



PREMIER MINISTRE



Training Seminar
Successful Preparation
for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union
(Sofia, 15-16 October 2015)

Topic: **2-day training session to prepare efficiently the forthcoming Bulgarian EU Presidency**

Main Objectives

- To better grasp the challenges and responsibilities of the preparation process of the Presidency of the Council of the EU
- To familiarize participants with the main aspects and steps of the process of preparation for the Presidency
- To identify key players, institutional environment and useful contacts for the incoming Presidency
- To improve the global knowledge, skills and expertise, necessary to efficiently prepare for Presidency

Methods

- Series of interactive sessions based on first-hand experiences
- Sharing know-how and best practices from previous and recent presidencies

Target group Bulgarian civil servants who participate in the national EU coordination mechanism under the CoM Decree 85/2007, participate in the meetings of the Council preparatory bodies and present the national positions in the EU decision-making process

Venue To be confirmed (location provided by the Institute of Public Administration)

Contacts:

- **Institute of Public Administration (IAP)**

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THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER

9.30-10.30am

Opening session

10.30am-1.30pm

Presentation: How to prepare the Presidency at national level (I) : Transfer of experience at interministerial level

⊕ duration: 3 hours

11.45-12.00am

Coffee-break

- Organisation, coordination, logistics, human resources and training
- Communication issues (main tools, website, goodies, etc.)
- Presidency calendar, institutions involved, trio and national programs, priorities definition
- Budgetary planning
- *Questions/answers*

Expert: *Laura ČEPONYTĖ, Third Secretary in charge of the relations with the European Parliament, Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the EU, Brussels. Former Head of Planning and Coordination Division of the Department of the Presidency at the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

1.30-2.30pm

Lunch-break

2.30-5.30pm

Presentation:

⊕ duration: 3 hours

How to prepare the Presidency at national level (II): Transfer of experience from one's ministry point of view

3.30-3.45pm

Coffee-break

- Organisation, coordination and logistics
- Communication issues
- *Questions/answers*

Expert: *Madara APSALONE, Presidency coordinator at the Ministry of Culture of Latvia*

FRIDAY, 16 OCTOBER

9.30-12.30am

⊕ duration: 3 hours

Presentation:

The rotating Presidency from Brussels' perspective

11.00-11.15am

Coffee-break

- Organisation and coordination of the Permanent Representation
- Relations to the Capital
- Presentation on the existing rules and the Presidency legal environment; support to be expected by the Council secretariat and the practicalities of the Council working groups (for instance, interpretation constraints)
- The importance of the relationships with the European Parliament, the European Commission and other European institutions
- The relationships with the other 27 Members States

- Questions/answers

Expert: Carlo JACOBUCCI, *Counsellor, Special assistant to the Director general for Development cooperation, Rome. Former Mertens Counsellor at the Italian Permanent Representation to the EU*

12.30am-1.30pm

Lunch-break

1.30-4.30pm

⊕ duration: 3 hours

Presentation:

The Council Working groups: functioning and procedures

- Experience of previous negotiations in the Council's working groups : concrete dossier followed by a former Chairperson under the ordinary legislative procedure from the Working group to COREPER and the Council
- Insights on the formal exercise (agenda-setting, giving and taking the floor, managing breaks); on the negotiation process (relations with the chairpersons and national delegations, accurate understanding of Member States' positions, etc.) and on relationships with the other institutions (especially the European Commission and the European Parliament)
- Emphasis on capacities to comprehend the general aspects of negotiations, on capacities to manage the information flow
- *Questions/answers*

3.00-3.15pm

Coffee-break

Expert: Carlo JACOBUCCI, *Counsellor, Special assistant to the Director general for Development cooperation, Rome. Former Mertens Counsellor at the Italian Permanent Representation to the EU*

4.30-5.00pm

⊕ duration: 30min

Concluding session

Wrap-up session and evaluation

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Laura ČEPONYTĖ, *Third Secretary in charge of the relations with the European Parliament, Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the EU, Brussels. Former Head of Planning and Coordination Division of the Department of the Presidency at the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Laura Čeponytė, Third Secretary for relations with the European Parliament and General Affairs at the Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the European Union. Before this post she had been dealing with EU coordination issues, including preparation of Strategic guidelines for Lithuanian EU policy 2015-2020. She has been working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania since 2010. During the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council she was responsible for the Presidency budget and had been dealing with its planning, implementation and coordination, reporting, communication as well as cooperation with more than 30 governmental institutions included in the Presidency. She had also prepared draft strategic documents for the Presidency, designed the motivation system for civil servants working in the areas related to the Presidency.

Madara APSALONE, *Presidency coordinator at the Ministry of Culture of Latvia*

Carlo JACOBUCCI, *Counsellor, Special assistant to the Director General for Development Cooperation, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome. Former Mertens Counsellor at the Italian Permanent Representation to the EU*

Carlo Jacobucci chaired the Mertens Group during the Italian Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2014. He obtained a MA at the College of Europe (2000), and worked for the United Nations Development Programme in Brazil (2000-2002) and the European Commission in Tunisia (2002-2003) before joining the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in 2003. He started his diplomatic career at the Directorate General for European Integration (2003-2007) and was appointed Head of the Political and Press section at the Italian Embassy in Beirut (2007-2010) and Mertens Counsellor the Permanent Representation of Italy to the European Union (2010-2014). After the Italian Presidency, he was assigned to the Directorate General for Development Cooperation at the Italian MFA. He has a multicultural educational background and speaks Italian, French, English, German, Portuguese, Spanish and some Arabic, Russian and Greek.