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OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

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Education, Youth, Culture and Sport

Brussels, 22 and 23 May 2019

Presidents	Constantin-Bogdan Matei Minister for youth and sports of Romania
	Ecaterina Andronescu Minister for national education of Romania
	Valer-Daniel Breaz Minister for culture and national identity of Romania

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 • Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
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ITEMS DEBATED**YOUTH****Young people and the future of work**

The Council adopted conclusions on young people and the future of work ([8754/19](#)). Employment has been recognised as one of the major challenges not only within the EU but also worldwide, in particular for young people. They are extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in economic trends, especially at a time where the traditional notions of 'work' are being seriously challenged and reconceptualised.

In a specific youth context, 'the future of work', as a general term describing the evolution of jobs in the medium-to-long term, is driven by demographic change and increased social expenditure due to an ageing population, the increased use of digital technologies and growing demand for greater skills, a need for higher levels of education and training and new forms of employment.

Youth employment has been high on the social policy agenda of the EU, and the conclusions focus on the specific problems facing young people in the current labour environment:

- insecurity
- lack of social protection
- in-work poverty
- precarious working conditions

The conclusions propose a number of measures to address those problems:

- adaptable and responsive education and training systems
- promotion of lifelong learning
- ensuring smooth school-to-work and work-to-work transitions
- ensuring equal access to quality jobs for all young people in the future

The conclusions also recognise that the European Union should support young people's personal development and growth to autonomy, build their resilience and equip them with the necessary resources to participate in society, thus contributing to the eradication of youth poverty and all forms of discrimination, as well as to the promotion of social inclusion.

Guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue

The Council also adopted a resolution establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue ([8760/19](#)). 'EU Youth Dialogue' (EUYD) means the dialogue with young people and youth organisations involving policy and decision makers, as well as experts, researchers and other relevant civil society actors, as appropriate. It serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection and consultation on the priorities of, implementation of and follow-up to European cooperation in the field of youth. The EUYD is the evolution of the Structured Dialogue process that had been established by the resolution on a renewed cooperation framework in the youth field (2010-2018).

The concept of the EUYD was developed in the context of preparations for the EU Youth Strategy (EUYYS) 2019-2027, which was adopted in November 2018. The Youth Dialogue is intended to contribute to the overall objectives of the EUYS through:

- encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe
- promoting equal participation between young women and men
- including diverse voices and ensuring openness to all young people to contribute to policy-shaping
- bringing about positive change in youth policy at local, regional, national and European level
- strengthening young people's citizenship competencies and sense of belonging to society and the European Union

Young people as agents of democracy in the EU

Ministers held a policy debate entitled 'Young people as agents of democracy in the EU', based on a presidency discussion paper ([8763/19](#)). The debate was kick-started by two Romanian students. Their interventions focused on the message that for the European project to work well, it was vital for young people to be involved in the decision-making process now and in the future.

Ministers were invited to present their views on the following questions:

1. What can member states and EU institutions do to respond to the challenges highlighted in this paper, with a view to fostering young people's commitment to democratic principles?
2. Considering the strengths, interests and profile of today's young generations, what measures would be most effective in increasing their participation in the democratic life of the EU and its member states?

Ministers exchanged examples of best practices for how to involve young people in policy-making and how to mobilise them to participate in elections. Strengthening the role of NGOs and involving social media more closely in policy-making were identified as possible ways of achieving these goals. Ministers also stressed the importance of education in developing and fostering critical thinking. It was highlighted that young people had to be better informed of the fact that participating in elections would have an impact on their lives. They would only engage in the process when they could feel that their concerns were taken on board by decision-makers.

The debate took place ahead of the European elections, but also in the context of a number of elections taking place in 2019 in different EU member states at national, regional and municipal levels. Against this background the issue of young people's involvement in politics and democratic processes is both crucial and very timely. There are recent signs that young Europeans are increasingly interested in public affairs, politics and democracy. The results of a Eurobarometer survey, released on 30 April 2019, show that 72% of young people interviewed said that, right from the moment they were allowed to participate in elections, they had voted in local, national, or European elections. The survey addressed around 11 000 young people aged between 15 and 30 in March 2019.

EDUCATION

Comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages

Ministers adopted a recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages ([8638/19](#)). The aim of the recommendation is to explore ways of helping all young people to acquire competences in two other languages in addition to their mother tongue/first language. The promotion of language learning has been a long-standing target of the EU. In March 2002 the Barcelona European Council noted the need for further action 'to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching of at least two foreign languages from a very early age'. In their conclusions of 14 December 2017, the heads of state or government reiterated the ambition of 'enhancing the learning of languages, so that more young people will speak at least two European languages in addition to their mother tongue'.

Against this background, the recommendation addresses:

- the need to invest in language learning by focusing on learning outcomes
- options to improve language learning in compulsory education by increasing language-awareness in school education

Education was chosen as the first topic for the Leaders' Agenda for the Gothenburg Summit in November 2017. In December 2017 the European Council called on member states, the Council and the Commission to take work forward on a number of key initiatives, including language learning, which is a key to facilitating learning mobility in Europe.

The Commission submitted its proposal on 22 May 2018 as part of the so-called second education package, consisting of a communication and proposals for Council recommendations on language learning, mutual recognition of diplomas and early childhood education and care.

High-quality early-childhood education and care systems

Ministers adopted a Council recommendation on high-quality early-childhood education and care systems ([7976/19](#)). 'Early years' is usually defined as from birth to the age of 6. The aim of the recommendation is to support member states in their efforts to improve access to and the quality of their early-childhood education and care systems, whilst recognising that member states bear primary responsibility in this area. It states that investing in early-childhood education and care is a good investment only if the services are of high quality, accessible, affordable and inclusive. It also refers to evidence that only high-quality early-childhood education and care services deliver benefits and that low-quality services have a significant negative impact on children and on society as a whole.

The importance of early-childhood education and care has been widely recognised. The European Pillar of Social Rights calls for access to affordable and good-quality early-childhood education and care and UN Sustainable Development Goal 4.2 states that all girls and boys should have access to quality early-childhood development care and pre-primary education by 2030.

Along with the recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages and a recommendation on the mutual recognition of diplomas, the recommendation on high-quality early-childhood education and care systems is part of the Commission's second education package presented on 22 May 2018.

Implementation of the Council recommendation on upskilling pathways: new opportunities for adults

The Council also adopted conclusions on the implementation of the Council recommendation on upskilling pathways: new opportunities for adults ([8639/19](#)).

In November 2016 the Council adopted a recommendation on upskilling pathways, which was part of the wider skills package published by the European Commission in June 2016. The recommendation called for a strategic and coordinated approach to provide learning opportunities to the Union's low-skilled and low-qualified adults in order to enhance their basic skills or to allow them to progress towards higher qualifications. The recommendation also called on member states to provide information on implementation measures at national level and called on the Commission to issue a report on its implementation. The conclusions are a response to the Commission's report, presented to the Council's Education Committee in March 2019.

The conclusions recognise the progress achieved at national level and call on the member states, among others, to :

- put in place sustainable long-term measures for adult upskilling and reskilling
- adopt a coherent strategic approach to basic skills provision for low-skilled and/or low-qualified adults
- raise the awareness of employers – and especially SMEs – of the importance of upskilling and reskilling and of available support mechanisms for adult skills development

Building the future of Europe: the contribution of education and training to strengthening social cohesion

Based on a presidency discussion paper, ministers held a policy debate entitled 'Building the future of Europe: the contribution of education and training to strengthening social cohesion' ([8653/19](#)).

The presidency put the following questions to ministers:

1. Which are the necessary next steps in European cooperation in education and training in order to achieve the objective of creating the European Education Area by 2025?
2. What are the most successful projects or practices in your country promoting a learning culture based on common values and strengthening social cohesion? How can cooperation in education and training at European level strengthen such a learning culture between learners of all ages?

The aim of the debate was to reflect on concrete future steps for the development of the European Education Area by 2025, in particular with respect to strengthening social cohesion.

Before the start of the discussions, a 16-year-old student from Romania briefly addressed ministers on the role of young people in decision-making, highlighting the message: 'We all have the right to participate!'.

During the debate ministers agreed on the importance of building a well-functioning European education area and making the Erasmus+ programme more effective. It was highlighted that young people needed to acquire the widest possible range of basic skills so as to be prepared for professions which will emerge in the near future. Lifelong learning was also identified as a way to equip people to face the fast-changing nature of the labour market. In the area of European cooperation, the importance of mutual recognition of diplomas across the EU was also highlighted.

The first leaders' discussion in the process towards the European Education Area, held at the Social Summit in Gothenburg, Sweden on 14 November 2017, was devoted to the role of education and culture. On that occasion, the Commission presented a vision for a European Education Area by 2025. In this context, the European Council conclusions of 14 December 2017¹ recognised education and culture as "key to building inclusive and cohesive societies, and to sustaining our competitiveness.". At the same time, the European Council called for the Commission, the Council and the member states to examine possible measures addressing "the need for an inclusive, lifelong-learning-based and innovation-driven approach to education and training".

OTHER BUSINESS

World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth and the Youth Forum 'Lisboa +21' – Lisbon, 22-23 June 2019

The Portuguese delegation briefed ministers ahead of a conference, which will take place in Lisbon on 22-23 June 2019 ([8825/19](#)).

DiscoverEU

The European Commission presented a report on the initial results of the DiscoverEU initiative. The Commission also gave an overview of the next rounds of this European Parliament preparatory action in 2019, as well as the proposed integration of DiscoverEU into the new Erasmus programme as of 2021 ([8819/19](#)).

WorldSkills Competition 2023

The French delegation presented France's bid to host the WorldSkills Competition in 2023 in the city of Lyon ([8771/19](#)).

¹ [EUCO 19/1/17 REV 1](#).

Education Summit

The Commission informed ministers about the second Education Summit, which will take place in September in Brussels, focusing on the essential role of teachers in ensuring high quality and inclusive education in the European Education Area ([9120/19](#)).

Education and combatting antisemitism

The Commission informed ministers about two projects in the area of the fight against antisemitism ([9384/19](#)).

Work programme of the incoming Finnish presidency

The Finnish delegation presented the priorities of the incoming Finnish presidency in the areas of youth and education.

In the area of **youth** the Finnish priorities are the following:

- advancing European Solidarity Corps negotiations
- enhancing the development of youth work and its quality
- promoting the education and training of paid and voluntary youth workers
- increasing the holistic understanding of and strategic approach to the use of digital media and technology in youth work

In the area of **education** the Finnish delegation presented the following priorities:

- advancing Erasmus+ negotiations
- fostering continuous learning
- promoting future-oriented learning
- promoting investment in human capital
- strengthening equity, equality and effectiveness
- enhancing cooperation between education and research

CULTURE

Young creative generations

Ministers adopted conclusions on young creative generations ([8804/19](#)). The conclusions take into account the political background, highlighting the importance of creating a Union where young people receive the best possible education and training and can study and find jobs across the EU. The conclusions also recognise the need for a more strategic approach to children's and young people's participation in culture, unlocking the potential of digital technologies so as to foster their creativity and critical thinking and develop skills that prepare them for life. At the same time, the conclusions encourage measures that facilitate a smooth transition from the education system to the labour market.

The Council invited member states and the Commission to address the following five priorities:

- promoting better access to culture and participation in culture for children and young people, including for those with fewer opportunities
- reinforcing cross-sectoral cooperation, with a focus on the synergies between culture and education
- facilitating youth entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative sectors
- fostering the emergence of new young talent
- promoting digital skills and media literacy

In May 2018 the European Commission adopted the New European Agenda for Culture, which underlined the importance of culture and creativity for society and for the competitiveness of the European economy. On 27 November the Council adopted the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022, which recognised that stronger orientation towards the needs of specific groups, such as young people, was necessary to improve cohesion and increase well-being.

Improving the cross-border circulation of European audiovisual works, with an emphasis on co-productions

The Council also adopted conclusions on improving the cross-border circulation of European audiovisual works, with an emphasis on co-productions ([8806/19](#)). The conclusions recognise Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity as an important asset for the European audiovisual sector. They also stress that by promoting diversity and shared European values, audiovisual content fosters a sense of belonging to a common cultural space.

The Council identifies two lines of action to improve the circulation of European audiovisual works:

- direct measures to encourage co-productions
- supporting a sustainable ecosystem for co-productions

Acknowledging the Commission's New European Agenda for Culture and in alignment with its objectives, in November 2018 the Council adopted the above-mentioned Work Plan for Culture, which set out five priorities for cooperation at European level in cultural policy-making:

- sustainability in cultural heritage
- cohesion and well-being
- an ecosystem supporting artists, cultural and creative professionals and European content
- gender equality
- international cultural relations

From tackling disinformation to rebuilding EU citizens' trust in the media

Ministers held a public policy debate entitled 'From tackling disinformation to rebuilding EU citizens' trust in the media', based on a presidency discussion paper ([8808/19](#)). Ministers were invited to consider the following questions:

1. On the very first day of the European elections, how do ministers assess the actions carried out so far at EU level to tackle disinformation and ensure quality media, in the interest of the EU citizens?

2. How should the coordinated approach among member states and the European institutions be stepped up in order to tackle current challenges? Should European audiovisual policy be strengthened and, if so, what should it focus on in order to rebuild EU citizens' trust in the media?

Ministers agreed that a holistic approach at EU level was needed, as disinformation was a global threat. In order to counter the spread of disinformation, they identified the following measures:

- fostering quality journalism
- encouraging the introduction of training for journalists
- increasing media literacy and enhancing public awareness of disinformation
- encouraging fact-checking and a critical approach

Ministers also agreed that cooperation between member states and stakeholders was of key importance as social media were global organisations and measures undertaken at national level only would not be effective.

The fight against disinformation has been an important priority of the Romanian presidency. It is a theme which has been addressed in several Council formations (General Affairs Council, Foreign Affairs Council, Justice and Home Affairs Council) with the aim of identifying an urgent and coordinated response to newly emerged challenges, especially in the context of the European elections.

As a follow-up to the call launched by the European Council in its conclusions of 28 June 2018, inviting the Commission and the high representative to present specific proposals for a coordinated approach by the EU institutions and the member states, a joint communication on an action plan against disinformation was published in December 2018, setting out key actions for tackling disinformation, structured around four pillars:

- improving detection and analysis
- strengthening coordinated and joint responses
- mobilising the private sector, namely online platforms and industry
- raising awareness and improving societal resilience

SPORT

Representation and coordination prior to World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) meetings

In the context of the review of the 2011 resolution on representation and coordination prior to WADA meetings, the Council adopted a resolution on the representation of EU member states in the WADA foundation board and their coordination prior to WADA meetings ([8709/19](#)). The resolution recalls that three seats in WADA's foundation board are allocated to representatives from EU member states. It also refers to the agreement between the representatives of the governments of the member states to the effect that representatives of EU member states on the WADA foundation board will be at ministerial level and the seats will be allocated as follows:

- one seat will be allocated to a person in charge of sport at ministerial level from one of the member states forming the incumbent trio presidency
- one seat will be allocated to a person in charge of sport at ministerial level from one of the member states forming the future trio presidency
- one seat will be jointly allocated by the member states meeting within the Council to a person responsible for sport at ministerial level (expert at governmental level)

Access to sport for persons with disabilities

Ministers adopted conclusions on access to sport for persons with disabilities ([8699/1/19 REV 1](#)). 'Disability' is defined as any physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses or activities. It usually refers to attributes that are severe enough to interfere with, or prevent, normal day-to-day activities.

The main aim of these conclusions is to facilitate access to grassroots sports for all persons with disabilities, in line with the overall aim of promoting social inclusion and the general principles and objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Increasing the participation of children and young people in sport in 21st century Europe

Based on a presidency discussion paper, ministers held a public policy debate on 'Increasing the participation of children and young people in sport in 21st century Europe' ([8801/1/19 REV 1](#)).

To steer the debate, the presidency put the following questions to ministers:

1. How can public authorities and the sport movement cooperate at EU and member state level in order to boost sport participation rates among children and young people?
2. What measures can be undertaken at EU level in order to strengthen the links between elite and grassroots sport with a view to better supporting sport's social and educational function?

Ministers agreed that an adequate infrastructure, not only at sports sites but also in public places (streets, parks, etc.), was crucial to increase the interest of young people in sporting activities. It was also highlighted that since many young people pointed out that they lacked free time to do sports, it was important to think about activities that could be integrated into everyday life. Enjoyment and fun were identified as factors that could attract children and youngsters and encourage them to perform various sporting activities. Ministers agreed that while sports were very important for the physical well-being and development of young people, they were also an important factor for social integration and social cohesion. At the same time it was highlighted that a healthy lifestyle in general was just as important as pure sport.

On average, interest in playing sports is decreasing in the EU, with almost a quarter of all young Europeans (15-24-year-olds) not engaging in any sport or exercise at all. Special Eurobarometer surveys show that non-participation increased by 7 percentage points from 2009 to 2017.

Some of the main reasons for these developments are competition on the 'leisure market', the attractiveness of home-based leisure (e.g. computer gaming, watching and/or interacting with audiovisual content), the costs involved in playing sport and too much focus on commercial aspects.

OTHER BUSINESS

Nomination of Veszprém for the European Capital of Culture 2023

The Hungarian delegation provided information on the concept developed by the city of Veszprém for the European Capital of Culture 2023 title ([8817/19](#)).

Fifth centenary of the first circumnavigation of the world, led by Fernão de Magalhães and Juan Sebastián Elcano

The Spanish and Portuguese delegations briefed ministers about all the activities scheduled to take place from 2019 to 2022 to commemorate this anniversary ([8810/19](#)).

Paris cultural heritage

The Council was informed by the Presidency of the outcome of the meeting of the culture and European affairs ministers that took place in Paris on 3 May 2019, following the fire at Notre-Dame de Paris cathedral, which resulted in a great loss for all Europeans. At this meeting, co-chaired by France and the Romanian Presidency, ministers expressed their commitment to create a European network of expertise for cultural heritage, aimed at providing advice and support upon request when a Member State is in need ([9370/19](#)).

Meetings of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) (14-16 May 2019, Montréal, Canada)

EU member states' representatives on the WADA foundation board briefed ministers on the outcome of the WADA meetings ([8802/19](#)).

Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (match fixing) – ways forward for the EU

The Danish delegation informed ministers that, following Switzerland's ratification on 16 May 2019, the Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions, also known as the **Macolin Convention**, will enter into force on 1 September 2019 ([8796/19](#)).

After ratification by Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the minimum number of required states has now been reached to trigger the entry into force of the Convention. While the Convention has been widely supported by EU member states, it has however until now not been possible to reach the requested unanimity in the Council in order for the EU to accede to the Convention.

Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Serbia to host either the Euro 2028 championship or the 2030 World Cup (Thessaloniki, 13 April 2019)

The Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian delegations provided information on the joint initiative ([9118/19](#)).

Work programme of the incoming Finnish presidency

The Finnish delegation presented the priorities of the incoming Finnish presidency in the areas of culture and sport.

Among the main Finnish priorities in the area of **culture** are:

- starting negotiations on Creative Europe
- audio-visual and sustainable competitiveness
- integrating culture in other EU policies
- fostering continuous learning

Among the main Finnish priorities in the area of **sports** are:

- advancing the negotiations on Erasmus+ programme in the area of sport
- implementation of the EU Work Plan for Sport
- acting against corruption in sport
- safeguarding children in sport
- coordination of EU positions for the WADA meetings

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

GENERAL AFFAIRS

Public access to Council documents - 2018 report

The Council approved its annual report on the implementation of Regulation 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents.

For more information, see the [press release](#).

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EUCAP Sahel Niger

The Council modified the mandate of EUCAP Sahel Niger to extend the area of operations to other G5 Sahel countries in the context of the second phase of the regionalisation of the EU's CSDP activities in the Sahel.

Regionalisation is intended to strengthen civilian and military support for cross-border cooperation and regional cooperation structures, and to reinforce capacity and ownership of the G5 Sahel countries to address challenges in the region.

The Regional Advisory and Coordination Cell established within EUCAP Sahel Mali will support EUCAP Sahel Niger.

EUCAP Sahel Niger was established on 16 July 2012, and was last extended on 18 September 2018 with a budget amount until 30 September 2020.

The first phase of the regionalisation was agreed by the Council on 20 June 2017, which reiterated the importance of regionalisation in its conclusions of 25 June 2018.

On 18 February 2019, the Council approved a joint civil-military framework for regionalisation of CSDP action in the Sahel.

[EUCAP Sahel Niger](#) (website)

ACP-EU Council of Ministers draft agenda

The Council agreed on the draft agenda for the 44th session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers.

The ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors agreed on the draft agenda on 12 April 2019.

The meeting will take place in Brussels on 23-24 May 2019, and will be co-chaired by Tjekero Tweya, Minister for Industrialisation, Trade, and SME Development of Namibia, and Maria Magdalena Grigore, Secretary of State of Romania.

ACP-EU Relations - delegation of powers

The Council approved the delegation of powers from the ACP-EU Council of Ministers to the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors for the adoption of transitional measures until a new ACP-EU Partnership Agreement comes into force.

Negotiations towards a new ACP-EU Partnership Agreement were launched in September 2018. If a new agreement is not reached by the expiry date of the current legal framework, it will be necessary to adopt transitional measures.

Article 95(4) of the ACP-EU Partnership agreement provides for the Council of Ministers to adopt any transitional measures that may be required until an agreement enters into force. Furthermore, Article 15(4) allows for the Council of Ministers to delegate such powers to the Committee of Ambassadors.

As transitional measures have not been agreed in time for the yearly ordinary meeting of the ACP-EU Council of ministers, it has proved necessary to delegate the decision to adopt transitional measures to the Committee of Ambassadors.

RESEARCH

Renewal of the agreement on cooperation in science and technology with Russia

The Council decided to renew the agreement on cooperation in science and technology between the European Community and the Government of the Russian Federation for an additional period of five years ([7683/19](#)).

TRANSPORT**Aerodynamic lorry cabs**

The Council adopted a decision amending the directive on maximum weights and dimensions for certain road vehicles ([8745/19](#); [PE-CONS 40/19](#)). The amendment concerns the time limit for the implementation of the special rules regarding maximum length for cabs delivering improved aerodynamic performance, energy efficiency and safety performance.

Germany abstained.

For more information, see the [press release](#).

ENERGY**Clean energy package**

The Council adopted a regulation on risk-preparedness in the electricity sector following a first-reading agreement with the European Parliament ([8736/19](#), [PE-CONS 73/18](#)).

The Council adopted a regulation establishing a European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (recast) following a first-reading agreement with the European Parliament. Germany abstained and submitted a statement ([8739/19 REV1](#) + [ADD1](#), [PE-CONS 83/18](#)).

The Council adopted a regulation on the internal market for electricity (recast) following a first-reading agreement with the European Parliament. Bulgaria, Czechia and Slovakia abstained. The Commission, Greece and Croatia submitted statements ([8737/19](#) + [ADD1 REV1](#), [PE-CONS 9/19](#)).

The Council adopted a directive on the internal market for electricity (recast) following a first-reading agreement with the European Parliament. The Commission submitted two statements ([8735/19](#) + [ADD 1](#) + [ADD1 COR1](#), [PE-CONS 10/19](#)).

For more information, see the [press release](#).

TRANSPARENCY

Public access to documents

On 22 May 2019, the Council approved the replies to confirmatory applications:

- No 10/c/01/19 ([8287/19](#))
 - No 11/c/01/19 ([8290/1/19 REV 1](#))
-