



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

PV(2026) 2559 final

- English translation of the French version which is authentic -

Brussels, 22 April 2026

TEXTE EN

MINUTES

of the 2559th meeting of the Commission

held in Strasbourg

(Winston Churchill building)

on Tuesday 10 March 2026

(afternoon)

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Single sitting: Tuesday 10 March 2026 (afternoon)

The sitting opened at 13.45 with Ms von der LEYEN, President, in the chair.

Present:

Ms von der LEYEN	President
Ms RIBERA	Executive Vice-President
Ms VIRKKUNEN	Executive Vice-President
Mr SÉJOURNÉ	Executive Vice-President
Mr FITTO	Executive Vice-President
Mr ŠEFČOVIČ	Member
Ms ŠUICA	Member
Mr VÁRHELYI	Member
Mr HOEKSTRA	Member
Mr KUBILIUS	Member
Ms KOS	Member
Mr SÍKELA	Member
Mr KADIS	Member
Mr BRUNNER	Member
Ms ROSWALL	Member
Mr SERAFIN	Member
Ms ZAHARIEVA	Member
Mr McGRATH	Member
Mr HANSEN	Member
Mr MICALLEF	Member

Absent:

Ms KALLAS	High Representative / Vice-President
Ms MÎNZATU	Executive Vice-President
Mr DOMBROVSKIS	Member
Ms ALBUQUERQUE	Member
Ms LAHBIB	Member
Mr JØRGENSEN	Member
Mr TZITZIKOSTAS	Member

The following also sat in:

Mr SEIBERT	Head of Cabinet to the PRESIDENT
Mr DE GREGORIO	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
Mr VAN KEMSEKE	Adviser in the PRESIDENT's cabinet
Ms SEMLALI	Policy Assistant in the PRESIDENT's cabinet
Mr TAQUET-GRAZIANI	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(2026) 2559/FINAL; SEC(2026) 2559/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(2026) 2559)

The Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on the weekly meeting of Heads of Cabinet held on Friday 6 March 2026.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Commission held over approval of the minutes of its 2555th, 2556th, 2557th and 2558th meetings of 18 and 26 February, and 2 and 4/6 March 2026 for a later date.

4. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

(RCC(2026) 160)

The Commission took note of the record of the meeting of the Interinstitutional Relations Group (GRI) held on Thursday 5 March 2026 (RCC(2026) 160).

The Commission approved the lines proposed for the following points:

- **Oral question O-000008/2026 – Upcoming European Research Area (ERA) Act**

Line set out in SP(2026) 59.

- **Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission – SIMON report – 2025/2243 (ACI)**

Line set out in SP(2026) 60.

- **European Parliament resolution under Article 225 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) – Digitalisation, artificial intelligence and algorithmic management in the workplace – shaping the future of work – BULA report – 2025/2080 (INL)**

Line set out in SP(2026) 61.

- **Draft Commission reply to the Contribution of the LXXIVth plenary session of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC), 30 November to 2 December 2025**

Line set out in SNP(2026) 3/3.

The Commission took note of the following points:

- **Scrutiny of delegated and implementing acts and related empowerments (DG SANTE)**

Information set out in SPI(2026) 36.

- **Scrutiny of delegated and implementing acts and related empowerments (DG FISMA)**

Information set out in SPI(2026) 37/2.

- **Amendment of Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights, and Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 on air carrier liability in respect of the carriage of passengers and their**

baggage by air (Regulation) – NOVAKOV (ex-ARIAS ECHEVERRÍA & ex-BACH) report – 2013/0072 (COD)

Information set out in SI(2026) 54.

**5. COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL ACTION
(RCC(2026) 209)**

The Commission took note of the operational conclusions in RCC(2026) 209 of the meeting of the Group for External Coordination (EXCO) held on Thursday 5 March 2026.

6. WRITTEN PROCEDURES, EMPOWERMENT AND DELEGATION OF POWERS

**6.1. WRITTEN PROCEDURES APPROVED
(SEC(2026) 63 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 2 and 8 March 2026.

**6.2. EMPOWERMENT
(SEC(2026) 64 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted between 2 and 8 March 2026.

**6.3. DELEGATION / SUBDELEGATION OF POWERS
(SEC(2026) 65 ET SEQ.)**

The Commission took note of the Secretariat-General's memoranda recording decisions adopted under the delegation and subdelegation procedures between 2 and 8 March 2026 archived in Decide.

**6.4. WRITTEN PROCEDURES SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED
(SEC(2026) 66 AND /2)**

The Commission took note of the written procedures specifically identified for which the time limit expired between 9 and 15 March 2026, and of the finalisation written procedure.

**7. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL ON THE CITIZENS
ENERGY PACKAGE**

(COM(2026) 115 TO /3; SWD(2026) 115; RCC(2026) 18)

**8. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF
THE REGIONS – CLEAN ENERGY INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

(COM(2026) 116 TO /3; RCC(2026) 18)

**9. COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF
THE REGIONS – STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND
DEPLOYMENT OF SMALL MODULAR REACTORS (SMRs) IN EUROPE**

(COM(2026) 117 TO /3; RCC(2026) 18)

Ms RIBERA presented the energy package, pointing out that its adoption that day was even more important in view of the current difficult international context,

which was also the reason why Mr JØRGENSEN could not attend that day's College meeting.

Ms RIBERA began by referring to the Clean Energy Investment Strategy, stressing that the security of the EU's energy supply was currently very much dependent on the global geopolitical environment. Global threats had a direct impact on energy prices for industry and households, and it was therefore crucial to reduce the EU's reliance on external energy sources. Speeding up investment in clean technologies, energy networks and infrastructure would allow Europe to break free from its dependence on fossil fuels and exposure to price volatility. In that context, the proposed strategy marked the start of the Commission's long-term response to structural energy challenges.

She noted that, in order to achieve its 2030 climate and energy targets, the EU needed annual investment of around EUR 660 billion in its energy system, which was double the current figure. Noting that public funding alone would not suffice and that private capital would therefore have to be mobilised on a large scale, she said that the strategy proposed new innovative financing instruments to attract private funding. The Commission would implement this strategy in close partnership with the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group, which was intending to provide more than EUR 75 billion in financing over the next three years to support the clean energy transition objectives. She stressed the importance of acting quickly, without waiting for the next Multiannual Financial Framework, and expressed her view that there were options in the current EU budget for channelling the necessary investments into the energy system.

Ms RIBERA then presented the Communication on energy-related measures to help citizens. She felt that, while the political debate on energy in recent months had rightly focused on industrial competitiveness and reducing prices for businesses, it was just as important to provide more affordable energy for people in Europe and to support the most vulnerable consumers. For many households, in particular those on

low incomes, energy bills took up a large proportion of their monthly budget. When prices rose or markets became volatile, as was the case at present, it was those households that were directly affected.

For those reasons, the Communication being presented that day put people first, with the simple objective of ensuring that all Europeans had access to affordable and clean energy in comfortable housing, and that the green transition benefited everyone. She added that it was important for citizens to feel the benefits of this transition, because if it was perceived as costly, imposed or unfair, it would lose public support. She noted that the situation remained deeply worrying, as around 42 million Europeans – i.e. almost 9% of the population – had been unable to heat their homes properly in 2024.

Ms RIBERA then presented the specific measures proposed in the Communication, which were based around three main objectives: (i) cutting household energy bills, through measures such as lower taxes, levies and network charges, which could bring down energy bills by around 14% or some EUR 200 per year on average; (ii) giving people the chance to become actively involved in the energy system, through energy communities, self-consumption and energy-sharing, by encouraging them to produce and use their own clean electricity; and (iii) tackling energy poverty and better protecting vulnerable consumers.

She added that comparing suppliers' tariffs could also generate significant savings, as was the case in the telecommunications sector. She believed that the measures set out in the Communication were synonymous with fairness, resilience and autonomy and would ensure that the energy transition brought down bills, protected the most vulnerable and enabled every household in Europe to benefit from clean energy. Finally, she stressed the importance of recalibrating national taxes on households, making it easier for people to change supplier, ensuring that contracts were more flexible and promoting energy communities.

Lastly, Ms RIBERA presented the Strategy on Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), noting that, according to assessments, using SMRs to decarbonise certain energy-intensive sectors of the economy would make it possible to have a sustainable and stable electricity supply round the clock. The strategy proved that the EU could and wanted to be a global industrial leader in this field, with the first projects set to begin as early as 2030. She concluded her presentation by reiterating the importance of ensuring funding was made available, in particular through the European Innovation Fund, to support deployment of the initial commercial units of innovative nuclear technologies through the use of de-risking schemes.

Mr SÉJOURNÉ, in turn, addressed the subject of small modular reactors, arguing that clean and local energy technologies were key to ensuring access to reliable and affordable energy and to strengthening the EU's leadership in net-zero technologies. He welcomed the fact that financing and supporting the technology associated with these small reactors was no longer taboo. He highlighted a step forward in terms of financing, pointing out that an InvestEU guarantee top-up of EUR 200 million from the Innovation Fund would be devoted, until 2028, to guaranteeing the production of these reactors at EU level, thereby creating a leverage effect.

He also pointed to the need to harmonise regulation within the EU to create a stable and secure market and to win the battle for innovation in the face of global competition, where a European alliance could offer products able to compete with those of the United States or China. In this context, he stressed the importance of drastically simplifying permitting schemes in order to prevent fragmentation of the EU's internal market.

Mr SÉJOURNÉ concluded by saying that the development of a strong European nuclear industry was not only an economic opportunity, but also an essential step towards decarbonising industry, strengthening the EU's energy independence and meeting the needs of new energy-intensive technologies.

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

- full support for the package proposed that day, whose timing was crucial to strengthening the EU energy market while pushing on with decarbonisation;
- the key contribution of nuclear energy to the EU's security of energy supply and to the 2050 climate neutrality objectives;
- in this context, the need to invest in extending the lifetime of existing nuclear reactors and developing the technologies required for small modular reactors, and to speed up licensing procedures;
- the expected benefits of the development of small modular reactors in terms of creating new quality jobs in the EU;
- the existence of multiple models and concepts of small modular reactors at global level and the importance for the EU of establishing common standards in the single market, selecting the most promising technological projects and directing public support towards them;
- the importance of the planned top-up of InvestEU with EUR 200 million from the Innovation Fund to support the deployment of the initial commercial units of innovative nuclear technologies, which would attract private investment to the sector;
- in addition, the role of the bioeconomy and the circular economy in reducing dependence on fossil fuels;
- the need to enable citizens to manage their energy consumption in the most efficient way possible while reducing their electricity bills and contributing to the green transition;

- a reference to the various levers available to the Member States in this regard, including energy taxation, support for housing renovation and diversification of the choice of energy suppliers.

In conclusion, the PRESIDENT stressed the complementary role of renewables and nuclear energy in ensuring the EU's independence from fossil fuels in a context of growing electricity needs, in particular for the development of artificial intelligence, data centres and e-mobility. She also mentioned the large number of highly qualified experts in the European nuclear energy sector and the need to retain these talents in Europe while preserving the EU's leading role in this sector.

Following these presentations, the Commission:

- approved the Communication in COM(2026) 115/3 for transmission to the European Parliament and the Council and, for information, to the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the national parliaments, together with the staff working document distributed as SWD(2026) 115, the contents of which were noted;
- approved the Communication in COM(2026) 116 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;
- approved the Communication in COM(2026) 117 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.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1. RESPONSE TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION UNDER ARTICLE 225 OF THE TREATY ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION – DIGITALISATION, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ALGORITHMIC MANAGEMENT IN THE WORKPLACE (SP(2026) 61)

In the absence of Ms MÎNZATU, Mr ŠEFČOVIČ informed the College of the proposed response to a legislative initiative resolution under Article 225 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), voted on by the European Parliament at its December 2025 plenary session.

The resolution called on the Commission to put forward a proposal on artificial intelligence and algorithmic management in the workplace with concrete recommendations on issues such as human oversight, transparency, and prohibited practices. The response, which was mainly based on the elements of the Quality Jobs Roadmap, stated that the Commission would focus primarily on the implementation and enforcement of existing rules. The Commission would then examine to what extent algorithmic management was sufficiently covered by the *acquis* and, if necessary, consider targeted complementary measures in the upcoming Quality Jobs Act. Any potential administrative burden and impact on competitiveness and on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) would be carefully evaluated in the Commission's impact assessment.

Mr ŠEFČOVIČ noted that during the previous term of office, 25 Article 225 resolutions had been adopted by the European Parliament and dealt with by the Commission. Under the new framework agreement concluded between the Commission and Parliament, the Commission's reply had to be accompanied

by a justification of the need for a new proposal, together with an estimate of the administrative burden and the costs that this could entail, to give Parliament all the information on the impact of its requests.

Following these presentations, the Commission approved the approach set out in SP(2026) 61, including the draft letter to be sent by Ms MÎNZATU to the European Parliament.

10.2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ENTRY/EXIT SYSTEM

Mr BRUNNER reported on the implementation of the new IT system to manage entry to and exit from the EU. Progressively deployed since October 2025, the system would be operational at all border crossing points from April 2026. The most modern border system in the world, it would register the passports and biometric data of all non-EU travellers and completely replace the stamping of passports.

In the first four months following the launch of the system in October 2025, over 35 million border crossings had been registered – more than two million per week. In terms of refusals of entry, over 18 500 individuals presenting a security or migration risk had been prevented from entering the Schengen area. The system was attracting attention from third countries such as the United States, which had an entry system but no exit system, and Canada, which had both but no connection between the two.

A change of this magnitude would always bring challenges; the emerging concerns fell into three categories. First, there had been negative media attention, underpinned by reports on long queues at European airports even when the system had not yet been fully deployed. Mr BRUNNER highlighted the communication work carried out to counter the effects of this negative press and emphasise the benefits of the system.

Second, there were fears in the transport and tourism sectors regarding potential queues for travellers resulting from the phased introduction of the system. Such fears were understandable, given the complexity of a system connecting more than 1 500 border crossing points in 29 countries at different stages of implementation. Mr BRUNNER noted specifically that three countries in the Schengen area were facing some delays and technical problems. He had reminded all countries of the need to be ready by April.

Finally, third countries had expressed concerns, particularly countries in the Western Balkans where truck drivers' organisations were complaining about the impact of the system on logistics. Mr BRUNNER stressed that the new system did not change the existing rules but ensured better compliance. Under the rules, non-EU truck drivers could stay in the Schengen area for only 90 days in a 180-day period. Drivers needing to stay in the EU for longer could apply for long-term visas or residence permits; there were also more flexible rules for cross-border workers. Discussions had been held with the countries concerned on these rules and the existing options.

To conclude, Mr BRUNNER emphasised the European success story that implementing this world-leading system represented. Moreover, increased border security directly responded to EU citizens' expectations.

In the course of the brief discussion that followed, the Commission primarily referred to the implications of compliance with the rules on limiting the stays of truck drivers from the Western Balkans in a context of a shortage of truck drivers in the EU.

In conclusion, the PRESIDENT expressed her satisfaction that the EU had equipped itself with the most modern system in the world, and stressed that the new system did not change the rules but made their application more transparent.

The Commission took note of this information.

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The meeting closed at 14.43.