



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2022) 2424 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 20 July 2022

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2424th meeting of the Commission

held in Brussels

(Berlaymont)

on Wednesday 29 June 2022

(morning)

PV(2022) 2424 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

EN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Attendance list	4-5
1. AGENDAS (OJ(2022) 2424/FINAL; SEC(2022) 2424/FINAL)	6
2. WEEKLY MEETING OF CHEFS DE CABINET (RCC(2022) 2424)	6
3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES	6
4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS (RCC(2022) 145)	6
5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2022) 27).....	12
6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS.....	12
6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2022) 259 ET SEQ.).....	12
6.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2022) 260 ET SEQ.)	13
6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS (SEC(2022) 261 ET SEQ.)	13
6.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES (SEC(2022) 262 AND /2)	13
7. PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL REGULATION AMENDING REGULATION (EC) NO 2866/98 ON THE CONVERSION RATE TO THE EURO FOR CROATIA (COM(2022) 319 AND /2)	13
8. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – UPGRADING COHESION POLICY – FLEXIBLE ASSISTANCE TO TERRITORIES (FAST-CARE) – TO ADDRESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION	

(COM(2022) 324 TO /3; RCC(2022) 149)	15
9. PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND REGULATION (EU) 2021/1060 AS REGARDS ADDITIONAL FLEXIBILITY TO ADDRESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE MILITARY AGGRESSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION – FAST (FLEXIBLE ASSISTANCE FOR TERRITORIES) CARE (COM(2022) 325 AND /2; RCC(2022) 149)	15
10. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL – 2022 STRATEGIC FORESIGHT REPORT – TWINNING THE GREEN AND DIGITAL TRANSITIONS IN THE NEW GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT (COM(2022) 289 AND /2; RCC(2022) 144)	19
11. OTHER BUSINESS	23
11.1. PROGRESS IN THE INTERINSTITUTIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE ‘FIT FOR 55’ PACKAGE	23
11.2. SECURITY OF ENERGY SUPPLY IN EUROPE	24
11.3. EVOLUTION OF THE HEALTH SITUATION IN THE EU	27

Single sitting: Wednesday 29 June 2022 (morning)

The sitting opened at 9.08 with Mr TIMMERMANS in the chair.

Present:

Mr TIMMERMANS	Executive Vice-President	
Ms VESTAGER	Executive Vice-President	
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Executive Vice-President	Items 1 to 11 (in part)
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Vice-President	
Ms JOUROVÁ	Vice-President	
Ms ŠUICA	Vice-President	
Mr SCHINAS	Vice-President	
Ms GABRIEL	Member	
Mr SCHMIT	Member	
Mr GENTILONI	Member	
Mr WOJCIECHOWSKI	Member	
Mr BRETON	Member	Items 8/9 (in part) to 11 (in part)
Ms FERREIRA	Member	
Ms KYRIAKIDES	Member	
Mr REYNDERS	Member	
Ms DALLI	Member	
Ms JOHANSSON	Member	
Mr LENARČIČ	Member	
Ms SIMSON	Member	
Mr SINKEVIČIUS	Member	
Ms McGUINNESS	Member	

The following sat in by videoconference:

Ms URPILAINEN	Member
---------------	--------

Absent:

Ms von der LEYEN	President
Mr BORRELL i FONTELLES	High Representative / Vice-President
Mr HAHN	Member
Ms VĂLEAN	Member
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member

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

Mr SERRANO	Chef de cabinet to Mr BORRELL	
Mr MUELLER	Chef de cabinet to Mr HAHN	Items 1 to 10 (in part)
Ms LESOVICI	Expert in Ms VĂLEAN's Office	
Ms TEEDUMÄE	Deputy Chef de cabinet to Mr VÁRHELYI	

The following also sat in:

Ms PETKOVA	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's Office	
Mr CALLEJA CRESPO	Director-General, Legal Service	
Ms AHRENKILDE HANSEN	Director-General, DG Communication	
Ms SPINANT	Deputy Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Ms DEWANDRE	Policy Coordinator in the PRESIDENT's Office	Item 10
Ms RAJ	Secretariat-General	
Ms ALLOUIS-LE LOSTEC	Head of Unit in the Secretariat-General	

Secretary: Mr LEARDINI, Deputy Secretary-General, assisted by Ms DEPREZ, Director in the Secretariat-General.

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2022) 2424/FINAL; SEC(2022) 2424/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) 2424)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 27 June 2022.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Commission held over approval of the minutes of its 2420th, 2421st, 2422nd and 2423rd meetings of 1, 7, 13 and 17, and 22 June 2022 for a later date.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2022) 145)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held by videoconference on Friday 24 June 2022 (RCC(2022) 145).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **Foreign subsidies distorting the internal market (Regulation) – HANSEN report – 2021/0114 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 231/2.

- **Batteries and waste batteries, repeal of Directive 2006/66/EC and amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 (Regulation) – BONAFÈ report – 2020/0353 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 234.

- **Information accompanying transfers of funds and certain crypto assets (Regulation - recast) – URTASEN & KANKO report – 2021/0241 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 235/2.

- **Markets in Crypto-assets (MiCA), and amendment of Directive (EU) 2019/1937 (Regulation) – BERGER report – 2020/0265 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 236/2.

- **Resilience of critical entities (Directive) – ŠIMEČKA report – 2020/0365 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 237.

- **E-evidence in criminal matters:**
 - **European production and preservation orders for electronic evidence in criminal matters (Regulation) — SIPPEL report – 2018/0108 (COD)**
 - **Harmonised rules on the appointment of legal representatives for the purpose of gathering evidence in criminal proceedings (Directive) – SIPPEL report – 2018/0107 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 240.

- **Strengthening the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms (Directive) – RAFAELA &**

PETER-HANSEN report – 2021/0050 (COD)

Line set out in SI(2022) 245.

- **Serious cross-border threats to health and repeal of Decision No 1082/2013/EU (Regulation) – TRILLET-LENOIR report – 2020/0322 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 248.

- **Objection pursuant to Rule 111(4) of the European Parliament’s Rules of Procedure – Taxonomy – Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/2139 as regards economic activities in certain energy sectors and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/2178 as regards specific public disclosures for those economic activities – C(2022) 631 – 2022/2594 (DEA)**

Line set out in SP(2022) 397.

- **Adding of the violation of Union restrictive measures to the areas of crime laid down in Article 83(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Council Decision) – 2022/0176 (NLE)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 241.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2022/109 fixing for 2022 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in Union waters and for Union fishing vessels in certain non-Union waters (Council Regulation) – 2022/0182 (NLE)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 242.

- **Amendment and correction of Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 as regards specific measures to alleviate the consequences of the military aggression of Russia against Ukraine on fishing activities and to mitigate the effects of the**

market disruption caused by that military aggression on the supply chain of fishery and aquaculture products (Regulation) – MELO report – 2022/0118 (COD)

Line set out in SI(2022) 247.

- **Amendment of Directives 2013/34/EU, 2004/109/EC and 2006/43/EC, and Regulation (EU) No 537/2014, as regards corporate sustainability reporting (Directive) – DURAND report – 2021/0104 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 250.

- **Amendment of Annexes IV and V to Regulation (EU) 2019/1021 of the European Parliament and of the Council on persistent organic pollutants (Regulation) – HOJSÍK report – 2021/0340 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 251.

- **Ensuring of a global minimum level of taxation for multinational groups in the Union (Council Directive) – LALUCQ report – 2021/0433 (CNS)**

Line set out in SI(2022) 239.

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

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

Line set out in SP(2022) 398/3.

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

Line set out in SP(2022) 399.

The Commission took note of the following points:

- **Digital single market:**
 - **Single Market For Digital Services (Digital Services Act) and amendment of Directive 2000/31/EC (Regulation) – SCHALDEMOSE report – 2020/0361 (COD)**
 - **Contestable and fair markets in the digital sector (Digital Markets Act) (Regulation) – SCHWAB report – 2020/0374 (COD)**

Compromise texts in SP(2022) 393 and SP(2022) 394, further to note SI(2022) 100/2, which the Commission had already approved on 3 May 2022, and to note SI(2022) 96, which the Commission had already approved on 5 April 2022.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 and Directive 2014/59/EU as regards the prudential treatment of global systemically important institution groups with a multiple point of entry resolution strategy and a methodology for the indirect subscription of instruments eligible for meeting the minimum requirement for own funds and eligible liabilities (Regulation) – FERNÁNDEZ report – 2021/0343 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2022) 395, further to note SI(2022) 117, which the Commission had already approved on 11 May 2022.

- **Establishment of the Authority for Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism and amendment of Regulations (EU) No 1093/2010, (EU) No 1094/2010 and (EU) No 1095/2010 (Regulation) – RADEV report – 2021/0240 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2022) 238.

- **Establishment of the Union Secure Connectivity Programme 2023-2027 (Regulation) – GRUDLER report – 2022/0039 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2022) 246.

- **European single access point:**
 - **Establishment of a European single access point (ESAP) providing centralised access to publicly available information of relevance to financial services, capital markets and sustainability (Regulation) – SILVA PEREIRA report – 2021/0378 (COD)**
 - **Amendment of certain Directives as regards the establishment and functioning of the European single access point (Directive) – SILVA PEREIRA report – 2021/0379 (COD)**
 - **Amendment of certain Regulations as regards the establishment and functioning of the European single access point (Regulation) – SILVA PEREIRA report – 2021/0380 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2022) 249.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (Kuwait, Qatar) (Regulation) – 2022/0135 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2022) 252.

- **Question Time to the Commission – Increasing EU ambitions on biodiversity ahead of COP 15**

Information set out in SP(2022) 375.

– **Results of the European Parliament’s June II 2022 part-session**

Information set out in SP(2022) 392.

– **Meetings of the European Parliament Committee Chairs, the Czech Presidency and the Commission Representatives**

Information set out in SPI(2022) 39.

– **Update of the maximum financial contribution per Article 11(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility – MURESAN & GARDIAZABIAL & PISLARU report**

Information set out in SPI(2022) 40.

**5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION
(RCC(2022) 27)**

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2022) 27 of the meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held on Wednesday 22 June 2022.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

**6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED
(SEC(2022) 259 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General’s memoranda recording decisions adopted between 20 and 26 June 2022.

6.2. EMPOWERMENT**(SEC(2022) 260 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 20 and 26 June 2022.

6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS**(SEC(2022) 261 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedures between 20 and 26 June 2022 archived in Decide.

6.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES**(SEC(2022) 262 AND /2)**

The Commission took note of the significant procedures for which the time limit expired between 27 June and 1 July 2022.

7. PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL REGULATION AMENDING REGULATION (EC) No 2866/98 ON THE CONVERSION RATE TO THE EURO FOR CROATIA**(COM(2022) 319 AND /2)**

Mr DOMBROVSKIS reminded the meeting that on 1 June the Commission had adopted two proposals for legal acts aimed at kick-starting the process of Croatia's adoption of the euro. These acts had been positively received by the Eurogroup, the Council and the European Council; the European Parliament was also expected to deliver a favourable opinion at the beginning of July. The process seemed to be on the right track, which would enable the Economic and Financial Affairs Council to finally adopt, on 12 July, the legal acts required for Croatia to join the euro area on 1 January 2023. The formal Council Decision would be followed by practical

preparations for the adoption of the euro in Croatia.

To contribute to this process, the Commission was asked that day to adopt a proposal to amend Regulation (EC) No 2866/98 on the conversion rates between the euro and the currencies of the Member States adopting the euro, so that the Council could irrevocably fix the conversion rate between the Croatian kuna and the euro. He quoted the exact conversion rate proposed by the Commission and explained that, according to the assessment made by the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN), this rate was in line with Croatia's underlying economic fundamentals.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS stressed that, given the market sensitivity of such a decision, the Commission had to follow a secure procedure for handling documents, as had been the case for the accession of other countries to the euro in the past. For this reason, the final conversion rate would not be made public until after the final adoption of the proposal by the Council on 12 July.

Mr GENTILONI considered that that day's proposal represented an important step in the process of Croatia's adoption of the euro. The question of the conversion rate between the Croatian kuna and the euro had already been discussed in the Eurogroup working group, on the basis of a technical note prepared by the Commission (DG ECFIN). The result of that discussion had been very positive.

He also reminded the College that the proposal for a Regulation comprised sensitive information for the market and that confidentiality therefore had to be guaranteed until final adoption of the proposal by the Council.

At the end of these presentations, the Commission adopted the proposal for a Council Regulation in COM(2022) 319/2 for transmission to the Council and the European Central Bank and, for information, to the European Parliament.

8. **COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – UPGRADING COHESION POLICY – FLEXIBLE ASSISTANCE TO TERRITORIES (FAST-CARE) – TO ADDRESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION**
(COM(2022) 324 TO /3; RCC(2022) 149)
9. **PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL AMENDING REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013 AND REGULATION (EU) 2021/1060 AS REGARDS ADDITIONAL FLEXIBILITY TO ADDRESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE MILITARY AGGRESSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION – FAST (FLEXIBLE ASSISTANCE FOR TERRITORIES) CARE**
(COM(2022) 325 AND /2; RCC(2022) 149)

Mr DOMBROVSKIS presented to the College the package of measures entitled ‘Flexible Assistance for Territories (FAST-CARE)’, a new set of actions aimed at extending the assistance already provided within the framework of Cohesion Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE) by offering additional support and flexibility in cohesion policy funding.

The Commission had already proposed several amendments to cohesion policy legislation to deal with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic and humanitarian impact of Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine. He mentioned, by way of example, that the Commission had on 8 March presented a proposal for Cohesion Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE), followed by CARE+ to assist those Member States that were most directly affected by the influx of refugees fleeing the war, and on 23 March it had proposed an increase in pre-financing from REACT-EU resources.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS reminded the meeting that on 28 April, ten Member States had submitted to the Commission a joint statement on the needs and challenges created by the unprecedented migration of Ukrainians to the European Union, and the response of cohesion policy to the consequences of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. A further two Member States had expressed their support for these requests and he considered that the current proposals broadly responded to them.

Furthermore, the proposal for a Regulation was based on two main factors, one humanitarian and the other economic. In this respect, the objective of that day's proposals was both to help Ukrainian refugees and to assist Member States to deal with the economic consequences of the war.

Ms FERREIRA explained how the FAST-CARE programme provided additional flexibility in the implementation of cohesion policy investments. The war in Ukraine had exacerbated the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and this additional flexibility, requested by the European Council, the European Parliament and the EU's regions, took into account the evolving situation. The new package of measures made a number of changes to cohesion policy legislation for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 in order to further speed up and simplify Member State assistance with the integration of third-country nationals while continuing to promote the regions' recovery from the pandemic.

First of all, it was proposed to advance an additional EUR 3.5 billion in pre-financing under the 2021-2027 programmes so as to support those hosting displaced persons, namely Member States, local authorities and civil society organisations. The payments would be made in 2022 and 2023 and would give all Member States quick access to additional liquidity. This amount came on top of the EUR 3.5 billion in additional pre-financing of REACT-EU that had been paid out under CARE since March 2022.

Moreover, the possibility of 100% EU co-financing was now being extended until the end of the 2014-2020 period to measures promoting the socio-economic

integration of refugees. This possibility was also being extended to programmes for 2021-2027 until mid-2024 when the matter would be reviewed.

Member States would be able to increase the amount of the simplified unit cost intended to cover refugees' basic needs from EUR 40 (the amount provided for under CARE) to EUR 100 per person per week. They would be able to claim these costs for up to 26 weeks (currently 13 weeks). This would further simplify the use of funds for displaced people. The proposal would make it possible to provide support outside of the programme's geographical scope (though without going beyond the borders of the Member State), given that refugees moved around within a Member State depending on where there was work, housing and schooling.

The possibility of cross-financing between the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER) and the European Social Fund (ESF), which was already an option under CARE, would be extended to the Cohesion Fund. As a result, the Cohesion Fund would now also be able to mobilise resources to address the consequences of migration-related challenges.

To ensure that this support went directly to those who needed it, at least 30% of the resources being deployed under the flexibility measures should be allocated to activities managed by local authorities and civil society organisations working with local communities.

The proposal also provided additional flexibility to help Member States, regions and beneficiaries cope with higher costs or delays in projects through easier ways to implement projects in two phases between the 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 programming periods. Projects worth over EUR 1 million (e.g. in the construction sector) that had received support under 2014-2020 programmes but could not be completed in time due to price increases and shortages of raw material and labour could continue to receive support under 2021-2027 programmes.

Various non-legislative measures had also been proposed, including a revision of the guidelines on closing programmes. The relevant departments would also draw

up guidance on handling cost increases in the implementation of contracts under public procurement rules.

The FAST-CARE package was a tangible means of further demonstrating the EU's solidarity towards all its Member States. However, it did not respond to all the requests made by the Member States, in particular the request to extend the N+3 rule for another year for 2014-2020. This request would not be granted because it would result in a substantial overlap between the two periods and would further delay the start of the 2021-2027 project period, which was already late. Furthermore, the proposals did not provide for new resources, contrary to the expectations of some Member States.

Ms FERREIRA closed her presentation by observing that six legislative adjustments had been made to the cohesion policy in the past two years. The cohesion policy could not and should not be a crisis response tool. It was a long-term development policy that needed to have some stability if it was to deliver results, and should not be used systematically to deal with short-term emergencies.

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

- the strong belief that the proposals responded to the European Council's request regarding the humanitarian and integration needs of refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine;
- recognition of the substantial efforts made by local authorities and non-governmental organisations to integrate refugees, not only in terms of housing, but also in terms of social inclusion, education and employment;
- the idea that the additional flexibility in the cohesion policy would encourage action by local authorities and non-governmental organisations, particularly by making it easier for them to access funding.

Mr TIMMERMANS wrapped up the discussion by noting that it was becoming increasingly difficult for local authorities and non-governmental organisations to meet the social, educational and economic needs associated with the integration of Ukrainian refugees. He believed that the proposals made that day would help alleviate some of the pressure created by the migration crisis linked to the war in Ukraine.

Following these presentations, the Commission:

- approved the Communication in COM(2022) 324/3 for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and, for information, to the national parliaments;
- adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2022) 325/2 for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments.

**10. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL – 2022 STRATEGIC FORESIGHT REPORT – TWINNING THE GREEN AND DIGITAL TRANSITIONS IN THE NEW GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT
(COM(2022) 289 AND /2; RCC(2022) 144)**

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ started by saying that, after zooming in on the resilience of the EU in 2020 and on its strategic autonomy in 2021, the strategic foresight report dealt this time with the twinning between the green and digital transitions in the new geopolitical context. The report thus examined how the green and digital transitions – both at the top of the European political agenda – interacted with each other in the medium term and especially in the light of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Strategic foresight allowed identification of the factors – technological and non-technological – that could strengthen synergies and ease tensions between the twin transitions in order to make both a success in the EU by 2050.

He added that digital technologies could play a key role in achieving climate neutrality and environmental sustainability, but at the same time it was important not to forget that wider use of digital technologies would increase energy consumption and e-waste. The ICT sector was already responsible for 5-9% of global electricity use and more than 2% of greenhouse gas emissions, and these figures could triple by 2025.

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ said that to ensure an effective twinning of the green and digital transitions by 2050, the report presented that day stressed the need for a strategic approach to the twin transitions, recognising their geopolitical nature, in an era of fierce competition between the great powers.

In order to do so, the report proposed ten concrete areas for action that aimed to inform and shape the Commission's strategic stance going forward. Among the areas for action, he mentioned the importance of managing critical supplies and raw materials strategically by adopting a long-term systematic approach to avoid falling into a new dependency trap. In this regard, recycling would be a source of easily reusable materials in the relatively near future.

To understand how the twinning could happen by 2050, the report looked into critical technologies for the five biggest greenhouse gas emitting sectors in the EU: energy, transport, industry, construction and agriculture. He said that technologies would play a crucial role in reducing the carbon footprint of those sectors. By 2030, most reductions in CO₂ emissions would come from technologies currently available. However, achieving climate neutrality and a circular economy by 2050 would be possible only by using new technologies currently in the experimental or prototype phase.

He also mentioned the important role of the EU as a source of regulation and standardisation at global level, the latter being key to ensuring the reliable and efficient use of data by industry, businesses and citizens.

Concluding his presentation, Mr ŠEFČOVIČ said that the 2022 strategic foresight report was built on a comprehensive foresight process that the Commission departments had led over eight months. The results of the exercise were collected in the ‘science for policy’ report, which the Joint Research Centre (JRC) was also publishing that same day. Finally, reflection had already started on the topic of the 2023 strategic foresight report.

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

- the importance for the Commission of assuming full responsibility for the major societal transition that was emerging, on the basis of the European Green Deal that clearly showed the path to follow;
- the considerable benefit of the report presented, which took proper account not only of the economic and technological aspects but also of the social aspects of the twin green and digital transitions;
- the importance of ensuring that European citizens did not fear the transformations to come and, in order to do so, the need to provide support for the changes and to manage the social impact well with, for example, transition solutions, proposals on recycling, education and retraining;
- the difficult general context for the purchasing power of European households, whether for energy or for food and other commodities;
- the reminder that demographics, which was the third transition underlying the other two, would have an impact on a large number of sectors of the EU’s

economy, including the transport and construction sectors, and on Europe's path towards sustainability;

- the need for the Commission and the Member States to manage the priorities of the moment well, while maintaining the objectives and staying on course, despite the upheavals;
- the reminder that the European Union was the largest area of freedom in the world, with nearly 450 million inhabitants living in a democracy and with responsibilities incumbent upon it in many areas, for example in terms of standardisation and the rule of law.

Mr TIMMERMANS considered that the ten key areas for action had one thing in common, namely the coordination, steering and integration effort that was necessary. He said that the question for the Commission was now that of governance and policy choices. Reflection would soon focus on issues relating to public responsibility and the link between the public and private spheres.

He hoped that the report presented would pave the way for useful discussions with the Member States and the European Parliament with a view in particular to gearing the whole process to the common good, which would also, in his view, enhance the international role of the European Union.

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ warmly thanked the Members of the Commission and the Commission departments for preparing the 2022 strategic foresight report.

He welcomed the proper inclusion of the social dimension into the report, in line with the Porto Declaration of 2021, promoting a greener, more digital and fairer 21st century economy.

He concluded by stating that the Commission would continue to discuss those questions, in close cooperation with the network of European research centres, and he noted that Spain was already planning a formal discussion on this subject during its upcoming EU Presidency.

Following this presentation, the Commission approved the Communication in COM(2022) 289/2 for transmission to the European Parliament and to the Council and, for information, to the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and to the national parliaments.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

11.1. PROGRESS IN THE INTERINSTITUTIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE ‘FIT FOR 55’ PACKAGE

Mr TIMMERMANS informed the College that the Energy Council, which had met on 27 June, had been able to reach an agreement on all the relevant European Green Deal proposals on the agenda for the meeting. He noted in particular the adoption of general guidelines on the proposals on energy efficiency and renewable energy, which were part of the ‘Fit for 55’ package, and the agreement on a Council common position regarding the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.

He welcomed the agreements reached on the complex set of initiatives contained in the ‘Fit for 55’ package and noted that he had been particularly impressed by the development of the discussions, in which the views of the Member States were no longer divided on the basis of their geographical location or their history. The few Member States which had opposed the adoption of common positions included countries in both eastern and western Europe, whereas the vast majority of them had supported the key elements of the package and had played a constructive role in drawing up compromises which were very often close to the proposals as adopted by the Commission.

He felt that the Member States were aware of the climate emergency and were now acting accordingly. He also noted that the turbulence on the global energy and raw materials markets caused by the war in Ukraine contributed to

this emergency situation and was also fully taken into account by the Member States. He invited everyone to take this opportunity to promote constructive trilogues between the co-legislators during the next stage of the legislative procedure and called for the contribution of all the Members of the Commission, given the complexity of the issues affecting all EU policies.

In the event of agreement on the 'Fit for 55 package' under the Czech Presidency of the Council, the Commission would have made a real contribution to making history and the EU would take a decisive step towards cutting emissions by 55% by 2030 and achieving climate neutrality in 2050. In this context, he stressed once again the importance of the Council also taking full historic responsibility and thanked the Commission departments and cabinets for their efforts and the quality of their work.

The Commission took note of this information.

11.2. SECURITY OF ENERGY SUPPLY IN EUROPE

Ms SIMSON explained that the Energy Council had devoted the first half-day of its meeting to environmental issues and the second half-day to issues linked to the security of the EU's energy supply.

She gave an update on the work of the Energy Platform, at a time when gas imports from Russia were falling gradually. As things stood, gas flows via *Nord Stream 1* had halved compared with the previous year and ten Member States had issued early warnings under the Security of Supply Regulation, while Germany had issued an alert, the next highest level. In the meantime, good progress had been made in terms of replenishing reserves as required under the recently adopted Regulation; storage levels now stood at 56% of capacity, which was 5% higher than the record level.

The Energy Platform had also continued efforts to secure other sources of supply by means of the Memoranda of Understanding signed with Egypt and Israel and the Memorandum that was due to be signed with Azerbaijan.

The previous week, a joint EU-Norway statement had been signed, which set out a new partnership and strengthened cooperation on energy. Norway had stated that it was close to reaching maximum capacity in terms of gas supply, but the aim now was to encourage it to develop its capacity in order to export new volumes of gas to Europe.

Ms SIMSON noted that the Platform was also making progress at regional level, as the Commission was about to create a second regional group with Central European countries. A technical meeting had been held in Prague the previous day and the College's visit to the Czech Presidency on 1 July could be an opportunity to finalise preparations to create the second regional group.

Lastly, she referred to trade in liquefied natural gas (LNG) with the United States, whose exports had already reached the record level of 28 billion m³ that year. In order to maintain this momentum, on 27 June the PRESIDENT had issued a joint statement on the EU-US Task Force on LNG and methane emissions.

Ms SIMSON concluded her presentation by stating that a communication was being drawn up to set out a winter preparedness action plan for the coming winter.

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

- the Russian regime's exploitation of energy supplies for political purposes and in order to influence prices on the global market, in part as a means of testing the resilience of the EU economy;

- the impact of the sharp increase in prices on the mechanisms of the global energy market, which might eventually cease to function;
- the need to draw up an emergency plan allowing the volumes of gas available to be allocated fairly to each Member State in order to preserve solidarity and cohesion within the EU;
- the importance of the Commission helping the Member States to assess the needs to be met and coordinating at EU level the implementation of the measures required to secure energy supply;
- the relevance of the EU's political priorities, which had been largely borne out, but which now needed to be implemented in a context of major market instability, particularly in the energy and agricultural sectors;
- the need to decide collectively on the measures to be taken in order to avoid a fragmented approach, which could only be detrimental to the functioning of the internal market, particularly in the energy sector;
- the need to also ensure coordination between initiatives at multilateral level and those planned by the EU;
- the desirability of actively promoting the organisation of joint EU procurement of energy products and of reconciling the sometimes divergent interests of the Member States with regard to supply;
- the importance, however, of not intervening in each Member State's internal decisions on the national emergency plans that they intended to implement in the event that Russia suspended gas supplies.

Ms SIMSON stressed the scale of the task that lay ahead in order to promote joint energy procurement, while taking into account the sometimes divergent interests of the Member States on energy issues. She also said that the lifting of China's health-protection measures in the context of the COVID-19

pandemic would drive up demand and create fierce competition on the global markets, which would inevitably have a further impact on prices. With that in mind, she stressed that it was not possible, in the short term, to reduce energy prices, although some producer countries were in a position to rapidly ramp up production.

Lastly, she said that the large amount of gas in storage provided considerable room for manoeuvre and that the EU could also influence demand by promoting, as far as possible, energy savings at all levels of the economy and society.

Mr TIMMERMANS wrapped up the discussion by inviting the Members of the Commission concerned to actively pursue efforts to launch the joint procurement of energy supplies and to identify new sources of energy supply, which would be important for the coming winter and even more so for the winter after that.

The Commission took note of this information.

11.3. EVOLUTION OF THE HEALTH SITUATION IN THE EU

Ms KYRIAKIDES reported on the latest developments regarding the epidemiological situation in the EU.

As regards monkeypox, the situation was being closely monitored by the Commission, with more than 2 600 cases reported within the EU. She added that on 25 June, an emergency committee of the World Health Organization had concluded that monkeypox did not constitute a public health emergency of international concern, but that it was a growing cause for concern. On 14 June, the European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA) had purchased 110 000 doses of smallpox vaccine, which it was gradually making available to the Member States. She explained that the Commission would ensure that all Member States had access to the

vaccines available and that this was not a vaccination campaign, but a measure aimed solely at protecting members of the same household as infected persons.

As regards the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms KYRIAKIDES reported that there were currently two dominant sub-variants of Omicron, BA.4 and BA.5, and that hospitalisations were increasing in some Member States, probably due to the reinfection rate of BA.5, which was higher than for the previous Omicron sub-variants. She also noted a plateau in the current vaccination campaign in the Member States, and stated that a new vaccine would probably be distributed in the autumn. There were two new vaccines being prepared, one from Moderna and the other from Pfizer, and both would cover the currently known Omicron sub-variants.

Finally, Ms KYRIAKIDES said that, at the request of the Member States and the G7, the Commission and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) would present a recommendation to the Member States in mid-July on how to deal with the pandemic over the autumn and winter.

The Commission took note of this information.

*

* *

The meeting closed at 10.48.