

MISSION LETTER

Brussels, 17 September 2024

Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Valdis Dombrovskis

**Commissioner-designate for Economy and
Productivity**

**Commissioner-designate for Implementation
and Simplification**

Dear Valdis,

The Commission we will serve in together will be called upon to make choices that will shape our Continent and our Union for years and decades to come. In a time of great global instability and great expectations of Europeans, we must live up to that responsibility. **We must deliver and lead from the front**, working closely with the people and regions of Europe and the parliaments, governments and institutions that serve them.

This was the spirit of the Political Guidelines which I presented to the European Parliament in July 2024 – our common plan for European strength and unity. It focuses on ensuring our **security** in every sense in a more dangerous and turbulent world, on supporting people and citizens by strengthening our **prosperity**, our social market economy, green and digital transitions and sustaining our unique quality of life. We will strengthen our **democracy**, rally around our values and ensure that we are stronger at home. We will work with our partners and better assert our interests around the world.

Together, we will respond to the real and legitimate concerns and expectations that Europeans expressed at the last elections. We will be closer to people and businesses where it really matters with practical support and sustained investment. We will strive to **make Europe faster and simpler** in the way that we act – and in the way we interact with people. And we will work towards European unity at every turn, starting from within our College.

I am convinced that your experience, motivation, and European commitment will be an essential part of this team. This letter sets out my expectations for our collective work, as well as for your own mission.

New Commission, new approach

The priorities that I have set out in the Political Guidelines are not standalone areas of work. They are all connected and they will all impact each other. The same will be true for the work of the College as a whole and for each of its Members working together in a spirit of **collegiality**. I expect every Member of College to take **full ownership** of what is agreed.

Every Member of College is equal and every Member of College will have an equal responsibility to deliver on our priorities. With this in mind, I expect cooperation at all levels and for you to take an active role across all priorities and to facilitate access to your services where other Commissioners' responsibilities require it.

You will work with myself and the Commissioner for Budget, Anti-Fraud and Public Administration for a **simpler, more focused and responsive long-term budget** that reflects European strategic priorities and our ambition to be an **Investment Commission**.

Given the transformative nature of the next long-term budget – and in order to adapt to our modern approach and new spending priorities – **I will review the structure of the College and the missions** of each Member of College.

I would also like you all to play an active role in **supporting candidate countries to prepare for joining our Union** in your respective policy areas. I count on you when it comes to the pre-enlargement policy reviews and for our broader **ambitious reform agenda**.

I expect you to all contribute to achieving our agreed climate objectives, notably those set for 2030 and the climate neutrality goal for 2050.

As we head to 2030, each Member of College will ensure the delivery of the EU targets and objectives defined for that year, as well as of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** within their policy areas. The College as a whole will be responsible for the overall implementation of the Goals.

Beyond what is listed in your individual mission below, I would like all Members of College to draw on recent or upcoming reports. This notably includes the **Draghi Report** on the

future of European competitiveness, the **Niinistö Report** on how to enhance Europe's civilian and defence preparedness and readiness, the report from the **Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU agriculture**, as well as the **Letta report** on the future of the Single Market.

Working together for Europe, working closer to Europeans

To ensure trust and confidence of Europeans, I also want the College to lead when it comes to openness, transparency and representation.

First, **this Commission will strengthen its relationship with EU institutions**. I expect all Commissioners to be present in the European Parliament, both in plenary debates, in Committee meetings and in trilogues. Equally, I expect all Commissioners to engage with Member States and participate in the relevant Council formations. This is essential for ensuring accountability and better communicating our work and our planning.

I will ask you to organise a **structured dialogue** with your respective Parliamentary Committee to chart a way forward for any Article 225 Resolutions adopted by the Parliament calling for legislative proposals. This will be part of our work in ensuring **transparency and information flow** with the Parliament and Council, notably before major events and at key stages about international negotiations.

Second, this Commission will be **more present on the ground, more often and in more regions**. I would like you to visit Member States regularly. I encourage you to go local, visit places and meet Europeans from across our Union, including in cities, rural and sparsely populated areas. Our network of Representations will support you in this. You should meet with representatives from regional or local areas, notably relying on our network of EU Local Councillors, and to give **more visibility to EU projects** making a difference to people's lives on the ground. When engaging with our international partners you will also be supported by our network of EU delegations around the world.

I expect you to **actively communicate** on the Commission's actions and decisions and explain the benefits and opportunities stemming from our work. You should also help **tackle disinformation**, notably by providing clear and accurate information at all times.

Third, this Commission will start **a new era of dialogue** with citizens and stakeholders. You should organise a first edition of the **annual Youth Policy Dialogues** within the first 100 days so that young people can be heard and can help shape your work.

This will be part of our work in embedding **citizen participation** in our work. We will build on the Conference on the Future of Europe to instil a true and **lasting culture of participative democracy**. We will choose policy areas and proposals where recommendations from a European Citizens' Panel would have the greatest value and follow up on their proposals.

Fourth, every Member of College must show a **true European commitment** beyond doubt and be fully independent in their action. I expect full adherence to all applicable

integrity, impartiality and ethical rules from all, starting with the **Code of Conduct**. You will ensure that the rules on transparency and meetings with interest representatives are fully respected, including for your staff and services. We will **strengthen our transparency system** by extending the requirements of the Transparency Register to all managers.

Fifth, we will ensure that the Commission becomes **more representative** of the people we serve. We have made a lot of progress in terms of gender balance across management but there is clearly more to be done. Reflecting the EU's strength in diversity, your Cabinet should ensure **gender and geographical balance**.

While the Berlaymont will remain your primary headquarters, you will also have an office within your Directorate-General and be expected to be present on a regular basis to **work closely with your staff and services**. We will collectively ensure that the Commission is an inclusive, respectful and safe workplace.

Making Europe simpler and faster

The success of this new Commission will be measured against our ability to meet the targets and objectives we set, notably as part of the **European Green Deal**.

You will be responsible for the delivery of the policy objectives and targets within your portfolio. To achieve this, you should make full use of all instruments for implementation and enforcement, including infringement proceedings.

You will ensure that existing rules are fit-for-purpose and focus on reducing administrative burdens and simplifying legislation. You must contribute to reducing reporting obligations by at least 25% – and for SMEs at least 35%. You should leverage the power of digital tools to deliver better and faster solutions. We must listen to all companies and stakeholders who work on a daily basis to comply with EU legislation. You will organise at least two **Implementation Dialogues** per year with stakeholders to align implementation with realities on the ground. You will prepare an **Annual Progress Report on Enforcement and Implementation** for your respective Parliamentary committees and Council formations.

You will also work to **stress test the EU acquis** and table proposals to eliminate any overlaps and contradictions and be fully digitally compatible, while maintaining high standards.

New legislation must ensure that our rules are simpler, more accessible to citizens and more targeted. You will ensure the principles of **proportionality, subsidiarity and Better Regulation** are respected, including through wide consultations, impact assessments, a review by the independent **Regulatory Scrutiny Board** and a new **SME and competitiveness check**. Proposals must be evidence-based and the Joint Research Centre, our internal scientific service, can support you in that work.

Your mission

I would like to entrust you with the role of Commissioner for the Economy and Productivity.

You will also be Commissioner for Implementation and Simplification.

The European economy has proven its resilience in the face of extraordinary circumstances over the past five years. From pandemics to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the ensuing energy crisis, Europe emerged stronger and equipped with new economic policy tools to improve competitiveness and productivity, and to ensure stability and fiscal sustainability while promoting reforms and investment.

Reflecting the greater need for coordination, as notably highlighted in the Draghi Report, your task will be to ensure policy coherence between the EU and national level through the European Semester, the revised economic governance framework, and the current and future long-term European budget. You will ensure our tax system plays a crucial role in supporting Europe's decarbonisation and competitiveness and ensures social fairness.

You will work with me to ensure that the European Semester serves integrated economic policy coordination, and you will work closely with other Members of College to align reforms and investment spending to meet the EU's strategic objectives of prosperity, decarbonisation, and a stronger social market economy.

- You will ensure the effective and consistent implementation of the reformed fiscal rules under the **Stability and Growth Pact**.
- You will lead the work, together with the Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms, on the successful implementation of **NextGenerationEU** until completion. You will ensure that the implementation of the **Recovery and Resilience Facility** accelerates, in view of the 2026 expenditure deadline. I want you to pay particular attention to the dialogue with stakeholders and the involvement of regional and local authorities.
- You will work with me on the **European Semester** to ensure it drives policy coordination for competitiveness, sustainability and social fairness. You will represent externally the Commission's work on the Semester and work with Member States to monitor progress. You will continue to integrate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals into the European Semester.
- In the context of the **reformed EU economic governance framework**, you will be responsible for the smooth integration of the Semester and the multilateral fiscal surveillance to improve the coordination of national economic and social policies across Member States and ensure that they address common EU priorities as well as national and, where relevant, regional challenges.
- You will develop a new **Competitiveness Coordination Tool**, as proposed in the Draghi report, to operate in conjunction with the future European Competitiveness

Fund. The tool will translate EU-wide competitiveness objectives into coordinated national policies, ensuring public and private financing for each strategic priority.

- EU financial instruments should support innovative projects, overcoming market failures and intervening when the case for purely market-based investments is weaker. You will seek to enhance the role of the **European Investment Fund** to step up financing for high-potential and fast-growing European companies.
- You will be in charge of relations with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the European Investment Bank.
- You will lead the work to enhance international investors' engagement with EU-level supranational issuance and **strengthen the international role of the euro** as a reserve currency.
- I would like you to make quick progress on the **digital euro** project, both online and offline, while ensuring access to euro cash at all times.
- You will oversee **Eurostat**'s work to further enrich statistical evidence, reinforce its role as a trusted point of reference, and support the enlargement process and international cooperation on statistics. You will implement the review of the System of National Accounts to better integrate well-being and sustainability concerns.

Implementation and Simplification

European rules and policies are in place to support business and protect people and we must make sure that is done in the simplest, fastest and most practical way. Implementation should be as easy to follow as possible for people and companies alike. We also need to enforce rules and work in partnership with all EU institutions and all those affected by our laws to make sure they work properly. Your task is to ensure that we put this into practice by focusing on less administrative and reporting burden, simpler implementation and better enforcement.

- You will lead the work of the College to **stress-test the EU acquis** with a view to eliminate overlaps and contradictions, while maintaining high standards. On this basis, you will coordinate the work with all relevant Members of College, to make proposals to **simplify, consolidate and codify** legislation where it is needed.
- You will perform this screening exercise, starting with the areas identified by stakeholders and taking into account existing evidence. This will help you prepare an **annual plan for fitness checks and evaluations** to be presented alongside the Commission Work Programme.
- You will also implement a new consultation approach, called **Reality Checks**, that will collect first-hand information from a selection of stakeholders in given areas to identify hurdles they face when implementing EU rules.

- You will also make proposals on how to **reduce administrative and reporting burden**, working in dialogue with all stakeholders and EU institutions.
- You will strengthen and ensure full compliance with the Commission's **better regulation standards** in the preparation of new initiatives with significant impacts, including delegated and implementing acts. You will oversee the implementation of the **SME and competitiveness check**. You will continue to strengthen the application of the "one in, one out" rule when proposing new legislation.
- I would like you to lead the negotiations on a renewed **Interinstitutional agreement on simplification and better law making**. This should ensure that each institution **assesses the impact and cost** of its proposals and amendments in the same way with a simple and clear methodology and ensure that proper implementation of EU law is treated as a shared objective.
- You will support Members of College in the preparation of their **annual progress report on enforcement and implementation** for their respective European Parliament Committees and Council formations. You will also help coordinate the **Implementation Dialogues** that each Member of College will hold with stakeholders.
- As proposed in the Draghi Report, you will review the Commission's system of Expert Groups to further improve the effectiveness of **stakeholder consultation**, while ensuring the optimal use of resources.

You will report directly to me on simplification and implementation.

As a rule, you will work under the guidance of Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy in your role as Commissioner for Economy and Productivity. The Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs and EUROSTAT will support you.

Way forward

The actions listed in this letter will shape your work. However, we will need to complete and adapt as we go along and I count on your ideas and expertise in this regard. In addition to College meetings and our continuous discussions, I will invite you every six months for a structured reporting meeting to discuss progress and challenges in delivering on your mission.

Reflecting the evolving nature of political priorities, the Commission must remain agile in allocating staff where most needed. I expect you to play a collegial role in this, by working with your services to identify efficiencies and contributing to corporate redeployment efforts across the Commission.

Given the scale of the challenges and the many issues in our in-tray, we must **hit the ground running on day one**. I invite you to take contact with your future services to prepare your hearing and the work ahead.

I look forward to working closely together for Europe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ursula v. d. L.', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

