



Margaritis Schinas

Background

Margaritis Schinas has been the Chief Spokesperson in the European Commission since November 2014. He is a veteran of the Eurobubble, as most of his career to date has been EU-focused. Starting as a Commission civil servant in 1990, he first joined DG MOVE and later to the European Commission representation in Athens. He held a number of senior posts, including in the offices of Transport Commissioners Abel Matutes and Marcelino Oreja, as well as Deputy Head of Cabinet of Commission Vice-President Loyola de Palacio (responsible for Transport, Energy and EP relations). He then served as Head of Cabinet for the Cypriot Commissioner Markos Kyprianou (2004-2007) responsible for Health and Consumer Protection.

He then became an MEP for the New Democracy (EPP) party, (replacing Antonis Samaras who resigned to focus on national politics) in the period 2007-2009. He was subsequently not put on the ballot in the 2009 elections and in 2010 was appointed Deputy Director of the Bureau of European Policy Advisers in José Manuel Barroso's Commission. In 2013 he was appointed Director at the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs and, in 2013-2014 was sent to Athens to lead on the coordination of the various teams providing technical assistance to Greece.

Born in Thessaloniki, in Northern Greece, but originally from the Chalkidiki area, Schinas studied law in the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He then obtained a Diploma of Advanced European Studies (DAES) in European Public Administration from the College of Europe in Bruges and a Master's Degree in Public Administration and Policy from the London School of Economics and Political Science. He has also completed Harvard University's "High Potential Leadership" programme in 2011, funded by the European Commission.

His nomination for Greek Commissioner was not received as a surprise and it can be argued that his previous experience and being a Brussels insider would make him a good candidate. His experience in the Cabinets of various commissioners, at DG level, in the European Parliament and as coordinator of the Greece task force point towards someone with intimate knowledge of EU machinations.

Personal Insight

He is married to Spaniard Mercedes Alvargonzález, who works in the European Parliament and is affiliated with the EPP party, having served as Head of Cabinet for Manfred Weber .

He is a supporter of the Thessaloniki football team Aris FC, although he likes to joke that it is one of the two "lost causes" in Europe (the other being Atletico Madrid FC).

Education

Law degree, Thessaloniki University of Thessaloniki

Diploma of Advanced European Studies (DAES) in European Public Administration from the College of Europe in Bruges

Master's Degree in Public Administration and Policy from the London School of Economics and Political Science

"High Potential Leadership" programme, Harvard University

General Work Experience

1993-1994: Cabinet member, Commissioners Matutes and Oreja

1994-1999: Communications Director, European Commission representation in Athens.

1999-2004: Deputy Head of Cabinet, Commission Vice-President Loyola de Palacio.

2004-2007: Head of Cabinet, Commissioner Kyprianou

2010-2013: Deputy Director of the Bureau of European Policy Advisers in José Manuel Barroso's Commission

2013-2014: Director at the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs; served in Athens leading on the coordination of the various teams providing technical assistance to Greece

2014-2019: Chief Spokesperson, European Commission; since 2015, Deputy Director General of DG Communication.

Political Experience

2007-2009: EPP MEP