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DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**on Former Vice-President Věra Jourová's post term of office Visiting Fellowship with
the Institute for Human Science**

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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 that 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) On 31 October 2025, Former Vice-President Jourová notified the Commission of her intention to accept the Karel Schwarzenberg Visiting Fellowship at the Institute for Human Sciences (Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen). Former Vice-President Jourová underlined that the fellowship is awarded for a period of one month, commencing on 1 February and concluding on 28 February 2026.
- 5) Former Vice-President Jourová informed the Commission that the Institute for Human Sciences, located in Vienna, was founded in 1982 in neutral Austria by a young Polish philosopher, Krzysztof Michalski, and two German colleagues, its original mission consisting of creating a meeting place for dissident thinkers from Eastern Europe and prominent scientists from the West.
- 6) Former Vice-President Jourová further indicated that the Institute for Human Sciences is currently an independent institute for advanced study in the humanities and social sciences, which serves as a hub for intellectual exchange and interdisciplinary research on contemporary political, social, and cultural issues. The Institute brings together academics, writers, journalists, and policymakers to engage in dialogue and collaborative inquiry on topics of European and global relevance. The purpose is to promote science, as well as research and educational work in the humanities and social sciences, and thus to contribute to international understanding and to a deepening of democracy. The Institute organises lectures, conferences, seminars, research projects, and fellowships, the latter providing Fellows with access to an international network of scholars and the Institute's own academic community.
- 7) Former Vice-President Jourová stressed that the Institute's governance structure comprises a Collegium, which includes the Rector, Executive Director, and Permanent Fellows, and is supported by a team of academic and administrative staff. The Fellowship Program Coordinator is responsible for the administration of fellowship programmes and serves as the primary point of contact for Visiting Fellows. The Board of Trustees and the Collegium provide strategic and scholarly guidance, shaping the Institute's direction and ensuring its continued relevance and impact.
- 8) Former Vice-President Jourová noted that the Institute is a non-profit organisation funded through a combination of public and private sources, among which, several Austrian federal ministries, the City of Vienna, Erste Stiftung and the Open Society Foundation.
- 9) Former Vice-President Jourová indicated that Karel Schwarzenberg Visiting Fellows are expected to conduct independent research during their stay at the Institute for Human Sciences, while actively engaging in the intellectual life of the Institute. She underlined that their work is expected to enhance the functioning and vitality of the Institute's intellectual community. Former Vice-President Jourová further explained that her activities will include: (1) working on the research project for which the fellowship was awarded (democracy and rule of law, current societal challenges); (2) participating in the Institute for Human Sciences' lectures, seminars, conferences,

and discussions to contribute to the Institute's collaborative environment; and (3) submitting a written report outlining research activities and achievements before the end of the stay.

- 10) Former Vice-President Jourová highlighted that Visiting Fellows are entitled to a remuneration for the duration of the one-month term, which is intended to defray all living expenses, including accommodation, utilities, local transportation, and research-related expenditure, in addition to the reimbursement of travel costs.
- 11) The Institute for Human Sciences is registered with the European Union's Transparency Register as a non-partisan academic institution. According to the Register, the Institute fosters exchange between researchers, policymakers, and the public on a range of issues, including Critical Raw Materials, Digital Humanism, Migration, Ukraine and Europe's Futures. It organises both public and closed discussions on contemporary policy challenges, contributing to informed policy debates without representing any commercial or political interests. The Institute has also engaged with high-level officials, including a meeting with the Director-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood, to discuss matters relevant to its research and engagement areas.
- 12) According to the same Register, the Institute for Human Sciences' primary funding sources comprise donations and public grants. In 2024, its principal contributors included the Austrian Education Ministry, which provided €790,000, the City of Vienna, which contributed €800,000, and the Open Society Foundation, which donated €3.61 million. The total budget for 2024 was approximately €6.23 million.
- 13) The Visiting Fellowship offered to Former Vice-President Jourová is linked to her former portfolio on 'Values and Transparency'. However, in view of its academic nature, the envisaged activity does not require the consultation of the Independent Ethical Committee as it corresponds to the category mentioned in Article 11(3), second subparagraph, letter (d) of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission.
- 14) As for the substance, the Visiting Fellowship offered to Former Vice-President Jourová does not present any risk of incompatibility with her former role as Vice-President in charge of 'Values and Transparency' or with the interests of the Institution, provided that the Former Vice-President abides by the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, notably Article 339, and of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission, namely Article 11 in conjunction with Article 5, as concerns the protection of confidentiality of sensitive information, the protection of collegiality and discretion.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

Former Vice-President Věra Jourová's Visiting Fellowship with the Institute for Human Sciences 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 duties set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in Article 11(1) of the Code in conjunction with Article 5.

Done at Brussels, on 10 December 2025.

The President
Ursula von der Leyen