

Commission press release on the Ioannina Declaration (30 March 1994)

Caption: On 30 March 1994, the European Commission issues a press release concerning the adoption by the representatives of the twelve Member States of the European Union of the Declaration on the 'Ioannina Compromise', following the informal meeting of the Council on 26 and 27 March 1994.

Source: RAPID. The Press and Communication Service of the European Commission. [ON-LINE]. [Brussels]: European Commission, [14.07.2003]. Available on

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URL: http://www.cvce.eu/obj/commission_press_release_on_the_ioannina_declaration_30_march_1994-en-ba422fb1-4da7-4edc-80de-958974b91739.html

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Press release (30 March 1994)

Enlargement - Institutions chapter - Council voting - End of negotiations

Following the discussions of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs at their informal meeting in Ioannina on 26 and 27 March 1994, the representatives of the twelve Member States adopted the Declaration set out below which will be entered in the minutes of the conferences at which the text of the Treaty of Accession of Austria, Sweden, Finland and Norway to the European Union was drawn up. The content of paragraph (c) is the subject of a Council Decision which will be published in the Official Journal:

- (a) The twelve present Member States of the European Union have agreed that if four new Member States join the Union, the threshold necessary for the qualified majority required by the Treaties will be fixed at 64 votes. They have also agreed that the question of the reform of the institutions, including the weighting of votes and the threshold for the qualified majority in the Council, will be examined at the Conference of representatives of the governments of the Member States which will be convened in 1996, in accordance with Article N(2) of the Treaty on European Union.
- (b) They have further agreed to invite the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission to draw up a report on the functioning of the Treaty on European Union. These reports will provide input for the work of a discussion group of representatives of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, which shall be set up by the European Council in Corfu and start work in mid-1995. This Group will work in association with the European Parliament. It will, inter alia, prepare options based on the positions and arguments of all Member States on the weighting of votes and on the threshold for qualified majority decisions, taking into account future enlargement.
- (c) They take note that the Council has decided that, if members of the Council representing a total of 23 to 26 votes indicate their intention to oppose the adoption by the Council of a decision by qualified majority, the Council will do all within its power to reach, within a reasonable time and without prejudicing the obligatory time limits laid down by the Treaties and by secondary legislation, such as those in Articles 189b and 189c of the Treaty establishing the European Community, a satisfactory solution that can be adopted by at least 68 votes. During this period, and with full regard for the Rules of Procedure of the Council, the President, with the assistance of the Commission, will undertake any initiatives necessary to facilitate a wider basis of agreement in the Council. The members of the Council will lend him their assistance.
- (d) Lastly, they agree that the various elements of this Declaration will continue to apply until the entry into force of an amendment to the Treaties, following the 1996 Conference.

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Following this agreement, conferences at Deputy level were held with the four applicants on the afternoon of 30 March, which enabled the Institutions chapter to be closed with each applicant and the accession negotiations thus to be declared at an end.

At those conferences the four applicant countries made the following declaration on the above text:

The four applicant States, i.e. Finland, Norway, Austria and Sweden, have expressed their agreement on the text of the Declaration by the twelve Member States of the European Union and on the text of the Council Decision.

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The text of the Accession Treaty will be finalized as soon as possible and forwarded to the European Parliament for assent.

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