



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2025) 2543 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 3 December 2025

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

**of the 2543rd meeting of the Commission
held in Brussels
(Berlaymont)
on Tuesday 4 November 2025
(morning)**

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Single sitting: Tuesday 4 November 2025 (morning)

The sitting opened at 9.06 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President
Ms VIRKKUNEN	Executive Vice-President
Mr SÉJOURNÉ	Executive Vice-President
Ms KALLAS	High Representative / Vice-President
Mr FITTO	Executive Vice-President
Ms ŠUICA	Member
Mr KUBILIUS	Member
Ms KOS	Member
Mr SÍKELA	Member
Mr KADIS	Member
Ms ALBUQUERQUE	Member
Mr BRUNNER	Member
Ms ROSWALL	Member
Mr SERAFIN	Member
Ms ZAHARIEVA	Member
Mr TZITZIKOSTAS	Member
Mr HANSEN	Member
Mr MICALLEF	Member

Items 1 to 8 (in part)

Absent:

Ms RIBERA	Executive Vice-President
Ms MÎNZATU	Executive Vice-President
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Member
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Member
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member
Mr HOEKSTRA	Member
Ms LAHBIB	Member
Mr JØRGENSEN	Member
Mr McGRATH	Member

The following also sat in:

Mr SEIBERT	Head of Cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Mr CALLEJA CRESPO	Director-General, Legal Service	
Ms SPINANT	Director-General, DG Communication	
Ms PINHO	Head of the Spokesperson's Service and Chief Spokesperson of the Commission	
Mr ADAM	Deputy Head of Cabinet to the PRESIDENT	
Ms PETKOVA	Director of Coordination and Administration in the PRESIDENT's cabinet	
Ms HAENICKE	Member of the PRESIDENT's cabinet	Item 8
Ms REICHSTEIN	Member of the PRESIDENT's cabinet	Items 9/10
Ms SEMLALI	Policy Assistant in the PRESIDENT's cabinet	
Mr TAQUET-GRAZIANI	Acting Head of Unit in the Secretariat-General	
Ms DAGILE	Deputy Head of Unit in the Secretariat-General	

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

1. AGENDAS

(OJ(2025) 2543/FINAL; SEC(2025) 2543/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(2025) 2543)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Heads of Cabinet held on Monday 3 November 2025.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

(PV(2025) 2539; PV(2025) 2539, PART II)

The Commission approved the minutes of its 2539th meeting of 30 September 2025 and decided to hold over approval of the minutes of its 2540th, 2541st and 2542nd meetings of 7, 16 and 21 October 2025 until a later meeting.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2025) 254)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (IRG) held on Friday 31 October 2025 (RCC(2025) 254).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **Amendment of Regulations (EU) 2021/694, (EU) 2021/695, (EU) 2021/697, (EU) 2021/1153, (EU) 2023/1525 and (EU) 2024/795, as regards incentivising defence-related investments in the EU budget to implement**

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the ReArm Europe Plan (Regulation) – KOLS report – 2025/0103 (COD)

Line set out in SI(2025) 329.

- **Accounting of greenhouse gas emissions of transport services (Regulation) – DECARO & LINS (ex-CANFIN & THALER) report – 2023/0266 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2025) 328.

- **Combat against sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child sexual abuse material and replacement of Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA (Directive – recast) – LENAERS report – 2024/0035 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2025) 338.

- **Union procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human use and establishment rules governing the European Medicines Agency, amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 536/2014 and repeal of Regulation (EC) No 726/2004, Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 and Regulation (EC) No 1901/2006 (Regulation) – WÖLKEN report – 2023/0131 (COD) / Union code relating to medicinal products for human use, and repeal of Directive 2001/83/EC and Directive 2009/35/EC (Directive) – MONTSERRAT (ex-WEISS-EHLER) report – 2023/0132 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2025) 343.

- **Objections pursuant to Rule 115(2) and (3) of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament to draft Commission Implementing Decisions:**
 - **authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize DAS1131,**

pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council – 2025/2893 (RSP)

- **renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified oilseed rape MON 88302, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council – 2025/2895 (RSP)**
- **renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified cotton MON 88913, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council – 2025/2894 (RSP)**
- **renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize MON 87427, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council – 2025/2897 (RSP)**
- **renewing the authorisation for the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified soybean MON 87708, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council – 2025/2896 (RSP)**

Line set out in SP(2025) 387/2.

- **Restructuring of the Union framework for the taxation of energy products and electricity (Council Directive – recast) – 2021/0213 (CNS)**

Line set out in SI(2025) 336.

- **Amendment of Regulations (EC) No 1272/2008, (EC) No 1223/2009 and (EU) 2019/1009 as regards simplification of certain requirements and procedures for chemical products (Regulation) – 2025/0531 (COD)**

Line set out in SI(2025) 339/2.

- **EU-UK negotiations on a common sanitary and phytosanitary area and on the linking of EU and UK greenhouse emissions trading systems**

Line set out in SPI(2025) 82.

The Commission took note of the following point:

- **Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality – KNOTEK report – 2025/0524 (COD)**

Information set out in SI(2025) 330.

5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION (RCC(2025) 258)

The Commission took note of the written exchanges of the External Coordination Group (EXCO) that took place for the week from 27 to 31 October 2025 (RCC(2025) 258).

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED (SEC(2025) 280 ET SEQ.)

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 20 October and 2 November 2025.

6.2. EMPOWERMENT (SEC(2025) 281 ET SEQ.)

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The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 20 October and 2 November 2025.

**6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS
(SEC(2025) 282 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedures between 20 October and 2 November 2025 archived in Decide.

**6.4. WRITTEN PROCEDURES SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED
(SEC(2025) 283 AND /2)**

The Commission took note of the written procedures specifically identified for which the time limit expired between 3 and 7 November 2025.

**7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
(SEC(2025) 284 AND /2)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
(PERS(2025) 86 AND /2)**

During the meeting, Mr SERAFIN presented two additional proposals for administrative decisions, which were submitted directly to the College for approval. It was proposed to approve the appointment of Mr Petr KLEMENT as Director-General of the European Anti-Fraud Office, and of Mr Alberto DE GREGORIO MERINO as Director-General of the Legal Service.

**7.1. EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE – APPOINTMENT OF A
DIRECTOR-GENERAL AT GRADE AD15**

The Commission took note of the information in point 1 of PERS(2025) 86/2 and, on a proposal from Mr SERAFIN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT,

decided to appoint Mr Petr KLEMENT to the post of Director-General of the European Anti-Fraud Office, and to hire him as a member of the temporary staff under Article 2(a) of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union for a non-renewable period of seven years.

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

**7.2. LEGAL SERVICE – APPOINTMENT OF A DIRECTOR-GENERAL AT GRADE AD15
(PERS(2025) 50 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-General of the Legal Service (PERS(2025) 50 and /2).

It took note of the opinions of the Consultative Committee on Appointments of 25 June and 4 July 2025 (PERS(2025) 50/3).

The Commission proceeded to compare the applicants' qualifications for the post. On a proposal from Mr SERAFIN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, it then decided to appoint Mr Alberto DE GREGORIO MERINO to the post.

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

**7.3. DG DIGITAL SERVICES – CLOSURE OF A SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR THE POST OF A DIRECTOR AT GRADE AD14/15
(PERS(2025) 34)**

On a proposal from Mr SERAFIN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, and after consulting Ms VIRKKUNEN, the Commission decided to close the selection procedure for the post of Director of the 'Digital Workplace and Infrastructure' Directorate in DG Digital Services, without making an appointment.

This decision would take effect immediately.

7.4. DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY – TRANSFER OF AN AD14 OFFICIAL UNDER ARTICLE 7 OF THE STAFF REGULATIONS

On a proposal from Mr SERAFIN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, and after consulting Ms LAHBIB and Mr VÁRHELYI, the Commission decided to transfer, in the interest of the service, under Article 7 of the Staff Regulations, Mr Wolfgang PHILIPP, currently Principal Adviser – Chief Science Officer in DG Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority, to the post of Principal Adviser for Health and Crisis Management in DG Health and Food Safety.

This decision would take effect on 1 December 2025.

7.5. DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INCLUSION – EXTENSION OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

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

- to propose to the Management Board of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) to extend the term of office of Mr Ivailo KALFIN as Executive Director of Eurofound for a period of five years from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2031, in accordance with Article 19(4) of Regulation (EU) 2019/127 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 January 2019;
- to task Ms MÎNZATU, the Member of the Commission responsible, with communicating this decision to Eurofound's Management Board.

These decisions would take effect immediately.

7.6. DG HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY – APPROVAL OF A TRANSFER IN THE INTEREST OF THE SERVICE TO FILL A POST OF HEAD OF EU DELEGATION AT GRADE AD9/14 (PERS(2025) 87)

The Commission took note of the information in point 4 of PERS(2025) 86 and, on a proposal from Mr SERAFIN, in agreement with the PRESIDENT, decided to approve, under Article 95(2) of the Staff Regulations, the proposal to transfer Mr Amador SANCHEZ RICO, in the interest of the service, to the post of Head of the EU Delegation to Chad (at grade AD9/14).

On this basis, the final decision on the transfer would be taken by the competent authority of the European External Action Service.

This decision 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 - 2025 COMMUNICATION ON EU ENLARGEMENT POLICY

(COM(2025) 690 TO /3; SWD(2025) 750 TO /3; SWD(2025) 751 TO /3; SWD(2025) 752 AND /2; SWD(2025) 753 AND /2; SWD(2025) 754 AND /2; SWD(2025) 755 AND /2; SWD(2025) 756 TO /3; SWD(2025) 757 AND /2; SWD(2025) 758 AND /2; SWD(2025) 759 TO /3; RCC(2025) 105)

The PRESIDENT introduced the annual enlargement policy package, which gave a comprehensive assessment of progress made by the partners concerned over the previous 12 months as well as guidance going forward. She noted the considerable public and political interest in the package and stressed its geostrategic importance. She emphasised that EU enlargement was a rigorous, fair and merit-based process.

The PRESIDENT stressed the positive impact of the growth plans, especially for the Western Balkans, as they enabled the countries concerned to move forward with their reforms and strengthen links with the EU through gradual access to the EU single market. Each enlargement round had historically led to tangible increases in GDP and living standards in the countries concerned, and had also strengthened the EU politically, economically and socially, thus demonstrating the benefits of new Member States joining. With the accession of new Member States increasingly within reach, she considered that the EU and its people should be gradually prepared for enlargement, especially by improving public perception of the candidate countries in the Member States.

Ms KALLAS pointed out that enlargement remained one of the EU's most effective geopolitical tools and a key investment in peace, stability and prosperity. She noted that the enlargement process was now progressing faster than in the previous 15 years, and that the current window of opportunity had to be seized. She emphasised that enlargement was a key driver of convergence; while bolstering the EU as a whole, it raised living standards in the candidate countries, as had happened in her own country (Estonia) after its accession to the EU in 2004. Significant progress had been made by some candidate countries and the merit-based approach continued to be important. Nevertheless, it was crucial to spot countries that were backsliding on democracy, the rule of law or fundamental rights.

Ms KOS then turned to the progress made by the various countries concerned. Montenegro and Albania had made significant progress towards EU membership and aimed to conclude negotiations by the end of 2026 and 2027 respectively. Montenegro was the furthest ahead, with four negotiating chapters already closed and several others that could be provisionally closed by the end of 2025. Four clusters had been opened over the past year for Albania, and preparations were well under way to open the final cluster that year. Ms KOS stressed that integrating these two countries into the EU should not pose any particular problems, given their combined population of only three million.

Ukraine and Moldova had both completed the screening process and made progress on key reforms despite one facing war and the other persistent hybrid threats. Preparations for the opening of clusters could be completed by the end of November, although some political obstacles remained. Moldova's progress over the previous year had been particularly notable, and the Moldovan government planned to provisionally close accession negotiations by early 2028. The Ukrainian government had signalled its aim to provisionally close accession negotiations by the end of 2028.

Ms KOS noted that Serbia's reform efforts had slowed, especially as regards the judiciary, electoral systems and media freedom, and alignment with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) remained weak. The Serbian authorities still regarded EU membership as a strategic objective, but the pace of reforms needed to increase for that objective to remain credible.

North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo* had made limited progress on the path to EU membership, while the situation in Georgia had deteriorated sharply, with a rapid erosion of the rule of law and fundamental rights.

Lastly, Ms KOS pointed out that, although Türkiye was a key partner for the EU, its accession negotiations had been at a standstill since 2018. Constructive cooperation continued, including in the regional and security fields and especially in the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

The success of enlargement would depend both on the credibility of reforms in the candidate countries and on the EU's willingness to integrate new members. Better communication on the benefits of enlargement was important. According to a recent Eurobarometer survey, public support for enlargement was around 60% in the EU as

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

a whole - a significant increase compared with 10 years previously. However, it was essential for future accession treaties to contain stronger safeguards against backsliding on the rule of law and other fundamental values to preserve the integrity of the EU.

Ms KOS concluded by stressing that the aim of enlargement was to strengthen the EU. She therefore called for continued engagement with Member States to ensure broad political ownership at national level and to guarantee a process that was credible, merit-based and firmly anchored in the EU's strategic interests.

During the discussion that followed, the Commission raised the following main points:

- recognition of the significant progress made by several candidate countries, especially Montenegro and Albania, and the positive developments seen in Ukraine and Moldova, despite the background of war and hybrid threats;
- the geopolitical importance of enlargement, which was regarded as both an investment in the continent's stability and a way of boosting the EU's security and resilience;
- the importance of the accession process being merit-based, with candidate countries being called on to pursue reforms in the areas of the rule of law, media freedom and alignment with the Common Foreign and Security Policy;
- concerns about delays resulting from political deadlock in the Council and about slow progress in some enlargement countries;
- the call to improve public communication on the benefits of enlargement for people in both Member States and candidate countries;
- the need to capitalise on the practical results of the enlargement process for candidate countries, such as the reforms supported by the Western Balkans

growth plan, the Single Euro Payments Area and the ‘Roam like at home’ policy;

- the importance for the EU of preparing itself to welcome new members, especially through institutional reforms, and of reflecting on decision-making arrangements to ensure an enlarged Union worked efficiently;
- the desire to avoid any weakening of the European democratic model with the integration of new members, by ensuring that future accession treaties include stronger safeguards against the risks of backsliding on the rule of law;
- the need for close coordination with Member States to sustain a strong political consensus on enlargement and maintain the credibility of the process for candidate partners.

The PRESIDENT concluded the discussion by pointing out that the Commission would soon present a Communication on in-depth policy reviews and reforms. It would propose a new approach for an enlarged EU, taking into account the institutional, political and budgetary challenges linked to the accession of new members. She emphasised that it would be crucial to address the issue of decision-making, where currently a single Member State could block the whole process, and that pragmatic solutions should be sought.

Following these presentations, the Commission approved the Communication in COM(2025) 690/3, 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, together with the staff working documents in SWD(2025) 750/3, SWD(2025) 751/3, SWD(2025) 752/2, SWD(2025) 753/2, SWD(2025) 754/2, SWD(2025) 755/2, SWD(2025) 756/3, SWD(2025) 757/2, SWD(2025) 758/2 and SWD(2025) 759/3, the contents of which were noted.

9. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS — CONNECTING EUROPE THROUGH HIGH-SPEED RAIL

(COM(2025) 903 AND /2; SWD(2025) 960; SWD(2025) 961; RCC(2025) 104)

10. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS — SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT INVESTMENT PLAN

(COM(2025) 664 TO /3; RCC(2025) 106)

Mr FITTO introduced the two Communications on transport, which aimed to accelerate the deployment of the European high-speed rail network, on the one hand, and, on the other, to boost investment in renewable and low-carbon fuels for transport, mainly in the aviation and shipping sectors. Competitiveness and sustainability were the guiding principles of these two Communications which covered two key areas: railways, where Europe was already at the forefront of sustainability, and fuels, where it needed to boost investments for its energy transition.

As regards the action plan for a European high-speed train network, Mr FITTO stressed that it was a flagship initiative of this year's Commission's Work Programme and a response to the recommendation made in Mr Enrico Letta's report to create a rail network linking all European capitals and major cities. The Communication, which was based on the Regulation on the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T), provided for the gradual establishment of high-speed rail links between the main urban centres by 2040.

He explained that the action plan set out the measures to be taken to address the remaining delays and bottlenecks regarding European railways and to fully achieve

the ambitions of the TEN-T. He also called on the Member States to consider, where economically feasible, very high-speed rail connections of more than 250 km/h, and stressed the need to ensure that less developed regions were connected to the network, so that the network was balanced across the EU.

Turning to the Communication on a Sustainable Transport Investment Plan (STIP), Mr FITTO explained that it aimed to create more favourable market conditions for investments in renewable and low-carbon fuels, in particular for the aviation and waterborne transport sectors, which were still heavily dependent on fossil fuels. He stressed the need to accelerate the deployment of sustainable fuels, alongside continuing with electrification efforts, where possible.

In this context, he called for an integrated approach to the biofuel value chain that would strengthen the sector without reopening existing legislation or prematurely anticipating future revisions. He believed that this approach was essential for the agricultural community, other economic actors and key industrial sectors, such as refining, which played a key role in territorial cohesion and the safeguarding of jobs.

In conclusion, Mr FITTO pointed out that these two complementary communications illustrated the EU's willingness to invest in a more integrated, sustainable and competitive transport system that served citizens and European cohesion.

Mr TZITZIKOSTAS stressed that competitiveness and sustainability should remain the guiding principles for the modernisation of the European transport system in its entirety. He pointed out that rail transport, an essential pillar of sustainable mobility, contributed directly to the daily lives of citizens, to the economic dynamism of regions and to European security, in particular through military mobility. He added that the Sustainable Transport Investment Plan complemented this approach by accelerating the energy transition of aviation and maritime transport and by supporting the emergence of a European market for renewable and low-carbon fuels.

As regards the action plan for the high-speed rail network, he explained that it was structured around four complementary pillars.

The first pillar focused on infrastructure development and the removal of bottlenecks, especially at borders, in order to build a truly continuous network at EU level. Mr TZITZIKOSTAS noted that the EU was still fragmented into a set of mainly national networks, with 12 000 kilometres of high-speed lines concentrated in a few Member States – mainly Spain, France, Italy and Germany – while central and eastern Europe was still insufficiently connected.

To address this, he stressed the need for a coordinated financial strategy between Member States, businesses and financial actors. The completion of this network would require around EUR 550 billion in investment, but could generate up to EUR 200 billion in additional economic and social benefits. He also stressed the importance of a unified digital framework, based on the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS), considering that its full deployment would enhance both the competitiveness and interoperability of the European network, while decisively improving its safety.

The second pillar consisted of the establishment of an enabling regulatory framework through EU regulation aimed at improving cross-border ticketing and booking systems, thus making it easier for passengers to prepare and book journeys in Europe. He said that the EU would also support the development of a market for used coaches and wagons and would invest, together with private industrial partners, in research for the next generation of high-speed rolling stock. Finally, he believed that infrastructure managers needed to work together more effectively to provide predictable and attractive cross-border capacity for long-distance services.

Mr TZITZIKOSTAS then turned to the third pillar, which was dedicated to strengthening the European rail supply industry. While Europe remained a leader in rail technology, its production capacity was no longer able to keep up with demand, with it taking four to six years to deliver a new train, while its international

competitors were quickly catching up. The Commission would revise public procurement rules in 2026 and encourage a more standardised production of high-speed trains, reducing manufacturing and maintenance costs while speeding up production times.

Mr TZITZIKOSTAS said that the last pillar concerned governance, with a need to strengthen coordination at European level. This would involve increased reliance on the coordinators of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), raising the expert group on the competitiveness of the railway industry to the political level, as well as strengthening the role of the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA), in order to make the system safer, more modern, and more efficient.

He added that Europe needed to remain at the forefront of innovation and open to disruptive technologies. In this regard, he mentioned the development of hyperloop, which consisted of passenger or freight pods travelling at very high speed in vacuum tubes. This technology was still under development but seemed promising for land transport. He noted that several European players were already among the world's frontrunners in the testing and prototyping phase, and announced the forthcoming publication of a report on the opportunities and challenges associated with this technology.

Secondly, he presented the Sustainable Transport Investment Plan (STIP), which set out the EU's strategy to increase investment in renewable and low-carbon fuels for the aviation and maritime sectors. This plan complemented the work already undertaken in other modes of transport, in particular the automotive action plan, the planned revision of CO₂ emission standards for cars and light commercial vehicles, the decarbonisation of corporate fleets and the ongoing dialogue with the heavy-duty vehicle sector.

He pointed out that aviation and maritime transport remained almost entirely dependent on fossil fuels. He considered sustainable fuels to be the only viable solution to decarbonise these two sectors, while strengthening the EU's energy

security, strategic autonomy and industrial competitiveness. He emphasised that, in order to achieve the targets set by the RefuelEU Aviation and FuelEU Maritime Regulations, the EU would have to produce around 20 million tonnes of biofuels and synthetic fuels by 2035. However, the current regulatory framework did not yet allow for the mobilisation of the necessary investments, which revealed a market failure in the development of sustainable fuels within the EU, particularly for synthetic fuels.

Although Europe had the largest portfolio of projects in the world for the production of synthetic fuels, no investor had yet made a definitive commitment. Mr TZITZIKOSTAS explained that these fuels, which remained two to ten times more expensive than conventional fuels, required considerable capital investment. He also noted a discrepancy between the expectations of producers, who were looking for long-term supply contracts of 10 to 15 years, and those of air and maritime operators, who favoured shorter commitments of 1 to 2 years because of price volatility.

He said that around EUR 100 billion would need to be invested by 2035 to scale up production of renewable and low-carbon fuels. He stressed that the majority of this funding was expected to come from the private sector. The investment plan therefore sent a clear signal to market players that the EU's objectives were stable and that the Commission would support the sector throughout this transition. The next two years would be decisive, as investment decisions would need to be made and construction works started by 2027 in order to achieve the 2030 targets.

Next, Mr TZITZIKOSTAS pointed out that the Communication focused on short- and medium-term measures. In the short term, resources available under existing EU funding programmes, such as the Innovation Fund, Horizon Europe and InvestEU, would be mobilised to provide at least EUR 2.9 billion in support for sustainable fuels. In addition, together with the Member States, the Commission would launch an early movers coalition pilot project for synthetic fuels to channel at least EUR 500 million into new projects, and the European Investment Bank (EIB) would

also make a substantial contribution through its TechEU programme. In the longer term, the Commission would propose that an EU mechanism be set up to connect fuel producers with buyers to provide revenue certainty while de-risking investments.

Lastly, he said that the plan did not focus solely on investment and financing; it also included a wide range of regulatory simplification and streamlining measures, as the sectors concerned were currently facing multiple overlapping reporting obligations. In parallel, international partnerships would be strengthened to boost global production of sustainable fuels while ensuring fair competition for European producers and consumers.

Mr TZITZIKOSTAS wrapped up his presentation by stressing that the initiatives being tabled that day were expected to drive innovation and investment, boost connectivity and improve the sector's autonomy while laying the foundations for a resilient and pioneering European transport system that lived up to citizens' expectations.

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

- the importance of rolling out the European high-speed network in an economically sustainable way so that the cost of rail travel did not encourage passengers to travel by plane;
- the need for a solid financial framework for network development based on more private investment and better use of economies of scale in order to boost the competitiveness of rail transport and the cohesiveness of the single market;
- the strategic role of investments in clean mobility and sustainable fuels as a means of strengthening the EU's industrial base, enhancing its technological sovereignty and driving forward the energy transition;

- the advisability of a realistic roll-out of sustainable fuels, whose costs remained high compared to fossil fuels, calling for careful planning based on credible economic and technological assumptions in order to avoid excessive increases in transport costs and preserve European competitiveness;
- the prospect that biofuels could help support farmers and European biorefineries in the face of pressure from external markets and low agricultural prices;
- the need to remove regulatory barriers and promote a sustainable bioeconomy, particularly in conjunction with wastewater management;
- the contribution the Sustainable Transport Investment Plan would make to the energy transition in the maritime transport sector, in line with the EU Oceans Pact and decarbonisation efforts in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

In response to some of the points raised, Mr TZITZIKOSTAS noted that the main difficulty regarding alternative fuels was the lack of production capacity, which explained why their cost was still high. He emphasised that the investment plan aimed to boost production by reducing risks for investors, which should lead to lower prices and drive the energy transition forward.

As regards the high-speed network, maps and timetables had been provided with the Communication detailing when the lines would become operational across the EU. He gave the example of the Madrid-Lisbon route, on which the journey time would be halved in two or three years' time. In conclusion, he called for the Commission to forge ahead with its efforts and for the two initiatives to be implemented without delay.

Following these presentations, the Commission, on a proposal from the PRESIDENT, confirmed that the Communications set out in COM(2025) 903/2 and COM(2025) 664/3 would be formally adopted by finalisation written procedure, the deadline for which was set at 10.00 on Wednesday 5 November 2025 (PE/2025/7555 and PE/2025/7610).

11. OTHER BUSINESS

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Ms KALLAS first mentioned her visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina on 3 November, shortly after the UN Security Council had renewed the mandate of EUFOR ALTHEA, the EU peacekeeping mission in the country, on 31 October, and ahead of the early presidential elections to be held in Republika Srpska on 23 November. She noted that it was now important for the EU to clearly commit to securing the country's European future.

With regard to Ukraine, she reported that Russia was stepping up pressure on the country's energy infrastructure in the run-up to winter. She stressed how important it was for Europe to provide support in terms of air defence and network repairs. The available intelligence did not currently suggest that there would be a large-scale displacement of civilians owing to power outages. Lastly, she mentioned the advisability of drawing up a 20th package of sanctions against Russia, emphasising the effectiveness of the measures already in place and their impact on the country's economy. Efforts also needed to be made to agree on a reparations loan to help Ukraine rebuild.

On Moldova, Ms KALLAS said that the new pro-European government led by Mr Munteanu, who had obtained the Parliament's backing in a vote of confidence at the end of the previous week, hoped to complete accession negotiations by 2028. She informed the College that she was meeting President Sandu later that day and would hold a working lunch with the new Prime Minister on 18 November.

Turning to the Middle East, she noted that, since Hamas and Israel had signed the ceasefire agreement earlier in the month, efforts had focused on how to support the peace plan put forward by President Trump. She stressed the importance of the EU having a tangible role in this process and emphasised the need for coordinated action to enable the EU to play a full part.

Lastly, Ms KALLAS briefly mentioned that she would be attending the G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting in Canada on 11 and 12 November.

The PRESIDENT stressed that EU sanctions were having an impact on Russia's economy and emphasised the need to spread this message so as to counter Russia's narrative which claimed the opposite was true.

The Commission took note of this information.

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At the end of the Commission meeting, a reminder was given of the importance of respecting the deadlines for distributing documents to be adopted, with a view to ensuring the smooth functioning of collegiality.

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The meeting closed at 10.56.