DECISIONS

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2021/26

of 12 January 2021

further extending the temporary derogation from the Council's Rules of Procedure introduced by Decision (EU) 2020/430, and extended by Decisions (EU) 2020/556, (EU) 2020/702, (EU) 2020/970, (EU) 2020/1253 and (EU) 2020/1659, in view of the travel difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Union

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 240(3) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Council Decision (EU) 2020/430 ([1]) introduced a one-month derogation from the first subparagraph of Article 12(1) of the Council's Rules of Procedure ([2]) as regards decisions to use the ordinary written procedure, where those decisions are taken by the Committee of the Permanent Representatives of the Governments of the Member States (Coreper). That derogation was foreseen until 23 April 2020.

(2) Decision (EU) 2020/430 provides that, if justified by continued exceptional circumstances, the Council may renew that Decision. On 21 April 2020, the Council, by Decision (EU) 2020/556 ([3]), extended the derogation provided for in Article 1 of Decision (EU) 2020/430 for a further period of one month from 23 April 2020. That extension of the derogation was foreseen until 23 May 2020. On 20 May 2020, the Council, by Decision (EU) 2020/702 ([4]), extended the derogation provided for in Article 1 of Decision (EU) 2020/430 until 10 July 2020. On 3 July 2020, the Council, by Decision (EU) 2020/970 ([5]), extended that derogation until 10 September 2020. On 4 September 2020, the Council, by Decision (EU) 2020/1253 ([6]), extended that derogation until 10 November 2020. On 6 November 2020, the Council, by Decision (EU) 2020/1659 ([7]), extended that derogation until 15 January 2021.

(3) Given that the exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic continue, with a number of extraordinary preventive and containment measures taken by Member States still in place, it is necessary to extend the derogation provided for in Article 1 of Decision (EU) 2020/430, as extended by Decisions (EU) 2020/556, (EU) 2020/702, (EU) 2020/970, (EU) 2020/1253 and (EU) 2020/1659, for a further limited period until 19 March 2021,

([1]) Council Decision (EU) 2020/430 of 23 March 2020 on a temporary derogation from the Council's Rules of Procedure in view of the travel difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Union (OJ L 88 I, 24.3.2020, p. 1).

([2]) Council Decision 2009/937/EU of 1 December 2009 adopting the Council's Rules of Procedure (OJ L 325, 11.12.2009, p. 35).

([3]) Council Decision (EU) 2020/556 of 21 April 2020 extending the temporary derogation from the Council's Rules of Procedure introduced by Decision (EU) 2020/430 in view of the travel difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Union (OJ L 128 I, 23.4.2020, p. 1).

([4]) Council Decision (EU) 2020/702 of 20 May 2020 further extending the temporary derogation from the Council's Rules of Procedure introduced by Decision (EU) 2020/430 and extended by Decision (EU) 2020/556 in view of the travel difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Union (OJ L 165, 27.5.2020, p. 38).

([5]) Council Decision (EU) 2020/970 of 3 July 2020 further extending the temporary derogation from the Council's Rules of Procedure introduced by Decision (EU) 2020/430, and extended by Decisions (EU) 2020/556 and (EU) 2020/702, in view of the travel difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Union (OJ L 216, 7.7.2020, p. 1).

([6]) Council Decision (EU) 2020/1253 of 4 September 2020 further extending the temporary derogation from the Council's Rules of Procedure introduced by Decision (EU) 2020/430 and extended by Decisions (EU) 2020/556, (EU) 2020/702 and (EU) 2020/970, in view of the travel difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Union (OJ L 294, 8.9.2020, p. 1).

([7]) Council Decision (EU) 2020/1659 of 6 November 2020 further extending the temporary derogation from the Council's Rules of Procedure introduced by Decision (EU) 2020/430 and extended by Decisions (EU) 2020/556, (EU) 2020/702, (EU) 2020/970 and (EU) 2020/1253, in view of the travel difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Union (OJ L 376, 10.11.2020, p. 3).

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The derogation provided for in Article 1 of Decision (EU) 2020/430, as extended by Decisions (EU) 2020/556, (EU) 2020/702, (EU) 2020/970, (EU) 2020/1253 and (EU) 2020/1659, is hereby further extended until 19 March 2021.

Article 2

This Decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

It shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at Brussels, 12 January 2021.

For the Council
The President
A. P. ZACARIAS