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REV 1

NOTE
Subject: Code of Conduct for the President of the European Council
CODE OF CONDUCT

FOR THE

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL
INTRODUCTION

In view of the role of the President of the European Council within the institutional framework of the Union, the general interest requires that he/she acts in a manner in keeping with the dignity and the duties of his/her office and in the sole interest of the Union, both during and after his/her term of office.

In a Union marked by the principles of openness and transparency, it is appropriate to lay down clear rules to this effect. This document, communicated to European Council members and published in the President of the European Council's website, thus sets out a code of conduct for the President of the European Council, without prejudice to Council Decision of 1 December 2009 laying down the conditions of employment of the President of the European Council.

I. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

1. The President will declare his/her interests. The declaration will be made public and contain the following information:

   i. Posts held currently and/or over the last 10 years in foundations or similar bodies, in educational institutions, in governing, supervisory and advisory organs of companies and other bodies devoted to commercial or economic activities and other professional activities during that period, including services, liberal profession and consulting activities.

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ii. Financial interests, detailing the company, the number of shares or securities per company and their estimated total current value.

iii. Assets separated by real estate and other property, except the homes reserved for the exclusive use of the owner and his/her family.

iv. The financial interests of the President's spouse/partner, including his/her professional activities.

2. During the term of his/her office, the President of the European Council will annually update his/her declaration.

II. GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

3. The exchange of gifts is discouraged. Member States' and third States' protocol services are informed in good time of this general principle.

4. Whenever a "no gifts rule" is deemed difficult to apply (e.g. in view of established diplomatic practices), gifts received or given by the President should be of a symbolic or commemorative nature and have a maximum value of 150 euros.

5. Purchases of gifts to be given by the President for protocol purposes will be made from a list of authorised companies selected in compliance with the EU Financial Regulation.
6. All gifts received with a value of more than 150 euros become the property of the GSC. They will be listed in the public register of gifts received by the President in compliance with the procedure for the handling of gifts\(^2\).

7. Offers of hospitality made to the President by third State governments, over and above usual diplomatic courtesies, should generally be declined. However, the President may accept such offers where it is in line with established protocol practices.

8. No offer of hospitality over and above usual courtesies will be accepted from a private company.

### III. OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES DURING THE TERM OF OFFICE

9. The President will not engage in any professional activity, whether gainful or not, during his/her term. Unpaid courses, seminars, lectures or other official communication activities are permitted if they do not interfere with the performance of the President’s duties and are compatible with the interests of the EU. They do not have to be declared.

10. Royalties from copyright in a work published in connection with his/her functions will be paid over to a charity of the President's choice.

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\(^2\) Decision No. 37/2013 of the Secretary-General of the Council establishing a public register for gifts transferred by the President of the European Council.
11. The President will not accept any form of payment for writing articles, delivering speeches or taking part in conferences. Should a payment be made, it will be donated to a charity of his/her choice.

12. The President may hold honorary unpaid posts in cultural, artistic or charitable foundations or similar bodies. He/she may also hold such posts in educational institutions. "Honorary posts" means posts in which the holder has no management role, no decision-making power and no responsibility or control of the operations of the body in question. "Foundations or similar bodies" mean not-for-profit organisations or associations which engage in activities in the public interest in the fields mentioned. Posts held on these terms will under no circumstances involve any risk of a conflict of interest. This risk exists in particular whenever the body receives any kind of financing from the EU budget. All such honorary posts will be listed in the declaration of interests referred to in point I of this document.

13. The President may be a member of and hold honorary or non-executive functions in a national or European political party or trade union, provided that this does not compromise his/her availability for service as President. The President may also hold political functions in a European political party, provided that this does not involve management responsibilities. His/her duties as President must prevail over party commitment.

IV. POST TERM-OF-OFFICE ACTIVITIES

14. After ceasing to hold office, the former President will continue to be bound by the duty to behave with integrity and discretion as regards the acceptance of certain appointments or benefits. During the eighteen months after the end of his/her term of office, he/she will not lobby nor advocate with members of EU institutions or their staff for his/her business, client or employer.
15. If the President intends to engage in an occupation during the eighteen months after ceasing to hold office, he/she will inform the Secretary-General in good time, as far as possible with minimum four weeks notice. The Secretary-General will examine the nature of the planned occupation and, if he/she deems it appropriate, inform the European Council. This does not apply where the former President engages in a public office.

16. The above paragraph is without prejudice to the obligation of the President to confidentially declare all his/her income resulting from a professional activity to the respective GSC service at least once per year during three years after leaving the function, as provided for in the decision laying down the President's conditions of employment.