



13705/21

(OR. en)

PRESSE 36
PR CO 36

OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3822nd Council meeting

Economic and Financial Affairs

Brussels, 9 November 2021

President

Andrej Šircelj
Slovenia's Minister for Finance

P R E S S

CONTENTS¹

ITEMS DEBATED

The EU economy after Covid-19: implications for economic governance	4
Economic recovery in Europe.....	5
Energy prices, inflation and policy implications	6
Basel III implementation.....	6
Conclusions on the future of the European Semester in the context of the RRF.....	7
EU statistics.....	7
International meetings.....	7
European Court of Auditors' annual report on the implementation of the budget of the EU for the financial year 2020	8
Financial services legislation	8

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

– NPLs: Directive on credit services, credit purchasers	9
– Motor insurance directive.....	9
– Strategic Framework for Customs Cooperation 2021–2024 between the European Union and the Government of the People's Republic of China	9
– Decision on the mobilisation of the EGF (EGF/2021/001 ES/País Vasco metal)	10
– Council Implementing Decision authorising Latvia to introduce a special measure derogating from the VAT Directive.....	10

¹ • 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.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

–	Commission’s intention to sign the Addis Tax Initiative Declaration 2025.....	10
–	EDF Contributions	10
–	Restrictive measures in Lybia.....	11
–	EU-Azerbaijan Partnership Priorities	11

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

–	Council conclusions - European Court of Auditors special report on Frontex’s support to external border management.....	11
–	Belarus - partial suspension of visa facilitation.....	12
–	COVID-19 - list of countries for which travel restrictions should be lifted	12
–	Schengen evaluations	12

TRADE POLICY

–	Decision related to trade agreements with Colombia, Peru and Ecuador	13
---	--	----

AGRICULTURE

–	Maximum residue levels.....	13
---	-----------------------------	----

TRANSPORT

–	International Aviation Climate Ambition Coalition	13
–	International carriage by rail.....	13
–	“Unified Railway Law” initiative	14

INTERNAL MARKET AND INDUSTRY

–	EU position on UNECE.....	14
---	---------------------------	----

TRANSPARENCY

–	Public access to documents	14
---	----------------------------------	----

ITEMS DEBATED

The EU economy after Covid-19: implications for economic governance

The Commission presented its communication on the implications of COVID-19 for the EU's economic governance, after which ministers exchanged views.

The communication marks the relaunch of the consultation on the economic governance framework, taking into consideration the changed environment brought about by the pandemic. Ministers discussed the future of the EU's economic governance framework and expressed their initial views on the way forward.

The public debate aims to reach a broad consensus on the path forward well before 2023. In parallel, the Commission plans to provide guidance during the first quarter of 2022 to facilitate the coordination of fiscal policies and the preparation of member states' stability and convergence programmes, due in April 2022.

[EU economy after COVID-19: implications for economic governance \(October 2021\)](#)

[Timeline: the evolution of EU economic governance](#)

Economic recovery in Europe

Ministers took stock of the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF).

The Commission outlined the state of play on the financing of NextGenerationEU and ministers shared their views.

All member states except the Netherlands have submitted their national recovery and resilience plans (RRPs). The decisions on plans for Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain were adopted at the Ecofin Council of 13 July. Council implementing decisions (CIDs) for Croatia, Cyprus, Lithuania and Slovenia were adopted on 28 July. On 8 September, the Council adopted the decisions on Czechia's and Ireland's plans, and on 5 October the decision on Malta's plan. The CIDs on Estonia's, Finland's and Romania's plans were adopted on 29 October.

By 9 November, the following countries had received their requested pre-financing: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. The total amount disbursed so far is around € 52.4 billion.

The Commission uses resources raised on the financial markets. So far, five syndicated bond issuance events have taken place, including the first ever EU green bond issuance. In addition, in September the Commission started with the EU-Bonds and EU-Bills auctions, raising additional funds to finance NextGenerationEU.

[Infographic - Recovery fund: the EU delivers](#)

[The Recovery and Resilience Facility \(European Commission\)](#)

Energy prices, inflation and policy implications

Ministers discussed energy prices and inflation developments, and their policy implications. The discussion was framed by the Commission's communication on tackling rising energy prices.

Ministers exchanged views on the Commission's toolbox of measures that the EU and its member states can use and are already using to address the immediate impact of energy price increases.

Energy prices also played an important role in recent developments in the harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP), with the HICP having increased, as of October 2021, by 4.1% in the euro area over the previous twelve months.

[Tackling rising energy prices: a toolbox for action and support \(European Commission\)](#)

Basel III implementation

The Commission presented the package of legislative proposals to complete the implementation of Basel III into EU law, after which ministers shared their initial views.

Basel III comprises a number of measures agreed by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) to enhance prudential regulatory standards, supervision and risk management of banks as a response to the global financial crisis of 2007/2008.

The package seeks to strike a balance between differing political objectives, and aims in particular at strengthening the resilience of banks without imposing a significant increase in their capital requirements. In addition, it seeks to implement international standards faithfully, while at the same time aiming to cater for certain European specificities.

[Proposal to amend the Capital Requirements Directive](#)

[Proposal to amend the Capital Requirements Regulation](#)

[Proposal to amend the Capital Requirements Regulation in the area of resolution](#)

Conclusions on the future of the European Semester in the context of the RRF

Ministers approved conclusions on the alignment of the European Semester cycle with the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). The conclusions follow up on the exchange of views ministers held at the Ecofin meeting on 5 October on lessons learned from the 2021 European Semester and on ways forward in the context of the RRF.

The conclusions call for a return to the essential elements of the European Semester in the 2022 cycle, especially in terms of reinstating country reports and country-specific recommendations (CSR). They underline the need to safeguard the economic recovery while making sure that fiscal policy is adjusted to the current circumstances and fiscal sustainability is preserved in the medium term. They stress the need to avoid overlaps in the reporting requirements of the European Semester and the implementation of the RRF.

Conclusions on the future of the European Semester in the context of the RRF

EU statistics

Ministers approved the 2021 Council conclusions on EU statistics.

The 2021 conclusions examine, among other things, the statistics used for COVID-19, sustainable development goals and the European Green Deal, surveillance of macroeconomic imbalances, housing costs and inflation, and structural statistics.

Council conclusions on EU Statistics 2021([13699/21](#))

International meetings

The Presidency and the Commission reported back to ministers on the results of the international meetings that took place on 13-14 October 2021:

- a G20 finance ministers' and central bank governors' meeting, which focused on pandemic preparedness and financing, international taxation, support for vulnerable countries, and the climate agenda;
- the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC) annual meeting.

Communiqué after the fourth G20 finance ministers and central bank governors meeting

Communiqué of the forty-fourth meeting of the IMFC

European Court of Auditors' annual report on the implementation of the budget of the EU for the financial year 2020

The president of the European Court of Auditors presented the annual report on the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2020.

[ECA's annual report on the implementation of the EU budget for the 2020 financial year](#)

Financial services legislation

The presidency updated ministers on legislative proposals in the field of financial services.

[Banking union \(background information\)](#)

[Capital markets union \(background information\)](#)

[Digital finance \(background information\)](#)

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

NPLs: Directive on credit services, credit purchasers

The Council adopted the directive on credit servicers and credit purchasers and amending Directives 2008/48/EC and 2014/17/EU. [[13237/1/21 REV 1](#)] and [[PE-CONS 54/21](#)+COR 1]

Motor insurance directive

The Council adopted the directive amending directive 2009/103/EC relating to insurance against civil liability in respect of the use of motor vehicles, and the enforcement of the obligation to insure against such liability.

[[13234/21](#) + ADD 1-2] [[PE-CONS 60/21](#)]

Strategic Framework for Customs Cooperation 2021–2024 between the European Union and the Government of the People’s Republic of China

The Council authorised the signing of the Strategic Framework for Customs Cooperation 2021–2024 between the European Union and the Government of the People’s Republic of China [12752/21].

Decision on the mobilisation of the EGF (EGF/2021/001 ES/País Vasco metal)

The Council approved the text of the decision on the mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). The decision aims at mobilising an amount of € 1 214 607 under the EGF to meet an application from Spain to deploy the fund following redundancies in six enterprises in the NUTS 2 region of País Vasco, in order to provide assistance for re-integrating the 491 targeted beneficiaries into the labour market, in line with Regulation (EU) 2021/691. The redundancies were caused by the global economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic [[12931/21](#)], [[12932/21](#)].

Council Implementing Decision authorising Latvia to introduce a special measure derogating from the VAT Directive

The Council adopted its implementing decision authorising Latvia to introduce a special measure derogating from point (a) of Article 26(1) and Articles 168 and 168a of the VAT Directive [[13126/21](#)], [[12807/21](#)].

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Commission's intention to sign the Addis Tax Initiative Declaration 2025

The Council approved the Commission's intention to sign the Addis Tax Initiative Declaration (ATI) 2025 on behalf of the EU. The ATI promotes fair and effective domestic revenue mobilisation, policy coherence and the social contract through partnership and knowledge building.

EDF Contributions

The Council adopted a decision [[2878/21](#)] regarding the annual contribution to be paid to the EDF for the years 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025. For the year 2022, the EDF receives € 2 500 000 000 from the Commission, and € 300 000 000 from the EIB. For the year 2023, the annual amount of the contributions will be € 1 800 000 000 from the Commission, and € 300 000 000 from the EIB. The indicative and non-binding forecast for 2024 is set at € 1 500 000 000 for the Commission and at € 300 000 000 for the EIB, and that for 2025 at € 900 000 000 for the Commission and € 9 000 000 for the EIB.

Restrictive measures in Lybia

The Council adopted a decision to amend Annex III to Regulation (EU) 2016/44 and Annexes II and IV to Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333 (regarding the list of persons and entities). The amendment concerns the delisting of one person.

EU-Azerbaijan Partnership Priorities

The Council adopted a decision regarding the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The EU-Azerbaijan Partnership is extended until 2024, and may be updated or further extended by agreement of the Cooperation Council.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**Council conclusions - European Court of Auditors special report on Frontex's support to external border management**

The Council adopted conclusions on the European Court of Auditors' special report on Frontex's support to external border management [[12811/21](#)].

The Council considers the special report a useful contribution to reflections of Frontex and the Commission on how to improve the efficiency of Frontex's support to external border management, as it focuses on the mandate regarding the regulation (EU) 2016/1624. It recognises in particular the importance of improving the information exchange framework and the European situational picture, updating and implementing the common integrated risk analysis model and secure access to other sources of information, developing the potential of the vulnerability assessment, improving Frontex's operational response and addressing the challenges posed by Frontex's new mandate.

Belarus - partial suspension of visa facilitation

The Council today adopted a decision partially suspending the application of the EU-Belarus visa facilitation agreement. This decision is a response to the ongoing hybrid attack launched by the Belarusian regime [[12825/21](#)].

The suspension covers the provisions that waive requirements for documentary evidence, regulate the issuing of multiple entry visas and reduce visa application fees as they apply to officials of the Belarus regime. This decision will not affect ordinary citizens of Belarus, who will continue to enjoy the same benefits under the visa facilitation agreement as they do currently.

[Belarus: Council suspends visa facilitation provisions for officials of the Belarus regime \(press release\)](#)

COVID-19 - list of countries for which travel restrictions should be lifted

Following a review under the recommendation on the gradual lifting of the temporary restrictions on non-essential travel into the EU, the Council updated the list of countries, special administrative regions and other entities and territorial authorities for which travel restrictions should be lifted. In particular, Singapore and Ukraine were removed from the list [[13497/21](#)].

[COVID-19: Council removes Singapore and Ukraine from the list of countries for which travel restrictions should be lifted](#)

Schengen evaluations

The Council adopted an implementing decision setting out a recommendation on addressing the deficiencies identified in the 2021 evaluation of Greece on the application of the Schengen acquis in the field of return [[13662/21](#)].

The Council adopted an implementing decision setting out a recommendation on addressing the deficiencies identified in the 2021 evaluation of France on the application of the Schengen acquis in the field of management of the external border [[13663/21](#)].

The Council adopted an implementing decision setting out a recommendation on addressing the deficiencies identified in the 2021 evaluation of the Netherlands on the application of the Schengen acquis in the field of management of the external border [[13664/21](#)].

TRADE POLICY

Decision related to trade agreements with Colombia, Peru and Ecuador

The Council adopted a Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the Trade Committee established by the Trade Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, of the other part, as regards modifications to Appendices 2, 2A and 5 to Annex II to that Agreement.

The Decision is adopted as set out in documents [11372/21](#) and [11373/21](#).

AGRICULTURE

Maximum residue levels

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a regulation amending Annexes II, III and IV to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum residue levels for acequinocyl, *Bacillus subtilis* strain IAB/BS03, emamectin, flutolanil and imazamox in or on certain products. [[12914/21](#), [12344/21](#) + ADD 1-2]

TRANSPORT

International Aviation Climate Ambition Coalition

In view of the UK COP 26 Presidency initiative on an ‘International Aviation Climate Ambition Coalition’ in the run-up to the 41st International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Assembly in 2022, the Council approved the EU position and the text of the declaration as set out in 12965/21 ADD 1, including instructions for on-the-spot coordination [12965/21; 12965/21 ADD 1; 12965/21 ADD 2].

International carriage by rail

The Council approved the EU position for the ad hoc Committee on Legal Affairs and International Cooperation of the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) concerning certificates issued by Entities in Charge of Maintenance (ECM) [[13165/21](#) + ADD 1].

“Unified Railway Law” initiative

The Council approved the coordinated position of the EU and its member states for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as regards the “Unified Railway Law” initiative [[13284/21](#) + ADD 1].

INTERNAL MARKET AND INDUSTRY

EU position on UNECE

The Council adopted a decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the World Forum for Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe as regards proposals for modifications to UN Regulations, for amendments to Consolidated Resolutions R.E.3 and R.E.5, for amendments to Mutual Resolutions M.R.1 and M.R.2, for authorisations to amend UN GTR on pedestrian safety, and to develop UN GTRs on Global Real Driving Emissions and on brake particulate emissions. [[13053/21](#); [13160/21](#); [13161/21](#)]

TRANSPARENCY

Public access to documents

On 9 November 2021, the Council adopted the reply to confirmatory application No 36/c/04/21. Ref. document: 11742/21 + ADD 1.
