



General Affairs Council Luxembourg, 24 October 2023

Chair: Pascual Ignacio NAVARRO RÍOS, Spanish State Secretary for the European Union

The meeting will begin at 9.30.

Ministers will take stock of progress on the request by Spain to include Catalan, Basque and Galician in Regulation No 1/1958, which governs the EU's language regime.

As part of the annual rule of law dialogue, ministers will hold a country-specific discussion.

The Commission will present its demography toolbox published on 11 October 2023, followed by an exchange of views.

The Council will continue preparations for the European Council meeting on 26 and 27 October 2023 by discussing draft conclusions.

Over a working lunch, ministers will focus on the future of Europe.

A press conference will take place after the meeting (+/- 17.30).

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[Press conferences and public events by video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

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

Amending of Regulation No 1/1958

Ministers will take stock of progress on the request by Spain to include Catalan, Basque and Galician in Regulation No 1/1958, which governs the EU's language regime.

The request was notified to the Council presidency on 17 August 2023, in a letter by Spain's Minister for Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation. In this letter, the Spanish government also requested the inclusion of the matter on the agenda of the General Affairs Council meeting of 19 September 2023.

On 3 September 2023, Spain circulated a proposal for amendment of Regulation No 1/1958.

At the General Affairs Council meeting on 19 September 2023, ministers had a constructive exchange and decided to continue working on the request by Spain to amend Regulation No 1.

Annual rule of law dialogue

As part of the annual rule of law dialogue, ministers will hold a country-specific discussion. The exchange of views will focus on key developments in Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, and Greece.

This will be the seventh round of country-specific discussions after the ones held in November 2020, April and November 2021, April and December 2022, and March 2023.

For each member state, the Commission will present the main findings of the respective country-specific chapter in its 2023 rule of law report. The member state concerned will then be asked to present key national developments and particular aspects of their national rule of law framework. This will be followed by a round of comments in which other delegations can share their experiences and best practices in relation to the developments mentioned.

The country-specific discussions are part of the commitment to make the annual rule of law dialogue stronger and more structured, while fully respecting the principles of objectivity, non-discrimination and equal treatment of all member states. The objective is to have a constructive and open exchange of comments and best practices.

[2023 Rule of law report \(European Commission\)](#)

[Rule of law \(background information\)](#)

Demography toolbox

The Commission will present its demography toolbox published on 11 October 2023, followed by an exchange of views.

The June 2023 European Council conclusions called on the Commission to put forward a toolbox to support member states in addressing demographic challenges and their impact on Europe's competitive edge. The need to address demographic challenges was reiterated in the Granada declaration of 6 October 2023.

In its communication on the demography toolbox, the Commission presents a set of policy tools available to member states for managing demographic change and its impacts on the EU's society and economy, including its global competitiveness. This includes regulatory instruments, policy frameworks and funding available to member states.

The demography toolbox sets out a comprehensive approach to demographic change structured around four pillars, focused on support for parents, younger generations, older generations and addressing labour shortages through managed legal migration. The toolbox also recognises the need to take on board specific regional challenges, such as the phenomena of population decline and 'brain drain'.

The Commission calls on member states to develop and implement integrated policies to tackle demographic change and to mainstream demographic concerns into all policy areas.

During the debate in the Council, ministers will be invited to indicate which EU policy tools and envisaged next steps they consider most effective for addressing demographic change and its impacts, in particular on competitiveness.

[Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action \(European Commission\)](#)

[European Council conclusions, 29-30 June 2023](#)

October European Council

The Council will continue preparations for the European Council meeting on 26 and 27 October 2023 by discussing draft conclusions.

At its upcoming meeting, the European Council will address the situation in the Middle East following up on the videoconference of the members of the European Council on 17 October and their statement of 15 October.

The European Council will also take stock of the latest developments in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and review all aspects of the EU's response.

Leaders will discuss the proposed revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027.

The European Council will assess progress in boosting Europe's competitiveness, with a particular focus on industrial policy and energy.

Leaders will hold a strategic discussion on the external dimension of migration, with a particular focus on cooperation with third countries.

They will take stock of preparations for the UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai (COP28).

The European Council will also address other foreign policy issues in the light of events.

[Annotated draft agenda](#)