



Press statement by President von der Leyen on the next College of Commissioners

Brussels, 17 September 2024

"Check against delivery"

Today, I have met with the Conference of Presidents of the political groups in the European Parliament. In this meeting I have presented to the Parliament the planned structure of the new college, based on my political guidelines, on which we worked together; intensive weeks of negotiations with the Member States.

I know that you are very interested in the structure but allow me to speak first about the content that defines the structure. Together, we have defined core priorities. They are built around prosperity, security, democracy. The backdrop is: competitiveness in the twin transition, and they are very much intertwined and cross-cutting.

The whole college is committed to competitiveness! We have dissipated the former rigid stovepipes.

This is one of the main recommendation of the Draghi report. Strengthening our tech-sovereignty, security and democracy. Building a competitive, decarbonised and circular economy, with a fair transition for all. Designing a bold industrial strategy with innovation and investment at its heart. Boosting European cohesion and regions. Supporting people, skills and our social model. Ensuring Europe can assert its interests and lead in the world. And this is reflected in the titles of the six Executive Vice-Presidents.

Another principle: as the treaty says, each Member of the College is equal – and each Commissioner has an equal responsibility to deliver on our priorities. That means that all Commissioners must work together. In this spirit, each Executive Vice-President will also have a portfolio to focus on – for which they will have to work with other Commissioners. Because what affects security affects democracy, what affects the economy affects society, and what affects climate and environment, also affects people and business.

This is also why we do not have the extra layer of Vice-Presidents. Leaner structure, more interactive and interlinked.

Another topic is balance in general. Be it gender or topic or geography.

As you will see, we now have 11 women in the College I propose today. That is 40%. When I received the first set of nominations and candidates, we were on track for around 22% women and 78% men. That was unacceptable. So I worked with the Member States and we were able to improve the balance to 40% women and 60% men. And it shows that - as much as we have achieved - there is still so much more work to do. And with this in mind I assigned six Executive Vice-presidents.

Six Executive Vice-Presidents: four women, two men. Three from Member States that joined before the fall of the Iron Curtain. And three from Member States that joined after Europe was reunited. From the Baltics, Nordics and Eastern Europe. Ministers and Prime Ministers. Different backgrounds. But all with one common goal – and that is to make Europe stronger.

So allow me to introduce them.

Teresa Ribera will be Executive Vice-President of a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition. She will also be responsible for Competition policy. She will guide the work to ensure that Europe stays on track for its goals set out in the European Green Deal. And that we decarbonise and industrialise our economy at the same time.

Henna Virkkunen will be the Executive Vice-President for Tech-Sovereignty, Security and Democracy. She will also be responsible for the portfolio on digital and frontier technologies. I will ask Henna to look at the internal and external aspects of security. But also to strengthen the foundations of our democracy, such as the rule of law, and protect it wherever it comes under attack.

Stéphane Séjourné will be the Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy. He

will also be responsible for the Industry, SMEs and the Single Market portfolio. He will guide the work to put in place the conditions for our companies to thrive – from investment and innovation to economic stability and trade and economic security.

As you already know, **Kaja Kallas** will be our High Representative and Vice-President. We are in an era of geostrategic rivalries and instability. Our foreign and security policy must be designed with this reality in mind and it must be more aligned with our own interests. I know that I can count on her to bring all of this together – and be the bridge between our internal and external policies. And to ensure we stay a Geopolitical Commission.

I am also very happy to entrust the role of Executive Vice-President for People, Skills and Preparedness to **Roxana Mînzatu**. She will have the responsibility for skills, education and culture, quality jobs and social rights. This is under the umbrella of demography. Roxana will notably lead on a Union of Skills and the European Pillar of Social Rights. She will focus on those areas which are crucial to unite our society.

Raffaele Fitto will be Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms. He will be responsible for the portfolio dealing with cohesion policy, regional development and cities. We will draw on his extensive experience to help modernise and strengthen our cohesion, investment and growth policies.

This is the team of Executive Vice-Presidents which will work hand in hand with each other and with all Commissioners.

And I would now like to introduce them to you all.

I will start here with **Maroš Šefčovič**, to whom I am very happy to give two roles. He will be Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security. This is a new portfolio which also includes customs policy. I have also entrusted him with a second role: Commissioner for Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency. For this second role, he will report directly to me.

Valdis Dombrovskis will also have a double role. He will be the Commissioner for Economy and Productivity. I have also given him the role of Commissioner for Implementation and Simplification. He will report directly to me on this part of his work.

Dubravka Šuica will be the Commissioner for the Mediterranean. I am entrusting her with this new role. She will also be responsible for the wider southern neighbourhood. She will work closely with **Kaja Kallas** – and many other Commissioners – to develop our shared interests with the region.

Olivér Várhelyi will be Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare. He will be responsible for building the European Health Union and continuing the work on beating cancer and on preventive health.

Wopke Hoekstra will be the Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth. He will continue to work on implementation and adaptation, on climate diplomacy and decarbonisation. And he will also be responsible for taxation.

Andrius Kubilius will be the Commissioner for Defence and Space. He will work on developing the European Defence Union and boosting our investment and industrial capacity.

Marta Kos, it should be noted that the Government of Slovenia has suggested **Marta Kos** as Member of the College. The nomination procedure which involves the consultation of the national Parliament for a non-binding opinion is ongoing. She will be Commissioner for Enlargement – also responsible for our Eastern neighbourhood.

She will work on supporting Ukraine – and continuing the work on reconstruction, and support candidate countries to prepare them for accession.

Jozef Síkela will be the Commissioner for International Partnerships. He will lead the work on Global Gateway – and ensure that we develop mutually beneficial partnerships which invest in a common future.

Costas Kadis will be the Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans. I count on his experience to help build a resilient, competitive, and sustainable sector and present the first European Oceans Pact.

Maria Luís Albuquerque will be the Commissioner for Financial Services and the Savings and Investment Union. This will be vital to strengthen and complete our Capital Markets Union and ensure that private investment powers our productivity and innovation.

Hadja Lahbib will be the Commissioner for Preparedness and Crisis Management. This is another new portfolio which will look at resilience, preparedness and civil protection. She will be responsible for leading our efforts on crisis management and humanitarian aid.

Magnus Brunner will be the Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration. He will of course focus on the implementation of the Pact on Asylum and Migration – but also on strengthening our borders and developing a new internal security strategy.

Jessika Roswall will be the Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy. She will have an important job to help preserve our environment and put nature on the balance sheet. She will help develop a more circular and more competitive economy. And she will lead the work on water resilience which is a big priority for the years ahead.

Piotr Serafin will be the Commissioner for Budget, Anti-Fraud and Public Administration. He will report directly to me and notably focus on preparing the next long-term budget and ensure we have a modern institution to deliver for Europeans.

Dan Jørgensen will be the Commissioner for Energy and Housing. His work will help to bring down energy prices, invest in clean energy and ensure that we cut our dependencies. He will be the first ever Commissioner for Housing – looking at all aspects from energy efficiency to investment and construction.

Ekaterina Zaharieva will be Commissioner for Research and Innovation. We must put research and innovation, science and technology at the centre of our economy. She will help ensure that we invest more and focus our spending on strategic priorities and on groundbreaking innovation.

Michael McGrath will be Commissioner for Democracy, Justice and the Rule of Law. I have entrusted him with the responsibility to take forward the European Democracy Shield. He will also lead our work on the rule of law, anti-corruption and consumer protection.

Apostolos Tzitzikostas will be Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism. He is responsible for mobility of goods and people. These are essential sectors for our competitiveness but also for our transitions, for connecting people and driving local economies.

Christophe Hansen will be the Commissioner for Agriculture and Food. He will have the task to bring to life the report and recommendations of the Strategic Dialogue. And based on the Strategic Dialogue he will develop a Vision for Agriculture and Food in the first 100 days of the mandate.

Glenn Micallef will be Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Culture, Youth and Sport. Intergenerational fairness is a cross cutting topic. It affects all of us – and especially young people. It is about the right balance in a society. And I have entrusted Glenn to watch over it.

The key message is that wherever we come from, whatever our job title: we must all work together. We will have open debates. We will all be independent in thought and action. And we will all take ownership of what is agreed. This is the team that I am putting forward today.

On this basis, once the European Parliament has received the official letter of the Council in agreement with the President of the Commission, it may proceed with the formal proceedings for the nomination of the new college. Always in accordance with its rules of procedure.

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