

BFUG9 9
12-13 October 2006

CANDIDATES TO HOST 2009 CONFERENCE; VOTING PROCEDURE FOR BFUG

Introduction

1. This paper describes the voting process that we plan to use to determine which country will host the 2009 Ministerial conference and provide the Bologna Secretariat from July 2007 until the end of June 2009. The suggested procedure has been agreed by the countries concerned. The vote is expected to take place during the October 2006 BFUG meeting.

Background

2. BFUG agreed in October 2005 that bids to host the 2009 Ministerial conference should be sent to the Secretariat by 31 December 2005. Three bids were submitted by the deadline from the Benelux countries, Croatia and the Slovak Republic. Copies of the bids are attached at Annex A. Please note Benelux has since indicated that they would be willing to postpone the suggested date of their conference by a few weeks.

3. Following a meeting on 10 May 2006, the countries concerned wrote to Finland, as incoming chair of BFUG, asking them to organise a vote amongst BFUG members. The Finnish Minister has written to his counterparts in the Benelux countries, Croatia and the Slovak Republic, securing their agreement to the suggested voting procedure. The countries concerned have stressed the need for a prompt resolution to this issue.

Election procedure

4. The proposed voting procedure is outlined below:

- Eligible to vote: the European Commission (EC) and all full BFUG country members, with the exception of those bidding to host the event (Benelux countries; Croatia; and the Slovak Republic)
- The voting will take place during the October BFUG meeting. Any country not able to attend BFUG will have the option of submitting a bid in a sealed envelope to the Secretariat before the meeting takes place. **(Note – countries must inform the Secretariat of their intention to do this no later than 9 October)**
- BFUG participants will carry out any necessary consultation with their Ministers in advance of the BFUG meeting, to ensure they have a mandate to vote. To assist with this, the Secretariat has recirculated the original letters from the Benelux countries, Croatia and the Slovak Republic indicating their willingness to host the 2009 conference.
- No additional information will be issued by the Benelux countries, Croatia or the Slovak Republic either before or during the October BFUG meeting.

- Each country/EC will have two votes; the Secretariat will provide two ballot slips for this purpose.
- The ballot will be secret.
- The outcome will be based on a simple majority of the number of votes cast. In the event of a tie, there will be a second round (see examples below). In the unlikely event of a further tie, the Chair will draw lots.
- The votes will be counted by the Secretariat during the BFUG meeting, overseen by two tellers. BFUG participants will be invited to volunteer to act as tellers at the start of the BFUG meeting.
- The Chair of BFUG will write to the Ministers of the countries concerned, to advise them of the outcome of the vote. This will have the effect of the two countries receiving the least votes withdrawing their offer to host the 2009 Ministerial conference.

Bologna Secretariat
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Example A

Country	Number of votes
Country A	28
Country B	30
Country C	16
Country B is selected	

Example B

Country	Number of votes
Country A	28
Country B	28
Country C	18
Second round	
Country A	38
Country B	36
Country C	Withdrawn
Country A is selected	