

The Future of Europe

The UACES Thirty-second Annual Conference and Seventh Research Conference

Queen's University Belfast, 2 - 4 September 2002

Panel: Institutional Reform: Nice and Beyond

Session (1), Monday 2 September 15:45- 17:15

Evolution of the European Council: The implications of a permanent seat

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Abstract

This paper will look at the future development of the European Council. The European Council, composed of the Heads of State and/or Government, is the supreme political authority of the European Union and plays a leadership role in all EU activities. The paper asserts that since its existence the European Council has been increasingly formalised, and to a greater extent institutionalised. I argue that in the context of the current institutional reform process this development might continue.

Among other factors, the paper will examine the implications of the 22nd Declaration attached to the Treaty of Nice, which states that 'as from 2002, one European Council meeting per Presidency will be held in Brussels. When the Union comprises 18 members, all European Council meetings will be held in Brussels.' I argue that this Declaration on the permanent venue of the European Council, a comparatively minor administrative measure, could have a significant political impact. The paper speculates that it will probably strengthen the European Council's position, as it should create a more effective European Council, a more powerful engine that could reinvigorate the EU integration process.

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Acknowledgement

The author would like to thank Dr. Richard G. Whitman for his helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

1. Introduction

This paper presents some partial results of the author's on-going doctoral research on the evolution of the European Council. It will briefly present different dimensions of the European Council and then mainly concentrate on the practicalities in relation to a permanent venue in Brussels. The research on this particular aspect can be considered *avant-garde*, as there are no books and only limited direct recent studies or documents available. Reference will be made in the paper to this existing literature. The author has to rely extensively on primary sources, essentially interviews with EU senior civil servants as well as diplomats or officials of permanent representations to the EU who are involved in the organisation of the European Council meetings.

The European Council¹ is a body of the European Union (EU)² that is composed of Heads of State (the Finnish and French Presidents³) and the Heads of Government of the other Member States and the President of the European Commission (Commission), assisted by the Foreign Ministers of the Member States and a member of the Commission. It is the actor that defines the general political guidelines of the EU that gives impetus for the development of the EU, thus it can be considered the EU's supreme political authority that plays a leadership role in all fields of EU activity, but particularly in international relations.

The total number of attendees, although restricted, can show some flexibility, for example, the Prime Minister of France may replace or assist the President of the French Republic. Generally, some forty people may be present in the main meeting room: the 15 Heads of State or Government accompanied by their Foreign Ministers, the President of the Commission accompanied by a Member of the Commission, the Secretaries-General of the Council and of

¹ Not to be confused with the:

- Council of Europe (which is an international organisation with its seat in Strasbourg) or with the
- Council of Ministers (which is an Institution of the EU composed of the different Ministers from 15 Member States with responsibility for the policy area under discussion at the relevant meeting, for example: Transport Ministers, Finance Ministers etc)

² Throughout the paper I will refer to the European Union or EU except when I am referring to specific events, which occurred prior to the ratification of the Treaty on European Union also called Treaty of Maastricht in 1993.

³ They are both Heads of State and chief executives. During the period of political cohabitation in France, the French Prime Minister may accompany the French President or even replace him. The Declaration of Laeken, for example, at Laeken European Council in December 2001 was signed by both Jacques Chirac and Lionel Jospin.

the Commission, and a limited number of representatives from the Member State that holds the Presidency and the Council Secretariat.

2. The aim of this paper

As mentioned above, this paper is part of a wider study on the European Council. The aim of the overall research investigation is to explore and understand the evolution of the European Council. More specifically, the intention is to investigate the past and present position of the European Council in order to find explanations for the transformation of this body. On the basis of these findings, the wider investigation intends to predict reasonably well the most probable scenarios for the future of the European Council. The way this will be done is through analysing the different dimensions of the European Council. In the general research project, a conscious decision will be taken to define a limited number of dimensions to be taken into consideration. This is an important decision as otherwise one could face an explosion of the problem. The European Council's dimensions that will be considered in the final thesis are as following:

- the location,
- the kind of body the European Council represents,
- rules and accountability in relation to power and finally,
- the form and aim of its meetings.

This paper will concentrate on the dimension of location of the European Council and hence, contribute to the overall research project. It will examine how location was dealt with at the beginning of the European Council and how this issue has developed over the years. Then, it will look at the 22nd Declaration attached to the Treaty of Nice on a permanent venue of the European Council. It will explore what lead to the inclusion of this declaration in the Treaty at the Nice European Council. Furthermore, it will investigate possible reasons for its advanced implementation as well as implications for the infrastructure and the security at the European Council meetings. In addition, it will analyse the consequences that this decision of a permanent seat might have on the practical organisation of the European Council meetings and consequently, on its efficiency. Finally, it will extrapolate from the results of this examination the possible deeper political impact that this decision might have on the European Council. It is important to bear in mind that the development of the European Council reflects contextual conditions. This body was not foreseen by the original treaties but has been developed out of

practice, and out of necessity, in particular historical circumstances. No blueprint existed from the beginning. Thus, the contextual circumstances have to be taken into account.

3. Legal Basis

The European Council arose out of sporadic summit meetings of the Heads of State and/or Government in February and July 1961 that then started to be held more regularly⁴. An agreement in 1974 was made to regularise this practice based on a legally non-binding half-page press release, known as the *Paris Communiqué*⁵. In 1977 and 1983, the Heads of States or Government signed two more Declarations, the *London Declaration on the European Council*⁶ and the *Stuttgart Solemn Declaration on European Union*⁷. In these legally non-binding documents⁸, they briefly specified the organisation and role of the European Council. Only in 1987, the European Council was first introduced into the founding Treaties of the Communities through the Single European Act. This was a revision, a modification of the original Treaties; it devoted only one Article in which it defined its composition and the frequency of its meetings (at least twice a year), but not its functions. The Treaty on European Union (TEU, Treaty of Maastricht) went a step further in 1993 and formally defined for the first time its role and tasks⁹; article 4 of the TEU also states that the European Council will hold at least two meetings per year.

4. Role and Tasks

The European Council's functions go well beyond official texts. In the course of the time, the European Council has effectively exercised five main functions¹⁰.

- The first and main function is to provide general political guidelines and give impetus to the development of the European Union. This was the original function, which can be deduced from the press release issued after the Meeting of the Heads of State and Government in 1974. This press release was quite vague, in the sense that it only stated that it was recognized that an overall approach was needed to internal problems related to the

⁴ May 1967, December 1969, October 1972, December 1973 (see appendix)

⁵ *Communiqué Issued After the Meeting of the Heads of State and Government*, Paris, 10 December 1974, Source: *Bulletin of the EC*, 1974, no 12

⁶ *London Declaration on the European Council*, 1977, Source: *Bulletin of the EC*, 1977, no 6

⁷ *Solemn Declaration on European Union*, Stuttgart, 19 June 1983, Source: *Bulletin of the EC*, 1986, Supplement no 2, p.7.

⁸ They were simple agreements and not part of the Treaty

⁹ Articles 4 (General policy), 13 (Common Foreign and Security Policy - CFSP), 17 (CFSP) and 40 (Closer cooperation) TEU

achievement of European Unity and the external problems facing Europe; and that the European Council was supposed to ensure progress and overall consistency in the activities of the Communities and in the political co-operation. A meeting of three times a year was suggested and whenever necessary. However, this Communiqué didn't give a clear definition of what the function should consist of and how the European Council should achieve this aim. This function was mentioned later on in the Solemn Declaration on European Union in 1983, and finally confirmed in article 4 of the TEU in 1992. Actually it is the only function mentioned in this article.

- The second function is to 'settle issues outstanding from discussions at a lower level'. This function of decision-making of last resort to resolve politically sensitive and complex problems is described in the London Declaration on the European Council 1977 and is one that the European Council has developed over the years.
- The third function is the European Council's involvement in external affairs. De Schoutheete¹¹ argues, that when it acts in this external capacity it operates in fact like a 'collective Head of State'.
- The fourth function is the solemn ratification of significant documents. What was initially conceived as a forum for taking strategic decisions in an informal way has gradually become a place where formal ratification of important documents is enacted.
- Finally, the fifth function is the involvement in the negotiation of the treaty changes.

5. The European Council a neglected Institution?

Despite an ever growing literature on EU politics and decision-making, a literature review reveals¹² that, in comparison to other European Institutions, i.e. the European Commission and the European Parliament, the European Council has received less attention in academic research projects, in particular in the last ten to fifteen years¹³. Very little has been written specifically, on the European Council. There are only very few monographs on the European

¹⁰ de Schoutheete, Belgium's Permanent Representative 87-97, forthcoming, p.33-44

¹¹ de Schoutheete, forthcoming, p.37

¹² see bibliography in section 10

¹³ i.e. Wessels, 1980, Taulègne 1993

Council¹⁴. Many publications on the Council of Ministers dedicate short chapters to the European Council¹⁵. Several Colloquii have been dedicated to the European Council¹⁶ and interesting contributions have been prepared in the context of these events¹⁷. Finally, a number of papers have been published in different specialised journals that give very good analysis on the subject¹⁸.

Hence, this highly mediatised body of such importance seems like a neglected Institution, which merits more attention; thus the main reason for doing this research. The overall research project will give details to what can be drawn from the review of the literature with respect to the different dimensions of the European Council as mentioned above. However, the question of location dealt with in this paper has hardly been touched in the existing literature. The 22nd Declaration being so recent, there is no literature discussing the different aspects and implications of a permanent seat, hence the present research will fill a gap and complement in that respect other publications on the European Council.

What makes research on the European Council so difficult is its very nature: European Council meetings are held *in camera*. There is usually little first hand information on the conduct of the European Council meetings. There are no formal minutes and the written sources one has to rely on are reports of the different governments, usually given through press interviews to the respective national media or the final presidency conclusions of the meeting. Finally, the European Integration process is very dynamic; hence, patterns described today are possibly outdated by tomorrow. Peterson and Bomberg¹⁹ described this basic problem for a researcher as followed: ‘the European Union has refused to stand still for us’.

6. The Media and the European Council meetings

“As with recent meetings of cross-national bodies such as the G8 and the IMF, a multitude of malcontents will highlight their own agendas on the sidelines of the EU summit [European Council meeting]. The Spanish authorities are expecting tens of thousands of demonstrators to converge on

¹⁴ i.e. Dondelinger, 1975, Morgan 1976, Donat 1987, Werts 1992, Johnston 1994

¹⁵ i.e. Hayes-Renshaw & Wallace 1997, Westlake 1999

¹⁶ i.e. in Louvain la Neuve, 1977, in Kerkrade 1984

¹⁷ i.e. Dondelinger, 1977, Jacque & Simon, 1984, Moreau Defarges, 1984, Wessels 1984, Bonvicini & Regelsberger 1984

¹⁸ i.e. Blumann, 1975, Gazzo, 1976, Lauwaars, 1977, Ipsben 1981, Bulmer 1997

the meeting [Barcelona European Council, 14-16 March 2002]. Trade unions are due to hold demonstrations today [15 March 2002], and there will be a major anti-capitalist rally tomorrow [16 March 2002]. The British protest group, Globalise Resistance, is among the many groups to have mobilised its supporters. ... The Spanish are desperate that the thousands of anarchists, environmentalists and assorted pressure groups do not stage a repeat performance of the riots at last year's G8 summit in Genoa [2001], where one demonstrator was killed by police.²⁰

“Spanish unions call general strike for eve of Seville summit [European Council meeting, June 2002]”²¹

The above extracts of press releases illustrate, that logistically the European Council meetings become a growingly complex matter: i.e. due to the high profile meeting important security measures have to be put in place. In addition, several thousand accredited journalists, technicians, cameramen and photographers, who want to cover this event²², have to be hosted in the same building of the meeting if possible. In recent years, the European Council meetings attract, to a greater extent, media attention. The amount of journalists present at the location of the meeting gives evidence of this increasing interest in this body. At the latest European Council in Seville (Spain) on 21-22 June 2002 four thousand accredited journalist were present that represented 766 media of communication from sixty-two countries²³. Indeed, the general public becomes more and more aware of these meetings. Also all kinds of pressure groups realize that this is a forum that takes important decisions, which they intend to influence. But also the high profile of the meeting attendees - so many prominent politicians in one place - attracts attention. As a result many protesters come for organized demonstrations to the town that hosts the European Council meeting to make known their agreement or disagreement with certain decisions. Unfortunately, some people ‘abuse these democratic rights by initiating, planning and carrying out acts of violence to coincide with public demonstrations.’²⁴ As the extracts above already suggest, these demonstrations emerged from a growing pattern of

¹⁹ Peterson & Bomberg, 1999, p. 3

²⁰ Philip, Pank, Guardian unlimited, 15 March 2002

²¹ Crawford, L., Financial Times, *Spanish unions call general strike for eve of Seville summit*, Madrid, 24 May 2002

²² Council of the European Union, *Presentation of the European Council*, at:

<http://ue.eu.int/en/Info/eurocouncil/index.htm>

²³ Diario de Noticias España, *Consejo Europeo en Sevilla. La UE afronta en Sevilla los retos de la inmigración y las reformas internas*, number 2172, 21 June 2002

²⁴ Council of the European Union, Draft proposals by EU to combat protests, 10731/01, 10 July 2001

popular demonstrations at international summits that go back to 1999 and through meetings of the International Monetary Fund in Prague, of the World Trade Organization in Seattle and of the G8 summit in Genoa. The Gothenburg European Council in 15-16 June 2001 was the first summit meeting to confront violent public demonstrations. The fierceness of these protests took both, the EU Heads of State and Government and the Swedish police by surprise. As a result, the Council of Ministers of the European Union initiated a draft proposal²⁵ for operational measures, which may help to reduce the risk of serious disturbances of law and order.

The following extracts of press releases contrast the above with some former European Council meetings:

“The eight heads of Government, their foreign ministers and supporting delegations coming to Dublin represent the largest political conference ever held in the state making unaccustomed organisational demands. Inevitably there are important security considerations. Add an estimated 600 journalists covering the two-day conference, and you get some notion of the task facing a small country playing host to Europe.” [Dublin 10-11 March 1975]²⁶

“...the EEC heads of government meeting opened in Brussels yesterday [Brussels 19-20 March 1984]. Less than 200 demonstrators gathered outside the Charlemagne building to register their protest against the stringent package of price restraints and production controls agreed by the EEC foreign ministers last week. ... Yesterday only 80 chanting young French farmers who had marched from Paris provided a noisy background to the sombre opening of the talks... A smaller and quieter contingent of about 40 Irish framers seemed to wield greater influence.”²⁷

Being more and more in the centre of attraction today, the European Council is increasingly being scrutinised. Criticisms have arisen of inefficient working methods, i.e. hectic meetings, overloaded agendas, showcase achievements, ‘horse-trading’ over dossiers and finally incapability of decision-making. As for example in Laeken (Belgium) on 14-15 December

²⁵ Council of the EU, *Draft conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States*, 10731/01 Limite JAI 74, Brussels, 10 July 2001

²⁶ Coyle, D.J., *Financial Times*, *EEC summit in Dublin. Irish fingers are crossed*, 7 March 1975

2001, the European Council could not reach a compromise on the seat of several new European Agencies, therefore, the Belgian Presidency closed the meeting by imposing a temporary solution, i.e. the European Food Agency would start provisionally in Brussels. The press and the political leaders themselves make it clear that there is pressure and the desire to improve the efficiency of the European Council²⁸.

The paper argues that the European Council is one of the key actors in the European Union. As such, it plays a crucial role in providing the European Union with strategic direction and a clear sense of purpose, such as driving forward the Lisbon²⁹ and Tampere³⁰ agendas. It was also instrumental in framing the European Union's response to the events of 11 September 2001³¹. Furthermore, recent developments in the European Union show, that this body, composed of the most important political leaders of the European Union, is confronted with new global issues and enlargement, and for that reason providing such political leadership will become both more important but of course more challenging. Finally, in the ongoing reform process the European Council gets more and more drawn in the limelight of attention. Since 1999 in Helsinki, the European Council itself embarked upon a process of reform focusing on four main subjects, the European Council being one of them.³² The European Council in its meeting in Seville in June 2002 held a detailed discussion on these issues and agreed on a series of specific measures applicable, without amendment of the Treaties.³³ Among others, it was decided that the General Affairs and External Relations Council adopts a definite agenda for the European Council on the eve of the meeting. The Danish Presidency stated its readiness to put these measures into practice as of 1 July 2002. To implement these new measures the

²⁷ Financial Times, *Few farmers turn up to protest outside summit*, 20 March 1984

²⁸ See for example

- Joint letter to Prime Minister Aznar of Spain, at the time he hold the EU Presidency, by Prime Minister Tony Blair and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in which they discuss the reform of the European Council to improve EU decision making, 25 February 2002
- British and French proposal to head the European Council by a president, Parker, G., Dombey, D., Financial Times, *Prodi to draw battlelines on Europe's future*, 18/19 May 2002 and *Dual ambitions*, 14 May 2002

²⁹ Presidency Conclusions of the Lisbon special European Council, which was hold to agree a new strategic goal for the EU in order to strengthen employment, economic reform and social cohesion as part of a knowledge-based economy, 23/24 March 2000

³⁰ Presidency Conclusions of the Tampere special European Council, which aimed at the creation of an area of freedom, security and justice in the European Union, 15/16 October 1999

³¹ Conclusions and Plan of Action of the extraordinary Brussels European Council, which was hold to analyse the international situation following the terrorist attacks in the United States and to impart the necessary impetus to the actions of the European Union, 21 September 2001

³² Others issues are: the General Affairs Council, the Presidency of the Council and the legislative activity of the Council and transparency.

³³ Annex I to the *Presidency Conclusions*, Seville European Council, 21-22 June 2002: *Report by the Presidency to the European Council, Measures to prepare the Council for enlargement*, 13 June 2002

General Affairs and External Relations Council on 22 July 2002³⁴ adopted a modification of the Council's Rules of Procedures³⁵. The introduction of an official agenda and, consequently, a more structured way of organising the European Council meetings is a sign for further institutionalisation of this body. Increasing the responsibility of the Council of Ministers, an official Institution of the European Communities, by giving it the task to adopt the final agenda for the European Council meeting shows a further approach of the European Council towards the Community framework, hence a further institutionalisation. This merits further research.

Summing up, this section above shows that logistically the organisation of the European Council becomes more and more complex. Furthermore, it illustrates that the European Council is a highly mediatised body of greatest importance for the EU that is increasingly scrutinised. Finally, it explains why its efficiency is questioned. It becomes apparent that the European Council, as it is currently organised, shows weaknesses. The paper argues that the recent developments demonstrate that these weaknesses are about to be tackled. Among other aspects, logistics and efficiency will play a crucial role in the question of a permanent seat, as we will see in the next section.

7. Location of the European Council³⁶

The question of location of the European Council was discussed at the time of its creation. The French government suggested the European Council should have a permanent secretariat with a fixed location in Paris rather than moving around with each Presidency. The Benelux States did not accept this proposition, as they believed it could undermine the role of the Commission.³⁷ Finally, the location of the European Council meetings was not mentioned in the original agreement or in any other of the following Declarations or Treaties in force. The first European Council took place in Dublin on 10-11 March 1975 under Irish Presidency. However, the second European Council under Italian Presidency was organised in Brussels in the Council building. Dondelinger³⁸, who wrote his book just after this European Council, saw in this an important step towards integration - at least at technical level - of this new body with the Council. Yet he added, that he didn't want to prejudge future evolutions.

³⁴ 2447th Council meeting - General Affairs and External Relations, 22 July 2002, 10945/02 (Presse 210)

³⁵ Council of the European Union - Rules of Procedure, July 2002, 10962/02 (JUR 278)

³⁶ see Appendix 1: List of European Council meetings

³⁷ Paris summit discussion, 1974, see Bulmer & Wessels, 1987, p. 51

³⁸ Dondelinger, 1975, p.21

Regarding the location of the European Council, different patterns can be observed depending from which angle one looks at the list of meetings³⁹. From 1975 to 1989 one meeting each year was held in one of the EU's seat (Brussels or Luxembourg or once in Strasbourg) while the other meetings were held in the member states, which hold the Presidency⁴⁰; with the exception of the European Council in March 1977, which was held in Rome to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome.

However, some of these European Council meetings held in Brussels, Luxembourg or Strasbourg were held under the respective Presidency of Belgium, Luxembourg and France. If one takes the criteria of Presidency into account, only some member states did, over the years, choose not to hold the European Councils in their Country. From 1975 to 1978, each year one meeting was not held in the country of Presidency but in Brussels (or Rome, see above). From 1978 to 1985, every two years one meeting was not held in the country of Presidency (but in Brussels or Luxembourg). From 1985 onwards, the situation changed completely. Germany was the only Member state that after that year, namely in 1988 and 1994, chose to organise the European Council in Brussels during its Presidency. All other meetings, up to the most recent ones in Barcelona in March 2002 and Seville in June 2002 under Spanish Presidency, were organised in the Country that held the Presidency.

With other words, since 1985 - with the exception of 1988 and 1994 - the European Council developed more and more into a 'travelling circus' and the logistic and security measures became more and more complex. It can be compared to 'a travelling court in the Middle Ages'. The large number of very senior politicians could be compared to 'noble man around the monarch' and 'the monarch comes to be the president of the time, a temporary monarch and there is a large fleet of followers'.⁴¹ The frequency of these meetings is now two per Presidency. Extraordinary European Council meetings are organised whenever necessary to take account of events. For example, an extraordinary meeting was held on 21 September 2001 following the terrorist attack of 11 September in the USA.

The Council of Ministers and the Presidency provide the secretariat, that is to say, they provide translation facilities, security arrangements, secretarial assistance and information for the national delegations. As mentioned above, all these years, there was no formal agenda for the

³⁹ Appendix 1

⁴⁰ Bulmer & Wessels, 1987, p. 11

European Council meetings, the Presidency prepared a list of subjects to be discussed, determined by subjects raised in previous meetings, by suggestions of the Commission and/or the Member States, but even more by current events and the Presidency's own priorities. Organising these highly mediatised European Council meetings in the Presidencies own country means that the whole event comes closer to their citizens. Each Presidency sees in these meetings an opportunity to fulfil their alternative agenda. With other words, by adding own national priorities on the agenda, it can be seen as a justification towards their electorate. However, apart from the above-mentioned future official agenda, more change is in view: A permanent seat in Brussels might alter these show-case events.

7.1. The 22nd Declaration of the Treaty of Nice

The 22nd Declaration attached to the Treaty of Nice signed in 2001 is the first legal document mentioning the venue of the European Council. It permanently fixes its location in Brussels. It states that:

‘As from 2002, one European Council meeting per Presidency will be held in Brussels. When the Union comprises 18 members, all European Council meetings will be held in Brussels’.

The Treaty of Nice, and with it this 22nd Declaration, will come into effect if and when ratified by each of the fifteen EU Member States. The European Council has repeatedly reiterated the aim to complete the ratification process by the end of 2002. For all Member States other than Ireland, ratification of this Treaty is by means of parliamentary approval. Ireland is the only country, which needs the support of a majority of voters to ratify the treaty. In June 2001 a referendum was held in Ireland, which saw a turnout of just 35% with 46% voting yes and 54% voting no. The result of the Irish referendum has slowed down the process. The Irish Government has decided to organise a second referendum in September 2002, the outcome of which is not foreseeable and thus it is not clear when and if the Treaty of Nice will come into effect.

It becomes apparent that the 22nd Declaration is being implemented even before the Treaty of Nice is in force. The Presidency of the EU in the second semester 2002 is held by Denmark. One of the European Council meetings during the Danish Presidency will take place in

⁴¹ Interview with the former Head of Representation of the European Parliament in the UK, 12 March 2002

Brussels on the 24-25 October 2002. Greece, who will hold the Presidency in the first half of 2003, has already contacted the Council to inform the meeting organisers that they plan one European Council meeting in Brussels.

The idea of the 22nd Declaration was to start initially with one meeting in Brussels and one meeting in the Country of the Presidency until a certain point where a certain number of Countries have joined when they would all take place there. Italy is even anticipating what was said in Nice. During its Presidency in the second half of 2003, Italy intends to organise both European Council meetings in Brussels. The preliminary dates for these meetings are 23-24 October 2003 and 12-13 December 2003. Italy will present the final calendar beginning of September 2002. Therefore, an official decision will be ready in October 2002.

Ireland, who holds the presidency in the first half of 2004, has also told the Council formally that they plan to organise at least one, if not both, European Council meetings in Brussels. If the enlargement goes according to plan, this would be a post accession European Council.

7.2. Possible Reasons for an Advanced Implementation

Several possible reasons for the anticipation of what was decided in Nice can be identified. It could be:

- the modified Rules of procedure of the Council of Ministers,
- simply on the ground of forward planning,
- the will to follow a political decision taken in Nice,
- the security aspect of the European Council or
- the financial aspect.

At first sight, it seems rather astonishing that the above-mentioned Member States anticipate the Treaty of Nice. As said before, having the European Council in a Member State brings the event closer to their citizens; as a result, it gives the opportunity for show-case events to gain support from electorate by adding own national priorities on the agenda. This will be more difficult if the meeting takes places at a remote place. One argument for an advanced implication of the 22nd Declaration could be that it might become more difficult for the Presidency to add own national priorities on the agenda. Since the recently modified Rules of Procedure of the Council of Ministers are in force, the agenda, although still drafted on a

proposal by the Presidency, will be finally adopted by the General Affairs and External Relations Council.⁴²

As far as Ireland is concerned, it took a decision already now to organise all European Council meetings in Brussels on the ground of forward planning, although the enlargement situation is not yet completely clear.

Italy's point of view is that this is what was decided in Nice, why wait. They see the organisation of the European Council in Brussels as a direct application of Nice. In the view of an Italian official⁴³ there are no other considerations but the one that in Nice this political decision was taken and it would seem strange now to have one meeting in Brussels and one in Italy. Italy can just start with both meetings in Brussels. He states that Italy has no problems regarding infrastructure. There are a lot of places in Italy where the European Council meetings could be organised. But there are no reasons to do it there since the 22nd Declaration has been signed.

However, one could speculate that Italy and probably also other Member States consider the security factor a strong reason for not organising the European Council in their Country but rather in Brussels. The above-mentioned events in Genoa shook the Italian government strongly. The ferocity of the violence at the Gothenburg European Council caught both the EU Heads of State and Government and the Swedish police by surprise. The result was a public-relations nightmare, which might convince the Member States to move on quickly with the establishment of a permanent venue in Brussels for the future.⁴⁴

Another reason for an advanced implementation of the 22nd Declaration could be the financial aspect. Some Member States holding the Presidency use the opportunity of organising the European Council in their country to renew infrastructure; i.e. the Greeks are using the opportunity to improve the Convention centre in Thessaloniki where they do the meeting. For many other Member States this is a cost to be avoided. The Seville local press⁴⁵ states that the total cost of the European Council in Seville amounted to 9 million euros. In contrast, the costs

⁴² Council, Rules of Procedure, 2002, 10962/02, p. 4

⁴³ Interview with an Italian official, 26 July 2002

⁴⁴ Heywood, Jones, Rhodes (Eds), 2002, p. 19

⁴⁵ Diario de Noticias Espana, 21 June 2002, Num. 2172

for the Danish Government will be in the order of 1 million euros.⁴⁶ It goes without saying that this is a significant difference and some Governments might take it into account.

Recently, a preliminary Council document has been circulated in a meeting of the Antici⁴⁷ group and has been discussed in the COREPER⁴⁸, but has not yet been made public. It deals with the financial aspects of the European Council meeting in October 2002. The aim is to take a general decision about who covers what costs without going into exact details. So far, it seems that the costs will be shared by the Presidency, the Council of Ministers and the Belgium Government. However, it was decided in the COREPER that this decision will be valid just for the European Council in October 2002 and cannot set a precedent. Every time, European Council by European Council, the division of burden should be calculated and adapted again. The present calculation can only be an indication and could be changed later on. The Danish Government accepted the cost sharing presented by the Council. It seems that the Council will take over expenses for the permanent and the Presidency for the non-permanent arrangements. Finally, the Belgium Government will be responsible for the main security.

7.3. Logistical nightmare

There have been already meetings between the Belgium Government, the Presidency and the Council regarding logistics. In fact, the question of infrastructure has created quite a few organisational headaches. It is for the first time that a European Council is organised with so many countries in Brussels but not under the hospice of the Belgium Government. The last time this happened was in 1994 under German Presidency with still twelve Member States.

Senior Council officials express their fear that from this time on the European Council meetings have to be treated slightly differently as they feel they don't really have neither the proper infrastructure nor the budgetary room to organise it on a sensible basis. In particular, in view of enlargement, solutions have to be found.

⁴⁶ Interview Senior official of the Council, 22 July 2002

⁴⁷The Antici Group (named after its Italian founder) is made up of assistants to the EU Permanent Representatives and a Commission representative, a member of the Secretary-General's Private Office and a member of the Council Legal Service. The Antici Group has two different tasks:

- It is responsible for deciding on the organisation of COREPER II (Committee of Permanent Representatives) proceedings. The Antici Group has a meeting usually in the afternoon before COREPER.
- Members of the Antici group also take notes of the discussion by Heads of Government at European Councils.

One of the first practical concerns raised by the Council of Ministers' General Secretariat, responsible for the planning of the forthcoming European Council in October 2002, is the question of housing the press. As one senior Council's official expresses, 'if we squeeze them into all sorts of places we make it up to 1200. But they would not find the normal conditions they would be used to at a European Council, where they are all there in the right place; here they will be dotted all over the place.'⁴⁹ The above-mentioned current figure of 4000 accredited journalists who participated in the Seville European Council makes it clear that more space is needed. Furthermore, it is planned that in the first half of 2003 Representatives of the Candidate States will take part as observers; they are probably very interested in sending more press representatives from their country; hence, housing the press will become an even more acute matter. An alternative would be to host the press in the Heysel stadium⁵⁰, the only big space available right now, as it was done during the Laeken Summit in December 2001 under Belgium Presidency. But, as the senior Council's official puts it, 'this is a horrible alternative and the press would not be happy as they would be away a couple of kilometres from the main event'⁵¹.

It has been suggested to prepare space for some press representatives for the next European Council in the lower level of the Justus Lipsius building, the main building of the Council of Ministers, and to prepare for later on some extra space in a building called the 'Residence Palace' just next to the Justus Lipsius building and make it available free of charge by the Belgian Authorities. The Residence Palace contains mostly Belgium government offices; it has a theatre, restaurant and swimming pool. Right now, the international press centre is located there. It was used as the press centre when Belgium held the EU's rotating Presidency. Currently, some work is been done on this building. There are some plans that suggest that some extension could be done to that building so that it could provide dedicated facilities to the European Council.

Another practical concern is the question of interpretation. Physically it is impossible at the moment to organise a meeting with many more languages. Nearly all the meetings have absolute top capacity of cabins; no further cabin can be squeezed in. There are a couple of

⁴⁸ not yet finalised; interviews with a senior Council official 22 July 2002, with an Italian official 26 July 2002, and with a diplomat from the German Permanent Representation 1 August 2002

⁴⁹ Interview Senior official of the Council, 22 July 2002

⁵⁰ News of Belgium events, *Belgium's EU Presidency*, March-April 2001, Bimonthly nr 2, website of the Belgium Embassy in the UK, <http://www.belgiumembassy.co.uk/marapr01.htm>

⁵¹ Interview Senior official of the Council, 22 July 2002

dedicated spaces which allow twenty odd cabins eventually but that is about it. The Council's secretariat-general is still not quite sure how it would work in the Justus Lipsius building.

Infrastructure will apparently be the capital cost and this signifies that the Council will provide the infrastructure for the future - at least at the beginning. This means building works, ordering certain equipment, cabling and other issues will be dealt with by the Council for the benefit of each successive European Council meeting. The Belgium Delegation has already mentioned the possibility of a dedicated building for the European Council in the future. A new building, which should be next to the Residence Palace, is planned but it will not be ready before 2006. This new building is already conceived with significant size meeting rooms, numbers of double-decker interpretation booths. Thus, a new improved infrastructure for the European Council will be located closed to the Council of Ministers.

7.4. Security

As mentioned above, Belgium is mainly concerned with security, which is an extremely important aspect. But it is still not clear how much Belgium has to pay. There are hidden costs as security is an issue that is hard to define. Certainly Belgians are very sensitive to security and they are aware of the danger that, for example, anti-globalisation demonstrations can cause. But there are no figures on how many extra police, security people and transport are needed in Brussels. The Spanish press indicated that during the Seville European Council around 9000 policemen (national and local police) were in active service during the meeting.⁵²

Hosting the delegations of each Member State also causes security concerns. Over the years, the delegations accompanying the Heads of State and Government have been growing all the time. Lately, there were delegations of Member States of around eighty and more persons. Logistically, this is very difficult to manage as for security reasons they are supposed to stay in hotels that are located closed together. At the Seville European Council it was decided to limit the delegations to twenty persons per Member State (excluding technical and security staff). It was agreed that this would be applied from October onwards. This will make the organisation somewhat easier and this makes also sense in the context of enlargement.

To conclude, the involved security costs cannot really be known. In the main, most delegations will provide their own transport and some security staff. However, some Heads of states might

need escort and things like that. It is thinkable that once the costs are established the Belgium Government might ask a refund to the Presidency or the Council; it remains to be seen, whether perhaps an arrangement out of the General Budget could be a solution⁵³.

7.5. Consequences

This Declaration looks like a practical matter. However, this paper asserts that, organising all European Council meetings in Brussels will have consequences at different levels. At a more pragmatic level, it will have consequences for the infrastructure and also for security. Furthermore, this paper emphasizes that it will have consequences for the evolution of the European Council, i.e. its efficiency and its strength; it could influence the fundamental nature of the European Council and by extension the EU.

In fact, so far no serious debate has taken place about the practical consequences and the deeper political impact of the 22nd Declaration; with other words, up to now nobody discussed how it should work and who does what, and what will be the long-term impact.

One official⁵⁴ believes that it has been decided for political reasons in this momentum of enlargement, but without having been thought through completely. Nobody has addressed practicalities and the implementation is getting nearer and nearer. He expresses serious doubts of how it will work and fears that it could be strangled in its own bureaucracy in the end. He imagines also that the on-going Convention is supposed to shed some light on it. But he fears that the Convention will come out with ideas but without addressing the practicalities.

7.5.1. Consequences for the infrastructure

As mentioned above, the administrative infrastructure will be facilitated by the Council of Ministers at the beginning. For example, the extraordinary meeting of the 21 September 2001 took place in the Justus Lipsius building, the main building of the Council of Ministers in Brussels. The existing infrastructure will now be improved, to start with for the forthcoming European Council in October. Later, probably a dedicated administrative infrastructure will be put in place: building, secretariat, interpreting services, security, etc.

⁵² Diario de Noticias España, 21 June 2002, num. 2172

⁵³ Interview with a Senior Council official, 24 January 2002

⁵⁴ Interview with a Senior Council official, 22 July 2002

Similar incremental developments have happened in the EU before. For example, the EU Military Staff started to operate in the main building of the Council of Ministers in Brussels, with only a few representatives. Later on, they moved to new bug-proof premises (Cortenbergh building) with strictly controlled access, with secure communications and encryption equipment already in place at several levels and duty officers round the clock to speak for Europe in a crisis. Furthermore, new procedures are planned to be put in place to pool national resources. Today they have around 130 personnel.

Officials in the organisational and planning departments of the Council emphasize how difficult it is to solve all the infrastructure problems, in particular for the first European Council under the Danish Presidency in October 2002⁵⁵. One Council official⁵⁶ states that he does not quite understand why it was presented as a real bonus for Belgium to have the permanent seat of the European Council in Brussels. He mentioned that a lot of people were surprised that Verhofstadt, the Belgium Prime Minister, accepted Brussels as a permanent venue of the European Council. It was presented by the French President Chirac as a gift to Belgium to 'sweeten the pill', that is to say to compensate the feeling of disadvantage during the negotiations for the Treaty of Nice where Belgium got one vote less than Netherlands in the Council of Ministers⁵⁷. It certainly has some inconveniences for Belgium, the question of infrastructure and the security factor. However, one could also speculate that there is an economic benefit of having these people in Brussels like embassy staff, civil servants and lobbies and, furthermore, one should not forget the question of prestige⁵⁸. In this context, a German diplomat⁵⁹ refers to Kissinger's question about whom to call if one wants to call Europe and he argues that the answer will be, it will be a phone number in Brussels. Whether it is the Commission or the Council remains to be seen but with the 22nd Declaration Brussels as a capital of Europe is confirmed

Several officials from different Permanent Representations argue, however, that, although logistically there are still decisions to be taken for a smooth operation of the meeting, one has to bear in mind that the political decision to organise the European Council in Brussels has

⁵⁵ Interview with Senior Council officials, 22 July and 23 July 2002

⁵⁶ Interview with a Senior Council official, 22 July 2002

⁵⁷ *El Mundo, Niza - El Reparto de Poder de la Nueva Europa*, 11 December 2001; *El Mundo, Chirac ofrece compensaciones 'bajo manga' a Bélgica*, 12 December 2001; *El Mundo, Disgusto Belga*, 12 December 2001

⁵⁸ *El Mundo, Chirac ofrece compensaciones 'bajo manga' a Bélgica*, 12 December 2001

⁵⁹ Interview with a German Diplomat, 1 August 2002

already been taken at Nice. In their opinion, whatever the logistical problems, there is still time to find the right solutions.⁶⁰

7.5.2. Consequences for the Efficiency

Once the necessary infrastructure in place, organising the meetings will be easier as the logistics (building, security, interpreting services/facilities, secretarial service, etc) are there and ready to be used at any time. This will give more flexibility and thus, there could be a tendency to meet more often. This might allow decisions to be taken quicker. One could also consider more involvement in the formal decision-making of the EU. Furthermore, being always in the same place might allow tackling issues of crowded management and disruption more easily. 'The kind of road show element of the European Council may make it harder to get a fruitful output'.⁶¹ The 22nd Declaration of the Treaty of Nice⁶² will end this 'travelling circus', which 'seems a rather inefficient way of doing business'.⁶³

It can be argued that, once the European Council is permanently established in Brussels, perhaps in its own or dedicated building, it might have its own permanent secretariat. This is not a new idea. Attempts to establish a more formal secretariat came up from time to time. Already in 1974 it was discussed, whether a permanent secretariat should be established to assist the preparation of the sessions. At that time, France suggested the constitution of a small secretariat dealing exclusively with administrative tasks⁶⁴. Most of the other member states were against this proposal, as they feared it could become an embryo of an organism outside the institutional framework. Later on, the matter came up again through a proposal made by the ex-Chancellor Kohl in 1983 and a Franco-German proposal in 1985, but again the idea was dismissed. In fact, the compromise was to use the existing infrastructure of the Secretariat General of the Council; furthermore the country that holds the Presidency gives at its disposal several civil servants to assist in the preparations of the European Council meetings.

Some Council officials do not believe that the European Council will have its own secretariat. They believe that the Council will maintain this task, and that this arrangement will constitute

⁶⁰ Interview with two members of different Permanent Representations in Brussels, 1 August 2002 and 27 July 2002

⁶¹ Interview with the Head of the Political Department of the Commission's Representation in the UK, 11 March 2002

⁶² signed in February 2001, still to be ratified

⁶³ Interview with the former Head of Representation of the European Parliament in the UK, 12 March 2002

⁶⁴ Dondelinger, 1975, p. 21

an organic link with the Community (with the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament)⁶⁵. Others believe this will be a logical consequence of a permanent venue and a dedicated building.⁶⁶

In conclusion, the permanent venue in Brussels, in combination with other dimensions mentioned above, i.e. rules and accountability, might lead the European Council to work more efficiently in future.

7.5.3. Deeper political impact

A permanent seat in Brussels and the regular organisation of the European Council in the Justus Lipsius building, the main building of the Council of Ministers could be a sign for a further integration of the European Council in the Community framework or at least an approach. With other words, the European Council is not officially an Institution⁶⁷, but by officially using the same building and facilities as the Council of Ministers it is approaching slowly the Institutional framework (physically). With time it might then be more and more embedded in the Community framework. Galloway⁶⁸ points out that: ‘Feelings about this declaration have been mixed. Some have emphasized that, in addition to cost savings, basing European Councils in Brussels undoubtedly represents a further step towards institutionalising the Union’s supreme political authority.’ He also says that ‘With the trend towards holding at least four meetings a year, including an annual meeting on economic and social matters in the Spring, giving it a fixed venue consolidates the European Council’s position as the body driving the Union’s political agenda.’

A Council official⁶⁹ argued that *de facto* the European Council is already the European Government; through a permanent seat the European Council could formally develop into a real European Government. Hence, Brussels could become the seat of the future European Government.

⁶⁵ Interview with two Senior Council officials, 24 January 2002

⁶⁶ Interview with a Diplomat in the German Permanent Representation, 1 August 2002 and with the former Head of Representation of the European Parliament in the UK, 12 March 2002

⁶⁷ Article 7, TEC

⁶⁸ Galloway, D. (a Council official involved in the preparation of the Intergovernmental Conference 2000) *The Nice Treaty and Beyond*, 2001, p. 158

⁶⁹ Interview with a Senior Council officials, 24 January 2002

One can conclude that the 22nd Declaration could further the existing tendency of a institutionalisation of the European Council. There is a possibility that the European Council might enter article 7 TEC. Probably the on-going constitutional Convention that started in March 2002 on the future of Europe will give more clarity on this issue. The President of the Convention, Valery Giscard d'Estaing, whose appointment was decided at the Laeken European Council meeting, was himself one of the founding members of the European Council as French President. Indeed, he suggested the formula and the name of the European Council during the French Presidency in 1974. Being the author of the original European Council position, he contributed to its institutionalisation in the first place. Therefore, he will probably pay particular attention to the future role of the European Council and make sure that in a Constitution the European Council will get a clearly defined place.

8. Conclusion

To sum up, this paper examined the aspect of location of the European Council and how this issue has developed over the years. It looked at the 22nd Declaration attached to the Treaty of Nice on a permanent venue of the European Council and investigated its implementation. Finally, it analysed the practical consequences and the political impact that this decision might have on the European Council.

As a result, the paper argues that the European Council is the supreme political authority of the EU and a permanent seat will probably strengthen its position. Exercising power in a crisis situation, for example, will become easier with a fixed venue and all the facilities in place. Hence, its power might increase and, at the same time, the European Council will continue to take a strong lead in governing Europe.

One might think that strengthening the European Council could reinforce national interests and thus the intergovernmental element; similar thoughts have been expressed in the 70's when the European Council has been created. However, after nearly 30 years of its existence, the outcome of the work of the European Council has been a considerable increase in the powers of the existing supranational institutions and a further push towards European integration. Furthermore, in addition to a permanent location, the introduction of more discipline in the European Council has been suggested. One of the first rules to be introduced already from the next European Council meeting in October 2002 onwards is the adoption of an official agenda

as mentioned-above. It is not unthinkable that more rules, i.e. voting rules⁷⁰, and even a kind of accountability towards other Institutions (Court of Justice, European Parliament), might be introduced for the European Council meetings. Consequently, although the overall strength of the European Council will be increased, the pure arbitrary power will be reduced by the introduction of rules. Basing the European Council permanently in Brussels as well as giving the General Affairs Council the responsibility to adopt the final agenda for its meetings represents a further step towards the institutionalisation of the European Council. It might ultimately, lead to an integration of the European Council in the Community framework.

Without doubt, the analysis of the dimension of location shed some light on the evolution of the European Council, hence this paper contributed to the overall study. However, this investigation also showed that the examination of the dimension of location can not be singled out. It has to be followed by a deep study of the other dimensions, namely the kind of body the European Council represents, rules and accountability in relation to power and finally, the form and aim of its meetings. This paper showed that these dimensions are highly interconnected. One has to look at a combination of these different dimensions in order to be able to predict the most probable scenarios for the future of the European Council.

To conclude, the current evolution will hopefully bring EU interest in the foreground and help prevent domination of the meetings by national interests. It should create a more effective European Council: a more powerful engine that could reinvigorate the EU integration process. Hence, a comparatively minor administrative measure, which is only a question of form, could have a significant political impact on the deeper roots of the European Council and hence, the European Union: Jean Monnet would have liked it.

⁷⁰ see suggestion by Blair and Schröder

9. Appendix

List of European Council meetings

The latest version of this list is at: <http://dragoman.org/ec/meeting.pdf>

	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>VENUE</u>	<u>PRESIDENCY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
1.	1961	02	10-11	Paris	Belgium	Summit
2.	1961	07	19-20	Bonn	Germany	Summit
3.	1967	05	29-30	Bonn	Belgium	Summit
4.	1969	12	01-02	The Hague	Netherlands	Summit
5.	1972	10	19-20	Paris	Netherlands	Summit
6.	1973	12	14-15	Copenhagen	Denmark	Summit
7.	1974	12	09-10	Paris	France	Summit
8.	1975	03	10-11	Dublin	Ireland	
9.	1975	07	16-17	Brussels	Italy	
10.	1975	12	01-02	Rome	Italy	
11.	1976	04	01-02	Luxembourg	Luxembourg	
12.	1976	07	12-13	Brussels	Netherlands	
13.	1976	11	29-30	The Hague	Netherlands	
14.	1977	03	25-27	Rome	UK	Anniversary
15.	1977	06	29-30	London	UK	
16.	1977	12	05-06	Brussels	Belgium	
17.	1978	04	07-08	Copenhagen	Denmark	
18.	1978	07	06-07	Bremen	Germany	
19.	1978	12	04-05	Brussels	Germany	
20.	1979	03	12-13	Paris	France	
21.	1979	06	21-22	Strasbourg	France	
22.	1979	12	29-30	Dublin	Ireland	
23.	1980	04	27-28	Luxembourg	Italy	
24.	1980	06	12-13	Venice	Italy	
25.	1980	12	01-02	Luxembourg	Luxembourg	
26.	1981	03	23-24	Maastricht	Netherlands	
27.	1981	06	29-30	Luxembourg	Netherlands	
28.	1981	11	26-27	London	UK	
29.	1982	03	29-30	Brussels	Belgium	
30.	1982	06	28-29	Brussels	Belgium	
31.	1982	12	03-04	Copenhagen	Denmark	
32.	1983	03	21-22	Brussels	Germany	
33.	1983	06	17-19	Stuttgart	Germany	
34.	1983	12	04-06	Athens	Greece	
35.	1984	03	19-20	Brussels	France	
36.	1984	06	25-26	Fontainebleau	France	
37.	1984	12	03-04	Dublin	Ireland	
38.	1985	03	29-30	Brussels	Italy	
39.	1985	06	28-29	Milan	Italy	
40.	1985	12	02-03	Luxembourg	Luxembourg	
41.	1986	06	26-27	The Hague	Netherlands	
42.	1986	12	05-06	London	UK	
43.	1987	06	29-30	Brussels	Belgium	
44.	1987	12	04-05	Copenhagen	Denmark	
45.	1988	02	11-12	Brussels	Germany	
46.	1988	06	27-28	Hanover	Germany	

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47.	1988	12	02-03	Rhodes	Greece	
48.	1989	06	26-27	Madrid	Spain	
49.	1989	11	18	Paris	France	Extraordinary
50.	1989	12	08-09	Strasbourg	France	
51.	1990	04	28-29	Dublin	Ireland	Extraordinary
52.	1990	06	25-26	Dublin	Ireland	
53.	1990	10	27-28	Rome	Italy	Extraordinary
54.	1990	12	14-15	Rome	Italy	
55.	1991	06	28-29	Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Extraordinary
56.	1991	12	09-10	Maastricht	Netherlands	
57.	1992	06	26-27	Lisbon	Portugal	
58.	1992	10	16	Birmingham	UK	Extraordinary
59.	1992	12	11-13	Edinburgh	UK	
60.	1993	06	21-22	Copenhagen	Denmark	
61.	1993	10	29	Brussels	Belgium	Extraordinary
62.	1993	12	10-11	Brussels	Belgium	
63.	1994	06	24-25	Corfu	Greece	
64.	1994	07	15	Brussels	Germany	Extraordinary
65.	1994	12	09-10	Essen	Germany	
66.	1995	06	26-27	Cannes	France	
67.	1995	09	22-23	Mallorca	Spain	Informal
68.	1995	12	15-16	Madrid	Spain	
69.	1996	03	29	Turin	Italy	
70.	1996	06	21-22	Florence	Italy	
71.	1996	12	13-14	Dublin	Ireland	
72.	1997	06	16-17	Amsterdam	Netherlands	
73.	1997	12	12-13	Luxembourg	Luxembourg	
74.	1998	06	15-16	Cardiff	UK	
75.	1998	12	11-12	Vienna	Austria	
76.	1999	03	24-25	Berlin	Germany	Extraordinary
77.	1999	06	03-04	Cologne	Germany	
78.	1999	10	16	Tampere	Finland	
79.	1999	12	10-11	Helsinki	Finland	
80.	2000	03	24	Lisbon	Portugal	
81.	2000	06	19-20	Santa Mariada Feira	Portugal	
82.	2000	12	07-09	Nice	France	
83.	2001	03	23-24	Stockholm	Sweden	
84.	2001	06	15-16	Göteborg	Sweden	
85.	2001	09	21	Brussels	Belgium	Extraordinary
86.	2001	10	19	Gand	Belgium	
87.	2001	12	14-15	Laeken	Belgium	
88.	2002	03	15-16	Barcelona	Spain	
89.	2002	06	21-22	Seville	Spain	
90.	2002	10	24-25	Brussels	Denmark	
91.	2002	12		Copenhagen	Denmark	
92.	2003			Brussels	Greece	
93.	2003			Greece	Greece	
94.	2003	10	23-24	Brussel	Italy	
95.	2003	12	12-13	Brussel	Italy	
96.	2004			Brussel	Ireland	

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