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## Information and Notices

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### Contents

#### I *Resolutions, recommendations and opinions*

##### RESOLUTIONS

###### **Council**

2021/C 504/01	Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the outcomes of the 8th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue .....	1
2021/C 504/02	Council Resolution on a new European agenda for adult learning 2021-2030 .....	9

##### RECOMMENDATIONS

###### **Council**

2021/C 504/03	Council Recommendation of 29 November 2021 on blended learning approaches for high-quality and inclusive primary and secondary education .....	21
---------------	--	----

#### II *Information*

##### INFORMATION FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

###### **European Commission**

2021/C 504/04	Non-opposition to a notified concentration (Case M.10463 – SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALE / HYUNDAI MOTOR COMPANY / JV) <sup>(1)</sup> .....	30
2021/C 504/05	Non-opposition to a notified concentration (Case M.10489 – BAXTER / HILL-ROM) <sup>(1)</sup> .....	31
2021/C 504/06	Non-opposition to a notified concentration (Case M.10439 – DP WORLD / SYNCREON) <sup>(1)</sup> .....	32

# EN

<sup>(1)</sup> Text with EEA relevance.

2021/C 504/07	Non-opposition to a notified concentration (Case M.10532 – GIP / IFM / SYDNEY AIRPORT) <sup>(1)</sup> .....	33
2021/C 504/08	Non-opposition to a notified concentration (Case M.10382 – CDPE / MACQUARIE / BLACKSTONE / ASPI) <sup>(1)</sup> .....	34

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#### IV Notices

##### NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

###### **Council**

2021/C 504/09	Notice for the attention of certain persons subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP and Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine .....	35
2021/C 504/10	Notice for the attention of the persons subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2196, and in Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2193 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine .....	36
2021/C 504/11	Notice for the attention of the data subjects to whom the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP and Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine apply .....	37
2021/C 504/12	Notice for the attention of the persons and entity subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2197 and in Council Regulation (EU) 2020/1998, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2195 concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses .....	39
2021/C 504/13	Notice for the attention of the data subjects to whom the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999 and Council Regulation (EU) 2020/1998 concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses apply .....	40
2021/C 504/14	Notice for the attention of persons subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP, as implemented by Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2199, and in Council Regulation (EU) No 36/2012, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2194, concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria .....	41
2021/C 504/15	Notice for the attention of the data subjects to whom the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP and in Council Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria apply .....	42
2021/C 504/16	Notice for the attention of the person subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333, as implemented by Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2198, and in Council Regulation (EU) 2016/44, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2192, concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya .....	43
2021/C 504/17	Notice for the attention of the data subjects to whom the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333 and Council Regulation (EU) 2016/44 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya apply .....	44

---

<sup>(1)</sup> Text with EEA relevance.

## **European Commission**

2021/C 504/18	Euro exchange rates — 13 December 2021 .....	45
---------------	--	----

## **Court of Auditors**

2021/C 504/19	Report on any contingent liabilities arising as a result of the performance by the Single Resolution Board, the Council or the Commission of their tasks under Regulation (EU) No 806/2014 for the 2020 financial year .....	46
---------------	--	----

## **European Commission**

2021/C 504/20	Commission notice on current State aid recovery interest rates and reference/discount rates applicable as from 1 January 2022 ( <i>Published in accordance with Article 10 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 794/2004</i> ) .....	47
---------------	--	----

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## V *Announcements*

### OTHER ACTS

## **European Commission**

2021/C 504/21	Publication of the single document referred to in Article 94(1)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council and of the reference to the publication of the product specification for a name in the wine sector .....	48
---------------	---	----

2021/C 504/22	Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs .....	57
---------------	---	----



## I

*(Resolutions, recommendations and opinions)*

## RESOLUTIONS

## COUNCIL

**Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the outcomes of the 8th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue**

(2021/C 504/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

RECALLING THAT:

1. This resolution builds on the Resolution on the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 <sup>(1)</sup>, the Resolution establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue <sup>(2)</sup>, the Conclusions on fostering democratic awareness and democratic engagement among young people in Europe <sup>(3)</sup>, the Conclusions on strengthening multilevel governance when promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes <sup>(4)</sup>, and the outcomes of the previous cycles of the EU Youth Dialogue.
2. The Resolution on the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 sets overall objectives, guiding principles and a basis for further cooperation in the field of youth at EU level. The resolution calls for a greater involvement of young people in the dialogue with decision-makers, and for the engagement of young people from diverse backgrounds and social groups.
3. The EU Youth Dialogue (EUYD) is a participation mechanism for young people in the EU. It serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection and for consultation on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of cooperation at EU level in the field of youth <sup>(5)</sup> between decision-makers, young people and their representative organisations, and that enables a continuous partnership in the governance of these processes at local, regional, national and European level.

<sup>(1)</sup> Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027, (OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1).

<sup>(2)</sup> Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue - European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (OJ C 189, 5.6.2019, p. 1).

<sup>(3)</sup> Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on fostering democratic awareness and democratic engagement among young people in Europe (OJ C 415, 1.12.2020, p. 16).

<sup>(4)</sup> Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on strengthening the multilevel governance when promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes (OJ C 241, 21.6.2021, p. 3).

<sup>(5)</sup> Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing 'Erasmus': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 COM/2018/367 final - 2018/0191 (COD).

4. Member States are encouraged to enable youth participation in all phases of implementation of the EU Youth Dialogue by involving the youth sector and by giving, where appropriate, the respective National Youth Council (NYC) <sup>(6)</sup> a leading role in the National Working Group (NWG) and in the European Steering Group (ESG).
5. The outcomes of the 8th Cycle of the EUYD are based on the cycle's three EU Youth Conferences, on feedback from national and European qualitative consultations and events from the dialogue phase, on the quantitative results of the EUYD Central Survey, and on the results from the impact phase at national and European level, and contribute to mainstreaming the multi-level and cross-sectoral implementation of Youth Goal #9 'Space and Participation for All'. The cycle was coordinated at European level by the European Steering Group.
6. The aim of this document is to ensure that the outcomes of the 8th Cycle of EUYD are recognised and followed up by relevant stakeholders in the field of national and European youth policies, and to ensure quality and continuity in the implementation of the EUYD process and its outcomes.

#### ACKNOWLEDGING THAT:

7. The 8th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue during the German-Portuguese-Slovenian Presidencies over the period from 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2021 under the common title 'Europe for YOUth - YOUth for Europe: Space for Democracy and Participation' builds on the European Youth Goals, namely Youth Goal #9 'Space and Participation for All' of the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027.
8. While the Resolution on the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 calls for greater involvement of young people in the EU Youth Dialogue process, it requires sufficient capacity, notably financial and human resources, to reach out and communicate to, and with, all young people at local, regional, national and European level.
9. The contribution of the National Working Groups is important in leading the EU Youth Dialogue processes at national level, including at regional and local level, particularly in reaching out to diverse groups of young people and connecting different national, regional and local stakeholders with the process.
10. The contribution of International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYOs) is important in bringing a range of perspectives from across Europe to the policy dialogue and in ensuring quality input on the transnational dimension of the EU Youth Dialogue process.
11. One particular feature of the 8th Cycle was the emphasis on the quality of participation and the predominant use of digital tools in the context of the health crisis. The 8th Cycle of the EUYD process ran during the COVID-19 pandemic when most EU countries had social distancing measures in place, which limited the ability to hold physical meetings. On account of the pandemic, all three EU Youth Conferences were organised in close cooperation with the respective National Youth Councils in virtual format.
12. The German Presidency focused on democratic awareness and democratic engagement among young people in Europe under the slogan 'Youth and Democracy'. As a basis for national and European level consultations and events, a set of qualitative questions was proposed to the National Working Groups (NWG) in the Member States and to the International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYOs), focusing on the seven targets of Youth Goal #9 'Space and Participation for All'.
13. The Portuguese Presidency focused on strengthening multilevel governance by promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes and put particular emphasis on the participation of young people through digital innovation. Attention was also given to youth rights-based approaches to youth policies, and this was the subject of the policy debate held at the Youth Ministers Council meeting on 17 May 2021. As the Portuguese Presidency coincided with the transition from the dialogue phase to the implementation phase, a toolbox with

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<sup>(6)</sup> Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027, (OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1).

concrete actions was developed to implement Youth Goal #9, taking into account the reports on the qualitative consultations and events, and the discussions held by the Portuguese EU Youth Conference delegates. In addition, the 48-hour Solve the Gap Hackathon was held and resulted in the creation of an online tool to promote the engagement of young people in democratic processes. The tool will feature on the European Youth Portal.

14. The Slovenian Presidency explored the importance of civic spaces for youth participation and ways to safeguard them. It also looked at the quantitative results of the EUYD Central Survey and the results from the set of guiding questions introduced under the Portuguese Presidency, using them to explore good practices for the implementation of Youth Goal #9 and its targets, and turning these practices into Youth Actions. The barriers to their implementation and the way forward have been identified.

CONSIDER THAT:

15. Each EUYD cycle builds on previous cycles, on EU Youth Conferences and on the work of the EU Council presidencies in the field of youth. It emphasises the role and importance of the unity of the presidency trio in reaching the objectives of each EUYD cycle and in contributing to reaching the targets set in the Youth Goals, by linking up successive cycles.
16. The National Working Groups used a variety of methods, such as participatory visual methods and participatory action research methods, round table events and online youth dialogue events. INGYOs facilitated roundtable events involving policy makers and young people at European level.
17. The European Steering Group proposed the EUYD Central Survey as a way of exploring other segments of youth participation in order to include as broad as possible a range of voices and as a way of encouraging National Working Groups and INGYOs to focus more on qualitative and on more meaningful formats for participation in the dialogue process, and thus to bring added value to the consultations at EU level.
18. Meaningful cooperation and co-creation between the three EU presidencies involved and their respective National Youth Councils, the European Youth Forum and the European Commission were among the core principles guiding the implementation of the 8th EUYD Cycle.
19. Putting young people and youth organisations at the core of the design, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up of the cycle and all its activities, for example by ensuring that the presidency's National Youth Councils have the right to co-chair the European Steering Group, was a key aspect in the success of the 8th EUYD Cycle.
20. Further recognising the involvement and contribution of INGYOs in the EUYD process is important for ensuring that the dialogue has a strong European dimension; sustainable, structural and sufficient funding and political support at European and national levels should be secured so that both National Working Groups and INGYOs can carry out their activities within the framework of the official EUYD process.
21. EU Youth Conferences are a meaningful part of the youth dialogue process, creating safe spaces where participants have the knowledge and opportunities needed to contribute, and should bring together decision-makers to take part in the dialogue in a meaningful way, exchange views with young people on an equal footing, co-create with them the outcomes of the Conferences, and integrate the outcomes, when possible, into their political decision-making in order to ensure a meaningful youth participation process.
22. Organising all events related to the EU Youth Dialogue in the most sustainable way possible, and considering the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainability is an important element in making the process more meaningful for young people and for decision-makers.
23. Focusing on the implementation of Youth Goal #9 in order to turn its targets into Youth Actions has brought an important new dimension to the EU Youth Dialogue process by bringing about the changes that are needed to improve the lives of young people in Europe, and could be adopted by future EUYD cycles as a good and inspiring practice.

## RECOGNISE THAT:

24. Young people are the present and the future of a sustainable, social, climate-neutral, prosperous and democratic Europe that is fit for the digital age. Their participation is vital when shaping the present and the future of Europe, ensuring that all its citizens enjoy personal fulfilment and well-being, and empowering them to engage in active and responsible citizenship.
25. The COVID-19 pandemic and the exceptional measures taken to counter the pandemic have had a severe impact on the participation of young people and on civic spaces for young people, which have been increasingly shrinking and could be proactively safeguarded. The COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted the importance of further exploring and developing new forms of participation and civic engagement, especially within the context of the digital participation of young people, while at the same time acknowledging and addressing existing digital divides and the limits of digital participation (7).

## WELCOME:

26. The active participation of young people in the national and European qualitative consultations implemented by National Working Groups and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations, and their active engagement in the Central EUYD Survey launched by the European Steering Group, as well as their active involvement in the implementation phase. The consultations and the implementation phase involved a varied and innovative use of smaller-scale surveys, focus groups, large youth dialogue events, workshops, participatory action research, participatory visual methods, roundtables and digital youth dialogue events.
27. The activities and measures proposed and being carried out by NWGs and INGyOs in circumstances made difficult by the pandemic, as part of the process of turning Youth Goal #9 into Youth Actions.
28. The successful cooperation and equal partnership within the European Steering Group throughout the cycle, building on the recommendations of the previous EUYD cycles for multi-level and cross-sectoral implementation of the EUYD.

## INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, IN LINE WITH THE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE AND WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE, TO:

29. Consider the outcomes of the 8th Cycle of EU Youth Dialogue, including the recommendations of young people attached in Annex I, when designing and implementing future youth policies, in synergy with all policies affecting young people, and explore further ways of implementing the European Youth Goals and the targets out therein.
30. Strengthen and improve the EU Youth Dialogue process by considering and, where possible, applying best practices from the 8th Cycle of EU Youth Dialogue and the principles that guided its successful implementation, in particular by putting young people and youth organisations at the core of the process and ensuring that the EU Youth Dialogue is a youth-led process where young people and decision-makers have a constructive solution-seeking dialogue with real impact. The National Youth Councils, where applicable, should therefore continue to be the leading stakeholders in the National Working Groups and be given the necessary political and financial support to perform this role.
31. Recognise and prioritise the role of the National Working Groups (NWGs), their indispensable commitment to the process, and their importance regarding outreach and diversity of perspectives.
32. Prioritise and give visibility to the EUYD in national and EU-level events and promote youth participation in decision-making processes at all levels, and support and strengthen cooperation between different stakeholders, namely the European Steering Group, National Working Groups, the European Youth Forum, National Youth Councils, International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations, and other relevant stakeholders.
33. Provide necessary support, including adequate financial resources, and youth-friendly participation tools needed to reach out and communicate to, and with, more young people from a wide range of backgrounds and social groups at all levels in order to achieve the ambitious goals set for the EU Youth Dialogue process in the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027.

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(7) Youth Partnership: Tomaž Deželan and Laden Yurttagüler (2021), Pool of European Youth Researchers, Shrinking democratic space for youth.



34. Ensure a more sustainable and strategic approach to EUYD communication and outreach, implementing an overarching internal and external communication strategy at European level, and provide National Working Groups with additional support, where relevant, to enhance their own EUYD communication, co-created by youth organisations, in line with the European communication strategy, created under the co-leadership of youth organisations, including a common EUYD logo, labelling all EUYD actions, at European, national, regional and local level.
35. The European Commission and the Member States should ensure the strengthening of a long-term institutional memory and continuity of work between the EUYD cycles. Regular exchanges and coordination that is youth led and adequately supported between the Presidency trio, the last presidency from the preceding trio, the first presidency from the next trio, the Commission and the European Youth Forum shall be organised. The documentation of the European Steering Group should be made public in the European Youth Portal.
36. Provide continuous feedback to young people and youth organisations involved in all stages of the EUYD process in order to ensure meaningful dialogue and youth participation at all levels.

AND FURTHER NOTE THAT:

The overall topic priority of the next trio presidency (France, Czech Republic and Sweden) is 'Engaging together for a sustainable and inclusive Europe'.

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## ANNEX I

**JOINT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 8TH CYCLE OF THE EU YOUTH DIALOGUE****'Europe for YOUth - YOUth for Europe'**

The ideas and opinions of young people shared at the EU Youth Conference in September 2021 were focused on Youth Goal #9 Space and Participation for All, and provide recommendations on how to implement Youth Goal #9. These recommendations of young people concern all seven targets of Youth Goal #9. The recommendations reflect the process that started with the German, continued with the Portuguese, and ended with the Slovenian Presidency.

The recommendations do not impose any formal requirements as regards national youth policies. However, they can serve as a source of inspiration for Member States.

Target 1: 'Ensuring young people have influence on decision making'

- a) We request that both the Member States and the European Commission always give concrete feedback to young people whenever they involve them in their decision-making process and ensure evaluation process with young people in order to make sure that the participation is real.
- b) We recommend the Member States to adopt or further develop the legislation for securing the sustainable youth co-management systems in decision and policy-making processes at national and local levels, among others to protect and expand the youth civic spaces.

Target 2: 'Ensuring equal access to participation'

- a) We recommend the Member States and the European Commission to increase the diversity in participation structures and tackle the lack of inclusion by providing easy accessible information for minority groups.
- b) Encourage all Member States to support local stakeholders in providing extracurricular activities for young people with fewer opportunities.

Target 3: 'Participation in elections and representation in elected bodies'

- a) Encourage Member States to establish an EU wide symbolic voting process for EU parliament elections for age groups not yet allowed to vote, in cooperation with local youth centres and National Youth Councils, in order to encourage young people under the currently legal voting age to take an active part in political decision-making processes and thus strengthening a culture of recognition of young people's opinion in politics.
- b) We recommend the European Commission and the Member States to develop strategies to support young people who would like to run for an office at local, national and EU level, by developing a common youth-friendly platform at an European level for young people who are planning to stand for elections, and providing materials to further develop similar structures for national elections.
- c) We recommend the Member States to provide quality citizenship education in schools for all young people in every Member State, and adopt a common EU framework, to make young people confident in their ability for meaningful and representative political participation.
- d) We recommend the European Commission and Member States to strengthen the credibility of political institutions and encourage them to base their actions on scientific facts with the goal of benefiting the whole society in order to avoid youth disillusionment towards decision-making and politics.

Target 4: 'Ensuring physical youth spaces'

- a) We recommend the European Commission and the Member States to raise awareness and promote funding opportunities targeted towards creating and sustaining physical spaces for young people.

- b) Invite the Member States to change national-level educational policies and provide EU-wide monitoring systems to promote youth-friendly safe spaces and initiatives
- c) We recommend the European Commission and the Member States to introduce monitoring of the safeguarding of physical civic spaces for young people in order to ensure young people's rights to keeping their physical spaces safe from various threats such as commercialisation and increasing rents.
- d) We recommend the European Commission and the Member States to make physical youth spaces comprehensive and accessible by providing more youth-friendly and accessible information about them.

Target 5: 'Ensuring Digitalised Youth Spaces'

- a) We encourage Member States to ensure minimum digital standard throughout Europe with regards to infrastructure that includes free Wi-Fi/internet and basic digital tools to be used by young people.
- b) We encourage the European Commission to allocate specific funds to the youth sector to empower and educate young people in developing digital skills with special emphasis on youth with fewer opportunities.
- c) We recommend the European Commission to develop a framework at European level that measures the youth friendliness of virtual spaces, that the existing spaces and tools can be given clear and up-to-date guidelines on accessible language usage and centralising information, in order to remove barriers to young people's active engagement in social and political processes.
- d) We recommend that Member States empower educators in formal and non-formal sectors to ensure youth has the competences and tools necessary to protect themselves from misinformation and hate speech in virtual spaces by stimulating their ability to form judgement in an objective way.

Target 6: 'Ensuring sustainable funding for youth participation'

- a) We recommend that Member States give more visibility to youth work by increasing its accessibility (notably through incentives for mobile youth work in rural and remote areas and with less accessible youth) and its recognition (through formal recognition of the occupation, active partnerships with formal education and local actors).
- b) We recommend the Member States to consolidate the position and role of youth work in societal matters (partnerships in local initiatives, events, competitions and projects) and secure its societal acknowledgment (valorisation of youth work).
- c) We recommend that Member States and the European Commission support and commit to creating a general Youth-Recovery Plan in the EU, with specific actions to be taken at European, national and local level that focus on youth work and youth participation in order to overcome the issues the pandemic has augmented.

Target 7: 'Providing youth-friendly, relevant information'

- a) We recommend that Member States introduce regular media and information literacy lessons in primary and secondary education into national curricula prepared and thoroughly monitored, in cooperation with relevant youth organisations at national, regional and local levels as well as with media practitioners while ensuring regular and nation-wide teachers' training co-funded by the EU budget.
  - b) We invite Member States and the European Commission to include the provision of quality youth information and counselling in accordance with the European Youth Information Charter in their youth strategies and to resource a national youth information coordination body so that young people can access relevant information at the European, national, regional and local level.
  - c) We recommend that the European Commission establish an EU Youth Communication Strategy that provides guidance to Member States on co-creating communications with young people, regarding youth-relevant policies and publications, ensuring these Communications are published on the European Youth Portal where youth discussion and dialogue can take place.
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## ANNEX II

**References:**

Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1)

Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Outcomes of the 7th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue: European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (OJ C 212 I, 26.6.2020, p. 1)

Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue — European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (OJ C 189, 5.6.2019, p. 1)

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on strengthening the multilevel governance when promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes (OJ C 241, 21.6.2021, p. 3)

Council conclusions, Youth in external action, General Secretariat of the Council, doc. 8629/20 of 5 June 2020

Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on fostering democratic awareness and democratic engagement among young people in Europe (OJ C 415, 1.12.2020, p. 16)

Council Resolution on the Structured Dialogue and the future development of the dialogue with young people in the context of policies for European cooperation in the youth field, post 2018 (OJ C 189, 15.6.2017, p. 1)

CIVICUS, State of Civil Society Reports 2016, Johannesburg, SOCS2016 (civicus.org).

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**Council Resolution on a new European agenda for adult learning 2021-2030**

(2021/C 504/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

WHEREAS:

It is crucial to address the future positively by working on the basis of adult learning needs and having in place formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities capable of providing all the necessary knowledge, skills and competences to create an inclusive, sustainable, socially just and more resilient Europe. As we navigate ever more complex and frequent transitions (particularly the digital and green transitions), and address current and future challenges (such as climate change, demography, technology, health, etc.), adult learning, as an important part of lifelong learning, can contribute to making economies and societies stronger and more resilient. It is also important to provide the necessary conditions for people to be agents of change through the choices they make.

RECALLING THAT:

1. At the 2017 Gothenburg Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth, the EU leaders jointly proclaimed the European Pillar of Social Rights, establishing the right to quality and inclusive education and training and lifelong learning for all as its first principle, and, as its fourth principle, the right to receive support for job search, training and re-qualification, as well as the right to transfer social protection and training entitlements during professional transitions,
2. The European Council conclusions of 14 December 2017 <sup>(1)</sup> singled out education as key to building inclusive and cohesive societies and to sustaining European competitiveness; education and training were thus put at the heart of the European political agenda for the first time,
3. In the EU Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 EU leaders agreed to step up investments in people's skills and education,
4. The EU leaders met at the Porto Social Summit on 7 May 2021 to deepen the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights by putting education and skills at the centre of political action,
5. In the June 2021 European Council conclusions EU leaders welcomed the EU headline targets on jobs, skills and poverty reduction set out in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, in line with the Porto Declaration, including the EU-level target of at least 60 % of adults participating in learning every year by 2030,
6. The relevant background documents, as set out in Annex III to this Resolution, should be taken into account.

AND TAKING NOTE OF:

7. The renewed European agenda for adult learning (EAAL), which was adopted by the Council of the European Union in 2011 in order to continue, complement and consolidate work in the field of adult learning under the four strategic objectives identified by the Council in the 'ET2020' strategic framework,
8. The Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults (2016), which underlines the specific needs of adults, particularly among low-qualified, unemployed and vulnerable groups, who require additional attention and support to improve their basic skills and enable progress,
9. The Report 'Achievements under the Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning' (2019), which takes stock of achievements in the period 2011-2018. It also identifies emerging topics and priorities that could be taken into account in the post-2020 period, including continued work on governance, supply and take-up, flexibility and access as well as quality assurance,

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<sup>(1)</sup> EUCO 19/1/17 REV 1.

10. The European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience (2020) proposes, among others, Action 8 'Skills for Life', which envisages work by the Commission and Member States on new priorities for the European Agenda for Adult Learning with the aim towards building comprehensive, quality and inclusive adult learning systems,
11. The Council Recommendation on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience (2020) and the Osnabrück Declaration on vocational education and training (2020) call for the further development of VET as an attractive and high-quality pathway for jobs and life, and raise and foster awareness among adults that learning is a lifelong endeavour,
12. The Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond envisages European cooperation in education and training for the period up to 2030 (2021–2030), to be conducted in an inclusive, holistic and lifelong learning perspective, and further states that lifelong learning includes all forms and levels of education and training from early childhood education and care to adult learning, including vocational education and training (VET) and higher education.

CONSIDERS THAT:

13. Member States of the European Union have diverse models of adult learning, depending on their national, regional and local needs, circumstances, policies, strategies and traditions. Reports show that due to the COVID-19 pandemic adjustments of adult learning and learning environments have further diversified adult learning practices throughout Europe <sup>(?)</sup>,
14. The Education and Training Monitor 2020 <sup>(?)</sup> reports that participation in adult learning is low, with an EU average of only 10.8 % of adults (women: 11.9 %, men: 9.8 %) aged 25-64 participating in adult learning in the last four weeks preceding the 2019 survey. Furthermore, Eurostat 2020 data show that participation in adult learning is lower than before the COVID-19 pandemic, with an EU average of only 9.2 % of adults (women: 10.0 %, men: 8.3 %) aged 25-64 participating in adult learning in the last four weeks preceding the survey,
15. The Eurydice report 'Adult education and training in Europe: Building inclusive pathways to skills and qualifications' (2021) shows that around one in five adults in the EU have not completed upper secondary education and that a substantial proportion of adults in Europe is affected by low levels of literacy, numeracy and/or digital skills. Countries also vary in terms of adult participation in education and training; however, a common feature is that most learning activities in which adults take part have a non-formal character.

RECOGNISES THAT:

16. A new learning culture should emphasise the relevance of basic skills for all and of continuously acquiring relevant knowledge, skills and competences, at all levels within formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts, throughout one's life. Individuals with a developed lifelong learning mindset are better equipped to adapt to new circumstances and to develop skills they need for jobs as well as for full participation in society and personal development,
17. Adult learning has a special place within the strategic priority of the Strategic framework for European cooperation towards the European Education Area – 'Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality for all', which is now more urgently needed than ever, due to the challenges of recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and the need for resilience, changing labour market needs, skills mismatch, the green and digital transitions and the persistently large proportion of adults in Europe with low basic knowledge, skills and competences,

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<sup>(?)</sup> See for example the following publications: Adult Learning and COVID-19: challenges and opportunities (ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning, 2020), Adult learning and education and COVID-19 (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2020) and Adult Learning and COVID-19: How much informal and non-formal learning are workers missing? (OECD, 2021).

<sup>(?)</sup> Education and Training Monitor 2020. Teaching and learning in a digital age, SWD (2020) 234 final. Data source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey (a change of methodology is foreseen in 2022).

18. The fragmentation of adult learning between sectors, policy areas and legal frameworks needs to be addressed. There is a need for dialogue between all parties to ensure that there is a shared vision for strengthened adult learning provision, where the social dimension of adult learning, as well as employability, are considered. Since individuals, employers and the state benefit from adult learning, the responsibility and contribution of each party should be recognised,
19. It is of the utmost importance to foster greater awareness among employers that adult learning contributes to the quality of work processes and outcomes, as well as to the quality of workers' engagement with their work. Adult learning can contribute to productivity, competitiveness, social inclusion, gender equality, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. It is an important factor in incentivising employers to take a more active role in supporting upskilling and reskilling and in enhancing the employability and labour market transitions of their employees on an ongoing basis. It is therefore important that a learning culture is created in all workplaces, that learning opportunities are planned and organised in the workplace, and should be promoted and supported by all stakeholders,
20. However, adult learning needs to go beyond the development of work-related skills. It is also important to foster greater awareness among the general population about the importance and benefits of participation in lifelong learning. Adult learning should be interlinked with all types and levels of education and training, including higher education, through flexible formal, non-formal and informal pathways,
21. Adult learning has the power to enhance life and work opportunities for adults, regardless of their socio-demographic and personal circumstances. Individual responsibility for career development should be considered as part of professional lifelong guidance and support. In addition, adult learning can contribute to active citizenship and community learning. It also supports personal, social and professional development and fulfilment, health and wellbeing, in accordance with the individual's current and future needs, talents and aspirations. Adult learning plays a crucial part in responding to current and future challenges and opportunities in life and at work, leading to sustainable communities,
22. The impacts of the demographic change, as well as the green and digital transitions, require new approaches to facilitate the participation of adults, including those not inclined to attend learning activities and the 65+ age group, in adult learning in order to support their full integration and participation in society.

UNDERLINES THAT:

23. Adult learning needs a holistic approach including inter-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration, and effective coordination at European, national, regional and local levels, respecting the diverse models of adult learning in the European Union and fully respecting the specific competences of the different policy levels.

ACCORDINGLY, AGREES THAT:

24. In the period up to and including 2030, the overall objective of the new European agenda for adult learning 2021-2030 (NEAAL 2030) will be to increase and improve the provision, promotion and take-up of formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities for all,
25. The NEAAL 2030's main priority areas ensure continuity of the work and further development of adult learning, as outlined below and detailed in Annex I hereto:
  - governance,
  - supply and take-up of lifelong learning opportunities,
  - accessibility and flexibility,
  - quality, equity, inclusion and success in adult learning,
  - the green and digital transitions.

FURTHER AGREES, HAVING REGARD TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY AND THE NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE MEMBER STATES, ON THE FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUMENTS:

26. *Open method of coordination (OMC)*: In the period up to 2030, the Member States and the Commission will work closely together to take stock of the work done at technical level, evaluating the process and its outcomes by means of OMC and by taking ownership of the process within their respective area of competence, at national, regional or European level. This should be done in consultation with the Working Group on Adult Learning set up as part of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) and the adult learning national coordinators' network.
27. *Mutual learning*: Mutual learning is a key element of the NEAAL 2030 as it provides the opportunity to identify and learn from good practices in different Member States. Mutual learning, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, will be carried out by such means as peer learning activities, peer counselling and exchanges of best policies and practices, conferences, seminars, high-level forums and expert groups, as well as through studies and analysis, networks (including web-based) and other forms of dissemination and through clear visibility of the outcomes.
28. *Effective governance*: The NEAAL 2030 is an integral part of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030).
29. *Monitoring of the process*: The periodic monitoring of progress towards the EU-level targets <sup>(4)</sup> through EU-level indicators (detailed in Annex II hereto) applied in the systematic collection and analysis of internationally comparable data provides an essential contribution to evidence-based policy-making without creating any additional burdens for Member States. Annual monitoring will take place through the Education and Training Monitor and the European Semester process (through the revised Social Scoreboard), tracking progress towards achieving all agreed EU-level targets in the field of adult learning. Monitoring and evaluation of EU-level targets and indicators should be done in cooperation with the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks (SGIB) and reviewed in 2023.
30. *Knowledge building and evidence-based adult learning policy*: It is necessary to further develop in-depth data analysis and research, where possible, at international, European and national level through a range of tools, and taking advantage of the work of Eurostat, Eurydice, CEDEFOP, the European Training Foundation - ETF, Eurofound, OECD and other organisations. The analysis should also include monitoring of vulnerable groups of adults and data on investment in education and training, if possible also at the level of employers and local communities, among others. The transformation of jobs and the enormous up- and re-skilling efforts require reliable and targeted skills intelligence to map future labour market skills needs. This will support adults in their lifelong career development and facilitate both labour-market and societal transitions.
31. *Cooperation with international organisations*: It is important to enhance the cooperation with organisations such as the OECD (in particular by making use of the results of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences (PIAAC)), the UN (in particular UNESCO and ILO) and the Council of Europe, and also within relevant regional or worldwide initiatives.
32. *Funding*: Adult learning is funded through a range of different instruments fed by a variety of sources. Adult learning should, preferably and where appropriate, and in line with the principle of subsidiarity, rely on continuous and regular funding rather than on subsidies related to projects or programmes. Financing approaches based on shared responsibility of public and private stakeholders can help increase and intensify resources.

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<sup>(4)</sup> The objectives are defined as EU average values to be achieved collectively by Member States. When reporting on progress towards achieving these objectives, including where relevant in the context of the European Semester, the Commission should take into account specificities of different national systems and circumstances. Member States should make full use of Union funding opportunities in line with their national circumstances, priorities and challenges. The objectives do not pre-empt decisions on how Union funding instruments under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and the NextGenerationEU are implemented.



INVITES THE MEMBER STATES, HAVING REGARD TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, TO:

33. Focus their efforts over the period 2021–2030 on the priority areas described in Annex I, thereby also contributing to the implementation of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030), where relevant, and in accordance with their national, regional and local contexts, circumstances and legislation,
34. Enhance effective liaison between the relevant ministries as well as with stakeholders, such as social partners, businesses, non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations with a view to improving coherence between policies on adult learning and broader socio-economic policies. This whole-of-government and multi-stakeholder approach can be further strengthened by effective national, regional and local coordination that would link policy and practice,
35. Support adult learning with lifelong guidance and career development by building partnerships at all levels. In line with quality assurance principles, this guidance should be linked to outreach activities, validation and awareness raising, thus contributing to the implementation of the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways. This will ensure that all adults have the opportunity to develop their basic skills and key competences based on their needs and attain the skill level necessary in today's society and labour market,
36. In implementing the Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, make progress in ensuring that validation opportunities are available to all adults, thus also ensuring second-chance opportunities, and possibly leading to full or partial qualifications,
37. Support expanding adult learning at the secondary and tertiary levels, both general and vocational through flexible learning pathways, for example evening classes, part-time education, distance and blended learning, and allow adult learners (a) to gain qualifications at EQF level 4 and above; and (b) to complete short courses allowing the updating, broadening and deepening of competences,
38. Raise the occupational status of and support the professionalisation of adult educators and trainers <sup>(*5*)</sup> and improve their initial and continuous education and training and professional development, including by supporting the use of innovative approaches (such as blended, online, distance, hybrid, etc.) and resources (ICT infrastructure and equipment),
39. Support, where appropriate, high-quality and inclusion-driven digitalisation of the education, training and learning processes at an organisational and individual level. In addition, assist, educate and train adult learners to use digital tools more widely and effectively while taking into account the digital divide and the digital gender gap,
40. Strive to develop simple, flexible and broad mechanisms for companies and individuals to raise awareness and foster a change in mindset among individuals and society, based on the lifelong learning concept that emphasises the need to acquire knowledge, skills and competences on an ongoing basis,
41. Facilitate lifelong learning to promote the participation of adults in learning through a variety of different instruments such as EPAL - the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (e.g. supporting adult learning professionals, including adult educators and trainers, guidance and support staff, researchers and academics, and policymakers),
42. Promote the learning mobility of adult learners and adult learning staff as well as cooperation across borders, including through the Erasmus+ programme, EU cohesion policy funds and other instruments, where appropriate,
43. Make further efforts to remove existing obstacles and barriers to all types of learning, including issues related to mobility, accessibility, gender inequalities, guidance, outreach, student services and recognition of prior learning as part of learning outcomes,

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<sup>(*5*)</sup> For the purposes of this Resolution, a teacher is a person who is acknowledged as having the status of a teacher (or equivalent) according to national legislation and practice, while a trainer is anyone who fulfils one or more activities linked to the (theoretical or practical) training function, either in an institution for education or training or at the workplace. They encompass teachers in general education and higher education, teachers and trainers in initial and continuing VET, as well as early childhood education and care professionals and adult educators, in line with the Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future (OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, p. 11).

44. Further develop quality assurance mechanisms by e.g. promoting internal and external quality assurance, with regard to programmes, processes, implementing organisations, adult educators and trainers, and counselling activities, and by developing data collection, for example by using information gathered through graduate tracking.

INVITES THE COMMISSION, IN LINE WITH ITS COMPETENCES AND HAVING REGARD TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

45. Support the Member States in implementing the NEAAL 2030 and its priority areas as described in Annex I, as well as in their possible development of holistic, whole-of-government national skills strategies,
  46. Ensure the complementarity and coherence of EU policy initiatives undertaken in accordance with the NEAAL 2030,
  47. Liaise closely with Member States, in order to ensure that a flexible and efficient governance structure is in place as outlined in the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021–2030), in particular involving the Working Group on Adult Learning, the network of adult learning national coordinators, peer learning activities and other networking activities,
  48. Support the adult learning national coordinators by funding their work to facilitate cooperation among Member States and with the Commission in implementing the NEAAL 2030,
  49. Strengthen knowledge about adult learning in Europe by conducting studies and research relevant for analysing adult learning issues, including through Eurydice, CEDEFOP, and ETF and in cooperation with other relevant networks and institutions, by making full use of their information and research capacities, without creating additional burdens for Member States. Attention should also be paid to the 65+ age group by developing comparative evidence and data on their participation in adult learning,
  50. Pursue and intensify cooperation with relevant international organisations such as the OECD, the UN (in particular UNESCO and ILO) and the Council of Europe, as well as with relevant regional or worldwide initiatives, for example in the Western Balkans, Eastern Partnership, etc.,
  51. Ensure the funds available at European level to support the implementation of the NEAAL 2030 through relevant EU programmes, funds and instruments, such as Erasmus+, the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the Just Transition Fund, InvestEU, the Technical Support Instrument, etc.,
  52. Present and regularly update the Council on a systematic overview and roadmap of ongoing and planned policies, cooperation tools, funding instruments, initiatives and targeted calls at Union level, such as Upskilling Pathways, Erasmus+, and the European Semester, which contribute to the achievement of the NEAAL 2030,
  53. Report on the implementation of the NEAAL 2030 as part of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (2021-2030), drawing on the work of the adult learning national coordinators, the Working Group on Adult Learning, studies and research experts,
  54. Enable further development and implementation of the EPALE, which supports and strengthens the adult learning professionals through exchanges amongst colleagues, blog posts, forums, networking and providing high-quality, accurate and relevant information on all aspects of adult learning,
  55. Support Member States, including through funding, in their regular involvement in research cycles in order to obtain comparable data on their progress in the field of adult skills (OECD Survey of Adult Skills [PIAAC], Adult Education Survey and Labour Force Survey).
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## ANNEX I

Taking into account the specific circumstances within each Member State, and in accordance with national priorities, Member States are invited, where appropriate with the support of the Commission, to focus on areas outlined below.

**Priority Area 1 – Governance**

- a) Partnerships between governments, regional and local authorities, education and training providers, companies, social partners, public employment and social services as well as civil society are a necessity and are strongly linked to the shared responsibility borne by all parties involved. This responsibility covers tasks including analysing education and training needs and developing learning opportunities for adults, optimising the involvement of and cooperation between all stakeholders, awareness raising and outreach, and supporting the provision of sufficient guidance and counselling to providers and companies.
- b) Strengthening the overall conditions for cooperation on adult learning needs: strive to develop a comprehensive approach to adult learning which includes all types, forms and levels of adult education and training and other relevant forms of learning opportunities, and clarifies the roles of all sectors involved. It should provide a cross-sectoral oversight, as well as inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral partnerships leading to policy coherence. Such an approach, as part of lifelong learning, could result in adult learning strategies and national skills strategies which are based on research, evidence and data.
- c) Cooperation and partnership of stakeholders at national, regional and local levels should meet the needs of adult learners and employers, including, if possible and according to national circumstances, the effective and efficient funding of adult learning initiatives.

**Priority Area 2 – Supply and take-up of lifelong learning opportunities**

- a) It is paramount to raise awareness among adults about the importance of learning as a lifelong endeavour, which should be pursued at regular intervals throughout a person's life.
- b) Adult learning should become more tailor-made. It should be encouraged and supported through effective lifelong guidance systems with outreach activities, as well as through integrated systems for the validation of prior learning.
- c) Existing skills forecasting systems (skills intelligence) should be available to all stakeholders in order to support the lifelong guidance and adult learning planning.
- d) Where appropriate, the integration of financial incentives, tax incentives and other social benefits or compensatory measures at employer level in the implementation of policies on adult learning should result in increased employer commitment to adult learning.
- e) Sustainable public funding should be supplemented by other funding at various levels (European, national, regional, local, employer, individual), for all types, forms and levels of adult learning. The efficient allocation and use of funds are crucial and need to be adjusted to individual learning needs. The monitoring of expenditure plays an important role in this.

**Priority Area 3 – Accessibility and flexibility**

- a) Adult learning should be flexible from the perspective of time, place, resources, forms of organisation and implementation, and should include a variety of approaches and measures to increase participation, inclusion and motivation for learning. It should allow enrolment not only in different levels of formal education and training but also in other programmes - including at non-formal level - aimed at reskilling and upskilling, together with a wider paradigm of learning. To fit in with their family, life and work responsibilities, flexibility is key to increasing and retaining adults in learning. Adult learning must provide high-quality programmes, irrespective of whether the financing is private or public.
- b) Educational and training programmes provided in the context of adult learning should build on the prior knowledge, skills and competences, experience, preferences and specifics of individual learners, based on their needs, possible self-assessment results, and with particular attention to vulnerable groups. An educational and learning approach that encourages adults to express their affinities, desires and needs is inclusive and motivates adults to educate themselves and to improve, while offering opportunities for personal and career development, community learning, intergenerational learning and other social aspects.

- c) Adult learning should also facilitate the acquisition and reinforcement of knowledge, skills and competences and thereby contribute to ensuring more inclusive societies and guaranteeing equal opportunities according to specific circumstances and socio-economical background, with special attention placed on vulnerable groups.
- d) Consideration should be given to putting in place financial and other support measures, as well as concrete actions to support learners. Examples might include financial incentives, such as loans, grants and tax reliefs.
- e) Exploring the concept and use of micro-credentials can help widen learning opportunities and could strengthen lifelong learning by providing more flexible and modular learning opportunities, and offering more inclusive learning paths.

#### **Priority Area 4 – Quality, equity, inclusion and success in adult learning**

##### *Professionalisation:*

- a) Professionalisation and capacity-building of adult educators and trainers, including practitioners (e.g. mentors, tutors) and other professionals involved in supporting activities such as guidance, validation, outreach, awareness-raising, leadership and management in adult learning is needed. Defining and validating the key competences of adult learning professionals could be an added value.
- b) Professionalisation in adult learning is essential for the quality of the education and training provided (e.g. in addition to content-related skills, adult learners need to acquire social and digital skills, for which a different/adjusted teaching approach is needed). Adult educators and trainers should be supported in implementing competence-based teaching and learning, including through counsellors and peer learning activities.
- c) A well-developed network and partnership of adult learning providers and other partners offering learning opportunities could ensure that adult learning becomes more accessible, and that money and time are less of a barrier than before.

##### *Mobility:*

- d) The mobility of adult learners, adult educators and trainers and other stakeholders in adult learning should continue to be expanded as a key element of European cooperation and a tool to enhance quality in adult learning and promote multilingualism in the European Union. Further efforts should be made to remove existing obstacles and barriers to all types of learning and teaching mobility, including issues related to access, guidance, student services and recognition of learning outcomes.
- e) Make use of the Erasmus+ programme, which offers a variety of new possibilities for strengthening mobility within the EU, outside the EU and for strengthening cross-border cooperation, possibly complemented with funding from ESF+ resources.

##### *Inclusion:*

- f) Adult learning is important for fostering gender equality and solidarity between different age groups and between cultures and people from all backgrounds and for fostering democratic citizenship and EU fundamental values; in this context, vulnerable groups merit special attention.
- g) A balanced allocation of resources for adult learning in education and training is needed. Funding models based on shared responsibilities and a strong public commitment need to be considered, especially with regard to adult target groups which are from a disadvantaged background, have disabilities or are affected by other factors that may cause exclusion.
- h) Incentives should be considered to eliminate the barriers to participation in adult learning of all target groups, such as lack of time for studying, low basic skills, low professional skills, inaccessibility, low levels of motivation and negative attitudes to learning. Cooperation with relevant stakeholders is essential in drawing disengaged adults and specific target groups back to learning.
- i) Intergenerational learning, including the 65+ age group, can be beneficial in promoting wellbeing as well as active, autonomous and healthy ageing.

*Quality Assurance:*

- j) Quality assurance of adult education and training providers and their partners on the systemic level should be further strengthened as appropriate.
- k) Monitoring the results of adult learning provision can increase quality assurance.
- l) Education and training should be more learner-centred and could provide short learning experiences to acquire or update targeted competences.
- m) The continuous development of monitoring, evaluation and quality methods is essential for ensuring that learning outcomes are evaluated and that progress is a prospect.
- n) In order to support the quality of adult learning, national and regional systems or models, including the validation and recognition of prior learning, should aim at developing and providing internal and external quality assurance.

**Priority area 5 – Green and digital transitions**

- a) The twin transitions (i.e. digital and green) act as a driver for innovations in learning pathways and new educational and training approaches, including learning environments. These innovations must ensure permeability and flexibility between the various forms and levels of adult learning. The digital and green transitions call for all generations to develop the necessary green and digital skills (increased digital media literacy and environmental awareness) to work and live proactively in a digital environment. Digital (blended, hybrid, etc.) learning also requires the professional development of adult educators and trainers, as well as support for the use of digital tools and the adaptation of learning materials, approaches and resources.
  - b) Develop approaches to integrating sustainable development into adult learning, including by addressing environmental attitudes, developing suitable mindsets, raising awareness and considering taking specific steps to develop training. The acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences in adult learning should be an important component of the ecological transformation process. Green skills, i.e. the skills needed in a low-carbon economy and society, will be required throughout society and in the workforce (in all sectors and at all levels) as emerging economic activities create new (or renewed) occupations, and as we strive for a sustainable lifestyle.
  - c) Additional support for opening up learning environments will accelerate digital transformation or improve the already existing infrastructure/initiatives, such as by promoting inclusive, digital and sustainable societies and learning workplaces. Such environments should enhance equal access to digital material for adult learners of all ages and should support the safe use of digital technologies. Learning platforms for the public good should be designed in such a way as to offer motivational support, professional mentoring, guidance and counselling to participants.
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## ANNEX II

## EU-LEVEL TARGETS AND INDICATORS

**Monitoring the European average performance in adult learning**

As a means of monitoring progress and identifying challenges, as well as contributing to evidence-informed policy making through systematic collection, analysis and research of internationally comparable data, a series of reference levels of European average performance in adult learning ('EU-level targets') and indicators should support the strategic priorities outlined in the NEAAL 2030. They should be based solely on comparable and reliable data and take account of the different situations in individual Member States.

**1. EU-level targets <sup>(1)</sup>****Participation of adults in learning**

At least 47 % of adults aged 25-64 should have participated in learning during the last 12 months, by 2025 <sup>(2)</sup>.

At least 60 % of adults aged 25-64 should have participated in learning during the last 12 months, by 2030.

**2. EU-level indicators**

- a) Participation of low-qualified adults in learning <sup>(3)</sup>
- b) Unemployed adults with a recent learning experience <sup>(4)</sup>
- c) Adults with at least basic digital skills <sup>(5)</sup>

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<sup>(1)</sup> The 2025 target was agreed by the Council in its Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030). The 2030 target was welcomed by the EU Heads of State or Government in the Porto Declaration and by the European Council in its conclusions of 24-25 June 2021.

<sup>(2)</sup> Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey (LFS), data collection from 2022 onwards. Given that the data source is planned to be changed in 2022 (from the Adult Education Survey to the EU Labour Force Survey), the target is subject to confirmation in 2023 on the basis of experience of the new data source. The Commission, in cooperation with SGIB, will evaluate the impact of these changes by comparing the results of the Adult Education Survey (AES) and the LFS in 2023 and consider possible changes to the LFS methodology, or to the level of the target. On the basis of this evaluation the Council will decide on a possible adaptation of the target level.

<sup>(3)</sup> The definition and sources of the indicator are similar to the indicator on participation of adults in learning. The main difference is the focus on low-qualified adults, i.e. those adults who have achieved at most a lower secondary qualification (or below) as their highest formal educational qualification. Thus, the indicator measures the proportion of low-qualified adults who report having participated in formal or non-formal education and training over a period of 12 months.

<sup>(4)</sup> The data is available from the EU Labour Force Survey. 'Recent learning experience' refers to participation in formal or non-formal education and training during the last 4 weeks.

<sup>(5)</sup> The source of the data for this indicator is the EU Community survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals.

## ANNEX III

The background documents relevant for the NEAAL 2030:

**European Council**

1. European Council conclusions of 24-25 June 2021 (EUCO 7/21)
2. A New Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 (adopted by the European Council on 20 June 2019)
3. European Council conclusions of 14 December 2017 (EUCO 19/1/17 REV 1)

**Council of the European Union**

4. Council conclusions on equity and inclusion in education and training in order to promote educational success for all, OJ C 221, 10.6.2021, p. 3
5. Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030), OJ C 66, 26.2.2021, p. 1
6. Council Recommendation on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, OJ C 417, 2.12.2020, p. 1
7. Council Recommendation on A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee and replacing the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee, OJ C 372, 4.11.2020, p. 1
8. Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future, OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, p. 11
9. Council conclusions on the key role of lifelong learning policies in empowering societies to address the technological and green transition in support of inclusive and sustainable growth, OJ C 389, 18.11.2019, p. 12
10. Council conclusions on the implementation of the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults, OJ C 189, 5.6.2019, p. 23
11. Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027, OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1
12. Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1
13. Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults, OJ C 484, 24.12.2016, p. 1
14. Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, OJ C 398, 22.12.2012, p. 1
15. Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning, OJ C 372, 20.12.2011, p. 1.

**Declarations**

16. The Porto Declaration (8 May 2021)
17. Osnabrück Declaration on vocational education and training as an enabler of recovery and just transitions to digital and green economies (30 November 2020)

**European Commission**

18. The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan (COM(2021) 102 final)
19. Green paper on ageing. Fostering solidarity and responsibility between generations (COM(2021) 50 final)
20. Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027. Resetting education and training for the digital age (COM(2020) 624 final)

21. European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience (COM(2020) 274 final)
  22. A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (COM(2020) 152 final)
  23. The European Green Deal (COM(2019) 640 final)
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

## COUNCIL

## COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION

of 29 November 2021

**on blended learning approaches for high-quality and inclusive primary and secondary education**

(2021/C 504/03)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Articles 165 and 166 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

WHEREAS:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected and put unprecedented pressure on education and training systems worldwide and across the Union. The societal restrictions have brought major changes to teaching and learning as well as to communication and collaboration within education and training communities <sup>(1)</sup>. They have had an impact on learners, their families, teachers, trainers, and institution leaders, as well as on community professionals who support education, such as social workers, psychologists, other counselling specialists, healthcare professionals and cultural educators. Member States were able to rapidly mobilise solutions and support for distance learning, making use of digital technologies in many instances. Useful lessons have been learned about new possibilities for education and training, including the significant increase in teachers' digital skills and competences and closer links between schools and the wider community. However, many Member States have experienced shortcomings in the system, with a widespread lack of readiness and resources for the shift to a different approach to teaching and learning, which highlighted and aggravated existing inequalities, gaps and needs <sup>(2)</sup>. Education and training systems need to address these and also to improve their resilience so as to better cope with and adapt to changing circumstances in the future.
2. The Council conclusions on countering the COVID-19 crisis in education and training invite Member States to 'resume face-to-face learning and teaching activities', and in addition to provide 'possibilities for distance, digital and blended learning', while paying 'additional attention to ensuring equal opportunities'. The Council conclusions on digital education in Europe's knowledge societies <sup>(3)</sup> further invite the Commission to 'follow up, in close cooperation with Member States and based on evidence', the aforementioned conclusions, 'aiming at a shared understanding at Union level of the approaches for effective, inclusive and engaging remote learning processes'.
3. The Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 outlines the European Commission's vision for high-quality, inclusive and accessible digital education in Europe. It is a call to action for stronger cooperation at European level to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic and make education and training systems fit for the digital age. It highlights the potential of technology to facilitate more accessible, flexible, personalised and learner-centred learning. It seeks to address inequities in education and training when digital skills and competences, access to appropriate tools, and reliable online connectivity are lacking. It stresses the need for strengthening digital capacity in education and training systems.

<sup>(1)</sup> Council conclusions on countering the COVID-19 crisis in education and training (OJ C 212 I, 26.6.2020, p. 9).

<sup>(2)</sup> See Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2021) 219 final part 1, page 6 (footnote 2).

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 415, 1.12.2020, p. 22.

4. Fostering the development of competences is one of the aims of a European Education Area that would be able 'to harness the full potential of education and culture as drivers for jobs, social fairness, active citizenship as well as a means to experience European identity in all its diversity' <sup>(4)</sup>. The Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) <sup>(5)</sup> sets, as the main goal of European cooperation in education and training, support for further development of education and training systems in Member States which are aimed at ensuring the personal, social and professional fulfilment of all citizens, whilst promoting democratic values, equality, social cohesion, active citizenship, and intercultural dialogue, as well as sustainable economic prosperity, the green and digital transitions, and employability.
5. The European Pillar of Social Rights <sup>(6)</sup> states as its first principle that everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that allow full participation in society and successful transitions in the labour market. Principle 11 of the Pillar states that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have the right to specific measures to enhance equal opportunities. The effective implementation of those principles greatly depends on the resolve and action of Member States. EU-level actions can complement national actions, and the Commission presented its contribution in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan <sup>(7)</sup>.
6. The European Skills Agenda <sup>(8)</sup> defines actions to help individuals and businesses develop more and better skills and to put them to use by strengthening sustainable competitiveness and by building resilience to react to crises, based on the lessons learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic; it also proposes fostering STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education in research and innovation actions.
7. The Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee <sup>(9)</sup> invites the Member States to guarantee effective and free access to education and school-based activities for children in need (i.e. at risk of poverty or social exclusion). The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child <sup>(10)</sup> calls for the building of inclusive, quality education.
8. In a rapidly changing and highly interconnected world, each person needs a wide range of competences and needs to develop them continually throughout life. The key competences as defined in the European Reference Framework on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning <sup>(11)</sup> aim to lay the foundation for achieving more equal and more democratic societies. They respond to the need for inclusive and sustainable growth, social cohesion and further development of the democratic culture.
9. The Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning <sup>(12)</sup> states that competence development is facilitated by promoting a variety of learning approaches and environments, including adequate use of digital technologies; providing support to educational staff and other stakeholders supporting learning processes, including families; supporting and further developing the assessment and validation of key competences acquired in different settings; and reinforcing collaboration within education and between education, training and learning settings at all levels, and in different fields.
10. The Council Recommendation on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience <sup>(13)</sup> proposes a modernised EU policy vision of VET, including its digitalisation and the use of blended learning. The Osnabrück Declaration on vocational education and training as an enabler of recovery and just transitions to digital and green economies states that digital learning can play an important and complementary role <sup>(14)</sup>.

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<sup>(4)</sup> COM(2017) 673 final.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ C 66, 26.2.2021, p. 1.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 428, 13.12.2017, p. 10.

<sup>(7)</sup> COM(2021) 102 final.

<sup>(8)</sup> COM(2020) 274 final.

<sup>(9)</sup> OJ L 223, 22.6.2021, p. 14.

<sup>(10)</sup> COM(2021) 142 final.

<sup>(11)</sup> OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 7.

<sup>(12)</sup> OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1.

<sup>(13)</sup> OJ C 417, 2.12.2020, p. 1.

<sup>(14)</sup> Endorsed on 30 November 2020.

11. The Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future <sup>(15)</sup> recognise that teachers, trainers and school leaders are an indispensable driving force of education and training who should be involved in the creation of education and training policies with autonomy in applying these policies in practice but who also need the support of a comprehensive approach to initial education, induction and continuous professional development.
12. The pandemic has increased a long-standing concern for the physical, mental and emotional well-being of children and young people. All children and young people should be given the support they need to enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle <sup>(16)</sup>, encouraging lifelong positive habits, and should have the opportunity to participate in a range of sports and other physical activities, which enhance motor skills and boost mental and emotional well-being. Children and young people also need support for their mental and emotional well-being during learning, including learning tasks under challenging circumstances and understanding safe and responsible online behaviour <sup>(17)</sup>. Support is also needed for those learners who spend extended periods of time away from their families, peers or school staff support. Identification of areas for improvement and remediation to address any learning losses and impacts on well-being are also important.
13. While fully recognising the value of face-to-face learning, learning in different ways and in different environments, including the school site, the home, the outdoors, cultural sites, workplaces and digital environments, can motivate children and young people to enhance their broad competence development. This in turn can help them to understand and be motivated by the relevance of formal education and training to their lives in society and increase their active engagement with local and global challenges, for instance those related to sustainability, the environment and climate change.
14. Education is a fundamental human right and a right of the child. Access to it has to be guaranteed, independent of the environment in which it takes place – the school site, other physical environments, at a distance, or a combination of all – and independent of the diverse personal and social circumstances of learners. Beyond the pandemic, while fully recognising the value of school-site and face-to-face learning, blended learning approaches are an opportunity to improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education and training, such as better learning provision in rural and remote areas, including the outermost regions and island communities, and for other learners who may (temporarily) not attend the school site full time: those who are part of traveller communities or occupational travellers; young carers; those with health issues or residing in hospitals and care centres; those engaged in high-performance training; and those in vocational education and training or paid work. All environments and tools should be equally accessible to minority groups, children and young people with disabilities and from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and should not lead to discrimination or segregation.
15. Blended learning approaches recognise the value of the school as a shared space for personal and social interaction, which is important for learning as a way of understanding and making meaning of the world. Both school architecture and school space design are significant in this regard.
16. Blended learning approaches can enhance broad competence development, due to the variety of learning tasks and tools they can encompass. The use of digital technology, including connecting devices online, can facilitate the interaction of the learner with other learners, learning programmes, and other sources of information, and can support face-to-face learning and learning in different environments. Acquisition of digital and data competences can be facilitated by blended learning approaches. The complementary use of scientific equipment, open educational resources (OER), craft tools, realia (objects found and used in everyday life), published texts, and writing and visual arts tools can support creativity and personal expression, both as an individual and collaboratively.

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<sup>(15)</sup> OJ C 193, 9.6.2020, p. 11.

<sup>(16)</sup> At EU level, for example, the European Commission is launching a 'HealthyLifestyle4All' initiative as a two-year campaign that aims to link sport and active lifestyles with health, food and other policies.

<sup>(17)</sup> See the JRC report 'The likely impact of COVID-19 on education: Reflections based on the existing literature and recent international datasets' (Di Pietro, G., Biagi, F., Dinis Mota Da Costa, P., Karpinski, Z. and Mazza, J., 2020).

17. Blended learning approaches require a coherent, system-wide approach to create enabling conditions. This includes engaging practitioners with different fields of expertise and promoting collaboration with the community, which encourages shared responsibility for the development of children and young people. The effectiveness of systematic measures to support blended learning approaches will also rely on articulating and supporting relationships between different elements of the ecosystem, between the local, regional and national education and training authorities; the education resources industry (providing technology, publishing, and other curriculum equipment); research, education and training institutions; communities; civil society organisations and initiatives; as well as families and learners themselves, regardless of their needs or levels of abilities.
18. Blended learning approaches are widely established practice in initial vocational education and training <sup>(18)</sup>; however, pandemic restrictions have challenged the capacity of institutions and organisations to provide work-based learning and maintain communication with trainers and mentors, and have had an impact on the provision of apprenticeships. The reduction in access to practical experiences has highlighted the known need for vocational education and training to take advantage of digital technology, including digital devices and learning platforms, ePortfolios and augmented reality and virtual reality for simulations. It has also reinforced the need to understand and coordinate how digital technologies are used for learning in different settings (e.g. on site at school or during work placements) in order to prepare learners for life and the future labour market.
19. The importance and relevance of non-formal learning is evident from experiences acquired through youth work, voluntary work, and participation in cultural activities, including grassroots sport. Non-formal learning plays an important role in supporting the development of essential interpersonal, communicative, cognitive and personal skills, including creativity, that facilitate young people's transition to adulthood, active citizenship and working life <sup>(19)</sup>. Identification of new ways of learning includes better cooperation between formal and non-formal learning settings <sup>(20)</sup>.
20. This Recommendation fully respects the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. It recognises that the level of autonomy enjoyed by education and training institutions varies widely across Member States. In some Member States, education and training institutions, teacher education institutions, as well as teachers and trainers, enjoy a high degree of autonomy. The Recommendation will be implemented according to national circumstances.

Taking into account the following definition of 'blended learning':

For the purposes of this Recommendation, blended learning in formal education and training involves a diversity of approaches and is to be understood as a school (in primary and secondary education, including vocational education and training), teacher and trainer or learner taking more than one approach to the learning process:

- blending school site and other physical environments away from the school site (either with the presence of a teacher/trainer, or separated by space and/or time in distance learning);
- blending different learning tools that can be digital (including online learning) and non-digital.

Using their professional pedagogical judgement, teachers, trainers and schools will select and facilitate the use of these approaches as part of engaging and effective learning tasks that support broad competence development, as appropriate to the age, abilities and circumstances of the learners and intended learning outcomes.

<sup>(18)</sup> Initial vocational education and training is usually carried out at upper secondary level and post-secondary level before students begin working life. It takes place either in a school-based environment (mainly in the classroom) or in work-based settings such as training centres and companies, depending on national education and training systems and economic structures.

<sup>(19)</sup> Council Conclusions on the role of youth work in supporting young people's development of essential life skills that facilitate their successful transition to adulthood, active citizenship and working life (OJ C 189, 15.6.2017, p. 30).

<sup>(20)</sup> Council conclusions on maximising the role of grassroots sport in developing transversal skills, especially among young people (OJ C 172, 27.5.2015, p. 8).

*Other physical environments* may include, for example, on the one hand: the home; hospitals (in the case of sick or injured children); and on the other hand cultural and memory institutions; farms, companies and other workplaces; nature sites and outdoors; sports and youth spaces.

*Distance learning* is defined as learning taking place with the teacher/trainer being separated from the learner by space and/or time, taking into account national circumstances.

*Online learning* is defined as learning that takes place using digital technology to connect different devices and to facilitate interaction between the learner and teachers, trainers or other educational staff, or other learners, aimed at obtaining learning content or other information to achieve the objectives of learning programmes.

*Digital learning tools* can include, for example: smart boards and projectors for collaboration in classrooms; mobile devices, tablets and laptops with applications for designing, exploring and sharing work; television and radio for following programmes; and augmented-reality and virtual-reality tools and applications for enhanced interactivity. Digital learning tools do not always need to be connected to the internet,

HEREBY RECOMMENDS THAT MEMBER STATES:

1. Based on lessons learned in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, support the recovery and preparedness of education and training systems by addressing the consequences of the pandemic for learners, teachers, trainers and other educational staff, develop longer-term strategic approaches to blended learning and build on successful innovations introduced or tested during the pandemic to share and scale good practices, in line with the principles set out in this Recommendation <sup>(21)</sup>. These innovations do not replace but complement school-site and face-to-face learning.
2. Support learners by considering the following measures:

*As a direct response to the crisis*

- a) Providing additional learning opportunities and targeted support to learners to remediate the learning loss caused by partial school closures and restrictions to face-to-face teaching, in particular those who face learning difficulties, have special educational needs, are from disadvantaged groups or have been otherwise affected by education and training disruption. This could include, for example, enhanced individualised support and personal tutoring, mentoring systems (including peer mentoring), inclusive learning communities, extra teacher resources assigned to the class (e.g. co-teaching), increased counselling support, additional learning time during the school year and/or holiday period, and access to additional learning environments, such as public libraries and community spaces, and to after-school services with pedagogical support.
- b) Prioritising the physical and mental well-being of learners and their families. This could include: strengthening psychological support and developing guidance for mental health; including learner well-being and anti-bullying policies in school objectives; monitoring and quality assurance processes (as part of regular quality assurance or school inspection work or in the context of specific assessments of the school situation in the context of the pandemic); assigning dedicated staff or facilitating access to qualified mental health and support professionals and services.
- c) Boosting the development of digital skills and competences of all learners and their families, taking into account the digital divide and the digital gender gap, while tackling all stereotypes and biases, including gender stereotypes and gender bias, and boosting the digital capacity of the education and training systems by encouraging investment at school and community levels in available devices and connectivity and by providing opportunities to boost digital skills and competences, including using technology for communication, both for independent and collaborative learning and for self-assessment to improve further learning. Implementing investments and reforms foreseen in national and Recovery and Resilience Facility plans ensures that all learners can access the necessary equipment and learning opportunities.

<sup>(21)</sup> The Framework for Blended Learning presented in the Commission Staff Working Document SWD (2021) 219 final can be a basis for specific actions adapted to countries' situations.

*To support recovery and the longer-term preparedness of education and training:*

- d) Exploring ways to develop blended learning approaches in primary and secondary education, including vocational education and training, for the benefit of all learners and to ensure a lasting positive impact on teaching and learning adapted to learners' age, abilities, specific needs and learning objectives, while fully recognising the value of school-site and face-to-face learning. This could include reinforcing the development and embedding of different tools for learning, in order to provide opportunities for investigation and expression, including the development of science, digital and media literacy; supporting learning that combines different environments to enrich the learning experience; creating an appropriate balance between teacher- and student-led learning on the one hand, and collaborative and independent learning on the other; exploring learning methods to make new opportunities attractive and offer better learning solutions for both learners and teachers.
  - e) Using blended learning approaches as a way to support learners' well-being, autonomy and personalised learning (taking into account learners' age, abilities, and specific learning needs), and to develop their 'personal, social and learning to learn competence' (one of the eight 'key competences for lifelong learning' <sup>(22)</sup> and further developed in the Commission LifeComp European framework initiative <sup>(23)</sup>).
3. Support teachers and trainers by considering the following measures:

*As a direct response to the crisis:*

- a) Supporting teachers' self-assessment on use of digital technologies, as well as upskilling courses and other forms of professional learning for teachers and trainers to help them use and embed digital programmes and tools in teaching <sup>(24)</sup>. Developing and disseminating online and on-site pedagogical modules and resources to help teachers and trainers adapt their teaching methods and practices to blended learning approaches <sup>(25)</sup>, based on their experience and feedback, and engage with them in the use of new tools and materials, including how to operate safely and ethically in digital environments and how to support students in doing so.
- b) Increasing focus on the well-being and quality of professional life of teachers and trainers, school leaders and other educational staff in order to mitigate stress and prevent burnout. This could include: facilitating access to qualified mental-health and support professionals and services; promoting the development and/or organisation of peer support to mitigate stress; and providing enhanced opportunities for training in resilience/mental well-being in initial teacher education and continued professional development programmes.

*To support recovery and the longer-term preparedness of teachers and trainers:*

- c) Embedding blended learning approaches in initial teacher education <sup>(26)</sup> and continued professional development <sup>(27)</sup> programmes to help educational staff to adapt learning design as appropriate to their professional contexts and help them to become competent in facilitating learning in a range of indoor and outdoor environments, tools and tasks.

<sup>(22)</sup> Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1).

<sup>(23)</sup> LifeComp comprises three intertwined competence areas: 'Personal', 'Social', and 'Learning to learn'. Each area includes three competences: self-regulation, flexibility, wellbeing (personal area); empathy, communication, collaboration (social area); growth mindset, critical thinking, and managing learning (learning to learn area). LifeComp competences apply to all spheres of life and can be acquired lifelong through formal, informal, and non-formal education. <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/lifecomp>

<sup>(24)</sup> On 5 October 2021, the European Commission launched the new SELFIE for Teachers tool, which can support educators in planning the development of their digital competences.

<sup>(25)</sup> The School Education Gateway includes already some resources on blended learning, dedicated to teachers and trainers.

<sup>(26)</sup> A period of formal study in order to gain a recognised qualification and be employed as a teacher. This is typically offered by education departments in universities or independent teacher education institutions (cf. glossary in the Staff Working Document SWD (2021) 219 final).

<sup>(27)</sup> The learning that professionals engage in at any stage of their career to enhance their practice (cf. glossary in the Staff Working Document SWD (2021) 219 final).

- d) Providing access to centres of expertise and to appropriate resources for guiding and enhancing blended learning approaches. Supporting education and training staff to develop blended learning approaches in their specific contexts through staff exchanges and peer learning, creating strong school teams through collaborative learning, networks, collaboration projects, and communities of practice.
  - e) Developing guidance on new approaches to assessment and final examinations, including online, with suitable tools for formative and summative assessment that are appropriate for different levels and learning settings of education and training.
  - f) Encouraging educational staff to participate in exploratory projects and research, including testing the use of tasks in other learning environments and the use of digital technology to support teaching and learning processes.
4. Support schools by considering the following measures:

*As a direct response to the crisis:*

- a) Providing tools and resources for blended learning approaches, as well as guidance to schools on how these can be used effectively <sup>(28)</sup>.
- b) Mobilising or recruiting additional staff to allow more time for individual support at school and in after-school activities, if possible.
- c) Supporting effective partnerships for infrastructure and resources between different education and training providers, including from local and regional authorities, business, professional associations, arts, cultural heritage, sport, nature, higher education and research institutes, civil society, the educational resources industry (including technology, publishing, and other curriculum equipment) and educational research.
- d) Supporting schools in monitoring and self-evaluation of their inclusion strategies and practices regarding blended learning approaches and in taking measures necessary to remedy shortcomings, including the use of EU tools <sup>(29)</sup>.
- e) Improving parents', legal guardians' and families' understanding of learning environments, tools and tasks via systematic communication and guidance, without creating additional burdens for them.

*To support longer-term recovery and to improve capacity for organisational change*

- f) Investing in high-speed internet connectivity for school-site and distance learning environments, on which online learning depends, accompanied by plans for maintenance and modernisation of the technical infrastructure.
- g) Allowing, where possible and in line with national and regional legislation and circumstances, an appropriate level of autonomy for school-level decision-making (by school boards, heads, leaders), in order to facilitate innovation, responsiveness and adaptation to local and regional needs.
- h) Supporting school leaders, who are key in managing organisational change and ongoing improvement, with dedicated professional development and guidance for their roles. Supporting schools and associated education and training providers in reflecting on blended learning approaches in their strategic planning and school improvement processes, which may include the use of self-assessment tools.
- i) Supporting dialogue and networking between a range of stakeholders, including families, engaged in learning at school sites and other physical environments and in distance learning, in order to generate feedback and ideas for future development from different sources. This should also include dialogue, guidance and strategies to protect children's and young people's safety and to ensure the confidentiality and protection of their data, and their security and privacy in the digital world.

<sup>(28)</sup> The SELFIE tool can support schools to reflect and gather evidence on their current situation and needs. The tool is modular and can be adapted by each school to take their particular context into account.

<sup>(29)</sup> The European Toolkit for Schools on 'Promoting inclusive education and tackling early school leaving' offers a wealth of resources and practical examples, as well as a self-assessment tool for schools.

- j) Using, where possible, part of the internal and/or external review and quality assurance mechanisms of a school for the blend of learning environments and tools, incorporating evaluation of/via other providers than the school.
5. Make full use of EU funds and expertise for reforms and investment in infrastructure, tools and pedagogy to increase resilience and preparedness for future-ready schools, in particular Erasmus+, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the European Social Fund Plus, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Digital Europe Programme, Horizon Europe and the Technical Support Instrument.
6. Invest in research on and monitoring and evaluation of the policy challenges and the impact of these initiatives on the educational ecosystem in order to build on lessons learnt and feed into future policy reform, including by building on learners' experiences as well as on the data collected, if available, to develop best practices and tailored AI solutions for improved learning programmes.
7. Take measures and follow up on the implementation of this recommendation, in line with national and regional education and training systems. Take into account, if appropriate, any measures supporting blended learning approaches in the national action plans for implementation of the European Child Guarantee.

HEREBY INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITH DUE REGARD FOR SUBSIDIARITY AND NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, TO:

1. Support the implementation of the Recommendation by facilitating mutual learning and exchanges among Member States and all relevant stakeholders, subject to the establishment and further elaboration of measures, through:
  - i) the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) <sup>(30)</sup>;
  - ii) the new European Digital Education Hub and the new Structured Dialogue with Member States, which will be established under the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 to support cross-sectoral collaboration on digital education;
  - iii) EU online platforms and communities for education and training, including the School Education Gateway, eTwinning and the European Toolkit for Schools on 'Promoting inclusive education and tackling early school leaving';
2. Support the development of resources, in cooperation with Member States, to be used on a voluntary basis, such as:
  - i) evidence-informed guidance material on learning design and school organisational practice within blended learning approaches, including on possible digital tools, approaches to the assessment and validation of learning, and data protection, privacy and online safety;
  - ii) the creation and sharing of high-quality digital education content, also exploring the potential of the European Digital Education Content Framework currently under development by the Commission.
3. Support professional development and learning opportunities for teachers, trainers and other educational staff, by:
  - i) promoting massive open online courses (MOOCs) on blended learning approaches for teachers, trainers, school leaders and teacher trainers hosted by the School Education Gateway platform, as well as the wide use of these courses for educational staff in schools;
  - ii) sharing good practice from Erasmus+ staff exchanges, projects and networks, including through the eTwinning online community, the future Erasmus+ Teacher Academies and the Centres of Vocational Excellence;
  - iii) promoting the new online SELFIE tool for teachers to help them reflect on their digital competences and to plan for further improvement. This builds on the SELFIE tool for whole-school digital planning, which can help support effective blended learning approaches, including in VET.
4. Work with all stakeholders, including providers of software and hardware, on ways to improve digital infrastructure and tools and their use in relation to education and training and, in addition, stress the importance of confidentiality and data protection in that context.

<sup>(30)</sup> OJ C 66, 26.2.2021, p. 1.



5. Support initiatives to further develop and promote inclusive, equitable, quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, particularly regarding the inclusion of learners in various circumstances that affect their access to particular learning environments and tools, and the inclusion of those who require targeted support in the learning process.
6. Continue its support to Member States undertaking reforms in order to enhance the quality and inclusiveness of education and training systems and support their digital readiness, in line with the objectives of the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027.
7. Address the development of blended learning approaches in primary and secondary education, including vocational education and training, in regular progress reports on the European Education Area and the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027.

Done at Brussels, 29 November 2021.

*For the Council*  
*The President*  
S. KUSTEC

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## II

*(Information)*INFORMATION FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES  
AND AGENCIES

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Non-opposition to a notified concentration****(Case M.10463 – SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALE / HYUNDAI MOTOR COMPANY / JV)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2021/C 504/04)

On 6 December 2021, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>. The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the ‘Competition policy’ website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32021M10463. EUR-Lex is the online point of access to European Union law.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

**Non-opposition to a notified concentration****(Case M.10489 – BAXTER / HILL-ROM)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2021/C 504/05)

On 6 December 2021, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>. The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the ‘Competition policy’ website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32021M10489. EUR-Lex is the online point of access to European Union law.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

**Non-opposition to a notified concentration**  
**(Case M.10439 – DP WORLD / SYNCREON)**

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2021/C 504/06)

On 23 November 2021, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>. The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the ‘Competition policy’ website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32021M10439. EUR-Lex is the online point of access to European Union law.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

**Non-opposition to a notified concentration**  
**(Case M.10532 – GIP / IFM / SYDNEY AIRPORT)**

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2021/C 504/07)

On 2 December 2021, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>. The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the ‘Competition policy’ website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32021M10532. EUR-Lex is the online point of access to European Union law.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

**Non-opposition to a notified concentration****(Case M.10382 – CDPE / MACQUARIE / BLACKSTONE / ASPI)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2021/C 504/08)

On 12 November 2021, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>. The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the ‘Competition policy’ website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32021M10382. EUR-Lex is the online point of access to European Union law.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

## IV

*(Notices)*

## NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

## COUNCIL

**Notice for the attention of certain persons subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP and Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine**

(2021/C 504/09)

The following information is brought to the attention of Mr. Denis Valentinovich BEREZOVSKIY (No 4), Mr. Sergey Pavlovych TSEKOV (No 8), Mr. Sergei Vladimirovich ZHELEZNYAK (No 17), Mr. Aleksandr Viktorovich VITKO (No 19), Mr. Alexander Mihailovich NOSATOV (No 27), Lt. Gen. Igor Nikolaevich (Mykolayovich) TURCHENYUK (No 32), Mr. Sergei Ivanovich MENYAILO (No 37), Ms. Olga Fedorovna KOVITIDI (No 38), Mr. Vladimir Anatolievich SHAMANOV (No 50), Mr. Aleksandr Yurevich BORODAI (No 62), Mr. Alexander KHRYAKOV (No 65), Mr. Marat Faatovich BASHIROV (No 66), Mr. Boris Vyacheslavovich GRYZLOV (No 77), Mr. Mikhail Vladimirovich DEGTYARYOV/DEGTYAREV (No 79), Mr. Fyodor Dmitrievich BEREZIN (No 84), Mr. Miroslav Vladimirovich RUDENKO (No 98), Mr. Vladimir Abdaliyevich VASILYEV (No 108), Mr. Igor Vladimirovich LEBEDEV (No 114), Mr. Alexander Mikhailovich BABAKOV (No 119), Mr. Oleg Konstantinovich AKIMOV (No 121), Mr. Yevgeniy Vyacheslavovich ORLOV (No 131), Mr. Eduard Aleksandrovich BASURIN (No 137), Mr. Andrei Valeryevich KARTAPOLOV (No 149), Mr. Ruslan Ismailovich BALBEK (No 152), Mr. Dmitry Anatolievich BELIK (No 154), Mr. Andrei Dmitrievich KOZENKO (No 155), Ms. Svetlana Borisovna SAVCHENKO (No 156), Mr. Pavel Valentinovich SHPEROV (No 157), Ms. Inna Nikolayevna GUZEYEVA (No 162), Ms. Natalya Ivanovna BEZRUCHENKO (No 163), Ms. Olga Valerievna POZDNYAKOVA (No 167), Mr. Aleksandr Vladimirovich DVORNIKOV (No 183), Mr. Sergei Andreevich DANILENKO (No 184), Ms. Lidia Aleksandrovna BASOVA (No 185) and Mr. Leonid Kronidovich RYZHENKIN (No 192), persons appearing in the Annex to Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP <sup>(1)</sup> and in Annex I to Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 <sup>(2)</sup> concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine.

The Council is considering maintaining the restrictive measures against the above-mentioned persons with new statements of reasons. Those persons are hereby informed that they may submit a request to the Council to obtain the intended statements of reasons for their designation, before 22 December 2021, to the following address:

Council of the European Union

General Secretariat  
RELEX.1.C  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175  
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel  
BELGIQUE/BELGIË  
Email: sanctions@consilium.europa.eu

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 16.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 6.

**Notice for the attention of the persons subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2196, and in Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2193 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine**

(2021/C 504/10)

The following information is brought to the attention of the persons that appear in the Annex to Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP <sup>(1)</sup>, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2196 <sup>(2)</sup>, and in Annex I to Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 <sup>(3)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2193 <sup>(4)</sup> concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine.

The Council of the European Union has decided that those persons should be included in the list of persons, entities and bodies subject to restrictive measures provided for in Decision 2014/145/CFSP and in Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine. The grounds for designations of those persons appear in the relevant entries in those Annexes.

The attention of the persons concerned is drawn to the possibility of making an application to the competent authorities of the relevant Member State(s) as indicated in the web sites in Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 269/2014, in order to obtain an authorisation to use frozen funds for basic needs or specific payments (cf. Article 4 of the Regulation).

The persons concerned may submit a request to the Council, together with supporting documentation, that the decision to include them on the above-mentioned list should be reconsidered, to the following address before 4 January 2022:

Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat  
RELEX.1.C  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175  
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel  
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: [sanctions@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:sanctions@consilium.europa.eu)

The attention of the persons concerned is also drawn to the possibility of challenging the Council's decision before the General Court of the European Union, in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 275, second paragraph, and Article 263, fourth and sixth paragraphs, of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 16.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 14.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 6.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 4.



**Notice for the attention of the data subjects to whom the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP and Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine apply**

(2021/C 504/11)

The attention of data subjects is drawn to the following information in accordance with Article 16 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup>.

The legal bases for this processing operation are Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP <sup>(2)</sup>, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2196 <sup>(3)</sup>, and Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 <sup>(4)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2193 <sup>(5)</sup>.

The controller of this processing operation is the Department RELEX.1.C in the Directorate-General External Relations - RELEX of the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC), that can be contacted at:

Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat  
RELEX.1.C  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175  
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel  
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: [sanctions@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:sanctions@consilium.europa.eu)

The GSC's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at:

Data Protection Officer

[data.protection@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:data.protection@consilium.europa.eu)

The purpose of the processing operation is the establishment and updating of the list of persons subject to restrictive measures in accordance with Decision 2014/145/CFSP, as amended by Decision (CFSP) 2021/2196, and Regulation (EU) No 269/2014, as implemented by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2193.

The data subjects are the natural persons who fulfil the listing criteria as laid down in Decision 2014/145/CFSP and Regulation (EU) No 269/2014.

The personal data collected includes data necessary for the correct identification of the person concerned, the statement of reasons and any other data related thereto.

The personal data collected may be shared as necessary with the European External Action Service and the Commission.

Without prejudice to restrictions pursuant to Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, the exercise of the rights of the data subjects such as the right of access, as well as the rights to rectification or to object will be answered in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

Personal data will be retained for 5 years from the moment the data subject has been removed from the list of persons subject to the restrictive measures or the validity of the measure has expired, or for the duration of court proceedings in the event they had been started.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 16.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 445, 13.12.2021, p. 14.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 6.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ L 445, 13.12.2021, p. 4.

Without prejudice to any judicial, administrative or non-judicial remedy, data subjects may lodge a complaint with the European Data Protection Supervisor in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725 ([edps@edps.europa.eu](mailto:edps@edps.europa.eu)).

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**Notice for the attention of the persons and entity subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2197 and in Council Regulation (EU) 2020/1998, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2195 concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses**

(2021/C 504/12)

The following information is brought to the attention of the persons and entity that appear in the Annex to Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999 <sup>(1)</sup>, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2197 <sup>(2)</sup>, and in Annex I to Council Regulation (EU) 2020/1998 <sup>(3)</sup> as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2195 <sup>(4)</sup>, concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses.

The Council of the European Union has decided that those persons and entity should be included on the list of natural and legal persons, entities and bodies subject to restrictive measures provided for in Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999 and Regulation (EU) 2020/1998. The grounds for designations of those persons and entity appear in the relevant entries in those Annexes.

The attention of the persons and entity concerned is drawn to the possibility of making an application to the competent authorities of the relevant Member State(s) as indicated in the websites in Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2020/1998, in order to obtain an authorisation to use frozen funds for basic needs or specific payments (cf. Article 4 of the Regulation).

The persons and entity concerned may submit a request to the Council before 31 July 2022, together with supporting documentation that the decision to include them on the above-mentioned list should be reconsidered, to the following address:

Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat  
RELEX.1.C  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175  
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel  
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: [sanctions@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:sanctions@consilium.europa.eu)

Any observations received will be taken into account for the purpose of the Council's periodic review, pursuant to Article 10 of Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999, of the list of designated persons and entities.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 410 I, 7.12.2020, p. 13.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 17.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 410 I, 7.12.2020, p. 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 10.

**Notice for the attention of the data subjects to whom the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999 and Council Regulation (EU) 2020/1998 concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses apply**

(2021/C 504/13)

The attention of data subjects is drawn to the following information in accordance with Article 16 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup>.

The legal basis for this processing operation are Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999 <sup>(2)</sup>, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2197 <sup>(3)</sup>, and Regulation (EU) 2020/1998 <sup>(4)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2195 <sup>(5)</sup>.

The controller of this processing operation is the Department RELEX.1.C in the Directorate-General for External Relations - RELEX of the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC), that can be contacted at:

Council of the European Union

General Secretariat

RELEX.1.C

Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175

1048 Bruxelles/Brussel

BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: [sanctions@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:sanctions@consilium.europa.eu)

The GSC's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at:

Data Protection Officer

[data.protection@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:data.protection@consilium.europa.eu)

The purpose of the processing operation is the establishment and updating of the list of persons subject to restrictive measures in accordance with Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999, as amended by Decision (CFSP) 2021/2197, and Regulation (EU) 2020/1998 as implemented by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2195, concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses.

The data subjects are the natural persons who fulfil the listing criteria as laid down in Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999 and Regulation (EU) 2020/1998.

The personal data collected includes data necessary for the correct identification of the person concerned, the statement of reasons and any other data related thereto.

The personal data collected may be shared as necessary with the European External Action Service and the Commission.

Without prejudice to restrictions pursuant to Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, the exercise of the rights of the data subjects such as the right of access, as well as the rights to rectification or to object will be answered in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

Personal data will be retained for 5 years from the moment the data subject has been removed from the list of persons subject to the restrictive measures or the validity of the measure has expired, or for the duration of court proceedings in the event they had been started.

Without prejudice to any judicial, administrative or non-judicial remedy, data subjects may lodge a complaint with the European Data Protection Supervisor in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 ([edps@edps.europa.eu](mailto:edps@edps.europa.eu)).

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 410 I, 7.12.2020, p. 13.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 17.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 410 I, 7.12.2020, p. 1.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 10.

**Notice for the attention of persons subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP, as implemented by Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2199, and in Council Regulation (EU) No 36/2012, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2194, concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria**

(2021/C 504/14)

The following information is brought to the attention of the persons that appear in Annex I to Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP <sup>(1)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2199 <sup>(2)</sup>, and in Annex II to Council Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 <sup>(3)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2194 <sup>(4)</sup>, concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria.

The Council of the European Union has decided that those persons should be included in the list of persons and entities in Annex I to Decision 2013/255/CFSP and Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 36/2012. The grounds for designation of those persons appear in the relevant entries in those Annexes.

The attention of the persons concerned is drawn to the possibility of making an application to the competent authorities of the relevant Member State(s) as indicated on the websites in Annex III to Council Regulation (EU) No 36/2012, in order to obtain an authorisation to use frozen funds for basic needs or specific payments (cf. Article 16 of the Regulation).

The persons concerned may submit a request to the Council, together with supporting documentation that the decision to include them on the above-mentioned list should be reconsidered, before 1 March 2022, to the following address:

Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat  
RELEX.1.C  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175  
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel  
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: [sanctions@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:sanctions@consilium.europa.eu)

Any observations received will be taken into account for the purpose of the Council's next review, pursuant to Article 34 of Decision 2013/255/CFSP and Article 32(4) of Regulation (EU) No 36/2012, of the list of designated persons and entities.

The attention of the persons concerned is also drawn to the possibility of challenging the Council's decision before the General Court of the European Union, in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 275, second paragraph, and Article 263, fourth and sixth paragraphs, of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 147, 1.6.2013, p. 14.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 23.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 16, 19.1.2012, p. 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 7.

**Notice for the attention of the data subjects to whom the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP and in Council Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria apply**

(2021/C 504/15)

The attention of data subjects is drawn to the following information in accordance with Article 16 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup>.

The legal basis for this processing operation are Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP <sup>(2)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2199 <sup>(3)</sup>, and Council Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 <sup>(4)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2194 <sup>(5)</sup>.

The controller of this processing operation is the Council of the European Union represented by the Director General of RELEX (External Relations) of the General Secretariat of the Council and the department entrusted with the processing operation is RELEX.1.C that can be contacted at:

Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat  
RELEX.1.C  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175  
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel  
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: [sanctions@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:sanctions@consilium.europa.eu)

The purpose of the processing operation is the establishment and updating of the list of persons subject to restrictive measures in accordance with Decision 2013/255/CFSP, as implemented by Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2199, and Regulation (EU) No 36/2012, as implemented by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2194.

The data subjects are the natural persons who fulfil the listing criteria as laid down in Decision 2013/255/CFSP and Regulation (EU) No 36/2012.

The personal data collected includes data necessary for the correct identification of the person concerned, the statement of reasons and any other data related thereto.

The personal data collected may be shared as necessary with the European External Action Service and the Commission.

Without prejudice to restrictions pursuant to Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, the exercise of the rights of the data subjects such as the right of access, as well as the rights to rectification or to object will be answered in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

Personal data will be retained for 5 years from the moment the data subject has been removed from the list of persons subject to the restrictive measures or the validity of the measure has expired, or for the duration of court proceedings in the event they had been started.

Without prejudice to any judicial, administrative or non-judicial remedy, data subjects may lodge a complaint with the European Data Protection Supervisor in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 147, 1.6.2013, p. 14.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 23.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 16, 19.1.2012, p. 1.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 7.

**Notice for the attention of the person subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333, as implemented by Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2198, and in Council Regulation (EU) 2016/44, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2192, concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya**

(2021/C 504/16)

The following information is brought to the attention of the person designated in Annexes II and IV to Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333 <sup>(1)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2198 <sup>(2)</sup>, and in Annex III to Council Regulation (EU) 2016/44 <sup>(3)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2192 <sup>(4)</sup>, concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya.

The Council of the European Union has decided that the person that appears in the above-mentioned Annexes should be included on the list of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures provided for in Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333 and Regulation (EU) 2016/44.

The attention of the person concerned is drawn to the possibility of making an application to the competent authorities of the relevant Member State(s) as indicated on the websites in Annex IV to Regulation (EU) No 2016/44, in order to obtain an authorisation to use frozen funds for basic needs or specific payments (cf. Article 8 of the Regulation).

The person concerned may submit a request to the Council before 15 May 2022, together with supporting documentation, that the decision to include that person on the above-mentioned list should be reconsidered. Any such request should be sent to the following address:

Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat  
RELEX.1.C.  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175  
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel  
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: [sanctions@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:sanctions@consilium.europa.eu)

Any observations received will be taken into account for the purpose of the Council's periodic review, in accordance with Article 17(2) of Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333 and Article 21(6) of Regulation (EU) 2016/44, of the list of designated persons and entities.

The attention of the person concerned is also drawn to the possibility of challenging the Council's decision before the General Court of the European Union, in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 275, second paragraph, and Article 263, fourth and sixth paragraphs, of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 206, 1.8.2015, p. 34.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 21.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 12, 19.1.2016, p. 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 1.

**Notice for the attention of the data subjects to whom the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333 and Council Regulation (EU) 2016/44 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Libya apply**

(2021/C 504/17)

The attention of data subjects is drawn to the following information in accordance with Article 16 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup>.

The legal basis for this processing operation is Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333 <sup>(2)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2198 <sup>(3)</sup>, and Council Regulation (EU) 2016/44 <sup>(4)</sup>, as implemented by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2192 <sup>(5)</sup>.

The controller of this processing operation is the Council of the European Union represented by the Director General of RELEX (External Relations) of the General Secretariat of the Council and the department entrusted with the processing operation is RELEX.1.C that can be contacted at:

Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat  
RELEX.1.C  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175  
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel  
BELGIQUE /BELGIË

Email: [sanctions@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:sanctions@consilium.europa.eu)

The purpose of the processing operation is the establishment and updating of the list of persons subject to restrictive measures in accordance with Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333, as implemented by Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2021/2198, and Regulation (EU) 2016/44, as implemented by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2192.

The data subjects are the natural persons who fulfil the listing criteria as laid down in Decision (CFSP) 2015/1333 and Regulation (EU) 2016/44.

The personal data collected includes data necessary for the correct identification of the person concerned, the statement of reasons and any other data related thereto.

The personal data collected may be shared as necessary with the European External Action Service and the Commission.

Without prejudice to restrictions pursuant to Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, the exercise of the rights of the data subjects such as the right of access, as well as the rights to rectification or to object will be answered in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

Personal data will be retained for 5 years from the moment the data subject has been removed from the list of persons subject to the restrictive measures or the validity of the measure has expired, or for the duration of court proceedings in the event they had been started.

Without prejudice to any judicial, administrative or non-judicial remedy, data subjects may lodge a complaint with the European Data Protection Supervisor in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 ([edps@edps.europa.eu](mailto:edps@edps.europa.eu)).

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 206, 1.8.2015, p. 34.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 21.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 12, 19.1.2016, p. 1.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ L 445 I, 13.12.2021, p. 1.



# EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## Euro exchange rates <sup>(1)</sup>

13 December 2021

(2021/C 504/18)

### 1 euro =

Currency	Exchange rate	Currency	Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,1278	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,4388
JPY	Japanese yen	128,19	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	8,7967
DKK	Danish krone	7,4362	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,6651
GBP	Pound sterling	0,85158	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,5420
SEK	Swedish krona	10,2310	KRW	South Korean won	1 333,60
CHF	Swiss franc	1,0418	ZAR	South African rand	17,9694
ISK	Iceland króna	148,00	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	7,1777
NOK	Norwegian krone	10,1598	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,5210
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	16 155,54
CZK	Czech koruna	25,401	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,7678
HUF	Hungarian forint	367,07	PHP	Philippine peso	56,731
PLN	Polish zloty	4,6221	RUB	Russian rouble	82,8238
RON	Romanian leu	4,9494	THB	Thai baht	37,612
TRY	Turkish lira	16,0525	BRL	Brazilian real	6,3190
AUD	Australian dollar	1,5795	MXN	Mexican peso	23,5354
			INR	Indian rupee	85,4225

<sup>(1)</sup> Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

## COURT OF AUDITORS

**Report on any contingent liabilities arising as a result of the performance by the Single Resolution Board, the Council or the Commission of their tasks under Regulation (EU) No 806/2014 for the 2020 financial year**

(2021/C 504/19)

The European Court of Auditors hereby informs you that its report for the 2020 financial year on any contingent liabilities arising as a result of the performance by the Single Resolution Board, the Council or the Commission of their tasks under Regulation (EU) No 806/2014 has just been published.

The report can be accessed for consultation or downloading on the European Court of Auditors' Internet: <http://eca.europa.eu>

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# EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## Commission notice on current State aid recovery interest rates and reference/discount rates applicable as from 1 January 2022

(Published in accordance with Article 10 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 794/2004 <sup>(1)</sup>)

(2021/C 504/20)

Base rates calculated in accordance with the Communication from the Commission on the revision of the method for setting the reference and discount rates (OJ C 14, 19.1.2008, p. 6). Depending on the use of the reference rate, the appropriate margins have still to be added as defined in this communication. For the discount rate this means that a margin of 100 basispoints has to be added. The Commission Regulation (EC) No 271/2008 of 30 January 2008 amending Regulation (EC) No 794/2004 foresees that, unless otherwise provided for in a specific decision, the recovery rate will also be calculated by adding 100 basispoints to the base rate.

Modified rates are indicated in bold.

Previous table published in OJ C 472, 23.11.2021, p. 7.

From	To	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
1.1.2022	...	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>2,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,01</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>0,26</b>	<b>2,38</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>1,21</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>2,27</b>	<b>-0,03</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>-0,49</b>	<b>0,51</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 140, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

## V

(Announcements)

## OTHER ACTS

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Publication of the single document referred to in Article 94(1)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council and of the reference to the publication of the product specification for a name in the wine sector**

(2021/C 504/21)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 98 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup> within two months from the date of this publication.

## SINGLE DOCUMENT

**'BOLANDIN'**

**PDO-ES-N1876**

**Date of application: 3 July 2014**

**1. Name to be registered**

Bolandin

**2. Geographical indication type**

PDO — Protected Designation of Origin

**3. Categories of grapevine products**

1. Wine
16. Wine from overripe grapes

**4. Description of the wine(s)**

Red wines

- Appearance: The wines must have at least a high depth of colour. Tone: red in colour with shades varying from violet in young wines to brick red in aged wines.
- Aroma: The wines must be of at least high intensity, with aromas of black and red berries. Aged wines will include notes of spices and toasted flavours.
- Tasting stage: The wines must be at least full-bodied. Well-balanced. Long-lasting aftertaste. Well-balanced acidity. Notes from the cask (roasted and/or toasted).

Volatile acidity:

≤0,65 g/l acetic acid, in young wines

≤0,85 g/l acetic acid, in aged wines

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671.

In the case of limits not specified, the applicable EU legislation must be complied with.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12,5
Minimum total acidity	
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	130

#### White wines

- Appearance: Yellow in colour, straw-coloured in young wines and golden in the case of wines fermented and/or aged in barrels. Limpid and brilliant.
- Aroma: The wines must be of at least high intensity, fruity and with notes of tropical fruits. Aged wines will develop spicy aromas.
- Tasting stage: The wines must be at least medium-bodied. Fresh and fruity. Both young and aged wines will be well-balanced.

Volatile acidity:

≤0,65 g/l acetic acid, in young wines

≤0,85 g/l acetic acid, in aged wines

In the case of limits not specified, the applicable EU legislation must be complied with.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12,5
Minimum total acidity	
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	170

#### White wines made from overripe grapes

- Appearance: intense, clean and shiny yellow-golden in colour.
- Aroma: The wines must be of at least a high intensity. Aromas of honey, ripe quince and fig. Very fruity.
- Tasting stage: The wines must be at least medium-bodied, round and unctuous. Long-lasting aftertaste.

Volatile acidity:

≤0,74 g/l acetic acid, in young wines

≤0,85 g/l acetic acid, in aged wines

≤0,72 g/l + 0,06 g/l acetic acid, for each degree of natural alcoholic strength exceeding 10 % in volume, in the case of wines made from botrytised grapes

In the case of limits not specified, the applicable EU legislation must be complied with.

Note: As the sugar content is over 5 g/l, these white wines from overripe grapes can have a sulphur dioxide content of up to 250 mg/l.

General analytical characteristics	
Maximum total alcoholic strength (in % volume)	
Minimum actual alcoholic strength (in % volume)	12.5
Minimum total acidity	
Maximum volatile acidity (in milliequivalents per litre)	
Maximum total sulphur dioxide (in milligrams per litre)	250

## 5. Wine making practices

### a. *Essential oenological practices*

#### Specific oenological practice

In no event may the ageing process be deemed to have started before 1 October of the year of the harvest.

#### Cultivation method

The planting density at the 'Bolandin' vineyards shall not be lower than 2 400 vines per hectare.

### b. *Maximum yields*

Cabernet Sauvignon, Tempranillo and Merlot

7 500 kilograms of grapes per hectare

52 hectolitres per hectare

Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay

7 400 kilograms of grapes per hectare

48 hectolitres per hectare

Syrah

7 300 kilograms of grape per hectare

51 hectolitres per hectare

Moscatel de grano menudo (small grain muscat)

7 200 kilograms of grape per hectare

28 hectolitres per hectare

## 6. Demarcated geographical area

The demarcated area of Bolandin is located in the municipality of Ablitas (Autonomous Community of Navarre) and it consists of the following cadastral parcels:

Polygon 5: parcel 1 658.

Polygon 5: parcel 1 659.

Polygon 5: parcel 1 660.

Polygon 5: parcel 1 661.

Polygon 5: parcel 1 662.

Polygon 5: parcel 1 663.

Polygon 5: parcel 1 884.

Polygon 5, parcel 1 885 and plot A partial, E, F, G and H.

## 7. Main wine grapes variety(ies)

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

CHARDONNAY

MERLOT

MOSCATEL DE GRANO MENUDO (SMALL GRAIN MUSCAT)

SAUVIGNON BLANC

SYRAH

TEMPRANILLO

## 8. Description of the link(s)

### *Surroundings (natural factors)*

Bolandin is the name of the historical site located in the municipality of Ablitas (Navarre) and recognised in the cadastral register for Navarre and the national maps issued by the Spanish National Geographical Institute. The Bolandin area totals around 170 hectares. 'Bolandin' is also the name of the triangulation station located in the demarcated area.

'Bolandin' is written with a 'V' in some documents because there are two official languages in Navarre: Castilian Spanish (in which the name starts with a 'V' and includes an accent) and Basque (in which it starts with a 'B' and does not include an accent). There are no accents and no letter 'V' in Basque.

Based on surveys and tests conducted by the Chair of Viticulture in the Department of Agriculture and Food at the University of La Rioja, the area is demarcated according to the following natural factors: soil, topography and climate.

### Soil and topology

The demarcated area comprises a small, elevated plain in the highest part of Bolandin and its slopes, which lead down to a plain on the south-eastern face, south-west of Bolandin. It is completely different to the surrounding areas on account of its altitude, gradient, exposure and soil types.

The upper part of the elevated plain (which is where the winery is located) is formed by red clays dating from the Aragonian stage of the continental Tertiary Period. Below the escarpment surrounding the remains of the terraces, there is a broad slope towards the south-west with a gentle 5 % gradient. This is where most of the vineyards are located. The slopes consist of gravel, sand and clay dating from the third Pleistocene stage of the Quaternary Period.

From the Bolandin boundaries the topography is flat and mostly formed by depositional glaciais from the second Pleistocene stage of the Quaternary Period, i.e. younger materials than the ones that make up Bolandin.

Its altitude is between about 369 and 324 metres above sea level, i.e. considerably lower than the altitude range for the 'Navarra' PDO (between 400 and 500 m).

### Climate

Bolandin is located on a south-facing slope, so the parcel has a unique mesoclimate with a lot of exposure to sunlight.

Average rainfall in the last 7-12 seasons was 379-354 mm per year, very low compared to the average for the 'Navarra' PDO (450-700 mm).

Wind is another decisive factor, with the north-westerly Cierzo prevailing on 70 % of days. This is a very dry wind that limits the development of any kind of disease.

The demarcated area has to contend with higher temperatures and less rain than the average for the 'Navarra' PDO. The area has an extreme continental climate with a Mediterranean influence. The seasons are quite distinct: cold winters, warm, almost non-existent springs and autumns and very hot, long, dry summers. This characteristic has a major impact on the range of temperatures and on rainfall.

The highest temperatures in summer are very high (over 35 °C) and the maximum temperatures for the whole of Navarre and the Ebro Valley are often recorded in the area. The minimum temperatures in December and January are very low, between -6 and -8 °C. The average annual temperature is over 1 °C higher than that of the 'Navarra' PDO.

#### *Human factors*

Vines have been among the most important crops grown in Bolandin for centuries. This area used to be irrigated by the Lodosa canal via elevation. The irrigated area mostly consisted of vineyards planted with century-old vines, which were used to produce wine of excellent quality, bottled and marketed under the name 'Bolandin'.

Nowadays, the experts in vine management techniques decide on the best options (selecting the plant material, irrigation, managing leaf area, limiting yield, managing nutrition and vine protection products) depending on the climate and growth during the year with a view to achieving the best raw material. The experts plan various specific practices on an annual basis, such as thinning out the bunches to control yield and removing leaves on the side where the sun shines on the bunches in the morning as this enhances the ripening process. The leaves where the sun shines in the evening are not removed as this could cause the grapes to burn. This latter practice also helps avoid disease spreading as it improves ventilation around the bunches.

Given that rainfall and relative air humidity are both very low and that the soil is very dry, the availability of an irrigation reservoir and the ability to control irrigation means it is possible to directly influence the ripening process and achieve optimal levels and ensuring that the plants are kept in the best growing and productive condition. Irrigation is managed very carefully, with quality rather than quantity in mind, in order to obtain grapes that are ripe and well-balanced.

#### *Description of the wine*

Product details: quality or characteristics of the product essentially or exclusively attributable to the geographical environment.

Based on the physiological behaviour of the plants due to the climate conditions, the essential characteristics of the wines are as follows:

Reds: Wines of deeper colour, with a higher total polyphenol content and dry extract. Wines with high polymerisation, maturity, finesse and silky tannins. Full-bodied in the mouth with no astringency and high opulence.

Moderately high alcoholic strength.

Well-balanced acidity, which is never very high. Malic acid is particularly low, due to the combustion of organic acids caused by the high temperatures in summer. This means the wines never have a sharp acidic feel.

Very low levels of aromatic compounds from the Pyrazine family. Wines made from the Syrah, Merlot and Cabernet varieties are fruitier than usual as the aromas are more fruity than vegetal.

Very mature phenolic compounds, which limits the oxygen affinity of the wines, thus avoiding the presence of reductive sulphur aromas. The resulting wines are highly aromatic and expressive.

Ageing and oxidation are slow due to the high polyphenol concentration and this means that the wines have a long shelf-life and that they age well.

As well as the characteristics that are shaped by the climate, other particularities of the red wines are due to the edaphology and topography of the demarcated area:

- Well-balanced, with good alcohol and high polyphenol contents.
- Varieties with a long growing cycle, such as Cabernet Sauvignon, have adapted well to the environment. This results in full ripening of the solid parts and wines with a high polyphenol content.
- Good acidity level, which means the wines age well and have a long shelf-life after bottling.
- Wines with mature, high-intensity aromas, including notes of fresh fruit.



White wines: The same physiological behaviour of the plants due to the geographical environment means that the white wines have balanced acidity and a moderately high alcohol content. Due to their optimal phenolic ripeness, they have intense, expressive aromas, which remain fresh over time and provide good volume and structure.

White wines made from overripe grapes: in this case, too, the geographical environment is responsible for several characteristics, such as the balanced acidity, good total alcohol content, intense fruitiness, fullness and the shiny golden colour.

#### *Link*

Causal link between the geographical area and the characteristics of the product:

Bolandin wines are distinctive due to the natural conditions of the demarcated area and the human factor in choosing the crop varieties, cultivation practices and type that are best suited to those natural conditions.

The interplay between these natural factors and human expertise makes it possible to obtain a product that is unique, specific and with its own particular identity that sets it apart from other wines.

The location of the demarcated area in the very south of the Navarre region has a major impact on its climate, as the heat summation and maximum temperatures are the highest in the region. This impact is further maximised by the fact that the demarcated area has south-facing slopes, so at local level in the vineyards in the demarcated area, the temperatures are much higher and relative humidity is very low.

The rainfall in the demarcated area is also the lowest in the region for the following reasons:

- Rain coming from the south: due to the Foehn effect, the Sierra de Moncayo means that the rain falls on the south side and does not reach the northern valley of these mountains, which is where the Bolandin demarcated area is located.
- Rain coming from the north: given the effect of the proximity to the River Ebro, the rain from the north does not reach south of the river, which is where the demarcated area is located. This effect is heightened by the fact that this rain is preceded by northerly winds that bring down the relative humidity with their low temperatures and thus contribute towards dryness.

These specific characteristics of the climate have physiological effects on the vines that have clear consequences for the analytical and organoleptic characteristics of Bolandin wines.

The most noteworthy characteristics of the wines, which give them their distinctive identity as a result of the physiological behaviour of the vines in these climate conditions, are as follows:

- The red wines are more intense in colour, with a higher total polyphenol index and polymerisation, maturity, finesse and silky tannins, meaning they are full-bodied in the mouth with no astringency and high opulence.

The aromas are fruitier and less vegetal than usual, as the levels of pyrazine aromatic compounds present in wines made from varieties such as Syrah, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon are very low.

- The reds, whites and whites made from overripe grapes have a high alcohol content, which heightens the feeling of opulence and sweetness in the mouth.
- The reds, whites and whites made from overripe grapes have balanced acidity, which is never very high. The level of malic acid is particularly low, due to the combustion of organic acids caused by the high temperatures in summer during ripening. This means neither the reds nor the whites nor the whites made from overripe grapes are ever sharply acidic, as can happen with wines from other more northerly subzones where malic acid levels are higher.
- The reds, whites and whites made from overripe grapes have very mature phenolic compounds, which limits the oxygen affinity of the wines, thus avoiding the presence of reductive sulphur aromas. The resulting wines are highly aromatic and expressive.
- In the reds, whites and whites made from overripe grapes, ageing and oxidation are slow due to the high polyphenol concentration and this means that the wines have a long shelf life and that they age well.

- The white wines made from overripe grapes are unctuous with very high total alcoholic strength and a golden-yellow colour due to the long period of exposure to sunlight resulting in a golden product. The lack of rain enables over-ripening over a long period of time, culminating in a good intensity of aromas of ripe fruit, honey and citrus notes.

The geology of the demarcated area has a clayey foundation. These clay soils are of the type referred to as 'shale'. These soil aggregates typically have a high salt content, which means that the agricultural soils in this demarcated area have elevated salinity levels (determined in tests according to the electrical conductivity parameter = 0,5 -2,5dS/m) that are significantly higher than other areas.

Given this elevated soil conductivity, the vines have to contend with the additional osmotic pressure generated by the high concentration of solutes in the soil. Like any other plant, in absorbing water from the soil, the vines also need to accumulate a considerable amount of solutes (mostly minerals and salts) in their interior and in the sap during all stages of the growing cycle. This is what enables the vines to thrive in this type of soils and it also has a direct effect on the composition of the bunches, as they also contain higher concentrations of salts and minerals in both the pulp and the skin.

This higher concentration of salts and minerals is directly transmitted to the wines as well, resulting in wines with a very high dry matter content. This feature means that the wines are very full-bodied and rich in taste with slightly salty notes in the mouth. This is one of the most distinctive features of the wines produced in the demarcated area of Bolandin.

As well as these natural conditions, the human factor and expertise also confer unique characteristics on the wines as the decisions made in setting up the vineyards and during cultivation maximise the uniqueness provided by the natural environment.

One example of this is the choice of varieties, which are unique to the area and well adapted to the specific conditions of the demarcated area of Bolandin.

All of the varieties grown are genetically well adapted to the extreme heat conditions in the demarcated area. The main adaptation is based on choosing vine varieties with a high potential for synthesising organic acids (tartaric acid) so as to produce wines that are balanced on tasting. This balance is based on offsetting the refreshing component provided by the natural acids in the wine, the high alcoholic strength and the full-bodied aspect that is typical of the demarcated area.

Another adaptation due to the human factor specific to Bolandin are the growing strategies that aim to obtain moderate to low yields. These limited yields, which never exceed 7 500 kg/ha, lead to very high quality wines in the sense that the fruity aromas are highly intense and mature in profile. They are also highly intense in the mouth, with good structure provided by the high concentration in total polyphenols. These polyphenols can also be very mature in the case of the red wines, which are smooth and harmonious.

Therefore, given the natural factors mentioned above (climate, soil and topography) and the human factors which shape the various winegrowing and oenological practices, the analytical characteristics of the wines are different to those made in the 'Navarra' PDO area, as can be seen from the following comparison table:

#### COMPARISON BETWEEN WINE WITH THE 'NAVARRA' PDO AND 'BOLANDIN' WINE

(PARAMETER: NAVARRA PDO/ BOLANDIN)

	'Navarra' PDO	'Bolandin'
WHITES		
ACTUAL ALCOHOLIC STRENGTH (% VOL):	≥10,50	≥12,5
TOTAL SO <sub>2</sub> (mg/l)	≤190	≤170
VOLATILE ACIDITY YOUNG WINES (g/l acetic acid)	≤0,75	≤0,65
VOLATILE ACIDITY AGED WINES (g/l acetic acid)	≤1	≤0,85
REDS		

ACTUAL ALCOHOLIC STRENGTH (% VOL)	≥11,50	≥12,5
TOTAL SO <sub>2</sub> (mg/l°)	≤140	≤130
COLOUR INTENSITY (DO420+DO520+DO620) u.a.cm.	≥4,5	≥8
TPI (DO280)	-	>55
VOLATILE ACIDITY YOUNG WINES (g/l acetic acid)	≤0,75	≤0,65
VOLATILE ACIDITY AGED WINES (g/l acetic acid)	≤0,9	≤0,85
WHITES MADE FROM LATE VINTAGE OR OVERRIPE GRAPES		
ACTUAL ALCOHOLIC STRENGTH (% VOL)	≥10,50	≥12,5
TOTAL SUGARS (g/l)	≥45	≥60
TOTAL SO <sub>2</sub> (mg/l)	≤300	≤250
VOLATILE ACIDITY YOUNG WINES (g/l acetic acid)	≤0,75	≤0,74
VOLATILE ACIDITY AGED WINES (g/l acetic acid)	≤0,9	≤0,85
VOLATILE ACIDITY BOTRYTISED GRAPES (acetic acid)	≤0,78 g+(1)	≤0,72+(1)
MAXIMUM YIELDS (KG/HA)		
TEMPRANILLO	8 000	7 500
CABERNET SAUVIGNON	8 000	7 500
MERLOT	8 000	7 500
SYRAH	8 000	7 300
CHARDONNAY	8 000 (EXCEP. 9 200)	7 400
SAUVIGNON BLANC	8 000 (EXCEP. 9 200)	7 400
MOSCATEL GRANO MENUDO (SMALL GRAIN MUSCAT)	8 000 (EXCEP. 9 200)	7 200

(1)+ 0,06 g/l for each degree of natural alcoholic strength exceeding 10 % in volume

It is important to bear in mind that the demarcated area covers about 170 hectares and that there are currently no other vines planted or wineries located there except from those belonging to the applicant, who owns a total of about 205 hectares. Other producers can use the registered designation if they set up in the demarcated area in future, provided they meet the conditions set out in the product specification. This is an entirely plausible scenario as the demarcated area covers about 170 hectares and there is therefore space for more producers and/ or wineries.

## 9. Essential further conditions

Legal framework:

In national legislation

Type of further condition:

Packaging within the demarcated geographical area

**Description of the condition:**

The wines must be bottled in the production area because for all of the wines covered by the designation, the process concludes with a second stage of ageing in the bottle. The reduction process in this period enhances the quality of the wines, rounding out their flavour. They are ready for consumption when they attain the organoleptic characteristics set out for each type of wine.

**Link to the product specification**

<http://goo.gl/UZCXBV>

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**Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs**

(2021/C 504/22)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(1)</sup> within three months from the date of this publication.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION OF A TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED

**‘Vincisgrassi alla maceratese’**

**EU No: TSG-IT-02658 – 17 February 2021**

**Member State or third country: Italy**

**1. Name to be registereds**

‘Vincisgrassi alla maceratese’

**2. Type of product [as in Annex XI]**

Class 2.21. Prepared meals.

**3. Grounds for registration**

**3.1. Whether the product**

results from a mode of production, processing or composition corresponding to traditional practice for that product or foodstuff;

is produced from raw materials or ingredients that are those traditionally used.

Historical research shows the traditional use of specific ingredients in Macerata province: the making of egg pasta with cooked wine or Marsala, red sauce using unminced meat and bones with marrow and poultry giblets for preparing the seasoning.

**3.2. Whether the name**

has been traditionally used to refer to the specific product;

identifies the traditional character or specific character of the product.

The term ‘Vincisgrassi alla maceratese’ – for which registration is sought – refers to the baked pasta which has been produced mainly in Macerata province on a continuous basis for more than 80 years and is a tradition handed down by word of mouth.

The dish is made with sheets of egg pasta interleaved with sauce made from poultry meat and offal and from pork and veal, with béchamel and grated cheese. In the extensive literature available, Vincisgrassi is historically the most common of the dishes based on recipes from the Marche Region. The recipe described in the specification is the recipe historically consolidated and routinely offered by restaurants and delicatessens in the area in which the tradition was born.

**4. Description**

**4.1. Description of the product to which the name under point 1 applies, including its main physical, chemical, microbiological or organoleptic characteristics showing the product’s specific character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)**

‘Vincisgrassi alla maceratese’ is a grated dish offered as a first course and obtained from three base products: fresh egg pasta, sauce with offal and béchamel, to which Parmigiano Reggiano PDO or Grana Padano PDO grated cheese is added.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

When released for consumption, 'Vincisgrassi alla maceratese' must have the following characteristics:

Physico-chemical characteristics:

Proteins: 9,5 - 13 g/100 g of product <sup>(?)</sup>

Organoleptic characteristics:

Appearance: Red baked pasta with at least 7/8 of the layers visible, béchamel and red meat sauce Colour: dark-red sauce, dark-red to dark-brown crust.

Odour/aroma: stewed meat sauce, cooked cheese and béchamel.

Taste: light salty and bitter flavour.

Texture: Crisp crust, soft layers.

4.2. *Description of the production method of the product to which the name under point 1 applies that the producers must follow including, where appropriate, the nature and characteristics of the raw materials or ingredients used, and the method by which the product is prepared (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)*

Proportions for the recipe:

— 50-63 % egg pasta.

— 30-40 % sauce.

— 6-10 % béchamel.

Ingredients for the sauce

— 30-40 % fresh meat, including:

— 45-55 % chicken, duck, goose, rabbit, gosling (including necks, wings and chicken feet), rabbit spine.

— 35-40 % veal or beef and pork (with bones, marrow and muscle); this meat may also be minced, coarsely chopped, or cut by knife.

— 10-15 % coarsely cut giblets (stomachs and livers) of chicken, duck, goose, rabbit and/or gosling.

— 0-15 % tomato concentrate and 0-30 % tomato purée.

— 1-3 % celeriac, 1-3 % carrot, 2-5 % white onion studded with cloves, bouquet garni of aromatic herbs (to taste) which must be fresh, neither in dehydrated form nor replaced by chemical flavourings.

— 2-5 % glass of dry white wine.

— 0-5 % pork or cheek fat.

— 4-8 % extra virgin olive oil.

— Ground salt and black pepper to taste.

— 2-5 % Grated Parmigiano Reggiano PDO or Grana Padano PDO.

— Enough water to cover the meat <sup>(?)</sup>.

— 0-8 % UHT whole milk or pasteurised fresh milk (optional).

Ingredients for the béchamel

— 80-90 % UHT whole milk or pasteurised fresh milk.

— 5-10 % common wheat flour.

— 5-10 % butter.

— Salt, ground black pepper and nutmeg to taste.

<sup>(?)</sup> Designation proof: Nitrogen and Proteins (Automatic Method) – Kjeldahl analytical technique – Standard/Test Method PRT.PGBT.248 Rev. 001 2017

<sup>(?)</sup> Not calculated in the final weight owing to evaporation during the long cooking process

#### Ingredients for the pasta

- 32-35 % fresh chicken eggs and 0-3 % egg yolks. Eggs and egg yolks may be replaced by pasteurised liquid egg products.
- 60-65 % common wheat flour or durum wheat flour.
- 0-3 % tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil or melted butter;
- 0-4 % tablespoon of cooked wine <sup>(4)</sup> or Marsala PDO;
- Salt to taste.

#### Preparing the sauce

Put the chopped fat or cheek in a saucepan to sauté with the extra virgin olive oil, add the bones and meat, celeriac, carrot and onion studded with cloves, cook well on a high heat, add salt and pepper to taste and then add the white wine. Add the tomato concentrate and tomato pureé and blend in to the mixture for a few minutes; soak in plenty of hot water so that the meat is covered. Leave to boil slowly, optionally add the milk until the sauce is reduced by half and the meat is well cooked. Remove from the sauce the meat and the bones from which the meat has been rendered; break the meat into pieces and put it back into the preparation.

Brown the giblets in a frying pan in extra virgin olive oil and add the dry white wine. Finish by cooking for a further 15 minutes or so.

#### Preparing the béchamel

Boil the milk with the salt, pepper and nutmeg. Melt the butter in a small saucepan and blend in the flour so as to obtain a uniform mixture, then slowly add the hot milk until the mixture is a smooth white-coloured cream.

#### Preparing the pasta

Mix the flour with the egg yolks and the whole eggs or with the egg products, cooked wine, extra virgin olive oil or melted butter, and fine salt to make a smooth, compact mixture. Leave to stand in a cool place for about one hour, then stretch the pasta to make a thin sheet of 2 to 5 mm, cut to a rectangle, poach in salted boiling water for a few minutes, then cool in cold water, drain and place on a tea towel to dry.

#### Finishing

Grease a rectangular baking-tin suitable for cooking and preserving food and interleave layers of the pasta, the meat and giblet sauce, a little béchamel and the grated cheese, repeating the process seven or eight times. In the last layer, add plenty of sauce, a little béchamel and plenty of grated cheese to create a crisp layer after cooking. Place in the oven at 180 °C for approximately 30 to 40 minutes.

The 'Vincisgrassi alla maceratese' may be eaten straightaway or kept for later consumption. In the latter case the fully prepared dish must be cooked for 20 minutes at 180 °C and then either blast-chilled to + 3 °C or blast-frozen to -18 °C, so that it is kept for the prescribed periods of time at the temperatures laid down in the health and hygiene regulations in force; it may also be blast-frozen directly to -18 °C, without the cooking provided for in the preceding paragraph. The food may be stored either in the baking-tin or in closed food containers in single portions.

### 4.3. Description of the key elements establishing the product's traditional character (Article 7(2) of this Regulation)

In Italian gastronomy the recipe for 'Vincisgrassi alla maceratese' has historically been very rich and costly in respect of both ingredients and preparation. In the past it was therefore made on special occasions in noble families. Since the Second World War, increasing middle-class prosperity has enabled the dish to become more widespread today and 'Vincisgrassi alla maceratese' continues to differ from other baked pasta dishes because it uses ingredients typical of the Marche peasant tradition. For a long time, poultry giblets were discarded but in recipe books they are now characteristic ingredients.

<sup>(4)</sup> Cooked wine (also called Vin Santo Marchigiano): a pleasant fake sweet wine with a fruity aroma and colour ranging from pomegranate to ruby. It is obtained by boiling grape must in order to increase its concentration from 30 to 50 %. When it has been reduced and allowed to cool, the cooked must is left to ferment in oak barrels. After fermentation (alcoholic strength between 12 % and 14 %), it is transferred to receptacles containing other cooked wine from previous years or bottled and aged.

A codified recipe for 'Vincisgrassi alla maceratese' first appeared in Cesare Tirabasso's 1927 recipe book entitled *Guida in cucina*. Tirabasso reinterprets an age-old pasta recipe traditionally used in Macerata province and attests to the word-of-mouth transmission going back over a century of a dish made from sheets of egg pasta interleaved with a rich sauce made from off-the-bone poultry meat (including poultry offal), pork and veal, with béchamel and grated cheese – ingredients available on special occasions in a sharecropping economy.

Developments in gastronomy and flavour have resulted in the loss of ingredients such as sweetbreads and lamb brain which are difficult to source, but for generations the recipe has still been prepared for celebrations.

In a diet lacking in animal proteins, such as the peasant diet, small parts (entrails) could not be discarded as they provided nourishment and flavour, making the dish different from others. It is precisely that peculiarity which has made poultry offal the distinguishing ingredient of 'Vincisgrassi alla maceratese'; in fact, it is considered that the giblets used serve to separate the many layers of egg pasta.

All the recipes found – from 1927 to the present – require the use on every occasion of at least seven sheets of egg pasta flavoured with cooked wine or Marsala PDO, placed in a baking-tin with alternating layers of sauce of assorted meat, tomato and poultry offal, together with béchamel and grated cheese. In every recipe identified, from Cesare Tirabasso's codified recipe of 1927 to the present day, those ingredients are always included using the same process and are typically present in the cuisine of Macerata province.

Bibliographic references to the recipe:

- The 1927 'Guida in cucina' by the chef Cesare Tirabasso (Bisson & Leopardi, Macerata, 1927, page 91) states that 'Vincisgrassi is widespread in Marche, in particular in Macerata province'.
  - In 'Le ricette regionali italiane' (A. Gosetti della Salda, *La cucina italiana*, Milan 1967, p. 608) it is stated that 'this palatable and highly nutritious dish – Vincisgrassi – is age-old and traditional in Macerata province'.
  - The 2010 'Cucina delle Marche' (by P. Carsetti, Newton Compton, p. 133), describes the recipe as 'codified'.
  - In 2010 in 'Le ricette d'oro delle migliori osterie e trattorie italiane' (by C. Cambi, Newton Compton, p. 515) the recipe is referred to as 'Vincisgrassi alla maceratese'.
  - In the 2003 'Marche a tavola' by A. Carnival Mallè and others, the recipe for Vincisgrassi appears on page 34 under the name 'Vincisgrassi alla maceratese'.
  - 'Vincisgrassi', published in 2000 by the Macerata province Chamber of Commerce in association with Confcommercio, the Accademia Italiana della Cucina (Italian Academy of Cuisine) and Federcuochi.
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