



Brussels, 11.12.2024
C(2024) 9011 final

DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**on Former Commissioner Mariya Gabriel's post term of office professional activity as
President of the Robert Schuman Institute**

DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

on Former Commissioner Mariya Gabriel's post term of office professional activity as President of the Robert Schuman Institute

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community,

Having regard to the Commission Decision of 31 January 2018 (C(2018) 700 final) on a Code of Conduct for the Members of the European Commission, and in particular Article 11(3) thereof,

Considering that:

Whereas:

- 1) According to the second paragraph of Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Members of the Commission, when entering upon their duties, shall give a solemn undertaking that, both during and after their term of office, they will respect the obligations arising therefrom and, in particular, their duty to behave with integrity and discretion as regards the acceptance, after they have ceased to hold office, of certain appointments or benefits.
- 2) Article 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that the Members of the institutions of the Union shall be required, even after their duties have ceased, not to disclose information of any kind covered by the obligation of professional secrecy, in particular information about undertakings, their business relations or their cost components.
- 3) Article 11 of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the European Commission establishes a specific procedure for the assessment of planned professional activities which the Members or former Members of the Commission intend to take up after they have ceased to hold office. The Commission shall examine the information provided in order to determine whether the nature of the planned activity is compatible with Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. If the planned activity is related to the portfolio of the Member or former Member, the Commission shall decide only after having consulted the Independent Ethical Committee unless the planned activity falls within the exceptions foreseen in paragraph 3, second subparagraph, lit. (a) to (f).

- 4) Former Commissioner Mariya Gabriel informed the Commission, on 27 November 2024, of her appointment for a non-remunerated position as President of the Robert Schuman Institute. She stated that she would not be involved in the daily project work of the Robert Schuman Institute, which implemented its activities in full transparency and in compliance with the requirements deriving from the Transparency Register. She furthermore underlined that her appointment followed an election held on 19 November 2024 and that she would be able to exercise her representation rights as President only after registration of her new role with relevant national authorities.
- 5) The Robert Schuman Institute describes itself as the European educational centre for politicians and parties belonging to the political family of the European People's Party (EPP), focussing on fostering democracy, leadership, and European integration. The Institute, headquartered in Hungary, operates as a hub for developing political knowledge and leadership skills, particularly within the context of center-right political ideologies.
- 6) According to its website, the Robert Schuman Institute's activities include organising workshops, seminars, conferences, and multi-day training programs to educate participants about democratic governance, human rights, and European political frameworks. These programs target young political leaders, activists, and party representatives, particularly from Central and Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans, and other neighbouring regions.
- 7) The Robert Schuman Institute indicates to primarily rely on a combination of membership fees, donations, and grants for its funding. The largest sources of funding come from grants and member contributions. In the recent past, key contributors included the European People's Party (EPP), the Eduardo Frei Foundation and the Robert Schuman Foundation, Luxembourg. The Robert Schuman Institute received in 2023 a grant amounting to €13.500 from EU programme 'Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values', managed by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).
- 8) Ms Mariya Gabriel's former Commission portfolio, held until 15 May 2023, included Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth. While the institute's activity has elements related to education and the training of young people who are close to certain political parties, the Commission considered, in line with previous decisions on Former Members' post term of office assignments with think tanks and political institutes that aim at strengthening the European integration, that the activity which Ms Gabriel envisages has no specific link with her portfolio and that the consultation of the Independent Ethical Committee was therefore not necessary.
- 9) The Commission also concluded that Former Commissioner Gabriel's envisaged activity does not present any risk of incompatibility with her former function as Member of the Commission or with the interests of the institution, provided she respects the duties imposed on her by the Code of Conduct for the Members of the

Commission. This includes namely the respect of collegiality and discretion as set out in Article 11(1) in conjunction with Article 5, as well as the duty to refrain from lobbying the Commission on behalf of the Institute on matters for which she was responsible within her portfolio for a period of two years after ceasing to hold office, as it results from Article 11(4) of the Code.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

Former Commissioner Mariya Gabriel's notified activity as President of the Robert Schuman Institute is compatible with the second paragraph of Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, subject to the respect of the obligations set out in Articles 245 and 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission, in particular Article 11(1), in conjunction with Article 5, and Article 11(4).

Done at Brussels, on 11 December 2024.

The President
Ursula von der Leyen