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II

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

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Non-opposition to a notified concentration**(Case COMP/M.5816 — Oaktree/Aleris)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2010/C 135/01)

On 18 May 2010, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the common market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004. 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 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/en/index.htm>) under document number 32010M5816. EUR-Lex is the on-line access to the European law.
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IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

COUNCIL

Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the social dimension of education and training

(2010/C 135/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

HAVING REGARD TO:

1. The conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of 14 November 2006, meeting within the Council, on efficiency and equity in education and training ⁽¹⁾, which invited Member States to ensure equitable education and training systems that are aimed at providing opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes that are independent of socio-economic background and other factors which may lead to educational disadvantage.
2. The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning ⁽²⁾, which highlights the importance of developing the provision of key competences for all and of making appropriate provision for those who due to educational disadvantages need particular support to fulfil their educational potential.
3. The Council Resolution of 15 November 2007 on new skills for new jobs ⁽³⁾, which stressed the need to anticipate skill needs and raise overall skill levels, giving priority to the education and training of those with low skills and at the risk of economic and social exclusion.
4. The Council Resolution of 23 November 2007 on modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy ⁽⁴⁾, which reaffirmed the importance of increasing lifelong learning opportunities, broadening higher education access to include non-traditional and adult learners and developing the lifelong learning dimension of universities.
5. The Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning ⁽⁵⁾, which emphasised the need to raise skill levels of a still significant number of low-skilled workers and which underlined the contribution of adult learning to fostering social cohesion and economic development.
6. Decision No 1098/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2008 on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010) ⁽⁶⁾, which states that the lack of basic competences and qualifications adapted to the needs of the labour market is a major barrier to inclusion in society.
7. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 21 November 2008 on the future priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET) ⁽⁷⁾, which underlined that VET not only promotes competitiveness, business performance and innovation in the context of a globalised economy, but also equity, cohesion, personal development and active citizenship, and that its attractiveness should be promoted among all target groups.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 298, 8.12.2006, p. 3.⁽²⁾ OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.⁽³⁾ OJ C 290, 4.12.2007, p. 1.⁽⁴⁾ Doc. 16096/1/07 REV 1.⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 140, 6.6.2008, p. 10.⁽⁶⁾ OJ L 298, 7.11.2008, p. 20.⁽⁷⁾ OJ C 18, 24.1.2009, p. 6.

8. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st century: an agenda for European co-operation on schools ⁽⁸⁾, which invited Member States to ensure access to high-quality educational opportunities and services, particularly for children and young people who may be disadvantaged by personal, social, cultural and/or economic circumstances.
9. The Council conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the education of children with a migrant background ⁽⁹⁾, which invited Member States to take appropriate measures at their required level of responsibility — local, regional or national — with a view to ensuring that all children are offered fair and equal opportunities, as well as the necessary support to develop their full potential, irrespective of background.
10. The Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) ⁽¹⁰⁾, which invited Member States to ensure equal access for young people to high-quality education and training at all levels, and to promote better links between formal education and non-formal learning.

AND HAVING PARTICULAR REGARD TO:

The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) ⁽¹¹⁾, which identified the promotion of equity, social cohesion and active citizenship as one of its four strategic objectives and which defined five reference levels of European average performance (European benchmarks) that also place a strong emphasis on achieving equity.

AND IN THE LIGHT OF:

The conference on 'Inclusive Education: a way to promote social cohesion' held in Madrid on 11 and 12 March 2010.

NOTING THAT:

Education and training systems across the EU need to ensure both equity and excellence. Improving educational attainment and providing key competences for all are crucial not only to

economic growth and competitiveness, but also to reducing poverty and fostering social inclusion.

Social inclusion through education and training should ensure equal opportunities for access to quality education, as well as equity in treatment, including by adapting provision to individuals' needs. At the same time, it should ensure equal opportunities to achieve the best outcomes, by seeking to provide the highest level of key competences for all.

AWARE THAT:

Education and training systems contribute significantly to fostering social cohesion, active citizenship and personal fulfilment in European societies. They have the potential to promote upward social mobility and to break the cycle of poverty, social disadvantage and exclusion. Their role could be further enhanced by adapting them to the diversity of citizens' backgrounds in terms of cultural richness, existing knowledge and competences, and learning needs.

Education is neither the sole cause of, nor the sole solution to, social exclusion. Educational measures alone are unlikely to alleviate the impact of multiple disadvantages, and so multi-sectoral approaches are needed which can articulate such measures with wider social and economic policies.

Increasing international competitiveness requires high professional skills combined with an ability to create, innovate and work in multicultural and multilingual environments. Together with the demographic squeeze, this makes it even more important for education and training systems to raise overall attainment levels, whilst ensuring that all people, young and adult — regardless of their socio-economic background or personal circumstances — are enabled to develop their full potential through lifelong learning. In this respect, particular attention should be paid to the requirements of persons with special educational needs, those of persons with a migrant background and those of the Roma community.

As the social effects of the economic crisis continue to unfold — and in the context of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010) ⁽¹²⁾ — it is clear that the downturn has hit hard the most disadvantaged, while at the same time jeopardising budgetary efforts which target these groups.

⁽⁸⁾ OJ C 319, 13.12.2008, p. 20.

⁽⁹⁾ OJ C 301, 11.12.2009, p. 5.

⁽¹⁰⁾ OJ C 311, 19.12.2009, p. 1.

⁽¹¹⁾ OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

⁽¹²⁾ See footnote 6.

RECOGNISES THAT:

If Europe is to compete and prosper as a knowledge-based economy based on sustainable, high levels of employment and reinforced social cohesion — as envisaged in the *Europe 2020* strategy, the role of education and training in a lifelong learning perspective is crucial. The provision of key competences for all on a lifelong learning basis will play a crucial role in improving citizens' employability, social inclusion and personal fulfilment.

In the context of the European benchmarks agreed under the ET 2020 Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training, there is an urgent need to reduce the current number of low achievers in basic skills — particularly reading (for which current data indicate that an average of one in four pupils is unable to read and write properly) — and to further reduce the number of early leavers from education and training, as well as a need to increase participation in early childhood education and care, to raise the number of young people with a tertiary-level qualification, and to increase adult participation in lifelong learning. Such needs are particularly acute in the case of those from a disadvantaged background, who statistically tend to perform significantly less well against each of the benchmarks. Only by addressing the needs of those at risk of social exclusion can the objectives of the Strategic Framework be properly met.

CONSIDERS THAT:

Differences in the degree of social inclusion achieved by the Member States indicate that there remains significant scope to reduce inequalities and exclusion in the EU, both through structural changes and through additional support for learners at risk of social exclusion. Equity and excellence are not mutually exclusive but complementary, and should be pursued at both national and European level. While each Member State's situation is different, European cooperation can help identify ways to promote social inclusion and equity, while not compromising excellence.

Systems which uphold high standards of quality for all and strengthen accountability, which foster personalised, inclusive approaches, which support early intervention and which target disadvantaged learners in particular, can be powerful drivers in fostering social inclusion.

Student support schemes such as grants, loans and additional non-pecuniary benefits can play an important role in facilitating

equal access, particularly in higher education. Given increased pressure on financial resources for education, it will be crucial to achieve enhanced effectiveness for public investment; analysis of the design and impact of different funding systems can help to inform choices.

FURTHER CONSIDERS THAT:

With regard to early and school education:

1. Participation in high-quality early childhood education and care, with highly skilled staff and adequate child-to-staff ratios, produces positive results for all children and has highest benefits for the most disadvantaged. Providing adequate incentives and support, adapting provision to needs and increasing accessibility can broaden the participation of children from disadvantaged backgrounds ⁽¹³⁾.
2. Ensuring high-quality education which provides key competences for all is one of the most effective ways of promoting social inclusion. Additional support is needed for schools with a high proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.
3. The successful prevention of early school-leaving requires the development of knowledge about groups at risk of dropping out (e.g. due to personal or socio-economic circumstances, or due to learning difficulties) at local, regional and national level, and systems for identifying early individuals who are at such risk. Comprehensive, cross-sectoral strategies should be implemented, which provide a range of school-wide and systemic policies targeting the different factors leading to early school-leaving. Individualised support for pupils at risk can include the provision of personalised learning, counselling, mentorship and tutorship systems, welfare support and extracurricular activities in support of learning.
4. At the level of each education institution, strategies for inclusion require strong leadership, the systematic monitoring of results and quality, innovative high-quality teaching supported by appropriate teacher training, empowerment and motivation, cooperation with other professionals and the provision of adequate resources. Providing more integrated support to learners in need requires cooperation with parents and stakeholders in the community, for instance in areas such as non-formal and informal learning activities outside school hours.

⁽¹³⁾ For the purposes of this text, the term 'disadvantaged background' also covers, as appropriate, learners with special educational needs.

5. Creating the conditions required for the successful inclusion of pupils with special needs in mainstream settings benefits all learners. Increasing the use of personalised approaches, including individualised learning plans and harnessing assessment to support the learning process, providing teachers with skills to manage and benefit from diversity, promoting the use of cooperative teaching and learning, and widening access and participation, are ways of increasing quality for all.

With regard to vocational education and training (VET):

— A diverse vocational offer, with a stronger emphasis on key competences, including transversal ones, can provide much needed routes for individuals to improve their qualifications and thus access the labour market. In the case of disadvantaged groups, the relevance of VET can be increased by tailoring provision to individual needs, strengthening guidance and counselling, recognising different forms of prior learning, and promoting alternate schemes for learning at the workplace. Increasing participation, particularly that of the low-skilled, in continuing vocational education and training is key to an active inclusion approach and to limiting unemployment in cases of industrial change.

With regard to higher education:

1. Raising aspirations and increasing access to higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds requires strengthening financial support schemes and other incentives, and improving their design. Affordable, accessible, adequate and portable student loans as well as means-tested grants can successfully increase participation rates for those who cannot afford the costs of higher education.

2. More flexible and diversified learning paths — for example recognising prior learning, part-time education, and distance learning — can help to reconcile higher education with work or family commitments and to encourage wider participation. Implementing measures aimed at monitoring and increasing the retention rate in higher education, at providing individualised support, as well as at enhancing guidance, mentoring and skills training — particularly during the early stages of a university course — can improve graduation rates for disadvantaged learners.

3. Special efforts are needed, especially with regard to funding, to ensure that full account is taken of the needs of disadvantaged students, who are often unable to benefit from the mobility schemes available.

4. The fight against inequality, poverty and social exclusion can be strengthened by recognising that higher education institutions have a social responsibility in returning the benefits of knowledge to society, in putting knowledge at the service of the wider community — at both the local and the global level — and in responding to social needs.

5. Higher education institutions can also exercise social responsibility by making their resources available to adult and informal and non-formal learners, strengthening research on social exclusion, fostering innovation and updating educational resources and methodology.

With regard to adult education:

1. Expanding access to adult education can create new possibilities for active inclusion and enhanced social participation, especially for the low-skilled, the unemployed, adults with special needs, the elderly, and migrants. With specific regard to the latter, learning the host country language or languages plays an important role in promoting social integration, as well as improving basic skills and employability.

2. Adult learning, offered in a variety of environments, involving multiple stakeholders (including public and private sectors, higher education institutions, local communities and NGOs) and covering learning for personal, civic, social and employment-related purposes, is central to reaching disadvantaged and at risk groups. With specific regard to employment-related learning, businesses can demonstrate corporate social responsibility by better anticipating structural changes and providing opportunities for retraining.

3. The potential of inter-generational learning can be explored as a means of sharing knowledge and expertise, and of encouraging communication and solidarity between younger and older generations, bridging the growing digital divide and reducing social isolation.

Within a lifelong learning perspective:

— Education and training systems with flexible pathways, which keep opportunities open as long as possible and which avoid 'dead ends', help to overcome disadvantage. They also help to avoid socio-economic or cultural marginalisation and being held back by low expectations. Providing lifelong guidance and the validation of acquired skills, including the recognition of prior learning and

experience, diversifying admission patterns for all levels of education and training, including higher education and adult learning, and devoting more attention to the quality and attractiveness of learning environments, can facilitate transitions for learners. Innovative ways of delivering guidance and collaboration with other social services and civil society are needed to reach out to disadvantaged groups outside the education and training systems.

ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE MEMBER STATES:

With regard to early and school education, to:

1. Ensure wider access to high-quality early childhood education and care, in order to give all children — particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds or with special education needs — a sure start, as well as to increase the motivation to learn.
2. Improve the quality of provision in schools and reduce differences between them and within them, with a view to countering possible socio-economic or cultural marginalisation.
3. Focus on the acquisition of essential basic skills, especially literacy, numeracy and — notably in the case of pupils with a migrant background — language skills.
4. Encourage networking activities between schools, in order to share experience and examples of good practice.
5. Intensify efforts to prevent early school-leaving, based on the development of early warning systems identifying pupils at risk; encourage school-wide strategies for inclusion, focused on quality and supported by adequate leadership and teacher training in a lifelong learning perspective.
6. Develop more personalised approaches and systemic responses to support all pupils, as well as provide additional help for those with disadvantaged backgrounds and those with special needs.
7. Enhance the relevance of school education with a view to raising pupils' aspirations and stimulating not just the ability to learn, but also the motivation to learn.
8. Enhance the attractiveness of teaching as a profession, provide relevant in-service training and ensure strong school leadership.

9. Make schools more accountable to society at large, strengthen partnerships between schools and parents, business and local communities, and further integrate formal and non-formal activities.

10. Promote successful inclusive education approaches for all pupils, including those with special needs, by making schools learning communities in which a sense of inclusion and mutual support is nurtured and in which the talents of all pupils are recognised. Monitor the impact of such approaches, in particular with a view to raising access and graduation rates of learners with special needs at all levels of the education system.

With regard to vocational education and training, to:

1. Strengthen the acquisition of key competences through vocational pathways and programmes, and better address the needs of disadvantaged learners.
2. Further develop VET provision which allows learners to build their own individualised pathways.
3. Endeavour to ensure that VET systems are properly integrated into the overall education and training systems, including flexible pathways which enable learners to move from one sector to the other, and to employment.
4. Strengthen guidance and counselling activities and relevant teacher training, in order to support students' career choices and transitions within education or from education to employment. This is particularly important for successful integration into the labour market and for the inclusion of students with special needs.

With regard to higher education, to:

1. Promote widened access, for example by strengthening financial support schemes for students and through flexible and diversified learning paths.
2. Develop policies aimed at increasing completion rates of higher education, including through strengthening individualised support, guidance and mentoring for students.
3. Continue to eliminate barriers to, expand opportunities for, and improve the quality of, learning mobility, including by providing adequate incentives for the mobility of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
4. Promote specific programmes for adult students and other non-traditional learners.

With regard to adult education, to:

1. Strengthen policies to enable the low-skilled, unemployed adults and, where appropriate, citizens with a migrant background to gain a qualification or take their skills a step further (one step up), and broaden the provision of second chance education for young adults.
2. Promote measures to ensure that all have access to the basic skills and key competences needed to live and learn in the knowledge society, in particular literacy and ICT skills.

And in general to strengthen the social dimension of education and training systems by:

1. Increasing the flexibility and permeability of education pathways and removing barriers to participation and to mobility within and between education and training systems.
2. Developing closer links between the world of education and the world of work and society at large, with a view to enhancing employability and active citizenship.
3. Establishing systems for the validation and recognition of prior learning, including informal and non-formal learning, and increasing the use of lifelong guidance among disadvantaged and low-skilled learners.
4. Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of financial support measures which target the disadvantaged, as well as the effects of the design of educational systems and structures on the disadvantaged.
5. Considering the collection of data on outcomes, drop-out rates and on learners' socio-economic backgrounds, particularly in vocational education and training, higher education and adult education.
6. Considering the establishment of quantified objectives in the area of social inclusion through education which are appropriate to the situation of each Member State.

7. Considering the development of an integrated approach to these objectives, in coordination with other policies.

8. Devoting adequate resources to disadvantaged pupils and schools and, where appropriate, extending the use of the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, in order to reduce social exclusion through education.

ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION TO:

1. Pursue cooperation on the strategic priority of promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship, by actively using the open method of coordination within the context of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) and by implementing the social dimension of the Bologna and Copenhagen processes and adopting measures in line with the 2008 Council conclusions on adult learning.
2. Endeavour to make active use of each strand of the lifelong learning programme and, where appropriate, of the European Social Fund, of the European Regional Development Fund and of the progress programme, in order to strengthen social inclusion through education and training, and maintain a strong focus on this dimension in the proposals for the next generation of programmes.
3. Promote and support greater participation of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, or those with special needs, in transnational mobility schemes, partnerships and projects, in particular those established under the Lifelong Learning Programme.
4. Support comparative research on the effectiveness of policies to increase equity in education and training, widen the knowledge base in cooperation with other international organisations and ensure a broad dissemination of research results.
5. Promote the role of education and training as key instruments for the achievement of the objectives of the social inclusion and social protection process.

Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on competences supporting lifelong learning and the 'new skills for new jobs' initiative

(2010/C 135/03)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning⁽¹⁾, which seeks to ensure that initial education and training offers all young people the means to develop the key competences to a level that equips them for further learning and working life and which allows adults to develop and update their key competences throughout their lives.
2. The Council Resolution of 15 November 2007 on new skills for new jobs⁽²⁾ and the Council conclusions of 9 March 2009 on new skills for new jobs — anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs⁽³⁾, which focused on equipping people for new jobs within the knowledge society, and which acknowledged that skills, competences and qualification requirements would increase significantly and across all types and levels of occupation, and that there was a growing demand from employers for transversal key competences.
3. The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning⁽⁴⁾, which encourages a shift away from the traditional emphasis on 'learning inputs' — such as the length of a learning experience, or type of institution — and towards an approach based on 'learning outcomes' — i.e. what a learner knows, understands and is able to do.
4. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 22 May 2008 on promoting creativity and innovation through education and training⁽⁵⁾, which stressed the importance of the key competences framework for enhancing creativity and innovation, and which led to the *Manifesto for creativity and innovation in Europe* that was presented by the Ambassadors for the 2009 European Year of Creativity and Innovation.
5. The Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning⁽⁶⁾ which highlighted the importance of adult learning as a key component of lifelong learning.
6. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st century⁽⁷⁾, which emphasised that a coherent approach to competence development based on the European reference framework of key competences for lifelong learning implied the need for stronger efforts to improve reading literacy and other basic skills.
7. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 21 November 2008 on the future priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET)⁽⁸⁾, which underlined that improving creativity and innovation was particularly important for VET and that to achieve this, the acquisition of key competences for lifelong learning should be actively promoted. The conclusions also aimed at improving the links between VET and the labour market by focusing on jobs and skills.
8. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 12 May 2009 on enhancing partnerships between education and training institutions and social partners, in particular employers, in the context of lifelong learning⁽⁹⁾, which recommended that sufficient attention should be paid in education and training institutions at all levels to the acquisition of transversal key competences useful in professional life.
9. The Council conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders⁽¹⁰⁾, which recognised that the demands placed on the teaching profession are imposing the need for new approaches and for teachers to take greater responsibility for updating and developing their own knowledge and skills.
10. The conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 26 November 2009 on developing the role of education in a fully-functioning knowledge triangle⁽¹¹⁾, which encouraged education and training institutions to ensure that curricula, as well as teaching and examination methods at all levels of education, incorporate and foster creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 290, 4.12.2007, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ Doc. 6479/09.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 111, 6.5.2008, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 141, 7.6.2008, p. 17.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ C 140, 6.6.2008, p. 10.

⁽⁷⁾ OJ C 319, 13.12.2008, p. 20.

⁽⁸⁾ OJ C 18, 24.1.2009, p. 6.

⁽⁹⁾ Doc. 9876/09.

⁽¹⁰⁾ OJ C 302, 12.12.2009, p. 6.

⁽¹¹⁾ OJ C 302, 12.12.2009, p. 3.

AND RECALLING IN PARTICULAR:

The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020')⁽¹⁾, which provide a means of addressing the challenges involved in fully implementing key competences and of improving the openness and relevance of education and training, including through the definition of priority work areas during the 2009-2011 work cycle, the possible development of a benchmark on employability and the adjustment of the coherent framework of indicators, paying special attention to the areas of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship,

AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING CHALLENGES:

1. The current economic crisis, together with the rapid pace of social, technological and demographic change, underline the crucial importance of ensuring that — through high-quality lifelong education and training, as well as increased mobility — all individuals, in particular young people, acquire a strong set of competences.

2. Acquiring and further developing competences are crucial to improving employment prospects and contribute to personal fulfilment, social inclusion and active citizenship, since they signal the ability of individuals to act in a self-organised way in complex, changing and unpredictable contexts. As set out in the Key Competences Recommendation, a competent individual is able to combine knowledge, skills and attitudes, and to apply and make use of prior learning (whether acquired formally, non-formally or informally) in new situations.

3. The 2010 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the 'Education & Training 2010' work programme recognises that:

— many countries are reforming curricula based explicitly on the key competences framework, particularly in the schools sector, but innovative approaches to teaching and learning need to be developed and implemented on a broader basis, in order to ensure that every citizen can have access to high-quality lifelong learning opportunities;

— there is a particular need to strengthen those competences required to engage in further learning and the labour market, which are often closely interrelated. This means further developing the key competences approach beyond the schools sector, into adult learning and into vocational education and training (VET) linked to the Copenhagen process, and ensuring that higher education outcomes are more relevant to the needs of the labour market. It also means developing ways of evaluating and recording transversal key competences — which are defined as including *learning to learn, social and civic competences, initiative-taking and entrepre-*

neurship, and cultural awareness and expression⁽²⁾ — that are relevant for access to work and further learning;

— a 'common language' bridging the worlds of education/training and work needs to be developed in order to make it easier for citizens and employers to see how competences and learning outcomes are relevant to tasks and occupations. This would further facilitate citizens occupational and geographical mobility;

— in order to enhance citizens' competences and thus better equip people for the future, education and training systems also need to open up further and become more relevant to the outside world.

STRESSING THAT:

— The above challenges call for action at both European and national level, as part of the priority work areas specifically planned for the first 2009-2011 work cycle of ET 2020. The key competences approach needs to be fully implemented in the schools sector, particularly to support the acquisition of key competences and quality learning outcomes for those at risk of educational under-achievement and social exclusion. Teaching and assessment methods need to evolve, and the initial and continuing professional development of all teachers, trainers and school leaders needs to be supported, in line with the competence-based approach.

— However, there is now also a need to clarify, and to consider developing, the link between the various existing European initiatives aimed at strengthening citizen' competences and at providing a greater focus on learning outcomes, as well as to ensure a consistent approach in this field. This should build on the progress made with implementation of both the Key Competences Recommendation and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), and should connect these to the acquisition of competences and learning outcomes in all relevant settings and at all levels. It should further aim at systematically improving and strengthening the acquisition of competences in education and training, as well as at work.

THEREFORE EMPHASISES THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTION IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

— Efforts are needed to show how key competences are relevant at all levels of education and training and in all stages and situations of life. In addition to supporting the implementation of key competences in the areas identified by the 2006 Recommendation, attention should also be paid to making best use of the Recommendation in order to support lifelong learning beyond the end of compulsory education.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10, and OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 4.

- More should be done to support the acquisition, updating and further development of the full range of key competences in the areas of vocational education and training and of adult learning.
 - In order to equip students with the competences required by the labour market, as well as for further learning and research activities, priority should also be given in higher education to the updating, acquisition and further development of key competences. It is particularly important that higher education institutions provide opportunities for students to develop the ability to communicate in foreign languages, as appropriate, as well as a strong set of transversal key competences, since these are essential for acquiring other skills, adapting to various working environments and being active citizens.
 - Curriculum design, teaching, assessment, and learning environments should be consistently based on learning outcomes, i.e. the knowledge, skills and competences to be acquired by learners. Particular emphasis should be placed on those transversal key competences that require cross-curricular and innovative methods. To achieve the transition to a competence-based approach, efforts should also be made to ensure that teachers, trainers and school leaders are equipped to take on the new roles implicit in such an approach. This process can be supported through enhanced partnerships between education and training institutions and the wider world, especially the world of work.
 - More should also be done to adequately assess, record and provide evidence of the competences developed by citizens throughout their lives in formal, non-formal and informal learning environments for the purposes of employment and of access to further learning, as well as for active participation in society. Flexible pathways in education and training can improve citizens' employment opportunities, as well as facilitate the identification of their evolving competences and future learning needs. The effectiveness of tools for the identification and recording of competences could be enhanced if a standardised terminology and approach to classification could be adopted by all stakeholders in both education and training and the labour market, expertise and continuing support of Cedefop, this should include taking greater account of transversal key competences in curricula, assessment and qualifications; promoting creativity and innovation by developing specific teaching and learning methods; and developing partnerships between education and training providers, businesses and civil society.
 - Support the initial and continuing professional development of all teachers, trainers and school leaders in general education, as well as in vocational education and training, including for the purpose of equipping them to take on the new roles implicit in a competence-based approach.
 - Initiate work to clarify how key competences can be continuously developed and adapted to meet the challenges faced by individuals throughout their learning and working lives, by examining and developing *inter alia* the assessment of key competences at various levels of education and training. In particular, consideration should be given as to whether a link should be established between the learning outcomes-based reference levels promoted by Member States' implementation of the EQF and the key competences framework.
 - Work, in collaboration with the social partners, public employment services and other stakeholders, on the development of a common language — or standardised terminology — covering European skills, competences and occupations (ESCO). This common language should aim to improve the articulation between competences acquired in learning processes and the needs of occupations and the labour market, and thereby bridge the worlds of education/training and work. It could both support and build on the implementation of the EQF, by facilitating the description, categorisation and classification of education and training provision, individual learning outcomes and experiences, as well as related employment opportunities. The overall purpose would be to make it easier for citizens, public employment services, careers counsellors, guidance providers and employers to see the relevance of learning outcomes in national qualifications to tasks and occupations, and to use the common language in order to better match skills needs to the labour market.
- INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION TO:
- Support the exchange of best practices and national initiatives relating to the areas mentioned above. In line with the work areas planned for the first 2009-2011 work cycle of ET 2020, and making the best use of the
 - Further develop and promote, in collaboration with all the relevant stakeholders, the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, with a view to enabling citizens to engage in further learning and the labour market.

- Develop the Europass framework in line with the implementation of the EQF and with a view to recording and highlighting more effectively the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by citizens throughout their lives in a variety of learning settings, including by considering the development of a 'personal skills passport' based on existing Europass elements.
- Continue work on identifying emerging knowledge, skills and competences required for work and learning purposes, while taking into account the importance of career guidance systems, in order to support citizens in their endeavours to

find and create new and better jobs, and in order to measure and analyse potential skills mismatches,

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:

Report back to the Council, by the end of 2011, on how the agenda set out in these conclusions could be further pursued, and work together with the Member States and interested stakeholders on its implementation in accordance with the priorities set out in the Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training, as well as in the context of the *Europe 2020* strategy.

Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the internationalisation ⁽¹⁾ of higher education

(2010/C 135/04)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

WHEREAS:

1. The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999 established an intergovernmental process aimed at creating a European Higher Education Area by 2010 which is actively supported by the European Union, and the Ministers responsible for higher education in the 46 participating countries, meeting in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve on 28 and 29 April 2009, called for higher education institutions to further internationalise their activities.
2. The Council Resolution of 23 November 2007 on modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy ⁽²⁾ invited Member States to promote the internationalisation of higher education institutions by encouraging quality assurance through independent evaluation and peer review of universities, enhancing mobility, promoting the use of joint and double degrees and facilitating the recognition of qualifications and periods of study.
3. The European Union has a long tradition of cooperation with third countries based on a set of policies and instruments in which higher education is playing an increasing role. Cooperation agreements with partners around the world often include support for infrastructure and cooperation programmes in higher education, as well as frameworks for policy dialogues in this field. Cooperation in higher education also features prominently in multilateral cooperation frameworks such as the Union for the Mediterranean, the Northern Dimension or the Eastern Partnership.
4. Decision No 1298/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 established the *Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013* action programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries ⁽³⁾.
5. The *Tempus IV* programme (2007-2013) supports the modernisation of higher education in the partner countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean region, mainly through university cooperation projects and partnerships. Other programmes, such as the cooperation programmes with industrialised countries, or *EduLink*, *Nyerere* and *Alfa*, cover academic cooperation activities with other regions of the world.

6. The *Marie Curie* actions under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development promote excellence and mobility in European research and provide broad support for the development of dynamic world-class human resources in the European research system, taking into account the inherent international dimension of research,

NOTING THAT:

1. Higher education is acquiring an increasingly international dimension, as more and more higher education institutions enrol students from third countries, exchange students, staff, projects and knowledge, and engage in international academic and research cooperation.
2. The quality of Europe's higher education institutions and the unparalleled range and depth of studies they offer make those institutions highly attractive to the international academic world, both as study destinations and as partners for joint education and research ventures.
3. In addition, Europe's success in creating tools such as the common reference framework that relates national qualifications systems and frameworks together around a common European reference ⁽⁴⁾, and in developing a common understanding in areas such as quality assurance ⁽⁵⁾, is generating increasing interest among global partners.
4. International cooperation programmes and policy dialogues with third countries in the field of higher education not only enable knowledge to flow more freely, but also contribute to enhancing the quality and international standing of European higher education, to boosting research and innovation, to fostering mobility and intercultural dialogue, as well as to promoting international development in accordance with EU external policy objectives,

RECALLING THAT:

The Council attaches great importance to promoting learning mobility in higher education for students, teaching staff and researchers. Such mobility provides a means of enriching human capital and strengthening employability through the acquisition and exchange of knowledge, the development of linguistic and intercultural competences, and the promotion of interpersonal contacts. Moreover, increasing the flow of knowledge in this way can enhance the capacity for creativity and innovation,

⁽¹⁾ For the purposes of this text, the term 'internationalisation' is used to refer to the development of international cooperation activities between EU higher education institutions and those in third countries.

⁽²⁾ 16096/1/07 REV 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 340, 19.12.2008, p. 83.

⁽⁴⁾ The European Qualifications Framework (OJ C 111, 6.5.2008, p. 1).

⁽⁵⁾ e.g. The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education, and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, each established under the Bologna Process.

NEVERTHELESS AWARE THAT:

The global competition to secure ever larger shares of the mobile international student population is increasingly challenging, with other world partners also actively pursuing strategies to promote the opening up of their higher education institutions to the wider world and to attract the best talents.

AGREES THAT:

1. International cooperation in higher education is an important and rewarding area which deserves support at both national and EU level. Such cooperation contributes to improving the quality and innovation of teaching, learning and research, and is beneficial to the production of knowledge. Higher education plays a central role in the development of individuals and societies, as it enhances social, cultural and economic development and promotes active citizenship and ethical values. While having special regard for the principle of subsidiarity, cooperation in higher education should therefore form an integral part of the EU's external cooperation policies, and should be adapted to the particular needs, interests and state of development of the partner countries concerned.
2. Support is needed for EU initiatives and programmes which promote higher education cooperation with a European dimension, and which support higher education institutions in working on joint academic projects, in reinforcing European networks and thus in reducing barriers between national systems. Supporting European higher education institutions in cooperating with their global peers plays an important role in promoting quality and excellence. Cooperation of this kind has, for instance, contributed to the creation of innovative courses and opened the way to the establishment of transnational joint, double and multiple degrees. EU academic cooperation programmes should be organised in such a way that they develop highly visible and efficient delivery mechanisms and convey clear, consistent and convincing messages throughout the world.
3. The progress achieved in making the degree structure more compatible and more comparable through the pan-European Bologna process, as well as the EU's success in adopting common approaches and tools with regard to the recognition of qualifications and quality assurance, have enhanced the attractiveness of higher education within the Union. There is a shared interest in promoting these developments worldwide and in responding to the rising interest which third countries are demonstrating. The Bologna Policy Forum which facilitates policy dialogue between the European Higher Education Area and other parts of the world should be welcomed as a tool for exchange on concrete issues of mutual interest.
4. Initiatives which make European higher education more understandable and transparent to international stakeholders can also help to make Europe more attractive as a study destination. The ongoing study aimed at mapping the

diversity of higher education institutions' missions and performances and at assessing the feasibility of a European transparency instrument should be continued with a view to improving readability and lending greater visibility to the particular strengths of European higher education.

5. A growing number of third countries are interested in the common policies and instruments developed by the EU to support Member States in modernising their different education systems, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) being amongst those that have attracted particular attention. This is why, in addition to international academic cooperation programmes, policy dialogue in higher education should be further developed with a number of interested world partners, with a view to sharing experience and good practice, building up local capacities and using positive feedback to improve EU policies.
6. International academic cooperation should continue to be an important means for the EU to support the modernisation efforts of its partners, since by offering structured partnerships between higher education institutions from the EU and third countries, the EU can contribute to building local capacities — both within and beyond higher education institutions — retain qualified university staff, and enhance international academic exchanges and mobility,

ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE MEMBER STATES TO:

Adopt, in coordination with higher education institutions and while recognising their autonomy and national practices, measures which are aimed at:

1. Fostering a truly international culture within those institutions, for instance by:
 - (a) promoting cooperation, networking and interaction between higher education institutions, the research world and the business sector at international level, as part of the drive towards a fully functioning knowledge triangle;
 - (b) fostering and supporting the mobility of international students, teachers, researchers and other staff;
 - (c) providing students, teachers, researchers and other stakeholders in higher education with the training and competences needed to work in an open international environment;
 - (d) recruiting internationally experienced staff who can encourage a more international outlook among native students and teaching staff;

- (e) ensuring the provision of high quality curricula and the application of teaching methods which take the international dimension into account;
 - (f) establishing an institutional environment which encourages the participation of students, teaching staff and researchers in international programmes, joint, double and multiple degrees, and research projects;
 - (g) encouraging higher education institutions to develop internationalisation strategies, and/or to include this dimension in their development plans.
2. Increasing the international attractiveness of higher education institutions, for instance by:
- (a) promoting the academic excellence of European campuses, and improving their international visibility as interesting places to study and conduct research;
 - (b) improving the quality of services supporting the reception, stay and return of international students, teaching staff, researchers and other staff;
 - (c) participating in international cooperation networks, projects and joint education and research programmes;
 - (d) promoting the development of high quality joint, double and multiple degrees, as well as the joint monitoring of theses;
 - (e) facilitating, whilst having due regard to quality assurance mechanisms, the recognition of qualifications and study periods abroad.
3. Promoting the global dimension and awareness of the social responsibility of higher education institutions, for instance by:
- (a) promoting new and innovative forms of transnational cooperation within the higher education community;
 - (b) fostering and improving equity in access to higher education and international mobility schemes through the provision of adequate incentives and support;
 - (c) returning knowledge to society at both the local, national and global level, thereby helping to meet society's needs and important social challenges,
- ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:
1. Develop, in collaboration with the Member States and while fully respecting the autonomy of higher education institutions, an EU international higher education strategy which is aimed at improving coherence and complementarity between existing international cooperation initiatives at both EU and national level, and which will continue to promote the attractiveness of European higher education, research and innovation in the EU's external activities, as well as EU cooperation programmes and policies in this field.
 2. Ensure that learning and research mobility between the EU and the wider world forms part of that strategy.
 3. Continue to support international higher education partnerships, international academic cooperation and capacity-building actions, and to facilitate policy dialogue in higher education with interested third countries.
 4. Promote the exchange of experience and good practice in this field.
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Council conclusions of 10 May 2010 on the contribution of culture to local and regional development

(2010/C 135/05)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

- the relevant political background as set out in Annex to these conclusions,
- the challenges, both economic and social, faced by the European Union and the need for a European strategy to address these challenges,
- the intrinsic value of culture, as well as its importance as a key driver for a competitive, innovative and inclusive market economy and as a vehicle for social cohesion,
- the particular cultural wealth and diversity of the regions and the cities of Europe, due to their proximity to the needs of citizens and local stakeholders and their role as platforms for economic, social and territorial cohesion,
- the contribution of culture and the cultural and creative industries to local and regional development through making European regions more attractive and developing sustainable tourism, creating new employment opportunities and innovative products and services, and helping develop new skills and competences,

AGREES THAT:

- there is an evident link between culture, creativity and innovation contributing to social and economic progress. Therefore, it is essential to consolidate the contribution of culture, especially the cultural and creative industries, to the 'Europe 2020 strategy' for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth,

CONSIDERS THAT IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THE CONTRIBUTION OF CULTURE TO LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IT IS NECESSARY TO:

- mainstream culture as a strategic and crosscutting element into European and national policies for the social and economic development of European regions and cities,
- encourage strategic investment in culture and cultural and creative industries, in particular SMEs, at local and regional level, in order to foster creative and dynamic societies,

- foster the contribution of culture to sustainable tourism, as a key factor for local and regional attractiveness and economic development, as well as a driver for highlighting the importance of cultural heritage in Europe,

- raise awareness among decision-makers on local and regional policies that develop new competences through culture and creativity adapted to the current fast-changing environment, with a view to developing new skills, improving human capital and fostering social cohesion,

- strengthen crossborder, transnational and interregional cultural initiatives as a means of linking the diverse peoples and regions of Europe and strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion,

IDENTIFIES THE FOLLOWING PRIORITY AREAS WITH DUE REGARD TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY:

1. Mainstream culture in local and regional development policies

The Member States and the Commission are invited to:

- (a) strengthen the role of culture in integrated local and regional development policies including infrastructure, urban regeneration rural diversification, services, entrepreneurship, tourism, research and innovation, human capital improvement, social inclusion and interregional cooperation;
- (b) enhance vertical and horizontal synergies between the cultural sector and other sectors, as well as partnerships between public and private stakeholders;
- (c) support an evidence-based approach to cultural investment at a local and regional level, making use of evaluation and impact assessment instruments;
- (d) promote greater cooperation and exchange of good practices between Member States, European regions, cities and stakeholders;
- (e) promote information and better awareness on the contribution of culture to local and regional development;

- (f) facilitate a better understanding of the regulatory framework and of the implementation procedures of the instruments of cohesion policy, which specifically involve the cultural stakeholders in both public and private sectors, including civil society, and which help to raise awareness of the cultural dimension among those responsible for local and regional development policies.

The Member States are invited to:

- (a) include cultural stakeholders in an integrated bottom-up approach to programmes for local and regional development, including in the context of European cohesion policy as appropriate;
- (b) associate local and regional authorities in the implementation of the European Agenda for Culture so that cultural policy responds to the expectations and needs of European regions and cities;
- (c) encourage integrated local development strategies aimed at compensating for geographical differences in access to culture among citizens.

The Commission is invited to:

- (a) collect and disseminate best practices at the European level and develop instruments for exchange of information at European level.

2. Stimulate a favourable environment at local and regional level for a better development of cultural and creative industries, especially SMEs

The Member States and the Commission are invited to:

- (a) take better advantage of the instruments of cohesion policy and other relevant financing programmes with a view to optimising support to the cultural and creative industries, including through facilitating access to information on funding opportunities and providing consulting services;
- (b) favour the creation of cultural and creative industry incubators at the local and regional level, thus strengthening entrepreneurship;
- (c) explore ways to promote new business models and to consolidate creative clusters and business research centres by taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the application and use of ICTs;

- (d) support and strengthen the access of cultural and creative SMEs to the digital and physical distribution channels, through policy encouraging the widest possible distribution and circulation of works, ensuring fair remuneration for the actors involved within the creation chain.

The Member States are invited to:

- (a) encourage a favourable regulatory environment for cultural and creative SMEs and explore innovative ways to enable access to finance, both public and private;
- (b) promote better communication between cultural and creative industries and financial services by encouraging business management, research and innovation, financial and information training for companies, employers and people working in cultural sector.

The Commission is invited to:

- (a) attach greater importance to the cultural and creative industries in key policy initiatives, relevant strategies and European Union programmes.

3. Deepen the contribution of culture to sustainable tourism

The Member States and the Commission are invited to:

- (a) encourage the development of cultural tourism, as a key element of sustainable tourism, and pay due attention to the protection of the environment, cultural heritage, landscape and the quality of life.

The Member States are invited to:

- (a) foster the revitalisation of resources intrinsic to a region, with special focus on cultural (tangible and intangible) heritage, cultural expressions and related activities;
- (b) promote cultural activities which take into account and respect the specificities of a region and foster its image while allowing the involvement and participation of the local population;
- (c) further develop, in the context of environmental education, greater awareness of the need to protect cultural and natural heritage, with a view to encouraging responsible attitudes among tourists and providers of tourist services.

4. Promote creativity in education and training with a view to developing new skills, improving human capital and fostering social cohesion

The Member States and the Commission are invited to:

- (a) promote creativity and innovation within education and business sectors through networks between educational institutions, research centres, cultural actors and enterprises;
- (b) intensify links between culture, education and business sectors at local and regional level in order to facilitate the integration of young people and people with fewer opportunities into the labour market and equip them with the communication and entrepreneurial skills required in an evolving socio-economic environment.

The Member States are invited to:

- (a) together with relevant local and regional authorities, assess the potential skills needs of a region and identify ways in which culture can contribute to policies aimed at the improvement of local human capital;
- (b) foster cultural and arts education as an important element in life long learning.

The Commission is invited to:

- (a) map skills and needs required for the cultural and creative sectors in the context of new challenges derived from the digital shift, demographic changes, and evolving economic circumstances;
- (b) mobilise existing instruments to support learning mobility for professionals in the culture and creative sectors, including for young entrepreneurs, and encourage new

forms of learning (i.e. crossborder peer to peer learning initiatives).

5. Reinforce cross-border, transnational and interregional cultural cooperation

The Member States and the Commission are invited to:

- (a) facilitate cultural cooperation and mobility of cultural operators among different regions of Europe;
- (b) support the development of cross-border and interregional cultural projects and activities which emphasize the local specificities of a territory and seek to involve their citizens.

The Member States are invited to:

- (a) foster the use of cohesion policy instruments to strengthen crossborder, transnational and interregional cooperation.

The Commission is invited to:

- (a) continue supporting cultural initiatives within cohesion policy instruments acting as a catalyst for good practices, exchanges and innovation laboratories;
- (b) disseminate widely among stakeholders relevant studies and examples of good practices,

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION TO:

take these priorities into consideration when drawing up and implementing current and future local and regional development policies, and when implementing European cohesion policy in accordance with their respective competences.

ANNEX

In adopting these conclusions, the Council recalls in particular the following background:

- UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (20 October 2005),
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999,
- Council conclusions on the contribution of the cultural and creative sectors to the achievement of the Lisbon objectives (24 May 2007),
- Commission Communication. Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism (19 October 2007),
- Council resolution on a European Agenda for Culture (16 November 2007),
- Presidency conclusions of the European Council (13-14 March 2008) which recognised that a key factor for future growth was the full development of the potential for innovation and creativity of European citizens built on European culture and excellence in science (7652/08),
- Council conclusions on Intercultural Competences (22 May 2008),
- Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010,
- Council Conclusions on Culture as a Catalyst for Creativity and Innovation (12 May 2009),
- Europe 2020 — A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (3 March 2010),
- Green Paper *Unlocking the Potential of Cultural and Creative Industries* (27 April 2010).

Studies:

- Application of Article 151.4 of the EC Treaty: Use of the Structural Funds in the field of culture during the period 1994-1999 (doc. 6929/04),
 - The Economy of Culture in Europe, ed., KEA European Affairs (13 November 2006),
 - The Impact of Culture on Creativity, ed., KEA European Affairs (June 2009),
 - The contribution of culture to local and regional economic development as part of European regional policy (April 2010).
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾

24 May 2010

(2010/C 135/06)

1 euro =

Currency		Exchange rate	Currency		Exchange rate
USD	US dollar	1,2360	AUD	Australian dollar	1,4928
JPY	Japanese yen	111,63	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,3095
DKK	Danish krone	7,4421	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	9,6421
GBP	Pound sterling	0,86080	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,8429
SEK	Swedish krona	9,7960	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,7408
CHF	Swiss franc	1,4339	KRW	South Korean won	1 500,79
ISK	Iceland króna		ZAR	South African rand	9,7392
NOK	Norwegian krone	8,0848	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	8,4400
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,2715
CZK	Czech koruna	25,664	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	11 446,75
EEK	Estonian kroon	15,6466	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,1029
HUF	Hungarian forint	278,34	PHP	Philippine peso	57,547
LTL	Lithuanian litas	3,4528	RUB	Russian rouble	38,4500
LVL	Latvian lats	0,7074	THB	Thai baht	40,112
PLN	Polish zloty	4,1150	BRL	Brazilian real	2,3026
RON	Romanian leu	4,1820	MXN	Mexican peso	16,0745
TRY	Turkish lira	1,9488	INR	Indian rupee	58,0730

⁽¹⁾ Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾**25 May 2010**

(2010/C 135/07)

1 euro =

Currency			Exchange rate		
Currency			Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,2223	AUD	Australian dollar	1,5047
JPY	Japanese yen	109,53	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,3204
DKK	Danish krone	7,4404	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	9,5370
GBP	Pound sterling	0,85205	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,8474
SEK	Swedish krona	9,8275	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,7345
CHF	Swiss franc	1,4244	KRW	South Korean won	1 529,06
ISK	Iceland króna		ZAR	South African rand	9,7373
NOK	Norwegian krone	8,1270	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	8,3495
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,2733
CZK	Czech koruna	25,647	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	11 428,04
EEK	Estonian kroon	15,6466	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,1124
HUF	Hungarian forint	280,38	PHP	Philippine peso	57,591
LTL	Lithuanian litas	3,4528	RUB	Russian rouble	38,5050
LVL	Latvian lats	0,7074	THB	Thai baht	39,750
PLN	Polish zloty	4,1642	BRL	Brazilian real	2,3236
RON	Romanian leu	4,1839	MXN	Mexican peso	16,2297
TRY	Turkish lira	1,9464	INR	Indian rupee	58,3200

⁽¹⁾ Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

V

(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Call for proposals — MOVE/SUB/01-2010 on road safety and the internal market: inland waterway transport*(2010/C 135/08)*

The European Commission is planning to grant subsidies totalling the indicative amount of EUR 2 250 000 to promote transport policy objectives. The policy priorities have been fixed in the 2010 Work Programme adopted by the European Commission.

The main topics selected are road safety and internal market for inland waterway transport.

Information on this call for proposals is available on the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport website at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/grants/index_en.htm

PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON
COMMERCIAL POLICY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Notice of the expiry of certain anti-dumping measures

(2010/C 135/09)

The Commission gives notice that the anti-dumping measure mentioned below will shortly expire.

This notice is published in accordance with Article 11(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1225/2009 of 30 November 2009 ⁽¹⁾ on protection against dumped imports from countries not members of the European Community.

Product	Country(ies) of origin or exportation	Measures	Reference	Date of expiry
Magnesium oxide	People's Republic of China	Anti-dumping duty	Council Regulation (EC) No 778/2005 (OJ L 131, 25.5.2005, p. 1)	26.5.2010

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 51.

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Notice for the attention of Nayif Bin-Muhammad al-Qahtani and Qasim Yahaya Mahdi al-Rimi, who were added to the list referred to in Articles 2, 3 and 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 881/2002 imposing certain specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities associated with Usama bin Laden, the Al-Qaida network and the Taliban, by virtue of Commission Regulation (EU) No 450/2010

(2010/C 135/10)

1. Common Position 2002/402/CFSP⁽¹⁾ calls upon the Union to freeze the funds and economic resources of Usama bin Laden, members of the Al-Qaida organisation and the Taliban and other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with them, as referred to in the list drawn up pursuant to UNSCR 1267(1999) and 1333(2000) to be updated regularly by the UN Committee established pursuant to UNSCR 1267(1999).

The list drawn up by this UN Committee comprises:

- Al Qaida, the Taliban and Usama bin Laden,
- natural or legal persons, entities, bodies and groups associated with Al Qaida, the Taliban and Usama bin Laden,
- and
- legal persons, entities and bodies owned or controlled by, or otherwise supporting, any of these associated persons, entities, bodies and groups.

Acts or activities indicating that an individual, group, undertaking, or entity is 'associated with' Al-Qaida, Usama bin Laden or the Taliban include:

- (a) participating in the financing, planning, facilitating, preparing, or perpetrating of acts or activities by, in conjunction with, under the name of, on behalf of, or in support of, Al Qaida, the Taliban or Usama bin Laden, or any cell, affiliate, splinter group or derivative thereof;
- (b) supplying, selling or transferring arms and related materiel to any of them;
- (c) recruiting for any of them;
- or
- (d) otherwise supporting acts or activities of any of them.

2. The UN Committee decided on 11 May 2010 to add Nayif Bin-Muhammad al-Qahtani and Qasim Yahaya Mahdi al-Rimi to the relevant list. They may submit at any time a request to the UN Committee, together with any supporting documentation, for the decision to include them in the UN list referred to above, to be reconsidered. Such request should be sent to the following address:

United Nations — Focal point for delisting
Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch
Room S-3055 E
New York, NY 10017
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 139, 29.5.2002, p. 4. Common Position as last amended by Common Position 2003/140/CFSP (OJ L 53, 28.2.2003, p. 62).

See for more information at: <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/delisting.shtml>

3. Further to the UN decision referred to in paragraph 2, the Commission has adopted Regulation (EU) No 450/2010 ⁽¹⁾, which amends Annex I to Council Regulation (EC) No 881/2002 imposing certain specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities associated with Usama bin Laden, the Al-Qaida network and the Taliban ⁽²⁾. The amendment, made pursuant to Articles 7(1)(a) and 7a(1) of Regulation (EC) No 881/2002, adds Nayif Bin-Muhammad al-Qahtani and Qasim Yahaya Mahdi al-Rimi to the list in Annex I of that Regulation ('Annex I').

The following measures of Regulation (EC) No 881/2002 apply to the individuals and entities included in Annex I:

1. the freezing of all funds and economic resources belonging to the individuals and entities concerned, or owned or held by them, and the prohibition (on everyone) on making funds and economic resources available to any of the individuals and entities concerned or for their benefit, whether directly or indirectly (Articles 2 and 2a ⁽³⁾);

and

2. the prohibition on granting, selling, supplying or transferring technical advice, assistance or training related to military activities to any of the individuals and entities concerned, whether directly or indirectly (Article 3).

4. Article 7a of Regulation (EC) No 881/2002 ⁽⁴⁾ provides for a review process where observations on the grounds for listing are submitted by those listed. Individuals and entities added to Annex I by Regulation (EU) No 450/2010 may make a request for the grounds for their listing to the Commission. This request should be sent to:

European Commission
'Restrictive measures'
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

5. The attention of the individuals and entities concerned is also drawn to the possibility of challenging Regulation (EU) No 450/2010 before the General Court of the European Union, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the fourth and sixth paragraphs of Article 263 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

6. Personal data of the individuals concerned will be handled in accordance with the rules of Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community (now Union) institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data ⁽⁵⁾. Any request, e.g. for further information or in order to exercise the rights under Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 (e.g. access or rectification of personal data), should be sent to the Commission, at the address mentioned under point 4 above.

7. For good order, the attention of the individuals and entities included in Annex I is drawn to the possibility of making an application to the competent authorities in the relevant Member State(s), as listed in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 881/2002, in order to obtain an authorisation to use frozen funds and economic resources for essential needs or specific payments in accordance with Article 2a of that Regulation.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 217, 26.5.2010, p. 8.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 139, 29.5.2002, p. 9.

⁽³⁾ Article 2a was inserted by Council Regulation (EC) No 561/2003 (OJ L 82, 29.3.2003, p. 1).

⁽⁴⁾ Article 7a was inserted by Council Regulation (EU) No 1286/2009 (OJ L 346, 23.12.2009, p. 42).

⁽⁵⁾ OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1.

Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2010/C 135/11)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽¹⁾. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

SUMMARY

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘LIMONE DI SIRACUSA’

EC No: IT-PGI-0005-0502-11.10.2005

PDO () PGI (X)

This summary sets out the main elements of the product specification for information purposes.

1. Responsible department in Member State:

Name: Ministero delle Politiche Agricole e Forestali
Address: Via XX Settembre 20
00187 Roma RM
ITALIA

Tel. +39 0646455104
Fax +39 0646655306
E-mail: sacco7@politicheagricole.gov.it

2. Group:

Name: Consorzio del Limone di Siracusa
Address: c/o SOAT 30 — viale Teracati 39
96100 Siracusa SR
ITALIA

Tel. +39 093138234
Fax +39 093138234
E-mail: —

Composition: Producers/processors (X) Other ()

3. Type of product:

Class 1.6.: Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed

4. Specification:

(summary of requirements under Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No 510/2006)

4.1. Name:

‘Limone di Siracusa’

4.2. Description:

The protected geographical indication ‘Limone di Siracusa’ may be used exclusively for the cultivar ‘Femminello’ and its clones, corresponding to the botanical species *Citrus limon* (L) Burm, grown at specialist locations on the territory of the province of Syracuse, as defined in point 4.3.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

The characteristics of the types of fruit depending on the time of harvest are the following:

'Primofiore': fruit picked from 1 October to 14 April displaying the following characteristics:

Colour of peel: light green to lemon yellow

Shape: elliptical

Size: medium to large

Weight of fruit: no less than 100 g

Pulp: light green to lemon yellow colour

Juice: lemon yellow colour

Minimum clear juice content: > 34 % of weight

Brix level of pulp: > 7 °

Acidity: > 6 %

'Bianchetto' or 'Maiolino' (or spring lemon): fruit picked from 15 April to 30 June displaying the following characteristics:

Colour of peel: light yellow

Shape: elliptical or ovoid

Size: large

Weight of fruit: no less than 100 g

Pulp: yellow colour

Juice: lemon yellow colour

Minimum clear juice content: > 30 % of weight

Brix level of pulp: > 6,5 °

Acidity: > 5,5 %

'Verdello' (or summer lemon): fruit picked from 1 July to 30 September displaying the following characteristics:

Colour of peel: light green

Shape: elliptical-round

Size: medium-large

Weight of fruit: no less than 100 g

Pulp: lemon yellow colour

Juice: lemon yellow colour

Minimum clear juice content: > 25 % of weight

Brix level of pulp: > 6 °

Acidity: > 5,5 %

Fruit eligible for the 'Limone di Siracusa' protected geographical indication must be marketed as fresh fruit in the categories Extra and Prime. The eligible sizes are: 3, 4 and 5.

4.3. *Geographical area:*

The geographical growing zone for PGI 'Limone di Siracusa' covers the following municipalities: Augusta, Melilli, Syracuse, Avola, Noto, Rosolini, Floridia, Solarino, Sortino and Priolo Gargallo.

This geographical area does not stretch beyond 10 km from the shores of the Ionian Sea and its altitude is no higher than 210 m above sea level: it is bounded in the North by the south-facing valleys of the Porcaria stream and in the South by the south-facing valleys of the Tellaro river.

4.4. *Proof of origin:*

Every stage in the production process must be monitored and a record made of the inputs and outputs at each stage. The traceability of the product is ensured in this way, as well as by entering the land registry plots on which the product is grown and the names of producers and packers in registers managed by the inspection body, and by declaring the quantities produced to the inspection body in a timely manner. All natural and legal persons whose names appear in the registers will be subject to checks by the inspection body in accordance with the terms of the specification and the corresponding inspection plan.

4.5. *Method of production:*

Planting distances and growing and pruning methods must maintain perfect plant equilibrium and development in addition to providing normal aeration and sunlight exposure. Maximum planting density is 400 plants per hectare. For high-density dynamic planting, the maximum density allowed is 850 plants per hectare.

The following rootstocks are used: 'Arancio amaro', 'Poncirus trifoliata', 'Citrange Troyer', 'Citrange Carrizo' and 'Citrus macrophylla', which are highly genetically stable.

The fruit has to be harvested from the tree by hand.

The fruit must be removed from the tree with the aid of harvesting scissors to cut the stem. The fruit is harvested straight from the tree using traditional methods when it has reached the level of maturity that ensures good organoleptic and aesthetic qualities.

Maximum lemon production is 29 tonnes per hectare for the entire marketing year, including the fruit from all flowerings.

4.6. *Link:*

The 'Limone di Siracusa' is characterised by its early ripening, high juice content, its medium to large size and an all-year harvesting period. These particularities are attributable to the soil and climate conditions of the area and the qualities of the cultivar grown in the production area. The 'Limone di Siracusa' is grown along the Sicilian coast and in some limited areas inland around the valleys and rivers that characterise the province of Syracuse. Analysis of average temperatures taken on the coastal plain of Syracuse reveals that the climate in the area is mild from October to March and arid from April to September. Throughout the area, the land is extremely fertile, more or less deep and rich in nutrients and organic matter.

Water is the decisive factor for growing lemons. In the 'Limone di Sicilia' production area water resources are guaranteed by the great subterranean river basin of the Hyblaen tableland, which constitutes the largest natural water reserve in the whole of Sicily, as well as by surface watercourses. The availability of water, in combination with atmospheric humidity, plays a decisive role in determining the quality of 'Limone di Siracusa' fruit, indeed the lack of water stress and an averagely humid atmosphere make it possible to produce juicier fruit that are more regular in shape, with finer peel, and which can be harvested over 12 months of the year.

Sicily boasts a citrus growing tradition and the respect for ancient practices in cultivating these plants, handed down from generation to generation, is still alive in the Syracuse region, giving rise to a veritable school of specialists in cultivating the 'Limone di Siracusa'.

4.7. *Inspection body:*

The inspection body fulfils the requirements applicable under standard EN 45011.

Name: Det Norske Veritas Italia
Address: Viale A. De Gasperi 187
95127 Catania CT
ITALIA
Tel. +39 095370020
Fax +39 095372871
E-mail: —

4.8. *Labelling:*

For packaged fruit, it is obligatory to indicate in legible and visible print on at least one side of the packaging, either indelibly printed directly on the package or on a label which is an integral part of or firmly affixed to the package: variety, origin, category, size and batch.

For fruit sold unpacked, all of them must bear stickers.

Packing material may be: cardboard, wood or plastic. Recyclable, leased plastic packaging can be used. Authorised packaging comprises: nets and bags with a plastic band attached to the net. All wrapping and packaging must bear the 'Limone di Siracusa' logo.

The logo consists of a horizontal oval containing a black and white image of the Greek Amphitheatre in Syracuse in the cavea of which, to the right, are two lemons. One of these lemons is whole, with a leaf, in the background, while the other is shown in cross-section and partly covers the first lemon. The lemon with a leaf has a stem, and the leaf is quadrichrome green in colour. The leaf is turned towards the centre of the logo and partly covers the lemon to which it is attached by the stem.

Inside the oval, at the top, is the wording 'Limone di Siracusa'.

It is forbidden to add any qualification or description other than that expressly stipulated, including adjectives such as '*fine* (fine), *superiore* (superior), *selezionato* (selected), *scelto* (choice)', etc. The use of laudatory terms is forbidden.



Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2010/C 135/12)

This publication confers the right to object to the application pursuant to Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 ⁽¹⁾. Statements of objection must reach the Commission within six months of the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 510/2006

‘ARANCIA DI RIBERA’

EC No: IT-PDO-0005-0669-07.01.2008

PGI () PDO (X)

1. Name:

‘Arancia di Ribera’

2. Member State or third country:

Italy

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff:

3.1. Type of product:

Class 1.6.: Fruit, vegetables and cereals, fresh or processed

3.2. Description of the product to which the name in (1) applies:

The protected designation of origin ‘Arancia di Ribera’ is reserved for products from the following varieties: Brasiliano and its clones: common Brasiliano, improved Brasiliano; Washington Navel, common Washington Navel, improved Washington Navel, Washington Navel 3033; Navelina and its clones: common Navelina, improved Navelina and Navelina ISA 315. On release for consumption, ‘Arancia di Ribera’ PDO presents the following characteristics: the fruit (*hesperidium*) has a minimum transverse diameter of 70 mm; minimum size 6 in the European classification; typically spherical-ellipsoidal (ovoid, compressed or elliptical) shape with an interior navel; colour of peel: uniform orange, tending to a reddish tint at the end of the winter; the pulp is also of a uniform orange colour with a fine but firm texture and no seeds; juice: orange in colour; juice yield not less than 40 %; soluble solids content between 9 and 15 degrees Brix; acidity level between 0,75 and 1,50; ratio of soluble solids to titratable organic acids not less than 8. The ‘Arancia di Ribera’ PDO is reserved for oranges in the commercial categories ‘Extra’ and ‘I’.

3.3. Raw materials (for processed products only):

—

3.4. Feed (for products of animal origin only):

—

3.5. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area:

In order to protect the PDO fruit and preserve its quality, all packaging operations must take place within the production area defined in point 4, as transport over long distances and subsequent handling could lead to the development of pathogens and contamination of the product.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 93, 31.3.2006, p. 12.

The 'Arancia di Ribera' undergoes no chemical treatment either pre- or post-harvest, or during packaging. The absence of preservatives on the peel means that the product is more vulnerable to damage in transport or from handling.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc.:*

The 'Arancia di Ribera' PDO is released for consumption in the following units:

- wood, plastic and cardboard boxes and/or trays of up to 25 kg,
- net bags of up to 5 kg,
- corrugated cardboard bins of up to 40 kg.

All packaging, net bags and bins must be sealed to prevent the contents being removed without breaking the seal.

3.7. *Specific rules concerning labelling:*

The labels on the packaging must bear the following in clear and legible print:

- a reference to the 'Arancia di Ribera' PDO and the logo, in characters larger than the other information given on the label,
- the variety of orange: Brasiliano, Washington Navel or Navelina,
- the name, business name and address of the producing and/or packaging undertaking.

The commercial category ('Extra' or 'I').

It is forbidden to add any description that is not expressly provided for. Brand names may be used, however, provided they are not laudatory in nature and are not such as to mislead the consumer, as may the name of the holding from which the product comes and other truthful and documentable indications permitted under the legislation in force. An indication may be given of the week in which the product was harvested.

The 'Arancia di Ribera' PDO logo consists of the following:

The words 'Arancia di Ribera D.O.P. Denominazione Di Origine Protetta' in Textile font, with 'Arancia di Ribera' in lower case apart from the capital 'A' in 'Arancia' and 'R' in 'Ribera', 'D.O.P.' in capital letters separated by full stops and 'Denominazione di Origine Protetta' all in upper case. The wording 'Arancia di Ribera' is covered by a sketched outline with the distinctive shape and colours of the fruit: a generous size with orange-coloured peel and broad leaves. To the left of the 'D.O.P.' lettering appears a stylised outline of the island of Sicily. The labels affixed to the packaging must bear, in clear and legible print, the following indications:



4. Concise definition of the geographical area:

The area in which the 'Arancia di Ribera' is produced extends along the banks of the Verdura, Magazzolo, Platani and Carboj rivers, taking in the following municipalities in the Province of Agrigento: Bivona, Burgio, Calamonaci, Caltabellotta, Cattolica Eraclea, Cianciana, Lucca Sicula, Menfi, Montallegro, Ribera, Sciacca, Siculiana and Villafranca Sicula, and the municipality of Chiusa Sclafani in the Province of Palermo.

5. Link with the geographical area:

5.1. Specificity of the geographical area:

The area in which the 'Arancia di Ribera' is cultivated is a real 'orange oasis' set completely apart from the region's general citrus-growing activity. The orange trees grow on the banks of the Verdura, Magazzolo, Platani and Carboj rivers. The soil, which is made up of vertisols and inceptisols, is excellent for agriculture due both to its high mineral content and its texture.

In the summer season, to make up for the lack of rain, the citrus trees in the 'Arancia di Ribera' area are irrigated by means of a system of channels using water from the Magazzolo, Carboj and Verdura rivers which has been collected by the Castello, Arancio and Prizzi dams.

These rivers provide an ample supply of top quality water with a balanced composition, low conductivity and no impurities.

The proximity to the sea makes for temperature and humidity conditions that are well suited to the ecophysiological needs of the fruit — very rarely is there any damage from the natural phenomena generally responsible for harming crops, such as ice or sirocco winds.

5.2. Specificity of the product:

The specificity of the 'Arancia di Ribera' lies in its juiciness and in the low resistance chewing of the membrane between individual segments and the vesicles, generally producing the feeling of the fruit 'melting in the mouth'.

The 'Arancia di Ribera' is also characterised by a high soluble solids to acids ratio, its crisp, long-lasting taste (which make it particularly suitable for consumption as fresh fruit), its 'mildness' and lack of acidity. Other distinguishing factors are the strong orange colour of the peel and juice.

5.3. Causal link between the geographical area and the quality or characteristics of the product (for PDO) or a specific quality, the reputation or other characteristic of the product (for PGI):

The characteristics of the 'Arancia di Ribera' are linked to a well-established combination of natural factors (climate, terrain, water, etc.) and the professional skills of the local growers.

The soil is rich in rapidly assimilable primary minerals and has a high cationic exchange capacity (> 20 meq/100 g), which helps to boost significantly the exchangeable potassium content available for the orange trees. The high availability of potassium, favouring the transfer of sugars from the roots, leaves and branches into the fruit, together with the typically Mediterranean climate, are a key factor in raising sugar levels and improving the taste of the 'Arancia di Ribera'.

The soil in these parts comes from alluvial sediment and is characterised by a balanced texture linked to the high clay content mitigated by the presence of sand and often shingle, which ensure that air and water can circulate freely. This allows biological processes to take place, such as the establishment of a positive 'microflora' encouraging the synthesis of organic substances, which in turn facilitates the take-up of nutrients and water and contributes to the juiciness of the fruit. The high quality and abundance of water from the Magazzolo, Carboj and Verdura rivers, and the absence of pollutants in the ground are ideal conditions for irrigation and the emergence of the organoleptic qualities of the product. It is these soil and climatic conditions that give the fruit its intense orange colour and above all the juiciness that makes it so suitable as a juicing orange.

Markets in Italy have been familiar with the 'Arancia di Ribera' since 1950. Its fame was given a major boost by the organisation of the Market Fair in 1966, which was renamed the 'Sagra (Festival) dell'Arancia di Ribera' in 1985. Historical documents testify to the fact that excellent oranges were already being grown in the Verdura valley in the early 1800s; these describe a rich territory with very soft water and products transported to Palermo and exported as far as America.

The main players have always been the growers, who have made full use of the perfect match between the varieties and the territory and innovated simply but effectively so that the growing of the 'Arancia di Ribera' has kept pace with the times and new growing requirements without going against tradition and local culture. In this respect, changes have been introduced over the years that have improved efficiency, such as irrigation through a system of low-pressure pipes (which saves water) and the use of pneumatic pruners. For many decades, farming in the Ribera area was the first point of reference for the region as a whole, and in some cases nationally, because of the growers' professional skills and advanced techniques, and the quality of the produce, which continues to meet with high acclaim.

Reference to publication of the specification:

The full text of the product specification is available:

- at http://www.politicheagricole.it/DocumentiPubblicazioni/Search_Documenti_Elenco.htm?txtTipoDocumento=Disciplinare%20in%20esame%20UE&txtDocArgomento=Prodotti%20di%20Qualit%E0>Prodotti%20Dop,%20Igp%20e%20Stg

or:

- by going directly to the home page of the Ministry (<http://www.politicheagricole.it>) and clicking on 'Prodotti di Qualità' (on the left of the display) and then on 'Disciplinari di Produzione all'esame dell'UE [regolamento (CE) n. 510/2006]'.

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