



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2018) 2254 final

- English language version of the French text which is authentic -

Brussels, 20 June 2018

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2254th meeting of the Commission

held in Brussels

(Berlaymont)

on Wednesday 16 May 2018

(morning)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attendance list	5-8
1. AGENDAS (OJ(2018) 2254/FINAL; SEC(2018) 2254/FINAL)	9
2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET (RCC(2018) 2254).....	9
3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2250 TH , 2252 ND AND 2253 RD MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (11 AND 25 APRIL, AND 2 MAY 2018) (PV(2018) 2250; PV(2018) 2250, 2 ND PART; PV(2018) 2252; PV(2018) 2252, 2 ND PART)	9
4. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS.....	9
4.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2018) 220 ET SEQ.).....	9
4.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2018) 221 ET SEQ.)	10
4.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2018) 222 ET SEQ.).....	10
4.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2018) 223 AND /2)	10
5. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL – PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN AGENDA ON MIGRATION (COM(2018) 301 TO /3; RCC(2018) 71).....	10
6. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING REGULATION (EC) 767/2008, REGULATION (EC) 810/2009, REGULATION (EU) 2017/2226, REGULATION (EU) 2016/399, REGULATION XX/2018 [INTEROPERABILITY REGULATION] AND DECISION 2004/512/EC, AND REPEALING COUNCIL DECISION 2008/633/JHA	

(COM(2018) 302 AND /2; SWD(2018) 195; SWD(2018) 196; SEC(2018) 236; RCC(2018) 71).....	11
7. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON THE CREATION OF A EUROPEAN NETWORK OF IMMIGRATION LIAISON OFFICERS (RECAST) (COM(2018) 303 AND /2; SWD(2018) 197; RCC(2018) 71)	11
8. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS (SEC(2018) 224 AND /2).....	12
8.1. SECRETARIAT-GENERAL – APPOINTMENT OF AD15/16 DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL (PERS(2018) 18 TO /3).....	14
8.2. DG TRADE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL (PERS(2018) 24 TO /3).....	14
8.3. DG TRADE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL (PERS(2018) 25 TO /3).....	15
8.4. DG HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY – APPROVAL OF LISTS OF CANDIDATES FOR HEAD OF EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION POSTS OR DEPUTY HEAD OF EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION POSTS (PERS(2018) 30; PERS(2018) 31; PERS(2018) 32; PERS(2018) 33; PERS(2018) 34; PERS(2018) 35; PERS(2018) 36; PERS(2018) 37).....	15
8.5. OFFICE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS - BRUSSELS — EXTENSION OF THE DIRECTOR'S TERM OF OFFICE	17
8.6. OFFICE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS - BRUSSELS — APPOINTMENT OF THE JURY MEMBERS AND DECISION ON THE AWARD OF PRIZES FOR THE 'LOI 130' INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION.....	17
8.7. DG BUDGET – INTERNAL AND INTERINSTITUTIONAL PUBLICATION (AT GRADE AD14/15) AND EXTERNAL PUBLICATION (AT GRADE AD14) OF VACANCY NOTICES FOR A DIRECTOR POST (PERS(2018) 29)	19
8.8. DG HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY – RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION OF THE TIME LIMIT FOR STATUTORY EXEMPTIONS UNDER ARTICLE 4(5) AND ARTICLE 4(5)(1) OF COMMISSION DECISION C(2011) 3588 OF 27 MAY 2011	

<i>ON THE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES ALLOCATED TO THE COMMISSION'S STAFF COMMITTEE</i>	<i>20</i>
9. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (RCC(2018) 66)	20
9.1. <i>LEGISLATIVE MATTERS</i>	21
9.2. <i>RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL</i>	23
9.3. <i>RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT</i>	25
9.4. <i>OTHER BUSINESS.....</i>	26
10. OTHER BUSINESS.....	27
<i>ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORTS OF THE COMMISSION DEPARTMENTS FOR 2017 (INFO(2018) 24).....</i>	<i>27</i>

Single sitting: Wednesday 16 May 2018 (morning)

The sitting opened at 9.19 with Mr JUNCKER, President, in the chair. Items 9 (in part) and 10 were chaired by Mr TIMMERMANS.

Present:

Mr JUNCKER	President	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Mr TIMMERMANS	First Vice-President	
Ms MOGHERINI	High Representative / Vice-President	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Mr ANSIP	Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Vice-President	
Mr KATAINEN	Vice-President	
Mr OETTINGER	Member	
Ms MALMSTRÖM	Member	
Mr MIMICA	Member	
Mr ARIAS CAÑETE	Member	
Mr VELLA	Member	
Mr AVRAMOPOULOS	Member	
Ms THYSSEN	Member	
Mr MOSCOVICI	Member	Item 9 (in part)
Mr STYLIANIDES	Member	
Ms BULC	Member	
Ms BIENKOWSKA	Member	
Ms JOUROVÁ	Member	
Mr NAVRACSICS	Member	
Ms CREȚU	Member	
Ms VESTAGER	Member	Items 9 (in part) and 10
Mr MOEDAS	Member	
Sir Julian KING	Member	

Absent:

Mr HAHN	Member
Mr ANDRIUKAITIS	Member
Mr HOGAN	Member
Ms GABRIEL	Member

(16 May 2018)

The following sat in to represent absent Members of the Commission:

Ms UDWIN	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr HAHN
Mr VINČIŪNAS	Chef de cabinet to Mr ANDRIUKAITIS
Mr POWER	Chef de cabinet to Mr HOGAN
Mr BUHR	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Ms GABRIEL

The following also sat in:

Ms MARTÍNEZ ALBEROLA	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr ROMERO REQUENA	Director-General, Legal Service	
Mr PESONEN	Director-General, DG Communication	
Mr SCHINAS	Head of the Spokesperson's Service and Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Ms ANDREEVA	Commission Spokesperson's Service	
Mr MOTOC	European Political Strategy Centre	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Mr SWIEBODA	European Political Strategy Centre	Items 9 (in part) and 10
Ms JUHANSONE	Deputy Secretary-General	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Deputy Secretary-General	Item 9 (in part)
Mr SZOSTAK	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Ms KRAMER	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's Office	Items 9 (in part) and 10
Ms DEJMEK-HACK	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	Item 9 (in part)
Mr DELVAUX	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	Item 9 (in part)
Ms ARKI	PRESIDENT's Office	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Mr SMULDERS	Chef de cabinet to Mr TIMMERMANS	Item 9 (in part)
Mr HAGER	Chef de cabinet to Mr OETTINGER	Items 1 to 8
Mr BURGSMÜLLER	A member of Ms MALMSTRÖM's staff	Item 9 (in part)
Mr BAILLY	Chef de cabinet to Mr MOSCOVICI	Items 1 to 9 (in part)

(16 May 2018)

Ms McCALLUM	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Ms VESTAGER	Items 1 to 9 (in part)
Ms VILA NUÑEZ	Secretariat-General	
Mr KRAFF	Director-General, Internal Audit Service	Items 9 (in part) and 10

Secretary: Mr SELMAYR, Secretary-General, assisted by Mr AYET PUIGARNAU, Director in the Secretariat-General.

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2018) 2254/FINAL; SEC(2018) 2254/FINAL)

The Commission took note of that day's agenda and of the tentative agendas for forthcoming meetings. It also noted the addition to the agenda of that day's meeting of items 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4 on administrative decisions.

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET

(RCC(2018) 2254)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 14 May 2018.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2250TH, 2252ND AND 2253RD MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (11 AND 25 APRIL, AND 2 MAY 2018)

(PV(2018) 2250; PV(2018) 2250, 2ND PART; PV(2018) 2252; PV(2018) 2252, 2ND PART)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 2250th and 2252nd meetings and decided to hold over approval of the minutes of its 2253rd meeting for a later meeting.

4. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

4.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2018) 220 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 30 April and 8 May 2018.

4.2. EMPOWERMENT
(SEC(2018) 221 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 30 April and 8 May 2018.

4.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS
(SEC(2018) 222 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 30 April and 8 May 2018 archived in Decide.

4.4. SENSITIVE WRITTEN PROCEDURES
(SEC(2018) 223 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the sensitive written procedures for which the time limit expired between 14 and 18 May 2018 and of the finalisation written procedures initiated following the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet on Monday 14 May 2018.

5. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL – PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN AGENDA ON MIGRATION
(COM(2018) 301 TO /3; RCC(2018) 71)

The Commission approved the communication in COM(2018) 301/3 for transmission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council, and, for information, to the national parliaments.

6. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING REGULATION (EC) 767/2008, REGULATION (EC) 810/2009, REGULATION (EU) 2017/2226, REGULATION (EU) 2016/399, REGULATION XX/2018 [INTEROPERABILITY REGULATION] AND DECISION 2004/512/EC, AND REPEALING COUNCIL DECISION 2008/633/JHA (COM(2018) 302 AND /2; SWD(2018) 195; SWD(2018) 196; SEC(2018) 236; RCC(2018) 71)

The Commission adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2018) 302/2 for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments, together with the impact assessment, the summary thereof and the opinion of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board in SWD(2018) 195, SWD(2018) 196 and SEC(2018) 236, the contents of which were noted.

7. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON THE CREATION OF A EUROPEAN NETWORK OF IMMIGRATION LIAISON OFFICERS (RECAST) (COM(2018) 303 AND /2; SWD(2018) 197; RCC(2018) 71)

The Commission adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2018) 303/2, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council and the national parliaments, together with the staff working document distributed as SWD(2018) 197, the contents of which were noted.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

(SEC(2018) 224 AND /2)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(PERS(2018) 28 AND /2)

At the invitation of the PRESIDENT, Mr OETTINGER submitted four new proposals for decisions directly to the College during the meeting. These were three proposals for appointments to senior management posts in the Commission – one in the Secretariat-General and two in DG Trade – and a proposal to approve the lists of candidates for the posts of Head of EU Delegation and Deputy Head of EU Delegation.

He firstly referred to the three proposals to appoint Ms Pia AHRENKILDE HANSEN, Ms Maria Helena KÖNIG and Ms Sandra GALLINA, based on the qualifications and experience of the selected candidates. He explained that, if the College approved the appointments, the Commission would make further progress towards its target of ensuring that, by the end of its term of office in November 2019, at least 40% of managers were women. With these three appointments, the rate of female representation would stand at 43% of Deputy Directors-General, while it currently stood at 38% at management level and 36% at senior management level.

As regards the proposal to approve the lists of candidates for the posts of Head of EU Delegation and Deputy Head of EU Delegation, he explained that the lists had been drawn up under the authority of Ms MOGHERINI, and that the final appointment decisions would be taken by the competent authority in the European External Action Service, once the Commission had formally approved the lists in accordance with Article 95(2) of the Staff Regulations.

Ms MOGHERINI reminded the meeting that well-established and transparent rotation rules applied to Heads and Deputy Heads of EU Delegations and ensured

that the system worked well. She referred to the well-established practice of not delaying appointments to those posts, except by a few months where necessary and for fully justified reasons.

While respecting these rules and this practice, she suggested that the posting of the current Head of the EU Delegation to the United States, which expired at the end of August 2018, be extended until at least 30 November 2018, on an exceptional basis in view of the specific political circumstances requiring continuity of service and management. She added that this measure should also prevent a situation whereby the Head and Deputy Head of this Delegation would be required to leave their posts at the same time, which would also undermine the continuity of service and of management of relations with the American authorities. She stated that she would keep the College informed of developments.

The PRESIDENT noted the Commission's agreement on the approval of all the lists of candidates for the posts of Head of EU Delegation and Deputy Head of EU Delegation put forward by Ms MOGHERINI. The PRESIDENT also noted the agreement of the College on the approach presented by Ms MOGHERINI whereby the posting of the current Head of the EU Delegation to the United States would be extended until at least 30 November and she would come back to the College on the question of the exact end date of the posting. He noted that the extension of the posting of the current Head of the EU Delegation to the United States in no way affected the choice of his successor from the list of candidates selected by Ms MOGHERINI, but was due to objective circumstances that were particularly complex.

A brief discussion ensued, during which certain members of the College pointed out that the EU delegations in third countries provided support and expertise not only to the President of the Commission and the High Representative, but also to Members of the Commission and representatives of other institutions travelling to those countries on official business.

The PRESIDENT concluded by promising that he would pass on this message when

he met the Heads of EU Delegations on 19 June.

**8.1. SECRETARIAT-GENERAL – APPOINTMENT OF AD15/16 DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL
(PERS(2018) 18 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it applications submitted under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Deputy Secretary-General (SG.SGA.2) in the Secretariat-General (PERS(2018) 18).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 2 and 7 March 2018 (PERS(2018) 18/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to an assessment based on the qualifications required for the post. On a proposal from Mr OETTINGER, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Ms Pia AHRENKILDE HANSEN to the post.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**8.2. DG TRADE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL
(PERS(2018) 24 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Deputy Director-General in charge of Directorates B, C and D in DG Trade (PERS(2018) 24).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 21 and 28 March 2018 (PERS(2018) 24/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr OETTINGER, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and after consulting Ms MALMSTRÖM and also

(16 May 2018)

Ms MOGHERINI and Mr KATAINEN, the Commission decided to appoint Ms Maria Helena KÖNIG to the post.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**8.3. DG TRADE – APPOINTMENT OF AN AD15/16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL
(PERS(2018) 25 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Deputy Director-General in charge of Directorates E, F, G and H in DG Trade (PERS(2018) 25).

The Commission took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 21 and 28 March 2018 (PERS(2018) 25/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr OETTINGER, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and after consulting Ms MALMSTRÖM and also Ms MOGHERINI and Mr KATAINEN, the Commission decided to appoint Ms Sandra GALLINA to the post.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**8.4. DG HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY – APPROVAL OF LISTS OF CANDIDATES FOR HEAD OF EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION POSTS OR DEPUTY HEAD OF EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION POSTS
(PERS(2018) 30; PERS(2018) 31; PERS(2018) 32; PERS(2018) 33; PERS(2018) 34; PERS(2018) 35; PERS(2018) 36; PERS(2018) 37)**

The Commission noted the information in point 1 of PERS(2018) 28/2 and, on a proposal from Mr OETTINGER, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, decided:

(16 May 2018)

- to approve the lists of candidates for Head of European Union Delegation posts in Botswana, Chad, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, South Sudan and Zimbabwe (AD9-14/AD12); in Panama (AD9-14/AD12) and the United States (AD15-16/AD15); in China (AD15-16/AD15) and Japan (AD14-15/AD14); in Albania, Georgia and Tajikistan (AD9-14/AD12); to the Council of Europe (AD9-14/AD12) and Geneva (AD14-15/AD14); and in Libya (AD9-14/AD12), as set out in PERS(2018) 30, PERS(2018) 31, PERS(2018) 32, PERS(2018) 33, PERS(2018) 34, PERS(2018) 35 and PERS(2018) 36;
- to approve the lists of candidates for the Deputy Head of European Union Delegation posts in Afghanistan, Russia and Ukraine (AD9-14/AD12), as set out in PERS(2018) 30 and PERS(2018) 34;
- to approve the list of candidates, outside the 2018 rotation exercise, for the Deputy Head of European Union Delegation post in Thailand (AD9-14/AD12), as set out in PERS(2018) 30 and PERS(2018) 37;
- to take note of the agreement of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to make the necessary arrangements to extend, at least until the end of November 2018, the term of office of Mr David O'SULLIVAN in the post of Head of the European Union Delegation in Washington, and to come back to the Commission on the question of the exact end date of the posting.

The competent authority of the European External Action Service would make the final appointments on the basis of these lists, as set out in PERS(2018) 30, PERS(2018) 31, PERS(2018) 32, PERS(2018) 33, PERS(2018) 34, PERS(2018) 35, PERS(2018) 36 and PERS(2018) 37.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

**8.5. OFFICE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS - BRUSSELS —
EXTENSION OF THE DIRECTOR'S TERM OF OFFICE**

On a proposal from Mr OETTINGER, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, the Commission decided to amend the Commission Decision of 26 July 2017 (PV(2017) 2222) and to set the date of the end of Mr Marc MOULIGNEAU'S term of office as Director of the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels (OIB) at 31 January 2019.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**8.6. OFFICE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS - BRUSSELS —
APPOINTMENT OF THE JURY MEMBERS AND DECISION ON THE
AWARD OF PRIZES FOR THE 'LOI 130' INTERNATIONAL
ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION**

The Commission noted the information in point 2 of PERS(2018) 28 and:

- decided, pursuant to Article 4(2) of Commission Decision C(2016) 769 of 12 February 2016 on the Internal Rules on the implementation of the general budget of the European Union, and at the request of the authorising officer by delegation, that the Commission itself would exercise authorising officer powers as regards the appointment of the jury members and the decision on the award of prizes for the 'Loi 130' international architectural competition;
- appointed the following persons as members and alternate members of the general jury:

Members

- Mr Günter Oettinger, Member of the European Commission;
- Mr Rudi Vervoort, Minister-President of the Brussels-Capital Region;

- Ms Irene Souka, Director-General of DG Human Resources and Security;
- Mr Vladimir Sucha, Director-General of the Joint Research Centre;
- Mr Marc Mouligneau, Director of the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels;

Alternate members

- Mr Michael Hager, chef de cabinet to Mr Günter Oettinger;
 - M. Thibaut Jossart, member of Mr Rudi Vervoort's staff;
 - Mr Bernard Magenmann, Deputy Director-General of DG Human Resources and Security;
 - Ms Maive Rute, Deputy Director-General of the Joint Research Centre;
 - Mr Marc Séguinot, head of department at the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels.
- appointed the following persons as members and alternate members of the architectural jury:

Members

- Mr Peter Benuska, master architect of the European Commission;
- Mr Kristiaan Borret, master architect of the Brussels-Capital Region;
- Mr Brian Cody, engineer (Ireland);
- Mr Dominique Lyon, architect (France);
- Ms Monica von Schmalensee, architect (Sweden);

- Ms Benedetta Tagliabue, architect (Italy);

Alternate members

- Mr Olivier Bastin, architect (Belgium);
 - Mr Paul van Bergen, architect (Netherlands);
 - Mr Almut Gruentuch-Ernst, architect (Germany);
 - Mr Bjarne Hammer, architect (Denmark);
- noted that Mr OETTINGER, who would himself be a member of the jury, would refrain from taking part in the discussions and in the Commission's decision on the appointment of the members of the jury;
 - asked Mr OETTINGER to inform the Commission, by way of a communication, of the ranking of projects proposed by the jury;
 - noted that Mr OETTINGER, who would be involved in adopting the jury's proposal, would refrain from taking part in the discussions and in the Commission's decision on the awarding of the prizes;

The authorising officer by delegation, in this case the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels, would continue to be responsible for any preliminary or subsequent measures concerning implementation of the budget under this procedure.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

**8.7. DG BUDGET – INTERNAL AND INTERINSTITUTIONAL PUBLICATION (AT GRADE AD14/15) AND EXTERNAL PUBLICATION (AT GRADE AD14) OF VACANCY NOTICES FOR A DIRECTOR POST
(PERS(2018) 29)**

(16 May 2018)

On a proposal from Mr OETTINGER, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, the Commission decided to authorise the internal, interinstitutional and external publication, pursuant to Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii), (1)(b) and (2) of the Staff Regulations, of the vacancy notices in PERS(2018) 29 for the post of Director, 'Budget Execution (General Budget and EDF)' in DG Budget.

This decision would take effect immediately.

8.8. DG HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY – RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION OF THE TIME LIMIT FOR STATUTORY EXEMPTIONS UNDER ARTICLE 4(5) AND ARTICLE 4(5)(1) OF COMMISSION DECISION C(2011) 3588 OF 27 MAY 2011 ON THE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES ALLOCATED TO THE COMMISSION'S STAFF COMMITTEE

The Commission noted the information in point 4 of PERS(2018) 28 and, on a proposal from Mr OETTINGER, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, decided to renew, for a further renewable period of 6 months, suspension of the implementation, including for ongoing proceedings, of the time limit for statutory exemptions provided for in Article 4(5) and Article 4(5)(1) of Commission Decision C(2011) 3588 of 27 May 2011 on the human and financial resources allocated to the Staff Committee of the European Commission, in order to allow the ongoing negotiation process on the review of the legal framework for social dialogue to continue.

This decision would take effect immediately.

**9. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS
(RCC(2018) 66)**

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held on Friday 4 May (RCC(2018) 66).

It paid particular attention to the following points.

9.1. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

i) Trilogues

(point 3.1 of the IRG record)

- Empowering the competition authorities of the Member States to be more effective enforcers and ensuring the proper functioning of the internal market (Directive) – SCHWAB report – 2017/0063 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 232/2.

- Veterinary medicinal products (Regulation) – GROSSETÊTE report – 2014/0257 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 220.

- Mutual recognition of freezing and confiscation orders (Regulation) – GRIESBECK report – 2016/0412 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 222.

- Controls on cash entering or leaving the Union and repeal of Regulation (EC) 1889/2005 (Regulation) – DELVAUX / LÓPEZ AGUILAR report – 2016/0413 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 225/2.

- Macro-Financial Assistance to Ukraine (Decision) – WAŁĘSA report – 2018/0058 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 236/2.

ii) Council dossiers

(point 3.3 of the IRG record)

- Amendment of Directive 2006/1/EC on the use of vehicles hired without drivers for the carriage of goods by road (Directive) – MONTEIRO DE AGUIAR report – 2017/0113 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 231.

- Banking Package – Amendment of Regulation (EU) 575/2013 as regards the leverage ratio, the net stable funding ratio, requirements for own funds and eligible liabilities, counterparty credit risk, market risk, exposures to central counterparties, exposures to collective investment undertakings, large exposures, reporting and disclosure requirements and amendment of Regulation (EU) 648/2012 (Regulation) – SIMON report – 2016/0360 (COD) / Amendment of Regulation (EU) 806/2014 as regards loss-absorbing and recapitalisation capacity for credit institutions and investment firms (Regulation) – HÖKMARK report – 2016/0361 (COD) / Amendment of Directive 2014/59/EU on loss-absorbing and recapitalisation capacity of credit institutions and investment firms and amendment of Directive 98/26/EC, Directive 2002/47/EC, Directive 2012/30/EU, Directive 2011/35/EU, Directive 2005/56/EC, Directive 2004/25/EC and Directive 2007/36/EC (Directive) – HÖKMARK report – 2016/0362 (COD) / Amendment of Directive 2014/59/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the ranking of unsecured debt instruments in insolvency hierarchy (Directive) – HÖKMARK report – 2016/0363 (COD) / Amendment of Directive 2013/36/EU as regards exempted entities, financial holding companies, mixed financial holding companies, remuneration, supervisory measures and powers and capital conservation measures (Directive) – SIMON report – 2016/0364 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 239.

9.2. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL**iii) Programming of Council business**

(SI(2018) 241; SI(2018) 244)

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2018) 241 and SI(2018) 244 on the Council meetings between 10 and 30 May.

iv) Preparation of informal meeting of European leaders (Sofia, 16 and 17 May)***Withdrawal of the United States from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme***

The PRESIDENT gave the floor to Ms MOGHERINI so that she could report on the state of play following the US President's announcement on 8 May of his intention to withdraw the United States from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme. This withdrawal meant the sanctions against Iran, which had been suspended or lifted as a result of the Plan of Action, would be gradually reintroduced from August 2018.

EU-US trade relations

Ms MALMSTRÖM reported once again on the discussions between the European Union and the United States following the US President's unilateral announcement that higher customs duties were to be imposed on steel and aluminium imports to the US, and his decision on 30 April to extend to 1 June the temporary exemption of steel and aluminium products from the EU from these customs duties.

v) Results of the General Affairs Council (Article 50) (Brussels, 14 May)

(point 4.2.1 of the IRG record)

Mr TIMMERMANS briefed the College on the discussions that had been held

on 14 May at the General Affairs Council on respect for the rule of law in Poland, and the procedures under way in this connection.

vi) Non-legislative dossiers

(point 4.1 of the IRG record)

- Conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Additional Protocol supplementing the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No 217) and the Convention itself (CETS No 196) (Council Decisions) – 2017/0265 (NLE) and 2017/0266 (NLE)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 226.

- Information to the Council for the purpose of taking decisions on applying visa leverage in relation to readmission cooperation – Côte d'Ivoire

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 166/2.

- Follow-up to the 5th African Union and European Union Summit (Abidjan, 29 and 30 November 2017) – Abidjan Action Plan 2018-2020 – Investment in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development – Joint Priority Initiatives 2018-2020

The Commission took note of the information in SI(2018) 227 and /2.

- Definition of the notion of ‘financing and financial assistance’ in guidelines for the formulation of legal acts imposing restrictive measures – Follow-up of the Court decision of 28 March 2017 – Case C-72/15

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 228.

- Draft Council Conclusions on the Negotiation and Conclusion of European Union Trade Agreements

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 230.

- Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2019-2020) complementing the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (Council Regulation) – 2017/0312 (NLE)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 234.

- Facility for Refugees in Turkey – C(2016) 855

At the PRESIDENT's request, Mr OETTINGER briefed the College on the state of the ongoing negotiations with the Member States in the Council concerning financing of the second tranche of €3 billion for the Facility for Refugees in Turkey, to enable Europe to continue to provide assistance to over 1 200 000 refugees in Turkey. The first tranche of €3 billion had been successfully implemented and the whole of this allocation had been committed and contracted at the end of last year. Thus, €1.9 billion had already been effectively disbursed by the end of March 2018.

The Commission took note of this information and approved the line set out in SI(2018) 240/3.

9.3. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

vii) Non-legislative dossier

(point 5.1 of the IRG record)

- European Parliament's Special Committee on Financial Crimes, Tax Evasion and Tax Avoidance (TAX3) – Request for documents

The Commission approved the line set out in SP(2018) 280.

viii) Action to be taken on Parliament's legislative resolutions and other resolutions of a legal nature

(SP(2018) 273)

The Commission took note of document SP(2018) 273, drawn up following Parliament's May I part-session.

ix) Results of Parliament's May I part-session

(SP(2018) 170)

The Commission took note of the information on Parliament's part-session held in Brussels on 2 and 3 May, set out in SP(2018) 170.

9.4. OTHER BUSINESS

x) Statement of support for a Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans – European Union-Western Balkans Summit (Sofia, 17 May)

(point 7 of the IRG record)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2018) 237 and /2.

xi) Commission Work Programme 2018 – Withdrawals of pending proposals – Publication of the list of withdrawals in the Official Journal of the European Union

The Commission authorised Mr TIMMERMANS to sign the draft letter annexed to note SPI(2018) 18 and decided to withdraw the 15 pending proposals, as announced in its Work Programme for 2018, adopted on 24 October 2017, and publish this list in the Official Journal of the European Union once Parliament had been informed by means of the letter referred to above, as set out in SPI(2018) 18.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORTS OF THE COMMISSION DEPARTMENTS FOR 2017

(INFO(2018) 24)

The PRESIDENT invited Mr OETTINGER to present the main conclusions of the annual activity reports of the Commission departments for 2017, which summarised the achievements, initiatives taken and financial and human resources deployed during the year. He thanked Mr Manfred KRAFF, Director-General of the Internal Audit Service, for his department's excellent work, which was essential for the smooth running of the DGs and agencies. He pointed out that the directors-general, as the authorising officers by delegation, were legally responsible for the 50 reports produced each year, but the Members of the Commission, having been informed of the reports' conclusions in full transparency, bore the political responsibility for the management by the directors-general and heads of service.

Mr OETTINGER reported that the authorising officers by delegation had entered 38 reservations for the 2017 financial year. This number was more or less the same as in 2016, but the financial impact was significantly less: €1 billion in 2017 compared with €1.6 billion in 2016. The majority of these reservations concerned legacy programmes. He then pointed to the good results for budget implementation, particularly the error rate of less than 2% for payments, and stressed that sound management of the EU's resources benefited ordinary citizens and at the same time showed the effectiveness of the control systems put in place by the Commission.

He did, however, express concern about the reservations relating to two agencies, emphasising that the Commission had limited competence in those cases. He noted that the 'parent' DGs had examined a number of possible remedies, but felt that it would be worth looking again at the wider question of the management of the agencies.

He concluded his presentation by reminding the meeting that the 2017 annual

activity reports of the Commission services would feed into the Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU budget, the final link in the chain of responsibility of the Commission's budgetary control system and an essential element in the annual budgetary discharge procedure.

Mr TIMMERMANS, for his part, observed that the difficulties identified in the reservations relating to the two agencies in question reflected the unique architecture of the European institutions, which was both centralised and decentralised. He stressed the importance of the Internal Audit Service, which was always available to the Commission services to find effective and rigorous solutions to the issues that had to be resolved. He wound up the discussion by stressing the delicate position of the College, which was considered by Parliament, in particular, to be politically responsible for the agencies, but, because of the political choices of the selfsame Parliament, had ever more limited means of exercising control over them.

The Commission took note of this information and of the note in INFO(2018) 24.

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The Commission's other discussions on certain agenda items are recorded in the special minutes.

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The meeting closed at 11.40.