



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



10414/08 (Presse 166)

PROVISIONAL VERSION

PRESS RELEASE

2876th Council meeting

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs

Luxembourg, 9-10 June 2008

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10414/08 (Presse 166)

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Main results of the Council

*The Council reached political agreement on a package of two regulations on **working time** and **temporary workers** respectively.*

*The Council reached political agreement on a decision on **Guidelines for the Employment Policies of the Member States for 2008**.*

*The Council reached general approaches on two draft regulations concerning the **coordination of the social security systems**.*

The Council adopted conclusions on:

- the Commission recommendation on **enhanced administrative cooperation** in the context of **posting of workers** in the framework of the provision of services;
- **anticipating and matching labour needs**, with special emphasis on **youth**;
- the implementation of the **Beijing Platform for Action**, with regard to **indicators in Girl Child** and **Women in political decision-making**, respectively;
- the elimination of **gender stereotypes** in society.
- Reducing the **burden of cancer**;
- **Antimicrobial resistance**;
- Implementation of the **EU Health Strategy**;
- **Information** to patients on **medicinal products**.

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- 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.

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PARTICIPANTS

The governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Ms Joëlle MILQUET

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Employment and Equal Opportunities

Bulgaria:

Ms Emilia Radkova MASLAROVA

Mr Valery TZEKOV

Minister for Labour and Social Policy
Deputy Minister for Health

Czech Republic:

Mr Petr NEČAS

Mr Tomáš JULÍNEK

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Labour and Social Affairs
Minister for Health

Denmark:

Mr Claus Hjort FREDERIKSEN

Mr Jakob Axel NIELSEN

Minister for Employment
Minister for Health and Prevention

Germany:

Mr Olaf SCHOLZ

Ms Marion CASPERS-MERK

Federal Minister for Labour and Social Affairs
Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Health

Estonia:

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Deputy Permanent Representative

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Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment with special responsibility for Labour Affairs
Minister for Health and Children

Greece:

Ms Fani PALLI-PETRALIA

Mr Georgios KONSTANTOPOULOS

Minister for Employment and Social Protection
State Secretary for Health and Social Solidarity

Spain:

Mr Celestino CORBACHO CHAVES

Mr Gerardo CAMPS

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Minister for Labour and Immigration
Minister of Economic, Treasury and Employment and Second Deputy President of the Council of the Generalitat of the Autonomous Valencian Community
Minister of health and Consume of the Autonomous Authority of Aragon

France:

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Minister for Labour, Labour Relations and Solidarity
Minister for Health, Youth, Sport and the Voluntary Sector

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State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs with responsibilities of Health

Cyprus:

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Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social insurance

Latvia:

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Mr Armands FLORIŅŠ

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State Secretary, Ministry of Health

Lithuania:

Ms Vilija BLINKEVIČIŪTĖ

Mr Rimvydas TURČINSKAS

Minister for Social Security and Labour
Minister for Health

Luxembourg:

Mr François BILTGEN

Minister for Labour and Employment, Minister for Culture, Higher Education and Research, Minister for Religious Affairs

Ms Marie-Josée JACOBS

Minister for the Family and Integration, Minister for Equal Opportunities

Mr Mars DI BARTOLOMEO

Minister for Health and Social Security

Hungary:

Mr Tamás SZÉKELY

Minister for Health

Mr László HERCZOG

State Secretary (with special responsibility), Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour

Malta:

Mr John DALLI

Minister for Social Policy

Netherlands:

Mr Piet Hein DONNER

Minister for Social Affairs and Employment

Austria:

Mr Martin BARTENSTEIN

Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Labour

Poland:

Ms Czesława OSTROWSKA

Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

Mr Marek TWARDOWSKI

Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Health

Portugal:

Mr José VIEIRA DA SILVA

Minister for Labour and Social Solidarity

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Romania:

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Minister for Public Health

Ms Denisa-Oana PĂTRAȘCU

State Secretary with responsibility for the Department for Social Dialogue, Labour Law and Relations with the Parliament, Ministry of Labour, the Family and Equal Opportunities

Slovenia:

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Minister for Labour, the Family and Social Affairs

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Minister for Health

Ms Romana Tomc

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Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and the Family

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Minister for Labour

Sweden:

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Minister for Employment

Mr Göran HÄGGLUND

Minister for Social Affairs

Ms Cristina HUSMARK PEHRSSON

Minister for Social Security

United Kingdom:

Mr John HUTTON

Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

Mr Pat McFADDEN

Minister of State for Employment Relations and Postal Affairs

Commission:

Mr Vladimír ŠPIDLA

Member

Ms Androulla VASSILIOU

Member

Other participants:

Ms Elise WILLAME
Mr Emilio GABAGLIO

Chair of the European Social Protection Committee
Chair of the Employment Committee

ITEMS DEBATED

WORKING TIME

The Council has reached political agreement on a directive Council amending Directive 2003/88/EC concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to finalise the text with a view to the formal adoption of a Common Position as an "A" item at a forthcoming Council session.

Directive 2003/88/CE establishes minimum requirements concerning the organisation of working time, in particular in respect of daily and weekly rest periods, breaks, maximum weekly working time, annual leave and certain aspects of night work, shift work and patterns of work.

The key issues [still to be resolved] resolved by the Council relate to the so-called "**opt-out** clause", i.e. the possibility of not applying the maximum weekly working time (48 hours) if the worker agrees to work longer hours.

The compromise text provides for the possibility of the opt-out clause, accompanied by a number of conditions in order to guarantee the protection of health and safety of workers.

The success of the Slovenian Presidency builds on the work of six previous presidencies and is part of an overall package which includes the **temporary workers** file, also discussed today.

The directive is to be adopted under the co-decision procedure with the European Parliament.

The European Parliament delivered its first-reading opinion on 11 May 2005 ([8725/05](#)) and the Commission its amended proposal on 31 May 2005 ([9554/05](#)).

TEMPORARY WORKERS

The Council has reached political agreement on a common position on the draft Directive on temporary agency work with a view to formal adoption of the directive following legal and linguistic verification of the text by the Council and the European Parliament.

The agreement was accompanied by a number of statements to be included in the Council minutes.

The core element of the compromise is a balance between ensuring the protection of temporary agency workers and, at the same time, allowing sufficient flexibility in labour markets which indeed have very different traditions of concluding agreements between the social partners.

The main element resolved by the Council concerned the **principle of equal treatment**, possible exceptions to that principle and the maximum length of assignments to which such exceptions can apply.

The Council's debate was based on a text resulting from the discussions in the preparatory bodies and which is part of an overall package including the *working time* file, also on the agenda of today's Council meeting.

The directive is to be adopted under the co-decision procedure with the European Parliament.

The European Parliament delivered its first-reading opinion on 21 November 2002 ([14331/02](#)).

ENHANCED ADMINISTRATIVE COOPERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF POSTING OF WORKERS* - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted conclusions on a Commission recommendation on enhanced administrative cooperation in the context of the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services.

These conclusions were accompanied by a statement by several delegations set out in [9935/08 ADD1](#).

Through this initiative, the Commission recommends the Member States to enhance their administrative cooperation in order to facilitate the effective implementation and enforcement of the Community legislation in this field; more specifically, it recommends action in three areas:

- (a) developing an electronic information exchange system;
- (b) improving access to information on the terms and conditions of employment both for foreign service providers and for the posted workers; and
- (c) promoting the exchange of information and of best practices.

See the full text of the conclusions at [\(09935/08\)](#).

GUIDELINES EMPLOYMENT POLICIES OF THE MEMBER STATES

The Council reached political agreement on a decision establishing the Guidelines for the Employment Policies of the Member States for the year 2008 ([10090/08](#)).

The Commission proposed in December 2007 that Integrated Guidelines, which include the Employment Guidelines, should remain unchanged for the next Lisbon cycle.

The Council has also constantly stressed the importance of the stability of the Guidelines and the need to concentrate on their implementation. This is especially important when getting nearer to the year 2010 where the results achieved by the Lisbon Strategy as a whole will have to be evaluated.

The Council received the opinion of the European Parliament on 20 May 2008.

SKILLS, JOBS AND YOUTH

ANTICIPATING AND MATCHING LABOUR MARKET NEEDS - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted conclusions on “Anticipating and matching market labour needs, with special emphasis on youth - A Jobs and Skills initiative”.

The March 2008 European Council Conclusions invited the Commission to present a comprehensive assessment of the future skills requirements in Europe up to 2020, taking account of the impacts of technological change and ageing populations and to propose steps to anticipate future needs.¹

See the full text of the conclusions at [\(10091/08\)](#).

EMCO OPINION ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Council endorsed the Opinion presented by Mr. Emilio GABAGLIO, chair of the Employment Committee, on Youth employment set out in [9898/08](#).

¹ Doc. 7652/08, conclusion nr. 14.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Implementing Regulation

Pending the European Parliament first reading opinion to be adopted early in July, the Council reached an unanimous partial general approach regarding part of a regulation aimed at implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004¹ on the coordination of social security systems and covering **chapter III of title IV (financial provisions - recovery of benefits provided but not due, recovery of provisional payments and contributions, offsetting and assistance with recovery)** ([9988/08 + ADD1](#)).

Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 was the first step of a process aimed at modernising and simplifying EU rules on the coordination of the national social security systems. Such rules are intended to allow EU citizens to move freely within Europe, while maintaining their social rights and expectations (health, pensions, unemployment protection, etc.).

The process must be completed with the adoption of the implementing regulation², which proposal is now under examination. The regulation will replace Regulation (EEC) No 574/72³, with provisions designed to strengthen cooperation between national institutions and improve the methods of data exchange.

Annexes to Regulation (EC) No 883/2004

Pending the European Parliament first reading opinion to be adopted early in July, the Council has agreed to a general approach on a regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of the social security systems and determining the content of its Annexes ([9939/08](#)).

These Annexes are necessary so as the particularities of the various systems of the Member States might be taken into account.

¹ Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 166, 30.4.2004, corrigendum OJ L 200, 7.6.2004.

² See Article 89 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

³ OJ L 74, 27.3.1972, as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 647/2005, OJ L 28, 30.1.1997.

Annex XI contains provisions regarding specific aspects of individual Member States' legislation.¹

The Council decided to enter in its Minutes the statement as set out in Annex III to document [9939/08](#).

Legal basis proposed: Articles 42 and 308 of the Treaty – unanimity required for a Council decision; co-decision procedure with the European Parliament applicable.

¹ See Article 83 of the Regulation.

BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION - FOLLOW-UP

The follow-up to the Beijing Platform, a set of actions for the advancement of women agreed at the United Nations World Conference on Women in 1995.

Since 1999, successive EU Presidencies have already developed indicators on 10 of the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Council has adopted Conclusions endorsing these indicators, which represent a crucial policy instrument.

Girl Child - Council conclusions

The Council adopted conclusions on the review of implementation by the member states and the EU institutions of the Beijing platform for action, accompanied by indicators in respect of *Girl Child*, and took note of the accompanying report by the Presidency set out in [9669/08 ADD1](#).

See the full text of the conclusions at [\(9669/08\)](#)

Women in political decision-making - Council conclusions

The Council also adopted conclusions on *Women in political decision-making* and took note of the accompanying report by the Presidency set out in [9670/08 ADD1](#).

See the full text of the conclusions at [\(9670/08\)](#)

GENDER STEREOTYPES - Council conclusions

The Council adopted conclusions on the elimination of gender stereotypes in society.

Gender-stereotyping is one of the most persistent causes of inequality between women and men in all spheres and at all stages of life.

See the full text of the conclusions at [\(9671/08\)](#)

REDUCING THE BURDEN OF CANCER - Council conclusions

The Council held a public debate and adopted conclusions on reducing the burden of cancer.

The importance of this issue is evidenced by the fact that statistically one in three Europeans will develop cancer during his or her lifetime.

In its conclusions, the Council invites

- member states to develop and implement comprehensive cancer strategies or plans,
- the Commission to present an EU action plan on cancer addressing all aspects of comprehensive cancer control and to promote exchange of information and sharing of expertise.

As one third of cancer cases could be avoided by **prevention**, the conclusions stress the need to raise awareness among the population in this respect and highlight prevention as the most effective long-term strategy in the fight against cancer, with the following main lines of action:

- promotion of healthy lifestyle,
- early diagnosis by screening,
- reduction of occupational and environmental exposure to carcinogenic risks,
- food safety.

Other issues include action in order to ensure

- quality of life for cancer patients through support, rehabilitation and palliative care,
- population-based cancer registration as a resource for epidemiological studies,
- investment in training qualified workforce, appropriate equipment and effective diagnostics and medicines,
- better EU and international collaboration in cancer research.

Finally, the role civil society has to play in this context was underlined.

See the full text of the conclusions at [09636/08](#).

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE - Council conclusions

The Council adopted conclusions on antimicrobial resistance and took note of the following information:

- France will organise a technical workshop on antimicrobial resistance in Paris, on 6-7 November 2008;
- The Czech Republic will organise, during its Presidency¹, a conference with a view to formulate basic standards for hospitals' antimicrobial programmes.

Commissioner Vassiliou took this opportunity to announce the "Antimicrobial resistance awareness day" on 18 November 2008 in Strasbourg and made a presentation of the event's logo (see below).

See the full text of the conclusions at [9637/08](#).



¹ First semester 2009

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU HEALTH STRATEGY - Council conclusions

Cooperation mechanism between the Council and the Commission for the implementation of the EU Health Strategy (*public debate*)

The Council adopted **conclusions** and held a public debate on a cooperation mechanism between the Council and the Commission for the implementation of the EU health strategy.

On the basis of the EU Health Strategy (Commission's White Paper "Together for Health: A Strategic Approach for the EU, 2008-2013"¹), the Council adopted conclusions on the strategic cooperation that will permit Commission, Member States and the Council to work together in EU matters that can influence health (e.g. ageing of population, health threats, etc.) that would have a real added value for Member States and ensure the implementation of the EU Health Strategy, including "health in all policies" approach.

See the full text of the conclusions at [\(09639/08\)](#).

¹ COM(2007) 630 final

INFORMATION TO PATIENTS ON MEDICINAL PRODUCTS - Council conclusions

The Council adopted conclusions on a communication of the Commission ([5242/08](#)) analysing current practice as regards information to patients on medicinal products.

The Council also held a policy debate where Ministers were invited to frame their discussions on a number of questions prepared by the Presidency ([9608/08](#)):

- Which are the essential elements for the necessary distinction between information to patients and advertising for medicinal products?
- Should the legislation on information to patients on medicinal products be decided at EU or at national level? Should this regulation include *a priori* or *a posteriori* control of the information or should the principle of self-regulation be applied?
- Can the discrepancies between member states concerning patients' access to information on medicinal products be resolved by EU legislation?

Most delegations agreed on the following views:

- the need to further develop means of distinction between advertising and information,
- the need to maintain the ban on advertising for prescription-only medicines,
- the role of Health Competent Authorities and healthcare professions to provide information to patients.

Furthermore, the Council took note of the Commission's ¹ intention to present a legislative proposal establishing a framework for information to patients on medicinal products.

See the full text of the conclusions at [9437/08](#).

¹ Commissioner Vassiliou took the floor on behalf of Commissioner Verheugen to whom she will convey Member States views on the matter.

AOB

Any other business

- (a) Amended proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on minimum requirements for enhancing worker mobility by improving the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights

– Information from the Presidency

The Council took note of the information provided by the Presidency on the state of play of the negotiation on a directive on minimum requirements for enhancing worker mobility by improving the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights.

- (b) Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010)

– Information from the Presidency

The Council took note of the information provided by the Presidency on a draft decision on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010) and took note of the views expressed by several delegations¹ on the co-financing of actions undertaken within the framework of the concerned European Year ([10360/08](#)).

- (c) Social Services of General Interest

– Progress report by the Chair of the Social Protection Committee

The Council took note of an oral progress report by Mrs Elise WILLAME, chair of the Social Protection Committee, as part of the open consultation mentioned in the Commission communication: "Implementing the Community Lisbon programme: social services of general interest in the EU"².

¹ Czech republic, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and Slovakia.

² 9038/06

(d) Information on events organised during the Slovenian Presidency:

i) Conference on "Jobs for Youth – Prosperity for All"¹

In the context of the discussion point on Skills, jobs and youth , the Council has taken note of the information provided by the Presidency on the conference on "Jobs for youth - Prosperity for all", held in Brdo on 24-25 April 2008 ([10317/08](#)).

ii) Conference on "Intergenerational Solidarity for Cohesive and Sustainable Societies"

The Council took note of the information provided by the Presidency on the conference on "Intergenerational Solidarity for Cohesive and Sustainable Societies", held in Brdo on 27-29 April 2008 ([10318/08](#)).

iii) Seventh European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Presidency on the Seventh European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty, held in Brussels on 16–17 May 2008 ([10319/08](#)).

This year's meeting focused on four pillars in the fight against poverty: services of general interest, social services, housing and minimum income.

iv) Conference on "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – From Words to Reality?"²

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Presidency on a conference on "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – From Words to Reality?" held in Kranjska Gora, on 22–23 May 2008 ([10320/08](#)).

¹http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/May/0516MDDSZ_Poverty.html

²http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/May/0509MDDSZ_invalidi.html

(e) Activities of the Expert Group on Demographic Issues

- Information from the Commission

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Commission on the activities of the Expert Group on Demographic Issues ([10321/08](#)).

(f) European Social Policy week

- Request from the Bulgarian delegation

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Bulgarian delegation concerning the European Social Policy week which took place in Sofia on 26-30 May 2008 ([10308/08](#)).

(g) Proposal for a Council Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment

- Information from the Presidency

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Presidency with regard to a draft directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment and of the comments made by Czech republic, Hungary and Belgium on the item.

(h) Proposal for a Community framework on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare

- Information from the Commission

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Commission on a proposal for a Community framework on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare which should be adopted in the coming months. ([10197/08](#)).

- (i) Conference "eHealth without frontiers" ¹(Portorož, Slovenia, 6–7 May 2008)

– Information from the Presidency

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Presidency on a conference on "eHealth without frontiers" held in Portorož, on 6–7 May 2008 ([9749/08](#)).

- (j) EU Strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm

– Information from the Commission and the Presidency

The Council has taken note of the information given by the Presidency on EU Strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm ([9806/08](#)).

- (k) Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues

– Information from the Presidency and the Commission

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Presidency and the Commission on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues ([9810/08](#)).

- (l) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

– Information from the Commission

The Council has been informed by the Commission on the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control ([9757/08](#)).

- (m) Organ donation and transplantation

– Information from the Commission

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Commission on Organ donation and transplantation ([10198/08](#)).

¹ http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/May/0507MZ-eHealth.html

(n) Patient safety package

- Information from the Commission

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Commission on Patient Safety Package [\(9764/08\)](#).

(o) Health Security related matters

- Information from the Commission

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Commission on Health Security related matters [\(9767/08\)](#).

(p) Mental health for Europe

- Information from the Commission

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Commission concerning Mental health for Europe [\(9770/08\)](#).

(q) Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2001/82/EC and Directive 2001/83/EC as regards variations to the terms of marketing authorisations for medicinal products

- Information from the Presidency

The Council has taken note of the information provided by the Presidency on a proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2001/82/EC and Directive 2001/83/EC as regards variations to the terms of marketing authorisations for medicinal products [\(9920/08\)](#).

- (r) Networking Meeting of the Competent Authorities for Pricing and Reimbursement of Medicinal Products

The Council has taken note of the feedback provided by the Presidency on a Networking Meeting of the Competent Authorities for Pricing and Reimbursement of Medicinal Products which took place in Brdo, on 28-29 April 2008.

– Information from the Presidency

- (s) Food Improvement Agents Package

The Council was informed by the Presidency on the state of play of the Food Improvement Agents Package.

– Information from the Presidency

- (t) European dimension of problems arising from coeliac disease: Spanish government support plan to assist gluten-intolerant people: need to amend European legislation

– Information from the Spanish delegation

The Council has taken note of the concerns expressed by the Spanish delegation on the gluten-intolerant people ([9772/08](#)).

Commissioner Vassiliou informed the Council on progress made at international level on standard on gluten labelling.

She draw the attention of Ministers on the need to take efficient and proportionate actions at Community level.

- (u) Social inclusion of Roma

– Request from the Romanian delegation

The Council has taken note of the information provided by Romania ([10481/08](#)) and of the comments made by Italy and Spain on the matter.

Commissioner Špidla mentioned that non discriminatory measures will be included in the Social Agenda expected in July 2008.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

EU military operation EUFOR Tchad/RCA – Participation of Albania

The Council adopted a decision approving the conclusion of an agreement with Albania on the participation of this country in the EU-led operation in Chad and in the Central African Republic (EUFOR Tchad/RCA) ([9405/08](#)).

On 15 October 2007, the Council adopted joint action 2007/677/CFSP on the EU military operation EUFOR Tchad/RCA. The joint action provides that detailed arrangements regarding the participation of third countries are to be the subject of an agreement, in accordance with article 24 of the EU treaty.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Dock dues in French overseas departments

The Council adopted a decision updating the lists of products manufactured in the French overseas departments eligible for exemptions or reductions to dock dues ([8988/08](#)).

The lists will be updated in order to take into account the emergence of new productions in the French overseas departments which are not covered by the current EU legislation, such as yoghurt, coffee roasting, chocolate manufacturing, manufacturing of cassava chips, banana chips and roasted peanuts, and beer brewing.

The new products and those already included in the lists suffer a handicap in comparison with imported products because of the higher costs of production in the overseas departments. Mainly the remoteness, the difficult climate and the small scale of the local market cause the higher costs.

The maximum permitted tax differential is 10%, 20% or 30%, depending on the product and on the overseas department.

TRADE POLICY

Agreement with Ukraine on trade in services

The Council adopted a decision approving the signature and provisional application of an agreement with Ukraine aimed at preserving the provisions on international maritime transport contained in the partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA) with Ukraine, following its accession to the WTO on 16 May 2008.

The PCA provisions on trade in services will automatically be superseded by Ukraine's commitments under the General Agreement on Trade in Services. These commitments cover the corresponding PCA provisions except for those on international maritime transport, which the new agreement maintains on a bilateral basis.

STATISTICS

Public health and safety at work

The Council reached a political agreement on a regulation aimed at establishing a common framework for the systematic production of statistics in the areas of public health and safety at work ([9823/07](#)). The agreement allows the Council to adopt its common position at a forthcoming session and forward it to the European Parliament for a second reading, in accordance with the codecision procedure.

The statistics will provide data for indicators that are necessary for the monitoring of Community actions in the fields of public health and health and safety at work.

The collection and treatment of data will be carried out in close cooperation between Eurostat and relevant national bodies in these areas in a harmonized manner.