

Chairman of the Committee on Budgets  
Chairwoman of the Committee on Budgetary Control  
Chairman of the Committee on Legal Affairs

Ref.: D (2017) 1125

D 300291 11.01.2017

Martin Schulz  
President  
European Parliament  
PHS 09B011  
B - 1047 Brussels

**Subject: Exchange of views with Commissioner Günther Oettinger on 9 January 2017**

Dear President,

In accordance with Rule 118 (7) of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament and point 2(c) of Annex XVI thereto (Guidelines for the approval of the Commission), on Monday 9 January 2017 the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Budgetary Control and the Committee on Legal Affairs held an exchange of views with Mr Günther Oettinger, Member of the European Commission, to whom the portfolio of Budget and Human Resources is transferred following the resignation of Vice-President Kristalina Georgieva.

Prior to the exchange of views, Parliament had sent the Commissioner a list of written questions. The questions together with the replies that were submitted by Commissioner Oettinger are attached to this letter.

On the basis of the comments made by our respective Committees' coordinators, who met afterwards under our chairmanship, we hereby give the following assessment:

*As far as the Committee on Budgets is concerned:*

Following a discussion after the exchange of views, a large majority of BUDG Coordinators agreed that they were satisfied that Commissioner Oettinger is in a position to assume the budget portfolio that is transferred to him and look forward to a close and fruitful working relationship between our respective institutions on crucial budgetary issues, including the upcoming annual budgets, the mid-term revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework and preparations for the next Framework, as well as the reform of the Own Resources system.

*As far as the Committee on Budgetary Control is concerned:*

During the exchange of views with the Commissioner, the Members of the Committee on Budgetary Control noted with satisfaction that the Commissioner intended to carry through projects, which his predecessor had begun, that he would endeavour to bring the current

“galaxies of budgets” back under the roof of a single EU budget, thereby enhancing democratic accountability.

CONT coordinators welcomed the Commissioner’s general commitment to and interest in budgetary control issues. Nevertheless, some coordinators expressed concerns regarding the Commissioner’s controversial public statements, and regarding his even-handedness when it comes to interacting with lobby groups. They thought that the Commissioner should therefore not be appointed Vice-President.

Overall, a majority of CONT Coordinators were convinced that the Commissioner has the necessary professional experience to exercise the responsibilities, which President Juncker had assigned to him.

*As far as the Committee on Legal Affairs is concerned:*

The Coordinators of the Committee on Legal Affairs considered that the transfer of such a key portfolio occurred at a crucial time for the EU and agreed that an exchange of views with Mr Oettinger was very opportune.

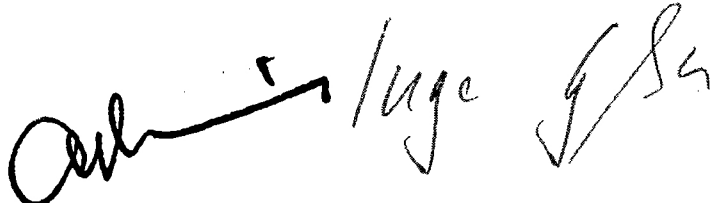

The Members of the Committee on Legal Affairs asked Mr Oettinger questions on the implications of Brexit for the EU budget in respect of the pension contributions for the UK staff members and on the concrete steps he would take in order to achieve geographical balance as regards EU personnel and foster gender mainstreaming. Mr Oettinger was also asked whether he would mediate between Parliament and the Council in order to unblock the Women on Boards file and how he would improve the attractiveness of the EU as an employer. Finally, he was asked whether, in light of his recent declarations, he had ever considered it more appropriate not to accept the human resources portfolio.

The majority of the Coordinators considered that the exchange of views with Mr Oettinger was constructive and that he appeared well prepared as regards staff matters.

Some Coordinators expressed concern about a lack of strategic vision as regards gender mainstreaming and concrete safeguards to ensure non-discrimination in the management of EU personnel and to guarantee the respect of the Commissioners’ Code of Conduct. In light of last year’s controversial actions and statements, the Coordinators of the Committee on Legal Affairs expect a strong commitment to gender mainstreaming, non-discrimination issues and transparency from the Commissioner.

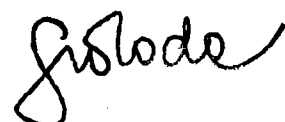
In conclusion, the majority of the Coordinators of the Committee on Legal Affairs are convinced that Mr Oettinger has the necessary professional experience to exercise the responsibilities that the President of the Commission has assigned to him.

Sincerely yours,



Jean Arthuis

Ingeborg Gräßle



Pavel Svoboda

cc: Mr Klaus Welle, Secretary General