



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2022) 2414 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 18 May 2022

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2414th meeting of the Commission

held in Strasbourg

(Winston Churchill)

on Tuesday 5 April 2022

(afternoon)

PV(2022) 2414 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

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Single sitting: Tuesday 5 April 2022 (afternoon)

The sitting opened at 13.12 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair. Items 9 to 13/14 were chaired by Mr TIMMERMANS.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President	Items 1 to 8
Mr TIMMERMANS	Executive Vice-President	
Ms VESTAGER	Executive Vice-President	
Mr BORRELL i FONTELLES	High Representative / Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	Items 1 to 13/14 (in part)
Ms JOUROVÁ	Vice-President	
Ms ŠUICA	Vice-President	
Mr SCHINAS	Vice-President	
Mr HAHN	Member	Items 8 (in part) to 13/14
Mr SCHMIT	Member	
Mr WOJCIECHOWSKI	Member	
Mr BRETON	Member	
Ms KYRIAKIDES	Member	
Mr REYNDERS	Member	
Ms DALLI	Member	
Ms JOHANSSON	Member	
Mr LENARČIČ	Member	
Ms VÁLEAN	Member	Items 1 to 13/14 (in part)
Ms URPILAINEN	Member	Items 1 to 8 (in part) and 9 (in part) to 13/14
Mr SINKEVIČIUS	Member	

Absent:

Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Executive Vice-President
Ms GABRIEL	Member
Mr GENTILONI	Member
Ms FERREIRA	Member
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member
Ms SIMSON	Member
Ms McGUINNESS	Member

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

Mr LOBRY-DEBLYCK	Policy Assistant in Ms GABRIEL's Office	
Mr SOBRAL	Chef de cabinet to Ms FERREIRA	
Ms PETSCH	Member of Mr VÁRHELYI's staff	
Mr KADARIK	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Ms SIMSON	
Mr POWER	Chef de cabinet to Ms McGUINNESS	
Mr SAVIGNAT	Member of Ms URPILAINEN's staff	Items 8 and 9 (in part)

The following also sat in:

Mr SEIBERT	Chef de cabinet to the PRESIDENT	Items 1 to 8
Mr CALLEJA CRESPO	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	Items 1 to 8
Ms PETKOVA	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's Office	
Mr VANDENBERGHE	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's Office	

Secretary: Ms JUHANSONE, Secretary-General, assisted by Ms DEPREZ, Director in the Secretariat-General.

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2022) 2414/FINAL; SEC(2022) 2414/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(2022) 2414)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 4 April 2022.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Commission held over approval of the minutes of its 2410th, 2411th, 2412th and 2413th meetings of 8, 16, 21 and 23, and 30 March 2022 for a later date.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2022) 100)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held by videoconference on Friday 1 April 2022 (RCC(2022) 100).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **2022 Commission Work Programme: withdrawal of pending proposals and publication of the list in the Official Journal**

Line set out in SI(2022) 23.

- **Contestable and fair markets in the digital sector (Digital Markets Act) (Regulation) – SCHWAB report – 2020/0374 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 96.

- **Establishment and operation of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen acquis and repeal of Regulation (EU) No 1053/2013 (Council Regulation) – SKYTTEDAL report – 2021/0140 (CNS)**

Line set out in SP(2022) 171.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 112(2) and (3) of the European Parliament's Rules of Procedure to a draft Commission Implementing Decision authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified soybean MON 87769 × MON 89788, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council – D078875/02 – 2022/2566 (RSP)**

Line set out in SP(2022) 201.

The Commission approved the lines set out for the following points, for transmission to the European Parliament:

- **Commission replies to non-legislative resolutions adopted by the European Parliament at its part-session of February 2022 (Part I)**

Line set out in SP(2022) 192/2.

- **Commission replies to non-legislative resolutions adopted by the European Parliament at its November II 2021 part-session (third and last part)**

Line set out in SP(2022) 199/2.

The Commission took note of the following points:

- **European green bonds (Regulation) – TANG report – 2021/0191 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2022) 108.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013, as regards restrictions to the access to Union waters (Regulation) – KARLESKIND report – 2021/0176 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2022) 110.

5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2022) 16)

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2022) 16 of the meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held on Wednesday 30 March 2022.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2022) 151 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 28 March and 3 April 2022.

6.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2022) 152 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 28 March and 3 April 2022.

6.3. *DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS*
(SEC(2022) 153 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedures between 28 March and 3 April 2022 archived in Decide.

6.4. *SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES*
(SEC(2022) 154 TO /3)

The Commission took note of the significant written procedures for which the time limit expired between 4 and 13 April 2022 and of the finalisation written procedure initiated following the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet on Monday 4 April 2022.

7. *ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS*
(SEC(2022) 155)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2022) 20)

***DG BUDGET – COMPLEMENTARY ALLOCATION OF HUMAN
RESOURCES FOR 2022***
(SEC(2022) 181 AND /2)

The Commission adopted the Communication in SEC(2022) 181/2.

This decision would take effect immediately.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

EU SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA

The PRESIDENT opened the meeting by addressing the situation in Ukraine, particularly the discovery of the atrocities committed in Bucha and other areas that Russian troops had recently left. These recent events had prompted the Commission to prepare a new round of sanctions against Russia. These would be adopted by urgent written procedure that day (PE/2022/2339 – JOIN(2022) 8; PE/2022/2350 – JOIN(2022) 10; PE/2022/2067 – C(2022) 2316) with a view to final adoption by the Council in the coming days.

The sanctions already in place were effective and were hitting the Russian economy hard. However, the Russian authorities were adopting more retaliatory or circumvention measures in response.

The PRESIDENT reported on the telephone calls she had had with some EU leaders over the past weekend and on internal discussions within the Commission about this latest wave of sanctions. She noted that the Heads of State or Government remained firm and united in their willingness to continue imposing severe restrictive measures on Russia. She was pleased that the EU's institutions were so quick to adopt these decisions despite their consequences for the Member States.

She said that this fifth package of sanctions had been strengthened significantly over the past 24 hours and praised the tremendous efforts made by the relevant Commission departments in that time.

The PRESIDENT explained that these sanctions covered a number of areas.

First, the EU would ban imports of coal from Russia, depriving Russia of EUR 4 billion a year in revenue.

Second, the EU would impose a full transaction ban on four major Russian banks, including the country's second largest bank, VTB. The four banks in question,

which would be entirely cut off from the markets, had a 23% market share in the Russian banking sector.

Third, the EU would ban Russian and Russian-operated vessels from accessing its ports, with exemptions for essentials such as agricultural and food products, humanitarian aid and energy. The EU would also propose a ban on Russian and Belarusian road transport operators, which would drastically limit Russian industry's options for obtaining key goods.

Fourth, further targeted export bans worth EUR 10 billion would be introduced in sectors in which Russia was vulnerable, such as quantum computers, advanced semiconductors, sensitive machinery, and transportation equipment.

Fifth, the EU would bring in specific new import bans worth EUR 5.5 billion to reduce the flow of money to Russia and its oligarchs. These import bans would apply to a number of products, such as wood, cement, liquor and seafood.

Sixth and finally, the EU would take a number of highly targeted measures including a general ban on the participation of Russian companies in public procurement in Member States and the exclusion of all financial support, be it European or national, to Russian public bodies.

The PRESIDENT emphasised the scale of this latest round of measures, which went far beyond the sanctions adopted by the US, for instance. She also noted that the Commission was already working on additional sanctions, including on oil imports, and was examining in greater detail some of the ideas presented by the Member States, such as the introduction of taxes or the establishment of specific payment channels like an escrow account.

She concluded by referring to her telephone call with the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr ZELENSKY, on 4 April, which concentrated on the events in Bucha. She said that Mr ZELENSKY had stressed the urgent need to gather evidence of war crimes committed by Russian troops in Ukraine so that they could be punished

and that he had welcomed the initiatives taken to that end by the Commission, with the support of Eurojust, Europol and the joint team created for that purpose.

Mr BORRELL explained that in addition to the sectoral sanctions already described, the EU would add over 200 new names to the list of Russian individuals and entities targeted by EU sanctions. The individuals being added to the list included politicians, senior government officials, businesspeople, oligarchs, representatives of the official media, people close to government circles, and high-ranking officers. The entities being added to the list included representatives of the so-called official institutions of the self-proclaimed 'People's Republics' of Donetsk and Luhansk, as well as industrial companies supplying the military.

Mr BORRELL stressed that the list of individuals targeted by sanctions had not been closed and said that on 7 and 11 April respectively, the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) and the Foreign Affairs Council would look into applying other sanctions, particularly in the Russian energy sectors, and that gradual sanctions would be considered too.

Mr REYNDERS spoke about the two strands of work that his departments were pursuing.

The first strand related to the implementation, in the Member States and the EU's partner countries, of the EU's sanctions against Russia, particularly within the context of the «Freeze and Seize» Task Force. This Task Force would meet for the fifth time on 8 April, and a representative of the US authorities would be attending.

The second strand was linked to the work being done within the European Network for investigation and prosecution of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes (Genocide Network), which included representatives of Europol and Eurojust and had met several times since 11 March.

Mr REYNDERS mentioned the very recent creation of a joint investigation team involving Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania, and the investigations launched by ten

Member States, some of them on the basis of universal jurisdiction, in order to gather evidence and investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Russian troops on Ukrainian territory. The EU was prepared to send members of the team out on the ground to support the Ukrainian prosecution service, and Eurojust and Europol were ready to provide additional assistance. Discussions were ongoing between Eurojust, the mandate of which could be extended, and the International Criminal Court with a view to the Court becoming part of the joint investigation team.

This coordinated approach by the Ukrainian authorities, the EU, its Member States and agencies, and the International Criminal Court would enable evidence of these crimes to be collected, analysed and processed in the most complete and effective way possible. Mr REYNDERS said that he would follow up on this work, noting that the joint investigation team was not made up of investigators or prosecutors, but of experts and analysts.

That day he had contacted the Ukrainian Prosecutor-General, who had emphasised Ukraine's determination to preserve its sovereignty. She had shared with him a number of requests to be addressed to the EU, relating to equipment to protect against the mines laid by Russian troops and to secure communications, as well as financial support. She would soon set out the details of these requests in a letter.

In conclusion, Mr REYNDERS informed the College that 2 000 allegations of war crimes or crimes against humanity had thus far been registered, including 400 witness statements recorded in Poland alone.

After an exchange of views, the Commission took note of this information.

- 9. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON SUBSTANCES THAT DEplete THE OZONE LAYER AND REPEALING REGULATION (EC) NO 1005/2009**
(COM(2022) 151 AND /2; SWD(2022) 98; SWD(2022) 99; SWD(2022) 100; SEC(2022) 157; RCC(2022) 106)
- 10. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON FLUORINATED GREENHOUSE GASES, AMENDING DIRECTIVE (EU) 2019/1937 AND REPEALING REGULATION (EU) NO 517/2014**
(COM(2022) 150 AND /2; SWD(2022) 95; SWD(2022) 96; SWD(2022) 97; SEC(2022) 156; RCC(2022) 106)
- 11. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON REPORTING OF ENVIRONMENTAL DATA FROM INDUSTRIAL INSTALLATIONS AND ESTABLISHING AN INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS PORTAL**
(COM(2022) 157; SWD(2022) 111 AND /2; SWD(2022) 112 AND /2; SWD(2022) 113; SEC(2022) 169; RCC(2022) 106)
- 12. PROPOSAL FOR A DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING DIRECTIVE 2010/75/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF 24 NOVEMBER 2010 ON INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS (INTEGRATED POLLUTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL) AND COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 1999/31/EC OF 26 APRIL 1999 ON THE LANDFILL OF WASTE**
(COM(2022) 156 TO /3; SWD(2022) 110 TO /3; SWD(2022) 111 AND /2; SWD(2022) 112 AND /2; SEC(2022) 169; RCC(2022) 106)

Mr TIMMERMANS asked Mr SINKEVIČIUS to present the package of four legislative initiatives on emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants, which was being laid before the Commission for approval that day.

Mr SINKEVIČIUS noted that Russia's invasion of Ukraine had revealed the EU's strong dependency with regard to fossil fuels but also animal feed and fertilisers, as well as the risks arising from such dependency. To tackle this dependency now, while pursuing the goal of reaching climate neutrality by 2050, the EU had to accelerate the industrial transition towards more efficient and cleaner production processes. Moreover, tackling climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution would also help make the European economy more sustainable and more resilient.

The current legal framework dated from 2010 and had functioned well until now in controlling the environmental impact of large agro-industrial installations in the EU through a robust process of data reporting by operators.

Therefore what the Commission was now proposing – and this was the focus of his remarks – was to update and modernise the Industrial Emissions Directive in order to accompany the transformation of large agro-industrial installations and intensive farms in the EU to reduce their pollution, emit less carbon dioxide and help achieve the 2030 and 2050 targets set in the European Green Deal.

In this context, he explained that the centrepiece of the Directive in question was to apply the 'best available techniques', developed by the Commission together with industry, experts from the Member States and civil society in an inclusive, evidence-based, scientific effort.

With the amendments proposed that day, frontrunners would benefit from a new flexible permit arrangement and the 'best available techniques' would be developed with a forward-looking approach, helping industry to identify solutions to reduce emissions of carbon and polluting substances.

He also pointed out that the energy audits and plans required by the Energy Efficiency Directive would be integrated into the environmental management system and would thus ensure an efficient and integrated approach to

encourage decarbonisation and enhance synergies between the zero pollution target and climate policies.

Finally, Mr SINKEVIČIUS said that the proposal would extend the scope of the current Directive to reduce pollutant emissions at source in sectors that were not yet covered by the legislation. This measure would level the EU-wide playing field for such activities, by laying down minimum operating standards for permits.

He mentioned in particular the compromise reached on the question of the thresholds applicable to farms. All cattle, pig and poultry farms with over 150 livestock units would fall under the Directive. He stressed that, according to the Commission's impact assessment, it would have been possible to have gone further in order to maintain a high cost-benefit ratio.

He also pointed out that the proposals being put forward that day would not produce immediate effects, as they were aimed at a medium and long-term perspective. The four instruments being presented by the Commission would come into force at best in 4 years' time and the new standards would only be developed between 2026 and 2035.

Even though the thresholds of 150 livestock units laid down in the Industrial Emissions Directive would cover only around 10% of the livestock farms in the EU, the resulting improvement would have significant health benefits for European citizens.

He pointed out that in 2019, air pollution had caused 360 000 premature deaths in the EU and that in its Zero Pollution Action Plan the EU had committed to reduce by more than 55% the number of deaths and health impacts caused by air pollution by 2030.

In conclusion, Mr SINKEVIČIUS welcomed the fact that the EU initiatives being proposed that day included measures to save lives, as air pollution was particularly

harmful to the most vulnerable members of society such as children and older people. It was therefore high time to take action in this field.

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

- general support for the ambition of the package of proposals;
- a reminder that, looking beyond the war in Ukraine and the resulting energy and food crises, the climate crisis was not only still present but continuing to worsen;
- hence the importance of the proposals put forward to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, which would bring significant benefits for human health and help achieve the objectives of the European Green Deal;
- at the same time, support for the general objective of reducing industrial farming practices and for the increase in the threshold for cattle, pig and poultry farms from 100 to 150 livestock units;
- on this last point, the suggestion of introducing a second, additional threshold of 300 livestock units for sustainable agriculture;
- questions about the choice of timing for adoption of the Industrial Emissions Directive, which would impose requirements on cattle, pig and poultry farms with over 150 livestock units, and the fear that this could affect food production and prices in the already difficult context of the situation in Ukraine and rising energy prices;
- consequently, the importance of spelling out in the Commission's communication activities that the package as a whole and the Industrial Emissions Directive in particular would only come into force in several years' time;

- the need also to continue to pursue the objectives of the ‘Farm to Fork’ strategy and to tackle the question of human nutrition, including food waste.

In reply to some of the observations made during the debate, Mr SINKEVIČIUS noted that all the initiatives tabled that day were focused solely on emissions and pollution and their impact on human health, and that they had been the subject of a detailed impact assessment.

Mr TIMMERMANS added that these proposals were the result of a wide-ranging consultation that had led to the introduction of a number of adjustments, in particular the increase in the threshold from 100 to 150 livestock units for cattle, pig and poultry farms. With the raising of this threshold, the Industrial Emissions Directive would only apply to large farms, with small farms excluded from it entirely.

He ended by noting that the proposal for a Directive now had to follow the legislative procedure, during which it could still be amended.

Following these presentations, the Commission:

- adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2022) 151/2, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the European Data Protection Supervisor and the national parliaments, together with the staff working document, the impact assessment, the summary thereof and the opinion of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board in SWD(2022) 98, SWD(2022) 99, SWD(2022) 100 and SEC(2022) 157, the contents of which were noted;
- adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2022) 150/2, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the European Data Protection Supervisor and the national parliaments, together with the staff working document, the impact assessment, the summary thereof and the opinion of the

Regulatory Scrutiny Board in SWD(2022) 95, SWD(2022) 96, SWD(2022) 97 and SEC(2022) 156, the contents of which were noted;

- adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2022) 157, 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 staff working document, the impact assessment, the summary thereof and the opinion of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board in SWD(2022) 113, SWD(2022) 111/2, SWD(2022) 112/2 and SEC(2022) 169, the contents of which were noted;
- adopted the proposal for a Directive in COM(2022) 156/3 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 staff working document, the impact assessment, the summary thereof and the opinion of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board in SWD(2022) 110/3, SWD(2022) 111/2, SWD(2022) 112/2 and SEC(2022) 169, the contents of which were noted.

13. COMMUNICATION TO THE COMMISSION – A NEW HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR THE COMMISSION
(C(2022) 2229 AND /2; RCC(2022) 97)

14. COMMUNICATION TO THE COMMISSION – GREENING THE COMMISSION
(C(2022) 2230 AND /2; RCC(2022) 97)

At the invitation of Mr TIMMERMANS, Mr HAHN presented two initiatives relating to staff and the Commission's internal green transition policy.

He began by referring to the new human resources strategy which was being submitted to the Commission for approval after two years of work, in which many

stakeholders within the institution had actively participated.

He felt that the current context made this new strategy more necessary than ever. He explained first that the COVID-19 pandemic and then the Russian military invasion of Ukraine meant that the Commission had an increased number of tasks to be carried out while staff numbers had not increased, owing to the high pressure on heading VII of the EU budget.

He then referred to the need to attract talent to the Commission from all the Member States, in order to improve the geographical balance, and also from diverse backgrounds, to better reflect the diversity of society. All these factors corresponded to the constantly evolving needs of the Commission in terms of more flexible and faster recruitment.

Lastly, he added to these considerations the importance of taking into account the new ways of working and other major changes brought about by the pandemic in the day-to-day management of the Commission's missions.

In his view, in order to meet these challenges, the institution needed to be made fit for the future by becoming more attractive, efficient, modern, digital and green, while putting the human dimension first. In this context, the new human resources strategy had three key objectives, namely (i) attractiveness, (ii) selection and recruitment, and (iii) career prospects, with a specific set of measures to achieve each of them.

First, he noted that in order to increase the attractiveness of the Commission as an employer, both at entry and senior levels, the strategy was intended first of all to better reflect the diversity of society in the Member States. While major progress had already been made on gender equality, he felt that there was still some way to go. This was why the strategy sought to achieve the current Commission's ambition to make gender equality a reality, thereby ensuring that it attracted people from diverse origins and backgrounds.

Second, geographical balance remained a major challenge for selection and recruitment. A number of EU nationalities were still under-represented among officials in the ‘administrator’ category, both at entry levels (at grades AD5-AD8) or across all grades.

The level of representation of some Member States had recently increased thanks to the positive measures taken both by the Commission and those Member States, but it was necessary to go even further. With its new strategy, the Commission was therefore committed to ensuring a better geographical balance of the institution’s staff at all grade levels through a series of measures such as a permanent Junior Professionals Programme, which would restore this balance at entry level, the modernisation of recruitment procedures, advertising European competitions at universities, participation in job fairs and, if necessary, organising open competitions by nationality. The Commission was going to cooperate with the Member States and encourage them to contribute themselves to this joint effort.

The Commission would recruit more temporary staff in the future and would ensure that these recruitments were geographically balanced. Some Member States were concerned about their low representation at management level in the Commission, and there were measures in the pipeline to address this.

Third, Mr HAHN stressed that the new strategy would encourage faster and more flexible career paths. It would thus promote greater fluidity between the different types of jobs within the institution and reward staff working in coordination roles and with experience in different departments. He pointed out that the Commission recruited more than 2 000 people each year and stressed that it offered a unique variety of jobs. This was a factor that appealed to young people and should be advertised more effectively.

Internal and external mobility would also be strongly promoted, including in EU delegations and executive agencies.

The new strategy was intended to make the Commission more effective and agile.

The institution would thus offer staff a more flexible working environment by combining the benefits of working in the office and from home, based on the experience gained over the last two years in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission had recently adopted new rules on working time and hybrid working.

He felt that it would then be necessary to modernise external recruitment competitions and organise regular internal competitions so as to make recruitment faster both internally and externally. The calendar of regular internal competitions until 2024 would be published in the near future. The Commission services would also have more flexibility to recruit more temporary staff with the profiles they needed.

Lastly, he referred to the necessary investments in new technologies, including artificial intelligence, to facilitate the work of staff and relieve them of repetitive tasks. This should help the Commission make the best use of the human resources at its disposal.

Mr HAHN felt that, with all these improvements, the new strategy would make the Commission a modern, digital and green workplace.

He then presented the Communication on greening the Commission. He explained that its ambition was to implement the institution's commitment to the green transition in even more concrete terms and enable it to lead by example by setting itself the goal of being climate neutral by 2030, twenty years earlier than the European target under the Green Deal. Within this timeframe, the Commission would therefore reduce its emissions by at least 60% and rely on carbon emission removal for the rest.

The Commission would focus on several actions to reach this goal.

The first concerned the optimisation of buildings and would consist of investing in the improvement or renovation of low energy performing buildings, as well as

making smarter use of office space through collaborative working methods. This was in line with the Commission's buildings' strategy approved in 2021.

The second action would focus on the optimisation of missions. Mr HAHN clarified that the overall objective would be to reduce by half the emissions generated by them. He felt that the Commission should be present and visible in Europe and in the world, but could do this by a better organisation of missions. He mentioned in particular an integrated IT tool that would monitor emissions resulting from work-related travel by staff, a practical tool that would make it possible to reduce the Commission's carbon footprint.

He also referred to a better integration of the European Bauhaus values in developing the Commission's presence and activities at its sites. For example, he mentioned the Commission's active cooperation with the Brussels Region in the design of the new European quarter and, in this spirit, its participation in the ongoing reflection on the celebration of the bicentenary of Belgium's independence around the Cinquantenaire Park in 2030.

Mr HAHN felt that the greening of the Commission would be brought about through a collective effort and that its staff could contribute by taking ownership of this endeavour, for example through the very active groups promoting these efforts internally.

Finally, he added that all the internal procedures would be improved in order to make them faster, simpler and digital.

He concluded his presentation of the two Communications by thanking the Members of the College for their help in shaping them. He was convinced that the Commission was taking the right steps that day for its future and that it would be a frontrunner in this respect among European and national public administrations.

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

- the importance of ensuring a geographical balance of Commission staff by recruiting nationals from all the Member States, including in highly competitive occupations;
- the need for the Commission to better reward excellence, effort and risk-taking in the careers of its officials, to enhance the sense of initiative and to continue to recruit staff who were both professional and committed to the European project;
- the desirability of ensuring the harmonious development of careers for all categories of staff, whatever their status or category, with real prospects of progress and mobility;
- the need to put the principles of diversity, inclusion and parity into practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff;
- a reminder of mental health issues, which needed particular attention in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response to certain points raised during the discussion, Mr HAHN said that he was in favour of a dynamic policy to offer Commission staff genuine opportunities for internal mobility.

He also pointed out that certain disparities, particularly in terms of salaries, between categories of staff performing the same work were generally linked to the coexistence of different Staff Regulations and that these disparities should be reduced as staff hired under older Staff Regulations retired.

Following these presentations, the Commission approved the Communications in C(2022) 2229/2 and C(2022) 2230/2.

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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 15.32.