



**Ursula von der Leyen**

*President-elect of the European Commission*

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## Mission letter

Brussels, 10 September 2019

**Rovana Plumb**

### **Commissioner-designate for Transport**

Dear Rovana,

Earlier this year, the people of Europe made their voices heard in record numbers at the European elections. They presented us with a mission to be decisive and ambitious on the big issues of our time that are shaping the future of our society, economy and planet.

Changes in climate, digital technologies and geopolitics are already having a profound effect on the lives of Europeans. We are witnessing major shifts all the way from global power structures to local politics. While these transformations may be different in nature, we must show the same ambition and determination in our response. What we do now will determine what kind of world our children live in and will define Europe's place in the world.

Our job as the European Commission will be to lead, to grasp the opportunities and to tackle the challenges that these changes present, working hand in hand with people from across Europe and with the governments, parliaments and institutions that serve them.

This is the guiding principle behind my Political Guidelines for the next European Commission 2019-2024, which I presented to the European Parliament on 16 July 2019. I outlined six headline ambitions on which I want the European Commission's work to focus. These priorities are interlocking and are part of the same picture. In this spirit, I have put together a College in which we will all work, decide and deliver together.

## An open and inclusive way of working

This approach reflects the open, inclusive and cooperative way of working that I will instil throughout the Commission, as well as in our relationships with others.

### *The College: One team*

The European Commission functions on the **principle of collegiality**. This means we are one team: we all work together following a whole-of-government approach, we all have our say, we all decide collectively and we all take ownership of what is agreed.

To help us deliver on our ambitions and commitments, **I will empower eight Vice-Presidents** to steer and coordinate thematic Commissioners' Groups on each of the Commission's priorities. They will be supported in this role by the Secretariat-General. All Commissioners will be in one or more Groups. The Commissioner for Budget and Administration will report directly to me.

Of the eight Vice-Presidents, the **three Executive Vice-Presidents** will have a dual function. As Vice-Presidents, they will lead a Commissioners' Group and be supported by the Secretariat-General. In addition, they will also manage a policy area and have a Directorate-General under their authority for this part of their job. One of the three Executives, First Vice-President Timmermans, will chair the College in my absence.

The High Representative/Vice-President will support me in coordinating the external dimension of all Commissioners' work. To ensure our external action becomes more strategic and coherent, it will be systematically discussed and decided on by the College. To support this, all services and Cabinets will prepare the external aspects of College meetings on a weekly basis, mirroring the process already in place for interinstitutional relations. This should also better align the internal and external aspects of our work. This will be a **'Geopolitical Commission'**.

I believe that we need to **speak and listen more to one another**, starting from within the Commission. College meetings will be places of open and honest discussion. As President I will set the agenda, but all College decisions will be taken collectively. In line with our commitment to fully digitalise the Commission and the need to use resources conscientiously, College meetings will be paperless and digital.

Each Commissioner will ensure the delivery of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** within their policy area. The College as a whole will be responsible for the overall implementation of the Goals.

### *Interinstitutional relations and better policy making*

Along with our close relations with the Council, I want to strengthen the Commission's **special partnership with the European Parliament**. This priority must cut through the work of each Member of the College, starting with myself.

I will expect you to ensure the European Parliament is regularly briefed, notably before major events and at key stages of international negotiations. In light of my support for a right of initiative for the Parliament, you should work closely with the relevant Committees, and be active and present during the preparation of resolutions requesting that the Commission legislate.

The more we build a consensus when designing policy, the quicker it can become law and make a difference to people's lives. This is why we need an **open and cooperative approach throughout the legislative process**, from policy design to final agreement. I will expect you to attend all political negotiations, known as trilogue meetings, with the other institutions.

We need to ensure that regulation is targeted, easy to comply with and does not add unnecessary regulatory burdens. The Commission must always have the leeway to act where needed. At the same time, we must send a clear signal to citizens that **our policies and proposals deliver and make life easier** for people and for businesses.

In this spirit, the Commission will develop a new instrument to deliver on a '**One In, One Out**' principle. Every legislative proposal creating new burdens should relieve people and businesses of an equivalent existing burden at EU level in the same policy area. We will also work with Member States to ensure that, when transposing EU legislation, they do not add unnecessary administrative burdens.

Proposals must be evidence based, widely consulted upon, subject to an impact assessment and reviewed by the independent Regulatory Scrutiny Board. You will ensure that they respect the principles of **proportionality and subsidiarity** and show the clear benefit of European action.

Given that any legislation is only as good as its implementation, I want you to **focus on the application and enforcement of EU law** within your field. You should provide support and continuous guidance to Member States on implementation, and be ready to take swift action if EU law is breached.

### *Bringing Europe closer to home*

I want to **strengthen the links between people and the institutions that serve them**, to narrow the gap between expectation and reality and to communicate about what Europe is doing.

We must engage with all Europeans, not just those who live in the capitals or are knowledgeable about the European Union. I will expect you to **visit every Member State within the first half of our mandate** at the latest. You should meet regularly with national parliaments and take part in Citizens' Dialogues across our Union, notably as part of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

A stronger relationship with citizens starts with building trust and confidence. I will insist on the **highest levels of transparency and ethics** for the College as a whole. There can be no room for doubt about our behaviour or our integrity. The Code of Conduct for Commissioners sets out the standards and the rules to follow.

You will ensure budgetary spending represents value for taxpayers and follows the principles of sound financial management.

### *Making the most of our potential*

The gender-balanced College I am presenting today makes good on my pledge to put together a Commission that is more representative and draws on all of our potential. This is a good start, but there is plenty more work to be done.

I expect you to **draw on all of Europe's talents** when it comes to setting up your own Cabinets. That means striking an appropriate balance in terms of gender, experience and geography.

The Commission should also lead by example when it comes to ensuring better representation and a diversity of voices in our public life. With this in mind, all public events organised by the Commission should aim to feature gender-balanced panels and a broad range of perspectives from across Europe.

## Your mission

### **I would like to entrust you with the role of Commissioner for Transport.**

Transport helps people, services and goods to move freely within our Union. It connects people from different regions and countries and brings us closer together. Demand for transport continues to rise as our economies and societies become more integrated. This creates new innovation and investment opportunities, as well as a set of new challenges.

The transport sector will have an important contribution to make in harnessing the potential of the twin climate and digital transitions. To become the world's first climate-neutral continent, Europe must reduce emissions further and faster. Transport will be a central part of the European Green Deal.

### *Sustainable, safe and affordable transport*

Your task over the next five years will be to ensure that European transport is sustainable, safe, affordable and accessible.

- To ensure that we have a transport sector fit for a clean, digital and modern economy, you should put forward a comprehensive strategy for **sustainable and smart mobility**. As part of this, you should focus on increasing the uptake of sustainable and alternative transport fuels for road, maritime and air transport.
- You will lead work on **extending the Emissions Trading System** to the maritime sector and reducing free allowances for airlines.
- I will ask you to play a leading role in international forums, notably in negotiations on **global emission reduction** within the International Civil Aviation Authority and the International Maritime Organization.

- You will contribute to the **zero-pollution ambition**, focusing on mitigating the impact of transport on our climate and natural environment, from emissions reductions to air, water and noise pollution.
- I want you to contribute to the review of the **Energy Taxation Directive** to align it with our climate ambitions and bring an end to fossil-fuel subsidies.
- We must also make the most of the opportunities linked to **connected and automated mobility**, with a strong focus on digital innovation. You should ensure the continued modernisation of key transport systems.
- I want you to focus on a **fair and functioning internal market for transport**. We need to complete the missing infrastructure links and the Trans-European Transport Network as swiftly as possible.
- As transport evolves and modernises, you should ensure that it remains affordable, reliable and accessible, notably for those on a low income or living in remote areas, and that **passenger rights** are respected.
- Cutting across all of your priorities is the need for the **highest safety standards**. This is becoming all the more important as traffic increases and security threats become ever more complex.
- I want you to strengthen **cooperation with key partners** to enforce existing agreements, open up new market opportunities, promote high safety standards and improve connectivity links, particularly in our neighbourhood and in the Western Balkans.
- You should ensure the implementation of dual-use infrastructure projects to improve **military mobility**, using the funds earmarked in the Connecting Europe Facility.

As a rule, you will work under the guidance of the Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal. The Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport will support you in your work.

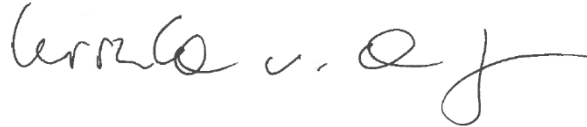
## The way forward

The mission outlined above is not exhaustive or prescriptive. Other opportunities and challenges will no doubt appear over the course of the next five years. On all of these issues, I will ask you to work closely with me, and with other Members of the College.

Once there is more clarity, we should be ready to pave the way for an ambitious and strategic partnership with the United Kingdom.

I look forward to working closely together at what is an exciting and testing time for our Union. You can of course count on my full personal and political support ahead of your hearing at the European Parliament and throughout our mandate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ursula v. d. L.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ursula von der Leyen

President-elect of the European Commission