



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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3013th Council meeting

Education, Youth and Culture

Brussels, 10 and 11 May 2010

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Main results of the Council

*The Council designated Riga in Latvia and Umeå in Sweden as **European Capitals of Culture 2014**.*

*For the first time, ministers discussed **sports policy** in a formal Council setting, given that the Treaty of Lisbon has created specific EU competence for cooperation on sports issues.*

*The Council also adopted conclusions on the **European digital library Europeana**, inviting the Commission to present a proposal for the sustainable financing of Europeana in the long run, together with a vision for consolidating Europeana into an essential reference tool for the digital era.*

*Without discussion, the Council approved a negotiating mandate for an **EU-US agreement on the transfer of financial messaging data** for the purposes of the US Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme.*

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- 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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Vice President

Member

ITEMS DEBATED

CULTURE

European heritage label

The presidency reported to the Council on progress with the establishment of a European heritage label ([9146/10](#)).

The European Heritage Label has existed as a voluntary inter-governmental initiative, in which 17 EU member states and Switzerland participate. The designation has been awarded to 64 sites since 2006. In November 2008, the Council requested that this initiative be transformed into a Community action in order to extend it and improve its functioning. The Commission proposed a draft decision in March ([7094/10](#)), which is currently being examined in both the European Parliament and the Council.

European Capitals of Culture 2014

The Council designated Riga in Latvia and Umeå in Sweden as European Capitals of Culture 2014 ([9144/10](#)).

Contribution of culture to regional and local development

The Council adopted conclusions on the contribution of culture to regional and local development ([8263/10](#)).

A competitive, inclusive and sustainable Europe: contribution of culture and creativity

The Council exchanged views on the contribution of culture and creativity to a competitive, inclusive and sustainable Europe.

Ministers stressed the importance of fully incorporating creativity and the role of cultural industries into the "Europe 2020" strategy for growth and jobs, in particular into the implementation of the flagship initiatives.

Delegations underlined the important contribution of cultural and creative industries to innovation, economic growth and employment in the EU. It was said that a favourable environment for SMEs and reduced bureaucracy as well as adequate protection of intellectual property rights were needed to help the cultural sector fulfil its economic potential.

Delegations also underlined how cohesion policy instruments could support cultural and creative industries and urged a better use of existing instruments, for instance structural funds or the Media programme.

AUDIOVISUAL

Europeana: next steps

The Council adopted conclusions outlining the next steps for the European digital library, Europeana. It invited the Commission to present a proposal for the sustainable financing of Europeana in the long run, together with a vision - including as regards governance issues - for consolidating Europeana into an essential reference tool for the digital era. The text is set out in [8843/10](#).

SPORT

Treaty of Lisbon and sport

Ministers discussed EU sports policy for the first time in a formal Council setting, given that the Treaty of Lisbon has added specific EU competence for cooperation on sports issues.

Delegations welcomed the creation of EU competence for coordinating sports policies and underlined that EU action needed to have clear added value by comparison with national plans, respecting the subsidiarity principle and the specific nature of sport. Ministers suggested the following areas for possible EU action:

- Social and educational functions of sport, e.g. social inclusion through sport and health-enhancing physical activity, dual careers for athletes;
- Sport structures, in particular those based on voluntary activity;
- Fairness and openness in sport, including the fight against racism, discrimination and violence;
- Physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the fight against doping and the protection of minors;
- Dialogue and close cooperation with the sports movement.

Ministers agreed that a possible EU financial programme supporting sports activities for the years 2012 to 2013 ought to have a limited number of priorities.

EDUCATION

Social dimension of education and training

In the context of the European year for combating poverty and social exclusion 2010, the Council adopted conclusions on the social dimension of education and training, see [8797/10](#).

Competences supporting lifelong learning and the "new skills for new jobs" initiative

The Council approved conclusions on competences supporting lifelong learning and the "new skills for new jobs" initiative, as set out in [8798/10](#).

Internationalisation of higher education

The Council adopted conclusions on the internationalisation of higher education, i.e. on cooperation activities between higher education institutions from the EU and those from third countries, see [8799/10](#).

Europe 2020 strategy - European Council on 17 June

The Council held an exchange of views on the numerical rates of the EU headline targets within the Europe 2020 strategy, resulting in the following presidency conclusions¹:

"The Council agreed to propose to the European Council in June 2010 the numerical rates of the EU headline targets to improve education levels of the new strategy Europe 2020, building on the two corresponding levels of European average performance ("European benchmarks") approved in the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), that is by 2020, the school drop-out rate should be less than 10% and the share of population having completed tertiary or equivalent education should be at least 40%².

¹ The United Kingdom was unable to agree the targets pending the formation of a new government after its election on 6 May.

² i.e. the percentage of those who have successfully completed education at ISCED levels 5 and 6. Member states may in justified cases include national qualifications currently classified at ISCED level 4 into the definition of their national target for tertiary or equivalent education.

In line with their responsibility for their education and training systems, the competence of the member states regarding the setting and implementation of quantitative national targets in the area of education and training is fully maintained. The principles and working methods agreed under the strategic framework for European cooperation in this field play their full role in monitoring progress towards the EU headline targets for education."

At its spring summit, the European Council launched the Europe 2020 strategy for a competitive, sustainable and inclusive economy ([7/10](#)). It agreed on headline targets as shared objectives guiding member states and the EU. One of them is to improve education levels by reducing school drop-out rates and increasing the share of population having completed tertiary or equivalent education. The European Council on 17 June is due to set corresponding numerical rates.

YOUTH

Active inclusion of young people: combating unemployment and poverty

In the context of the European year for combating poverty and social exclusion 2010, the Council adopted a resolution on the active inclusion of young people: combating unemployment and poverty, see [9018/10](#). Given that the economic crisis has hit young people particularly hard, this issue was a high priority for the Spanish presidency. As well as inviting the member states and the Commission to take action in a number of areas, the resolution stresses the importance of ensuring that youth policy is fully integrated into the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy.

A competitive, inclusive and sustainable Europe: developing the youth dimension

The Council exchanged views on developing the youth dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs. Ministers discussed key aspects of youth policy, such as mobility, recognition of non-formal education, the importance of excellence in education, youth access to the labour market and the forthcoming EU flagship initiative "Youth on the move".

Delegations underlined that the very high levels of youth unemployment currently seen in the EU were not acceptable. Ministers therefore welcomed the prominence of youth-relevant issues in the Europe 2020 strategy for competitive, inclusive and sustainable growth. In order to increase employment, it was said that young people had to be supported in the transition between education and the labour market and that measures to promote quality employment as well as mobility of all young people were necessary.

The Europe 2020 strategy establishes as one of its five headline targets increasing the employment rate of men and women aged between 20 and 64 years to 75% in the EU by 2020, placing special emphasis on young people. Another headline target concerns the reduction of early school leavers ([7/10](#)).

OTHER BUSINESS

Role of culture in the reconstruction of Haiti

The French delegation provided the Council with an information note ([8604/10](#)) calling for a European cultural initiative in Haiti. Given the dramatic consequences of the earthquake in Haiti in January, the French representative suggested that the EU support the restoration of Haiti's main theatre, the "Ciné Théâtre Triomphe". Several ministers and the Commission supported this initiative.

EU-China cultural cooperation

The Commission briefed the Council on the preparations for an EU-China cultural forum.

Conference on digital cinema

The presidency reported to the Council on the conference on the independent exhibition sector and the challenges of digitisation in cinema that took place in Barcelona on 5 and 6 March. Its aim was to provide information about digitisation and discuss its impact on the film sector and its effect on cultural diversity.

Bologna ministerial anniversary conference

The Austrian and Hungarian delegations briefed the Council on the Bologna ministerial anniversary conference 2010 and the second Bologna policy forum, which took place on 11 and 12 March. The conference took stock of the implementation of the Bologna objectives during the last ten years ([8606/10](#)).

2011 EU-China youth year

The Commission informed the Council about plans for an EU-China youth year in 2011.

Conference on youth employment and social inclusion

The presidency briefed the Council on the results of a conference on youth employment and social inclusion held in Jerez de la Frontera from 13 to 15 April.

Work programme of the incoming presidency

The Belgian delegation presented the work programme for its presidency, which is to take place in the second half of 2010.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

GENERAL AFFAIRS

European chemicals agency - new Bulgarian member of the management board

The Council appointed Mr Boyko Marinov Malinov as the new Bulgarian member of the management board of the European chemicals agency until 31 May 2011.

Centre for the development of enterprise

The Council adopted joint decisions appointing:

- Mr Jean-Erick ROMAGNE (France) as director of the technical centre for the development of enterprise for a five-year term starting in 2010 ([8936/10](#));
- Ms Jyoti JEETUN (Mauritius) as deputy director of the technical centre for the development of enterprise for five-year term starting in 2010 ([8933/10](#)).

Mechanism on cooperation and verification for Bulgaria and Romania - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted conclusions on the mechanism on cooperation and verification for Bulgaria and Romania ([8791/10](#)).

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Restrictive measures against Burma/Myanmar

The Council adopted a regulation clarifying the derogations on the prohibition of the purchase in Burma/Myanmar of certain goods.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS**Amendment of certain international accounting standards - committee procedure**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a Commission regulation on certain international accounting standards.

The new regulation implements amendments that the International Accounting Standards Board made in November 2009 to international accounting standard 24.

Under the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, the Council can oppose an act which exceeds the implementing powers of the Commission, is not compatible with the aim or content of the basic instrument or does not respect subsidiarity or proportionality if the regulatory committee previously supported the envisaged measures.

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA**Air traffic management**

The Council extended cooperation in the field of air traffic management within the European Economic Area (EEA), by amending the EEA agreement ([7998/10](#)).

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

EU-US agreement on financial messaging data for counter-terrorism investigations

The Council adopted a negotiating mandate for an EU-US agreement on the processing and transfer of financial messaging data for the purposes of the US Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP). On this basis, the Commission, which will be the main negotiator for the EU assisted by a Council working party, can start formal negotiations with the US.

A final agreement with the US will need the support of a qualified majority of EU member states and the consent of the European Parliament. Its purpose is to allow the US Department of the Treasury to receive financial messaging data stored in the EU in order to permit targeted searches for counter-terrorism investigations, while ensuring an adequate level of data protection.

Under the TFTP, the US Department of the Treasury seeks to identify, track and pursue suspected terrorists and their providers of finance. It was set up shortly after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. Relevant results of the US analysis have been shared with EU member states and have contributed to effective investigation and prevention of terrorist attacks.

On 11 February 2010, the European Parliament rejected an interim agreement negotiated under the Swedish presidency.

HEALTH

Prevention of healthcare workers from sharp injuries

The Council adopted a directive aimed at achieving the safest possible working environment for healthcare workers through prevention from sharp injuries ([7318/10](#) + [8491/10](#)).

For more details, see press release [9619/10](#).

AGRICULTURE

Protection of animals used for scientific purposes*

The Council agreed on a directive for the protection of animals used for scientific purposes ([8869/10 ADD 1](#) + [8869/10 ADD 2](#)), with Germany abstaining.

The act is aimed at strengthening the protection of animals while allowing research to maintain its key role in the fight against diseases.

For more details, see press release [9550/10](#).

FISHERIES

São Tomé e Príncipe and Micronesia - renewal of agreements

The Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations for the renewal of protocols to the fisheries partnership agreements with São Tomé e Príncipe and with the Federated States of Micronesia.

Fisheries agreement with Comoros - renewal of the protocol

The Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the European Union for the renewal of the protocol to the fisheries partnership agreement with Comoros.

INTERNAL MARKET

Type-approval requirements for windscreen defrosting and demisting systems

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a Commission regulation concerning type-approval requirements for the windscreen defrosting and demisting systems of certain motor vehicles. The Commission regulation implements regulation 661/2009 concerning type-approval requirements for the general safety of motor vehicles, their trailers and systems, components and separate technical units intended therefor.

Under the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, the Council can oppose an act which exceeds the implementing powers of the Commission, is not compatible with the aim or content of the basic instrument or does not respect subsidiarity or proportionality if the regulatory committee previously supported the envisaged measures.

SOCIAL POLICY

Population and housing censuses

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a Commission regulation on a programme of statistical data and metadata for population and housing censuses ([6821/10](#)).

Under the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, the Council can oppose an act which exceeds the implementing powers of the Commission, is not compatible with the aim or content of the basic instrument or does not respect subsidiarity or proportionality if the regulatory committee previously supported the envisaged measures.

TRANSPARENCY

Public access to documents

The Council adopted the reply to confirmatory application No 11/c/01/10, with the Finnish and the Swedish delegations voting against ([8072/10](#)).
