

Opening – Rytis Martikonis

As the chair of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) - together with the members of the Board and our colleagues of the Secretariat - happy to welcome and to host this annual conference devoted to the 2022 Annual Report of the RSB.

This is the fifth time that we are coming together, and I am very glad to see that there are more or less 200 of us gathered in this room, both from the Commission, other EU institutions and many Member States and interest groups that are present both in Brussels and in Member States.

Few remarks to start with, because I think we have a good programme waiting for us for the next three hours or so.

- The first reminder - even if speaking to a knowledgeable audience - is that the RSB, being independent, makes part of the internal quality assurance of the Commission's decision making. It is part of the well-established process; it contributes to the better regulation agenda which is of course bigger and broader, and the RSB deals with scrutiny of draft impact assessment, evaluation or fitness check reports.
- Secondly, RSB never takes a view on the political objectives or advisability of the initiatives. The College, the Commission, as such decides. RSB's duty, its mandate, is to check the quality of the arguments, of the evidence, the intervention logic, so the political decisions are based on the strongest evidence that can be provided.
- On transparency I believe that the RSB functions under the highest standards; all of its opinions are published together with the College decisions once they are adopted. On the other hand, all meetings of the RSB members with different stakeholders are dutifully registered on our site. Needless to say, never the individual files are discussed with them or with the interest groups.
- The last point is one of appreciation to the colleagues of the Commission. They – in different departments and units of the Commission – are the owners of impact assessments needed for policy-making. On the RSB side, together with the Secretariat-General, we are partnering in the process of scrutiny and improvement but the authorship and ownership belongs to them. I say this with sincere appreciation and recognition of the common purpose.

We have the members of the Board on stage; we have the panels set to focus on trends and challenges of impact assessments and evaluations in 2022 (introduced by Michael Gremminger) and then on the cost benefit analysis since this is a special feature of the report (introduced by Dorota Denning). Thanks again for the work on this report to all Board members. Thanks to the panelists for joining us for this event.

And before we go to them, I am very glad to welcome Juraj Nociar, Head of Cabinet of Vice-President of the European Commission, Maroš Šefčovič, who had to take a flight unexpectedly and cannot be with us. We are eager to hear what you have to say on this occasion.