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THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

3313th Council meeting

### **General Affairs**

Brussels, 13 May 2014

President

**Evangelos Venizelos**

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of  
Greece

# **P R E S S**

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## **Main results of the Council**

### ***European Council in June***

*The Council examined a draft annotated agenda for the European Council meeting to be held on 26-27 June. The European Council will focus on freedom, security and justice, enhancing growth, jobs and competitiveness, as well as external relations in light of recent developments.*

*"I won't stop repeating how important it is to promote economic growth and projects that create jobs and fight unemployment, especially among young Europeans", said Evangelos Venizelos, deputy prime-minister and minister for foreign affairs of Greece, after the meeting.*

### ***Efficiency of EU financial markets***

*The Council adopted new rules to promote the efficiency of EU financial markets, amending and replacing the existing directive on markets in financial instruments ("MIFID").*

### ***Border surveillance - Frontex***

*The Council established new rules for the surveillance of the external sea borders in the context of operational cooperation coordinated by FRONTEX. The rules aim to improve effectiveness and legal certainty in operations, and constitute one of the key tools which the EU has at its disposal to contribute to preventing, for example, tragedies at sea such as the recent ones in the southern Mediterranean.*

### ***Legal migration - Intra-corporate transferees***

*The Council adopted a directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer. The directive will make it easier and quicker for multinational companies to temporarily assign highly skilled employees to subsidiaries situated in the EU.*

### ***Enlargement - ceremony***

*The Council also marked the occasion of the ten-year anniversary since the 2004 enlargement that brought ten new countries into the European Union.*

*"Enlargement has proved again and again to be a success story for the European family", noted deputy prime-minister Venizelos at the press conference after the meeting.*

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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>).
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State Secretary to the Minister for EU Affairs

**United Kingdom:**

Mr David LIDINGTON

Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

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**Commission:**

Mr Siim KALLAS

Vice President

.....

## **ITEMS DEBATED**

### **Preparation for the June European Council**

The Council examined a draft annotated agenda for the European Council meeting to be held on 26 and 27 June ([8280/14](#)).

The European Council will focus on:

- *Freedom, security and justice*; the European Council will define strategic guidelines for legislative and operational planning within the area;
- *Growth, competitiveness and jobs*: heads of state or government are to conclude this year's European Semester and return to the issue of regulatory fitness. The European Council will also come back to the question of climate and energy.
- *External relations*: leaders will be addressing specific issues in light of developments on the international scene.

The Council will hold a further discussion, on the basis of draft European Council conclusions, at its meeting on 24 June 2014.

## **OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

### **GENERAL AFFAIRS**

#### **Withdrawal of a Czech proposal to amend the Treaties**

The Council withdrew the recommendation for an examination of an amendment to the Treaties proposed by the Czech government on 5 September 2011, with regard to the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union to the Czech Republic.

#### **Council 2013 report on access to documents**

The Council approved its report on last year's implementation of regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents ([8423/14](#) + [8423/14 COR 1](#)).

The report provides an overview of the Council's transparency policy and practice in general and gives information about the Council's public register of documents as well as statistics on public access to documents (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/documents/access-to-council-documents-public-register?lang=en>).

For more information see press release [9702/14](#).

## **ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS**

### **Markets in financial instruments**

The Council adopted new rules to promote the efficiency of EU financial markets, amending and replacing the existing directive on markets in financial instruments ("MIFID").

The new rules are aimed at overcoming problems that have emerged in applying the MIFID which, since 2007, have essentially prevented member states from requiring trading to take place on specific exchanges.

Market and technological developments have outpaced various provisions in the existing MIFID text and the trading environment has become more complex. The 2008 financial crisis exposed weaknesses in the regulation of instruments other than shares, traded mostly between professional investors. Such developments underscored the need for strengthened investor protection.

The new directive (MIFID) and regulation (MIFIR) will ensure that all organised trading is conducted in regulated trading venues: regulated markets, multilateral trading facilities and organised trading facilities.

For more information see press release [9769/14](#).

## **EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA**

### **Amendment to protocol 31 to the EEA agreement**

The Council adopted a decision on the position to be adopted, on behalf of the EU, in the EEA joint committee concerning an amendment to protocol 31 to the EEA agreement, in order to allow for the inclusion of regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2014 - 2020) ([8546/14](#)).

## **ENLARGEMENT**

### **Association with Montenegro**

The Council adopted decisions to adapt the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the EU and Montenegro in order to take account of the accession of Croatia to the European Union.

## **JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**

### **Border surveillance - FRONTEX**

The Council adopted a regulation establishing rules for the surveillance of the external sea borders in the context of operational cooperation coordinated by the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the member states of the EU (FRONTEX) ([PE-CONS 35/14](#)).

The regulation provides member states participating in FRONTEX operations with clearer, updated and binding rules to be applied in the course of these operations. This will result in greater effectiveness and legal certainty in operations at the external sea borders.

For more information see press release [9492/14](#).

### **Cross-border debt recovery**

The Council adopted a regulation establishing a European Account Preservation Order procedure to facilitate cross-border debt recovery in civil and commercial matters ([PE-CONS 34/14](#)).

The aim of the regulation is to facilitate cross-border debt recovery by creating a European procedure leading to the issuing of a European Account Preservation Order ("Preservation Order" or "Order"). This European procedure will be available to citizens and businesses as an alternative to national procedures, but will not replace national procedures. It will apply only to cross-border cases.

For more information see press release [9602/14](#).

### **Legal migration - Intra-corporate transferees**

The Council adopted a directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer ([PE-CONS 58/14](#)). Member states will need to transpose this directive within two and a half years after its publication in the Official Journal.

The directive will make it easier and quicker for multinational companies to temporarily assign highly skilled employees to subsidiaries situated in the EU. Moreover, the directive will facilitate mobility of intra-corporate transferees between member states during their assignments. The directive also lays down a common set of rights for intra-corporate transferees when working in the EU in order to prevent their exploitation and the distortion of competition.

For more information see press release [6338/14](#).

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **Posting of workers**

The Council adopted a directive on posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services ([PE-CONS 19/14](#)).

The aim of the enforcement directive is to enhance the freedom to provide cross-border services by establishing a core set of clearly defined employment conditions which the posting undertakings must ensure.

It also aims to promote a climate of fair competition between all service providers by guaranteeing both a level playing field and legal certainty for service providers, service recipients, and workers posted for the provision of services. This means that the protection of posted workers has to be reconciled with the interests of the freedom to provide services.

For more information see press release [7299/14](#).

## **TRANSPORT**

### **Airworthiness of aircraft and approval of personnel involved**

The Council decided not to oppose adoption by the Commission of a regulation on the continuing airworthiness of aircraft and aeronautical products, parts and appliances, and on the approval of organisations and personnel involved in these tasks ([7461/14](#) + [7461/14 ADD 1](#)).

As the 2003 Commission regulation has been substantially amended several times and further amendments are to be made, this draft regulation is a recast.

The Commission regulation is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt the regulation unless the European Parliament objects.

## **CUSTOMS UNION**

### **EU-China customs cooperation - Council conclusions**

The Council adopted conclusions emphasising the importance of enhancing customs cooperation with China, which is a priority for the EU (8112/1/14).

The conclusions endorse the EU-China Strategic Framework for Customs Cooperation 2014-2017 with a view to continuing to develop EU-China cooperation in the field of customs in a structured and coherent manner.

The EU-China 2020 strategic agenda for cooperation, adopted at the EU-China Summit in November 2013, called for a new Strategic Framework for EU-China Customs Cooperation for 2014-2017.

Since 2005, when the EU-China agreement on cooperation and mutual administrative assistance in customs matters entered into force, EU and China customs have launched cooperation successfully in a number of fields. In order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of this cooperation, in 2010 the EU-China joint customs cooperation committee adopted a 'Strategic Framework for Cooperation' for the period 2010-2012.

The EU and China are major trading partners. As an integral part of economic and trade cooperation, EU-China customs cooperation is important in ensuring trade facilitation and the protection of citizens and the environment, whilst combating illegal trade activities.

For more information see [Council conclusions](#).

## **FISHERIES**

### **Partnership agreement between EU and Seychelles - Conclusion of the protocol**

The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for by the fisheries partnership agreement (FPA) between the EU and the Republic of Seychelles ([16651/13](#)).

The FPA in the fisheries sector between the EU and Seychelles was concluded in 2006. The main objective of the protocol to this agreement is to define the fishing opportunities offered to EU vessels as well as the financial contribution due, separately, for access rights and for sectoral support. The new protocol is established for a period of six years.

Following the negotiations, a new protocol was signed by the Council and Seychelles in December 2013. In order to allow EU vessels to carry out fishing activities, the new protocol has been applied on a provisional basis since 18 January 2014, pending completion of the procedures for its formal conclusion. The European Parliament gave its consent on the conclusion of this protocol on 16 April 2014.

### **Partnership agreement between EU and Madagascar - Conclusion of the protocol**

The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of the Protocol agreed between the EU and the Republic of Madagascar setting out fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the two parties currently in force ([14164/1/12 REV 1](#)).

The FPA in the fisheries sector between the EU and Madagascar was concluded in 2007. The main objective of the protocol to this agreement is to define the fishing opportunities for EU vessels in Madagascar waters within the limits of the available surplus. The protocol also establishes the financial contribution due, separately, for access rights and for sectoral support. The new protocol is established for a period of two years and covers the period from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2014.

On 28 November 2012, the Council decided to sign the protocol. In order to allow EU vessels to carry out fishing activities, the new protocol has been applied on a provisional basis since then, pending completion of the procedures for its formal conclusion. The European Parliament gave its consent for the conclusion of this protocol on 16 April 2014.

## **Partnership agreement between EU and Comoros - Conclusion of the protocol**

The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of the Protocol between the EU and the Union of the Comoros setting out the fishing opportunities and financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the two parties currently in force ([16130/13](#)).

The FPA in the fisheries sector between the EU and Comoros was concluded in 2006. The main objective of the protocol to this agreement is to define the fishing opportunities for EU vessels in Comoros waters within the limits of the available surplus, in accordance with the best available scientific advice.

Following negotiations, a new protocol was signed by the Council and Comoros in December 2013. In order to allow EU vessels to carry out fishing activities, the new protocol has been applied on a provisional basis since 1 January 2014, pending completion of the procedures for its formal conclusion. The new protocol covers a period of three years from the date of provisional application. The European Parliament gave its consent for the conclusion of this protocol on 16 April 2014.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Technical implementation of the Kyoto protocol \***

The Council adopted a regulation amending regulation (EU) No 525/2013 as regards the technical implementation of the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change ([PE-CONS 76/14, 9333/14 ADD 1 REV 1](#)).

Today's final adoption of the legislation by the Council follows an agreement reached at first reading with the European Parliament. The European Parliament voted at its plenary session of 16 April 2014.

The new regulation, which amends the recently adopted monitoring mechanism regulation (EU) [No 525/2013](#), provides the legal basis enabling the Commission to adopt the necessary technical implementation rules for the second commitment period of the Kyoto protocol in the EU. These rules are necessary to enable the effective operation of the joint fulfilment of the commitments of the EU, its member states and Iceland for the second commitment period, and to ensure the alignment of the technical implementation of the Kyoto protocol with the operation of the EU emissions trading scheme and the effort sharing decision.

At the Doha Climate Change Conference in December 2012, the 192 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change adopted an amendment to the protocol. This "Doha Amendment" establishes the second commitment period of the Kyoto protocol, starting on 1 January 2013 and ending on 31 December 2020. The Kyoto protocol's second commitment period will continue and will enhance the existing comprehensive system of emissions accounting to ensure transparency of the performance of Parties and compliance with their obligations.

## **INTERNAL MARKET**

### **Safety of pressure equipment**

The Council adopted a directive aimed at reinforcing and simplifying the market surveillance for the free movement of pressure equipment in the internal market ([PE-CONS 38/14 and 9338/14 ADD 1](#)).

Manufacturers and distributors of pressure equipment such as boilers, pressure cookers, fire extinguishers, heat exchangers, steam generators, industrial piping, safety devices and other storage vessels intended to resist a pressure of more than 0.5 bars, will find it easier to make their products available in the internal market.

For more information see press release [9730/14](#).