

**Major interpellation for written answer G-001001/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 139

**Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Zdzisław Krasnodębski**  
on behalf of the ECR Group

Subject: Commissioner Schinas and Qatar

On 9 December 2022, Belgian police carried out raids at various addresses throughout the country, including at offices in the European Parliament. Eight people were arrested, among whom were current and former Members of the European Parliament for the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats. Other raids in connection with this case followed in Italy and Greece and the investigation is still ongoing<sup>1</sup>.

The suspects arrested have been accused of corruption, money laundering and membership of an alleged criminal organisation sponsored by a 'Gulf State' (presumably Qatar), the aim of which was to illicitly influence political decisions or actions taken by the European institutions. The combined amount of cash seized in more than 20 raids across Europe totalled EUR 1.5 million.

This unprecedented corruption scandal has considerably tarnished the image of the European Parliament and of the European Union as a whole. In order to restore citizens' trust and confidence, it will be essential to shed light fully on similar allegations of foreign interference faced by other European institutions.

Against this backdrop:

1. Do the positive comments on recent political developments in Qatar, in particular on its labour market reform, made several times by Commissioner Margaritis Schinas on his social media channels<sup>2</sup> fully reflect the official stance of the Commission, as claimed by their author?
2. When and how was the decision taken to delegate the role of officially representing the Commission at the opening ceremony of the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar to Commissioner Schinas?
3. Will the Commission disclose a full list of meetings held by Commissioner Schinas with the Qatari authorities or with representatives of entities controlled by Qatar or Qatari citizens since the beginning of his mandate as Commissioner for Promoting our European Way of Life on 1 December 2019?
4. To what extent was Commissioner Schinas involved in the internal drafting process of the Commission's proposal for a regulation on visa exemptions for nationals of Qatar and Kuwait?
5. Will the Commission launch an internal investigation into whether Commissioner Schinas' actions in connection with the above-mentioned file constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct for Commissioners?
6. What is the state of play regarding the Commission's work on a proposal on setting up an independent ethics body common to all European institutions, as announced in President Von der Leyen's mission letter to Commissioner Věra Jourová, Vice-President for Values and Transparency, in December 2019?

Submitted: 2.2.2023

---

<sup>1</sup> As of 21 December 2022.

<sup>2</sup> See posts published on Margaritis Schinas' official Twitter account (@MargSchinas) on 27 April 2022 and on 19 and 20 November 2022.