



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



9501/05 (Presse 133)

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

2665th Council meeting

### **Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry and Research)**

Luxembourg, 6 and 7 June 2005

President

**Mr Jeannot KRECKE**

Minister for Economic Affairs and Foreign Trade

**Mr François BLITGEN**

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

of Luxembourg

# **P R E S S**

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9501/05 (Presse 133)

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**EN**

## Main Results of the Council

The Council adopted:

- a Directive on **professional qualifications**, which will facilitate the mobility of qualified persons in the internal market;
- conclusions on the "**better regulation**" process, which form the Council's response to the Commission's recent communication on the subject and set out the priorities, particularly with a view to the imminent United Kingdom Presidency;
- in the field of **trans-European** networks, a Regulation amending the existing rules for the granting of **Community financial aid**;
- at its meeting on 7 June, orientations concerning the preparation of the future **European Space Programme**. These were also discussed in detail at the **second Space Council**, a joint meeting at ministerial level between the European Union and the European Space Agency.

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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.
- The documents whose references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site <http://ue.eu.int>.
- 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 abovementioned Council 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 Geneviève TUTS

Deputy Permanent Representative

### Czech Republic :

Mr Martin JAHN

Mr Petr KOLÁŘ

Mr Miroslav SOMOL

Deputy Prime Minister, responsible for Economic Affairs

Deputy Minister for Education, Youth and Sport

Deputy Minister for Industry and Trade, Representative for European Affairs

### Denmark :

Ms Connie HEDEGAARD

Mr Leo BJØRNSKOV

Minister for the Environment and for Nordic Cooperation

State Secretary

### Germany :

Mr Jürgen TRITTIN

Ms Edelgard BULMAHN

Federal Minister for Environment, Nature Protection and Reactor Safety

Federal Minister for Education and Research

### Estonia :

Mr Edgar SAVISAAR

Mr Mailis REPS

Minister for Economic Affairs and Communications

Minister for Education and Science

### Greece:

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Minister for Development

State Secretary for Economic Affairs and Finance

State Secretary for Education and Religious Affairs

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Mr Salvador BARBERA

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State Secretary for the European Union

Secretary-General

Secretary-General

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Mr François LOOS

Minister with responsibility for European Affairs

Minister with responsibility for Higher Education and Research

Minister with responsibility for Industry

### Ireland :

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Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment

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Deputy Minister for Education, the Universities and Research

State Secretary for Production Activities

### Cyprus :

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### Latvia :

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State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs

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Minister for the Economy

Deputy Minister for Education and Science

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Mr François BILTGEN

Minister for Economic Affairs and Foreign Trade, Minister for Sport

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

Ms Octavie MODERT

State Secretary for Relations with Parliament, State Secretary for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development, State Secretary for Culture, Higher Education and Research

**Hungary :**

Mr Péter GOTTFRIED

Head of State Secretariat for Integration and External Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
State Secretary

Mr Miklós BODA

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Mr Censu GALEA

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State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology

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Mr Eduard MAINONI

Minister for Science and Information Technology  
State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour

**Poland :**

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Mr Jacek PIECHOTA

Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education  
State Secretary for Trade, Services and Consumer Protection

**Portugal :**

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Mr Fernando SERRASQUEIRO

Minister for the Economy  
State Secretary at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

**Slovenia :**

Mr Andrej VIZJAK

Mr Janez MOŽINA

Minister for Education  
State Secretary at the Ministry of the Economy

**Slovakia :**

Mr Martin FRONC

Mr László POMOTHY

Minister for Trade and Industry

**Finland :**

Mr Mauri PEKKARINEN

Minister for Industry, Employment and Communications

**Sweden :**

Mr Thomas ÖSTROS

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Minister for Science and Innovation

**United Kingdom :**

Mr Alan JOHNSON

Lord SAINSBURY of TURVILLE

**Commission :**

Mr Günther VERHEUGEN

Mr Charlie McCREEVY

Mr Stavros DIMAS

Mr Markos KYPRIANOU

Mr Janez POTOČNIK

Vice-President

Member

Member

Member

The Governments of the acceding States were represented as follows:

**Bulgaria :**

Mr Igor DAMYANOV  
Ms Silvana LUBENOVA

Minister for Education and Science  
Secretary-General

**Romania :**

Mr Ioan-Codruț ȘERES  
Mr Adrian CIOCANEA  
Mr Anton ANTON

Minister for the Economy and Commerce  
Secretary of State at the Ministry of European Integration  
Secretary of State at the Ministry of Education and  
Research

**ITEMS DEBATED****SERVICES IN THE INTERNAL MARKET**

The Council took note of the Presidency report on the state of play regarding the proposal for a Directive on services in the internal market and confirmed its intention to continue studying this priority dossier with the aim of reaching an agreement, while taking into account the European Parliament's opinion, which was expected in October 2005.

The objective of the Commission proposal is to eliminate obstacles to the freedom of establishment for service providers and the free movement of services between the Member States. It covers a wide variety of economic service activities. The Commission's proposal also contains a number of exceptions such as financial services, electronic communications services and networks, and most transport services – and applies only to service providers established in a Member State.



## **BETTER REGULATION**

After hearing a statement by Mr Günter Verheugen, Vice-President of the Commission, on the work the Commission is doing in this area, and one by the United Kingdom delegation which presented its programme of work for this initiative, the Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL,

RECALLING the European Council Conclusions of 22-23 March 2005 requesting the Commission and the Council to press ahead with work related to improving the regulatory environment;

1. REAFFIRMS its view that better regulation is a joint responsibility of the EU Institutions and of the Member States and the importance which it attaches to the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better law-making<sup>1</sup> as framework for the cooperation between the Institutions;
2. WELCOMES the Commission's Communication on Better Regulation for Growth and Jobs in the European Union<sup>2</sup> of 16 March 2005 as a basis for joint action to improve the regulatory framework in the European Union and as one key element of the re-launch of the Lisbon Strategy; ENDORSES its objective of improving the framework conditions for economic growth, employment and productivity in the EU while ensuring that the objectives of legislation are attained without excessive administrative costs;
3. INVITES the Commission to actively pursue the objectives set out in its Communication both as regards the development of integrated impact assessments on new legislation, and with regard to setting up a continuous and systematic process of simplification of existing legislation, while respecting the *acquis communautaire*;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 321, 31.12.2003, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> 7797/05 COMPET 57.

## 4. WELCOMES

- the emphasis which is put on early consultation of stakeholders,
- the planned increased use of external expertise while in particular stressing the need for transparency in this respect,
- the launch, by early 2006, of a comprehensive independent evaluation of the Impact Assessment system,
- the use of Impact Assessment Roadmaps as a means to enhance transparency in the process;

5. INVITES the Commission, in its impact assessments, to explore a wide range of options, including non-legislative, where appropriate, which could potentially meet the set objectives of a proposal;

6. UNDERTAKES to carry out impact assessments on substantive Council amendments to legislative proposals, building on the experience from the pilot project which was carried out under the Dutch Presidency, on the follow-up proposals contained in the Presidency Report to the March Competitiveness Council and on an interinstitutional common approach on impact assessment, and in this context WELCOMES the prospect of an agreement on such an approach by June 2005. UNDERTAKES, furthermore, to pursue work at interinstitutional level and to review the issue before the end of 2006, based on further experience gained;

7. LOOKS FORWARD to seeing rapid progress on the Commission's pilot project on measuring administrative cost with a view to agreeing on a common methodology to be used, *inter alia*, in impact assessments and simplification;

8. WELCOMES the Commission's intention to carry out a more thorough screening of pending legislative proposals, notably in the context of attaining the Lisbon objectives; NOTES Member States' intentions to make suggestions to the Commission in this respect, without prejudice to the Commission's right of initiative;

9. RECALLS the list of Council priorities for simplification from November 2004, TAKES NOTE of ongoing work in the Commission in this respect and EXPECTS the Commission to take appropriate initiatives;
10. WELCOMES in this context the Commission's recent initiative asking for Member States' priorities on simplification and SIGNALS ITS INTENTION to remain involved in simplification and to respond to the Commission's priorities in November 2005; UNDERTAKES, furthermore, to continue efforts for a timely adoption of pending simplification proposals and to continue working on the interinstitutional level to adapt working methods in this respect as foreseen in the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better law-making;
11. INVITES Member States, in full respect of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, to reinforce ongoing efforts to improve the regulatory framework at national level, including through direct stakeholder consultation, simplification of legislation and impact assessments. Furthermore INVITES Member States to redouble efforts to reduce transposition deficits and to consider to undertake a screening of domestic legislation for compatibility with EU rules in order to remove market barriers and open up competition in the internal market;
12. AGREES to revert to the subject of Better Regulation in October 2005 to review progress."

## **REACH**

The Council took note of the Presidency report on the state of play regarding the draft Regulation concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency.

The Council held a policy debate with Mr Günter Verheugen, Vice-President of the Commission, and Mr Stavros Dimas, Environment Commissioner, in attendance.

The policy debate ranged over a whole series of issues contained in the Presidency report, viz.: the role of the Agency in the evaluation of dossiers and substances – particularly as regards cooperation between the Agency and the Member States – and the conclusions to be drawn from the work on the REACH impact analyses.

At the close of the debate, the President summarised the discussions as follows:

"The Council referred to its intention to take forward the REACH proposal with a view to reaching a political agreement following on from the European Parliament's opinion.

As for the evaluation of dossiers, debate within the Council confirmed the broadly positive attitude to the enhanced role of the Agency but reiterated the importance of retaining national capability to respond to challenges and of retaining capability to evaluate substances likely to constitute a risk to health and/or the environment. In this context, the Council calls on its preparatory bodies to consider the possible consequences of the alternative proposals with the same rigour as that applied to the analysis of the Commission proposal – also in terms of Community resources required to implement them.

On the subject of the outcome of the REACH workshop, organised by the Luxembourg Presidency, the Council considers that the impact studies conducted hitherto have produced sufficient knowledge to enable negotiations to continue on the basis of the Commission proposal with a view to producing a feasible system.

The Council calls on its preparatory bodies to continue their negotiations on all aspects of the Commission proposal while taking due account of the impact of the new legislation on SMEs, on producers/importers of low-volume substances and on the international competitiveness of European industry.

Finally, the Council is determined to take account of all the results obtained from impact studies when it takes a political decision."

**SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH (2007-2013)**

Subject to current discussions on the Financial Perspective, the Council held an in-depth debate on a number of issues concerning the "collaboration" and "human resources" chapters of the Commission proposal on the Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013). Delegations' comments will be taken into account when future discussions are held on the programme. The Council asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue studying the proposal under the codecision procedure with the European Parliament.

**ITER**<sup>1</sup>

The Council took note of the information provided by Mr Janez POTOČNIK, Research Commissioner, on the progress of the international negotiations on the future construction of an international thermonuclear experimental reactor (ITER). The Council invites the Commission continue with these negotiations in accordance with the Council's and European Council's guidelines within the time-frame set.

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<sup>1</sup> ITER is the English name of the international thermonuclear experimental reactor. There are six parties to the negotiations: China, South Korea, the United States, Japan, Russia and the EU.

## EUROPEAN SPACE PROGRAMME

The second meeting of the "Space Council"<sup>1</sup> was held between the Council of the European Union and the Council of the European Space Agency (ESA). It was jointly chaired by Mr François Biltgen, Minister for Culture, Higher Education and Research of Luxembourg and President-in-Office of the EU Competitiveness Council, and by Ms Edelgard Bulmahn, Federal Minister for Education and Research and current Chair of the Council of the ESA at ministerial level. The meeting was also attended by Mr Günter Verheugen, European Commission Vice-President, responsible for enterprise, industry competitiveness and space matters, and by Mr Jean-Jacques Dordain, ESA Director-General.

The "Space Council" held an exchange of views on the guidelines concerning the preparation of the future European Space Programme. Mr Günter Verheugen presented his communication resulting from joint EU-ESA work ("European Space Policy: preliminary elements").

The two Chairs of the "Space Council" confirmed that the orientations set out below had been approved by the Council of the European Union and by the ESA Council (at ministerial level) in accordance with their respective rules.

### Guidelines concerning the preparation of the future European Space Programme

1. The first joint and concomitant meeting of the Council of the European Union and of the Council of the European Space Agency at ministerial level ("Space Council") identified the need to prepare a European Space Programme for late 2005. The Joint Secretariat, in consultation with the High-Level Space Policy Group, prepared a document on the Preliminary Elements of a European Space Policy, which addresses the guidelines of the first "Space Council". The second meeting of the "Space Council" takes note of the approach outlined in this document and reaffirms its objective to endorse at its next meeting, planned for late 2005, a European Space Policy and Programme covering the period to 2013. This will be drawn up by the Joint Secretariat in close association with the Member States, in particular in the High-Level Space Policy Group, and in consultation with private and public stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the EC-ESA Framework Agreement, the "Space Council" consists of "regular joint and concomitant meetings of the Council of the European Union and of the Council of the ESA at ministerial level". The objectives of the Space Council are to: (a) provide guidelines for the achievement of the objectives of the Agreement; (b) make recommendations concerning the main elements of the specific arrangements; (c) advise the parties on ways of enhancing cooperation; (d) review the effective and efficient application of the Agreement. The first meeting of the Space Council was held in Brussels on 25 November 2004.

2. In particular, the "Space Council" confirms that the European Space Policy should contain the following main elements:
- (a) the European Space Strategy outlining the objectives,
  - (b) the European Space Programme, listing the priority activities and projects to achieve the strategy and reflecting the costs and funding sources of these,
  - (c) a commitment by the main contributors to their respective roles and responsibilities, and
  - (d) key principles of implementation.

The European Space Programme will be the common, inclusive and flexible programmatic basis for the activities of the ESA, the EU and their respective Member States. Existing capacities will have to be used to their maximum extent and complementarity ensured.

3. The "Space Council" recommends that the fully elaborated draft of a European Space Policy be developed on the basis of these guidelines, in accordance with the Framework Agreement between the European Community and the ESA and the ESA Convention. It notes in particular:

– Strategy

Space is strategic for Europe, a tool to serve the policies of the Union, European governments and European citizens. Many European and national policies already benefit from operational space systems, integrated with related terrestrial systems. Space-based systems will increasingly be developed on the basis of user requirements, taking into account the benefits of using broadly supported European solutions contributing to the strategic importance of space for Europe. The European Space Policy will seek to ensure continuity of these benefits and that they are shared by all.



– Roles and responsibilities

The EU will use its full potential to lead in identifying and bringing together user needs and to aggregate the political will in support of these and of wider policy objectives. Subject to the requirements of strict budgetary discipline and to objective evaluation, it will be responsible for ensuring the availability and continuity of operational services supporting its policies, and will contribute to the development, deployment and operation of corresponding dedicated European space infrastructure, in particular for Galileo and GMES. It will also pursue an optimum regulatory environment to facilitate innovation, access to international markets and the effective coordination with ESA of the European position in international fora.

The ESA and its Member and Cooperating States will develop space technologies and systems, supporting innovation and global competitiveness and preparing for the future. Their activities will focus on exploration of space and on the basic tools on which exploitation and exploration of space depend: access to space, scientific knowledge and space technologies. They will pursue excellence in space-based scientific research. On a voluntary basis, they will support the technological preparation, including validation, of space systems responding to user needs, including those relevant to EU policies.

Most Member States of the EU and of the ESA are already investing in operational infrastructures through their membership of EUMETSAT and will consider the experience of similar organisations and Eumetsat's role in relation to wider operational services.

– On priorities within the European Space Programme:

The EU will focus on space-based applications to contribute to the achievement of its policies, particularly Galileo and Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES).

ESA activities will focus on securing a guaranteed and competitive access to space through a family of launchers, pursuing excellence in science of space, from space and in space, exploiting its know-how in exploration of the solar system, and developing technologies to maintain a globally competitive European space industry equipped to meet Europe's future space system needs, including in all elements of the value chain.

Individual EU or ESA Member States will be responsible for identifying their national contribution to the European Space Programme and provide this input to the Joint Secretariat for consideration of its inclusion in the overall European Space Programme to be presented to the next "Space Council".

– On key principles of implementation

The implementation of the European Space Policy requires an industry policy tailored to the specificities of a sector subject globally to government influence. This policy should provide all stakeholders in Europe with the motivation (i) to maintain and reinforce their scientific and technological expertise and capacities and (ii) to encourage Member States and stakeholders to make the necessary investment to maintain know-how, independence in selected critical technologies and a globally competitive space industry. This is central to the achievement of Europe's economic and political objectives, thus contributing to growth and employment.

Key instruments for delivery will be, for the EU, in particular the 7th Framework Programme of Research, Technology and Development, the trans-European network programme and the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme; and for ESA, a combination of mandatory and optional programmes. Programme costs will be estimated in the European Space Programme, which should highlight that user policies will in the future need to be more adequately reflected in the funding scheme.

The management of EU space-related programmes will be based on efficiency, in line with the EC-ESA Framework Agreement and drawing on the management and technical expertise of the ESA, in cooperation with the relevant agencies and entities in Europe, and taking into account factors such as the integration of space with terrestrial systems and the diversity of sources of funding. The management of ESA programmes will be based on the rules laid down by the ESA Convention.

4. The "Space Council" notes that decisions on future programmes to be taken at the coming ESA Ministerial Council and the decision on the EU financial perspective will determine the ability of the programme to match the ambitions of the European space policy.
5. The "Space Council" invites the Joint Secretariat in close consultation with the High-Level Space Policy Group to identify possible cost-efficient scenarios for optimising the organisation of space activities in Europe in the future and to initiate a wide-ranging appraisal of these in comparison to present processes, taking all relevant factors into account. It invites the Joint Secretariat to report back on the outcomes of this appraisal.

**OTHER BUSINESS**– ***SOLVIT***

The Council took note of the statement by Mr Charles McCreevy, the Commissioner responsible for the internal market and services, on the Commission report on the functioning of the SOLVIT network in resolving problems in the internal market.

The SOLVIT Network was set up in July 2002 to help citizens and businesses to resolve problems resulting from the misapplication of Community legislation. When citizens or businesses encounter difficulties in having their rights on the internal market respected, they may contact the SOLVIT centre in their own Member State, which will submit the case to its counterpart in the country in which the problem has arisen. The two centres then work together to resolve the problem within a period of six weeks.

The network dealt with 289 cases in 2004, i.e. 72% more than in 2003. According to the Commission report, solutions were found in four out of five cases. The challenge now is to increase awareness of SOLVIT as a rapid and free-of-charge alternative to the courts.

Mr McCreevy also drew attention to the importance of Member States providing their SOLVIT centres with the human and financial resources necessary to enable them to function effectively.

– ***Future Programme of Community action in the field of health and consumer protection (2007-2013)***

The Council took note of a written statement from Mr Markos Kyprianou, Commissioner with responsibility for health and consumer protection, on the new proposal for a Programme of Community action which brings together within a single programme actions in the field of health and consumer protection for the period 2007-2013.

– *Situation in the fish processing industry*

At the request of the Danish delegation, the Council held a brief discussion on the implications for the fish-processing industry in the Member States of the Community decision of 27 April 2005 to impose provisional anti-dumping duties on imports of farmed salmon from Norway<sup>1</sup>.

– *Proposal for a Council Directive on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals to carry out scientific research*

At the request of the Netherlands delegation, the Council was briefed by the Commission on the state of play regarding the proposal for a Directive and two proposals for recommendations on the admission of third-country nationals to carry out scientific research in the European Community.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 104 (23.4.2005), p. 5.

## **OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

### **RESEARCH**

#### **EU-Brazil Agreement on scientific and technological cooperation**

The Council adopted a Decision approving an Agreement on scientific and technological cooperation between the EU and Brazil, signed on 19 January 2004 (8702/05, 11680/03).

The purpose of the agreement is to encourage, develop and facilitate cooperative activities in areas of common interest by carrying out and supporting scientific and technological research and development activities.

### **INTERNAL MARKET**

#### **Recognition of professional qualifications**

The Council adopted a Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications (see press release 9775/05 Presse 137).

### **COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY**

#### **Combating terrorism – Restrictive measures against certain persons and entities**

The Council updated the list of persons, groups and entities to which the restrictive anti-terrorism measures (freezing of funds and other financial assets or economic resources and police and judicial cooperation between Member States) introduced in December 2001 apply. The list was last updated on 14 March 2005 (see press release 6199/05).

It adopted two acts to that end:

- a Common Position updating Common Position 2001/931/CFSP<sup>1</sup> of 27 December 2001 and repealing Common Position 2005/220/CFSP of 14 March 2005.
- a Decision implementing Regulation (EC) No 2580/2001<sup>2</sup> on the adoption of specific restrictive measures and repealing Decision 2005/221/EC.

The updated list is published in Official Journal L 144 of 8 June 2005.

The group "Lashkar e Tayyaba (LET)/Pashan-e-Ahle Hadis" was removed from the list following the decision taken by the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee on 2 May 2005 to include this group on the list drawn up pursuant to Resolution 1267 (1999) – individuals and entities belonging to or associated with the Taliban and Al-Qaida.

Pursuant to that Decision of 2 May 2005, on 11 May 2005 Commission Regulation 717/2005<sup>3</sup> added the same group to the list of persons and entities associated with Usama bin Laden, the Al-Qaida network and the Taliban who are subject to the measures on the freezing of financial resources introduced by Regulation 881/2002<sup>4</sup>.

The list annexed to Regulation 881/2002 is regularly updated to take account of adjustments made by the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee under Resolution 1267 (1999).

## **EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

### **Support for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia – Restrictive measures**

The Council adopted a Decision amending the list annexed to Common Position 2004/694/CFSP of persons indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) whose funds and economic resources are frozen (9012/05).

Following the transfer of Mr Vujadin Popovic and Mr Nebojsa Pavkovic to ICTY detention units and the ICTY's adoption of an Order granting leave to withdraw without prejudice the indictment against Mr Goran Borovnica, presumed dead, the names of these three persons were removed from the list.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p. 93. Common Position last amended by Common Position 2004/500/CFSP of 17 May 2004 (OJ L 196, 3.6.2004, p. 12).

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 121, 13.05.2005, p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 139, 29.5.2002, p. 9.

## **COMMERCIAL POLICY**

### **World Trade Organisation: Multi-chip integrated circuits**

The Council authorised the Commission to negotiate an agreement with the United States, Japan, Korea and Chinese Taipei on duty-free treatment of multi-chip integrated circuits.

### **Anti-dumping measures – Vietnam, Pakistan and the Philippines – Fluorescent lamps**

The Council adopted a Regulation extending the definitive anti-dumping measures imposed by Council Regulation (EC) No 1470/2001 on imports of integrated electronic compact fluorescent lamps (CFL-i) originating in China to imports of the same product consigned from Vietnam, Pakistan and the Philippines (9019/05).

## **ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS**

### **Short-term business statistics\***

The Council adopted a Regulation designed to improve short-term EU business statistics (*PE-CONS 3606/05 and 8755/05 ADD1*).

The Regulation provides in particular for an import price index for industrial products and a production price index for services. Certain major economic indicators will also be measured at more frequent intervals and forwarded earlier.

Short-term statistics provide the European Central Bank with the information that it requires to conduct monetary policy. The Regulation follows from the Action Plan on Economic and Monetary Union Statistical Requirements, which stressed the need to improve the statistics covered by Regulation 1165/98, which has now been amended accordingly.



**TRANSPORT****Granting of Community financial aid in the field of trans-European networks\***

The Council adopted a Regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2236/95 laying down general rules for the granting of Community financial aid in the field of trans-European networks (3615/05, 8757/05 ADDI).

The present Regulation raises the ceiling for Community financing of projects in the telecommunications sector to 30%.

Regulation 2236/95 limits the maximum contribution to projects in the area of telecommunications to 10% of the total investment cost. Since the cost of a preparatory study for a service in the telecommunications sector represents a high proportion of the total investment required to roll out the service, that percentage is not enough to stimulate the deployment of services which make the greatest contribution to the development of the information society.

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