



Brussels, 15 May 2013

BACKGROUND NOTE¹

EDUCATION, YOUTH, CULTURE AND SPORT COUNCIL

Brussels, 16-17 May 2013

*The Council will start on Thursday at 10.00 with the session on **Education**, chaired by the Irish Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairí Quinn TD.*

*At lunchtime (13.00-15.00), the usual informal meeting ("structured dialogue") will take place between representatives of European youth organisations, the President of the Youth Council configuration and Commissioner for Youth Ms Androula Vassiliou, and ministers from the expanded trio (CY, IE, LT, EL). The exchange of views will focus on possible improvements to the "structured dialogue" process. The afternoon, beginning at 15.00, will be devoted to **Youth** related issues and will be chaired by Minister for Youth, Frances Fitzgerald.*

*On Friday, Council proceedings will start with a working breakfast (8.30-10.00) for **audiovisual** ministers, who will have an exchange of views on the Commission's Green Paper on "Connected TV". Minister Pat Rabbitte will represent the Presidency, and the Commission's Vice-President Kroes, who is responsible for audiovisual questions and the digital agenda, is expected to attend.*

*The Council formal session will resume at 10.00, with **culture and audiovisual** matters chaired by the Irish minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Jimmy Deenihan, and **sport** related issues will be dealt with in the afternoon, starting at 15.00, under the chairmanship of Ireland's minister of Sports, Michael Ring.*

*The **Sport session** will be preceded by a working lunch (13.00-15.00), in the framework of the "structured dialogue" between representatives of the sports movement² and ministers from member states of the expanded trio, addressing the issue of the fight against doping.*

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

² Mr Travis Tygart, Chief Executive Officer, US Anti-Doping Agency.
Mr Pat McQuaid, President, International Cycling Union
Mr Patrick Hickey, President, European Olympic Committees
Mr Olivier Niggli, Legal Director, World Anti-Doping Agency
Mr Gian Franco Kasper, President, International Ski Federation
Mr Jonas Baer-Hoffmann, Policy Officer, EU Athletes

Education

*The Council is due to adopt conclusions on the **social dimension of higher education**.*

*It will also hold, in public deliberation, a policy debate on the link between **a teaching profession of the highest quality and achieving better learning outcomes**.*

Youth

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on:

- ***maximising the potential of youth policy in addressing the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy;***
- ***the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people.***

*Ministers will afterwards have a policy debate, in public deliberation, on the subject "Europe's young people: **what can quality youth work contribute to addressing current challenges?**"*

Culture and Audiovisual

*In public deliberation, the Council is expected to reach a general approach on the proposal for a decision establishing a Union action for the **European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020-2033**. It will also designate the **European Capitals of Culture for the years 2017 and 2018**.*

*Ministers will have an exchange of views on **cultural diversity**, in the context of the future Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Agreement between the EU and the USA.*

*The Council will also hold, in public deliberation, a policy debate on the use of **culture as a soft policy option in EU external relations***

Sport

*The Council is due to adopt conclusions on **dual careers for athletes**.*

*It will be updated by the Presidency on the **negotiations for an international convention of the Council of Europe to combat the manipulation of sports results**.*

*Ministers will also be briefed by the Presidency on the outcome of the recent World Anti-Doping Agency meetings in Montreal (11-12 May 2013). In this context, the Council will hold a policy debate **on the role of public authorities in combating doping in sport**.*

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Press conferences: *Thursday after lunch (+/- 14. 45)
Friday at +/- 13.15 and +/- 15.00*

Press conferences and public events can be followed by video streaming at:

<http://video.consilium.europa.eu/>

Video coverage will be available for preview and download in broadcast quality (MPEG4) at:

<http://tvnewsroom.consilium.europa.eu>

EDUCATION

Higher education

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on the **social dimension of higher education** (8574/13), highlighting the need to develop high quality education and training systems which are also fair. As a contribution towards reaching one of the Europe 2020 targets for education³, the conclusions therefore propose measures to ensure greater access to, participation in and completion of higher education for non-traditional learners and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.⁴

There are still too many capable students who are excluded from higher education systems because of their socio-economic situation, insufficient systems of support and guidance, and other obstacles. This increases the risk of unemployment, social exclusion and wasted human potential in a modern knowledge-based economy.

High quality teachers

In public deliberation, ministers will discuss the subject: "**Ensuring a teaching profession of the highest quality** to underpin the achievement of better learning outcomes", on the basis of a background paper prepared by the Presidency.⁵ Ministers will be invited to highlight briefly one practical initiative in their member state that could be of relevance to other ministers.

Issues related to the teaching professions have received significant attention from the Council, Commission and external bodies such as the OECD in recent years. Teacher quality is frequently cited as the most important in-school element influencing student achievement. Teachers therefore play a critically important role in enhancing both young people's employment prospects and life chances generally.

At European level, an agenda for co-operation has been agreed, with a particular focus on addressing the crisis in youth unemployment and achieving the Europe 2020 targets regarding early school leaving and higher education attainment.

In order to promote a more dynamic, free-flowing debate, the Presidency has invited two guest speakers with specific experience in this field:

- **Ms Christine Blower**, President of the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) and General Secretary of the UK's National Union of Teachers;
- **Mr Pasi Sahlberg**, Director-General of Finland's Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation and author of "Finnish Lessons: What Can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland?"

³ 40% of 30-34 year olds should have completed tertiary or equivalent education by 2020.

⁴ See also: Commission communication of November 2012: "Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes" (14781/12)

⁵ See also: Staff Working Paper on "Supporting the Teaching Professions" (14781/12 ADD 4)

YOUTH

Potential of youth policy

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on **maximising the potential of youth policy in addressing the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy (8576/13)**, calling in particular for measures to enhance cross-sectoral and inter-institutional cooperation in youth and youth related policy areas and highlighting the importance of increased synergies between instruments and initiatives already in place or recently adopted in the youth field⁶, in particular the Youth Employment Initiative.

The conclusions also seek to improve the accessibility of European funding programmes that support mobility, exchange and skills development. The next generation of European structural and investment funds will be instrumental in investing in young people and their skills and improving their employability and access to the labour market.

The overall goals of Europe 2020 and member states' respective targets to tackle youth unemployment, reduce early school leaving and increase participation in tertiary education have a particular relevance to youth policy and its response to those young people most at risk of exclusion. Youth policy measures, such as informal and non-formal learning and youth work, contribute to young people's inclusion in educational, developmental and associational activities and offer possibilities to gain experience and provide practical learning opportunities.

The dramatic situation of youth unemployment⁷ has an immediate economic cost - in terms of benefits paid out, lost tax revenue and earnings foregone - which the EU Agency Eurofound has estimated at 153 billion per year, or 1.2% of EU GDP. Of course the "human cost" to the individuals concerned is incalculable.

Quality youth work

- The Council is due to adopt conclusions on the **contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people (8575/13)**, aiming to strengthen cooperation among member states in youth related areas such as health, education, employment, culture and sport. They also call for mechanisms ensuring that quality youth work is results-oriented so that young people get maximum benefit from their activities.

"Youth work" is a broad term that covers a wide range of activities of a social, cultural, educational or political nature by, with and for young people, at local, regional, national and European level. It focuses on the personal and social development of young people, based on their needs and interests, thereby complementing formal education and enhancing social inclusion. Youth work belongs to the area of "out-of-school" education, as well as specific leisure time activities managed by professional or voluntary youth workers and youth leaders.

⁶ - Youth Employment Package (17944/12), in particular the Youth Employment Initiative ([EUCO 3/13](#));
- "Youth Opportunities Initiative" ([5166/12](#));

- Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (*OJ C 398, 22.12.2012*);
- The renewed Framework for European Cooperation in the Youth Field (2010-2018) (*OJ C 311, 19.12.2009*).
⁷ More than 5.7 million (23.6%) young people in the European Union (EU) were without a job in January 2013 and 30 % of unemployed people under the age of 25 years in the Union have been unemployed for more than twelve months.

Quality youth work programmes and activities develop young people's 21st century skills, including transversal skills such as learning to learn, social and civic competence, initiative taking, entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness and expression. This learning allows young people to participate in their communities, in wider society, in education and in employment.

This is all the more crucial in the current economic crisis which has seen increasing levels of unemployment, social fragmentation and young people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs)⁸.

The incoming Presidency Trio (Ireland, Lithuania and Greece) have agreed on 'Social Inclusion' as their overall theme in the Youth sector for 2013-2014.

In public deliberation, ministers will also discuss how **quality youth work can contribute to addressing the challenges currently facing Europe's young people**. They will be invited to focus on immediate and practical measures that could complement or improve the ones already in place in this field.

Statistics show that half of young people in the EU participated in activities run by a youth organisation, leisure and/or sports club in the past year, while a quarter took part in organised voluntary activities. However, this generation of young people also face unprecedented levels of unemployment and a higher risk of poverty than that of the general population.

Action is underway in all member states and at EU level to address the impacts of the crisis on young people⁹, in particular:

- the Youth Employment Package, followed by the Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee ([8548/13](#)) and the Youth Employment Initiative under the Multi-annual Financial Framework 2014-2020, involving a fund of EUR 6 bn;
- the proposal for a regulation establishing 'ERASMUS FOR ALL': the Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport, in particular its youth chapter ([17188/11](#)).

In order to promote a more dynamic debate, the Presidency has invited two guest speakers with specific experience in this field:

- **Dr Massimiliano Mascherini**, Head of Research, Eurofound, Dublin, Ireland.
- **Dr John Bamber**, Centre for Effective Services, Dublin, Ireland.

⁸ There are 7.5 million NEETs across the Union, representing 12.9% of young Europeans (aged between 15-24).

⁹ See footnote 5, page 4.

CULTURE AND AUDIOVISUAL

European Capitals of Culture 2020-2033

The Council is expected to adopt a general approach on the proposal for a decision establishing a Union action for the **European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020-2033** (8737/13).

The European Capitals of Culture initiative was launched in 1985 and over 40 cities have been designated since then. Its aims are to promote greater mutual understanding between European citizens and to strengthen the feeling of European citizenship, simultaneously highlighting the richness of European cultures and both their diversity and their shared features.

The current rules for selecting European Capitals of Culture are laid down in decision 1622/2006¹⁰ and will expire in 2019. In July 2012, the Commission submitted a proposal to continue this initiative beyond 2019 ([12558/12](#)). Since the process lasts for about six years, the new framework should be in place by the end of 2013, so the future Capitals of Culture have sufficient time to prepare.

The new Commission proposal retains the general structure of the current initiative, as well as a number of existing elements, such as the chronological order of the member states entitled to host a European Capital of Culture, a selection based on year-long cultural programmes created specifically for the event, and the eligibility of cities which may involve the surrounding region, if they so wish.

The main changes concern the designation of the European Capitals of Culture, which it is proposed will be done by the Commission instead of the Council, the composition of the European panel responsible for selection and monitoring, which would no longer be composed of national experts, but exclusively of experts appointed by EU institutions, and a partial opening out of the initiative to candidate and potential candidate countries.

The voting in the CULT committee of the European Parliament is expected to take place on 28 May 2013. At this stage, the main issues for the Parliament are to ensure greater involvement of civil society, sustainability of infrastructure investments and the need for the selected cities to use different EU funding programmes such as structural funds, given the limited budget available under the European Capitals of Culture initiative itself (one-off prize of EUR 1.5 million). Informal negotiations with the European Parliament are expected to start only under the Lithuanian Presidency.

European Capitals of Culture for 2017 and 2018

The Council is expected to designate **Aarhus** in Denmark and **Paphos** in Cyprus as European Capitals of Culture for 2017, as well as **Valletta** in Malta for 2018 ([8931/13](#)).

Decision 1622/2006/EC sets out the procedure for selecting the European Capitals of Culture. Its Annex establishes the order in which the member states are entitled to nominate their city. Until 2019, cities from two member states are designated as European Capitals of Culture each year.

¹⁰ ([OJ L 304, 3.11.2006](#)).

A selection panel is established for each member state concerned, which assesses the applications of the candidate cities and draws up a report, together with a recommendation for the nomination of one city as European Capital of Culture. On the basis of that report, the member states concerned themselves nominate a city and notify the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions.

The European Parliament may forward an opinion to the Commission on the nomination of the city in question. In light of that opinion and of justifications based on the selection panels' reports, the Commission draws up a recommendation on the nomination of a city as a European Capital of Culture, which is then forwarded to the Council for official designation.

Cultural diversity

Ministers will have an exchange of views, on the basis of a Presidency background paper (9054/13), regarding **cultural diversity in the context of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Agreement** between the EU and the USA (TTIP), which is currently being negotiated. The Trade Policy Committee is in charge of preparing the negotiating mandate, and the Presidency is aiming for adoption by the Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) on 14 June.

The aim of the discussion is to give ministers an opportunity to discuss how best to promote and support cultural diversity in the context of international trade negotiations such as the TTIP. In particular, ministers are also invited to reflect on the impact of the digital on-line environment on cultural diversity which is by its nature open and in which an increasing amount of contents is being distributed.

The EU and the US are the world's major traders and investors and the bilateral trade relationship is therefore very important to both partners. Following the EU-US Summit in November 2011, the EU and the US announced their intention to launch negotiations on a comprehensive agreement called the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the aim of deepening transatlantic economic integration.

The increased market opportunities for EU goods and services could become a significant source of growth and job creation in many areas, including in the audiovisual sector. However, this area poses particular challenges for EU operators.

Cultural goods and services, which include audiovisual works, in particular films, reflect the cultural diversity of the different traditions and histories of the EU member states and they play an important role in shaping European identities. Audiovisual works have a double economic and cultural nature, their public interest goes beyond the products' pure commercial value and this is why the EU has always taken a differentiated approach in international trade negotiations as regards cultural goods and services.

Culture in EU external relations

In public deliberation, ministers will also discuss **culture as a “soft” policy option in EU external relations**, on the basis of a background paper prepared by the Presidency (8235/13). The main purpose of the debate is to develop a consensus around the further development of a strategic approach to the role of culture in EU relations with third countries.

The promotion of culture by the European Union and its member states in their relations with third countries is enshrined in the Treaties¹¹. Culture is a key component of what is often called “soft power” i.e. the use of cooperation and cultural contacts as instruments of foreign (external) policy. This approach is also linked to trade relations and the circulation of EU cultural goods and services, as well as to public diplomacy and image building. Culture and creativity is considered an area of 'comparative advantage' for Europe.

Culture in external relations is one of the key priorities of the 2011-2014 Council Work Plan for Culture¹², in line with the European Agenda for Culture¹³, which identified the promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations.

Since 2011, the EU Presidencies have also been organising joint informal meetings between senior officials of Ministries of Culture and Ministries of Foreign Affairs in order to foster cooperation between them. In March 2012, the Commission established an expert group on culture and external relations, aiming to contribute to the development of a more general EU strategy in this field, while launching a pilot initiative with China as a “test case”. The expert group reported back in November 2012 and identified a set of guiding principles and general recommendations for a strategic approach to culture in the case of EU-China relations.

SPORT

Convention of the Council of Europe to combat the manipulation of sports results

Ministers will take note of information from the Presidency on the state of play regarding the recommendation for a decision authorising the European Commission to participate, on behalf of the EU, in the **negotiations for an international convention of the Council of Europe to combat the manipulation of sports results** (<http://hub.coe.int/>), with the exception of matters related to cooperation in criminal matters and police cooperation, which will be addressed in a separate decision.

As the negotiations will cover matters which fall partly within the Union's competence and partly within that of the member states, the Union should participate in these negotiations together with its member states.

The provisions of the future Convention may concern the following competency areas of the Union:

- promotion of fairness and openness in sporting competitions and cooperation between bodies responsible for sports, protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen;
- internal market freedoms (freedom to provide services and right of establishment) insofar as they relate to the relevant provisions on match-fixing and sports betting in the draft Convention;
- data protection in relation to the above areas.

¹¹ Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

¹² OJ C 325, 2.12.2010, p.1.

¹³ OJ C 287, 29.11.2007.

Dual careers for athletes

The Council is due to adopt conclusions on **dual careers for athletes**, which include guidelines to develop and improve conditions for successfully combining sporting careers with education or work, establishing specific arrangements for talented and elite athletes throughout Europe.

The promotion of dual careers for athletes responds to several goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy (prevention of early school leaving, increasing graduates in higher education, higher employability), but these kinds of arrangements are relatively recent in the majority of member states and sports. Although a large number of specifications and regulations related to talented and elite sports people exist in a number of member states, most of them are fragmented or focused only on certain aspects.

In May 2011, the Council established a European Union Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014¹⁴, which highlighted the issue of athletes' place in the education system and in the workforce and established the expert group "Education and Training in Sport" and the *ad hoc* group of experts on dual careers. In November 2012, the expert group produced a set of EU Guidelines on Dual Careers for Athletes.

Anti-Doping

The Council will be briefed by the Presidency on the outcome of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) meetings that took place in Montreal on 11-12 May 2013 concerning the ongoing **WADA code review**.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)¹⁵, set up in 1999, is a private law body whose mission is to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against doping in sport in all its forms. Its key tasks include scientific research, education, the development of anti-doping capacities and monitoring of the World Anti Doping Code,

The World Anti Doping Code is the core document that provides the framework for harmonised anti-doping policies, rules and regulations within sports organisations and among public authorities worldwide. Its review procedure started in November 2011 and the final draft will be submitted to the WADA Foundation Board for approval at the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Johannesburg in November 2013. The new Code will then come into force as of 1 January 2015.

The WADA is composed of a foundation board, an executive committee and several committees. The 38-member Foundation Board is WADA's supreme decision-making body and it is composed in equal proportion of representatives from the Olympic Movement and from governments. The European continent has five representatives (three of them from the EU) on the Foundation Board.

In this context, the Council will hold a policy debate **on the role of public authorities in combating** the increased sophistication of **doping in sport**. To stimulate debate, the Presidency has invited Mr Travis Tygart, Chief Executive of the United States Doping Agency (USDA) to address the Council. Mr Tygart will also participate in the high-level structured dialogue at lunchtime.

Sport plays an important social, economic and health role in society and threats to the integrity of sport, such as doping, can have far-reaching negative consequences. Elite athletes are role models particularly for young people and their success in honest and fair competition can encourage participation and boost morale.

¹⁴ OJ C 162, 1.6.2011

¹⁵ <http://www.wada-ama.org>

It is generally acknowledged that protecting the integrity of sport against doping is an on-going global challenge, which requires international and cross-sectoral cooperation and initiatives involving public authorities, sports organisations and national anti-doping agencies. With more sophisticated methods of doping continually emerging, and evidence of increased criminal infiltration in doping in sport, public authorities have to develop new and more effective approaches in this fight.

However, measures taken by those authorities cannot overrule athletes' human and legal rights. This delicate balance between the public interest and individual rights needs to be explored further, in particular as WADA has recently taken the view that, to succeed in the fight against doping in sport, there is a need to move beyond drug-testing alone and develop additional ways of gathering, sharing and exploiting information and evidence about the supply and use of prohibited substances by athletes.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Education

- Proposal for a regulation establishing "ERASMUS FOR ALL": the Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport
 - Information from the Presidency
- Youth Employment Initiative
 - Information from the Austrian delegation
- European schools
 - Information from the Presidency
- Work programme of the incoming Presidency
 - Information from the Lithuanian delegation

Culture and audiovisual

- Culture's contribution to sustainable development (follow-up to the 2008 Council conclusions on architecture)
 - Information from the Presidency
- Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Creative Europe Programme
 - Information from the Presidency
- Proposal for a Council Regulation establishing for the period 2014-2020 the programme "Europe for Citizens"
 - Information from the Presidency

- Better connections for a better Europe
 - Information from the Portuguese delegation
 - Communication from the Commission on state aid for films and other audiovisual works
 - Information from the German delegation
 - State aid reform - general exemption from notification requirements for culture
 - Information from the German delegation
 - Work programme of the incoming Presidency
 - Information from the Lithuanian delegation
-