

Coronavirus: Further preventive measures introduced in Council

The Secretary-General of the Council, having consulted the Presidency, has decided on a number of new preventative measures which take into account latest developments in the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) as well as updated expert medical advice. The measures have been communicated to member state delegates and others who are affected by them. They take effect as from today (9 March).

- The number of meetings of the Council, its preparatory bodies and working groups will be reduced. Decisions on which meetings to maintain will be taken on a regular basis by the Presidency.
- The size of delegations participating in meetings will be limited.
- All visitor groups and non-essential training will be suspended
- GSC staff are encouraged to limit as far as possible internal meetings and to continue to observe scrupulously the recommended hygiene measures.

In addition, the list of areas for which travel restrictions apply to GSC staff has been updated to take into account the latest decisions by the Italian authorities.

The emphasis of this approach reflects a shift towards more general measures given that the virus is now present to a considerable extent in most member states, including Belgium, and that this development is likely to continue.

In line with international norms, the GSC has protocols in place in case it needs to deal with any further confirmed cases of COVID-19 among its staff or in its buildings.

The GSC will continue to monitor the situation closely, and stands ready to introduce further measures depending on developments.