

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000545/25
to the Commission
Petra Steger (Pfe)
(5 February 2025)**

Subject: Niinistö Report: cost, contract award and transparency

On 20 March 2024, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen gave advance notice of a joint report by special adviser Sauli Niinistö and former High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell. Ursula von der Leyen received the EU-funded report on strengthening EU civil and military preparedness and readiness, requested by the Commission, on 30 October 2024. The report includes several aspects worthy of severe criticism: in addition to calling for even closer cooperation between the EU and NATO and close coordination on mutual defence, it includes plans to establish a fully-fledged EU secret service. Pursuing this would lead Austria even further away from its founding neutrality and the country would lose yet another piece of its national sovereignty. Above all, however, many unanswered questions remain in connection with the transparent use of taxpayers' money.

1. What was the total cost of producing the Niinistö Report, and what remuneration did Sauli Niinistö and Josep Borrell personally receive?
2. What selection criteria were applied when awarding the contract to produce the report, and how many others did Sauli Niinistö and Josep Borrell compete with and ultimately beat?
3. What does the Commission make of possible conflicts of interest arising from Sauli Niinistö's party political ties to Commission President Ursula von der Leyen?

Submitted: 5.2.2025

**Answer given by President von der Leyen on behalf of the European Commission
(27 June 2025)**

1. Sauli Niinistö was nominated unpaid Special Adviser to the Commission President on 20 March 2024. The High-Representative and Vice-President of the Commission at the time received his salary and there was no additional payment linked to the drafting of the report.
 2. Special Advisers are selected based on their expertise and qualifications. The choice of Mr Niinistö to work on preparedness was based on his expertise on this matter, as former President of Finland. Based on a whole of society and whole of government approach, Finland has a comprehensive preparedness and civil defence strategy in place, which prepares for all emergencies including military, hybrid threats and natural disasters.
 3. Each Special Adviser must provide a declaration of activities and sign a document declaring that there is no conflict of interest between their duties as adviser to the Commission and their other activities. On the basis of the declaration by Mr Niinistö, the Commission established that there was no conflict of interest regarding his activities and his duties as Special Adviser.
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