



Strasbourg, 26.11.2024
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DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**on Vice-President Věra Jourová's post term of office professional activity as Pro-Rector
of the Charles University (Prague)**

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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 which 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) With her letter of 13 September 2024, Vice-President Jourová informed the Commission about her intention to accept, as from 1 January 2025, and for an indefinite period, a remunerated assignment as Pro-Rector for Human Resources Development and New Technologies of the Charles University (*‘Univerzita Karlova’*) in Prague. Ms Jourová indicated that her responsibilities would be the following: (1) leading and coordinating the Human Resources Award project related to ethics, recruitment, and the system of promotions within the University; (2) monitoring EU policies related to science, research, and higher education, and proposing actions for the University’s participation in relevant EU policies and programs; (3) overseeing the creation of cross-border academic partnerships and the University’s participation in EU-funded projects; (4) cooperating on research initiatives, particularly those focused on AI and digital technologies; (5) teaching at the Faculty of Law.
- 5) The Charles University is an academic institution founded in 1348. It underwent transformation throughout the centuries and, following its reform of 1848-49, the University assumed the form of a modern higher education institution. Free academic life resumed after 1989 and the Charles University has become an academic institution which continues to nurture academic cooperation and plays an active role in a broad spectrum of European and global programmes. The University is composed of seventeen faculties and several institutes and draws strongly on international cooperation.
- 6) Vice-President Jourová underlined that the University was funded primarily through the Czech national budget, complemented by EU funding for specific research projects and programs. Some additional funding was sourced from tuition fees, research grants, and partnerships with other academic institutions and organizations.
- 7) The Charles University has been a recipient of EU funds. According to the Financial Transparency System of the Commission, the Charles University had 235 budgetary commitments from 2019 to 2023, amounting to a contracted commitment of EUR 501,26 million, of which EUR 355,16 million have been utilised so far. These commitments were distributed over 29 different programmes and managed by 18 European Commission departments, none of which under Ms Jourová’s political responsibility, notwithstanding the fact that the topics covered by some of these programmes fall into Ms Jourová’s field of responsibilities as Vice-President for ‘Values and Transparency’.
- 8) The Charles University is registered in the European Union’s Transparency Register (as “Univerzita Karlova”). According to its entry, there have been no meetings with the European Commission.
- 9) In accordance with Article 11(3)(d) of the Code of Conduct, Vice-President Jourová’s future teaching activity at the Charles University does not require the consultation of the Independent Ethical Committee.

- 10) As concerns the other aspect of the Vice-President's future responsibilities as Pro-Rector of the Charles University, the Commission concludes that they might be remotely related, on specific occasions, with Vice-President Jourová's then previous Commission responsibilities as Vice-President in charge of '*Values and Transparency*'. Yet, this link is not sufficient to trigger the need, under Article 11(3) of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission, to request the consultation of the Independent Ethical Committee. The Commission also notes that the Committee has already rendered opinions on activities which correspond to the activity envisaged by the Vice-President.
- 11) In order to rule out any possible lobbying concerning future decisions of the Commission on the allocation of funds, it is appropriate to set the same restriction as in previous decisions on post term of office activities in the field of university management.
- 12) Without prejudice to the restriction stated above, the envisaged activity does not present any risk of incompatibility with Vice-President Jourová's role as Member of the Commission or with the interests of the institution, provided that Ms Jourová 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(1), in conjunction with Article 5, and Article 11(4) as concerns the protection of confidentiality of sensitive information, the protection of collegiality and discretion and the prohibition of lobbying during a period of two years after her term of office.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Vice-President Jourová's envisaged post term of office professional activity as Pro-Rector for Human Resources Development and New Technologies of the Charles University ('*Univerzita Karlova*') is, after the end of her mandate, compatible with the second paragraph of Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, subject to the following conditions and restrictions :

- In accordance with Article 11(4) of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission, during a period of two years following her term of office, Vice-President Jourová shall refrain from lobbying the Members of the Commission or their staff on behalf of the Charles University, on matters for which she was responsible as Vice-President in charge of '*Values and Transparency*', in particular as concerns future decisions of the Commission on the allocation of funds. This prohibition on lobbying does not affect participation in public events or general exchanges of, and on, publicly available information with Members of the Commission or Commission staff.

- In accordance with Article 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Vice-President Jourová shall refrain from participating in any activity or decision-making procedure within the Charles University which might involve using information of the kind covered by the obligation of professional secrecy regarding, in particular, undertakings, their business relations or their cost components.
- In line with Article 11(1), in conjunction with Article 5, of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission, Vice-President Jourová remains bound by the duties of collegiality and discretion, with respect to the Commission’s decisions and activities during her term of office.

Article 2

In line with Article 13(2) of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission, Vice-President Jourová will inform the President of the Commission, in a timely manner, if she has doubts on any situation regarding the application of the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission in relation to the Charles University

Done at Strasbourg, on 26 November 2024.

The President
Ursula von der Leyen