

**ANSWERS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE**  
**Sylvie GOULARD**  
**Commissioner-designate for Internal Market**

### **1. General competence, European commitment and personal independence**

**What aspects of your personal qualifications and experience are particularly relevant for becoming Commissioner and promoting the European general interest, particularly in the area you would be responsible for? What motivates you?**

My whole public and professional life has been dedicated to Europe.

I started my career as a civil servant in the Legal Department of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1989-1993), where I had the opportunity to work on the ‘Two plus Four’ Treaty, signed on 12 September 1990 and paving the way for the German reunification. As a French diplomat, I then joined the Policy planning staff of the Ministry, which gave me several occasions to work closely with European partners, in particular German counterparts. A few years later, I became a member of the Group of Policy Advisors of the European Commission when Romano Prodi was its President (2001-2004). I followed, for the President, the work carried out by the European Convention. The Prodi Commission actively prepared the enlargement of the European Union.

I have spent an important part of my life explaining the massive benefits the European Union provides to European citizens. I have a long-standing engagement to bring Europe closer to citizens. I have worked a lot with the civil society, for example in the French Branch of the European Movement that I chaired from 2006 to 2010. We were involved in advocacy, public debate, and education programs for adults, schools and young people. I have also been involved in several associations and think tanks, all aiming at building bridges between peoples and cultures and integrating Europe further. These activities were closely linked to the research I conducted in parallel on European issues (at the Centre d’Etudes des Relations Internationales, Sciences Po), but also to my teaching activities (in the College of Europe in Bruges after Sciences Po). All of this fueled my personal reflections on European matters, to which I devoted several books (one of them - ‘L’Europe pour les Nuls’ - won in 2009 the European Book Award).

In 2009, I decided to go one step further in promoting the European general interest and ran to become a Member of the European Parliament (MEP). Throughout my two mandates as an MEP (2009-2017), which were marked by the financial crisis and its aftermath in Europe, I was a member of the ECON Committee. In this Committee, I have been rapporteur and coordinator of legislative proposals including on financial supervision, on the revision of the Stability and Growth Pact, on the Banking Union, and on solvency rules for insurance companies. I also wrote two initiative reports (on the creation of Eurobonds and on the international role of the EU in economic and financial fora), which convinced me that the Parliament should have, as President-elect Ursula von der Leyen is supporting in her Political guidelines, a right of initiative.

On top of my participation to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON), I became a substitute in the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) where I followed in particular the wine sector. I was also a shadow member in the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) where I followed the question of transnational lists, which President-elect Ursula von der Leyen committed to address as a complementary tool of European democracy in her Political guidelines.

In addition, I joined and then chaired the pluralist Intergroup of the European Parliament fighting against poverty and for the dignity of deprived people. In so doing, I worked closely with Europeans who feel that they are left behind. To give them a say, we organised, for example, in March 2014, an Université Populaire Quart Monde at the European Parliament with the non-governmental organisation ATD Quart Monde. I am convinced that we must do more to fight poverty, as President-elect von der Leyen underlined in her Political guidelines, and that strengthening our unique European social market economy is indispensable in this respect.

In 2017, I joined the French Government as Minister of Defence, where I was responsible for the French Armed Forces in a highly sensitive context. This experience confirmed my conviction that European cooperation, both in terms of operations and capacity building, is of crucial importance. This is the reason why I am fully committed to foster more cooperation in defence and space in Europe, in particular through the implementation and oversight of the European Defence Fund, as foreseen in my mission letter.

I was then appointed Deputy Governor of the Banque de France/Eurosystem where I followed international issues (G7 and G20), the governing Council (ECB) as well as issues related to green finance, financial stability, and cybersecurity. The latter is key to better protect ourselves.

Thanks to these various legislative and executive experiences, I have gained an in-depth knowledge of how European and national institutions work and interact together on a daily basis. As a former MEP, I am especially committed to ensuring the most transparent and efficient workflow between the European Commission and the European Parliament. As President-elect Ursula von der Leyen stressed in her Political Guidelines, it is crucial that we strengthen the partnership between the European Commission and the European Parliament in the coming years.

As regards the area for which I would be responsible if the Parliament confirms me as Commissioner – the internal market –, I have been working for years on economic and macroeconomic issues, in the European Parliament as well as in the Banque de France. As such, I have gained extensive knowledge about the vital importance of the single market for European businesses, inside the European Union and vis-à-vis our international partners. I am deeply convinced that our companies are able to thrive on our continent precisely because we have built this unique ecosystem of norms, standards, enforcement mechanisms and jurisdiction, which has made Europe one of the most attractive places to live and to do business.

### **How will you contribute to putting forward the strategic agenda of the Commission?**

If confirmed as Commissioner, I will take full responsibility for the internal market as described in my mission letter. My goal will be to build on all my previous experiences and contribute to putting forward the Political Guidelines of the Commission, together with my colleagues in the

College and in particular under the guidance of the Executive Vice-President-designate for a Europe fit for the digital age.

First, I would guarantee the further development and smooth functioning of the single market, ensuring it adapts to the two major transformations at play, namely the environmental and the digital ones. In this context, I would also be committed to focus on remaining barriers relating to goods and services. It would also involve new industrial strategies that contribute to enhance European sovereignty and provide jobs for people.

Second, I would do my best to put in place the right framework to allow Europe to make the most of the digital transition, while ensuring that our enduring values are respected as new technologies develop. This would require investments in the next frontier of technologies, a coordinated approach on artificial intelligence, and massive efforts to improve digital literacy for all Europeans, especially women. All these efforts would contribute to the emergence of a Europe fit for the digital age and would be pursued under the guidance of the Executive Vice-President-designate in charge of this portfolio.

Third, I intend to contribute to a stronger Europe in the world. Here, I think about the external dimension of the single market, which is based on a level playing field that we should further develop and strengthen. I also think about the European defence and space industry, which is one of our most valuable and strategic assets. On this point, an open and competitive Europe defence equipment market and, in its relevant components, a strong and innovative space industry would undoubtedly contribute to building a genuine European Defence Union, as called for by the President-elect in her Political guidelines.

In all cases we will need to integrate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in our collective and individual approaches.

**How will you implement gender mainstreaming and integrate a gender perspective into all policy areas of your portfolio?**

When I was member of the ECON committee of the European Parliament, I actively encouraged diversity in the European Central Bank Executive board and in all other decision-making bodies of the European Central Bank.

In all the policy areas in my portfolio, I commit to pursuing the goals defined by the European Commission in its Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019, in particular: increasing female labour market participation and economic independence of women and men; reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women; promoting equality between women and men in decision-making.

To do so, I will build on and deepen concrete actions launched by my predecessors. Here, I think about the initiatives launched by Directorates-general Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) and Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT) to raise awareness to promote female entrepreneurship, including through the launch of an e-platform for women entrepreneurs, the creation of a European Network for Women Business Angels and the Network of Women's Web Entrepreneurs Hubs.

I also have in mind the initiatives launched by DG CNECT based on its Women in digital strategy, which aims at combating digital gender stereotypes and promote role models, enhancing digital skills and education for girls and women, and stimulating female digital

entrepreneurship and innovation. On all these issues, I will precisely follow the results of the Women in digital scoreboard created by DG CNECT to monitor progress at EU and national levels.

**What guarantees of independence are you able to give the European Parliament, and how would you make sure that any past, current or future activities you carry out could not cast doubt on the performance of your duties within the Commission?**

My last position, in the French Central bank, has given me a direct experience of an institution (which is part of the Eurosystem) very keen on defending its independence, as defined in the Treaty. For all Central banks, independence is an issue of the utmost importance to allow them to stick to their mandate and deliver what society and the economy need, independently of any pressure coming from a political authority. This has been a key experience in this regard.

If I am confirmed as Commissioner, I will attach the greatest importance to respecting the highest ethical standards, as defined in the Treaties (article 17§3 TEU, article 245 TFEU) and the Code of Conduct for Commissioners, as I have always done in my previous positions. I will fully respect the letter and spirit of the Treaty, in particular the obligation to act in the European interest. Furthermore, I commit to avoid any position or situation, which could put into question my independence, my impartiality and my availability to the Commission, and I will inform the President of the Commission of any situation, which might involve a conflict of interests in the performance of my duties. My Declaration of Interests is complete, accessible to the public, and will be updated should it be subject to changes.

**2. How would you assess your role as a Member of the College of Commissioners?**

The mission letter I received from the President-elect includes several fields put under the umbrella of the internal market: the digital economy and society, future-ready industry and single market, as well as defence industry and space.

The first one relates to the digital economy and society. In this domain, my role would consist in contributing to the work on enhancing Europe's technological sovereignty, through investment in the next frontier of technologies and common standards for 5G networks and new generation technologies. It would also involve leading the work on a coordinated European approach on artificial intelligence and the Digital Services Act, as well as building a real single market for cybersecurity. I am committed to advance work on Artificial Intelligence, including its human and ethical dimensions, within the first 100 days of our mandate. Another challenge would consist in strengthening digital literacy among European citizens, which is crucial if we want all Europeans to benefit from the digital transition. On this point, I will work in close cooperation with the Commissioner-designate for Innovation and Youth to contribute to an updated Digital Education Action Plan.

My portfolio includes also a 'future-ready European industry'. This covers contributing to a long-term strategy for Europe's industrial future and to a new SME strategy, which will both be jointly led by the Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the digital age and by the Executive Vice-President for an economy that works for people. A new Circular Economy Action Plan, coordinated by the Executive Vice-President for the European green deal, will feed into our overall industrial strategy. Furthermore, to be future-oriented does not mean that we could neglect the day-to-day functioning of the Single Market. As the guardian of the Treaties, the Commission has an important role to play in the fair and efficient implementation of rules throughout Europe. Among those rules I would want to mention intellectual property

rights, which are of the outmost importance in a digital age. On this last point, I will ensure that the implementation of all the work done by Mariya Gabriel on copyright progresses swiftly.

Third, on defence, I shall continue, under the guidance of the Executive Vice-President for Europe fit for Digital Age, the efforts made by previous commissioners on equipment market (Elżbieta Bieńkowska) and on military mobility (Violeta Bulc). As regards the former, I will do my best to encourage collaborative projects with as much cross-border participation by small and medium-sized enterprises as possible across Europe so that this Fund continues to thrive and irrigate research and innovation. As for military mobility, I will work in close cooperation with the Commissioner-designate for Transport. Space is also part of my portfolio with new challenges deriving, inter alia, from new global competitors. Implementing the future Space Programme (covering, inter alia, Galileo, EGNOS and Copernicus) will not only be strategically important but have a major impact on our everyday life (with, for instance, applications in the field of geo-tracking, business, agriculture, environment). I will also improve the link between space, defence and security. All these efforts will contribute to a stronger Europe in the world and would, as such, notably involve close coordination with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy / Vice President.

**In what respect would you consider yourself responsible and accountable to the Parliament for your actions and for those of your departments? What specific commitments are you prepared to make in terms of enhanced transparency, increased cooperation and effective follow-up to Parliament's positions and requests for legislative initiatives? In relation to planned initiatives or ongoing procedures, are you ready to provide Parliament with information and documents on an equal footing with the Council?**

If I am confirmed as Commissioner, engagement with the European Parliament will be of paramount importance to me, not only because democratic debate is in itself what I value most. Politically, I will, as a Member of the Commission, be fully responsible and accountable to the European Parliament for the activities of the Commission falling under my portfolio. As a former MEP, I have experienced in many occasions the types of interactions between the European Parliament and the European Commission that bear the best results in terms of policy-design and ownership by the citizens. These interactions should be based on openness, mutual trust, efficiency, and regular exchange of information, with a view to building consensus on future initiatives. These values are the ones I intend to follow as a Commissioner in my relationship with the European Parliament. In so doing, I intend to contribute to the strengthening of the Commission's special relationship with the European Parliament, as called for by the President-elect in her Political guidelines.

In my view, this implies an open and cooperative approach throughout the legislative process, from policy design to final agreement. In this perspective, I commit to ensuring a regular flow of information with the Chairs of relevant committees and directly communicate with coordinators, rapporteurs and committee members. I consider that this is a crucial part of a Commissioner's work. In terms of follow-up, it also implies making sure that questions from Members of the European Parliament to the Commission that come under my responsibility are responded to swiftly and accurately. And I will indeed appear before the European Parliament's plenary and whenever called to answer a question or provide any particular response.

I will also ensure that the European Parliament is regularly briefed, notably before major events and at key stages of international negotiations in areas under my responsibility.

As required by the ordinary legislative procedure, I commit to putting the Parliament and the Council on an equal footing. I also commit to participate personally to trilogues in my field of competence, as this is in my view the most efficient way to move forward.

President-elect Ursula von der Leyen supports a right of initiative for the European Parliament. She committed that her Commissioner will follow-up to Parliamentary resolutions adopted by a majority of its members with a legislative act, in full respect of proportionality, subsidiarity and better law-making principles. I fully support this objective and I will work hand in hand with Parliament at every stage of Article 225 TFEU resolutions.

In all my interactions with the Parliament, I consider that trust should be based on transparency. This is the reason why I commit to fully implementing the provisions of the Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission and the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making regarding transparency and the flow of information between the two institutions. I consider this to be crucial not only between both institutions, but more broadly to regain citizens' faith in the European Union.

### **Questions from the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy:**

**1. What are the main policy priorities you intend to pursue within the main part of your portfolio which falls within the remit of the ITRE Committee, namely Digital Economy and Society, Industry, SMEs, Defence Industry and Space? What are the specific legislative and non-legislative initiatives, including financial instruments, you envisage for achieving those priorities, in particular with regard to initiatives in the field of Europe's technological sovereignty, including cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, distributed ledger technologies, high-performance computing, communications networks, data, as well as key value chains in the defence, space and other sectors? What would be the main content and timetable for those initiatives? How will you ensure that the new Circular Economy Action Plan feeds into the EU overall industrial strategy? How will you concretely apply the 'One In, One Out' principle in relation to the legislative proposals in your portfolio?**

After ten years of dealing with the aftermath of the financial crisis, our economies are confronted with unprecedented changes linked to climate change, the digital revolution and a fast-changing geopolitical environment which are deeply transforming the way we live, work, produce and exchange goods and services.

A global race for strategic autonomy and technological leadership is now well on its way, and Europe is in danger of falling behind. Without a strong industrial base, built on a common strategy and pooled resources, Europe will be unable to domestically produce the technologies it needs to stay at the forefront of global competition and sustain its unique social model.

My goal is to do my best to further strengthen Europe's industrial base through sound market-based policies and, thus, our collective ability to lead the transition towards a new digital world and becoming the first climate-neutral continent. This will require mobilising important financing, which will inevitably be a mix of public and private funds, at national and EU levels, mobilising different financial instruments, including through InvestEU and the European Investment Bank.

My overarching objective will be to reconcile the social and the market in today's modern economy.

### ***Digital economy and society***

Europe's industry plays a central role in the EU's prosperity, world leadership and social cohesion. Europe is the global leader in many industries, especially when it comes to high value added products and services, including the automotive, aeronautics, engineering, chemicals and pharmaceutical industries. However, our industry needs to adapt to an accelerated pace of industrial transformation, transition to a climate-neutral economy as well as technological breakthroughs, in particular the rise of digital technologies, and a fast-changing geopolitical environment.

In 2001, only one of the top five largest companies in the world by market capitalisation was a digital company. Today, the top five are all from the digital sector, and none is European. Europe has lost its technological leadership in the digital field, despite the fact that the region remains one of the world's largest markets for digital products and services.

Regaining technological leadership should help us lead a European way of doing digital policy. In this context, setting standards is critical. Being ahead of the regulatory curve will allow the EU to shape how technologies develop according to our own preferences. It is a question of values and also one of industrial strategy: it prevents fragmentation into national markets and sets the global standards as no one can ignore Europe as one of the largest markets in the world. Global firms will have to adapt their products and services to Europe's rules, as was the case for the General Data Protection Regulation.

I will work in close cooperation with relevant College members to ensure an inclusive transformation of our industries that benefits everyone. As stressed by the President-elect in her Political Guidelines, we must recognise, in this transition, that we do not all start from the same point. We all share the same ambition but some may need more tailored support than others. The European structural and investments funds new Just Transition Fund will help that nobody is left behind. We will also need to support new skills development. In this context, I will contribute to update the Digital Education Action Plan to address the increasing skills gap in Europe and will remain particularly vigilant about the impact of the transition on the most vulnerable of our citizens.

### ***Industry and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)***

A strategy for the EU's industrial future should cover all aspects that affect industry and its competitiveness, from investment and public procurement to trade, skills, innovation and supporting small and medium-sized business. It can only be designed and developed in dialogue with all interested parties.

SMEs represent the vast majority of companies and the backbone of our economy. They deliver the biggest contribution to the EU's economic welfare, providing two-thirds of the total employment. Creating a business-friendly environment, in which small companies, young innovative ones with high growth potential (i.e. start-ups and scale-ups) as well as 'traditional' SMEs can thrive, remains a big challenge.

When developing our SME strategy, I will always keep in mind all the difficulties entrepreneurs are facing daily: recruitment, access to finance, bureaucracy, late payment, etc. This multi-

faceted challenge should be tackled in close-coordination with other College members, for example for completing the Capital Markets Union to ensure SMEs have access to the financing they need to grow. Within my portfolio, bureaucracy and the remaining barriers in the single market particularly affect companies seeking to do cross-border business and access third country markets. Addressing these will be high on my agenda for SMEs.

### ***Technological sovereignty***

To contribute to enhancing Europe's technological sovereignty, I will support investing in the next frontier of technologies (blockchains, high-performance computing, algorithms, and data-sharing and data-usage tools). In all these domains, I am convinced that we can do more through joint efforts at EU and national level. The existing European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking (EuroHPC JU) is a case in point, as it will pool European resources to develop top-of-the-range exascale supercomputers for processing big data, which Member States could not do alone. This is the type of concrete initiatives I intend to support and I will ensure we make full use of the resources of the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

### ***Climate change challenge and Circular Economy***

As President-elect Ursula von der Leyen stressed in her Political Guidelines, becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050 is the greatest challenge and opportunity of our times. Therefore, I will do my best to helping the EU industry to lead the transition to a sustainable economy. This will require additional measures for specific regions where the transition represents a special challenge due to the presence of energy-intensive and coal industries.

Based on the success of the Circular Economy Action Plan adopted in 2015, our new Circular Economy Action Plan will feed into this overall industrial strategy. My intention is to build on the example of the European Strategy for plastics to support other sectors or value chains with high environmental impact and potential for circularity. I am convinced that we can move towards maintaining resources and materials in the economy for longer and minimising waste, through eco-design, energy labelling, green public procurement and sectoral legislations.

### ***Competitive and innovative defence industry***

The European defence industry generates a total turnover of 100 billion EUR per year. The defence industry faces many obstacles in our internal market because of Member States' practices to spend their defence budgets nationally and define their technical requirements for military equipment nationally. For example, Member States have 17 types of battle tanks, while the U.S. has one. There is not enough defence cooperation in Europe. There are several duplications in spending and the defence market is highly fragmented.

There is ample scope for making progress at European level in removing barriers to collaboration and opening cross-border access to new entrants and small and medium-sized companies.

Making sure that Europe has at its disposal a competitive and innovative defence industry is one of my priorities. It will make Europe stronger in the world, enabling it to reinforce NATO and to improve the transatlantic burden-sharing.

The Commission has important tools at its disposal to make progress at European level in removing cross-border barriers for collaboration and profiting from the opportunities of Europe's internal market. The first important tool is the European Defence Fund (EDF), which will allow co-funding the contribution from the European defence industry to deliver innovative and cutting-edge technologies and products, based on military requirements of Member States.

The EDF will encourage cooperation between Member States and their industries. This cooperation should:

- Help to break down national silos, avoid unnecessary duplication and fragmentation, thereby reducing costs and inefficiencies. To be eligible, projects will have to involve cooperation among at least three companies from three different Member States.
- Moreover, in order to take the utmost advantage from synergies between entrepreneurship and defence policies, a specific bonus will be granted to encourage the participation of SMEs in the EDF.

I will also be sensitive to the fact that ethical principles are respected in the implementation of the EDF, with a particular emphasis on the important issue of Artificial Intelligence in defence.

An important work strand will be the implementation of the Action Plan on Military Mobility. The co-financing envelope under the Connecting Europe Facility together with efforts to upgrade dual-use infrastructures and a number of customs and value added tax measures, will enhance the ability of Member States to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation related to collective defence and their capacity to deploy military operations in reaction to external threats.

Legislative tools, like the defence procurement Directive and the Directive on intra-EU transfers of defence related products, have been put in place to make the defence internal market work better. In monitoring closely their enforcement, I also want to ensure that these pieces of legislation become more effective and that Member States fully apply them in a uniform way.

### ***Leader in Space***

Europe is the second space power in the world. We have the best Earth observation system (Copernicus) and the best satellite positioning system (Galileo) in the world. Space technology, data and services have become indispensable in the lives of Europeans. We rely on them when using mobile phones and car navigation systems for example. Satellites also provide immediate information when disasters, such as earthquakes, forest fires or flood strike, enabling better coordination between emergency and rescue teams.

EU space policy aims at tackling some of the most pressing challenges of today such as fighting climate change and helping to stimulate technological innovation. Space systems bring benefits to the EU society and economy if a large and heterogeneous community of users benefit from and invest in them. Galileo, the EU's global satellite navigation system is used worldwide by over 1 billion of users. Full operational capability should be reached in 2020. EGNOS provides safety of life services to aviation and maritime users in Europe. Farmers rely on EGNOS for precise farming.

There has been progress on the use of Space data and on creating opportunities for SMEs and start-ups, but the work has just started and more can be done, for example by further promoting the use of Galileo services in automated and connected cars and for timing and synchronisation

of European critical infrastructure. The new EU Space Programme will promote capacity building across the Union and support companies, for example by facilitating access to finance, setting up networks of space hubs or provision of training capacities, supporting start-ups and innovation actions. Interaction between space applications and research activities should be deepened to develop new tools and new solutions, for example in the development of new Copernicus Satellites with new capacities for global CO2 emissions monitoring, changes in the Arctic region, etc.

The EU Space Programme is also an asset for EU's security and defence. For example, the Galileo Public Regulated Service (PRS) provides position and timing restricted to government-authorised users, for sensitive applications, which requires a high level of service continuity. This includes emergency services, peacekeeping operations and crisis management. Synergies between these two policy areas need to be further explored and reinforced as with the PRS.

The EU's autonomous, reliable and cost effective access to space, as well as its global leadership should be preserved, but international cooperation is paramount and a key element of the Space strategy. Space dialogues with international partners (U.S., China, Japan or South Africa) should be continued.

### ***'One-in, one-out' principle***

EU legislation can achieve objectives and deliver benefits that Member States acting separately cannot do. However, to achieve its objectives, the EU legislation can lead to burdens on final beneficiaries or users.

The 'One In, One Out' principle will alleviate these burdens: every legislative proposal creating new burdens should relieve people and businesses of an equivalent existing burden at EU level in the same policy area. It will be applied by looking at the entire policy area, therefore going beyond each individual piece of legislation imposing new burdens. This will ensure that the overarching policy objectives are achieved efficiently and with minimum burden and the Commission always has the leeway to act where needed.

**- What will be your main priorities on Digital Economy and Society, for instance regarding cybersecurity, deployment of next generation networks and future mobile technologies and in support of the European Electronic Communications Code? With respect in particular to cybersecurity, how do you intend to establish a Joint Cyber Unit (as regards inter alia its composition, tasks and impact on existing Union actors in the field), and would you commit to proposing a new horizontal legal instrument to establish binding cybersecurity obligations (e.g. with respect to software updates) for all connected products?**

Digitisation has changed the lives of European citizens and revolutionised the way we do business, making our lives easier and creating enormous opportunities for companies but also new challenges for people and business to cope with fast developments. Artificial Intelligence, big data, cloud, super-and soon quantum- computing, blockchain and high-speed connectivity can help us solve some of the world's biggest challenges: from fighting climate change to treating cancer and producing affordable and safe food but it also raises fundamental questions which need to be addressed.

Over the last five years, the Digital Single Market Strategy has reduced market fragmentation, increased data flows and market fluidity, and updated existing rules to the digital age. But much

more needs to be done. I therefore intend to build on these important achievements, with the help of the European Parliament, Member States and stakeholders.

As announced in the President-elect's Political Guidelines, I will work together with Executive Vice-President-designate Vestager, on a new EU regulatory framework for Artificial Intelligence that promotes the development and take up of trustworthy Artificial Intelligence, taking into consideration the ethical dimensions of its deployment.

To boost the European digital economy and provide for the open and safe online environment that European society needs, the President-elect has furthermore entrusted me to prepare the Digital Services Act and it will be one of my key priorities. My guiding principles in this field will consist in strengthening a level playing field for digital services; ensuring fair, responsible and transparent behaviour of online platforms; protecting our fundamental rights such as freedom of expression and privacy; keeping markets open and non-discriminatory to foster a data-driven economy. As raised in the European Parliament's 2017 report on online platforms and the Digital Single Market, I will in particular make sure that the Act provides for clarity and effective processes for tackling the dissemination of illegal content online. We also need to reflect on how best to address emerging problems related inter alia to algorithmic decision-making, data access, digital advertising, working conditions and concerns on collaborative economy platforms.

The fight against illegal content cuts across all jurisdictions. I want to reinforce, in the single market, the cooperation mechanisms that make it possible for all European citizens to be equally and effectively protected, and for authorities to trust each other. The proposal for a Digital Services Act will be based on a robust analysis and an inclusive stakeholder dialogue.

Blockchain-inspired distributed ledgers technologies are transformative technologies that provide greater trust and efficiency in the existing services and future ones. I am committed to working with Member States and industry to gain EU leadership in blockchain, e.g. by investing in R&D&I, in standard-setting and having the public sector taking a leading role. In particular, I will seek to advance the work on the European Blockchain Services Infrastructure with the objective of turning it into a global benchmark for performance, security, resilience and energy efficiency.

Communications networks are the backbone of the digital economy and society and are essential for entrepreneurship and innovation. However, still today too many small businesses cannot reach their full potential in rural areas with a poor internet connection or decide to pursue their business ideas outside Europe because the existing digital environment is not fit for the 21st century. I am committed to change this. I will focus on working together with Member States to increase connectivity and make Europe 5G ready.

Building on the recently adopted European Electronic Communications Code, and ensuring that it is fully implemented, we will continue our actions in this field. For example, we will facilitate the deployment of small cells for 5G wireless communications and encourage the timely release of harmonised spectrum or 5G as well as spectrum for unlicensed use for short-range devices, Wi-Fi or transport safety. I will also work to ensure timely implementation of the reinforced rules on the European emergency number 112 because this can save lives.

I consider it vital to ensure that our 5G networks are resilient and secure. I will therefore ensure that the measures proposed by the Recommendation on the cybersecurity of 5G networks are completed according to plan and that they include processes to identify security risks and

mitigating measures. Under these conditions, I intend to facilitate their orderly and timely deployment, while taking proper account of the interests and concerns of stakeholders and citizens.

Ensuring digital leadership and building a strong data-driven economy will also depend on the ability to protect against cyberattacks. The importance of cybersecurity will therefore only increase further as we will need to enhance the protection of our critical infrastructures and the public services dependent on them, particularly as connected objects will provide many more points of vulnerability. Cybersecurity is a domain where the EU has made progress by increasing the level of trust among the Member States. In the future, we need to continue on this path so that we move from a 'need to know' to a 'need to share' culture and cybersecurity cooperation and information sharing become the norm in all areas, including in the law enforcement and defence domains.

The Directive on security of network and information systems is the first horizontal Union legislation on cybersecurity. I believe that the ongoing dialogue with the Member States and the companies covered by the Directive, as well as the strategic cooperation between Member States' national authorities will allow it to be implemented in a more effective manner. As part of the implementation of the Cybersecurity Act, the Commission will work at full speed with the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) and Member States to roll-out cybersecurity certification schemes in priority areas such as 5G or cloud computing. This will ultimately improve cybersecurity in a broad range of digital products and services.

My mission letter asks me to lead the work to build a Joint Cybersecurity Unit. This would encompass the resilience, law enforcement and defence dimension of cybersecurity, to ensure a structured reinforced cooperation as well as mutual assistance mechanism in times of crisis at EU level. The Joint Cyber Unit could build on the existing experience and expertise across national and EU cybersecurity bodies. In the long-run, we will have to further reflect on the appropriate infrastructures we need to cope with these cyber challenges.

There is also a need to strengthen the cybersecurity of ICT products and services, which is becoming ever more important. The Cybersecurity Act is an important step in the right direction as it established an EU-wide common cybersecurity certification approach. The Commission will review the need for mandatory certification for certain categories of products and services in due time, according to the provisions of the Cybersecurity Act.

**- In the political guidelines for the next European Commission, the President-elect mentioned a new industrial strategy without providing concrete details. How will you ensure that the new EU long-term integrated industrial strategy contributes, amongst others, to the creation of high-quality jobs, raising the industrial contribution to the Union's GDP, reducing the risk of industry relocation outside the EU, ensuring that third country participation in strategic industries and infrastructure is adequately screened, and promoting synergies amongst the various EU policies to reduce the risk of damaging consequences on EU industries, while complying with the objectives of the Paris Agreement? To that end, would you consider the creation of an "Industry Union" (similar to the concept of the "Energy Union") to consolidate and coordinate the efforts towards reaching the above objectives?**

A new industrial strategy should respond to the two fundamental transformations of our economies and societies: digitalisation and climate change, in a fast changing external environment.

Such a strategy should be developed in dialogue with all interested parties. I will closely cooperate with Executive Vice-Presidents-designate Margrethe Vestager and Valdis Dombrovskis to contribute to a new long-term strategy for the EU's industrial future.

We should mobilise all our policies and instruments from investment and public procurement to trade, skills, innovation and supporting small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). The new industrial strategy should guide a successful industrial transition to the digital age and a climate-neutral economy whilst also preserving and improving the unique European social market economy model, the source of our prosperity and social fairness. Globalisation, digitalisation, climate change, will require a vast rethinking on the way we work, produce, consume and trade. The question of a level playing field in global trade is acute in a world where the multi-lateral rules-based economic system is under strain.

The single market is at the core of our industrial strategy. It is already our Industry Union. This unique construction in the world removes borders for the free circulation of people, goods, services and capital. The negotiations on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU has increased the awareness of its benefits. Ensuring a good functioning of the single market will be a key element of our industrial strategy.

The single market is clearly also our best asset for our economic diplomacy, as it offers a single entry point for the largest market in the world. But when granting access to our market, a level playing field should be ensured. While the EU needs to remain open, it should not be disarmed.

In this context, we have seen a growing number of strategic acquisitions by third country companies over the recent years. The new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) screening regulation will enter into force in October 2020. It will allow the Commission to issue opinions when an investment from a third country threatens the security or public order of more than one Member State, or when an investment could undermine a strategic project or programme of interest to the whole EU. I will support the Commissioner-designate for Trade in implementing this new tool, particularly from the perspective of the strategic industries and programmes under my responsibility, and with a view to ensuring Europe's technological sovereignty. But we will also need stronger industrial collaboration along European value chains to create the necessary critical mass and scale. Therefore, I will actively coordinate the efforts with Member States to strengthen key value chains, with full respect for the industrial policy competence of Member States.

In a world where intellectual and intangible assets (inventions, creations, brands, data, know-how) increasingly determine companies' value, intellectual property policies are a key lever to boost industrial competitiveness. This is why I intend to take a close look at our intellectual property regime to verify and ensure that it is coherent, is fit for the digital age and supports our competitiveness. The regime should address new challenges such as AI, 3D printing, the circular economy, etc. and ensure SMEs' access to Intellectual Property protection. Globally, Europe should also continue assuming a global leadership by contributing to global norm setting and ensuring a level playing field.

Finally, public procurement policy is a powerful enabler for increasing competitiveness of the European economy. The public purchase of works, goods and services account for over 14% of GDP in the EU. Public procurers will have to leverage public demand to ensure the uptake and encourage the development of innovative and sustainable solutions. They need to become important actors in the European innovation eco-system, leveraging innovation procurement for solving systemic issues by creating demand for incremental and breakthrough innovations

and providing opportunities for SMEs. Through public procurement, governments at all levels can reach wider policy objectives such as competitiveness, social fairness and Sustainable Development Goals. The guidance on the participation of third country bidders and goods in the EU procurement market should also help ensuring a level playing field internationally, where reciprocity on open procurement opportunities is our objective.

**- What are your concrete plans to promote the Union’s policy on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), especially with regard to mainstreaming the ‘Think Small First’ principle, updating the definition of ‘SME’, if necessary, according to the latest ECJ ruling, and giving special attention to ‘micro-enterprises’ and ‘start-ups’? How will you ensure that SMEs have appropriate and easily accessible funding and that their administrative burden is further reduced? How will the ‘dedicated SME strategy’ set out in the political guidelines for the next European Commission be implemented? Moreover, what would be the function of the ‘SME Envoy’ mentioned in your mission letter and how will she or he be selected?**

Europe’s entrepreneurs, start-ups and SMEs play a crucial role in our industrial strategy. They represent 99% of all companies and employ two-thirds of all employees. But many SMEs struggle with regulatory complexity, access to finance, and the difficulty of finding commercial and investment partners. Too few European start-ups survive the critical phase of 2-3 years, with even fewer growing into larger firms. Also, becoming entrepreneurs is not equally easy across Europe, especially in most deprived regions. A particular concern is the relatively low rate of female entrepreneurship. Women represent fewer than 30% of entrepreneurs in Europe and the gap is particularly acute in innovation and science.

The SME strategy will be an essential component of our industrial strategy because of their importance in our economic and social model. It should mobilize all tools available and be based on the ‘Think Small First’ principle.

Administrative burden is a major obstacle for SMEs. I will ask my services to work closely with the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) to make sure a systematic and proportionate application of the SME test is ensured with a view to avoiding legislation putting excessive burdens on SMEs. Beyond that, I will make sure that small businesses’ feedback on regulatory barriers is heard and followed-up as appropriate. In this context, the SME Assembly and the SME Envoy Network are important *fora*, whose work will be an important element of the SME strategy. The decision on who will be the Commission SME Envoy will be taken in this context.

Access to finance (including private finance) and dedicated support (including through the European Investment Bank) are essential elements. I will make sure that all our available financial resources which should facilitate access to finance for hundreds of thousands of SMEs are fully used. In addition, the Digital Europe Programme can provide valuable support to SMEs in their transition to a more sustainable, digitised economy, both through its focus on advanced digital skills and support to the sharing of expertise on cutting edge technologies through the so-called digital innovation hubs.

Beyond, the SME strategy should be complemented and supported by wider efforts of our industrial strategy on skills, public procurement, intellectual property, global level playing field as described above.

Our SME definition should be relevant and future-proof, taking into account the diversity of SMEs in Europe. The outgoing Commission has carried out an evaluation of the SME definition

including an extensive consultation exercise with all stakeholders: businesses, associations, governments and managing authorities at all levels. This evaluation touches upon a wide range of aspects. I will carefully assess any need for changes.

**- What actions do you envisage to contribute to the competitiveness of the EU industry? Will you take sector-specific measures to support European industrial sectors where there is cutthroat global competition, such as the aerospace industry (including helicopters and drones), defence industry, telecommunications industry, automobile industry, energy-intensive industries, and the manufacturing industry? How will you ensure that the components of strategic value chains located in the EU will remain part of future worldwide value chains in particular for new technologies? Furthermore, how will you ensure that the industrial transformation boosts the uptake of climate-friendly and safe products, processes and technologies, while preventing carbon leakage to third countries? What specific measures do you envisage to prevent carbon leakage?**

Europe's industry plays a central role in its prosperity, economic leadership and social cohesion. Industry accounts for around 17.5% of the EU's GDP (22% including construction) and directly provides work to almost 24% of the employed, with a much bigger real contribution to employment and growth due to the importance of industry-related services and the trend of servitisation. However, the European industry now faces much stronger competition due to the raise of new economic powers. This is particularly visible in the global positioning of European firms.

Industry today looks radically different compared to decades ago due to an accelerated pace of economic, societal and environmental transformations as well as technological breakthroughs and new business models. This is especially true due to digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, high-performance computing or cybersecurity, in which Europe increasingly depends on foreign technologies. If this dependency continues, critical European value chains may be entirely shaped by third countries.

### ***Competitiveness***

Strengthening the competitiveness of the European industry, and SMEs in particular, will be key in addressing these new challenges. This is the reason why it will be at the core of our long-term strategy for Europe's industrial future. There is no silver bullet to increase competitiveness, but a wide range of self-reinforcing instruments, from investment and public procurement to skills, trade, IP, innovation and supporting SMEs.

Without concerted public and private investments, Europe risks missing out or under-investing in key strategic value chains such as cybersecurity, smart health, hydrogen, low CO2 emission industry, clean connected and autonomous vehicles, industrial internet of things, batteries, microelectronics. Beyond the use of EU financial instruments, these investments could be supported by specific frameworks such as Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEIs).

The strategic use of public procurement by local, regional and national bodies, is also an essential vehicle for investment. My goal will be to transform public procurement into a strategic instrument to reach our objectives. I will therefore support public buyers across the EU. In particular, I will support bringing together communities of practices (such as big buyers

– large cities across the EU or specialists in the health sector) to help them implement better purchase strategies and better functioning of public procurement systems.

An ambitious strategy on skills will also be key in ensuring that Europeans remain competitive. Only a coordinated action bringing together the Commission under the leadership of Nicolas Schmit, Member States, regions, industry, education and training systems, and trade unions will enable the EU industry to access talents and qualified workforce it needs.

Let us not forget that a major instrument to boost the competitiveness of the European industry will remain a well-functioning single market, which offers firms access to a large and competitive market and eliminates barriers that impede growth and innovation. I intend to tackle remaining barriers for goods and services (including digital), to enhance enforcement and implementation of EU legislation, and to improve the delivery of the single market on the ground through practical tools, such as SOLVIT.

### ***Uptake of climate-friendly and safe products, processes and technologies***

In the next few years, the digital transition should also help us achieving our environmental goals. To do so, we should consider two dimensions of this policy:

- First, using digital technologies to help other industrial sectors become greener. ICT solutions that enable stable and secure decarbonised electricity grids are a case in point. Other examples include ICT solutions for smart mobility and logistics, or super- and high-performance computers to model and forecast extreme weather events.
- Second, reducing the carbon footprint of the ICT industry, which will require a mix of measures, from better recycling of old devices and longer product lifecycles, to financing innovative solutions for more energy efficient data centres, to making better use of Green Public Procurement rules.

Another priority will be to accelerate the decarbonisation of energy-intensive industries such as steel and chemicals as well as look closer at automotive value chain. The work within the High Level Group on Energy Intensive Industries provides a strong basis for the work ahead. I will work towards developing climate neutral solutions and help financing their market uptake.

### ***Carbon leakage to third countries***

Transforming processes to produce climate-friendly products will mean developing new technologies and processes, which will require considerable investment. Climate-friendly products are likely to be more expensive than conventional ones at first. We will continue to ensure that the highest level of safety is guaranteed for these new products, processes and technologies.

The lack of a global level playing field in climate policies, and in particular carbon pricing, can create risks of carbon leakage. The transition to a climate-neutral EU makes the issue of carbon leakage more relevant than ever. That is why the Commission will propose the introduction of a carbon border tax, which should be fully compliant with WTO rules. There are several ways to design and implement a carbon border tax and the Commission, under the responsibility of the Commissioner-designate for Economy Paolo Gentiloni, will examine carefully the different policy options.

**- How do you intend to support, including through competition rules, European companies and start-ups to scale up, grow and even become world leaders? Will you pursue an ‘EU champions policy’? In that context, what are your views on the future development of antitrust and state aid rules?**

A resilient economy depends on a thriving culture of start-up and scale-up companies. Evidence shows that they have a great potential to innovate, to create jobs and to increase productivity in Europe. They provide innovative solutions for societal challenges and often strive to operate in a sustainable way - not only delivering profit to their shareholders but also creating economic, social and environmental value to stakeholders around them. This approach is Europe's competitive advantage.

The Public consultation carried out in 2016 revealed that start-ups looking to scale up still face many legal, regulatory and administrative barriers, especially when expanding cross-border. Problems were attributed mostly to weak venture capital financing, the lack of a true digital market, but also the difficulty to access new markets and hire skilled workers.

I will continue the work under the Start-up and Scale-up initiative and in particular, under my portfolio, continue removing regulatory burden and remaining barriers in the Single market. Cutting red tape for them to provide services cross-border is a first condition for companies to grow, even if we should continue making good progress on other issues. For example, establishing a global level playing field, including through addressing the distortive effects of foreign subsidies and foreclosed public procurement markets. European start-ups should not have to jump through 27 different hoops of regulation, and if we want to have home-grown champions, we need common rules for digital services.

Fair competition in the single market is a major driver of companies' competitiveness, because it requires companies to innovate and invest. Fair competition is ensured through our competition rules. They represent also a powerful tool on the global scale. The Commission will evaluate and review its competition rules under the lead of the Executive Vice-President-designate for a Europe fit for the digital age, Margrethe Vestager.

**- What measures will you take to ensure that the EU Space Policy fosters the development and uptake of space applications and services downstream, thus ensuring that the Union catches up with other major international actors in support of growth and the securitisation of European society and economy? In this context, will you support specific actions aimed at facilitating the research and deployment of specific technologies, such as quantum, in the space sector? What is your vision on the ‘crucial link between space and defence and security’, as mentioned in your mission letter, and what measures do you intend to take to improve that link?**

### *Space*

Space policies support European industrial competitiveness by boosting innovation. The EU is becoming a global leader in big data provision thanks to the Copernicus programme. The combination of space data with digital technologies and other sources of data opens up many new business opportunities in all Member States.

Space is an enabler for a wide range of industrial and technological activities. Spill-over from space activities supports developments in other sectors (e.g. digital image sensors used today

in our mobile phones have initially been developed for space application). Space-based data and services enables the development of new products and services (e.g., financial transactions use satellite navigation time-stamps, earth observation data help assessing crop conditions and yield forecasts, EGNOS makes landing safer). Many areas of our economy from agriculture, aviation, fishing, emergency management services to fighting climate change can benefit from space.

A key objective of the EU space policy is to maximise the benefits of our Space Programme for the European citizens. Our actions should therefore be two-fold: 1) create an ecosystem to support entrepreneurs, whatever their size, for example through the Competitive Space Start-ups for Innovation Initiative (CASSINI) which aims to expand the ‘space ecosystem’, increase space-based start-ups in the EU and attract more private investment to scale-up and 2) promote the use of the data and services provided by the EU Space Programme’s components.

A key objective of the EU Space Policy is to ensure that the European citizens are making use of the technologies created by our EU space programme (Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus), one of my main priorities will be to promote the further market uptake of the services they offer. Today there are numerous activities to support the use of European space applications and services. I plan to expand and strengthen them, for example by looking at making Copernicus archives machine-discoverable to enable their re-use for development in AI, at the integration of more space-based, data analytics-enabled products in EU procurement for policy-making, at reinforcing the standardisation of Galileo and EGNOS applications, etc. The EU Space Programme Agency in Prague will play a key role in ensuring a wider market uptake of the data and services provided by the EU Space Programme's components.

Moreover, the development of space programmes contribute to the emergence of a new ecosystem in the downstream sector. By providing data and services free of charge, Copernicus, Galileo and EGNOS foster the creation of new business models and the development of disruptive innovations by entrepreneurs, SMEs and start-ups.

### ***Quantum technologies***

Given the centrality of trust in our information systems to our economy and society, it is essential for Europe to invest in the development of next generation cryptography. This is particularly relevant as we know it is possible to develop secure encryption methods by making use of quantum properties (particularly quantum key distribution). These would have the added benefit of being future-proof as they would be unbreakable.

The next decade will see the development of key technologies based on quantum physics, from quantum communication to quantum computing, and quantum metrology. It will be essential for Europe’s long-term prosperity and security, to be present in the value chains of these technologies once they are market ready. To do so, Europe will need to translate its excellence in quantum physics research into commercial deployment.

A new flagship initiative called ‘quantum communication infrastructure’ (QCI), based on the concept of quantum key distribution (QKD), has recently been launched. I intend to continue with its implementation in close cooperation with the European Space Agency Member States.

### ***Links between space, defence and security***

Space is a strategic asset for Europe. This is an industrial question as well as a question of EU strategic autonomy. There is indeed a ‘crucial link between space and defence and security’.

Space is an enabler for security. Defence actors rely also on space-enabled services, such as global positioning, satellite communication or space surveillance. Space and defence technologies and their industrial base in the EU are largely overlapping. They require public research and development spending to maintain expertise and industrial capacities. Defence and space industries face an un-precedent global competition and major technological challenges with the emergence of cutting edge technologies (robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Cyber, etc.). By seeking synergies and cross-fertilization between space and defence in EU programmes, we aim to use more efficiently resources and technologies.

Space is an important tool for security actors, such as military, police, civil protection, emergency managers, border management actors etc. The existing space programmes Galileo and Copernicus already include security-related services, such as the Copernicus security and emergency services, and in particular the Galileo Public Regulated Service, which can be used by governments for emergency services, peacekeeping operations and crisis management. I will support Member States in increasing the uptake of those services.

In the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF 2021-2027), governmental satellite communications will provide secure satellite communications to security actors.

Under the European Defence Fund, we will continue to identify priorities with a view to improving the crucial link between space and defence and security. This could include Space Situational Awareness and early warning capabilities as well as Positioning, Navigation and Timing and satellite communication capabilities.

Improving the link between space and defence and security does not mean that the EU will alter the civilian dimension of EU investments in space. The civilian nature of EU investments shall be maintained and deepened in order to reap the full benefits that space-based technologies and services provide to smart growth, and to the well-being of the citizens in their daily life through a wide range of space-based applications.

**- In her political guidelines, the President-elect stated her intention to strengthen the European Defence Fund (EDF) to support research and capability development. What concrete measures, including financial ones, do you intend to take in order to strengthen the EDF? How do you plan to ensure that the Fund will promote cooperation among companies and countries across the Union and facilitate the establishment of new cooperative networks including those involving SMEs?**

The European Defence Fund intends to be an important driver towards a functioning defence internal market. My first challenge will be to make sure that the Council and Parliament agree the funding of this new instrument.

My second challenge will be to ensure its successful implementation; starting with the establishment of a coherent and strategic vision on the actions to be funded by the European Defence Fund. The Fund needs to attract the projects that will contribute to Europe's strategic autonomy in the future. I intend to provide strategic direction on the funding priorities. Of course, I will keep the European Parliament closely informed about this discussion.

My third challenge will be to ensure consistency with other defence initiatives in the EU, such as the Permanent Structured Cooperation in defence (PESCO) and the Capability Development Plan (CDP), which is under the responsibility of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy / Vice President Josep Borrell. Like its pilot programme under the current Multiannual Financial Framework (the European Defence Industrial development Programme), the EDF Regulation foresees a 10% bonus for selected projects that are also implemented in the framework of PESCO. This major incentive shows the level of our commitment towards coherence in defence.

Fourthly, I will exercise diligent oversight of the EDF implementation, especially when it comes to the participation of small and medium sized enterprises, but also other companies that are new to the defence sector. Additional funding is foreseen to encourage the participation of SMEs in consortium with large companies. I also want to explore and exploit synergies between civil and sectoral policies (including space) and defence policies.

Other legislative tools aiming at improving the defence internal market should be fully exploited. This is the case of the defence procurement Directive and the Directive on intra-EU transfers of defence related products. I want that these pieces of legislations become more effective and that Member States fully apply them in a uniform way.

**- Furthermore, how will you ensure full and effective implementation of existing legislation within your portfolio, in particular towards the Digital Single Market? What concrete means and measures will you apply to ensure implementation and enforcement of the EU acquis by the Member States?**

The correct implementation and application of single market rules will be among my top priorities. The single market is based on agreed rules: only if these rules are respected will the single market function, whether digital or offline. An ambitious implementation of agreed rules offers a significant potential in terms of additional jobs and growth, estimated at 1.6% EU GDP for the Services Directive alone.

With respect to the Digital Single Market, the previous Commission adopted 28 legislative instruments. It is crucial that these new legal acts are now fully implemented and enforced. European companies and citizens must enjoy the full benefits of this new framework, whether it is the end of unjustified geoblocking, copyright, audiovisual media services, the free flow of non-personal data or strengthened cybersecurity.

Although the Commission and Member States each have their own role to play in relation to the implementation and enforcement of EU law, ensuring that EU law is fully and effectively applied in practice is a shared responsibility. Interested parties, such as citizens, businesses and public authorities, should also be involved in this process as appropriate. The guidance on the collaborative economy previously developed by the Commission in consultation with Member States and stakeholders is one example of such a joint effort to improve the application of EU law in a particular context. The best practices identified by the Commission together with Member States on retail service regulation is another one.

My services will provide full support to Member States and stakeholders to ensure a consistent application of newly adopted EU law. One case in point is the new Regulation on promoting fairness and transparency for business users of online intermediation services (P2B), the first horizontal regulation covering online platforms. Its proportionate obligations must be adequately applied and enforced, so that their positive effects on the European platform

economy can reach their full extent and truly establish an environment of trust, fairness and transparency. Similarly, as far as unjustified geo-blocking is concerned, we will continue to provide assistance to the national authorities involved in the application of the Geo-blocking Regulation. Making the recently agreed Single Digital Gateway operational will be another important matter: it requires intensive cooperation between the Commission and Member States and involves many different administrations at national, regional and local level.

Should there be cases where there are clear signals that rules are not adequately implemented or enforced, coming from the market or otherwise, I will not hesitate to act to ensure compliance. The Commission is the guardian of the EU Treaties and as such has to take legal enforcement actions where it considers this necessary and appropriate.

**2. How will you and your services ensure efficient coordination with other Commissioners whose policy areas have an impact on, or are affected by, your portfolio, and in particular the Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age and the Executive Vice-President for An Economy that Works for People? How will you personally ensure the good quality of legislative proposals, full transparency of lobbying activities (directed at you and your services), and consistent and balanced consultation of all stakeholders taking also into account the need to carry out thorough impact assessments, in particular concerning the impact of all proposed legislation on SMEs?**

### *Cooperation across policies*

As part of the College, I will work in close collaboration with all concerned colleagues in order to deliver on the political priorities set out in the political guidelines of the President-elect. Given the transversal nature of the Single market portfolio, I will be working in close collaboration with the many College members who will be involved in this file.

For example, I will closely work with the Executive Vice-Presidents-designate for a Europe fit for the Digital Age and for An Economy that Works for People to prepare a new long-term strategy for the EU's industrial future. This will be an integrated strategy ensuring coherence and synergies across the various policies, covering all aspects that affect industry and its competitiveness whether internally, in the single market, or externally. We will have to mobilise all our policies and instruments from investment and public procurement to trade, skills, innovation and supporting small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), involving many College members. Similarly, when contributing to the SME strategy announced by the President-elect, many colleagues will be involved in the different aspects of a holistic strategy.

I will work under the guidance of the Executive Vice-President-designate for a Europe fit for the digital age in preparing key initiatives in the digital area such as the Digital Services Act and the European framework for artificial intelligence.

Another challenge will be to ensure consistency with other defence initiatives in the EU, such as the Permanent Structured Cooperation in defence (PESCO) and the Capability Development Plan, which is under the responsibility of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy and Security Policy / Vice-President Josep Borrell

### ***Better Regulation***

I will act in full respect of the provisions of the Commission's REFIT programme and the Better Regulation Guidelines. I personally believe that stronger focus on transparency, evidence and inclusiveness should have a key role to play in enhancing the legitimacy of EU action. This is why I will make sure that my services will continue to:

- transparently inform the MEPs and public about upcoming initiatives;
- evaluate the results of existing legislation before proposing new rules;
- consult regularly MEPs, representatives of the Member States and all interested stakeholders;
- transparently report on all the feedback received, and
- carry out thorough impact assessments that will be systematically screened by the Regulatory Scrutiny Board.

As for the crucial issue of transparency, my services and I will make diligent use of the Transparency Register when consulted by any stakeholders as well as to facilitate, whenever possible, the public's access to documents.

### ***Impact of all proposed legislation on SMEs***

It is my conviction that efforts are needed to avoid disproportionate burdens on SMEs. I will therefore ensure that my services apply the principles of the SME test when carrying out impact assessments. Moreover, feedback from SMEs, notably through the SME Envoys network, will be an important contribution to ex-post assessment.

**3. How will you and your services ensure enhanced cooperation with the ITRE Committee? What concrete steps will you take to ensure that the ITRE Committee is given in a timely and proactive manner the same information, as Council and Member States, with respect to planned legislative initiatives or other major initiatives? How will you facilitate scrutiny by the ITRE Committee of legislative and non-legislative procedures, providing at an early stage all necessary information concerning the preparation of legislative acts, delegated and implementing acts, and facilitate monitoring of their implementation? How do you intend to ensure that ITRE is kept appropriately informed and involved in relation to any international agreements in your policy area?**

As a former Member of the European Parliament, I attach the greatest importance to building a relationship between the European Commission and the European Parliament based on cooperation, trust, and transparency.

As such, I will work with the European Parliament and relevant committees, including ITRE, at all stages of both the policy-making process and the political dialogue, for legislative and non-legislative procedures.

I intend to regularly brief the Committee members, in particular the coordinators and the rapporteurs of a file, on the relevant legislative proposals and work closely with you in an open and cooperative spirit throughout the legislative process, from policy design to final agreement.

In line with the President's-elect Political Guidelines, I will be available to take part in relevant committee meetings and trilogue discussions. I will ensure that parliamentary committees are involved in any major developments under my responsibility.

Likewise, I will encourage my services to engage with the members of relevant Parliament committees at all stages of the legislative process.

I am fully committed to implement the provisions of the Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making which embodies our joint responsibility to deliver high-quality Union legislation founded on the principles of better regulation, transparency and cooperation throughout the legislative cycle.

Our relationship should be based on a two-way flow of information and mutual assistance. Specifically, I will ensure a regular flow of information with all relevant parliamentary committees, directly communicate with committee members, and ensure that I am available for bilateral meetings. I will also ensure that the European Parliament is regularly briefed, notably before major events and at key stages of international agreement in areas under my responsibility.

#### **Questions from the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection:**

**1. The fragmentation of the internal market poses challenges for both consumers and businesses. What long-term measures/tools will you propose to strengthen the internal market and ensure that the existing rules are properly and timely implemented and enforced, supporting the competitiveness of European businesses and bringing concrete benefits to consumers? Given the need to ensure a balance between consumer protection and simplifications for business, how would you tackle regulatory complexity and unjustified national regulatory and non-regulatory barriers within the internal market?**

In order to reach its full potential, the single market has to continuously evolve and adapt to challenges such as climate change, digital revolution, globalisation or demographic changes. I consider the single market a major tool to deliver an economy that works for everyone: businesses, consumers and employees alike.

The single market must allow European businesses, especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to benefit from economies of scale, to grow and to build their global competitiveness.

Intra-EU trade in goods accounts for 64% of total EU trade in goods. Non-compliant products on the market not only endanger consumers but also undermine the level playing field for businesses, including SMEs. I consider strengthening market surveillance as one of my top priorities. I intend to continue an open dialogue with our industry partners to ensure that harmonised standards provide easy and full market access.

The services sector accounts for 71% of EU GDP and 69% of EU employment. Still, the single market in services remains underdeveloped: intra-EU trade in services only represents one third of intra-EU trade in goods. At the same time, complex goods supply chains depend more and more heavily on services ('servitisation') and digitalisation leads to new business models of providing services. Therefore, better integrated service markets help the whole of the economy. I will therefore work towards a deeper integration of the single market also for services. This includes ensuring a better implementation of the Services Directive.

It will be essential to strike the right balance between consumer protection and simplifications for businesses. I look forward to working closely with other College members, and in particular the Commissioner-designate for Justice to ensure the necessary coordination.

Barriers to the proper functioning of the single market still exist and new obstacles emerge. Delivering the single market on the ground is a shared responsibility of the Commission and Member States. I am committed to support Member States to improve their capacity to enforce EU law. I believe that, in line with the principle of subsidiarity, more can be done at the Member States level, faster and closer to citizens and businesses. I aim to work in partnership with Member States to achieve this. However, if needed I will not shy away from taking enforcement actions.

**2. What measures do you foresee in the area of free movement of goods, taking also into account recently adopted legislation on mutual recognition and market surveillance of products? In this regard, what are your plans to ensure that EU legislation on goods is fit for the digital era, reaping the benefits and addressing the challenges of technical progress in digitalisation, such as those related to artificial intelligence, while preventing non-compliant or unsafe products from circulation on EU market, providing consumers with extensive information thereof, and ensuring a level-playing field for businesses?**

The Regulation on mutual recognition will ensure that businesses and consumers can easily access the relevant information on the national rules that apply to their products. The Regulation on market surveillance and compliance of products modernises the enforcement, addressing products sold online and improving cooperation between enforcement authorities.

This is an important step forward for the single market for goods. Non-compliant products are dangerous for consumers but also undermine the level playing field for businesses, including SMEs. Still in 2017 there were as many as 32% of toys, 58% of electronics, 47% of construction products or 40% of personal protective equipment inspected that did not meet the EU requirements for safety or consumer information. I am convinced that the newly adopted Goods Package is a great step forward. For market surveillance, I will support setting up the EU Product Compliance Network to improve cooperation between national authorities, to offer them capacity building and to organise EU-wide surveillance actions.

I will work together in partnership with Member States to better implement the mutual recognition principle. In addition, businesses will be able to use an alternative problem-solving procedure, based on SOLVIT, under which SOLVIT centres can request the opinion of the Commission.

Artificial Intelligence can serve us in many sectors of the economy, such as health, transport, communication and education. It is therefore our intention in the first 100 days of the new Commission to put forward proposals developing the European approach for Artificial Intelligence. Our objective is to promote the use of Artificial Intelligence applications. We must ensure that its deployment in products and services is undertaken in full respect of fundamental rights, and functions in a trustworthy manner (lawful, ethical and robust) across the Single Market. This approach must provide regulatory clarity, inspire confidence and trust, and incentivise investment in European industry. It should improve the development and uptake of artificial intelligence in the Union while protecting Europe's innovation capacity. As part of our approach to an overall framework for Artificial Intelligence, we will ensure that consumers benefit from the same levels of protection independently of whether they are using traditional

products or smart, digitally-enabled products (e.g. smart fridge, smart watches, voice-controlled virtual assistants).

Given the complexity of the issues at stake, a wide and thorough consultation of all stakeholders, including those who have participated in the pilot on implementing the ethics guidelines developed by the high-level expert group, would be required. Any legislative initiative in this area will therefore follow a robust evidence-based analysis and an inclusive stakeholder dialogue. We will look carefully at its impact across the board and make sure that our new rules are targeted, proportionate and easy to comply with, without creating any unnecessary red tape.

Strengthening the cybersecurity of digital products is of paramount importance with connected (Internet of Things) devices entering the market by the billions. If everything is connected, one incident can affect the whole system, with serious economic and social consequences. I plan to build on the Cybersecurity Act and roll-out cybersecurity certification schemes in priority areas such as 5G, cloud and connected devices. In close cooperation with relevant stakeholders the EU Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) and the Member States, I will review the need for mandatory certification for certain categories of products in due time, according to the provisions of the Cybersecurity Act. When having a close look at our intellectual property framework, I will assess whether it remains coherent, fit for the digital age and supports our competitiveness.

**3. Which concrete policy initiatives and enforcement measures will you propose to improve the single market for services, including professional services and qualifications, collaborative economy services, public services and procurement, especially in view of the opportunities offered by digital technologies, in order to reduce unjustified administrative burden, promote entrepreneurship and make the European services sector globally competitive in the coming decades? Given that Europe's productivity and growth is strongly linked to the services sector, what ambitious actions will you take to promote the free movement of digital services and the development of trustworthy AI-enabled services?**

Improving the functioning of the single market in services, by far the largest part of the EU economy, offers a large potential for additional jobs and growth and a stronger Europe. I want the EU single market in services to live up to this potential and adapt to the modern economy, while respecting our social models. My focus will be on those areas where the EU can add value and make a significant difference.

First, we have a number of existing instruments to facilitate the functioning of the single market in services, including the free movement of professionals. I will make sure that these instruments, notably the Services Directive and the Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications, can play their role fully. This will require more engagement by Member States. I intend therefore to develop and intensify the partnership with Member States for a better implementation of existing rules.

I will work to ensure that the recently adopted Proportionality Test Directive and Single Digital Gateway Regulation will be transposed and implemented in an ambitious way and fully applied. These instruments build on a partnership between Member States and Commission to work together for the better implementation of single market rules.

I will also continue to improve the recognition of professional qualifications, in particular by using digital tools such as the European Professional Card, a fully electronic procedure for cross-border recognition of professional qualifications. Although currently available only to a limited number of professions, feedback has been positive. Given its potential, I stand ready to work together with Member States and professions to further expand its use.

Second, trade through online platforms has become a key part of the EU economy. More than 1 million EU enterprises trade through online platforms. At the same time, we have to make sure that in particular the largest players in this sector play fair and do not exploit increased dependence of businesses, in particular SMEs, on those services. The previous Commission has taken important steps to this regard, including through the recently adopted Platform-to-business Regulation, the first global regulation of online platforms. I will make the effective enforcement of this Regulation a priority.

With the Digital Services Act, I want to consolidate a single market for the free movement and free establishment of digital services in the Union. This will address in a harmonised way EU-wide challenges, like the fight against illegal content online, providing for the necessary clarity and predictability of the legal environment and of the responsibilities which can be reasonably imposed on relevant online service providers. Digital services know no borders – acting at European level is therefore important to avoid fragmentation and the creation of a plethora of national rules. This will help the development of European platforms and digital services such as cloud infrastructure services, or web hosting services.

Third, the collaborative economy enjoys strong consumer interest in the EU and creates many opportunities for citizens as entrepreneurs and as consumers. It also raises important policy questions and concerns, including in relation to working conditions, the enforcement of existing rules and the protection of public interest objectives. I will work towards ensuring that the collaborative economy develops in a sustainable and responsible manner.

It is essential to have a robust regulatory framework for artificial intelligence, which guarantees that the development and deployment of artificial intelligence systems in products and services is undertaken in full respect of fundamental rights, and functions in a trustworthy manner (lawful, ethical and robust) across the EU single market. Such an approach will provide regulatory clarity, inspire confidence and trust, and create a competitive advantage and incentivise investment in European industry. This artificial intelligence framework will strengthen and complement the comprehensive body of safety legislation that the EU has today. Given that Artificial Intelligence will increasingly be interwoven with all other digital technologies, which in turn will be increasingly integrated into all kinds of economic activities and services, regulatory cross-border barriers for Artificial Intelligence could potentially seriously hinder the entire single market. Therefore, it is imperative that Europe's Artificial Intelligence policy prevents an unnecessarily fragmented approach.

As regards the digital transformation of public services, I will make use of all the available tools at European level to help making national, local and regional public administrations all over Europe more inclusive, competitive and focused on citizens. We need to expand our achievements of the last years in sectors where there will be relevant advantages for European citizens (for instance, in digital health), which would involve working closely with the College members in charge.

Finally, for a greater competitiveness and transparency of the public sector in the single market, I will make the digital transformation of public procurement a priority. There is a great potential

in the procurement market: the estimated value of the EU public procurement is approximately EUR 2 trillion a year, which amounts to 14% of the EU GDP. Therefore, I will support public buyers across the EU. In particular, I will support bringing together communities of practice (such as big buyers – large cities across the EU or specialists in the health sector) to help them implement better purchase strategies and better functioning of public procurement systems.