EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

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Brussels, 24 June 2020

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2340th meeting of the Commission

held in Brussels

(Berlaymont)

on Wednesday 3 June 2020

(morning)

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Single sitting: Wednesday 3 June 2020 (morning)

The sitting opened at 9.03 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President	
Mr TIMMERMANS	Executive Vice-President	
Ms VESTAGER	Executive Vice-President	
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Executive Vice-President	
Mr BORRELL i FONTELLES	High Representative / Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	
Ms JOUROVÁ	Vice-President	
Ms ŠUICA	Vice-President	
Mr SCHINAS	Vice-President	
Mr HAHN	Member	
Mr HOGAN	Member	
Mr SCHMIT	Member	
Mr GENTILONI	Member	
Mr WOJCIECHOWSKI	Member	
Mr BRETON	Member	
Ms FERREIRA	Member	
Ms KYRIAKIDES	Member	
Mr REYNDERS	Member	
Ms DALLI	Member	
Ms JOHANSSON	Member	
Mr LENARČIČ	Member	
Ms VĂLEAN	Member	Items 8 (in part) and 9
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member	
Ms URPILAINEN	Member	
Ms SIMSON	Member	
Mr SINKEVIČIUS	Member	

Absent:

Ms GABRIEL Member

The following sat in to represent an absent Member of the Commission:

Ms KIRALY	Chef de cabinet to Ms GABRIEL	

The following also sat in:

Mr SEIBERT	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr ROMERO REQUENA	Director-General, Legal Service	
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Director-General, DG Communication	
Mr MAMER	Head of the Spokesperson's Service and Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Ms RISO	Deputy Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr FLOSDORFF	Executive Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	
Ms PETKOVA	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's Office	
Ms CABRAL	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	Items 1 to 8
Mr LLORACH	A member of Mr BORRELL's staff	Item 9 (in part)
Ms ALLOUIS-LE LOSTEC	Secretariat-General	
Mr VALERO LADRÓN	Secretariat-General	

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

1. AGENDAS
(OJ(2020) 2340/FINAL; SEC(2020) 2340/FINAL)

The Commission took note of that day's agenda and of the tentative agendas for forthcoming meetings.

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET
(RCC(2020) 2340)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 29 May 2020.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2336TH, 2337TH, 2338TH AND 2339TH MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION (6, 13, 20 AND 27 MAY 2020)

The Commission held over approval of the minutes of its 2336th, 2337th, 2338th and 2339th meetings for a later meeting.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS
(RCC(2020) 73)

The Commission took note of the record of the virtual meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) during the week of 25 to 28 May 2020 (RCC(2020) 73).

It paid particular attention to the following points.

4.1. RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

i) Amendment of Directive 2011/16/EU to address the urgent need for deferring certain time limits for the filing and exchange of

information in the field of taxation due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Council Directive) – 2020/0081 (CNS)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2020) 170.

4.2. HORIZONTAL ITEM

ii) 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework – Trilogue

– Exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting for the period 2021-2027 (Pericles IV Programme) (Regulation) – DALY report – 2018/194 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2020) 168.

4.3. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

iii) Trilogues

– Amendment of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) as regards cooperation with the European Public Prosecutor's Office and the effectiveness of OLAF investigations (Regulation) – MARINESCU report – 2018/0170 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2020) 166/2.

– Streamlining measures for advancing the realisation of the trans-European transport network (Regulation) – RIQUET report – 2018/0138 (COD)

The Commission approved the line set out in SI(2020) 165/2.

4.4. RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT

iv) Results of Parliament's May II 2020 part-session
(SP(2020) 207)

The Commission took note of the information on Parliament's part-session held on 27 May 2020 in Brussels, set out in SP(2020) 207.

5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2020) 67)

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2020) 67 of the meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held by videoconference and teleconference on Wednesday 27 May 2020.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2020) 193 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 25 and 29 May 2020.

6.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2020) 184 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 25 and 29 May 2020.

6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2020) 185 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedure between 25 and 30 May 2020 archived in D*e*cide.

6.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2020) 186 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the significant written procedures for which the time limit expired between 2 and 5 June 2020.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS (SEC(2020) 187)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (PERS(2020) 43)

DG EDUCATION, YOUTH, SPORT AND CULTURE – AMENDMENT OF THE ORGANISATION CHART AND REINSTATEMENT OF AN AD16 OFFICIAL

On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT and after consulting Ms GABRIEL, the Commission decided:

– to create a temporary post of Adviser Hors Classe in DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture; this post would be abolished on departure of the job holder;

– to reinstate to this newly created post Mr Vladimir ŠUCHA, an AD16 official and former Director-General of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), currently on leave on personal grounds, under Article 40 of the Staff Regulations.

These decisions would take effect on a date to be determined.

8. CONSULTATION DOCUMENT – SECOND PHASE CONSULTATION OF SOCIAL PARTNERS UNDER ARTICLE 154 TFEU ON A POSSIBLE ACTION ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES RELATING TO FAIR MINIMUM WAGES
(C(2020) 3570 AND /2; SWD(2020) 105; RCC(2020) 84)

Mr DOMBROVSKIS presented to the College the document submitted for its approval with a view to launching the second phase of consultation of the social partners on a possible EU action addressing the challenges relating to fair minimum wages.

He reminded the meeting that under Article 154 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, all Commission proposals in the field of social policy must be preceded by a two-phase consultation of the social partners, first on the possible direction of EU action and then on the content of the proposed action should it seem desirable following the first phase of the consultation.

With regard to the question of fair minimum wages, he said that the viewpoints expressed by the social partners in the first consultation phase carried out at the beginning of 2020 had shown the need for EU action in this field.

The second phase that the Commission was proposing to launch that day would therefore focus on the content of the proposed initiative, in particular on the importance of an enhanced role for collective bargaining, on the advantages of clear and stable national frameworks for setting and updating statutory minimum wages, on the need to involve the social partners in setting these wages, on the effect of exemptions and variations on coverage and the adequacy of minimum wages, and, lastly, on the importance of monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with the rules in force on minimum wages.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS added that the legal form – directive or recommendation – to be taken by the EU action on fair minimum wages had not been decided and was part of the consultation.

He stressed that in any event, as expressly pointed out by the consultation document, EU action would neither seek to harmonise the level of minimum wages across the EU nor to establish a uniform mechanism for setting minimum wages.

He said that at the request of the social partners, the usual 6-week consultation period would be extended to 12 weeks to allow them sufficient time to express their views in the current exceptional circumstances related to the COVID-19 crisis.

Based on the replies to the consultation, the Commission intended to propose an initiative on fair minimum wages in the last quarter of 2020, on the understanding that it would suspend its work if the social partners decided to negotiate between themselves on this matter under Article 155 TFEU.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS concluded by saying that this initiative was all the more justified given that the COVID-19 crisis had clearly highlighted the key contribution made by certain categories of low-paid workers to the functioning of society.

Mr SCHMIT stressed the important political signal sent by the launch of the second-phase consultation on this sensitive issue. He welcomed this and pointed out that the initiative was a response to a commitment made by the PRESIDENT in her political guidelines and before the European Parliament.

He said he wished to maintain a climate of trust, which was essential for the success of this initiative, through constructive dialogue both with the social partners and with the Member States, which needed to be reassured that the EU action would respect their national traditions, the autonomy of the social partners and the freedom of collective bargaining.

In the course of the brief discussion that followed, the Commission raised the following main points:

– support for this initiative, the sensitivity and importance of which were underlined;

– thanks for the efforts made to create a climate of trust with the Member States by demonstrating that the Commission was making genuine endeavours to encourage social progress while respecting national traditions in this field;

– the importance of not prejudging the legal instrument that would be used for the proposed initiative and of listening to representatives of both workers and employers;

– the fact that the case for addressing the challenges of a fair minimum wage in the EU was all the greater in light of the severe impact of the COVID-19 crisis on vulnerable people;

– regret that the consultation paper did not contain more data broken down by population groups;

– the relevance of this issue also with a view to reducing the gender pay gap.

The PRESIDENT wound up the discussion by noting the College's agreement on the document submitted to it.

The Commission therefore approved the consultation document C(2020) 3570/2 and authorised the Director-General of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion to send it to the social partners.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The Commission referred to the subject of EU-China relations in the wake of the informal meeting of foreign ministers held on 29 May by videoconference, during which this question had been discussed, with a view to the summit planned for the end of June to be attended by the leaders of the European Union and the People's Republic of China.

9.2. ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORTS OF COMMISSION DEPARTMENTS FOR 2019
(INFO(2020) 22)

The Commission took note of the main conclusions of its departments' annual activity reports for 2019, which were the subject of an information note for its Members. In these reports the 50 Directors-general, Heads of service and Directors of Executive Agencies, in their capacity as authorising officers by delegation, described the main achievements of their departments in 2019, setting out, among other things, the progress they had made towards achieving their objectives and the way in which resources, particularly financial resources, had been deployed during the period under review.

The annual activity reports were a key element of the Commission's governance, since it was on the basis of the information they provided that the College assumed overall political responsibility for the management carried out by the heads of the various services and agencies. The Members of the Commission had discussed the content of these reports with each of the heads of services placed under their authority. The annual activity reports of the Commission departments would feed into the Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU budget, which would be presented to the College for approval.

The Commission took note of this information and of the note distributed as INFO(2020) 22.

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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 9.35.