



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2024) 2490 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 12 June 2024

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

**of the 2490th meeting of the Commission
held in Brussels
(Berlaymont)
on Wednesday 17 April 2024
(morning)**

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Single sitting: Wednesday 17 April 2024 (morning)

The sitting opened at 9.08 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President	
Ms VESTAGER	Executive Vice-President	
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Executive Vice-President	
Ms JOUROVÁ	Vice-President	
Mr HAHN	Member	
Mr SCHMIT	Member	
Mr WOJCIECHOWSKI	Member	
Mr BRETON	Member	
Ms FERREIRA	Member	
Ms KYRIAKIDES	Member	
Ms DALLI	Member	
Ms JOHANSSON	Member	
Mr LENARČIČ	Member	
Ms VÁLEAN	Member	Items 8 (in part) to 9.3
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member	
Ms URPILAINEN	Member	Items 1 to 9.2
Mr SINKEVIČIUS	Member	
Ms IVANOVA	Member	
Mr HOEKSTRA	Member	

Absent:

Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Executive Vice-President
Mr BORRELL i FONTELLES	High Representative / Vice-President
Ms ŠUICA	Vice-President
Mr SCHINAS	Vice-President
Mr GENTILONI	Member
Mr REYNDERS	Member
Ms SIMSON	Member
Ms McGUINNESS	Member

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

Mr LESCRAUWAET	A member of Mr DOMBROVSKIS's cabinet	
Mr SCICLUNA	Head of Cabinet to Ms ŠUICA	
Ms BERTAUD	Deputy Head of Cabinet to Mr SCHINAS	
Mr BALASSONE	Head of Cabinet to Mr GENTILONI	
Mr LAHTI	Head of Cabinet to Ms URPILAINEN	Item 9.3 (in part)
Mr KADARIK	Deputy Head of Cabinet to Ms SIMSON	
Ms DE BASALDUA	Deputy Head of Cabinet to Ms McGUINNESS	

The following also sat in:

Mr CALLEJA CRESPO	Director-General, Legal Service
Ms SPINANT	Director-General, DG Communication
Mr MAMER	Head of the Spokesperson's Service and Chief Spokesperson of the Commission
Ms PODESTA	Deputy Chief Spokesperson of the Commission
Ms PETKOVA	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's cabinet
Mr CALACEAN	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's cabinet
Mr CHARLES	Secretariat-General

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Secretary: Ms JUHANSONE, Secretary-General, assisted by Ms ALLOUIS-LE LOSTEC, Head of Unit in the Secretariat-General.

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2024) 2490/FINAL; SEC(2024) 2490/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(2024) 2490)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Heads of Cabinet held on Monday 15 April 2024.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

(PV(2024) 2486)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 2486th meeting of 12 March 2024 and decided to hold over approval of the minutes of its 2487th, 2488th and 2489th meetings of 20 and 27 March and 10 April 2024 until a later meeting.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2024) 91)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (GRI) held on Friday 12 April 2024 (RCC(2024) 91).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **Temporary trade-liberalisation measures supplementing trade concessions applicable to Ukrainian products under the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and**

their Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part (Regulation) – KALNIETE report – 2024/0028 (COD)

Line set out in SI(2024) 213.

- **Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Court of Justice, the European Central Bank, the European Court of Auditors, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – COM(2023) 311 final**

Line set out in SI(2024) 220.

- **Amendment of Directive 2014/62/EU as regards certain reporting requirements (Decision) – LÓPEZ AGUILAR report – 2023/0355 (COD)**

Line set out in SP(2024) 293.

- **Amendment of Regulations (EU) 2017/745 and (EU) 2017/746 as regards a gradual roll-out of Eudamed, information obligation in case of interruption of supply and the transitional provisions for certain in vitro diagnostic medical devices (Regulation) – 2024/0021 (COD)**

Line set out in SP(2024) 301.

- **Implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (Council Directive) – KUHNKE report – 2008/0140 (CNS)**

Line set out in SI(2024) 212.

- **Introduction of a screening of third country nationals at the external borders and amendment of Regulations (EC) No 767/2008, (EU) 2017/2226, (EU) 2018/1240 and (EU) 2019/817 (Regulation) – SIPPEL report – 2020/0278 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2024) 216.

- **La Hulpe Declaration on the Future of the European Pillar of Social Rights**

Line set out in SI(2024) 200/2.

- **Non-paper regarding an overview of support possibilities under agricultural State aid rules**

Line set out in SI(2024) 214.

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

- **Commission replies to the non-legislative resolutions adopted by the European Parliament at its July 2023, December 2023, January I 2024 and February I 2024 part-sessions**

Line set out in SP(2024) 299/3.

The Commission took note of the following points:

- **Prevention of plastic pellet losses to reduce microplastic pollution (Regulation) – ALBUQUERQUE report – 2023/0373 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 280/2.

- **‘Payment services’: Payment services and electronic money services in the Internal Market, amendment of Directive 98/26/EC and repeal of Directives 2015/2366/EU and 2009/110/EC (Directive) – KOVAŘÍK report – 2023/0209 (COD) / Payment services in the internal market and amendment of Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010 (Regulation) – BELKA report – 2023/0210 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 291.

- **Combating late payment in commercial transactions (Regulation) – THUN UND HOHENSTEIN report – 2023/0323 (COD)**

Information set out in SP(2024) 294/2.

- **Establishment of the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card for persons with disabilities (Directive) – ĎURIŠ NICHOLSONOVÁ report – 2023/0311 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 278, further to note SI(2024) 108/2 already approved by the Commission on 21 February 2024.

- **Extension of Directive [XXXX] to third country nationals legally residing in a Member State (Directive) – MANDERS & KUHNKE report – 2023/0393 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 279, further to note SI(2024) 168 already approved by the Commission on 12 March 2024.

- **Common rules promoting the repair of goods and amendment of Regulation (EU) 2017/2394, Directives (EU) 2019/771 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Directive) – REPASI report – 2023/0083 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 281, further to note SI(2024) 83 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Combating violence against women and domestic violence (Directive) – FITZGERALD & INCIR report – 2022/0066 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 284, further to note SI(2024) 101 already approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Transfer of proceedings in criminal matters (Regulation) – KANKO report – 2023/0093 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 287, further to note SI(2024) 180 already approved by the Commission on 20 March 2024.

- **Prohibition of products made with forced labour on the Union market (Regulation) – LEITÃO-MARQUES & RAFAELA report – 2022/0269 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 282, further to note SI(2024) 167/3 already approved by the Commission on 20 March 2024.

- **Amendment of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims (Directive) – BJÖRK & RODRÍGUEZ PALOP report – 2022/0426 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 283, further to note SI(2024) 65 already approved by the Commission on 6 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Directive (EU) 2019/1153 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as regards access of competent authorities to centralised bank account registries through the single access point (Directive) – RADEV report – 2021/0244 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 295, further to note SI(2023) 188 already approved by the Commission on 20 June 2023.

- **Measures to reduce the cost of deploying gigabit electronic communications networks and repeal of Directive 2014/61/EU (Gigabit Infrastructure Act) – MITUȚA report – 2023/0046 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 285, further to note SI(2024) 98, approved by the Commission on 14 February 2024.

- **Establishment of a framework of measures for strengthening Europe’s net-zero technology products manufacturing ecosystem (Net Zero Industry Act) (Regulation) – EHLER report – 2023/0081 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 286, further to note SI(2024) 116 already approved by the Commission on 21 February 2024.

- **Establishment of a framework for the recovery and resolution of insurance and reinsurance undertakings and amendment of Directives 2002/47/EC, 2004/25/EC, 2009/138/EC, (EU) 2017/1132 and Regulations (EU) No 1094/2010 and (EU) No 648/2012 (Directive) – FERBER report – 2021/0296 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 288, further to note SI(2024) 14 already approved by the Commission by written procedure on 16 January 2024.

- **Amendment of Directive 2009/138/EC as regards proportionality, quality of supervision, reporting, long-term guarantee measures, macro-prudential tools, sustainability risks, group and cross-border supervision (Directive) – FERBER report – 2021/0295 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 289, further to note SI(2024) 15 already approved by the Commission on 24 January 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures (Regulation) – SPYRAKI report – 2022/0432 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 290, further to note SI(2023) 559 already approved by the Commission by written procedure on 19 December 2023.

- **Effective coordination of economic policies and multilateral budgetary surveillance and repeal of Council Regulation (EC) No 1466/97 (Regulation) – FERBER (ex-DE LANGE) & MARQUES report – 2023/0138 (COD)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 275, further to note SI(2024) 117 already approved by the Commission on 21 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1467/97 on speeding up and clarifying the implementation of the excessive deficit procedure (Council Regulation) – FERBER (ex-DE LANGE) & MARQUES report – 2023/0137 (CNS)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 276, further to note SI(2024) 117 already approved by the Commission on 21 February 2024.

- **Amendment of Directive 2011/85/EU on requirements for budgetary frameworks of the Member States (Council Directive) – FERBER (ex-DE LANGE) & MARQUES report – 2023/0136 (NLE)**

Compromise text in SP(2024) 277, further to note SI(2024) 117 already approved by the Commission on 21 February 2024.

- **Results of the European Parliament plenary session of April I 2024**

Information set out in SP(2024) 226.

- **Revised Protocol on cooperation between the European Commission and the European Committee of Regions – outcome of negotiations**

Information set out in SR(2024) 8.

5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2024) 16)

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2024) 16 of the meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held on Wednesday 10 April 2024.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED

(SEC(2024) 113 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 8 and 14 April 2024.

6.2. EMPOWERMENT

(SEC(2024) 114 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 8 and 14 April 2024.

6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS

(SEC(2024) 115 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedures between 8 and 14 April 2024 archived in Decide.

6.4. SIGNIFICANT WRITTEN PROCEDURES

(SEC(2024) 116 AND /2)

The Commission took note of the significant written procedures for which the time limit expired between 15 and 19 April 2024.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

(SEC(2024) 117)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(PERS(2024) 38)

7.1. *LEGAL SERVICE – TRANSFER OF AN OFFICIAL AT GRADE AD15 FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION*

On a proposal from Mr HAHN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, the Commission decided to approve the transfer of Mr Alberto DE GREGORIO MERINO, in the interest of the service, under Article 8 of the Staff Regulations, from the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union to the European Commission, and to appoint him to the post of Principal Legal Adviser in charge of the ‘AFFAIR – Establishment, services, business law, movement of capital, transport, intellectual property and information society’ Team in the Legal Service.

This decision would take effect on 16 June 2024.

7.2. *SECRETARIAT-GENERAL – ANNUAL REPORT ON THE APPLICATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN 2023 (SEC(2024) 142)*

The Commission took note of the annual report on the application of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the European Commission in 2023 set out in SEC(2024) 142.

8. *SIGNATURE OF THE AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING AN INTERINSTITUTIONAL BODY FOR ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR MEMBERS OF INSTITUTIONS AND ADVISORY BODIES REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 13 OF THE TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION (SI(2024) 220)*

Ms JOUROVÁ began by going over the background to this initiative, reminding the meeting that the creation of an interinstitutional ethics body had first been envisaged

by the PRESIDENT in her political guidelines at the start of the term of office. The ‘Qatargate’ scandal affecting the European Parliament the previous year had brought this file to the forefront more rapidly, in response to increased demand from citizens for a clear set of rules governing the European institutions.

The objective had been to arrive at an agreement between the institutions and advisory bodies referred to in Article 13 of the Treaty on European Union, in order to work together on common standards regarding questions of ethics such as declarations of interests, gifts, hospitality or travel offered by third parties, and post-mandate activities of former members.

Ms JOUROVÁ highlighted the complexity of the negotiations, which had begun with nine institutions and advisory bodies and ended with the conclusion of an historic agreement between eight, an outcome that had been difficult to imagine not long ago, and which she welcomed wholeheartedly. Referring to the difficulty of reaching a significant agreement without affecting the specific characteristics of each institution, she welcomed the fact that the final agreement maintained the essential features of the Commission’s original proposal.

The body would be truly interinstitutional, covering eight institutions and bodies, and would remain open to new entities joining in future. Although the Council of the European Union will contribute to establishing the standards for all parties to the Agreement, Ms JOUROVÁ noted that its participation was only partial: Ministers of the Member State holding the rotating Presidency of the Council would only be required to declare to which national ethical standards they subscribed. Furthermore, she regretted that the President of the European Council had ultimately decided not to join the agreement.

The agreement established a standard-setting body, whose main task would be to set the standards that all participating parties committed to reflect in their internal rules. These standards would apply only to political representatives and appointed

members, as staff were already covered by the Staff Regulation* (Regulation n° 31 (EEC), 11 (EAEC), laying down the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community). The participating institutions would also be able to submit written declarations to the body thus created, to seek the opinion of its experts. This would be purely voluntary, strictly bilateral, and at the discretion of each institution.

With regard to the next steps, Ms JOUROVÁ explained that the process of validation by all parties could be completed by 10 May; signing could take then place immediately, followed by publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*. This would ensure entry into force before the European Parliament elections, as intended. The participating organisations would then appoint experts so that the newly created body could begin to develop the ethics standards as soon as possible.

She thus hoped that an initial set of standards could be published before the end of the year. This would mean that during the next legislative term the political appointees in all the EU institutions would be subject to clear and understandable rules in all the relevant fields. In this way, the interinstitutional body would play a key role in maintaining citizens' trust.

In the course of the brief discussion that followed, the Commission primarily mentioned the complexity of the approval process for Members of the Commission and the importance of not making these procedures more cumbersome than necessary, highlighting the Commission's leading role concerning transparency and compliance with ethics rules.

In response to a question, Ms JOUROVÁ clarified that the hearing procedure for Members nominated to the Commission remained unchanged, and that no second

* OJ 45, 14.6.1962, p.1385.

hearing was expected aside from the one before the European Parliament's Committee on Legal Affairs.

The PRESIDENT concluded the discussion by warmly thanking Ms JOUROVÁ for the excellent work carried out on this crucial matter.

The Commission endorsed the text of the political agreement as concluded by the eight parties, and authorised the signing of the agreement on its behalf.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1. COMMISSION DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR REGISTRATION OF A EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ENTITLED 'FOR A CIVIC ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE' (PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT)

Ms JOUROVÁ presented the request for registration of the European Citizens' Initiative entitled, in the authentic language (English), 'For a Civic Artificial Intelligence', calling on the Commission to develop artificial intelligence systems in the interests of the right to know and of democracy.

This Citizens' Initiative clearly fell outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for a legal act. The preliminary assessment of the initiative had therefore concluded that it could not be registered as it was.

Ms JOUROVÁ proposed asking the organisers to consider revising the initiative, noting that they would then have two months to decide whether to revise their proposal, to maintain the request for registration in its current form, or to withdraw it. On the basis of the organisers' response, the Commission would then decide whether to register the initiative in full or in part or reject it.

The Commission took note of this information and approved the draft letter drawn up on this basis, which Ms JOUROVÁ was authorised to send to the organisers.

9.2. RESULTS OF THE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS (LA HULPE, 15-16 APRIL)

The PRESIDENT informed the College about the high-level conference on the future of social Europe organised by the Belgian Presidency of the Council, which was held in La Hulpe on 15 and 16 April. The Conference had taken stock of the social progress made by the Commission since the Proclamation on the European Pillar of Social Rights in 2017 in Gothenburg, Sweden.

In this regard, she welcomed the success of the measures taken by the Commission during this term of office, which had effectively mitigated the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. She pointed out that, contrary to the alarming initial forecasts, neither an economic crisis nor mass unemployment had materialised in the wake of the pandemic. The introduction of the pioneering European SURE instrument, designed to mitigate unemployment risks in an emergency, together with the reforms and investments of the NextGenerationEU recovery plan, had, in her view, played a key role in minimising the economic impact in Europe.

While stressing the current low unemployment rate and the historically high levels of employment in the European Union, the PRESIDENT turned to the need to address skilled labour shortages. In this respect, she highlighted the fundamental role of the European Skills Agenda. She also highlighted the notable social initiatives launched by the Commission, mentioning in

particular the EU Gender Equality Strategy and the European Child Guarantee.

She said that the Conference on the future of social Europe followed the European Industry Summit that had taken place in Antwerp a few weeks earlier. At the summit, industrial stakeholders explored the outlook for the sector, confirming their commitment to the EU's climate objectives and proposing reflections on the implementation of a circular economy. She noted that the La Hulpe Conference had enriched these discussions with a social dimension, highlighting the need to combine economic and social progress.

In conclusion, the PRESIDENT welcomed the adoption of the La Hulpe Declaration by the vast majority of Member States, social partners and civil society representatives, as well as by the Commission and the European Parliament. She regretted that Sweden, Austria and the Confederation of European Business (BusinessEurope) had not signed the Declaration, but welcomed the participation of the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEunited).

Mr SCHMIT highlighted the commitment of the Belgian Presidency of the Council to build on the conclusions of the 2021 Porto Social Summit and on the progress made since then in pursuing implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. He felt that the twenty principles of the Pillar were still relevant today, while noting the constant need to adapt them for application to a rapidly changing world.

He reported on the significant contribution of the La Hulpe Conference to the strategic reflections of the European Council and for the Commission's next term of office. In particular, he stressed the importance of integrating the social dimension into all EU policies. In this context, he appreciated Mario DRAGHI's overall perspective on the EU's competitiveness,

considering the European social model not as an obstacle but as an asset with which to build a more cohesive society.

Mr SCHMIT then addressed the need to develop and adjust the European Pillar of Social Rights in the face of changes in the world of work, in particular as regards the implications of increased use of algorithms in the workplace. He also reiterated the urgent need to address persistent shortages of skilled and less skilled labour, and to keep the focus on this issue beyond the European Year of Skills.

He emphasised the importance of gender equality issues and stressed that broader social acceptance of the green transition was needed.

Considering that social dialogue played a key role in this respect, he also welcomed the adoption of the La Hulpe Declaration by the social partners, including SMEunited as employers' representative. He also regretted that BusinessEurope had not signed the Declaration, and called on all social partners to include the social dimension in their future reflections.

Mr SCHMIT considered it essential to adapt the European Semester to the new economic governance rules. He noted the importance of increasing social investment in areas such as vocational training and health, and highlighted the contribution of public services to the economic and social resilience of the continent. Finally, he felt that the conclusions of the Conference on the future of social Europe were a strong foundation for social progress in the years to come.

The PRESIDENT concluded by drawing attention to the essential role of legal migration in addressing the labour shortages, both skilled and unskilled, that Europe was facing. She welcomed the recent adoption by the European Parliament of the Pact on Migration and Asylum and congratulated Mr SCHINAS and Ms JOHANSSON on their crucial work on this issue.

She also mentioned the significant contribution that the draft reports of Mr DRAGHI and Mr LETTA, on the EU's competitiveness and on the single market, respectively, could make to the EU's long-term strategic reflections. She pointed out that Mr DRAGHI's report was scheduled for publication that summer, while Mr LETTA's report, which would be available shortly, would be discussed at the Special Summit of the European Council on 17 and 18 April. Both documents, by providing a critical analysis of the EU's economic performance, proposed lessons to be learned and key recommendations for the years to come.

The Commission took note of this information.

9.3. *FOURTH REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY AND POLICY ANALYSIS SYSTEM (ESPAS) – ‘CHOOSING EUROPE’S FUTURE’*

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ presented the fourth report of the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS) on global trends, published on 15 April, entitled ‘Choosing Europe’s Future’. The European Strategy and Policy Analysis System brought together nine EU institutions and bodies responsible for working collectively on foresight. For the Commission, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) had played a key role in the report’s final preparation.

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ noted that the aim of this report, published just before a new policy cycle, was to provide opportunities to better anticipate, prepare and ultimately shape the desired future for the European Union. As such, the report examined ten major global trends: (i) the centrality of geopolitics, (ii) economic challenges: mounting pressure on economic growth, (iii) uneven demographic ramifications, (iv) environmental and climate crises, (v) energy transition, (vi) the quest for equality, (vii) technological acceleration and convergence, (viii) health as a global challenge, (ix) changes in where and how we live, and (x) threats to democracy.

He presented some of the main policy choices that policy makers may have to

consider in the context of the Commission's next term of office.

In this respect, the report first looked at the EU's ability to assert itself as a smart global power, capable of navigating effectively an uncertain geopolitical landscape, and acting with partners where possible, autonomously when necessary.

He then stressed the importance of ensuring an effective and equitable green transition, both socially and economically, by exploring the trade-offs necessary to achieve this. The question of the extent to which European policy makers were willing to accept economic risks to strengthen the EU's geopolitical and technological sovereignty was also addressed.

The report also examined whether the current EU economic model was fit for purpose and whether a major update was needed to ensure its long-term sustainability. It analysed how the European regulatory framework could incentivise innovation and deliver economic benefits while providing adequate protection against potential risks and harm.

Finally, it explored how the EU could strengthen opportunities for all European citizens, in order to prevent social fragmentation and consolidate support for future transitions, as well as the role of social protection instruments to help mitigate political risks to democratic systems.

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ concluded his presentation by stressing that the report highlighted what many felt intuitively, namely that the world had become significantly more complex, characterised by increasingly interrelated phenomena and more intense and faster changes than before.

The Commission took note of this information.

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The meeting closed at 9.43.