.

Sometimes, organ donation and transplantation have been found to be the most efficient or even the only treatment for a number of diseases, such as organ failure. Overall donation rates throughout the EU still lag well behind the demand for donor organs, however, and waiting lists are constantly growing. Nevertheless, the prevailing shortage could be bridged considerably by enlarging the pool of potential donors. Due to the ethical sensitivity of the issue, many people still refrain from consenting to organ donation.

Every transplant brings with it the risk of transmission of what may be life-threatening diseases, both for the donor and the recipient. Therefore, it is indispensable to guarantee high standards of quality and safety. Hence, each graft needs to be assessed most carefully in order to ensure the best possible outcomes.

In addition to that, differences prevail among the individual donation systems of Member States and some have proven to be more efficient than others. Trans-national donation networks have contributed to the reallocation of donor organs across national borders. Such networks are particularly important for smaller Member States, which have even lower donation rates.

The Commission communication "Organ donation and transplantation: policy actions at EU level", has identified as main areas of action:

- Improving quality and safety for human organs;
- Increasing organ availability;
- Making transplantation systems more efficient and accessible;
- Strengthening cooperation between Member States;
- Examining the need for an EU legal instrument on quality and safety of organ donation and transplantation.

The European Parliament is currently preparing a report on organ donation and transplantation.

The draft Council conclusions are aimed at:

- enhancing the performance of transplantation systems;
- creating political commitment to high standards in the quality and safety of organ donation and transplantation;
- stimulating exchange of best practice and expertise between the Member States;
- inviting the Commission to continue its examination of the need for an EU framework on quality and safety for human organs.

Strategy for Europe on nutrition, overweight and obesity (*public debate*)

At the end of an exchange of views, the Council will adopt the conclusions set out in *15612/07*.

These conclusions follow on from the Council conclusions of May 2007 on health promotion by means of nutrition and physical activity (*see 10026/07*).

²¹ 9834/07.

Combating HIV/AIDS within the EU and in neighbouring countries (*public debate*)

The Council will be informed by the Presidency of the progress achieved in the fight against HIV/AIDS within the EU and in neighbouring countries, on the basis of the progress report set out in 15338/1/07.

It was suggested at the meeting organised by the Portuguese Presidency for the National AIDS Coordinators from European and neighbouring countries and States from the WHO Europe and Central Asia Region on "*Translating principles into action in the European Region and EU Neighbouring countries*" (Lisbon, 12 and 13 October 2007), that a technical working party of HIV/AIDS National Coordinators be set up that should meet at least every two years, in order to:

- agree on practical definitions, interpretations and priorities when translating principles into action;
- assist Member State Governments in analysing and deciding on best practice and technical solutions for tackling the AIDS epidemic in Europe, involving relevant multilateral and civil society organisations;
- agree and provide information on collaborative, complementary and coherent national strategies and programmes.

Moreover, on 24 April 2007 the European Parliament (EP) adopted a Resolution in response to the Commission Communication on combating HIV/AIDS within the EU and in the neighbouring countries (2006-2009)²², which supports the initiatives put forward and reaffirms the right of all human beings to access to education and health, correct information, prevention of illness, healthcare, medical treatment and medicines.

Under the German Presidency a number of initiatives were already developed as part of the implementation of the Commission Communication, in particular the adoption of Council conclusions on 31 May 2007 and negotiations with the pharmaceutical industry.

Other business

- (a) Events organised during the Portuguese Presidency
 - Information from the Presidency
 - (i) Conference of Experts on "Employability and Entrepreneurship – Gender Stereotypes" (3 and 4 October 2007)
 - (ii) Conference on "Trafficking in Human Beings and Gender" (8 and 9 October 2007)
 - (iii) 6th European Round Table on Poverty and Social Exclusion. Minimum Social Standards: a Strategy for Protection and Empowerment (16 and 17 October 2007)
 - (iv) ILO Forum on Decent Work for a Fair Globalization (31 October, 1 and 2 November 2007)
 - (v) Conference on "The Paths of Sustainability and the Reform of Pension Systems" (13 and 14 November 2007)

- (b) Draft Council conclusions on trafficking in human beings (JHA Council)
 - Information from the Presidency
 - (c) Draft Council Resolution on new skills for new jobs (Education, Culture and Youth Council)
 - Information from the Presidency
 - (d) Communication from the Commission "Opportunities, access and solidarity: towards a new social vision for 21st century Europe"
 - Information from the Commission
 - (e) Communication from the Commission – Outcome of the Public consultation on the Commission's Green Paper "Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century"
 - Information from the Commission
 - (f) Information on the Presidency's Conferences on Health
 - Information from the Presidency
 - (g) Environment and Health
 - Information from the Presidency
 - (h) Community framework on health services
 - Information from the Commission
 - (i) Strategy on mental health for Europe
 - Information from the Commission
 - (j) Matters relating to health security
 - Information from the Commission
 - (k) Commission's High Level Group on Health services and Medical care
 - Information from the Commission
-