

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND  
HOME AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION

ASSOCIATED COMMITTEE:  
COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

INVITED COMMITTEE:  
COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT

## **HEARING OF MARGARITIS SCHINAS**

COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE

(Protecting our European Way of Life)

THURSDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2019

BRUSSELS



1-002-0000

**IN THE CHAIR****JUAN FERNANDO LÓPEZ AGUILAR***Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs***SABINE VERHEYEN***Committee on Culture and Education**(The hearing opened at 18.32)*

**Juan Fernando López Aguilar**, *Chair LIBE*. – Good evening dear colleagues. There's not a minute to waste: we have a way to go. First, as Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties Justice and Home Affairs, I'm glad to welcome to this hearing Vice-President-designate of the Commission to be, Margaritis Schinas. Please be warmly welcome to this hearing session, together with the Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education, Ms Sabine Verheyen.

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs is also associated with this hearing, which has been much too often the case. Let's remind you that, according to Annex 7 of the Rules of Procedure, this Parliament shall, through this hearing, evaluate the Commissioners-designate – in this case, the Vice-President-designate: the competence, the European commitment and of course personal independence to fulfil the job, but also knowledge of the prospective portfolio and communication skills.

To prepare this meeting, two common questions were drafted by the Conference of Presidents and six specific questions, out of which three were prepared by the CULT Committee and three by the LIBE Committee. The Commissioner-designate has replied in writing, and all of the answers have been circulated among the Members in all the official languages, which is also the case for the interpretation cabin. The JURI Committee raised no objection to holding this hearing, which is meaningful, as we all know.

The debate will be structured as follows: the Commissioner-designate is going to present his case for no longer than 15 minutes. We've got a three-hour schedule for this meeting at this late hour in the day, so we're going to do our best to make it right. The question and answer of each Member will be five minutes for each one of the slots, up to a maximum of 25: five minutes each, which means one minute shooting the question first, then two minutes for the first answer from the Vice-President-designate, then an immediate follow-up of one minute, and a final reply – one minute again. That sums up five minutes each. That's the way it'll be. There will be a first round of questions for representatives of every political group of this House and a second round, up to a maximum of 25, including a representative from non-attached Members. Finally, the Vice-President-designate will have five minutes for a closing statement. That will be the structure. Both Ms Verheyen and myself will have to be strict as to the timing. So please don't make us interrupt you, because otherwise it gets out of hand, and we really need to make it right. As I said, interpretation will be provided in all the official languages of the European Union.

Let me just finish my first statement by saying that this hearing happens to be of particular relevance. We all know that Mr Schinas is Vice-President-designate for protecting the European way of life, including 'guidance and coordination' of Commissioners-designate Ylva Johansen on home affairs and Helena Dalli on equality. These are also relevant portfolios for the LIBE Committee competences, particularly when it comes to law-making. So Mr Schinas' portfolio is meaningful for the LIBE Committee, especially under the Lisbon Treaty and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, which came into force, along with the Lisbon Treaty itself, exactly ten years ago, because asylum and immigration policies – the

external and internal dimensions of it – are also accompanied by pieces of legislation: the asylum package, the migration package, the Schengen package. Just as the case of the European security union: the internal and external dimensions. So surely there's going to be a debate about his relevant portfolio, including the very name of it: the European way of life. That will be the first question, that's for sure. What do you mean? What does it mean? Because surely we can agree there's a European way of life, but we need to also agree as to the content. What is it to be protected from? What are the real threats against the European way of life? Not to be misled or mistaken, not to get the point wrong, because surely asylum and migration, in the view of the LIBE Committee, I must say, are not threats to the European way of life.

So we will carefully listen to every contribution that will be made in both fields, which are of particular importance, and particularly as this unannounced Pact on Asylum and Migration to be delivered by the Commission to be unblocking the asylum package, most particularly – unblocking the asylum package that has been blocked by the Council, as we all have in mind, for all too long.

Having said this, I will pass the floor to our Co-Chair for this hearing, the CULT Chair, Ms Verheyen, for her opening remarks before we hear from Vice-President-designate Mr Schinas.

1-004-0000

**Sabine Verheyen**, *Vorsitzende des CULT-Ausschusses*. – Vielen Dank, Herr Ko-Vorsitzender López Aguilar, für Ihre Einleitung und dafür, dass Sie sehr klar dargelegt haben, wie diese Anhörung abzulaufen hat. Im Namen des Ausschusses für Kultur und Bildung möchte ich den designierten Vize-Präsidenten Herrn Schinas sehr herzlich hier bei uns begrüßen.

Herr Schinas, Ihnen wurde eine sehr weitreichende Verantwortung übertragen, indem Sie nämlich für den Schutz unserer europäischen Lebensweise Sorge tragen sollen. Ihre Verantwortung erstreckt sich sowohl auf die Bereiche Migration und Sicherheit als aber auch auf Kultur, Bildung und Sport. Es wird Ihnen sicherlich nicht entgangen sein, dass es zum Namen Ihres Portfolios sicherlich die eine oder andere Frage geben wird, und im Laufe dieser Anhörung werden Sie bestimmt auch die Gelegenheit haben, Ihre Vorstellung von dem Portfolio entsprechend darzulegen.

Ich sehe es als ein durchaus positives Signal, dass die Koordinierung der Kultur- und Bildungspolitik zukünftig im Verantwortungsbereich eines Vize-Präsidenten der Kommission liegen soll, was die Bedeutung von Kultur und Bildung für das europäische Projekt unterstreicht. Gleichwohl stellt sich natürlich auch die Frage, wie diese Aufgabe im politischen Tagesgeschäft und in Zusammenarbeit vor allem mit der designierten Kommissarin Mariya Gabriel, die für die entsprechenden Generaldirektionen zuständig ist, angegangen werden soll.

Was uns darüber hinaus im Ausschuss für Kultur und Bildung an Ihrem Portfolio besonders interessiert, ist unter anderem, wie Sie der Ihnen aufgetragenen Aufgabe der Koordinierung, der Verwirklichung des europäischen Bildungsraums gerecht werden wollen. Wie wollen Sie Bildung zugänglicher, integrativer machen, und wie gedenken Sie, lebenslanges Lernen und grenzüberschreitendes Lernen besser zu fördern?

Des Weiteren sind wir sehr gespannt, von Ihnen zu hören, welche Instrumente Sie in den Bereichen Bildung, Kultur und Sport zur Integration von Flüchtlingen und Einwanderern einzusetzen gedenken. Einige Anhaltspunkte haben Sie uns im Rahmen des schriftlichen Verfahrens bereits geliefert, und ich möchte mich an dieser Stelle bei Ihnen für die

schriftlichen Antworten auf die Fragen, die wir Ihnen im Voraus gestellt haben, von ganzem Herzen bedanken.

Ich bin gespannt darauf, im Laufe der nächsten drei Stunden mehr über Ihre Ansichten zu den verschiedenen Politikbereichen, für die Sie zuständig sein werden, zu hören, und ich bin zuversichtlich, dass die Anhörung die Schlüsselfragen für alle beteiligten Ausschüsse beantworten wird. Insofern freue ich mich nun auf eine interessante Diskussion mit Ihnen.

1-005-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *Commissioner-designate*. – This is a very special moment for me. It is an emotional moment. Over the last 30 years, on countless occasions, I have had the chance to sit in a number of committees and bodies of this institution. First as a junior official, then as a manager, and later as a Member of the European Parliament, but the magnitude of me sitting now in front of you as Vice-President-designate, seeking your confidence and trust to implement a programme for the next five years together with you, is truly humbling.

The Treaty reminds us that the European Union is founded on the respect for human dignity, in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality between women and men prevail. In doing so, the Treaty, for me, very clearly defines my mission as Vice-President. The portfolio responsibilities attributed to me range from education, culture, employment, security, migration to health and equality, but the common thread of all these policy areas is people. Defending the simple but essential premise that everybody matters, that none should be left behind, and that all should have access to the same rights, securities and opportunities.

This is the premise I will start from, should I be confirmed as Vice-President. I see my coordinating role as bringing a significant added value in three main areas on which I will concentrate these short introductory remarks.

First, on making our societies fairer and more inclusive; second, on delivering the new pact for migration and asylum; and thirdly, completing our security union that addresses traditional and modern threats. In all three areas, the measures to be taken have to cut across existing organisational silos. My job will be to ensure we pool expertise across policy areas, with a focus on people and concrete outcomes.

I do not by any means take lightly the debate that has been triggered by the title given to this work. I have the greatest respect for all the positions and all arguments expressed in this debate.

Shakespeare would have us believe that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. But names are important, because they give things meaning. They bring us meaning, and it means something to be European. At its core, being European means protecting the most vulnerable in our societies. It means healthcare and welfare systems that all can access; it means having the same opportunities; it means promoting culture and sport as core elements of our systems and equipping people with the knowledge, education and skills they need to live and work in dignity. It means feeling safe in our homes, in our streets and all of the places we like to meet, exchange and experience life together.

Being European means being open to the world, extending heart and home to those who are less fortunate. It means standing up for these values, for these rights, for these principles across the globe. Being European means peace, freedom, equality, democracy and respect for human dignity.

On a very personal note, being European for me has meant living a European life, raising a European family and dedicating 30 years of my life to European public service. I am nothing if not for Europe. I am proud to be European, and all the more so for having been given the unique opportunity to serve our Union.

Honourable Members, your Committees represented here today serve as drivers in making our societies more inclusive and more resilient, and I believe that together we can build a future based on access and opportunities for all.

Let me start with the first chapter of these remarks: making our societies fairer and more inclusive. We are known as societies that protect the most vulnerable in our midst, and I want this to be true across the board. If confirmed, I will use the cross-cutting portfolio attributed to me to promote a comprehensive approach when it comes to inclusion and integration. The establishment of the European Pillar of Social Rights has been a landmark development, but we must now make sure that all these rights and principles are brought to life in practice. One of my first tasks – my main tasks – will be to ensure that the future European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) fosters social inclusion, supports those most in need, and helps enhance labour mobility across the EU.

We need to equip our youth with the right skills to thrive in a changing world of work. We will work to make the European Education Area a reality and incentivise Member States to reform and modernise their education and training systems, including in digital learning. I will ensure we use the Erasmus+, the Discover EU and the European Solidarity core programmes to empower our youth and offer new mobility opportunities.

To help ensure that no child is left behind, we shall introduce a European Child Guarantee to ensure children at risk of poverty or exclusion have access to most basic rights like healthcare and education. This is an idea born precisely in this Parliament, and we will honour this pledge. I will work with the Health Commissioner to ensure that we promote the inclusiveness of national healthcare systems, and I'll work with the Equality Commissioner to ensure we promote equality at all levels, including between sexes, a new push for the anti-discrimination legislation, and the European Gender Strategy that promotes equal pay for equal work.

These new drives for inclusion across all spheres must include a strong and renewed push to further the integration of third-country nationals. I intend to build on the 2016 Action Plan on the Inclusion of Refugees and Migrants and additional funds in this area. I was glad to see that the longer-term integration of migrants and refugees will be incorporated under the new European Social Fund Plus. This will allow us to have more tools and more resources to support inclusion initiatives.

And we must not forget one of Europe's treasures: our cultural heritage that we must continue to invest in and promote inside and outside our borders. Sport too can have a positive impact on society, in terms of health, social inclusion and gender equality. If we want to help our societies and economies thrive, we need to support everyone who is part of that society, with inclusion being both a right and a duty for all.

Let me now come to the second chapter of my work: delivering the new pact on migration and asylum. This is a tall order, but one I believe we can achieve by mobilising our strengths and learning from the past. This new pact must be cross-cutting and marry internal and external policies. When it comes to the reform of our Common European Asylum System, the first thing we will do, together with the Commissioner for Home Affairs, is engage in a dialogue with you and our Member States. We have to find exactly where there is scope for compromise, listen, and establish the way forward. We will present you quickly with options that we would like to discuss and find consensus on, but only then will we be putting

something formally on the table. We will not neglect for a second the mountain of work already achieved over the past three years, as well as the compromises found already on a large bulk of the reform package, all of which, I know very well, was very much thanks to you here in this Parliament. This work will be preserved.

Our internal reforms are only one part of what needs to be a much broader picture. As a stop-gap, until a new truly asylum system comes into force, we need to support Member States in including temporary arrangements on disembarkation. For me, part of this must include pursuing a proper dialogue with the many NGOs doing commendable search and rescue work in the Mediterranean. We need them to be part of the solution, and today, on the tragic anniversary of the Lampedusa tragedy, this is more true than ever before.

All proposals and initiatives of the new pact will be done with the aim – a parallel aim – of lifting internal border controls and returning to a fully-functioning Schengen area.

A credible system for asylum must also protect against abuses of the system. I will lead a renewed drive to set up returns of those with no right to stay: firstly by completing the reform of our EU internal rules on return, and secondly by concluding readmission agreements and arrangements with priority countries of transit and origin. It is now high time to use all tools at our disposal in support of our priorities in the area.

And finally, building on pilot projects on legal migration, which are under way, I will promote modern and targeted legal migration schemes that respond to the needs of the EU economy, labour market and demographic challenges, and we will ensure that humanitarian corridors are set up along the model of the emergency transit mechanisms to Niger and now also Rwanda.

Finally, moving on to my responsibilities regarding our Security Union, the values that we stand for must not only be championed but also secured against what challenges them. This is the same Union that sets world standards on data protection and privacy, and I'm very conscious that my role is also to ensure that whatever we do in security respects fundamental rights. The respect of fundamental rights needs to be designed into policies from the start. This will also guide my work in implementing the interoperability proposals, which will be particularly important as we move to launch our new information systems.

I will place a relentless emphasis on implementation of what we have collectively agreed. I will promote a coordinated approach to protecting Europeans online, through the adoption of our Terrorist Online Content proposal, by inputting the Digital Services Act to come and by investing in the work of the EU Internet Forum. I will use any possibility I have to build the EU's resilience and response to hybrid threats, which threaten our systems and our very democracies.

Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, j'ai siégé en tant que membre de cette assemblée et je sais pertinemment que le cœur de la démocratie européenne réside ici.

C'est ici que nos lois sont adoptées et notre avenir façonné. Ce Parlement, votre Parlement, a été élu avec le plus grand nombre de voix en vingt ans. Cela témoigne de l'engagement actif des citoyens, qui participent et donnent forme à notre démocratie. Nous ne pouvons pas le décevoir.

Cela signifie également que j'assume une totale responsabilité envers vous, ainsi que la plus grande transparence quant à mon travail et à ma personne.

Κυρίες και κύριοι βουλευτές, κλείνω λέγοντας ότι δεσμεύομαι να εφαρμόσω τα υψηλότερα πρότυπα δεοντολογίας και διαφάνειας, με σεβασμό στη Συνθήκη και τον Κώδικα Συμπεριφοράς των Επιτρόπων. Δεσμεύομαι να εργαστώ συλλογικά με τους συναδέλφους μου και να εργαστώ ακούραστα μαζί σας για μια Ένωση ασφαλέστερη για τους πολίτες μας, πιο ισότιμη και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς. Πάνω απ' όλα, δεσμεύομαι με όλες τις δυνάμεις μου να θέσω ως απόλυτη προτεραιότητα τους ανθρώπους, πέρα και πάνω από κομματικές γραμμές και εθνικά σύνορα. Η δική μας Ένωση πρέπει να είναι μια Ένωση ανθρώπων, μια Ένωση στην οποία κανένας δεν θα βρίσκεται στο περιθώριο, μια Ένωση πολιτών που ζουν σε συνεκτικές και ανεκτικές κοινωνίες.

1-008-0000

**Roberta Metsola (PPE).** – Thank you, Vice-President-designate, for your comprehensive introduction. The EPP welcomes the fact that your portfolio will cut across a number of interdependent aspects of European life because, as you have rightly said, ultimately your portfolio deals with people. Our European way is rooted in the Treaty: respect for human dignity and rights, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, rights of minorities, pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity. We are proud of these values and proud of the example they give not only to Europeans, but across the globe. Your portfolio demands leadership, and this is what we will look to you to provide. How do you plan to ensure that the equality and the diversity that is so much part of our way of life is strengthened? How will you ensure that integration remains a cornerstone of your work? And finally, you have been asked to coordinate the new pact on migration, ensuring coherence with internal and external aspects and labour market realities. How do you plan on doing that?

1-009-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – On the values and the priority to use this cross-cutting responsibility to fertilise with our collective work things that each of these workstreams can produce to combine the emergence of everything that our new societies will need in terms of skills: equality, integration, inclusion – I think this is very obvious. I don't think that I need to spend too many words on this. We are very successful in working in these workstreams. We have been doing it successfully. But now we need to harvest the work that is coming out of these parallel tracks to create new added value. I'm delighted, and I must say excited, to have been given this responsibility because this involves cooperation with my fellow Commissioners, with you here, and of course our Member States.

Now on the pact. I think one of the lessons of the situation that I, together with Ylva Johansson, find in this area is that we desperately need a new start. We need to look again at those things that clearly haven't worked and we haven't managed to agree upon, without losing the five important pieces of work where significant progress has been made in the pact. So, we need to concentrate on the centre of gravity, and the centre of gravity of the pact clearly would be the reform of the Dublin rules and the corresponding regulation and procedures, but then clearly we need to add next to it everything we need to unblock the situation, that would help us make this fresh start and that would help clink the minds of those who have a partial view of what needs to be done.

1-010-0000

**Roberta Metsola (PPE).** – Specifically, when it comes to migration: while arrivals have reduced, there are still people losing their lives on our shores; trafficking networks are still operating; returns are still not where we need them to be; we still lack a proper system of responsibility-sharing; countries of origin still need increased European investment to build up their systems; and readmission agreements are still too few.

So it is clear, as you just said, that more needs to be done. But what can you do differently over the next five years that has not been tried and already blocked? And how do you see your role in seeing this happening? And finally, on legal migration, understanding that this is



Member States' territory: is it time for a serious assessment to be made to better match the skills needed in Member States with those of the people arriving legally in Europe?

1-011-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Starting from where I left it in your first question, I think that we have to start keeping our emphasis on the reform of Dublin and the corresponding procedures but to unblock the situation, bring in all the other elements that combine the full picture: returns, new readmission agreements and arrangements, Schengen, borders... We have to help people see that there is not one issue that can be the magic bullet in all of this. We have to address all dimensions of the pact, both internal and external. Talk, listen and then come. On legal migration, in the ten seconds that I have, I think we have to build on the success of these pilot projects, review our blue card proposal which is on the table, and quite intelligently match our skills needs and demography with clear demographic legal pathways and avenues. I think this is possible.

1-012-0000

**Birgit Sippel (S&D).** – Unfortunately the title of your portfolio plays into the hands of right-wing extremists, leading to interpretations that you are building a kind of 'Fortress Europe'. But our culture has always been influenced by migration, visible in everyday things like food, architecture and music. Migration is a challenge, but migrants are not a threat, and welcoming people who flee from persecution, war or are looking for employment, is part of our history and our European values. In your letter you state 'we need to protect our European culture'. Can you precisely say from what or from whom we need to protect it? And can you ensure that your portfolio will not contribute to greater division in society but to a more inclusive union? And how, concretely, will you, as mentioned in your letter, promote our values and a rule-of-law culture?

1-013-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Thank you, Ms Sippel, for this question that allows me to clarify – I think I tried to do it in my introductory statement – but I have never, ever, shared the view that the title of my portfolio can be a threat or can be inductive to an 'us versus them' culture. This is not what guides our work.

The European Union is a beacon of light in a world that is becoming darker. We are diverse, we are inclusive, we are different, we are special. We are admired and envied. And I think that it is also in our interest to positively use these attributes, to make more resilient and more inclusive societies, without having the fear – or some call it self-flagellation – that we have to apologise because of our values. And if certain populists try to speculate, or instrumentalise our values, I would say that our values are very resistant to threats by the populists. The populists should be threatened by our values. I do not think that there is a culture of animosity, or enemy. Migration policies – the way we structure migration policies – are comprehensive and inclusive. They are based on the single premise that Europe will continue to be an asylum destination. That defines us, that is who we are. Why is it 'us versus them'? This is the most value-driven policy we have, that Europe will always be a land of asylum. But we also have to be very clear that those who are not eligible for asylum will, at some point, have to go back, and we will do that in our own European way with our own values, in a humane and dignified way, with our money and decently.

I do not see why this should be something to make us feel guilty, or proud, or something to apologise for. Certainly, I want to stress the positive side of all this.

1-014-0000

**Birgit Sippel (S&D).** – Unfortunately, I'm sorry to say that you did not answer the question of against whom we need to protect our culture, and you did not answer the question about how, concretely, you want to promote our values and rule-of-law culture.

Once again, will you show a clear commitment that this Commission will work for a Europe that extends its hearts and homes to those already in the Union, but also to newcomers? And could you specify what exactly will be new in the new pact on migration? How will it differ from existing legislation and proposals for reform currently under discussion? And how will it differ from Parliament's decision on a holistic approach for migration?

And hopefully you can also answer the other questions from my first minute. And regarding the title: I never said you share the negative interpretation of the title. Nevertheless, this interpretation is there, and in the written questions we ask if you are ready to change the title. You did not answer that. Therefore, do you personally engage to have the name of your portfolio changed?

1-015-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Let me first start by the against whom. Against those who do not allow us to celebrate 14 juillet in Nice. Against those who do not allow us to walk in Las Ramblas in Barcelona. Against those who, instead of helping migrants, throw them in a camp. Against those who do not give food to asylum seekers. Against those who do not allow their children to go to school. Against all these elements that we think can be addressed positively through an inclusive approach to who we are and what we stand for.

Again, I repeat – I think I made it very clear – that under no circumstances should my view of this portfolio, which exists for the first time, be seen negatively or should make us think that some populists would like to instrumentalise it so we have to play the game of the populist. Certainly this is not my role.

As far as the pact is concerned, I think I was very precise in my replies to Ms Metsola. I'm happy to have more opportunities to continue explaining those.

1-016-0000

**Sophia in 't Veld (Renew).** – I must say that I have absolutely no doubts about your personal commitment to the values you have described, but I also admire your valiant attempts to defend a title that cannot be defended. You've not even spoken the words of the title: 'Protecting our European way of life'. You're a very experienced communications expert, and I think you immediately understood that this title, combined with the migration portfolio, is toxic. It has been embraced as a victory by the far right, and you know better than anybody else that no amount of interpretation and explanation can undo that.

So I'm amazed that Ms von der Leyen has so far insisted because, if this was ever meant to unite people, it failed miserably, because it is divisive and it excludes people. And that shows in Parliament as well, if I see that the ECR is happy about it, the EPP is only half-heartedly in damage-control mode, and the centrist forces reject it outright. So do you agree that the choice of title was a mistake or, even worse, a case of bad political judgement?

1-017-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Ms in 't Veld, I start by the premise that I respect – I said it in my opening statement – all arguments and all positions expressed in the debate on the title. I'm very happy to repeat it. I do not argue against the value of the arguments expressed.

I read the op-ed that the President-elect wrote in leading European newspapers three weeks ago, where she clearly explained the positive way of seeing this in conjunction with Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty. This op-ed terminates by a concluding paragraph that says that part of our European way of life is that in Europe we always discuss and agree amongst ourselves.

So I think, since you were challenging me to position myself against this fact, that I have full confidence in the President-elect to value this argument. She has been in Parliament for many years – as many as you have been – and, between the respect of all the arguments expressed and her willingness to listen and agree, I'm sure that time will provide the answer you are asking me to give now.

1-018-0000

**Sophia in 't Veld (Renew).** – We have time: we still have two minutes, I believe, because the question is really – seriously – and again, this is not just a question addressed to you but to the Commission and Ms von der Leyen: what battle does the Commission want to pick? Because there was a vote in July – that was one with a wafer-thin majority. And then I wonder why the Commission doesn't invest in a close relationship with Parliament instead of a kind of showdown over the European version of *Leitkultur*, because that's basically what it is. And I think it would be better to try and seek an alliance with the pro-European centrist forces rather than appeasing the fringes. Now, my Group, Renew Europe, has made it very clear the title needs to go, full stop. So my advice to you: drop the dog whistle and work with us for the next five years for a European Union that is open and inclusive, because you will not find a majority in this House for anything else, and Europe should be the world champion of equality, diversity and opportunity. So the choice is yours, Mr Schinas: will you, yes or no, advocate to drop the title?

1-019-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – When the President-elect presented her political guidelines in July to this Parliament, she presented six streams of work in writing and in her speech. One of the six was protecting the European way of life, with the content that was clearly explained.

She obtained the confidence of this House. She's the President-elect because you invested her with your confidence on the basis of the six guidelines that she submitted to you, and you approved. So I understand that a lot has happened since. I understand that you try to marry a certain negativity, pre-judging the work that I will be doing, whereas I'm taking time to explain to you that I would never see negativity being part of my job description. On the contrary, you're preaching to the converted when you discuss on the need for us to be the world champion of equality, gender-parity, climate, because we already are, by the way: we already are world champions for this. So we need to assume this with a certain pride, and we need to defend it. And if you're preaching this to me personally and telling me to do it, I've been building bridges for the last 30 years. That's what defines me. I have been building bridges. That was my job: to bring people together, and I'm confident that I can continue doing this.

1-020-0000

**Magid Magid (Verts/ALE).** – Mr Schinas, I know you've tried to put a positive spin on your job title, but aren't you genuinely embarrassed that your job title – 'protecting our European way of life' – seems to have been stolen from some sort of 1990s neofascist online chatroom? For many people it seems as if what we want is for you, for the sake of Europe, to please just ask for a job title that isn't a gift to a lot of racists and fascists.

With these premises, I am concerned about what your priorities will be concerning integration. Do you commit to evaluate and update the Commission's 2016 Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals living in the EU and to support the Parliament in obtaining complementary budgetary commitments in the framework of the MFF negotiations? And in particular, would you commit to support the direct provision of funds for local and regional authorities as well as civil society organisations for integration of reception activities as proposed by this Parliament in its position on the MFF funds?

1-021-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Mr Magid, I think I already replied earlier to Ms Sippel, in saying that it is the extremists and the populists that need to be afraid of our values, not the other way around, and I clearly reject that, at least as far as I am concerned, the way I view this title responds to what you just described in the first part of your question.

On the second part of your question, the answer is a resounding yes. I said in my opening statement that we had this Action Plan 2016 at the peak of the migratory crisis, a phenomenon where we tried bringing together all the different strands of the Commission, to produce a first action plan on the inclusion and integration of refugees and migrants. It worked, but I see this only as the beginning. We need to do much more, and we are lucky that, under the new MFF proposals, the long-term inclusion of migrants would be under the new European Social Fund Plus, which gives us much more money, much more opportunities.

And I will say something else, where I agree fully with you. You have been a mayor in Sheffield, I believe. I do not see that this work needs to be done from Brussels. It would be a huge mistake for a ‘Brussels knows better than everybody else’ approach. We should not promote inclusion as a top-down instrument from us to you. We have to listen to local communities, to regions, to municipalities, to people on the ground, civil society, and I pledge that you will see me a lot on the ground, you will see me with host communities, you will see me at training centres, at football matches, you will see me at schools, universities. That’s where we need to go, and I very much count on your support in this.

1-022-0000

**Magid Magid (Verts/ALE).** – Nobody is questioning your work rate whatsoever but, with the greatest respect, it is just simply not good enough. Like you said, titles and words have meaning and carry weight. Insisting on keeping this title expresses the absolute arrogance and political backwardness of this entire new Commission.

So let me be honest. For me, and many others, this title is simply unacceptable, an unacceptable concession to the far-right fascists and racists. And, Mr Schinas, there is only one way in which integration can be achieved and it is through guaranteeing equal rights, adequate support and a strong legal position for everyone living in the EU, whether they are migrants, asylum seekers or refugees. Furthermore, we have long-term resident non-EU nationals obstructed from integration by labour market tests, including migrants and refugees. Are you willing to promote a true right of free movement, starting from amending the Long-term Residence Directive?

1-023-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – On the first part of your question, I don’t think I have to say more. I think by now you know where I stand.

On the second part, I fully agree. I think that there is scope to review our long-term labour resident legislation, which is in place, but which clearly needs a review. And there is a review scheduled. Some of the early reviews of this legislation prove that there are indeed inconsistencies and gaps, and I am very willing to consider a legislative amendment of the long-term resident legislation precisely to address any obstacles so that legally residing people can have a chance to benefit from labour mobility across the EU. I know that this is a subject very close to the heart of Ms Strik sitting next to you.

1-024-0000

**Nicolas Bay (ID).** – Monsieur Schinas, votre prédécesseur M. Avramopoulos se plaisait à distinguer l’immigration légale, dont il souhaitait faire la promotion, de l’immigration clandestine qu’il prétendait combattre, mais sans jamais réellement s’en donner les moyens.

Nous sommes tous ici attachés au droit d'asile, mais tout le monde peut constater qu'aujourd'hui le droit d'asile a été largement dévoyé, qu'il est devenu une filière à part entière de l'immigration. Aujourd'hui, les demandeurs d'asile, lorsqu'ils sont déboutés ne sont souvent pas expulsés, c'est une réalité partout en Europe: les chiffres d'Eurostat le montrent, les rapports parlementaires dans les États membres le montrent aussi, de sorte que la liberté de circulation, grand dogme de l'Union européenne s'est mû en véritable liberté d'installation.

Je suis rapporteur fictif de mon groupe pour le projet de directive «retour». Or, dans les 17 pages de vos réponses au questionnaire du Parlement européen, il n'est fait qu'une seule fois mention du retour sans aucune décision opérationnelle. Alors, j'aurais deux questions: vous êtes chargé de protéger le mode de vie européen, c'est le libellé de votre mission; quelles sont les mesures techniques et juridiques que vous entendez mettre en œuvre pour que les expulsions soient effectives? Et souhaitez-vous conditionner les aides financières aux États d'émigration vers l'Europe à la maîtrise des flux migratoires et au laisser-passer consulaire pour l'expulsion de leurs ressortissants?

1-025-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, commissaire désigné.** – Monsieur Bay, un des problèmes que nous avons en Europe, surtout quand on discute de la politique européenne de la migration, c'est une certaine tendance à chercher une vérité partielle pour répondre à un phénomène qui est très complexe et qui, malheureusement, n'est pas gérable sur la base d'une seule vérité ou d'une approche sectorielle. D'où la nécessité de tout revoir. Et au sujet du nouveau pacte, comme dans ma réponse à Mme Metsola, je veux souligner que le terme «pacte» est un terme très noble. Il faut avoir du contenu pour le servir, alors il faut faire en sorte de marier tous les éléments que nous avons à notre disposition.

Pour avoir un système de retour effectif, nous avons besoin d'un système d'accords de réadmission avec les pays d'origine et de transit que j'ai l'intention d'organiser avec la commissaire chargée des partenariats internationaux, le haut représentant/vice-président et mon collègue de l'élargissement et du voisinage.

Notre priorité doit être de parler avec les pays tiers et d'essayer de chercher, permettez-moi de le dire, non pas la conditionnalité, car cela ne marchera pas, mais des accords globaux, des accords *win-win*. Il faut se pencher, dans ces accords, à la fois sur les racines du phénomène migratoire et sur le besoin de développement de ces aides. Il faut créer des opportunités pour les jeunes pour qu'ils restent là et y vivent une vie décente, au lieu de tomber entre les mains des passeurs en Méditerranée ou ailleurs. C'est ce que j'ai l'ambition de faire, c'est ce dont j'ai beaucoup discuté avec Ylva Johansson et que nous avons l'ambition de faire ensemble, c'est ce que la présidente élue nous demande de faire et je pense qu'avec votre accord nous aurons de meilleures chances d'y aboutir.

1-026-0000

**Nicolas Bay (ID).** – Monsieur Schinas, je m'inquiète un peu de votre réponse car elle ne semble pas très différente de celles de vos prédécesseurs, qui ont tous totalement échoué en la matière, et j'aurais une question supplémentaire à vous poser: cela concerne les mafias et les passeurs qui prospèrent au nord du continent africain, qui mènent une véritable traite des êtres humains dans des conditions épouvantables. Il y a, on le sait, des ONG qui se comportent en complices de ces mafias et de ces passeurs: quelle est l'action que vous entendez pouvoir mener en lien avec Frontex pour que ces ONG cessent d'être à la fois les complices de l'immigration clandestine, mais aussi les complices de gens qui utilisent des méthodes absolument abjectes? Et j'ai été scandalisé de voir que Mme Carola Rackete était aujourd'hui même auditionnée par la commission LIBE, alors qu'elle participe à cette logique de complicité avec les mafias et les passeurs.

1-027-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *commissaire désigné*. – M. Bay, je ne partage pas cette lignes d'arguments et je ne pense pas que les ONG soient le problème de ce phénomène, je pense que les ONG font plutôt partie de la solution qu'il faut chercher. Je répète qu'il faut le faire de façon globale. On ne peut pas aborder ces questions sans avoir l'intelligence et prendre le soin de voir toutes les causes qui alimentent le phénomène.

C'est très facile de dire que c'est une question de passeurs ou que c'est une question d'ONG, mais ça ne marche pas comme ça. Il s'agit d'une situation beaucoup plus compliquée, d'un phénomène global qui ne s'explique pas par des approches et des argumentations partielles et, je reviens à ce que je disais avant, notre seul moyen de réussir, c'est de regarder un peu vers le passé et de voir ce qui n'a pas marché. Et là vous avez raison, les retours n'ont pas marché.

Par conséquent, il faut faire plus. Et les retours n'ont pas marché parce que, justement, nous n'avons pas un nombre important d'accords de réadmission pour soutenir les retours. Alors, voyez-vous, une chose que j'ai apprise dans ce domaine, c'est que dans la politique de migration tout est lié (*everything is linked to everything*), c'est pourquoi nous devons adopter une approche globale.

1-028-0000

**Nicola Procaccini (ECR)**. – Good evening Mr Schinas, you say that the European way of life is the result of the culture and values which define us as the European Union. Political pluralism, separation between the State and religion, respect for minority rights and gender equality, just to provide a few examples.

So which actions would you carry out in order to prevent the escalation of the ghetto culture, which is totally the opposite of the principle which characterises us. I refer, of course, to some neighbourhoods in our cities where peculiar religious and ethnical identities exclude the European way of life, the European cultural heritage. Places where religious radicalism, which has already caused suffering in our Member States, often develops.

1-029-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *Commissioner-designate*. – Mr Procaccini, I have never in my life defended, liked or respected any words that end with 'ism'. I'm against 'ism's' and I think that the phenomena that you describe are precisely the result of many 'ism's'. Again, these ghettos – or I prefer to call them 'islands of exclusion' rather than inclusion – are the result of multifactorial developments in society. I do not think that there is one explanation that leads to these phenomena. I can think of some, but there is not one.

In my mind, the answer to what we can do as the European Union is very simple. It is what I was discussing with Mr Magid earlier – we have to listen to the cities, to regional authorities. We have to go on the ground, being able to address the needs of integration and inclusion, and bring these people into society. This is what we need. This is how we fight 'isms'.

1-030-0000

**Nicola Procaccini (ECR)**. – In your written answers, you say that supporting legal migration is going to be one of your main goals. Would you share the idea that the only way to establish a rational legal migration framework is combating illegal migration?

Let me say that I'm positively impressed by your intention to put human beings at the centre of your political activity – differently from what normally happens in this Parliament often affected by an ideological attitude.

Your approach made me think of some meaningful words by the Catholic French philosopher Jacques Maritain: 'a trillion ideas are not worth a single person. We must love people; it is for people that we need to live and die'.

1-031-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Everything that would make us meet on the territory of humanities, I agree, we will be there together. Everything that is people-centric, anthropo-centric, I will be there with you and I hope you will be with me, too.

On legal migration, there are three reasons that compel us to do something meaningful on legal migration, and all three are important. First, because this is a way to face our demographic problem. Second, because this is the way to break the business model of the smugglers. And third, this is the only – well, not the only – but one of the possible ways to address our skills gap.

So moving and doing something meaningful on legal migration is not something that depends on fighting illegal migration. It's something that we have to organise properly, positively. And there we have made a good start, I think. These pilot projects that allow some of our Member States, with our help, to start engaging in some sort of legal migration skills – this is a good start. We need to do more along these lines. Then, I'm new to this, but I'm very happy to review our blue card proposal. Let's see what went wrong there. Probably we overprescribed an approach that we need to review. Probably we need to take a lighter approach. I'm very open to that.

And finally, we have to continue these humanitarian corridors combined with resettlement, because this is another orderly way to bring in people legally. People that can contribute positively to our society and to our economy.

1-032-0000

**Κωνσταντίνος Αρβανίτης (GUE/NGL).** – Αξιότιμε κύριε Σχοινά, καλώς ήρθατε. Σας ευχαριστούμε πάρα πολύ που είστε εδώ. Χρησιμοποιήσατε πολλές φορές τη λέξη «ασφάλεια», «ασφάλεια», «ασφάλεια», και σήμερα -και χάρηκα πρέπει να σας πω- τη λέξη «υγεία», «υγεία», «υγεία», και φαντάζομαι ότι μιλάτε για πρόσβαση όλων των ανθρώπων στην υγεία. Αυτό για μένα σημαίνει ότι έχουμε μια ενδιαφέρουσα είδηση εδώ. Διευκρινίστε το, αν μιλάτε γι' αυτό ακριβώς.

Όμως, κύριε Σχοινά, τέσσερις πολιτικές ομάδες, το Renew, οι Σοσιαλιστές, οι Πράσινοι και εμείς οι GUE εμμένουμε στο θέμα του τίτλου. Είστε πολύ έμπειρος και απορώ πώς δεν μας καταλαβαίνετε. Δεν καταλαβαίνετε το μισό Κοινοβούλιο. Ο τίτλος του χαρτοφυλακίου σας για την προστασία του ευρωπαϊκού τρόπου ζωής έχει γίνει εργαλείο στην ακροδεξιά. Η κυρία Λεπέν πανηγύρισε γ' αυτό —το ακούσατε και εσείς— και πραγματικά θέλω να πω ότι περίμενα από εσάς άλλη κίνηση· μια δήλωση.

Δεσμεύεστε λοιπόν να τον αλλάξετε; Είμαι δημοσιογράφος και θέλω συγκεκριμένες απαντήσεις από έναν πολύ έμπειρο και αξιόλογο άνθρωπο. Δεσμεύεστε να τον αλλάξετε; Όχι μόνο για συμβολικούς λόγους, κύριε Σχοινά, αλλά κυρίως για να μας πείσετε ότι απέχετε από αυτήν τη ρητορική που θέλει να διχάσει την Ευρώπη.

1-033-0000

**Μαργαρίτης Σχοινάς, Ορισθείς Επίτροπος.** – Ευχαριστώ, κύριε Αρβανίτη. Ναι —όσον αφορά την πρώτη ερώτησή σας— όντως, κομμάτι των αρμοδιοτήτων μου, ειδικά στο πλαίσιο της ισότητας και της ισότιμης πρόσβασης όλων στις καθολικές υπηρεσίες υγείας και παιδείας, είναι αυτό ακριβώς: να βεβαιωθούμε ότι οι πιο ευαίσθητοι, οι πιο ευάλωτοι και οι πιο αδύναμοι δεν θα αποκοπούν από την ισότιμη πρόσβαση σε αυτές τις βασικές υπηρεσίες. Να κάτι που μας κάνει Ευρωπαίους· να κάτι που πρέπει να προστατεύσουμε στον ευρωπαϊκό τρόπο ζωής· να κάτι που πρέπει να δούμε θετικά —όχι αρνητικά.

Τώρα μου λέτε ότι η κυρία Λεπέν πανηγυρίζει. Η κυρία Λεπέν δεν πανηγυρίζει· η κυρία Λεπέν προσπαθεί να εργαλειοποιήσει αυτήν τη συζήτηση προς όφελός της και περιμένει να

δει αν εμείς θα τσιμπήσουμε. Αν τσιμπάμε, παίζουμε το παιχνίδι της κυρίας Λεπέν· αν δεν τσιμπάμε, η κυρία Λεπέν απειλείται από τις αρχές μας. Αυτή είναι η δική μου λογική.

(χειροκροτήματα)

1-034-0000

**Κωνσταντίνος Αρβανίτης (GUE/NGL).** – Είναι τιμή μου που είμαι δημοσιογράφος και υπερασπίστηκα το δημόσιο συμφέρον, κύριε Σχοινά. Ελπίζω και εσείς από τη θέση σας να κάνετε το ίδιο για τους φτωχούς, για τους ανθρώπους που έχουν ανάγκη. Επιμένω, όμως, ότι στο χαρτοφυλάκιό σας η ασφάλεια συνδέεται με το μεταναστευτικό σε μια ανησυχητική υπερσυγκέντρωση εξουσιών και σε μια αυθαίρετη σύνδεση της προστασίας των πολιτών με τη θωράκιση των συνόρων, ενώ —αντίθετα— απουσιάζει εντυπωσιακά μία λέξη, κύριε Σχοινά: η λέξη «δικαιοσύνη». Ρωτώ λοιπόν: δέχεστε να απαλειφθεί η ασφάλεια από το χαρτοφυλάκιό σας ως ασύμφωνη με τον πραγματικό χαρακτήρα των καθηκόντων σας; Δέχεστε τη λέξη «δικαιοσύνη» και την ουσία της;

1-035-0000

**Μαργαρίτης Σχοινάς, Ορισθείς Επίτροπος.** – Κύριε Αρβανίτη, σέβομαι απόλυτα τη δικαιοσύνη έτσι όπως την εννοείτε. Η μόνη διαφορά είναι ότι η δικαιοσύνη δεν είναι στην αντιπροεδρία τη δική μου, δεν είναι στις εντολές που έχω λάβει από την εκλεγείσα πρόεδρο. Αρμόδια είναι η συνάδελφός μου, η κυρία Γιούροβα, που θα την δείτε εδώ τη Δευτέρα και θα σας εξηγήσει.

Μου λέτε αν δέχομαι να βγάλω την ασφάλεια, αν αντιλαμβάνομαι καλά, από το χαρτοφυλάκιό μου. Θα μου επιτρέψετε να σας πω ότι η ασφάλεια και η μετανάστευση και η πολιτική μετανάστευσης, σχεδόν σε όλες τις χώρες, σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, είναι μαζί. Στην Ελλάδα —τη χώρα που και οι δύο ξέρουμε καλά— είναι μαζί. Σε πολλές άλλες χώρες, είναι μαζί. Ο κύριος Λόπεθ Αγκιλάρ θα σας πει ότι και στη LIBE είναι μαζί και στην Επιτροπή Γιούνκερ επίσης ήταν μαζί, με αντιπρόεδρο τον κύριο Τίμερμανς και Επίτροπο τον κύριο Αβραμόπουλο, ώσπου να έρθει ο κύριος Κινγκ. Γιατί λοιπόν, λέω εγώ, στην Επιτροπή φον Ντερ Λάιεν να είναι διαφορετικά;

Σε κάθε περίπτωση, η λογική είναι δεδομένη μέσα σε ένα πλαίσιο αποφάσεων —σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 17 σημείο 6 της Συνθήκης— που δίνει στον πρόεδρο της Επιτροπής την απόλυτη αρμοδιότητα, νομική και θεσμική, να χτίσει την Επιτροπή όπως θέλει, ακούγοντας βέβαια και συζητώντας με εσάς και λαμβάνοντας ψήφο εμπιστοσύνης, όπως έλαβε τον Ιούλιο. Άρα, θέλω να σας πω ότι δεν εξαρτάται από εμένα να πω έτσι κι αλλιώς. Μπορώ όμως κάλλιστα, για να απαντήσω στην ερώτησή σας, να σας θυμίσω ποια είναι η τρέχουσα κατάσταση. Η τρέχουσα κατάσταση είναι απολύτως ίδια με τη δική μας, την τωρινή.

1-036-0000

**Sabine Verheyen, Chair CULT.** – Thank you very much. We will go on in the same rhythm with the other Members of the Committees, and I want to remind you to stick to the 1-2-1-1 principle of the question block, because we are already running out of time.

The first is Tomasz Frankowski, for the CULT Committee, EPP.

1-037-0000

**Tomasz Frankowski (PPE).** – Biorąc pod uwagę Pana rolę jako wiceprzewodniczącego odpowiedzialnego za edukację, kulturę i sport, chciałbym zadać pytanie dotyczące sportu. Najbardziej udaną i wyjątkową inicjatywą ostatniej Komisji Europejskiej było wezwanie *Tartu Call* czyli współpraca trzech komisarzy odpowiedzialnych za zdrowie, rolnictwo i sport na rzecz promowania i poprawy zdrowego stylu życia oraz współpraca w różnych sektorach w tej kwestii. Innym dobrym przykładem promocji sportów masowych jest organizowanie co roku europejskiego tygodnia sportu.

Czy planuje Pan kontynuowanie tych inicjatyw? I jeśli tak – jak zamierza je Pan ulepszyć i jak będzie wyglądać kontynuacja wezwania *Tartu Call*?



1-038-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Indeed, I think these are precisely the sort of initiatives that we want, because this is precisely where the European Union can play a role and can provide this added value, because here we are talking about large-scale trans-border outreach activities that improve the conscientiation, if I may say so, and the understanding of what unites us.

There is no doubt that sports unite us. The same goes for health and healthy lifestyles. This is also something that is very closely linked to sport. This is very close to the heart of my Cypriot colleague, Commissioner Stella Kyriakides, who was here with you a few days ago. I want to exploit fully the synergies between Mariya Gabriel and her work on sport and Stella Kyriakides on healthy lifestyles.

But there is something else that you haven't mentioned, and I'm tempted to raise it to complete the picture. Sport can be a magnificent avenue for inclusion and for integration. This is the sort, as Mr Magid was saying earlier, of thing that brings a common sense of belonging. This is what makes us, drives us towards more resilient and cohesive societies. And as I was preparing for this exchange, I was delighted to see that, not very far from here, in Kraainem, there is a Kraainem football club of amateur football players, and they managed, with our help, with Erasmus+ money, to bring together a fantastic programme of integration of refugees and migrants, a LEADER programme that I intend to go and visit as soon as possible. This is the sort of grassroots contributions that we can make in sport. This is where we should put our money and this is where we should help.

1-039-0000

**Tomasz Frankowski (PPE).** – W Kraainem faktycznie również byłem, mimo że jestem nowym członkiem Komisji Kultury. Na przestrzeni ostatnich lat Komisja Europejska wypracowała szereg korzystnych inicjatyw, takich jak na przykład *BeInclusive Sport Award*. Komisja z powodzeniem wdrożyła również projekty pilotażowe Parlamentu Europejskiego dotyczące włączenia uchodźców oraz walki z radykalizacją poprzez sport. Chciałbym zapytać, czy zamierza Pan również kontynuować te inicjatywy i w jakim kierunku je rozwijać?

1-040-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – I was saying earlier on the Migration and Refugee part of this exchange that indeed I intend to revisit the 2016 Action Plan on integration of migrants and refugees. I say that we need to do it for a very simple reason: when we first did it, it was 2016, and it was the moment where – let us not fool ourselves – the EU response to what was the biggest population movement in Europe since World War II inevitably forced us to work more on the management side of the refugee phenomenon, and we didn't have yet the know-how and the resources to work on integration. But despite these difficulties, our services, the leadership of DG HOME (but with all other services concerned in cooperation), we managed to produce this Action Plan. Now is the time to revise it – now is precisely the time to revise it so that we can do more and probably better.

1-041-0000

**Predrag Fred Matić (S&D).** – Gospodine Schinas, kultura je element osjećaja pripadanja Europskoj uniji. Međutim, postoji manjak svijesti o presudnoj ulozi europskog i globalnog građanskog obrazovanja da pruži informacije potrebne za aktivan angažman s današnjom globalnom arhitekturom. Vaše pismo povjerava Vam osiguravanje toga da mladi ljudi mogu steći nova iskustva, vještine i prilike za sudjelovanje u društvu maksimalno koristeći program Europske snage solidarnosti.

Kako namjeravate promovirati i poticati svijest o važnosti i znanje o građanskim pravima i vrijednostima kroz obrazovanje? I, gospodine Schinas, kako planirate promovirati i poticati europsjstvo kroz kulturu?

1-042-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – What defines us, what gives us a common sense of belonging is precisely the richness and the diversity of our cultures. This is why we are admired and I would say envied across the world. Is this enough? No, it is not. We need on the one hand to continue investing and promoting our cultural heritage, our cultural richness and diversity. But on the other hand, building a more unifying narrative through education – and you're absolutely right, through education we need to be able to bring people together. We need to create this European education area by 2025. This is our main priority. To get there, we need to be able to address all levels of education from schools, the universities. We need to create a student's card. We need to build on the European university alliances that we started already. We need to valorise teachers. Teachers in our countries have to be valorised, they have to be seen as doing and are doing incredible work, contributing to our societies. And finally, we need to have money for it, and the money in the education, culture, youth and sport area, as you know, is the Erasmus+ fund, which is the jewel in our crown. It's one of the most successful programmes in EU history and, as you know, we fully support your idea to triple the resources attributed to it. And then we have its two small brothers: the European Solidarity Corps, and DiscoverEU. These are also equal priorities with Erasmus+, and there I agree with many opinions expressed, that DiscoverEU and the Solidarity Corps, the people who participate should not only travel. They should bring back some experience, they should be exposed to some sort of skills and they should bring back some knowledge to the wider society and I'm willing to work on that.

1-043-0000

**Predrag Fred Matić (S&D).** – Nedavni izbori pokazali su duboki angažman mladih diljem svijeta na području održivog razvoja i klimatskih akcija.

Gospodine Schinas, kako namjeravate zadržati mlade ljude angažirane na temama budućnosti planeta, ljudi i društva?

1-044-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – There is no doubt that the Green Wave will be one of the defining elements of this Commission. This is not a secret. This is not something that you have to convince us to do. I think that we are fully convinced, and I'm sure that you haven't missed the presentation, the speech of the President-elect in July, where she clearly identified the need of addressing the Green Wave and the Digital Wave, as they are two defining priorities. There is no doubt that there is an element of youth participation that revolutionises the way we look at climate and the environment. This is good; this is something that our youth should not be apologising for, because I was surprised to hear or read here and there certain aspects lecturing our youth on how to go about expressing their opinions on climate. They are entitled to do that, because that's their future and that's their legacy. So I will be from my side of the argument, if you like, from my side of responsibilities, namely through our youth programmes (Solidarity Corps, Discovery), I will try to do as much as I can to promote the sustainability drive involving our youth.

1-045-0000

**Laurence Farreng (Renew).** – Monsieur Schinas, je veux d'abord rejoindre l'opinion qui s'exprime sur le nom de votre portefeuille. Qu'il s'agisse de migration ou de culture, il n'envoie pas le bon message et il doit être changé.

Je veux maintenant vous interroger sur l'éducation. Quand on parle d'éducation dans l'Union européenne, il y a deux réalités: une Europe qui sait et une Europe qui stagne.

Dans un rapport rendu lors du récent sommet sur l'éducation, on voit, d'un côté, un bon niveau de diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur, satisfaisant, avec 40 % d'une classe d'âge qui profite aujourd'hui le plus largement d'Erasmus+. De l'autre côté, une part inquiétante d'enfants en grande difficulté. En effet, aujourd'hui, en Europe, un enfant de quinze ans sur

cinq, d'après Eurostat, ne maîtrise pas les bases: lire, écrire, compter. C'est notamment le cas chez les enfants migrants dont votre portefeuille a la charge.

Pour construire l'union de l'égalité et de la diversité, qui est un objectif de votre lettre de mission, comment comptez-vous agir sur ce problème et comment allez-vous concilier ces deux réalités?

1-046-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, commissaire désigné.** – Le centre de gravité de votre question, c'est effectivement la question de l'inégalité. Il est clair que, malgré nos progrès et malgré nos avancées, les inégalités existent encore, tant dans le marché du travail que dans l'éducation. Et nous avons l'obligation de les combattre, surtout au moment où l'Europe se trouve dans un record historique d'emploi. C'est justement maintenant qu'il faut s'attaquer aux questions de l'inégalité. Comme le disait Jean-Claude Juncker, «réparons le toit de l'Europe tant qu'il fait beau». C'est donc le moment de voir les inégalités des deux côtés: côté marché du travail et politique sociale; on va le faire tout d'abord avec nos politiques du semestre et des recommandations par pays, comme chaque année, travail qui sera sous la tutelle de mon collègue vice-président Dombrovskis et auquel je vais participer activement parce que figurez-vous que 60 % des recommandations que nous faisons dans nos États membres concernent des domaines de ma compétence: des questions d'accès à la santé, d'accès aux compétences, etc.

Parallèlement à ce travail du semestre nous allons également activer nos instruments, comme le Fonds social européen et les mécanismes de vocation professionnelle. Il faut le faire, vous faites bien de le souligner. C'est une priorité pour nous, et elle sera abordée avec confiance et optimisme.

Je partage aussi votre analyse sur la question de la démocratisation du programme Erasmus+, parce qu'il y a quelques aspects dans Erasmus+ qui empêchent une certaine population de nos jeunes d'y participer, par manque de moyens. Pour contribuer à leur budget, pour combiner avec la contribution communautaire, je suis en conversation avec mon collègue Nicolas Schmit, le commissaire à l'emploi, et on travaille, pour justement envisager de mobiliser des fonds du Fonds social pour permettre à ces jeunes d'avoir le financement qui leur permettra de combiner avec nos contributions. C'est un problème réel, j'en suis conscient.

1-047-0000

**Laurence Farreng (Renew).** – Je voulais justement vous interroger sur la relation entre éducation et emploi, et notamment sur autre chose qui est dans votre lettre de mission, qui est la gestion des compétences, ce qui veut donc dire une démarche prospective, pour prévoir. Nous savons très bien que nous nous engageons, et c'est notre souhait aussi pour une Europe plus innovante, plus axée autour du *Green Deal*. Ces emplois vont donc se transformer.

Là encore, au titre de la commission de la culture, je vous interroge: comment allons-nous prévoir et comment allons-nous adapter ces formations et les programmer pour vraiment arriver à ces actualisations de compétences tout au long de la vie et en faveur de ces objectifs?

1-048-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, commissaire désigné.** – Sur le point des compétences, j'estime qu'il nous faut avancer selon trois principes: tout d'abord sur le principe de l'adéquation, puis la comparabilité et l'anticipation. Il faut avoir ces trois principes en tête quand on se prépare, pour contribuer, avec les compétences, dans un monde qui change et dans une société qui change.

Au sein de la Commission, je dois vous avouer que cette question des compétences est très partagée entre plusieurs directions générales. Elles sont représentées ici, c'est pour ça qu'il y a autant de monde. Et il faut d'une certaine façon en finir avec cette fragmentation.

Au niveau politique, c'est un travail qui sera partagé entre le commissaire Nicolas Schmit, qui est chargé des compétences et moi-même, justement pour faire en sorte qu'on puisse contribuer précisément avec nos instruments. Et, tout ce qui est politique sociale classique, ce sera Nicolas Schmit avec Valdis Dombrovskis, c'est cela le partage de compétences.

Effectivement, Mariya Gabriel avec ses instruments à elle sera aussi, de notre côté de cette vice-présidence, voilà comment on va s'organiser.

1-049-0000

**Romana Tomc (PPE).** – Spoštovani gospod Schinas, nadaljujem z vprašanjem, ki je povezano z veččinami, kajti zadolženi boste tudi za pomembne teme, ki so povezane z Odborom za zaposlovanje in njegovimi temami.

Da bi ohranili evropski način življenja, rabimo tudi dobro delujoč trg delovne sile. V Evropski uniji imamo danes zgodovinsko visoko zaposlenost, a se kljub temu soočamo s pomanjkanjem delovne sile, še posebej pri poklicih, ki zahtevajo zelo specifična znanja in spretnosti.

Soodgovorni boste za program nova znanja in spretnosti za Evropo in celo odgovorni za program poklicna znanja in poklicno usposabljanje.

Z vašimi ukrepi, ki jih boste predlagali, boste torej lahko pripomogli direktno, da bo na trgu dela več oseb z znanji, ki jih gospodarstvo potrebuje, in torej želim izvedeti od vas, kateri so vaši načrti na tem področju, kaj boste naredili, kateri konkretni ukrepi.

1-050-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – First allow me to say, Ms Tomc, that I'm delighted that the Employment Committee is represented in this hearing, because the mere fact that the Employment Committee sits here next to LIBE and CULT gives precisely the meaning of my portfolio. If I were to explain why such a Vice-Presidency should exist, this is precisely it: we bring together all these different strands of work. So I'm delighted that you are here.

In terms of skills, I think we have to do two things at the same time. First, of course, as I was telling Ms Farrang, we need to keep investing in skills for the job market and to fight inequality. This is – let's call it the traditional way of investing in skills. But there is something else which is skills-related, and I think it's also very relevant and where we have to do more. This is the question of soft skills that relate to inclusion: not skills that necessarily lead you to the job market but skills that can lead you to better inclusion into the society around you. Talking to others, doing sport, visiting museums, engaging in civil society activities, getting out of what Mr Procaccini described as a ghetto or a silo – these soft skills are equally as important as building skills for the jobs market.

We are determined, with the help of Mariya Gabriel and Nicolas Schmit, to address both these strands of work: by law, because already we have legislation on that; by our instruments; by the European Social Fund, Erasmus+, the Solidarity Corps and Discover EU, but also through Horizon 2020, which is a considerable source of resources for investing in skills.

1-051-0000

**Romana Tomc (PPE).** – Hvala lepa za ta vaš odgovor. Še na nekaj bi vas spomnila.

Evropska unija se ne sooča le s pomanjkanjem poklicnih spretnosti, ampak tudi s pomanjkanjem specifičnih znanj na področjih zelo visoke tehnologije. Digitalizacija bo razkorak med iskalci in ponudniki zaposlitev na trgu dela še povečala.

Zato se moramo pravočasno pripraviti. Ampak to ni stvar daljne prihodnosti, to se nam dogaja danes in vidimo, da je prilagajanje za nekatere ljudi zelo težko. Niso vsi mladi, niso vsi prilagodljivi, niso vsi računalniško pismeni.

Na trgu dela imamo tudi veliko starejših, ki se prilagajajo malce težje, ki nimajo ustreznih znanj. Tudi za te bo treba poskrbeti na trgu dela, kajti oni tu ostajajo. Ali imate tudi zanje, za takšne, ki se težje prilagajajo, kakšne posebne načrte?

1-052-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Yes, there again there is a double approach: there are two things to do, two different things to do. First is how – the geek word for it is ‘upskilling’ – how we make sure that parts of our society that are practically cut out of certain skills can be brought to a level that can benefit from digital technology, and you rightly identify the elderly and other vulnerable groups. This is the work that we can do on the social strand of the portfolio. The other part is bridging the skills gap, which is different. This is: what can we do to face up to the fact that we will be needing in the next year 250 000 skilled workers in digital – and we don’t have them and we have to find them? And that’s where legal migration comes, that’s where positive intervention through what Mariya Gabriel described to you – the Digital Education Act – through how we use our educational stream in the European education area to produce these skills that we miss. So we have to do it both ways and at the same time.

1-053-0000

**Evin Incir (S&D).** – I dina skriftliga svar på frågor om laglig migration och integration hänvisar du till att befintliga verktyg kan genomföras och tillämpas bättre, men givet den vikt som tillträdande kommissionsordförande Ursula von der Leyen har lagt vid att skapa lagliga vägar till Europa i ditt uppdragsbrev så undrar jag om det verkligen är tillräckligt. Baserat på dina skriftliga svar så är det, enligt min mening, mycket svårt att se hur ditt tillvägagångssätt skulle innebära någon förbättring, eller någon förbättring från den föregående kommissionen.

Kommer det inte att komma några nya förslag alls för laglig invandring från den nya kommissionen? Eller ska vi tolka det som att fokus i stället enbart kommer att ligga på befintliga instrument, pilotprojekt och stöd till tredjeländer? Oaktat de tveksamheter som finns i vissa medlemsstater: Vad kommer du att göra för att ta en ledande roll för att skapa lagliga vägar till Europa, så att ingen behöver riskera sitt liv i flykten från krig och elände?

1-054-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – This is a very central question to most of the issues we have been discussing so far. Legal migration – yes, we have to revisit legal migration and we have to do it dispassionately. We have to do it very objectively. I have already mentioned the three reasons that compel us to do that: demography, breaking the smugglers’ business model and bridging our skills gap. It’s as simple as that. You can attach all sorts of ideological tags to this and I was violently attacked in certain Member States precisely for my written answers to you, but these are the facts.

So what we can do to move more intelligently, if you like, along the path of legal migration, is, first of all, see what works, and these pilot projects that we have are a first, timid but important step that works. We have to do more. I asked the Director-General and I also talked with Ylva (Johannson) to try to make a better and more extensive use of these pilot projects.

The second thing – as I have already said – is that we have to revisit our blue card proposal. Let’s see why it didn’t work. Probably because it was too prescriptive, probably because it was a one-size-fits-all. Let’s see. I’m willing to look at it with a fresh pair of eyes.

Finally, another thing that is connected – as you rightly mention – is these humanitarian corridors that have to be accompanied by resettlement pledges. This is another track, which is

again conducive to legal migration. This is something that has worked, to a certain extent, at a very specific part of the geography. Now we need to do more, we need to have more corridors, and we have to do more with our partners and see how we can maximise our efforts there.

1-055-0000

**Evin Incir (S&D).** – Jag tyckte inte att jag fick några nya svar eller svar som indikerar att det skulle finnas möjliga nya alternativa lösningar än dem som tidigare har prövats och prövas just nu. Hur som helst, i ditt skriftliga svar på frågan om integrering konstaterar du att lösningarna måste komma nerifrån och inte uppifrån – och det poängterar du tidigare också – och betonar vikten av EU-finansiering.

Kan du förbinda dig att stödja Europaparlamentets försök se till att en miniminivå av EU-stödet till integration – framför allt via asyl-, migrations- och integrationsfonden – kommer att finnas tillgänglig för de lokala regionala myndigheterna, och inte först nödvändigtvis behöver gå via nationella regeringar, speciellt med tanke på vilka som sitter vid makten i vissa regeringar? Som medordförande för antirasist- och mångfaldsintergruppen i Europaparlamentet undrar jag hur du tänkt arbeta med att skydda minoriteter i Europa i den här kontexten med högerextrema krafter som växer sig allt starkare.

1-056-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – On the funds: with my extensive talks across the house before coming here I didn't sense that the size of the MFF funds that are being discussed or proposed is not satisfactory. On the contrary, I sense the certain idea that we are doing rather well. I say 'we' because I feel part of your community now. I think we managed to go from EUR 10 to EUR 30 billion for these policies, which is a tripling of resources. Now you're asking me to commit that a part of this is ringfenced for the regional and the municipal. I'm afraid that I cannot do that because you are the co-legislators, you are deciding on how the regulations are organised. So if you convince the Council to do it, I will be with you. But I have the feeling that this needs to be done differently. We need to see what the EIB can eventually do. How we can approach the regional level more rapidly and more flexibly.

Now for the rest I hope I'll have another minute later on to tell you about equality and the non-discrimination of minorities.

1-057-0000

**Patrick Breyer (Verts/ALE).** – Policies such as communications data retention and EU PNR (Passenger Name Record) aim at recording our everyday movements and private communications, and that of the entire population, so citizens who feel constantly watched and under surveillance will no longer feel free and courageously stand up for their rights and for a just society.

The European Court of Justice has twice ruled that communications data policies that apply to citizens who are not even remotely connected to crime are disproportionate, and it delivered a similar opinion on Canada PNR.

So do you accept that law-abiding citizens with no connection to crime have a right not to have their behaviour recorded? And will you implement a moratorium on such mass surveillance and bulk data collection policies covering anybody? And more specifically will you reject the Council's push for a new proposal on communications data retention, and also some Member States' calls for recording information on ferry and railroad travel?

1-058-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – I'm fully aware of the sensitivities of the issue of data retention that you mention, both of your group and the wider sensitivities and concerns, which to more than a certain extent I share. As a former EU civil servant, I have always learned to abide by, and read carefully, the European Court of Justice decisions.

What the Court told us to do in this case is something that we should consider very carefully. I don't think that we should improvise solutions now that we know the boundaries that the Court set. Having said that, this work on data retention now is something that will continue within the Commission. We will continue evaluating the situation after the ECJ decisions, but I also understand that there are many other court cases which are pending. I discussed with the services and I understood that they would feel safer if they allow for these pending cases also to conclude before we decide on the next steps.

Now on your more general question, I think I've said twice or three times so far that the European Union is the world champion of privacy and data protection. We are the block in the world that we have given our citizens the best and the most solid guarantees, and there is one principle which has to apply ecumenically: people's consent; a person's consent. So I would find it very difficult to violate this principle in certain parts of our policies while we accept it in certain others. This has to be a universal application. This is part of what the European way of life is, at least for me.

1-059-0000

**Patrick Breyer (Verts/ALE).** – Thank you for your answer. Respect for court decisions is one thing, but it is another thing – and a policy decision – whether you want to apply these ideas to even new ways of mass bulk data collection. That's why I would like to ask whether you would be willing to accept, as a general measure for security laws, that they shouldn't cover the entire population?

My second question is: in your written answer you write that the right to security must be balanced against the right to privacy. This thinking, however, is flawed, because there is no human right to be secure from crime. It's not in the Charter or anywhere, and you being a lawyer, how can we trust that you respect human rights if you have such a fundamental misunderstanding of them? I mean we're critical anyway of the wide range of items in your portfolio, but that idea of a right to security really fuels our concerns.

1-060-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – On the first leg of your question, I think that the best way to address your fears or worries is for me – together with Commissioner Gabriel and Commissioner Johansson, but I think that would be more for me – is to make sure that when the Digital Services Act is produced by Vice-President Vestager and Commissioner-designate Goulard, that this is the moment where clearly we must find the right balance between policy, security and guarantee. I do not think that this has to be necessarily an antithetic or a zero-sum game where someone has to lose out. I think that we can sufficiently address these concerns by this assurance that our security policy should be driven by fundamental rights. There is no security without fundamental rights, it's as simple as that. And fundamental rights should not be seen, as was the case up to now, as an impact assessment that we have to do at some point at the end. It has to be front-loaded. It has to be done when we decide policy from the very start.

1-061-0000

**Nicolaus Fest (ID).** – Herr Schinas! Wie Sie am Anfang Ihrer Vorstellung sagten, verfolgen Sie im Wesentlichen drei Ziele, nämlich erstens den Schutz der Gleichstellung von Mann und Frau, zweitens den Kampf gegen jede Form von Diskriminierung und drittens die Umsetzung der *Global Compacts* für Migranten und Flüchtlinge. Nun widersprechen sich diese Ziele allerdings und niemand hat das klarer gemacht als der leider verstorbene Modeschöpfer Karl Lagerfeld. Sie alle wissen, Karl Lagerfeld war kein Rassist, er war kein Populist und er war noch nicht einmal ein Rechter. Er hat diesen Widerspruch bei seiner Kritik der Willkommenskultur von Frau Merkel sehr klar benannt. Er sagte: Man könne – so Lagerfeld – nicht zwei Millionen Muslime ins Land holen und gleichzeitig den steigenden Antisemitismus beklagen. Und man kann auch nicht – um es zu ergänzen – zwei Millionen oder künftig noch

mehr Muslime ins Land holen und gleichzeitig die Gleichstellung von Frau und Mann und die Rechte der LGBT-Community schützen wollen.

Für eine Seite müssen Sie sich also entscheiden. Beides zusammen geht nicht. Also für welche Seite entscheiden Sie sich? Für Migration oder für den Schutz von Juden, Frauen und Homosexuellen?

1-062-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *Commissioner-designate*. – I'm not sure I can give the answer that I have in mind to this question, but I'll try. No, Mr Fest, I don't see this thing, with all due respect, as an either/or. I do not. I simply do not. I understand that some people want us – force us – to think like that. I will not do it. I will resist the temptation to do it.

*(Applause)*

And I will go a step further, looking at this part of the Chamber. I would also resist the temptation of people pushing me, using this argument to do it. This is precisely what they want to achieve. This is precisely the trap that they want to set for us. It's either/or. *Οι δύο Ευρώπες, που είπε ο κύριος Αρβανίτης*. There are not two Europes. There is one Europe with a place for everyone. That's my answer to Mr Fest.

*(Applause)*

1-063-0000

**Nicolaus Fest (ID)**. – Herr Schinas! Ich sehe, dass Karl Lagerfeld der bessere Kommissar auf Ihrer Position wäre, und ich hoffe sehr, dass Sie im Bereich der Modeschöpfung ähnlich gut sind und dass Sie Ihren weiteren Weg vielleicht in diesem Feld suchen, denn hier sind Sie leider nicht geeignet.

1-064-0000

**Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)**, *Chair LIBE*. – Now, you've got every right to use the rest of your timing, Mr Schinas, if you will. Only if you will.

1-065-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *Commissioner-designate*. – No, Chair, that will not be necessary, thank you.

1-066-0000

**Dace Melbārde (ECR)**. – First of all, thank you for your well-structured answers, both oral and written. I will have a question from the cultural angle of your responsibilities.

When we speak about the way of life of people or communities in the cultural policy discourse, we can't escape the concept of identity. Do you have an identity policy, and what could it be?

1-067-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *Commissioner-designate*. – Thank you for this question Ms Melbārde, which I would use also to address the one that Ms Incir put to me, but unfortunately she left, so I will stick to you.

No, I would not like to use the word 'identity'. I would prefer to use the term 'common sense of belonging'. Because the term 'common sense of belonging' makes us all feel more comfortable. This is a term that allows space for everyone. This is a continent where everybody fought everyone else on everything, and most of the times it was around identity, or religion, or cleavages, or I think that one of the greatest successes of this unprecedented historic accomplishment which is the European Union is precisely that we managed to construct a set of values, a space, on which everyone feels comfortable – well most, I would say, feel comfortable. And I think that opening these doors of identity politics would not



necessarily improve the societies of tomorrow, which have to be inclusive, have to be resilient, have to be with skills, have to be with cultural instruments, but have to be with a common sense of belonging – not with a certain culture of ‘us against them’, and the term identity has this connotation, which I would like to avoid.

1-068-0000

**Dace Melbārde (ECR).** – So whether we use the word ‘identity’ or not, there is still one key word missing in your answers and in the whole scope of your tasks, and I think it’s an important concept. It’s ‘European history and social memory’. So you know that at its last session, the European Parliament in Strasbourg adopted a resolution on the European remembrance for the better future. What will you do to bring the resolution to life?

1-069-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – This is not a question that should be addressed to me because I’m not the one who would have to deal with the issue of history, democracy, values. This is somewhere between my colleague Dubravka Šuica, who has her meeting in the next room, I think, as we speak, on democracy and demography, and Vice-President-designate Věra Jourová, who is the Vice-President in charge of values, who will be heard by you next Monday. So I think that it would be wiser for me not to cross on their turfs and offer an opinion for them.

1-070-0000

**Ελισσάβητ Βόζεμπεργκ-Βρυωνίδα (PPE).** – Καλησπέρα, κύριε Σχοινά, σας εύχομαι καλή επιτυχία. Θα αναφερθώ στη συμφωνία-δήλωση Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης-Τουρκίας που, εδώ και τέσσερα χρόνια, λειτούργησε σε μεγάλο βαθμό ικανοποιητικά, μειώθηκαν σημαντικά οι ροές και μπορέσαμε να μην έχουμε απώλειες ανθρώπινων ζώων στη Μεσόγειο. Παρ’ όλα αυτά, τελευταία υπάρχει μια δραματική αλλαγή των πραγματικών περιστατικών. Δεκάδες άνθρωποι έρχονται από τα παράλια της Τουρκίας και η αύξηση των ροών είναι της τάξεως του 200%, από τον Μάιο μέχρι σήμερα. Αντιλαμβάνεστε ότι για τη χώρα μας, την Ελλάδα, που είναι χώρα πρώτης υποδοχής, η κατάσταση είναι δραματική και μη διαχειρίσιμη.

Η Τουρκία είχε αναλάβει, βάσει της συμφωνίας αυτής, την υποχρέωση να αποτρέψει το άνοιγμα καινούργιων οδών —στη θάλασσα και στην ξηρά— και να συνεργαστεί τόσο με την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση όσο και με τρίτες χώρες. Φαίνεται ότι ως προς αυτό, στην πράξη, δημιουργούνται προβλήματα. Πώς αξιολογείτε τη λειτουργία της δήλωσης-συμφωνίας μέχρι σήμερα; Πιστεύετε ότι πρέπει να ασκηθούν πιέσεις στην Τουρκία ώστε να υποχρεωθεί να τηρήσει τους όρους της συμφωνίας;

1-071-0000

**Μαργαρίτης Σχοινάς, Ορισθείς Επίτροπος.** – Κυρία Βόζεμπεργκ, νομίζω ότι αφετηρία της απάντησης σε αυτό το θέμα πρέπει να είναι η παραδοχή εκ μέρους μας του γεγονότος ότι η Τουρκία φιλοξενεί εδώ και χρόνια στο έδαφός της πάνω από τρία εκατομμύρια Σύριους πρόσφυγες. Είναι ένα βάρος που έχει αναλάβει και πρέπει να το αναγνωρίσουμε, όπως και για τον Λίβανο και την Ιορδανία —κράτη που έχουν αναλάβει δυσανάλογα μεγάλα βάρη και τιμούν τις υποχρεώσεις τους προς τους αδύναμους και τους αιτούντες άσυλο.

Είναι αλήθεια ότι η δήλωση Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης-Τουρκίας παρήγαγε μέχρι πρόσφατα πολύ σημαντικά αποτελέσματα και ουσιαστικά εκμηδένισε τις ροές σε ποσοστό μεταξύ 85% και 90%. Είναι επίσης γνωστό ότι η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση —πολύ γενναιόδωρα— με ένα ποσό που φτάνει τα έξι δισεκατομμύρια σε δύο προγράμματα έχει αναλάβει ουσιαστικά τη χρηματοδότηση της υποδοχής αυτών των απελπισμένων ανθρώπων που βρίσκονται στην Τουρκία. Είναι επίσης αλήθεια ότι μερικές πλευρές της συμφωνίας έμειναν εκκρεμείς. Αυτά είναι τα δεδομένα. Όπως είναι επίσης αλήθεια ότι η τελευταία επιθετική ρητορική που συνδέεται με τις εξελίξεις στη Συρία και στο Ιντλίμπ επιβαρύνει την κατάσταση.

Τι πρέπει να κάνουμε λοιπόν; Νομίζω ότι πρέπει να ξαναεπισκεφθούμε τη συμφωνία· να την ξαναφρεσκάρουμε. Είναι πολύ θετικό ότι —«as we speak» που λένε— αυτήν τη στιγμή, ο

Επίτροπος Αβραμόπουλος, μαζί με τον υπουργό Ζεεχόφερ και τον υπουργό Καστανέρ, βρίσκεται στην Τουρκία γι' αυτό ακριβώς το θέμα και αύριο θα πάνε και οι τρεις στην Αθήνα. Είναι πολύ σημαντικό να καταλάβει η Τουρκία τον ρόλο που έχει ως εταίρος της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στη διαχείριση αυτού του προβλήματος, που είναι κοινό και για τους δυο μας. Είναι επίσης σημαντικό και οι ελληνικές αρχές να αναλάβουν κάποια από τα μέτρα που πρέπει να ληφθούν σε ελληνικό έδαφος για την καλύτερη διαχείριση των αρνητικών συνεπειών, δηλαδή τις μη γρήγορες επιστροφές. Τα μέτρα αυτά έχουν ήδη δρομολογηθεί, όπως ξέρετε. Πιστεύω ότι μέσα από αυτήν τη λογική θα βρούμε μια άκρη στο θέμα Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης-Τουρκίας.

1-072-0000

**Ελισσάβητ Βόζεμπεργκ-Βρυωνίδα (PPE).** – Κύριε Σχοινιά, σας ευχαριστώ πολύ για την απάντηση και τις διαπιστώσεις σας. Συμφωνώ —όπως φαντάζομαι συμφωνείτε και εσείς— ότι η αλλαγή είναι δραματική τους τελευταίους μήνες. Υπάρχει ένα καινούργιο δεδομένο: μια καινούργια κυβέρνηση στη χώρα μας, που έχει μια διαφορετική μεταναστευτική πολιτική, η οποία εναρμονίζεται σε μεγάλο βαθμό με τη συμφωνία. Με δεδομένο αυτό που είπατε, ότι θα ξαναδούμε τη συμφωνία, θέλω να σας ρωτήσω: θα τη δούμε από μηδενική βάση ή εκτιμάτε ότι πρέπει να γίνουν κάποιες τροποποιήσεις, κάποιες βελτιώσεις που να δεσμεύουν και τα δύο μέρη να τηρούν τις υποσχέσεις τους και τους όρους της συμφωνίας αυτής;

1-073-0000

**Μαργαρίτης Σχοινιάς, Ορισθείς Επίτροπος.** – Η ερώτησή σας είναι πολύ καλή κυρία Βόζεμπεργκ, αλλά νομίζω ότι η απάντηση είναι άμεσα συνδεδεμένη με την επίσκεψη Αβραμόπουλου-Ζεεχόφερ στην Άγκυρα, απόψε το βράδυ· ο υπουργός Καστανέρ δεν ταξίδεψε λόγω της επίθεσης στο Παρίσι. Όντως, πρέπει να δούμε με την τουρκική κυβέρνηση ποιο μπορεί να είναι το κέντρο αυτής της φρέσκιας οπτικής στη δήλωση Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης-Τουρκίας. Δεν θέλω τώρα να προτρέξω. Νομίζω —μιας και το θέτετε— ότι ήρθε η ώρα να πούμε ότι η Ελλάδα δεν θα αφηθεί μόνη της στη διαχείριση αυτών των ροών. Δεν μπορεί η Ελλάδα να αφηθεί μόνη της. Είναι ευχής έργο αυτήν τη στιγμή που η νέα ελληνική κυβέρνηση ευθυγραμμίζει σε μεγάλο βαθμό τις δράσεις της με τις ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές μετανάστευσης. Ελπίζω ότι από αύριο, σε αυτές τις λίγες εβδομάδες που μας μένουν, θα μπορέσουμε να δρομολογήσουμε αυτήν τη νέα ματιά στην ευρωτουρκική συμφωνία θετικά. Θα ξεπερνάει ρητορικές και λόγια και απειλές· νομίζω ότι αυτά δεν έχουν πια καμιά σημασία στη διαχείριση του θέματος που μας απασχολεί.

1-074-0000

**Fabienne Keller (Renew).** – Monsieur le président, Monsieur le commissaire candidat, l'incendie meurtrier dans le camp de Moria, à Lesbos, dimanche dernier, nous a rappelé combien il est urgent pour l'Europe de se munir d'un régime d'asile commun.

Vous avez parlé d'un nouveau pacte sur la migration et l'asile, d'un consensus pour un nouveau départ. Mais, Monsieur Schinas, pouvez-vous nous en dire davantage, nous présenter vos actions concrètes, notamment sur le paquet asile? Quelle sera la nature de ce nouveau pacte? Quels instruments envisagez-vous? Et surtout, quel sera votre calendrier?

1-075-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, commissaire désigné.** – Merci Madame Keller pour cette question. Je vais essayer de vous en dire le plus possible, puisque, comme on s'est mis d'accord avec Ylva Johansson, il faut tout d'abord faire un tour des capitales très vite, parler avec vous, voir un peu le terrain d'atterrissage avant de formaliser nos propositions. Il ne faut pas échouer cette fois; nous avons une opportunité: ce nouveau départ, bâtir un nouveau consensus. *Failure is not an option this time.* Il faut réussir. Alors je vais essayer, compte tenu de ces contraintes, de vous dire ce qui, personnellement, me paraît pouvoir constituer la base de ce pacte. Je le mentionnais brièvement à Mme Metsola au début.

Tout d'abord, il faut garder les progrès accomplis dans les cinq textes législatifs que vous avez très bien élaborés ici au Parlement; c'est pour moi le point de départ. Tout cela doit

rester sur la table. Deuxièmement, il faut se concentrer sur les deux textes qui manquent: la réforme de Dublin et les procédures. Pourquoi? Parce que nos systèmes d'asile sont bâtis pour une Europe différente, lorsque les demandes d'asile venaient de ceux qui fuyaient la dictature grecque, portugaise, espagnole. Or, maintenant, nous avons un phénomène migratoire colossal. Il faut donc adapter nos lois d'asile à l'époque où nous vivons. Mais pour le faire, pour débloquer la situation dans les États membres qui bloquent, il faut être en mesure d'introduire d'autres éléments pour accomplir ce nouveau départ, qui pourraient être – je les ai mentionnés brièvement – le retour, les accords et les arrangements pour la réadmission; ça, c'est important. Il faut revoir la proposition Schengen, parce que la liberté interne est liée à la façon dont nous protégeons nos frontières.

Il faut voir les frontières, il faut voir les migrations légales. Je pense qu'avec tous ces éléments, on peut avoir la masse critique pour un nouveau départ pour le pacte.

1-076-0000

**Fabienne Keller (Renew).** – Monsieur le commissaire désigné, vous l'avez rappelé, la réforme du droit d'asile est retardée depuis trop longtemps. On peut se le rappeler: il y a eu, en 2016 déjà, des nouvelles propositions de la Commission, qui n'ont pas permis de dépasser les tensions entre les États membres. Vous savez que la précédente législature de ce Parlement a beaucoup travaillé pour construire une majorité large.

Alors, je me permets d'insister sur la question du calendrier: comment vous proposez-vous d'avancer sur ce dossier, pour lequel on pourrait dire que l'indécision, l'absence de décision, nourrit le populisme? Le pire c'est: aujourd'hui, on n'avance pas. Allez-vous, par exemple, inciter le Conseil à appliquer les règles de majorité qualifiée qu'il est possible d'appliquer dans ce domaine?

1-077-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, commissaire désigné.** – Une réponse facile, Madame Keller, et une réponse un peu plus difficile. La réponse facile, c'est sur le calendrier. Notre intention avec la commissaire désignée en charge, c'est, après ce tour des capitales, ce *listening tour* avec vous, de très vite, avant la fin de l'année, pouvoir vous présenter – comme on dit en français – un *scoping paper*, un document qui traite les questions principales à aborder, les zones d'atterrissage éventuelles, et puis si tout va bien, je pense que nous serions en mesure de faire ce nouvel élan avec tout l'appui du collège de la présidente élue au début de l'année prochaine. Ça, c'était la réponse facile.

Pour la réponse difficile: vous me demandez s'il faut avoir recours à la majorité qualifiée. C'est une question importante, mais la réponse est difficile. Pourquoi? Parce qu'on a essayé la majorité qualifiée, vous vous souvenez quand on a fait l'effort de la relocalisation ad hoc: on a cru qu'avec la majorité qualifiée, on avait résolu le problème. Peut-être a-t-on résolu un problème à ce moment-là. Mais la majorité qualifiée, il faut l'avouer, a laissé des traumatismes. Dans ces questions-là, l'application de la majorité qualifiée a créé des blessures. Alors, nous sommes maintenant dans un nouveau départ, que faut-il faire? Je pense que oui, techniquement, la majorité qualifiée est là; mais politiquement, nous avons intérêt à l'éviter. Voilà la réponse difficile.

1-078-0000

**Κωνσταντίνος Παπαδάκης (NI).** – Κύριε Σχοινά, η πολιτική της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στο προσφυγικό-μεταναστευτικό χαρακτηρίζεται από την αντιδραστική κατεύθυνση των απελάσεων που εύχρα αποκαλείτε «επιστροφές», της ενίσχυσης των στρατιωτικών μέσων στα σύνορα, της μετατροπής της κράτησης σε κανόνα για ανθρώπους που εξαναγκάστηκαν —κάτω από συνθήκες πολέμου, ιμπεριαλιστικών επεμβάσεων και εξαθλίωσης— να εγκαταλείψουν την πατρίδα τους. Είναι δε ιδιαίτερα επικίνδυνη εξέλιξη ο επιχειρούμενος περιορισμός και η ίδια η αλλοίωση της έννοιας του πρόσφυγα.

Στην Ελλάδα, η νέα κυβέρνηση, σε συνέχεια της προηγούμενης και προωθώντας την ίδια ευρωενωσιακή κατεύθυνση, προεξοφλεί κιόλας —με ανακοινωθέντα στόχο— 10.000 απελάσεις έως το 2020 και επίσης, μεταξύ άλλων, το να πάψουν οι πρόσφυγες με σύνδρομο μετατραυματικής διαταραχής να συμπεριλαμβάνονται στις ευάλωτες ομάδες αιτούντων άσυλο.

Οι παραπάνω ευθείες παραβιάσεις διεθνών αναγνωρισμένων δικαιωμάτων συνιστούν την αποκαλούμενη «προστασία του ευρωπαϊκού τρόπου ζωής» ή και —πολύ χειρότερα— το νέο σύμφωνο για τη μετανάστευση και το άσυλο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης σηματοδοτείται μέσα από αυτές;

1-079-0000

**Μαργαρίτης Σχοινάς, Ορισθείς Επίτροπος.** – Κύριε Παπαδάκη, μου δίνετε την ευκαιρία να επαναλάβω κάτι που είπα στην αρχή: σέβομαι όλες τις απόψεις και όλες τις προτάσεις που έχουν μια τάση να ερμηνεύουν το πολύ σύνθετο μεταναστευτικό φαινόμενο από μία συγκεκριμένη οπτική. Είλικρινά τις σέβομαι και πιστεύω ότι έχουν και μια παραγωγική συνεισφορά στο θέμα. Αλλά, δυστυχώς, βρισκόμαστε σε αυτήν την κατάσταση, με την Ευρώπη στο κέντρο αυτού του μεταναστευτικού φαινομένου, και είναι απαραίτητο να σκεφτούμε συνολικά. Πρέπει, δηλαδή, να αντιμετωπίσουμε όλα αυτά τα πράγματα μαζί· τόσο αυτά που θέλουμε όσο και αυτά που —ενδεχομένως— δεν θέλουμε.

Τώρα, αν σας καταλαβαίνω καλά, μου λέτε ότι η πορεία των πραγμάτων, δηλαδή και με άσυλο και με επιστροφές και με διαχείριση ροών, είναι —κατά κάποιον τρόπο— εναντίον των αξιών μας. Θα μου επιτρέψετε να πω ότι εγώ δεν συμμερίζομαι αυτήν την άποψη. Θα ήταν εναντίον των αξιών μας αν η Ευρώπη ακολουθούσε το μοντέλο της Αυστραλίας. Αυτοί που θέλουν τον αυστραλιανό τρόπο ζωής θα θέλουν και το αυστραλιανό μοντέλο διαχείρισης της μετανάστευσης. Δεν είναι αυτός ο δικός μας τρόπος· εμείς κάνουμε τα πράγματα αλλιώς. Τα κάνουμε συνολικά, με όλες τις παραμέτρους που έχουμε στα χέρια μας. Είμαστε κοινωνίες και κράτη μέλη δικαίου· όλα μας τα κράτη μέλη σέβονται τις διεθνείς συνθήκες της Γενεύης και όλα μας τα κράτη μέλη σέβονται τη διεθνή και ευρωπαϊκή έννομη τάξη. Να με συγχωρήσετε, αλλά δεν βλέπω γιατί πρέπει αυτό αμέσως να σημαίνει ότι τα πράγματα είναι στραβά· εγώ δεν τα βλέπω στραβά. Δεν τα βλέπω όλα λυμένα, αλλά βλέπω μια συνεπή ευρωπαϊκή προσπάθεια για να κάνουμε το καλύτερο που μπορούμε σύμφωνα με τις δικές μας αξίες και αυτό θα συνεχίσουμε να κάνουμε.

1-080-0000

**Κωνσταντίνος Παπαδάκης (NI).** – Κύριε Σχοινά, δεν ισχυρίστηκα ότι αυτά που περιέγραψα είναι ενάντια στις αρχές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Αυτές είναι οι αρχές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης· ο «ευρωπαϊκός τρόπος ζωής» είναι η Μόρια και τα hotspot. Δεδομένου ότι εδώ και τρεισήμισι χρόνια η συμφωνία Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης-Τουρκίας στην πράξη έχει αποδειχθεί ότι επιβάλλει τον μαζικό εγκλωβισμό προσφύγων στα ελληνικά νησιά, αυτές τις μέρες στην Ελλάδα εκτυλίσσεται μια δραματική και συνάμα εκρηκτική κατάσταση και επί της ουσίας δεκάδες χιλιάδες πρόσφυγες ζουν σε άθλιες συνθήκες· όχι μόνο στη Μόρια, αλλά και στα άλλα κέντρα υποδοχής και φιλοξενίας, οξύνοντας τα προβλήματα και για τους ντόπιους κατοίκους.

Πώς λοιπόν τοποθετήστε στο γεγονός ότι πλέον αποδεικνύεται ότι ο ισχυρισμός, μέχρι τώρα, της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και των κυβερνήσεών της πως η δήλωση Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης-Τουρκίας σταματούσε τις ροές, έχει στην πράξη καταρρεύσει; Πώς επίσης τοποθετήστε στην ανάγκη να κλείσουν εδώ και τώρα όλα τα hotspot και να υπάρξει μεταφορά των προσφύγων και μεταναστών στην ηπειρωτική Ελλάδα, σε αξιοπρεπείς και δημόσιες δομές φιλοξενίας, με προοπτική τη γρήγορη μεταφορά τους στις χώρες πραγματικού προορισμού τους και με πλήρη τήρηση των δικαιωμάτων τους για το άσυλο;

1-081-0000

**Μαργαρίτης Σχοινάς, Ορισθείς Επίτροπος.** – Είναι λίγο το ένα λεπτό για όλα αυτά τα θέματα που έθεσε ο κύριος Παπαδάκης, αλλά ίσως πολύ γρήγορα πρέπει να πω μερικές από τις επιτυχίες μας, κύριε Παπαδάκη, που νομίζω ότι τις υποτιμήσατε. Ο «ευρωπαϊκός τρόπος ζωής» είναι οι 700.000 ψυχές που σώθηκαν στη Μεσόγειο χάρη σε εμάς· είναι οι γιαγιάδες της Λέσβου· είναι η επίσκεψη του Πάπα στην Ελλάδα και στη Λέσβο, που χαιρετίζει τις ευρωπαϊκές αξίες· είναι όλα όσα έχουμε κάνει σχετικά με το άσυλο κάτω από πολύ δύσκολες συνθήκες —ξέρετε ότι το 2015 και 2016 δεν υπήρχε τίποτα στα νησιά του Αιγαίου και ξεκινήσαμε από το μηδέν.

Τώρα, αν με ρωτήσετε αν η κατάσταση στη Μόρια με ικανοποιεί, εγώ είμαι ο πρώτος που θα σας πω ότι δεν με ικανοποιεί· με πληγώνει και ως Έλληνα και ως Ευρωπαίο. Δεν πέφτω όμως στην παγίδα να εκτιμήσω ότι είναι αποτέλεσμα μιας παραμέτρου αυτό —αυτό είναι μια πολυπαραγοντική εξίσωση, στην οποία πρέπει να σκεφτούμε πώς φτάσαμε τα τελευταία τρία χρόνια. Το πώς μπορούμε να το αντιμετωπίσουμε θα το δούμε, και η Ευρώπη —όπως είπα πριν— θα είναι αρωγός για την Ελλάδα.

1-082-0000

**Łukasz Kohut (S&D).** – I have a short question. You have been tasked to coordinate the work of an ambitious education agenda. How will you strengthen the role of adult education within the new strategic framework? And the second one: how will you ensure that non-formal adult learning will be promoted separately to vocational education and training?

1-083-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – This is a very important question that in a way compliments the issues raised by our colleague from the Employment Committee. Indeed, other than linking the skills to the job market and introducing through soft skills integration tools for vulnerable communities and upskilling, you raise now the issue of lifelong learning and vocational training. This is now, I would say, one of our top priorities, because the era where Europeans had to train once for a life career is over. I think people of my generation probably would be the last Europeans to have trained for one thing. So to accompany lifelong learning is a priority. We have to do it through a comprehensive set of instruments that relates both to the Skills Act but to the very important tools that we have at our disposal, normally on the Gabriel side of things, namely the tools of Erasmus+ but also European Social Fund Plus. There we have to very clearly help Member States identify which are the specific needs for lifelong learning, because there is another tendency that we often draft programmes here in Brussels in a way that responds to a certain – how should I call this – organisational logic, that the projects that are easy to manage, easy to handle, easy to pay – that then we discover that they do not quite match the needs in each Member State. I continue to pledge that we have to start bottom-up. We have to go to the Member States, identify needs and then match with policies and instruments from the EU.

1-084-0000

**Łukasz Kohut (S&D).** – You mentioned that you will work to ensure greater accessibility to education for all segments of society, and in particular those belonging to minorities and people who have disabilities. I cross my fingers for this. How are you going to encourage governments to support you in this field, for example, the Polish or Hungarian governments?

1-085-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – I think you are right on the diagnostic part of your question, that it's not going to be easy. I agree. And as you know, the fact that in the area of non-discrimination we mainly operate with unanimity does not help either.

We have this Non-Discrimination Directive, the horizontal instrument that I take a certain pride to have voted for as an MEP back in 2008, although the EPP was against this. Robert, I'm sorry I broke the party whip at the time, but I feel very proud to have voted for this Non-Discrimination Directive, which is stuck since then: nothing has moved, so your diagnosis is

right. But I'm happy to see now that the Finnish Presidency are organising a final push to unblock it. There is an EPSCO Council, I understand, on 24 October. Fingers crossed, I think that if our Finnish colleagues manage to unblock this, that would be the first convincing answer to the problems you identify.

1-086-0000

**Jeroen Lenaers (PPE).** – Although the numbers of arrivals have significantly decreased in recent years, it is also clear that the European Union is nowhere near ready for a potential next crisis. We've said it in this House many times – you've said it tonight as well – the only real approach to migration is a holistic one.

Border control, fair and efficient asylum procedures, solidarity and dignified receptions are all needed, but especially also what is missing is return. If we see that only one third of the people that are not in need of international protection actually return to their country of origin, it also means that two-thirds wilfully ignore the rules or procedures that we make here and stay anyway, which is something that is also hurting public support that we need in order to take care of real refugees. Now increasing returns – you've said this already – can only be done by cooperating with other countries. Tragically, however, this is also part of the policy that we have not been very successful on so far.

So my question to you, Mr Schinas, is: how would you envisage to improve this cooperation with third countries and what kind of concrete steps are you planning to take in that regard?

1-087-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Yes, Mr Lenaers, I think you are touching one of the – how should I call this? – new elements that we have to bring into the pact, as I was saying earlier, to try to unblock the situation and use this new fresh opportunity for a new dynamic start. It is in my mission letter, by the way, as are many other things, but I think that one of my priorities would be, together with Jutta Urpilainen, the Commissioner-designate for international partnerships, to start, early on in the mandate, a new wave of readmission agreements with countries of transit and origin. We need this, not only because, inevitably – we cannot pretend that this is not happening – it has an impact on the management of migration policies, because we need it as a new partnership approach with these countries into some sort of a win-win relationship.

It would be wrong to build these readmission agreements only on a partial reality, which is migration-related. We have so much in common with these countries. We have so much to do to help them. So we have to be, I would say, intelligent enough (and I think we are, with all modesty) to try to craft these new agreements with third countries in a way that makes sense for them and for us – not only for us. And we now have in our rich instruments and tools visas, soft power, money, scholarships, also trade, all sorts of educational cooperation that can bring together in discussing and striking agreements with these countries. Without these agreements do not expect, Mr Lenaers, improvement on returns.

So this is something that has to go together, and this is something that will be part of the new pact. I am personally convinced of it.

1-088-0000

**Jeroen Lenaers (PPE).** – I fully agree on the part about the readmissions and especially it is also very sensible to start with a number of key target countries of origin and transit. I also hope that the cooperation in that respect, and the help you will get in the coming five years, from the High Representative and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States, will be more efficient than it was in the past five years.

Now, secondly, partnerships, and win-win partnerships as well, tend not to be cheap. I'm not only saying this because I got married this year, but in general, how do you see, for instance,

the role of the funds and specifically the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) to help you reach this cooperation with third countries, specifically of origin and transit?

1-089-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – I think you are right in saying that this needs to be a fresh start, you are right in saying that it has to be done with everything that we have at our disposal.

In terms of resources, I think money – I will come to the money in a second, but other than money, I think we have lots of other things now that we can leverage when we discuss with these countries: visas, trade, cooperation, investment, education. On the money side, you raised the MFF, but you should not forget also that we have this new programme with an unpronounceable abbreviation – I'm unable to pronounce it; we call it the 'single lady', I think, in the MFF jargon. There is a lot of money that would allow us to address root causes, real development needs, and also aspects related to borders management and so on. So we can do a lot through that.

1-090-0000

**Niyazi Kizilyürek (GUE/NGL).** – Mr Schinas, in contrast to the title of your portfolio, I strongly believe that there is no one way of life in the European Union, but political principles which aim to protect human dignity, pluralism, diversity, non-discrimination, solidarity and equality. And indeed we are living in a period where cultural racism is growing in the European Union. What measures do you intend to implement in order to face the challenges arising from cultural racism? In your original answers, you stated that the European culture, and I quote, is admired throughout the world and we need to protect it. And here you spoke about some envy towards European culture. Who is envying the European culture and from whom shall we protect it? Do you believe that European culture is superior? And lastly, you said that you don't like 'isms'. Feminism is also an 'ism'. Do you dislike feminism?

1-091-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, Commissioner-designate.** – Let me start with feminism. I prefer the term gender-balance. I think that's the way to say the same thing and avoid the 'ism'. So we can clear that up now.

Let's continue with the other two issues. I'm not quite clear on what you mean by cultural racism. What exactly do you have in mind? I'm trying to see what would justify the use of this term in the European Parliament. Where is our cultural racism? We are translating into 22 languages, we have people from all backgrounds – ethnic, linguistic and national – represented here, elected directly by the people of Europe. Where is our cultural racism? I see a cultural richness, and I'll say a cultural pride, when I listen to people like you, like Ms Incir and like Mr Magid. Where is our cultural racism?

I have never lived through such a concept. I don't know what it is, and when I look at our instruments, when I look at our programmes, Creative Europe, when I look at Erasmus +, when I look at all of these, the only thing we do is precisely the opposite of what you accuse us of. We bring people across borders, so that they can meet, travel, study, train, understand other cultures. Where is this cultural racism located in Europe? I would be very interested to go and see it.

I understand that there is a fear of cultural dominance. There is a fear of cultural supremacy. I do not share this fear, because I think that precisely our strength is, as you rightly say in the second part of your question, in our diversity of values, of the languages, of the way we are and the way we live in Europe. And when I say indeed that European culture is envied, I say that when you are in China, you want to go to the Louvre, you want to go to the Parthenon, you want to see our cultural heritage. This is what I mean. I don't mean exclusion. I don't

mean us against them – you misunderstood me profoundly if you attribute this mentality to me. I'm not like that.

1-092-0000

**Niyazi Kizilyürek (GUE/NGL).** – I will continue in Greek; maybe we can understand each other better.

Ο πολιτισμικός ρατσισμός είναι μια έννοια που υπάρχει σε όλες τις γλώσσες: στα ελληνικά ονομάζεται «πολιτικός ρατσισμός», στα γερμανικά «kulturrassismus», στα αγγλικά «culture racism». Μάλιστα, έχει τεράστια σημασία γιατί είναι αυτό ακριβώς που ανατρέπει την ετερότητα στην Ευρώπη· γιατί η Ευρώπη πρέπει να είναι ενωμένη μέσα από την ετερότητα, όπως συμφωνούμε και οι δύο μας. Όμως, πολλές φορές ακούσαμε ότι απέτυχε η πολυπολιτισμικότητα στην Ευρώπη· το έχουμε ακούσει και από την κυρία Μέρκελ, από τη Γερμανία και από άλλους, ότι απέτυχε η πολυπολιτισμικότητα. Άρα, έχει μεγάλη σημασία να υπερασπίσουμε την πολυπολιτισμικότητα. Το ερώτημά μου προς εσάς είναι τι θα κάνετε για να ενδυναμώσουμε μια λειτουργική πολυπολιτισμικότητα.

1-094-0000

**Μαργαρίτης Σχοινάς, Ορισθείς Επίτροπος.** – Δεν υπάρχει καλύτερη απόδειξη για την πολυπολιτισμικότητα από το γεγονός ότι ένας Κύπριος ευρωβουλευτής τουρκοκυπριακής καταγωγής με έναν Ελλαδίτη υποψήφιο αντιπρόεδρο μιλάνε στα ελληνικά στην αίθουσα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου. Πάτε ψάξτε αλλού, εδώ δεν θα βρείτε πολιτικό ρατσισμό ούτε πολιτιστικό ρατσισμό· εδώ είναι Ευρώπη, κύριε Κιζιλγιουρέκ, τα κάνουμε τα πράγματα αλλιώς.

1-095-0000

**Alicia Homs Ginel (S&D).** – Señor Schinas, como representante de la Comisión de Empleo y Asuntos Sociales, a mí me gustaría preguntarle por los jóvenes. Los jóvenes de hoy somos la generación mejor preparada. Sin embargo, la tasa de desempleo juvenil sigue siendo inaceptablemente alta en la Unión Europea; la precariedad laboral y los contratos temporales han aumentado exponencialmente y afectan al 43,3 % de los jóvenes de entre 15 y 24 años. Entre estos jóvenes hay un número extremadamente alto que no puede conseguir un empleo fijo. Los contratos de cero horas, a tiempo parcial o temporales o los contratos mercantiles no cubiertos por la legislación laboral son cada vez más comunes entre los jóvenes. Muchos se ven obligados a aceptar condiciones cada vez más precarias y menos seguras.

Señor Schinas, ¿cómo piensa mejorar la situación de los trabajadores jóvenes para fomentar su acceso a un trabajo digno, cualificado y de calidad que, al mismo tiempo, amplíe su protección social? ¿Está de acuerdo en que el desajuste formativo no es la única causa de esta situación y que, por tanto, la política de formación no puede ser la única solución? ¿No cree que precisamente este desajuste se debe en parte a que las personas sobrecualificadas están atrapadas en empleos de baja calidad?

1-096-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, comisario propuesto.** – Señora Homs Ginel, yo creo que, efectivamente, usted plantea la pregunta correcta y apunta a una paradoja europea. La paradoja es la siguiente: nunca jamás en la historia del empleo hemos tenido tantos europeos trabajando; o sea, tenemos un récord histórico de empleo. Pero la paradoja es que mientras tenemos cada vez más empleo, tenemos también una desigualdad que persiste, dificultades de acceso y problemas de precariedad del empleo. Estos son problemas reales y son problemas europeos, pero sería un error, creo yo, ofrecer desde Bruselas una solución única que responda a las necesidades de los mercados laborales de nuestros Estados miembros.

Nosotros sí y lo hacemos a través del marco de gobernanza económica, con el Semestre Europeo. Cada año, en cada país, decimos con precisión a los Estados miembros lo que nosotros vemos: es importante concretar y mejorar la política. Lo hacemos y, como decía



antes a otro diputado, el 60 % de estas recomendaciones por país tienen que ver con el empleo, las habilidades y la sanidad. O sea, temas que me corresponden.

Por ello, soy consciente de que tenemos que seguir apoyando este trabajo del Semestre. En paralelo tenemos que trabajar con instrumentos como el Fondo Social Europeo, precisamente para el tema de la inclusión porque tenemos un 20 o 25 % reservado para la inclusión. Por lo que concierne a los jóvenes, la solución es, digamos, la «parte Gabriel», que es Erasmus+, la formación profesional. Ahí tenemos más oportunidades de orientar Erasmus+. Ya no es un problema académico, debe ser también un problema de formación.

1-097-0000

**Alicia Homs Ginel (S&D).** – Ahora me gustaría preguntarle por las condiciones de trabajo de los becarios, específicamente en lo relativo al nivel de remuneración y al contenido del aprendizaje de estas experiencias para los jóvenes, ya que sigue siendo uno de los elementos que más nos preocupan. ¿Qué hará la Comisión Europea para abordar este problema en vista de que las iniciativas en curso, como el marco de calidad para los períodos de prácticas, no han logrado otorgar los derechos adecuados a los becarios?

¿Está de acuerdo en que las prácticas deben remunerarse, basarse en un contrato escrito y en que nunca deben sustituir a los trabajos reales?

Y para terminar y abordando otro tema, me gustaría hacer una pequeña referencia al nombre de su cartera. Muchas veces se han alzado aquí hoy para cambiar el nombre, pero a mí me gustaría hacerle una propuesta. La denominación de esta cartera debería reflejar lo que es y lo que deberían ser Europa y sus ciudadanos: una sociedad cohesionada, integradora, solidaria y segura. Por eso la denominación debería ir más encaminada hacia el multiculturalismo y los valores europeos y no debería ser la que se está proponiendo para la cartera.

1-098-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, comisario propuesto.** – Para la segunda parte de su pregunta, no tengo ningún inconveniente en decir que estoy de acuerdo con el contenido que usted propone. Yo creo que he pasado más de dos horas aquí precisamente explicando cómo veo yo mi trabajo, que es muy similar a la manera en que usted acaba de describirlo.

En segundo lugar, en el tema de los becarios también tiene razón. Hay una nueva toma de conciencia de que el trabajo de los becarios no puede ser una oportunidad para tener formas de trabajo perennes en condiciones precarias, utilizando —yo diría, distorsionando— la noción de la formación. El trabajo de los becarios tiene sentido solo si tiene que ver con un período limitado, muy bien precisado en términos de aprendizaje y habilidades y —para mí, importantísimo— de remuneración. Si estas condiciones no se reúnen, considero que el trabajo de los becarios es otra cosa. La Comisión —yo creo que en este tema lo estamos haciendo un poco mejor— va a seguir trabajando con el comisario Schmit para que sea este el principio universal para este tipo de trabajo.

1-099-0000

**Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE).** – Señor Schinas, el derecho a la libertad de expresión artística ha sufrido graves violaciones en los últimos años. Los casos judiciales y el encarcelamiento de artistas por haber ejercido su derecho a la libertad de expresión han aumentado en toda Europa, y son los gobiernos los principales violadores de estas libertades artísticas. La cultura es una importante herramienta para el diálogo intercultural y para construir sociedades inclusivas que no sean racistas y que abracen todas las diferencias culturales e ideológicas. Pero los casos de censura y represión artística afectan muy a menudo a grupos vulnerables, como las minorías étnicas, las mujeres, las comunidades LGBTI o los grupos críticos con el sistema.

La ONG Freemuse ha registrado un número creciente de causas abiertas a artistas, así como casos de censura de obras de arte que afectan principalmente a artistas de estos grupos de los que he hablado. ¿Qué medidas tomará para fortalecer la libertad de expresión del arte como herramienta para combatir el racismo y la discriminación? ¿Evaluará la legislación implementada por los Estados miembros que contravenga las normas europeas e internacionales de derechos humanos sobre libertad de expresión artística?

1-100-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, comisario propuesto.** – Señora Riba i Giner todos nuestros Estados miembros son democracias y todos nuestros Estados miembros suscriben la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales y las libertades que allí se exponen en detalle.

Por lo que a mí me concierne, tanto como persona como comisario propuesto, yo no concibo que la expresión artística y cultural pueda ser de alguna manera disciplinada. No lo concibo, no entra en mi esquema de valores. Yo creo que la expresión cultural y las libertades, lo que nuestras fuerzas creativas componen, escriben y divulgan, es algo que también es parte del modo de vivir europeo. Es lo que nos define. Es por lo que somos únicos y por lo que nos admiran y a veces nos envidian en otras partes del mundo.

Ahora, creo que usted tiene algunos ejemplos en mente que yo desconozco, pero si esto fuera así me resulta difícil ver que un juez pudiera procesar a un artista por un tema de expresión cultural. Es una cuestión muy vinculada a la independencia del Poder Judicial. No seré yo, ni la Unión Europea, quienes puedan decir a los poderes judiciales lo que es aceptable o lo que no es. Eso es parte de nuestra civilización constitucional y reglamentaria en cada Estado miembro. Pero estoy dispuesto, con María Gabriel y los servicios competentes, a considerar casos o asuntos que tengan que ver con las competencias europeas, porque ahí sí que nos interesaría saber lo que pasa y lo que podríamos hacer para ayudar.

1-101-0000

**Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE).** – Voy a poner un ejemplo concreto: según diversas ONG, ha aumentado el uso que hacen algunos gobiernos de algunas medidas que están destinadas a luchar contra el terrorismo, pero que en realidad las utilizan para castigar a los grupos que antes he mencionado. En España, por ejemplo, hay un cantante, Baltonic, que fue, incluso, condenado a prisión por las letras de sus canciones. Ahora se encuentra exiliado aquí en Bélgica.

La misma Comisión Europea ha considerado que no es válida la orden de arresto de España contra él. Esto ya no es un conflicto interno, señor Schinas, sino que afecta a los estándares democráticos europeos. ¿Cómo garantizará que la libertad de expresión esté protegida en Europa y que nadie pueda ir a la cárcel por sus obras artísticas?

1-102-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, comisario propuesto.** – Vuelvo a repetir lo que dije en mi primera respuesta. Para mí, la creación artística y la libertad de expresión es un principio universal que nos define. No conozco el caso que usted acaba de citar, pero, según lo cuenta, tiene que ver con la apreciación judicial de un sistema judicial nacional de una determinada situación que desconozco. Siempre en mi vida profesional como funcionario europeo he seguido el principio de que hay separación de poderes en Europa desde la época de Montesquieu —otra cosa que nos define, otra cosa que nosotros hemos inventado para el resto del mundo— y aquí me quedo. No puedo aquí establecer los parámetros de un caso específico que desconozco y que tiene que ver con la apreciación del poder judicial independiente en nuestros Estados miembros.

1-103-0000

**Judith Bunting (Renew).** – Mr Schinas, thank you very much for your answers. I'm very pleased to hear you confirm with such vigour your commitment to diversity in Europe. I'm a liberal – I say hastily – and I have no interest in promoting aggressive identity politics but,

like others here, I value Italian culture, Greek culture, German culture and, yes, even British culture. I do not want anyone outside of the 'Eurobubble' to have any reason to think that we – any of us – insist that there is only one European way of life.

For my first question, though, I want to ask about the practicalities of your position. You are responsible for lifelong learning and cross-border learning and you have mentioned Erasmus+ a few times. How do you plan to work with other Commissioners to ensure that the European influence on education promotes European cultural diversity as well as the critical, but less controversial, innovation, digital and vocational skills?

1-104-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *Commissioner-designate*. – Ms Bunting, for the first part of your question, I think by now you will have understood that we agree. On the second part of your question, on exactly the limits of my responsibilities and how I will position myself, I will share with you an experience when I was preparing this exchange and I was briefed by the services of the Commission. At the moment where we had to discuss – they had to brief me – on skills, education, culture, digital, we were 55 people around the table, and they say, 'Why are we so many?'. And there was a good answer for that, because this, historically, was done there, then the head of unit moved with his unit there, and then something else happened, the Commissioner... So I use this example to tell you that the fact that Ms von der Leyen thought that she needs a Vice-President who will be politically accountable to you and responsible to her for bringing together added value that comes from this plethora of organisational structures, tools and instruments: I'm totally for this job. That's what excites me about this job actually, because I'm not happy with this fragmentation. I'm not happy that I have to be briefed by 50 people. I'm not happy that many of the issues we discussed, like lifelong learning, like youth unemployment, like skills, like upskilling, are scattered around the Commission. So we need – and that's, I think, my role, together with the Commissioner for jobs, together with the Commissioner for culture, education, youth and sport, together with the Commissioner for equality, together with the Commissioner for health, to bring all this together and come to you and explain if I managed or if I failed. But at least you would have me and the Commissioner.

1-105-0000

**Judith Bunting (Renew)**. – It does come back to the title of your role – I am sorry – and you will have prepared for this, you will have discussed it with Ursula von der Leyen before you came here, and you will have had an idea of what you were going to face. But you have faced concern from across this Chamber, from the left and the right, from LIBE and CULT. You've persuaded me that you and what you intend to do is good, right and proper – seriously, you've got me on side. But the name of the role is poor, and I ask you not to be arrogant, not to be defensive, but to go back to Ursula von der Leyen and discuss a potential renaming. For what it's worth, my contribution would be 'Protecting European solidarity', something like that – just something that doesn't make... if we worry then the citizens are going to worry even more (those that pay attention, anyway). So I ask you, please don't be arrogant. Can you commit that you will spend at least half an hour discussing this with Ursula von der Leyen?

1-106-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *Commissioner-designate*. – First of all, let me tell you that I feel very honoured that I have you on my side. That's a great accomplishment in itself. Second, I was telling Ms in 't Veld, I think, on where we are. I repeat: I don't think that I was arrogant. If I was, I apologise. I repeat that this is something that we need to address in the context of what the President-elect has described, explained to you, you voted for her, and she further explained to you her concerns in her op-ed.

I said, and I repeat, that I have the greatest respect for all the arguments that shaped this debate. I respect these arguments. I had the opportunity to say that I come from a positive angle into all this. I'm not accepting that this can be instrumentalised by the extremists, and I want to assure you that I will work on the positive side. And then you're saying: go back to

the President-elect and tell her. The President told you already that in Europe we discuss, and in the end, we agree. That's what she said, that's what she wrote in her op-ed. So that's it, that's my answer.

1-107-0000

**Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE).** – Señora presidenta, señor comisario propuesto. Hemos llegado al final. A lo largo de todo este debate hemos hablado de la ambiciosa agenda de educación que la presidenta electa le ha puesto encima de la mesa. En ella se habla de la necesidad de mejorar el acceso a la educación, de la lucha contra el abandono escolar, de la formación a lo largo de la vida —lo hablábamos antes—, de las personas de 50 años que, por ejemplo, están teniendo problemas en el acceso al mercado laboral. También hemos hablado de la formación profesional como un reto importante.

Pero hablando de proteger nuestro modelo de vida y los valores europeos, lo que está claro es que lo que defendemos es la libertad, el Estado de Derecho y, sobre todo, que Europa es un espacio de oportunidades, un espacio donde hay oportunidades. Y esas oportunidades las crean los empresarios, las crean aquellos que invierten y crean empresas. A mí me gustaría escuchar, cuando se habla de educación, que se hablara de crear mentalidad empresarial ¿Qué se va a hacer desde Europa para que haya más empresarios que creen más puestos de trabajo y oportunidades para todos?

1-108-0000

**Margaritis Schinas, comisario propuesto.** – Gracias, señora Benjumea. Efectivamente, la pregunta plantea la siguiente situación: que muchas veces decimos que, con todo nuestro trabajo en educación, cultura, formación y juventud, no hacemos un mercado único de educación, y no hace falta hacerlo, porque ya ahí tenemos competencias distintas de las de los Estados miembros en el nivel regional. Pero ¿qué hacemos con todo eso? Contribuimos a formar a gente joven, a nuestros trabajadores y a nuestros empresarios, y a hacer las dos cosas que decíamos antes: *bridging the skills gap*, crear un puente entre lo que nos falta y lo que hay que tener, y el *upskilling*, ayudar a avanzar a aquellas partes de nuestra población a las que se ha dejado fuera, al margen del progreso tecnológico empresarial.

Estoy de acuerdo con usted porque, haciendo eso con nuestra gente, indirectamente ayudamos a nuestra economía y a la sociedad. No es una cosa que hacemos para nosotros y para ellos. Hay un efecto directo de creación de empleo, de creación de crecimiento, de creación de riqueza. Ahora, efectivamente, el *entrepreneurship*, focalizar nuestros instrumentos en la creación de empresas, es algo que no se debe tampoco dictar desde Europa. No podemos mandar a nuestra gente que sean todos empresarios, pero podemos darles la formación, la mentalidad, los idiomas, los diplomas que faciliten su transición hasta la creación de empleo.

Y muchos de nuestros programas, como el Plan Juncker de inversiones, como todos esos programas de inversión tecnológica en el marco de Horizonte 2020, tienen este componente empresarial.

1-109-0000

**Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE).** – Yo soy de la teoría de que los empresarios nacen, pero también se hacen. Y para hacer esos empresarios —por supuesto, tiene que ser una decisión libre, no queremos imponerle a nadie que sea empresario—, Europa tiene que tener la ambición de que haya cada vez más empresarios y cada vez más gente con ganas de generar riqueza, generar oportunidades, generar puestos de trabajo, que son al final los que pagan esos impuestos que permiten mantener el estado de bienestar, que también es una de las señas de identidad de la Unión Europea. Por lo tanto, insisto en la pregunta —y no está en la carta de la presidenta electa— de si hay una voluntad de que cuando se hable de educación esté presente el objetivo de trabajar para crear en los niños la ambición y la ilusión de poder ser empresarios, de poder decir: «Papá, mamá, quiero ser empresario».

1-110-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *comisario propuesto*. – No, no lo hay en mi carta de misión y no lo hay tampoco en los instrumentos ni en nuestros fondos como objetivo, digamos, singular; pero sí que hay —como intenté explicar en mi respuesta anterior— un abanico de opciones, de instrumentos que nos permiten, primero, identificar las partes de *skills*, de habilidades en las que estamos muy débiles. Esto ya, en sí, induce a la gente a focalizarse en lo que busca. Entonces, si un joven, un estudiante, tiene interés en el camino empresarial, sí tenemos la obligación de decirle que puede ir por ahí; lo que no podemos hacer es imponerle un cierto objetivo de formación. Esto tiene que ser el resultado de un trabajo mucho más amplio y mucho más cooperativo entre nosotros, vosotros aquí en el Parlamento, y nuestros Estados miembros.

1-111-0000

**Sabine Verheyen**, *Chair CULT*. – Thank you very much. We now close the second round of questions. I want to say thank you and I pass over to my Co-Chair, Juan López Aguilar.

1-112-0000

**Juan Fernando López Aguilar**, *Chair LIBE*. – Thank you, Co-Chair Verheyen. Yes, we have completed no fewer than 25 blocks of questions meant to last five minutes each. Although exceeding the time foreseen slightly – or less slightly – we’re getting closer to the end of this joint session of ours.

But, before we close it, of course you will have your say again. Your final say in this joint session of ours belongs to you for the next five minutes to make your closing statement before the end of this meeting.

1-113-0000

**Margaritis Schinas**, *Commissioner-designate*. – Thank you, President. It is very late. I thank you for this rich and broad discussion, which has clearly shown me one thing: there is no doubt about one thing, that I saw here tonight – the very high level of dedication and rigour of all of you in the areas of your Committees.

The second thing I want to do is to say before seeking your confidence, trust and support, to take into account that the job that I have been entrusted to do is one that has never existed before. It’s a new job. And the starting point should be: why is this a new job? Why is this necessary in this new Commission that the President-elect is putting together? I think that the answer, and I hope that I was able to convey this to you tonight, is that although the job is new, the problems are old and they are deeply rooted in the way our societies have developed over time. This has brought with it a certain organisational logic of silos and fragmentation, and now I am asked, with the help of the Commissioners working with me – steering, coordinating their work – to be able not only to advance in this ‘chantier’, in these workstreams, to deliver what we promised you back in July, but also, and this is more for me than for the Commissioners, to put all this together into some sort of a unified narrative of good practice, skills, diversity, inclusion of our richness and of our values that would help us cement these resilient and tolerant societies for tomorrow. There are many challenges ahead, but I think and I hope that you would understand my modest contribution to take this forward. This is what I will fight for and this is what I hope we will be able to deliver together over the next five years. Thank you very much.

*(Applause)*

1-114-0000

**Juan Fernando López Aguilar**, *Chair LIBE*. – It’s us who thank you, Vice-President-designate Schinas, and of course, thank all of the Members with this high level of attendance at this late hour of the day.

I might simply add, as a concluding remark to this lengthy session – it's been more than three hours now – that you're bound to carry a portfolio which is heavily loaded with footnotes and remarks – if not objections – because there is a European way of life, but one thing I can say is that working at this late hour is certainly not consistent with the European way of life. And the second thing I can say is that, yes, there might be a European way of life, but certainly it's not one version which is meant to be compulsory. If there is a European way of life, it is open, it is inclusive, it is meant to encompass diversity and pluralism.

So we only can thank all of the Members who have enriched this discussion of us only to announce that me, as Chair of the LIBE Committee, and the AFCO Chair, will be convening the follow-up by the coordinators just to assess properly the outcome of this discussion that we just had. We thank you, Vice-President-designate Schinas, we wish you well.

1-115-0000

**Sabine Verheyen**, *Chair CULT*. – I also want to say thank you, first to Mr Schinas. It was, as we expected, a very interesting and broad discussion, and I want to say thank you for answering all the questions that were raised, and I also want to say thank you to the Members here who raised the questions, because you were also part of this interesting debate we had this evening.

I also want to say thank you to my Co-Chair, Juan López Aguilar. It was a good cooperation during this hearing. I also want to say thank you to the services who organised this meeting so that it could run through quite smoothly. As you know, our next task will be that we have to evaluate what we heard this evening, and I want to ask you to be, from 22.15, together with the coordinators from LIBE and CULT, for a coordinators' meeting for the evaluation in ASP 1G3. I beg all the coordinators to listen and please, for all the others, to be a little bit more quiet so that everyone can understand what we say.

So the coordinators' meeting will take place at 22.15 in ASP 1G3, so please all the coordinators from LIBE and CULT, be there in time so that we can finish our work of today. The EMPL Committee, as associated Committee, will also be represented with one of the Chairs of the Committee. So please at 22.15 in ASP 1G3.

I just forgot to say thank you also to the interpreters who gave their time this evening. It is not an easy job, and I think we should have perhaps a small applause for the ladies and gentlemen in the cabins, who made it possible that we have this in all the languages. Thank you very much.

*(The hearing closed at 21.34)*