

PATRIOTS FOR EUROPE - TRAN COMMITTEE

Statement on the opening of trilogue negotiations

The Patriots for Europe group enters the trilogues week on clean corporate vehicles with a clear account of what this Parliament's mandate contains and what it does not.

We secured three provisions we will not trade away. The Union must finance the transition it imposes, without loading the cost onto Member States or their taxpayers. The principle of technological neutrality is now expressly part of Parliament's position. The Commission's delegated powers on the definition of "Made in the EU" have been constrained, as they should be in a democracy. On these, the Council's mandate is either silent or weaker. But they are not open for renegotiation on our part.

On the "Made in EU" definition specifically: the text adopted does not fully reflect our group's preferred approach. The definition that passed was shaped by the EPP, S&D and Renew coalition, and we have reservations about certain of its parameters. That said, we supported it; and we will defend it at this table for a reason that transcends the substance: for the first time, this Parliament has placed a binding definition in the legislative text itself, rather than leaving the matter to Commission implementing acts operating outside democratic scrutiny. Whatever its imperfections, that is the right institutional precedent. The Commission's discretion has been circumscribed. Its power to define, unilaterally and without co-legislative oversight, what qualifies as a European product, has been curtailed. We carry that result into these negotiations as part of the mandate this Parliament has given us, and we will negotiate accordingly.

On two further questions, the mandate is incomplete, and we intend to use these trilogues to address that. The review clause adopted by Parliament is an improvement on the Commission's original text, but it does not guarantee that a finding of harm will trigger revision. The Council's approach, which explicitly requires the review to assess employment, supply chains, infrastructure, and the leasing sector, is closer to what a serious accountability mechanism looks like. We believe any final text must make the Commission's review genuinely consequential, rather than a reporting exercise that arrives two years into implementation when the damage, if it comes, will already be done. We will therefore work toward a final text that combines the Parliament's ambition with that substance.

On financial support restrictions for conventional vehicles, the Parliament's mandate is silent. We tried to warn our colleagues of the necessity to drop those restrictions, but our request was not welcomed. We respect that outcome, The Council, however, has had the intellectual honesty to flag that the level of those restrictions must be revisited as part of the review. We support that position. It is the minimum concession to empirical reality that a regulation of this ambition requires.

We also note, as a matter of institutional principle, that the role of the Commission in these negotiations is clearly defined. Under Article 294 TFEU and the interinstitutional arrangements governing trilogue, the Commission is here to mediate between the two co-legislators, the Parliament and the Council. It is not here to lobby either of them. The decision on the final text rests with the Parliament and with the Council alone. We expect all parties to conduct themselves accordingly.

We are the third largest group in the European Parliament. We did not get everything we sought in committee; no group ever does. The mandate before us reflects choices made by our institution as a whole; choices we participated in, argued for, and in some instances lost. We accept that, because that is how democratic legislatures work. What we bring to this table is not a competing agenda but a coherent reading of the mandate we collectively hold: obligations must follow enabling conditions, not precede them. Where that logic is embodied in the text before us, whether it comes from the EP mandate or the Council mandate, we will defend it. Where it is absent, we will argue for it - within the bounds of what the Parliament has tasked us to negotiate.

We close with a simple reminder to everyone involved in these final negotiations. When this text is signed, we will go home. The Commission officials will return to their offices. The lobbyists will move to the next file. But the worker on an assembly line in Graz, or Turin, or Bratislava will still be there, wondering whether his or her factory will be operating in five years. The owner of a small fleet company, unable to access the capital that electrification demands, will still be there. They did not ask to be the subjects of this experiment. They deserve a text that meets them where they are, not where ideology wishes them to be.

We are not legislating for the long run of history. We are legislating for the people who are working right now.

Europe's strength is its people. Not its regulations.

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