

Medlemmerne af Folketingets Europaudvalg og deres
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Til underretning for Folketingets Europaudvalg vedlægges formandskabets
reviderede kommenterede dagsorden vedrørende Det Europæiske Råds møde i
Bruxelles den 16.-17. oktober 2003, 12940/03.



NOTE

From: The Presidency To: Council Subject: *European Council (16/17 October 2003) - Annotated draft agenda*

According to the Seville European Council Conclusions the General Affairs and External Relations Council, acting on a presidency proposal, shall draw up an annotated draft agenda at least four weeks before the meeting of the European Council.

The Presidency accordingly submits the following annotated draft agenda, which sets out the main items it expects the European Council to address in Brussels on 16/17 October. The revised final version of the annotated draft agenda which the Presidency will submit to the GAERC immediately preceding the European Council will take into account the outcome of relevant work in sectoral Councils (ECOFIN, TTE, JHA) meeting earlier in the month.

The Presidency furthermore recalls that Heads of State or Government will also meet as an Intergovernmental Conference on the new Constitutional Treaty in the margins of this European Council. For the sake of completeness, indications on the likely proceedings of the IGC will be contained in the revised version of this note.

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B. EUROPEAN COUNCIL

The Presidency intends to limit the agenda to the following items:

- I. Relaunching the European economy
- II. Strengthening the area of freedom, security and justice
- III. External relations

RELAUNCHING THE EUROPEAN ECONOMY

The Growth Initiative

After a period of uncertainty, some positive signs are emerging in Europe. An improvement in the international economic environment, low levels of inflation, stabilised oil prices and better conditions in the financial markets are key factors behind a pick up in economic activity, which is expected to strengthen in the course of 2004.

Since the situation remains fragile, a message of confidence in the European Union's economic potential is needed. Maintaining sound macroeconomic policies, accelerating structural reforms and promoting investment in infrastructure and human capital are key priorities. In this context, economic policies should continue to be aimed at producing job-creating growth.

The purpose of this European Council, without seeking to pre-empt the Spring 2004 rendez-vous, is to focus immediate attention on certain areas of the EU's agenda for growth, in order to organise work and to offer guidance in view of concrete conclusions at the European Council on 12/13 December. Relaunching growth calls for determined action to be taken before the end of the year on the following three fronts:

- ***Boosting investment in key projects***

Speeding up the implementation of European physical networks and increasing investment in human capital will be crucial for growth as well as for helping to achieve an effective integration of the enlarged Europe, with significant gains in productivity.

To this end the European Council is expected to pave the way for putting into place a programme for supporting growth by increasing overall investment in TENs and R&D projects through more substantial private sector involvement. This will require greater efforts to encourage and channel private capital towards productive uses. (*Initiative for Growth - To be completed after the ECOFIN Council on 7 October*)

- ***Connecting up the Member States***

Building modern, efficient transport infrastructures to ensure easy and equal access between all Member States will have a twofold positive effect: it will boost growth directly, and it will boost growth by maximising the benefits of the internal market. In this framework, the European Council is expected to give particular attention to the new Decision on the priority projects for transport TENs - accompanied by proposals intended to boost the volume and the efficiency of investment in those projects - and other proposals being examined by the TTE Council (*to be updated after the TTE Council on 9/10 October*). To this end, a higher rate of

Community co-financing and stronger coordination among Member States will be considered. This must be accompanied by a modern transport policy which accords due importance to considerations of safety and sustainability.

- ***Securing supplies of energy***

The completion of an integrated market for electricity and gas will enhance security of supply and competitiveness, giving further impetus to growth. In addition, the development of energy infrastructures will also ensure the full involvement of the new EU's neighbours and partner countries in the European market. Given the heavy dependence of the EU on energy imports and the importance of neighbouring countries, in particular those of the Mediterranean region as suppliers or countries of transit, the European Council could discuss ways and means of promoting new energy networks with these countries, inter alia in view of the Rome Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on energy to be held in December.

Favourable conditions for growth

Priority action under the Growth Initiative will be carried out in the context and against the backdrop of on-going efforts to give concrete substance to the indications provided by previous Spring European Councils in a number of other key areas. Continued efforts in the following areas will contribute to enhancing the longer-term growth potential of the Union while keeping in mind environmental considerations and the social dimension:

- ***Enhancing the competitiveness of the European economy***

Enhancing competitiveness remains essential for stimulating economic growth. The European Council is therefore expected to call for:

- the pace of structural reforms across the board to be kept up and where possible accelerated,
- an evaluation of the role which could be assigned to Industrial policy at European level,

- effective better regulation (improved quality of legislation and simplification) at European and national level, in order to provide the appropriate environment for business,

- a further extension and deepening of the knowledge base, with investment in research and advanced technologies as well as in human capital playing a crucial role in this regard.

The European Council could also give consideration to how further action to enhance **sustainability and environmental protection** could contribute to boosting growth, while evaluating its impact on competitiveness.

- ***Completing the integration of the Financial Markets***

Fully integrated and stable financial markets will play a crucial role in channelling savings into productive investment and enhancing economic growth. The European Council is accordingly expected to identify as a priority rapid progress on all the outstanding components of the Financial Services Action Plan with a view to finalisation in accordance with the agreed timetable; more robust enforcement of existing legislation will also be called for.

The European Council is also expected to give impetus for bringing work on the take-over bids Directive, intended to create a level playing field in this area, to a rapid and successful conclusion.

- ***Reinforcing the social dimension***

The systems of social protection play a vital role in achieving the goals set out in the Lisbon Strategy and reinforcing competitiveness while maintaining the European social cohesion model. These systems nevertheless need to undergo reform if their long-term sustainability, particularly in the context of the challenges posed by an ageing population, is to be ensured.

Such action will, in turn, contribute to relaunching the economy in the short term.

The European Council is accordingly expected to consider and support the Member States on ways of enhancing the global and mutually-reinforcing nature of the Lisbon Strategy : on the one hand, by ensuring that social aspects are fully integrated into the Union's economic and employment policies, and on the other, by developing policies aimed at reforming labour markets and preparing for the challenges posed by an ageing population, in particular the sustainability of pensions systems while maintaining their quality, adequacy and availability.

STRENGTHENING FREEDOM, SECURITY AND JUSTICE

Managing the Union's common borders

The European Council is likely to:

- stress that with the forthcoming enlargement, the Union's borders are expanding, and recall the common interest of all Member States in establishing a more effective management of the borders, in particular with a view to enhancing the security of its citizens;
- underline the importance of full implementation of the Plan for the management of external borders and the setting up of the Border Management Centres, which should operate in close coordination with each other;

- invite the Commission to submit a proposal for the creation of a Border Management Agency, in time for the Council to reach a political agreement on main elements by the end of the year. This proposal should draw on the experience of the Common Unit of External Border Practitioners;
- take note of the study carried out for the Commission on maritime borders and invite the JHA Council to draw up a work programme on this issue to be adopted by the end of the year.

Controlling migratory flows

The European Council is likely to:

- confirm the top political priority ascribed to the issue of migration and reaffirm its commitment to a balanced approach between, on the one hand, the urgent need to stop illegal migration and to fight against the trafficking of human beings, and, on the other hand, the reception and integration of legal immigrants, in accordance with the principles and priorities set out in the European Councils in Thessaloniki, Seville, Laeken and Tampere;
- commit itself to the use of all appropriate **instruments** of EU's external relations, including strengthened partnerships with the third countries concerned, in pursuit

of the EU's strategy to combat illegal migration. In this context the European Council could:

- invite the Commission, the Council and the Member States to make every effort to facilitate the successful conclusion by the Community of readmission agreements. It is likely to invite the Council and the Commission to prepare, in view of its Spring 2004 meeting, a report identifying in particular the priorities of a common readmission policy and the measures taken to ensure the successful development of such a policy;
- reaffirm that a common return policy is a key element for an efficient and comprehensive immigration policy and invites the Council and the Commission to give the highest priority to the implementation of the action plan adopted in November 2002. In this framework, it is likely to invite the Commission to present a proposal, taking into account the financial

perspectives, to provide financial support for the repatriation in full compliance with humanitarian principles and respect for the dignity of the person of illegal immigrants and unsuccessful applicants for asylum to countries of origin and transit;

- note with satisfaction the work under way within the Union and in international bodies (ICAO, G8) on the introduction of biometric identifiers in visas, residence permits and passports; call upon the JHA Council to reach a political agreement by the end of 2003 on the two Commission proposals for Council Regulations on biometrics identifiers and to take the necessary decisions on the development of the Visa Information System (VIS) and the Schengen Information System (SIS) II.

Furthermore the European Council could also:

- recognise that, while each Member State is responsible for the number of legal immigrants admitted to its territory, in accordance with its law and reflecting its specific situation, including labour markets, there could be considerable value in

combining national **quotas** to support the Commission in its international negotiations in the field of migration on behalf of the Community; in this framework, the European Council could welcome the Commission's initiation of a study into the relationship between legal and illegal immigration including setting quotas, and invite all Member States, Accession States and Candidate States to cooperate fully with the Commission to this end;

- call upon the JHA Council to complete its work urgently on proposals for the **asylum** qualification and procedures directives, in order to comply with the deadline already set by the Seville and Thessaloniki European Councils for the end of 2003, to enable us to tackle asylum abuse and inefficiency while fully respecting the Geneva Convention and our humanitarian traditions.

Judicial Cooperation

The European Council is likely to:

- call for continued efforts towards closer police, judicial and customs cooperation and a strengthening of law enforcement cooperation, particularly as concerns the

fight against serious crime and terrorism;

- reaffirm the importance of the fight against drug trafficking and call for adoption of the Commission proposal for a Council Framework Decision on this subject by the end of 2003;
- welcome the approval of the Council Regulation on parental responsibility and matrimonial matters, which, by allowing the recognition and enforcement throughout the Community of national judgements, will greatly enhance citizens access to justice in matters of direct concern to them in their daily lives. This Regulation constitutes in particular an important step in the creation of a coherent legislative framework for the custody and the protection of minors.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

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