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**DECISION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
**of 7.1.2025**  
**on the establishment of a Commissioners' Project Group on Democracy**

**Decision of the President of the European Commission  
on the establishment of a Commissioners' Project Group on Democracy**

THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

*Having regard to the Treaty on the 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's Rules of Procedure, and in particular Article 3(6) thereof,*

Whereas the Commission's work to protect EU democracy requires cooperation across a number of portfolios to deliver the best results.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

*Article 1*

(1) A Project Group on the European Democracy Shield is set up to support delivering on this project. It shall facilitate the joint work in line with the Political Guidelines and the Mission Letters. The Project Group shall also steer the Commission's work to support strong democracies in the EU and abroad.

(2) Without prejudice to the decision-making process of the College and the responsibility of the collegial preparatory bodies, the Project Group shall ensure timely preparation and provide political steer for the development of the initiatives and implementation of priorities. It shall support the preparation of a new European Democracy Shield. It shall develop a whole-of-society approach that strengthens the resilience and protection of democracy in the EU.

(3) The Project Group shall develop EU actions to preserve the fairness and integrity of elections across Europe, including by promoting high standards in democratic infrastructure and practice.

(4) The Project Group shall bring together work to develop situational awareness, counter foreign information manipulation and interference and disinformation, by detecting, analysing and proactively countering disinformation and information manipulation and enhancing the transparency of democratic processes and interest representation.

(5) The Project Group shall coordinate work to strengthen freedom of speech, foster pluralistic and free media and engagement with civil society organisations. It shall ensure a fair and open online platform environment, prevent dissemination of mis-/disinformation and deepfakes and protect civic discourse and electoral processes, ensuring complementarity with enforcement of digital rulebook, including of the Digital Services Act and Artificial Intelligence Act.

(6) The Project Group shall oversee the building of a Civil Society Platform to deepen citizen participation and engagement.

(7) The Project Group shall consider the related work on tech Sovereignty, cybersecurity and the implementation of the European Digital Rulebook, the EU's preparedness strategy, the European Internal Security Strategy, the EU's enlargement policy and global engagement, and seek to maximise synergies.

## *Article 2*

(1) The Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection shall chair the Project Group.

(2) The composition of the Project Group shall be as follows:

- Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy,
- High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission,
- Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness,
- Commissioner for Equality; Commissioner for Preparedness and Crisis Management,
- Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration,
- Commissioner for Startups, Research and Innovation, and
- Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection.

(3) The President may decide to attend and chair the group. Other Executive Vice-Presidents and Commissioners may participate in relevant meetings of the Project Group and contribute to the work on invitation by the chair.

(4) The chair decides for each meeting if participants can be accompanied by one or more staff members, either from the Cabinet or Services.

(5) The Secretary-General of the Commission or a Deputy Secretary-General, the Director-General of the Legal Service or his or her Deputy, the Director General of Directorate-General for Communication or his or her Deputy, and the Cabinet of the President, have standing invitations to attend the meetings of the Project Group.

## *Article 3*

(1) The Secretariat-General shall ensure the secretariat of the Project Group.

(2) The secretariat shall assist in the organisation of the Project Group's meetings and prepare draft agendas. The secretariat shall ensure the timely preparation and/or circulation of

meeting documents (short discussion notes, background).

(3) The agendas of meetings of the Project Group shall be decided by the chair in agreement with the Cabinet of the President. Participants may suggest items to be included in the agenda.

(4) The chair shall draw the conclusions of the meeting which shall be circulated by the secretariat. The conclusions shall be published on the Commission website unless the chair decides otherwise depending on the nature of the discussions.

#### *Article 4*

(1) The Project Group is established for an initial period of one year.

(2) The Project Group may continue to operate subsequently if the President decides to renew its mandate under the same or revised terms.

Done at Brussels, 7 January 2025.

*The President*

*Ursula VON DER LEYEN*