



PREMIER MINISTRE



Training Seminar
Successful Preparation
for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union
(Sofia, 13-14 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 Around 45-50 Bulgarian civil servants coming from different ministries who will take part 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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- **Ecole nationale d'administration, Directorate for European Affairs**

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TUESDAY, 13 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 structure and coordination
- Trio and national programs, presidency calendar
- Human resources and training
- Communication issues (main tools, website, goodies, etc.) and public diplomacy issues
- Logistics
- Budgetary planning
- *Questions/answers*

Expert: **Kristine POMMERE**, *Director of the Presidency Secretariat, Riga*

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: **Anna SKRJABINA**, *Director of the EU Affairs Department, Ministry of Justice, Riga*

WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER

9.30-12.30am

⊕ duration: 3 hours

11.00-11.15am

Coffee-break

Presentation:

The rotating Presidency from Brussels' perspective

- 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: **Kaspars KRUMHOLCS**, *Head of COREPER I Division, EU Coordination and Policies Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia,*

Riga. Former MERTENS Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Latvia to the EU during the Presidency

12.30am-1.30pm

Lunch-break

1.30-4.30pm

⊕ duration: 3 hours

3.00-3.15pm

Coffee-break

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*

Expert: Kaspars KRUMHOLCS, *Head of COREPER I Division, EU Coordination and Policies Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Riga. Former MERTENS Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Latvia to the EU during the Presidency*

4.30-5.00pm

⊕ duration: 30min

Concluding session

Wrap-up session and evaluation

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Kristine POMMERE, Director of the Presidency Secretariat, Riga

Kristīne Pommere – director of the Secretariat of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The main task of the Secretariat is to ensure the preparation for the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2015. From 2012 to 2014 Kristine Pommere was a deputy director of the Secretariat of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU. Previously (2010 – 2012) Kristīne Pommere has worked in the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Latvia as the head of the European Affairs Department. From 2008 – 2010 Kristīne Pommere took the position of deputy director of the European Affairs Department in the Ministry of Justice. Kristine Pommere earns a Master's degree in European Studies from the Faculty of Economics and Management of the University of Latvia and earns a Bachelor's degree in Law from the Judicial Faculty of the University of Latvia.

Anna SKRJABINA, Director of the EU Affairs Department, Ministry of Justice, Riga

Anna Skrjabina is Director of the European Affairs Department at the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Latvia. She was directly responsible for all organizational issues with the view to prepare the Latvian Presidency in the Council of EU in the justice sector – from strategic planning of training, budget, logistics etc. to development of the Presidency programme and priorities, maintaining contacts with *trio* partners and institutions.

During the Presidency Ms Skrjabina organized horizontal coordination, substantially prepared the number of high level meeting in Riga, Brussels and Luxembourg. In July 2015 awarded by the Latvian Government for an excellent representation of the EU interests in the area of justice during t Presidency.

Inter alia, she is actively involved in the *Twinning* projects as the short term expert, is the representative of Latvia to different EU and international formats and member of the European Law Institute.

Kaspars KRUMHOLCS, Head of COREPER I Division, EU Coordination and Policies Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Riga. Former MERTENS Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Latvia to the EU during the Presidency

Kaspars Krumholcs is currently the Head of COREPER I (*Committee of Deputy Permanent Representatives*) Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia. His experience in the EU affairs draws from five year posting in Brussels where he was in charge of COREPER I coordination as Latvian representative in the *Mertens* group. As *Mertens* he was one of the key persons at the Permanent Representation of Latvia to the EU being in charge of overall preparations for the Latvian EU Presidency in first half of 2015. During the Latvian Presidency he chaired the *Mertens* group and was in charge over internal and external coordination and preparation of the Council meetings – Competitiveness; Transport, Telecommunications, Energy; Environment; Agriculture and Fisheries; Employment, Social policy, Health and Consumer Affairs; Education, Youth, Culture and Sport, as well as planning and coordination of the horizontal activities in relation to European Semester, Energy Union, Digital Single Market, Better Regulation. His training for the Latvian Presidency includes traineeship at the Cabinet of the Vice President of the Commission Mr *Siiim Kallas* and special module-based training by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA). Prior to his posting in Brussels he was working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the EU institutional and general affairs, including relations with the European Parliament. A graduate of Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences where he acquired professional degree in Political Science (*BA.Sc.Pol.*). He was recently awarded with Certificate of Merit and Commendation from the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers for his substantial contribution in ensuring successful Latvian EU Presidency.