



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2023) 2472 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 6 December 2023

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2472nd meeting of the Commission

held in Brussels

(Berlaymont)

on Wednesday 8 November 2023

(morning)

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Single sitting: Wednesday 8 November 2023 (morning)

The sitting opened at 9.11 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President	
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Executive Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Executive Vice-President	
Ms JOUROVÁ	Vice-President	
Ms ŠUICA	Vice-President	
Mr SCHINAS	Vice-President	Items 1 to 8/10
Mr HAHN	Member	
Mr SCHMIT	Member	Items 1 to 8/10 (in part)
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 VÁLEAN	Member	
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member	Items 1 to 8/10
Ms URPILAINEN	Member	
Ms SIMSON	Member	
Mr SINKEVIČIUS	Member	
Ms McGUINNESS	Member	
Ms IVANOVA	Member	

Absent:

Ms VESTAGER	Executive Vice-President
Mr BORRELL i FONTELLES	High Representative / Vice-President
Mr HOEKSTRA	Member

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

Mr VILLARINO	Head of Cabinet to Mr BORRELL
Ms GIPPNER	Member of Mr HOEKSTRA's cabinet

The following also sat in:

Mr SEIBERT	Head of Cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr CALLEJA CRESPO	Director-General, Legal Service	
Ms SPINANT	Acting Director-General, DG Communication	
Mr MAMER	Head of the Spokesperson's Service and Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Ms PETKOVA	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's cabinet	
Mr FLOSDORFF	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's cabinet	Items 8/10
Ms PODESTA	Deputy Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Mr KRISTOFFY	Head of Cabinet to Mr VÁRHELYI	Items 8/10
Ms ALLOUIS-LE LOSTEC	Head of Unit in the Secretariat-General	
Mr CHARLES	Secretariat-General	

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

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2023) 2472/FINAL; SEC(2023) 2472/FINAL)

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

2. WEEKLY MEETING OF HEADS OF CABINET

(RCC(2023) 2472 AND /2)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Chefs de cabinet held on Monday 6 and Tuesday 7 November 2023.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

(PV(2023) 2466; PV(2023) 2467; PV(2023) 2468; PV(2023) 2468, 2ND PART)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 2466th, 2467th and 2468th meetings of 12 and 27 September and 3 October 2023, and held over approval of the minutes of its 2469th, 2470th, and 2471st meetings of 11, 17 and 24 October 2023 for a later date.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2023) 173)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held on Friday 27 October 2023 (RCC(2023) 173).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **Establishment of a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for sustainable products and repeal of Directive 2009/125/EC (Regulation) –**

MORETTI report – 2022/0095 (COD)

Line set out in SI(2023) 405/2.

- **Common procedure for international protection in the Union and repeal of Directive 2013/32/EU (Regulation) – KELLER report – 2016/0224 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2023) 413.

- **Asylum and migration management and amendment of Council Directive (EC) 2003/109 and the proposed Regulation (EU) XXX/XXX [Asylum and Migration Fund] (Regulation) – TOBÉ report – 2020/0279 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2023) 417.

- **‘Fit for 55’ – Methane emissions reduction in the energy sector and amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/942 (Regulation) – PAULUS & SARDONE report – 2021/0423 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2023) 414/2.

- **European statistics on population and housing, amendment of Regulation (EC) N° 862/2007 and repeal of Regulations (EC) N° 763/2008 and (EU) N° 1260/2013 (Regulation) – PEREIRA report – 2023/0008 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2023) 418.

- **Transparency and targeting of political advertising (Regulation) – GOZI report – 2021/0381 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2023) 416/2.

- **Amendment of Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) (Directive) – ZALEWSKA report – 2023/0025 (COD)**

Line set out in SP(2023) 549.

- **Amendment of Decision (EU, Euratom) 2020/2053 on the system of own resources of the European Union (Council Decision) – FERNANDES & HAYER report – 2021/0430 (CNS)**

Line set out in SP(2022) 553.

- **Status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents (recast – Directive) – BOESELAGER report – 2022/0134 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2023) 412.

- **Conclusions reached on Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 at the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework Meeting of 10 to 12 July 2023 and adopted under written procedure on 17 July 2023**

Line set out in SI(2023) 403/2.

- **Draft joint Council, High Representative and Commission statement on guiding principles for structured dialogues under the EU-United Kingdom Trade and Cooperation Agreement**

Line set out in SI(2023) 415.

- **Joint Statement of Special Envoys and Coordinators on Combating Antisemitism**

Line set out in SI(2023) 440.

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

- **Commission replies to the legislative resolutions (and list of non-legislative resolutions without formal reply) adopted by the European Parliament at its October I 2023 part session**

Line set out in SP(2023) 557.

- **Commission replies to the non-legislative resolutions adopted by the European Parliament at its June, July and September 2023 part-sessions**

Line set out in SP(2023) 558/3.

The Commission approved the line proposed for the following point, for transmission to the European Economic and Social Committee:

- **Follow-up to opinions of the European Economic and Social Committee – plenary session of July 2023**

Line set out in SC(2023) 33/3.

The Commission took note of the following points:

- **Type-approval of motor vehicles and engines and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, with respect to their emissions and battery durability (Euro 7) and repeal of Regulations (EC) N° 715/2007 and (EC) N° 595/2009 (Regulation) – VONDRA report – 2022/0365 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2023) 547.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) N° 691/2011 as regards introducing new environmental economic accounts modules (Regulation) – CANFIN report – 2022/0210 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2023) 548.

- **Harmonised rules on fair access to and use of data (Data Act) (Regulation) – DEL CASTILLO VERA report – 2022/0047 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2023) 550, further to note SI(2023) 272, which the Commission had already approved on 5 July 2023.

- **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)**

Compromise texts in SP(2023) 551, further to note SI(2023) 252, which the Commission had already approved on 28 June 2023.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) N° 909/2014 as regards settlement discipline, cross-border provision of services, supervisory cooperation, provision of banking-type ancillary services and requirements for third-country central securities depositories (Regulation) – VAN OVERTVELDT report – 2022/0074 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2023) 552, further to note SI(2023) 280, which the Commission had already approved on 11 July 2023.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/833 laying down conservation and enforcement measures applicable in the Regulatory Area of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (Regulation) – O’SULLIVAN report – 2023/0056 (COD)**

Line set out in SP(2023) 556.

- **Approval and market surveillance of non-road mobile machinery circulating on public roads and amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 – VANDENKENDELAERE report – 2023/0090 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2023) 410.

- **Amendment of Council Decision 2009/917/JHA, as regards its alignment with Union rules on the protection of personal data (Regulation) – ERNST report – 2023/0143 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2023) 422.

5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2023) 37 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2023) 37/2 of the meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held on Wednesday 25 October 2023.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2023) 352 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 23 October and 5 November 2023.

6.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2023) 353 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 23 October and 5 November 2023.

6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS
(SEC(2023) 354 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedures between 23 October and 5 November 2023 archived in Decide.

6.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES
(SEC(2023) 355 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the significant written procedures for which the time limit expired between 6 and 10 November 2023.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
(SEC(2023) 356)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2023) 101)

7.1. DG MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS – APPOINTMENT OF A
DIRECTOR AT GRADE AD14/15
(PERS(2023) 102 TO /3)

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Director of the 'International and Horizontal Affairs' Directorate in DG Migration and Home Affairs (PERS(2023) 102).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 18 August and 14 September 2023 (PERS(2023) 102/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, and after consulting Ms JOHANSSON, it then decided to appoint Ms Corinna ULLRICH to the post.

This decision would take effect on a date to be determined.

**7.2. DG MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS – APPOINTMENT OF A DIRECTOR AT GRADE AD14/15
(PERS(2023) 103 TO /3)**

The Commission had before it applications under Article 29(1)(a)(i) and (iii) of the Staff Regulations for the post of Director of the 'Internal Security' Directorate in DG Migration and Home Affairs (PERS(2023) 103).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 19 October 2023 (PERS(2023) 103/2 and /3).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, and after consulting Ms JOHANSSON, it then decided to appoint Ms Floriana SIPALA to the post.

This decision would take effect on a date to be determined.

**7.3. DG RESEARCH AND INNOVATION – ADOPTION OF A LIST OF CANDIDATES FOR THE POST OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CIRCULAR BIO-BASED EUROPE JOINT UNDERTAKING (CBE JU), AT GRADE AD14
(PERS(2023) 104 TO /3)**

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

- to approve the list of three candidates, presented in alphabetical order, set out in point 3 of PERS(2023) 101, for the post of Executive Director of the Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking (CBE JU) in DG Research and Innovation, and to consider this list as the Commission proposal;
- to ask the Member of the Commission responsible, Ms IVANOVA, to communicate this decision to the Governing Board of the Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

**7.4. DG MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT – ADOPTION OF A LIST OF CANDIDATES FOR THE POST OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AVIATION SAFETY AGENCY (EASA), AT GRADE AD14
(PERS(2023) 105 TO /3)**

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

- to approve the list of three candidates, presented in alphabetical order, set out in point 4 of PERS(2023) 101, for the post of Executive Director of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in Cologne, Germany, and to consider this list as the Commission proposal;
- to ask Ms VĂLEAN, Member of the Commission with responsibility for transport, to communicate this decision to the Management Board of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

8. **COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – 2023 COMMUNICATION ON EU ENLARGEMENT POLICY**
(COM(2023) 690 TO /6; SWD(2023) 690 TO /4; SWD(2023) 691 TO /4; SWD(2023) 692 AND /2; SWD(2023) 693 TO /4; SWD(2023) 694 TO /4; SWD(2023) 695 AND /2; SWD(2023) 696 TO /3; SWD(2023) 697 AND /2; SWD(2023) 698 TO /4; SWD(2023) 699 TO /3; RCC(2023) 181)
9. **COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS – NEW GROWTH PLAN FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS**
(COM(2023) 691 TO /4; RCC(2023) 181)
10. **PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON ESTABLISHING THE REFORM AND GROWTH FACILITY FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS**
(COM(2023) 692 TO /4; RCC(2023) 181)

In her introduction, the PRESIDENT highlighted the historic nature of the 2023 enlargement package. She focused in particular on Ukraine's unwavering determination to join the European Union almost 10 years after the Maidan revolution and over 600 days since the start of Russia's war of aggression. She hailed the considerable reforms undertaken by Ukraine over the past 20 months, especially since obtaining candidate status. These reforms had been carried out in spite of the war and had been spurred on by the pressures of the conflict, leading to significant progress. She also referred to Moldova's sustained commitment to deep reforms and its determination to look towards Europe despite Russia's persistent attempts at interference.

The PRESIDENT thus welcomed the remarkable progress achieved by Ukraine and Moldova, which had both met more than 90% of the preconditions set by the Commission in 2022 for the opening of accession negotiations. The College was therefore now proposing that negotiations begin with both countries, with the final decision resting with the European Council.

She then gave the floor to Mr VÁRHELYI to present in more detail the enlargement package, which provided a thorough assessment of the progress made by the ten countries that were on the path towards EU membership, as well as the growth plan for the Western Balkans.

Mr VÁRHELYI explained that the package encompassed both the Western Balkans and the countries of the Eastern Partnership to which the EU had offered a European perspective in 2022.

As regards the Western Balkans, he highlighted the new approach adopted by the EU to help those countries integrate. It was now fully recognised that accession to the European Union represented an anchor of stability for these countries; this confirmed the highly political and strategic importance of enlargement policy.

He also noted that the countries in question had high expectations of joining the EU in the medium term. Referring back to the analytical report of February 2023, which had laid the basis for the decisions proposed that day, he felt that all the relevant criteria had been examined. In this context, he reiterated the importance for the Commission of conducting a credible and meticulous fact-based analysis and of assessing progress based on identical measures for each country. The resulting reports paved the way for the decisions to be taken by the European Council in December and highlighted the importance of the Commission's recommendations being followed up by practical action.

Mr VÁRHELYI then spoke about the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans, the aim of which was to create the right political, economic and social conditions for those countries' integration.

In previous enlargements, measures to close the economic and social gap had begun only after accession, leading to difficulties further down the line. It was therefore preferable to speed up the socio-economic convergence of the countries concerned before they joined the EU, so that accession was implemented gradually.

Mr VÁRHELYI concluded by saying that the measures for the Western Balkans consisted of four strands: (i) a proposal allowing the countries to integrate as quickly as possible in terms of the four fundamental freedoms in order to gain access to the EU's internal market, (ii) the need for close cooperation between these countries, which would provide long-term stability and peace, while opening up their markets to each other in order to create a real common regional market that would encourage the flow of goods and services between countries and significantly boost the gross domestic product of the Western Balkans, (iii) the no less important task of speeding up reforms, with results that could be measured each year, and lastly (iv) more financial aid for the Western Balkans up to the end of the current Multiannual Financial Framework, worth 6 billion euros, which corresponded in aid intensity to the average of the thirteen EU Member States currently receiving structural and cohesion funds.

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

- full support for this historic enlargement package, as well as the recognition of the excellent cooperation and exceptional work carried out by the Commission's departments;
- the balance, coherence and credibility of the package, which sent a strong message to the populations concerned about the substantial progress of the enlargement process;
- the current geopolitical context, which called for enlargement and offered a reminder that post-war reconstruction had provided the historical foundation of the EU;

- recognition of the role of history as a driving force for enlargement, particularly in a context where some populations were fighting and dying to see their countries join the EU;
- the geopolitical imperative of enlarging the EU in order to avoid grey zones in Europe, for the benefit of both the EU and the countries on the path to accession;
- the prospect of enlargement as a source of stability for the EU, strengthening its role on the international stage and injecting renewed optimism into the European project;
- the importance of communicating clearly on enlargement, particularly to the citizens of the EU, in order to highlight its economic, geopolitical and security benefits;
- the need for an integration process allowing for the actual and full adoption of all chapters, based on a clear timetable for accession;
- the importance of clearly defining the reforms required, not only to provide clarity for the accession countries, but also to facilitate effective monitoring;
- the importance, beyond the adoption of laws, of actually implementing reforms with the help of the EU's technical and administrative support to the administrations of these countries;
- the focus of the enlargement package on consolidating the rule of law, democracy and the EU's fundamental values;
- the inclusion of the accession countries in the rule of law reporting cycle, thereby fostering dialogue and ensuring the equivalence of the methodologies used with those of the Member States, while respecting the specific characteristics of each country's judicial and administrative systems;

- the package’s support for the economic growth of the accession countries in order to accelerate their economic convergence, as well as the need to adopt a new approach to cross-border projects with these countries as future members of the European single market;
- the essential support for the social market economy in the accession countries, in particular by maintaining close links with civil society and social partners in those countries;
- the importance of aligning positions on the issue of sanctions and the fight against money laundering and, more generally, positions taken by the EU in the framework of its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP);
- with regard to digital policy, the necessary alignment with EU harmonised standards, in particular concerning the 5G toolbox;
- positive developments in research and education, such as the gradual integration of the accession countries into Horizon Europe, the European Research Area, Erasmus+ and the Eurydice network for sharing education-related data;
- the fact that Ukraine already enjoyed many of the benefits of European integration, in particular in terms of freedom of movement, education, health and access to EU funds;
- the major progress made by Ukraine and Moldova in the energy sector to reduce their dependence on Russian gas;
- Ukraine’s significant environmental progress despite the ongoing war, and the need to identify acts of ecocide perpetrated by Russia;
- some concerns expressed about Ukraine’s ability to fully follow the Venice Commission recommendations in a war context;

- the full support of the College for the growth plan for the Western Balkans, which reflected the EU's determination to support these countries in their reform efforts and to promote their gradual integration at regional level;
- the call by some Members to move forward with accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, given that current progress, albeit limited, had been achieved thanks to the positive impact of the candidate status on the dynamics of the integration process;
- the growing divergences between Türkiye and the EU, in particular in the area of foreign and security policy, which called for a reaffirmation of the EU's fundamental values;
- recognition, nevertheless, of Türkiye's central role on many issues, particularly in the fields of energy and migration, and the usefulness in this context of the Commission's forthcoming comprehensive report on the state of EU-Türkiye relations;
- the increased responsibility for defence that a further enlargement of the EU entailed through the mutual defence clause introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, and the need, therefore, to strengthen the EU's defence capabilities in close cooperation with the accession countries;
- for some, concerns about the impact on the EU agri-food market of the integration of agricultural exporting countries;
- a reminder of the need for internal reforms in the EU to prepare its institutional system for further enlargement;
- for some, however, the importance of not letting institutional reforms slow down the process of enlargement, as many issues could be resolved by the accession treaties themselves.

Addressing some of the points raised, Mr VÁRHELYI explained that the Venice Commission recommendations served as a benchmark for the European Council in its deliberations. This Commission had issued four opinions on the subject, with specific recommendations to be taken into account. Mr VÁRHELYI reminded the College that Russia's withdrawal from the Council of Europe had resulted in the loss of protection of its minorities abroad under the treaties of the Council of Europe. He also stressed that the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine was not defined as a minority and that, consequently, the Venice Commission recommendations did not apply in this context. Furthermore, the restrictions on the use of the Russian language under martial law in Ukraine had been deemed proportionate by the Venice Commission.

With regard to the assessment of progress made, Mr VÁRHELYI stressed that the evaluation criteria were applied uniformly to all accession countries. This method made it possible to compare diverse situations and to avoid the perception of accelerated procedures or unequal standards. Finally, he stressed that the fact that accession countries were required to fulfil all prior obligations before starting accession negotiations excluded any politically expedient accession.

The PRESIDENT reiterated the historic nature of that year's enlargement package, stressing that it conveyed a strong message of unity, defence of European values and promotion of peace and stability. She also pointed out that the EU's mutual assistance clause, set out in Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union, had been activated only once in the history of the EU, following the Bataclan attacks in France in November 2015. This had increased awareness of security and defence matters in the EU.

With regard to the implementation of the Venice Commission recommendations and the protection of national minorities, the PRESIDENT noted the progress made by Ukraine in this area, which reflected the country's commitment to addressing minority issues.

On the impact on the EU of a possible accession of Ukraine, she acknowledged the need for a transition period. In her view, the successful implementation with Ukraine of the solidarity lanes and the export licensing system was evidence of the ability of the Ukrainian side to manage this transition successfully. In this context, the PRESIDENT stressed the importance of reciprocity in trade, noting that the EU had exported more to Ukraine than Ukraine had to the EU.

With regard to Bosnia and Herzegovina, she acknowledged the significant progress that had been made in a complex political context. She called for continued positive communication in this regard.

Finally, she felt that enlargement benefited all, not just future members, and mentioned the example of Croatia, which had made major progress in a decade, as well as Poland, highlighting the mutual benefits of enlargement. She stressed the contrast between the EU's narrative of progress and prosperity and Russian alarmism. In this context, she stressed the importance of encouraging positive change by providing incentives, ambition and a clear goal to promote and guide the transformation. She added that, throughout its history, the EU had always promoted stability, prosperity and democracy.

In conclusion, the PRESIDENT pointed out that the Commission's role was to provide factual reports and recommendations, while the European Council was responsible for taking the final political decisions.

Following these presentations, the Commission:

- approved the Communication in COM(2023) 690/6, for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and, for information, to the national parliaments, together with the staff working documents distributed as SWD(2023) 690/4, SWD(2023) 691/4, SWD(2023) 692/2, SWD(2023) 693/4, SWD(2023) 694/4, SWD(2023) 695/2, SWD(2023) 696/3, SWD(2023) 697/2, SWD(2023) 698/4 and SWD(2023) 699/3, the contents of which were noted;

- approved the Communication in COM(2023) 691/4 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 European Court of Auditors and the national parliaments;
- adopted the proposal for a Regulation in COM(2023) 692/4 for transmission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Court of Auditors and the national parliaments and, for information, to the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

***11.1. COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'EU LIVE BUS STOP INFO' PURSUANT TO REGULATION (EU) 2019/788 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
(C(2023) 7436)***

***11.2. COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'TRUST AND FREEDOM' PURSUANT TO REGULATION (EU) 2019/788 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
(C(2023) 7599)***

11.3. COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'I'M GOING EUROPEAN: AN ECI TO CONNECT YOUR NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP' PURSUANT TO REGULATION (EU) 2019/788 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

AND OF THE COUNCIL**(C(2023) 7583)****11.4. COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'CREATION OF A EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AUTHORITY' PURSUANT TO REGULATION (EU) 2019/788 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL****(C(2023) 7448)**

Ms JOUROVÁ presented the four implementing Decisions proposed to the College for adoption concerning the registration of four new European citizens' initiatives. These were entitled, in the authentic language, respectively, English for the first three and Hungarian for the fourth one: (i) 'EU Live Bus Stop Info', (ii) 'Trust and Freedom', (iii) 'I'm Going European: An ECI to Connect your National and European Citizenship' and (iv) 'Az Európai Környezetvédelmi Hatóság (EKH) létrehozása' (Creation of a European Environment Authority).

The 'EU Live Bus Stop Info' initiative proposed the integration of QR codes at bus stops across the EU Member States to allow passengers to access real-time information about schedules, routes, delays and updates. The initiative sought to 'green' cities by encouraging bus travel, reducing congestion and emissions.

The 'Trust and Freedom' initiative proposed measures regarding informed consent, human dignity, freedom, and bodily autonomy. In particular, it referred to the right to make informed decisions regarding healthcare and treatment options, free consent and improved access to information. The organisers of the initiative also requested measures enhancing transparency and access to information in EU decision-making processes.

The 'I'm going European: an ECI to connect your national and European

citizenship' initiative aimed to introduce a right to education on European citizenship, human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The organisers called on the Commission to establish a European civic education requirement in EU free movement legislation, adopt a statute on European citizenship and set up a centre of excellence for exchanging best practice and teacher training.

The organisers of the initiative 'Creation of a European Environment Authority' called for the setting up of a European Environment Authority, as a successor to the European Environment Agency or as a new authority. This authority would have the power to issue binding administrative decisions, monitor activities that have an environmental impact, and issue sanctions for environmental pollution.

Ms JOUROVÁ pointed out that the College's task that day was to decide only on the registration of the initiatives and not at this stage to analyse their substance or political expediency.

She explained that the conditions for registering European citizens' initiatives were set out in Article 6(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788 of 17 April 2019 on the European citizens' initiative, which had repealed and replaced Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 with effect from 1 January 2020. Those conditions included the requirement that no part of the citizens' initiative should manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for an EU legal act for the purpose of implementing the Treaties.

Mme JOUROVÁ noted that the requests by the promoters of the four European citizens' initiatives did not fall outside the Commission's powers to propose legal acts for the purpose of implementing the Treaties. She underlined the fact that if, over the next twelve months, one or more of the proposals garnered the minimum support required, in other words at least one million statements of support from citizens of at least one-quarter of the

Member States, the Commission would then analyse the substance of the proposals. In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2019/788, any proposed initiatives registered now benefited from more user-friendly arrangements for organisers to gather support and easier access for European citizens. The Commission would then have a period of six months to submit its reasoned decision as to whether or not to take any action.

The Commission confirmed that the Citizens' Initiatives (i) 'EU Live Bus Stop Info', (ii) 'Trust and Freedom', (iii) 'I'm going European: an ECI to connect your national and European citizenship', and (iv) 'Creation of a European Environment Authority' (*Az Európai Környezetvédelmi Hatóság ('EKH') létrehozása*) fulfilled the conditions for registration. It therefore decided, in accordance with C(2023) 7436, C(2023) 7599, C(2023) 7583 and C(2023) 7448, to inform the groups of organisers, and authorised Ms JOUROVÁ to sign the replies on behalf of the College, and to send them to the groups of organisers.

Following these presentations, the Commission approved the Commission implementing Decisions in C(2023) 7436, C(2023) 7599, C(2023) 7583 and C(2023) 7448, and decided (i) to notify the organisers of the initiatives in the authentic languages, (ii) to publish them, for information, in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, and (iii) to transmit them, for information, to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments.

11.5. GLOBAL GATEWAY FORUM

Ms URPILAINEN reported on the outcome of the first Global Gateway Forum held in Brussels on 25 and 26 October 2023.

The event had brought together over 90 Heads of State or Government, ministers and leaders of international organisations, as well as high-profile captains of industry and representatives of civil society. It had been marked

by a dynamic atmosphere conducive to bilateral and multilateral discussions, and had generated very positive feedback from partner countries.

Underlining the collective commitment of the College, Ms URPILAINEN expressed her gratitude to the ten Commissioners who had actively contributed to the Forum. She ended by saying that, almost two years after its creation, the Global Gateway initiative was already delivering on its promises for its partners and for the EU, as illustrated by the leaders' testimonies at the Forum, as well as announcements and the signing of projects worth over EUR 3 billion.

The PRESIDENT congratulated Ms URPILAINEN on the success of this major event, which had been very well received by the EU's partners.

The Commission took note of this information.

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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 11.39.