

The GUE/NGL group does not approve Mr Schinas for the position of the Vice-President of the Commission.

Our main reasons are as follows:

Mr Schinas has evaded all critical questions as to the title of his portfolio and did not commit to any efforts to change the title "Protecting our European way of life", on the contrary he seems comfortable and supportive of the title despite its extremely disturbing nature, as expressed by a majority of political groups during the hearing. Our group insists on the necessity to change this unacceptable title.

He seemed not to grasp the dangerous implications of the co-existence of culture, security and migration within one portfolio in parallel with the absence of the Justice Commissioner's portfolio from those under the remits of his coordination. Nor did he understand the necessity to address issues of security from the proper legal point of view on the priority of fundamental rights.

Despite the importance he gives to the Security Union, he displayed a lack of knowledge on important aspects of this portion of his portfolio, in particular with regard to data retention and PNR collection.

It was surprising to hear him saying that rulings by the ECJ will have to be considered. Decisions of the ECJ are to be followed and his role would be to ensure their implementation.

The way he referred to the visit of Commissioner Avramopoulos and Member States' Home Affairs Ministers to Ankara and the solution they will bring to migration management flows, makes us believe that he would repeat intransparent procedures that will, on top of everything else, side-line again the European Parliament.

Even though many vague statements regarding a reform of the CEAS as well as search and rescue and safe and legal pathways to the EU were made by the Vice President-designate, no actual commitments were undertaken. Despite repeated claims of a 'fresh start', only old and failed policies were put forward.

His repeated references to access to healthcare failed to convince us that he will pursue policies in favour of promoting free, universal access to quality public healthcare services.

By repeatedly referencing to a unique European culture which is to be envied, he showed a deep lack of understanding of cultural diversity to the point of underestimating other cultures.

His denial of the existence of cultural racism in Europe reveals in a flagrant way that he will not take any action to tackle this major issue.

For all the above reasons, our group cannot give a positive evaluation and, thus, abstains.