

C L I F F O R D
C H A N C E



**THE EUROPEAN
COMMISSION
2019-2024**



— THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2019-2024

On 27 November 2019, The European Parliament confirmed the new class of European Commissioners with 461 votes in favour, 157 against and 89 abstentions. The new President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and her team of European Commissioners took office on 1 December 2019 and will drive the EU's agenda for the next five years. President Von der Leyen, the former German defence minister, says that it will be a "geopolitical Commission," signalling an intention to position Europe as a heavyweight on the world stage. Here Clifford Chance experts, including Of Counsel Michel Petite who worked for EU institutions for 27 years and was legal adviser to three Commission Presidents, assess the priorities for the von der Leyen Commission.

The composition of the Commission

Ursula von der Leyen is the first woman to hold the position of President of the European Commission. She urged Member States to nominate Commissioners that would allow her to build a gender-balanced team. In this respect, she has been successful. Von der Leyen's initial team of Commissioners was constituted of 12 women and 15 men. This was already the largest proportion of women of any Commission, and a significant improvement compared with Jean-Claude Juncker's Commission, where the ratio of men to women was 2:1. Following the resignation of Phil Hogan in August 2020, and his replacement as Ireland's Commissioner by Mairead McGuinness, the proportion of women is even greater, 13 women to 14 men. Michel Petite says: "All the Commissioners have first class pro-European credentials, and the gender balance has been addressed, which is great."

President von der Leyen has also overhauled the structure of the Commission. There are now eight Vice-Presidents, three of whom are Executive Vice-Presidents – Valdis Dombrovskis, Frans Timmermans and Margrethe Vestager, representing the three largest political groups. These three new Executive Vice-Presidents have been

given oversight of major policy areas for the EU. Frans Timmermans from the Netherlands is in charge of DG Climate Action (CLIMA). Valdis Dombrovskis from Latvia was given DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union (FISMA), and replaces Phil Logan on Trade. Margrethe Vestager from Denmark retains responsibility for DG Competition (COMP). "This is a new feature," says Petite, "the appointment of three Executive Vice-Presidents signals that the Commission will work through a hard core of heavyweights, with a great deal of experience, who will be at the forefront of all decisions taken."

In contrast to her predecessor Jean-Claude Juncker's "political Commission" von der Leyen says that the Commission will be "a guardian of multilateralism," as it deals with a range of challenges such as the continuing refugee crisis, an unpredictable and protectionist US, the rise of China and an increasingly hostile Russia. She has appointed a number of Commissioners – including Margrethe Vestager, the former Commissioner for Competition who now widens her portfolio to include tech. In addition, she has created a new department charged with overseeing defence and space policy, which Washington may regard as a challenge to the US-led NATO alliance.

Von der Leyen's State of the Union Address

On 16 September 2020, President von der Leyen gave her first State of the Union Address to the European Parliament. Unsurprisingly, the speech focused heavily on the Covid-19 pandemic. Von der Leyen talked about strengthening the European Health Union, and committed to the creation of a European BARDA, an agency for biomedical advanced research and development set up to improve EU capacity and readiness to respond to crises such as Covid-19.

Among the other areas of focus were climate change and the digital economy. Von der Leyen made new commitments on the climate, increasing the 2030 target for emissions reduction from 40% to 55%, with a promise to revise European climate and energy regulation in order to meet this target. The European Parliament has subsequently backed an even more ambitious target of 60% emissions reductions.

On the digital economy, von der Leyen said she wanted to make this "Europe's digital decade". She described Europe as having been "too slow" on personal data such that there is no common EU data space and we are now "dependent on others", and set forth a plan to avoid the same happening on industrial data. On artificial intelligence, she wants a "set of rules that puts people at the centre". She also made commitments for the creation of a European e-identity, and on improving connectivity, particularly in rural areas, as well as an investment of EUR 8 billion for the next generation of supercomputers.

On international relations, von der Leyen urged Member States to move away from unanimity and towards qualified majority "at least on human rights and sanctions implementation", two areas where the EU has recently struggled to agree a common position.

In her closing remarks, von der Leyen addressed the issue of equality. She talked of her desire to build a "a truly anti-racist Union" and has committed to appointing the Commission's first-ever anti-racism coordinator. She will also put

forward a strategy to strengthen LGBTQI rights and push for mutual recognition of family relations in the EU, concluding: "If you are a parent in one country, you are a parent in every country".

A rocky start for the Von der Leyen Commission

After securing the top post in the European Commission with a majority of only nine votes from MEPs, von der Leyen faced a number of set-backs before taking office. She suffered numerous delays to the Commissioner confirmation procedure and, as a result, her class of Commissioners were delayed by one month in taking office, with the previous Commission staying on beyond their term in a "caretaker" capacity. She also received widespread criticism for her decision to create a portfolio for "protecting our European way of life", which she later changed to "promoting the European way of life."

Phil Hogan's early exit – a strategic loss for Ireland

Then, in August 2020, Ireland's Commissioner Phil Hogan, in charge of trade, was forced to resign following a political scandal. The Commissioner attended a dinner (along with other notable Irish politicians) amidst nationwide lockdown rules which were in place because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The media uproar that followed led the Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister), Micheál Martin and Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) Leo Varadkar to ask Hogan to "consider his position", eventually bringing about his resignation.

Hogan was yet to settle into the role of Trade Commissioner. Following the early retirement of Roberto Azevêdo from the role of Director General of the WTO, Hogan had toyed with the idea of putting his name forward to replace Azevêdo. Concerned by a potential conflict of interests, von der Leyen was forced to impose restrictions on Hogan pending his decision, including restricting him from speaking publicly and requiring sign-off from Executive Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis on any trade policy decisions. In the end, Hogan decided not to apply, commenting that the "important EU Trade Agenda requires the full and



careful involvement of the European Union and in particular, the Trade Commissioner". Less than two-months later, he had tendered his resignation.

As a result of Hogan's resignation, Ireland have lost the coveted Trade portfolio. Already an important policy area, it was especially significant for Ireland given the ongoing negotiations with the UK on a future trade relationship. Ireland is the UK's closest neighbour and the only country in Europe with a land border with the United Kingdom. Mairead McGuinness, Phil Hogan's replacement, takes over on Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union.

Other notable appointments

Margrethe Vestager

Her nomination as an Executive Vice-President is not only a reflection of her performance in the previous Commission, but also of the improved results of the Liberal group (Renew), which currently includes seven heads of government across the EU and won 108 seats in May's European Parliament elections.

This is the first time a Competition Commissioner has remained in post for a second term. In the past, it was considered too powerful and too sensitive a position to remain in the hands of the same person for two terms. What is not clear is how Vestager will manage the competition portfolio alongside the additional responsibility of leading on digital issues, a challenge which Vestager herself acknowledged in her hearing before the European Parliament. In reality, it is likely that she will coordinate with Thierry Breton, the Commissioner for the Internal Market.

"Margrethe Vestager will also surely stymie recent suggestions from France, Germany and other Member States that competition rules should be amended in order to promote national champions following the blocking of the Alstom-Siemens merger," says Gail Orton, Clifford Chance's Head of EU Public Policy. A more interventionist approach could, however, be pursued in the portfolio of Thierry Breton, where he is now responsible for developing Europe's

data strategy and there is already an industrial policy for defence and space.

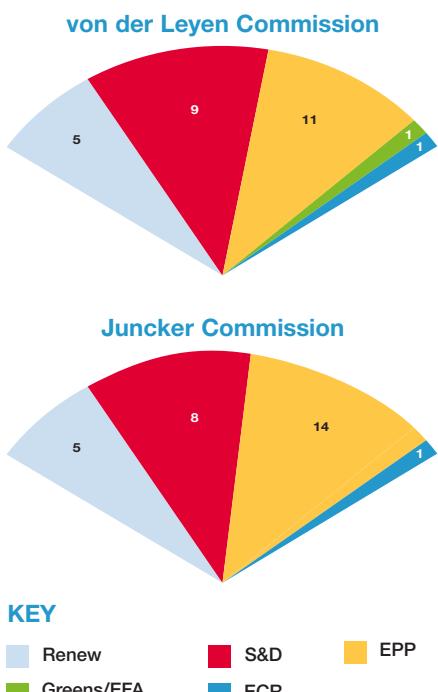
Thierry Breton

France has been given an extremely important portfolio, bringing together two DGs and creating a third to put Thierry Breton in charge of the internal market, including the Digital Single Market (DSM), defence and space. The new DG Defence Industry and Space has come out of DG GROW, which had grown too big and unwieldy. It is also the first time that digital has been brought into the fold of the internal market, emphasising the importance of creating a real DSM.

Valdis Dombrovskis

Following Phil Hogan's resignation, Valdis Dombrovskis, one of von der Leyen's Executive Vice Presidents, adds Trade to his already broad economic portfolio, "An Economy that Works for People". This is the first time that an Executive Vice President has been in charge of Trade, indicating the growing importance of trade for the Commission.

Michel Petite says: "Dombrowski's status and broad portfolio is impressive. It reflects a new, holistic approach to the EU economy, and a more political approach to the trade issues."



New Commission at a glance and comparison with Juncker Commission

	Juncker	von der Leyen
Number of Commissioners	28	27
Vice-Presidents	7	8
Political affiliation		
– EPP	14	11
– S&D	8	9
– Renew	5	5
– Greens/EFA	0	1
– ECR	1	1
Number of returning Commissioners	7	8 ¹
Average age	53	57
Age range	41-64	29-72
Male-female ratio	2:1	1.1:1

Timetable of appointment and comparison with previous Commissions

	Barroso I	Barroso II	Juncker	von der Leyen
Announcement of portfolio allocations among nominated Commissioners	12 August 2004	27 November 2009	10 September 2014	10 September 2019
Hearings of Commissioners-designate before the relevant European Parliament Committees	27 September – 16 November 2004	11 January – 3 February 2010	29 September – 20 October 2014	30 September – 14 November 2019
MEPs vote in plenary	18 November 2004	9 February 2010	22 October 2014	27 November 2019
New Commissioners take office	22 November 2004	10 February 2010	1 November 2014	1 December 2019
New President of the European Council takes office	Rotated every six months between heads of government of Member States	1 December 2009	1 December 2014	1 December 2019
New High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy takes office	18 October 1999 (renewed for a second term in 2004)	1 December 2009	1 November 2014	1 December 2019

¹ Valdis Dombrovskis, Mariya Gabriel, Johannes Hahn, Věra Jourová, Maroš Šefčovič, Frans Timmermans and Margrethe Vestager.

STRUCTURE OF THE NEW COMMISSION



FRANS TIMMERMANS
Executive Vice-President
European Green Deal



MARGRETHE VESTAGER
Executive Vice-President
Europe Fit for the Digital Age



VALDIS DOMBROVSKIS
Executive Vice-President
An Economy that Works for People



VICE-PRESIDENTS

JOSEP BORRELL
A Stronger Europe
in the World



VĚRA JOUROVÁ
Values and
Transparency



MARGARITIS SCHINAS
Promoting the European
Way of Life



MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ
Interinstitutional
Relations and Foresight



DUBRAVKA ŠUICA
Democracy and
Demography



COMMISSIONERS

JOHANNES HAHN
Budget and
Administration



DIDIER REYNDERS
Justice



MARIYA GABRIEL
Innovation and
Youth



STELLA KYRIAKIDES
Health and Food Safety



KADRI SIMSON
Energy



JUTTA URPILAINEN
International Partnerships



THIERRY BRETON
Internal Market



MAIREAD MCGUINNESS
Financial Stability,
Financial Services and
the Capital Markets Union



PAOLO GENTILONI
Economy



VIRGINIJUS SINKEVIČIUS
Environment,
Oceans and Fisheries



NICOLAS SCHMIT
Jobs and Social Rights



OLIVER VARHELYI
Neighbourhood and
Enlargement



HELENA DALLI
Equality



JANUSZ WOJCIECHOWSKI
Agriculture



ELISA FERREIRA
Cohesion and
Reforms



ADINA VĂLEAN
Transport



JANEZ LENARČIČ
Crisis Management



YLVA JOHANSSON
Home Affairs



KEY

Renew

S&D

EPP

Greens/EFA

ECR

GERMANY



Ursula von der Leyen
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: President of the Commission

Services/Directorate(s) General:

Secretariat-General, the Legal Service, DG Communication (COMM), European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC)

Most recent position held: Minister of Defence to the German Government

Age at the time of taking office: 61

President: Ursula von der Leyen

Ursula von der Leyen was born in 1958 in Ixelles, Belgium. Her father worked as a civil servant for the European Union. She studied economics in Göttingen, Münster and at the London School of Economics. In 1980 she switched to study Medicine, graduating and obtaining her medical licence in 1987 from Hanover Medical School. She specialised in gynaecology, graduated as a Doctor of Medicine in 1991 and worked in a women's clinic in Hanover until 1992. From 1996 to 2002, she taught at the Department of Epidemiology, Social Medicine and Health System Research at the Hanover Medical School and also earned a Master's degree in Public Health at the same institution.

She entered politics in 1990 when she joined the CDU (The Christian Democratic Union of Germany), a German centre-right, liberal-conservative political party. She was elected to the Parliament of Lower Saxony in 2003 and served as the Minister for Social Affairs, Women, Family Affairs and Health of Lower Saxony from 2003 to 2005.

In 2005, she was appointed Federal Minister of Family Affairs and Youth in the cabinet of Angela Merkel. She was elected to the Bundestag in 2009 and appointed as Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. During her time as Family and Labour Minister she imposed gender quotas for company boards and introduced paternity leave rights, gaining considerable popularity for her policies. From 2013 to 2019 she served as Germany's first female Defence Minister.

Von der Leyen is a key ally of Angela Merkel, with whom she has worked since Merkel became Chancellor in 2005. She is known to be in favour of strong European integration and has pushed for greater military cooperation within the European Union.

She is the first woman to be elected as President of the European Commission. In her Political Guidelines of the new Commission she emphasised the need to address the changes in climate, technology and demography that are transforming our societies and way of life.

Johannes Hahn

Johannes Hahn was born in Vienna in 1957 and studied Philosophy at the University of Vienna, graduating with a PhD in 1987. Aside from his career in politics, Hahn acted as a Board Member and CEO of Novomatic AG, an online gaming and casino management system firm, from 1997 to 2003.

Hahn has been politically active since his early twenties; he chaired the Viennese group of the Youth wing of the Austrian People's Party from 1980 to 1985 and then worked his way up the Vienna branch of the Austrian People's Party, eventually chairing it in 2005. From 2003 to 2007, he was a member of the Viennese regional government and from 2007 until his appointment as Austria's European Commissioner in 2010, he was the Minister for Science and Research within the Austrian Federal Government.

From 2010 to 2014 Hahn served as the European Commissioner for Regional Policy and, whilst Viviane Reding campaigned for and later took her seat in the European Parliament, he was twice appointed acting Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship. Hahn was then appointed as the European Commissioner for Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement Negotiations in 2014 and, in July 2019, he took over the position of Commissioner for Regional Policy as Corina Crețu took her seat in the European Parliament.

Hahn is responsible for a number of reforms aimed at modernising the European Commission. These include fully digitising the Commission, developing a new human resources strategy, implementing the Commission's anti-fraud strategy and promoting gender equality at all levels of management. Hahn will also assist the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, with concluding the negotiations on the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

Hahn's partner is Susanne Riess, former Vice Chancellor of Austria and former leader of the Austrian Freedom Party.

AUSTRIA



Johannes Hahn
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Budget and Administration

Services/Directorate(s) General: DG Budget (BUDG), DG Human Resources and Security (HR), DG Informatics (IT), DG Translation (DGT), DG Interpretation (SCIC), Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements (PMO), Office of Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels (OIB), Office of Infrastructure and Logistics in Luxembourg (OIL), Publications Office of the European Union (OP), European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)

Most recent position held: European Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement Negotiations Commissioner

Age at the time of taking office: 61

BELGIUM



Didier Reynders

Didier Reynders was born in Liège, Belgium, in 1958. Reynders graduated in Law from the University of Liège in 1981, and worked as a lawyer from 1981 to 1985 before beginning his political career.

Didier Reynders was Director General of the Local Authorities Department of the Ministry of the Walloon Region from 1985 to 1988, before becoming Chief of staff of the Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Justice and Institutional Reforms from 1987 to 1988.

Reynders was elected to the Belgian Parliament in 1992 and since 1999 has held a variety of ministerial positions: Minister of Institutional Reforms (2004-2011); Minister in charge of the National Lottery, the Federal Holding and Investment Company and the insurance companies (2007-2011); Minister of Finance (1999-2011); Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs (2011-2014); Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs (2014-2018); Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; and Minister of Defence (2018-present). Reynders has been Deputy Prime Minister since 2004.

Didier Reynders
(Political group – Renew) 

Portfolio: Justice

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Justice and Consumers (JUST),
Internal Audit Service (IAS)

Most recent position held: Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Minister of Defence, Deputy Prime Minister

Age at the time of taking office: 61

In June 2019, Didier Reynders lost a bid to become Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Europe's leading human rights body. Reynders has previously expressed interest in the rule of law, pioneering the idea of an annual peer review system amongst EU countries concerning their respect for the rule of law. In his role, Reynders jointly manages the rule of law portfolio with Věra Jourová, the Commissioner for Values and Transparency. He will lead the work on promoting a rule-of-law culture within the EU including in areas of consumer protection, judicial cooperation between Member States and the protection of the rights conferred by European citizenship. He will also oversee the full implementation of GDPR and the setting up of a European Public Prosecutor's Office, which will investigate and prosecute cross-border terrorism.

Mariya Gabriel

Mariya Gabriel was born in Gotse Delchev in 1979. She has a BA in Bulgarian and French languages from Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University, and a Master's degree in Comparative Politics and International Relations from the Academy for Political Sciences in Bordeaux. From 2004 to 2008 she was a teacher and researcher at the Institute for Political Studies in Bordeaux, before being appointed Parliamentary Secretary to MEPs from the GERB political party, which sits within the EPP Group.

In 2009 she was elected to the European Parliament, where she was the EPP Group coordinator for the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality. She was re-elected in 2014, and made a Vice-President of the EPP Group. She was twice nominated MEP of the year by the Parliament's in-house magazine, once in the development category and again in the gender equality category.

In 2017 Gabriel was nominated by Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov to be the country's European Commissioner, following the mid-term resignation of Kristalina Georgieva. Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker then reshuffled the Commission portfolios and made Gabriel the Digital Commissioner.

Gabriel was once more elected as an MEP in May 2019, but renounced her seat in order to remain a Commissioner. Confirming her nomination, Prime Minister Borissov emphasised Gabriel's contribution to the "*development of the digital single market, the improvement of security and the protection of personal data online, as well as the modernisation of copyright.*" A profile published by Politico in April 2018 painted a less positive image, however, highlighting her reluctance to properly engage with the key issues, her lack of political weight and her tendency to rely on Andrus Ansip, the Estonian Commission Vice President for the Digital Single Market, to try to push through tough proposals.

Gabriel is responsible for the next Horizon programme, leading on making the European Education Area a reality by 2025, promoting networking amongst European universities and updating the Digital Education Action Plan.

BULGARIA



Mariya Gabriel
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Innovation and Youth

Services/Directorate(s) General:

DG Research and Innovation (RTD),
DG Education, Youth, Sport and
Culture (EAC), Joint Research Centre
(JRC)

Most recent position held:

Commissioner for Digital and Society

Age at the time of taking office: 40

CROATIA



Dubravka Šuica
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Vice-President, Democracy and Demography

Services/Directorate(s) General:

Secretariat-General and DG Communication for the Vice-President coordination role

Most recent position held: Member of European Parliament

Age at the time of taking office: 62

Dubravka Šuica

Dubravka Šuica was born in 1957 in Dubrovnik, Croatia. She graduated in 1981 from the Zagreb Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, majoring in English and German languages. She worked as a high school teacher, university professor and head teacher up until 2001 when she was elected as the first female mayor of Dubrovnik. She held office for two consecutive terms until 2009.

Šuica has been active in national politics since 1998, when she joined HDZ (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica – Croatian Democratic Community), a liberal conservative political party and the main centre-right political party in Croatia. She was its Vice-President from 2012 to 2016. She was elected as a member of the parliament in three mandates from 2000 to 2009. Between 2004 and 2014 she was also the Vice-President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, and President of the Croatian delegation to the Congress.

Since 2013 she has been a Member of the European Parliament. She is also a Vice-President of EPP Women, an official association dedicated to the advancement of women in the European Union. Within the European Parliament, she has been a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and a member of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo.

Within the new Commission, Šuica is one of its eight Vice-Presidents and the Commissioner for Democracy and Demography. From the Commission's side, she will lead the work on the Conference on the Future of Europe which will run for two years, starting in 2020. She will also be responsible for developing a long-term strategy for rural areas of the EU and supporting the areas affected by 'brain drain', as well as exploring ways to invest more in the future of Europe's youth.

Stella Kyriakides

Stella Kyriakides was born in Nicosia, Cyprus in 1956. She studied Psychology at the University of Reading and obtained a Master's degree from the University of Manchester. She spent 30 years at the Cypriot Ministry of Health between 1976 and 2006, working as a clinical psychologist at the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Her political career began in 2006 when she was elected to the Cypriot House of Representatives. Since 2013 she has been the Vice President of the governing Democratic Rally party (DISY), which sits in the EPP group.

Since 2012 she has headed the Cypriot delegation in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and, from October 2017 to January 2018, she served as President of PACE.

Following the death of her mother from breast cancer and her own diagnosis at the age of 40, Kyriakides became involved in the Europa Donna NGO; she was President of its European Breast Cancer Coalition between 2004 and 2006, and President of the Cyprus Breast Cancer Forum for 15 years.

In his letter nominating Kyriakides to become the country's next European Commissioner, Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades highlighted her contribution to the fight against breast cancer both at home and abroad. Her responsibilities within the health and food safety portfolio include putting forward "Europe's Beating Cancer Plan" to support Member States improving cancer prevention and care. She will also be responsible for ensuring the supply of affordable medicine, monitoring the implementation of the new regulatory framework on medical devices, implementing the EU's plan on antimicrobial resistance as well as prioritising communication on vaccination, in particular "*combating the myths, misconceptions and scepticism that surround the issue.*" On the food safety side of the portfolio she will lead on the strategy for a sustainable food chain, work to reduce dependency on pesticides and "*help protect citizens from exposure to endocrine disruptors.*"

CYPRUS



Stella Kyriakides
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Health and Food Safety

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Health and Food Safety (SANTE)

Most recent position held: Member
of the Cypriot Parliament

Age at the time of taking office: 63

CZECH REPUBLIC



Věra Jourová
(Political group – Renew) 

Portfolio: Vice-President, Values and Transparency

Services/Directorate(s) General:
Secretariat-General for the Vice-President coordination role

Most recent position held: Justice, Consumers & Gender Equality Commissioner

Age at the time of taking office: 55

Věra Jourová

Věra Jourová was born in 1964 in Třebíč, Czech Republic. She graduated from Charles University from both the Department of the Theory of Culture and the Department of Law and Legal Science. In 1991, she worked as Deputy Director of the Civic Culture Centre in Třebíč, later working as the Secretary of the City Council. From 2000, she was employed at DHV ČR working on human resources, regional development, economic policy and EU funds projects. Between 2001 and 2003, she was head of the Regional Development Section in the Regional Office of the Vysočina Region, and was subsequently made European Integration Deputy at the Ministry for Regional Development. From 2006, she worked for a consultancy on Euro grants. In 2013, she was made a Deputy in the Czech Parliament and in 2014 acted as the Minister for Regional Development. She sat in the Chamber of Deputies for her party, ANO, between 2013 and 2014.

Since 2014, she has been the European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality. In this role she has been responsible for overseeing matters relating to EU data protection and privacy matters, gender equality and enforcement of remuneration rules in the financial and business sectors.

Jourová chairs the Commission's Group on a New Push for European Democracy and is responsible for coordinating the work on a European Democracy Action Plan, which aims to reduce the risk of foreign intervention in European elections and democratic systems. Her role also includes working on issues such as media pluralism and journalistic activities, as well as transparency in the legislative process and the prospect of the implementation of an independent ethics body for all EU institutions.

In February 2019, Romanian officials launched a criminal probe into Jourová and Frans Timmermans, the Commissioner for the European Green Deal, over alleged false claims made in a Commission report on the rule of law in Romania.

Margrethe Vestager

Margrethe Vestager was born in Glostrup, Denmark in 1968. Vestager graduated from the University of Copenhagen in 1993 with an MSc in Economics. She worked for the Ministry of Finance between 1993 and 1995 before working for the Agency for Financial Management and Administrative Affairs from 1997 to 1998. Having been national chairwoman of the Danish Social Liberal Party from 1993 to 1997, Vestager was appointed Minister of Education and Church Affairs in 1998.

Margrethe Vestager was a Member of the Danish Parliament for the Social Liberal Party from 2001 to 2014, becoming leader of the Party in 2007. She became Minister for Economic Affairs and the Interior in 2011, holding this position until 2014 when she became the Competition Commissioner.

Vestager continues to serve as the Commissioner for Competition in the new Commission. In the past five years, Vestager has frequently made tech companies the focus of her investigations, with a combined record fine of €8 billion awarded against Google and an order against Apple to pay €13 billion in taxes. Vestager has also announced a probe into the conduct of Amazon.

Vestager's new role combines her previous competition work with wider regulation of the tech sector and, during her hearing before the European Parliament, she acknowledged that it would be a challenge to reconcile the two areas of policy. It is likely to focus on the digital market in the context of competition and taxation, as the portfolio for developing the Digital Single Market has been granted to Thierry Breton (France).

Margrethe Vestager ran as a candidate for the Presidency of the European Commission in 2019.

DENMARK



Margrethe Vestager

(Political group – Renew) **RENEW EUROPE**

Portfolio: Executive Vice-President, Europe fit for the Digital Age, Competition Commissioner

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Competition (COMP)

Most recent position held:
Competition Commissioner

Age at the time of taking office: 51

ESTONIA



Kadri Simson

Kadri Simson was born in Tartu, Estonia in 1977. She has a degree in History from Tartu University and a Master's degree in Political Sciences from University College London.

During her studies, between 1998 and 2002 she worked for Tallinn City Council and as an Adviser to the Mayor of Tallinn. Upon her graduation in 2003, she worked for a year in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly as a Research Assistant.

Her political involvement began in 1995 when, as a student, she joined the Estonian Centre Party. Simson was nominated a Secretary-General of the Estonian Centre Party for four years between 2003 and 2007. As of 2009, she has been the Chairwoman of the Centre Party in the Riigikogu (Estonian Parliament). She was also elected to Pärnu City Council in 2013 and in 2017.

In 2016, she was appointed as a Minister of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure. Following her experience in the Estonian Government, she was the only candidate proposed by the Estonian Prime Minister to replace Andrus Ansip as the next European Commissioner.

President Ursula von der Leyen told each country that she would like them to nominate one male and one female candidate. However, Estonian Prime Minister Ratas stuck to his choice by nominating Simson alone. In his nominating letter Prime Minister Ratas said "*As Minister of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure at the time of the Estonian presidency, she managed the areas of the internal market, energy, and transportation in the Council of the European Union with competence, dedication, and great results*".

Simson will focus on the implementation of energy efficiency and renewable energy legislation, speeding up the deployment of clean energy across the economy, and putting consumers at the heart of the European Union system. She will work under the guidance of Frans Timmermans, Vice-President and Commissioner for the European Green Deal.

Kadri Simson
(Political group – Renew)

Portfolio: Energy

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Energy (ENER)

Most recent position held: Minister of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure to the Estonian Government

Age at the time of taking office: 42

Jutta Urpilainen

Jutta Urpilainen was born in 1975 and graduated from the University of Jyväskylä in 2002 with a Master's degree in Educational Services. Although she began her career as a teacher, Urpilainen had been politically active since her time in secondary school; she was a member of the Finnish Social Democratic Party's (SDP) youth and student organisations, and by 2001 she was an elected member of Kokkola City Council and President of the Young European Federalists of Finland.

In 2003, a year after her graduation, Urpilainen left teaching to pursue a career in politics. She was elected into the Finnish Parliament as a member of the SDP and quickly rose through the party ranks, serving as its first female leader from 2008 to 2014, and as the first female Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister of Finland from 2011 to 2014. Urpilainen has also held several positions within international organisations, including as a member of the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund (IMF) Development Committee (2013-2014), Chair of the National Commission on Sustainable Development (2013-2014), and Chair of the Finnish National Commission for UNESCO (2015-2018).

She has continued to serve as a Member of Finnish Parliament for the electoral district of Vaasa since she was first elected in 2003, and in 2017 was appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs as his Special Representative on Mediation. In this role, Urpilainen has focused on conflict prevention and strengthening the status of women and young people in Africa.

As Commissioner for International Partnerships, Urpilainen will work under the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell Fontelles on a number of key areas of EU policy, including the empowerment of women and promoting the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. She will also assist the High Representative/Vice-President in developing a new strategy for the European Union's relationship with Africa, including building on the current EU-Africa Sustainable Alliance and negotiating the Post-Cotonou Agreement with countries from the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

FINLAND



Jutta Urpilainen
(Political group – S&D)

S&D

Portfolio: International Partnerships

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG International Cooperation and
Development (DEVCO)

Most recent position held: Member
of Finnish Parliament (Electoral District
of Vaasa) / Foreign Minister's Special
Representative on Mediation

Age at the time of taking office: 44

FRANCE



Thierry Breton
(political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Internal market

Services/Directorate(s) General:

DG Communications Networks,
Content and Technology (CNECT), DG
Internal Market, Industry,
Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW),
DG for Defence Industry and Space

Most recent position held:

CEO of Atos

Age at the time of taking office: 64

Thierry Breton

Thierry Breton was born in Paris in 1955 and graduated from the École Supérieure d'Électricité (Supélec) with an MSc in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science in 1979. Upon graduation, he began his career as a professor of IT and Mathematics at the Lycée Français de New York, but just two years later left the role to set up his own software engineering company, Forma Systems. Breton was the CEO of Forma Systems until 1986.

Breton then began his political career as an adviser to the French Ministry of Education and Research, where he designed the open air science and technology theme park Futuroscope. He also sat on the Poitou-Charentes Regional Council from 1986 to 1992, and served as its vice-president from 1988.

After six years of working in the public sector, Breton returned to industry as the Director for Strategy and Development at Bull, a French-owned computer company, in 1993. He is widely credited with saving Bull from the brink of bankruptcy and was appointed Vice-President of Bull's board of directors in 1996. After his success at Bull, Breton quickly developed a reputation for saving companies in financial difficulties; he was appointed CEO of Thomson Multimedia (1997-2002) and France Telecom (2002-2005) by the French government; both experienced significant growth in profits during his tenure. Breton's successful term at France Telecom placed him as number 62 of "The 100 Best-Performing CEOs in the World" between 1995 and 2009 by the Harvard Business Review.

Breton returned to politics as the Minister for the Economy, Finance and Industry in 2005 under Jacques Chirac. He then spent a year as a professor of leadership and corporate accountability at Harvard University in 2008, before becoming the CEO of Atos, a French company which specialises in cloud, cybersecurity and high-performance computing.

After Sylvie Goulard was rejected by the European Parliament, Breton himself scraped through the Commissioner approval procedure; only 12 of the 23 members of the European Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee approved his financial declarations, and he faced a difficult round of questioning before MEPs in relation to his corporate positions and shareholdings. However, in response, Breton resigned from all of his corporate jobs and has pledged to sell all of his shares in Atos.

Breton is in charge of the Internal Market "super portfolio", which includes the digital economy and digital transition, the functioning of the single market, Europe's industrial future and a European strategy for the data economy. He is also responsible for the new portfolio of Defence Industry and Space, which will involve implementing and overseeing the European Defence Fund, including pushing European competitiveness in the space industry.

Margaritas Schinas

Margaritas Schinas was born in Thessaloniki in 1962. He holds an LLB from the University of Thessaloniki, a Master's from the College of Europe in Bruges and a Master's in Public Administration and Policy from the London School of Economics.

He joined the European Commission in 1990, beginning in DG Transport before short stints in the Cabinets of Commissioners Abel Matutes and Marcelino Oreja. He then spent five years as Head of Press and Information at the European Commission Representation in Greece between 1994 and 1999.

Returning to Brussels in 1999, he was Deputy Head of Cabinet to Loyola de Palacio, Vice-President Commissioner for Transport and Energy for five years, followed by five years as Head of Cabinet to Commissioner, Markos Kyprianou, Health and Consumer Protection.

Between 2007 and 2009, he was an MEP for the Nea Dimokratia party (part of the EPP group). He was the Chief Spokesperson of the European Commission from 2014 until his nomination as Greece's Commissioner in July 2019. He is well-known to the Brussels press corps and considered to be careful about what he does and does not say.

There are four strands to the portfolio he has been allocated: (i) skills, education and integration, (ii) finding common ground on migration, (iii) the Security Union Land, (iv) leading the Commission's dialogue with religious organisations. Schinas is responsible for coordinating the work on improving the integration of migrants and refugees into society and for coordinating the overall approach and work on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Eyebrows were raised when it was announced that "protecting our European way of life" included migration. In her letter setting out the priorities for Schinas, von der Leyen explained that the "European way of life is built on the principle of dignity and equality for all." However, the name received intense scrutiny from MEPs following criticism that the European way of life was somehow opposed to migration. Following Schinas's hearing in the European Parliament, Commission President von der Leyen changed the name of the portfolio to "promoting the European way of life."

He is married to Spaniard Mercedes Alvargonzález, who is currently the Head of Cabinet to the Chairman of the EPP Group in the European Parliament.

GREECE



Margaritas Schinas
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Vice-President, Promoting the European Way of Life

Services/Directorate(s) General:
None

Most recent position held: Chief Spokesperson for the European Commission and Deputy Director General, Directorate General Communication (COMM)

Age at the time of taking office: 57

HUNGARY



Olivér Várhelyi
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Neighbourhood and Enlargement

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement
Negotiations (NEAR)

Most recent position held:
Permanent Representative of Hungary
to the European Union

Age at the time of taking office: 47

Olivér Várhelyi

Olivér Várhelyi was born in Szeged, Hungary in 1972. He graduated from Aalborg University in 1994 with a Master's degree in European Legal Studies and obtained a Law degree from the University of Szeged two years later. In 2005, he passed the Hungarian bar exam.

He began his career as a Trainee in the Hungarian Ministry for Industry and Trade in 1995, but transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1996. He quickly ascended the ranks and was appointed Head of the Ministry's Legal Unit within just two years. Várhelyi then became heavily involved in Hungary's accession to the EU, serving as a legal counsellor to the Hungarian Mission to the EU between 2001 and 2003 before being promoted to the Head of the Legal Service in Hungary's Permanent Representation to the EU.

After Hungary officially became an EU Member State in 2004, Várhelyi's career maintained a strong EU focus. He was appointed as the Head of the EU Law Department in Hungary's Ministry of Justice in 2006 and, between 2008 and 2011, Várhelyi worked at the European Commission as the Head of the unit responsible for Industrial Property Rights. He was then appointed as the Deputy Permanent Representative of Hungary to the EU before becoming the Permanent Representative in 2015.

During his hearing in the European Parliament, a number of MEPs expressed concerns over Várhelyi's loyalty to Hungarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán. However, Várhelyi successfully won over MEPs with his written responses after the hearing, where he pledged to only serve the Commission and to keep his interests independent of the Hungarian Prime Minister.

Várhelyi is responsible for implementing structural and institutional reforms which focus on the rule of law, economic development and public administration. In particular, he will progress the proposals for enlargement negotiations with Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia, as well as maintaining ties with Turkey on interests such as security, migration and trade. Várhelyi is also responsible for strengthening relations with the Eastern Partnership comprised of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Várhelyi became the Hungarian Commissioner nominee after László Trócsányi's appointment was blocked by the Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee, citing concerns over conflicts of interest.

Várhelyi is married and has three daughters.

Mairead McGuinness

Mairead McGuinness was born in Drogheda, Ireland in 1959. A child of farmers, she was the first female graduate of University College Dublin's Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics in 1980.

Following her studies, McGuinness went into a career in journalism and achieved notoriety in Ireland as a presenter on Ear to the Ground, RTE's popular farming and rural affairs series.

McGuinness entered politics in 2004, elected as an MEP for Fine Gael, part of the European People's Party, representing the Midlands-North-West constituency.

McGuinness rose through the ranks of the European Parliament and, before leaving for the Commission, was one of its Vice Presidents. Already a veteran of the Parliament, she was being touted as a possible future President.

As an MEP, McGuinness earned a reputation for her spats with infamous Brexiteer, Nigel Farage. In his final speech to the European Parliament, Farage and his Brexit-party colleagues produced Union Jack flags. McGuinness, chairing the session, muted his microphone, bluntly telling Farage: "If you disobey the rules, you get cut off."

Commenting on McGuinness' candidacy, President Von der Leyen said that she "has significant political experience on EU issues, having been an MEP since 2004."

"This experience is crucial in carrying forward the EU's financial sector policy agenda and ensuring it supports and strengthens the Commission's key priorities, notably the twin green and digital transition."

IRELAND



Mairead McGuinness
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union (FISMA)

Most recent position held:
Vice-President of the European Parliament

Age at the time of taking office: 61

ITALY



Paolo Gentiloni
(Political group – S&D)

S&D

Portfolio: Economy

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN), DG Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD), Eurostat (ESTAT)

Most recent position held:

President of Italian Democratic Party,
Prime Minister of Italy

Age at the time of taking office: 65

Paolo Gentiloni

Paolo Gentiloni was born in Rome in 1954 and graduated in Political Sciences from the Sapienza University of Rome. Alongside his studies, he was a far left student activist. Gentiloni began his career as a journalist and slowly abandoned far left ideals to become a member of the centre-left Democratic Party.

From 1993 to 2000 he served as the Spokesperson for the newly elected Mayor Francesco Rutelli in the Rome administration. In the 2001 general election, Gentiloni was elected as a Member of Parliament and became a founding member of the new Daisy party ("La Margherita") which was formed with the merger of three parties, namely the Italian People's Party, the Democrats and Italian Renewal. He served as Minister of Communications from 2006 until 2008 in Romano Prodi's second government. He was re-elected in 2008 to the Italian Parliament for five years. He ran in the 2012 primaries for the Mayor of Rome, but placed third with just 15% of the vote.

In 2014, Gentiloni was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. Following the constitutional referendum and Matteo Renzi's resignation from the post of Prime Minister, Italy's President Sergio Mattarella called upon Gentiloni to form a new government. In 2016, he became the new Italian Prime Minister and, according to *Politico*, Gentiloni was the country's most popular politician, well above far right Northern League leader Matteo Salvini or populist Five Star leader Luigi Di Maio.

Gentiloni is tasked with both ensuring European economic policy encourages sustainable growth and that tax policies are fair and fit for the digital economy.

Valdis Dombrovskis

Valdis Dombrovskis was born in Riga in 1971. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Economics for Engineers from Riga Technical University in 1995, and a Master's degree in Physics from the University of Latvia in 1996.

Between 1995 and 1998, Dombrovskis held a number of assistant roles at the Institute of Physics of the University of Mainz, at the University of Latvia's Institute of Solid State Physics and at the University of Maryland. Dombrovskis went on to work as a macroeconomic specialist within the Latvian Bank's Monetary Policy Department, a position which he held for four years. Having been elected to the Latvian Parliament in 2002 as a member of the New Era Party, Dombrovskis held the position of Minister of Finance from 2002 to 2004.

Dombrovskis was elected to the European Parliament in 2004, becoming Latvian Head of the Delegation of the EPP ED Group. During his tenure as an MEP, he was a member of three European Parliament Committees, including the Committee on Budgets. Dombrovskis served as Prime Minister of Latvia between 2009 and 2014, during which time he implemented a series of austerity measures credited at the time with turning Latvia into one of the EU's fastest growing economies. He also presided over Latvia's accession to the Eurozone on 1 January 2014.

Dombrovskis has been a Member of the European Commission since 2014. He has served as the Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue since 2016, and has also been in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union.

Dombrovskis is responsible for coordinating the EU's action plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Sustainable Europe Investment Plan. Dombrovskis is also in charge of relations with the European Central Bank and of jointly leading the long-term strategy for Europe's industrial future.

Following Phil Hogan's resignation, Dombrovskis adds trade to his portfolio, and Hogan's replacement, Mairead McGuinness, will take on financial services and financial stability. Dombrovskis oversaw the trade portfolio when Hogan toyed with the idea of running for WTO Director General over the summer of 2020.

Despite McGuinness having the financial services and financial stability portfolio, von der Leyen has confirmed that Dombrovskis will continue to attend monthly Eurogroup meetings of euro area finance ministers.

LATVIA



Valdis Dombrovskis
(Political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Executive Vice-President, An Economy that Works for People

Services/Directorate(s) General: DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union (FISMA)

Most recent position held: Vice-President of the Commission, Euro and Social Dialogue

Age at the time of taking office: 48

LITHUANIA



Virginijus Sinkevičius
(Political group –
Greens/EFA)



Portfolio: Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Environment (ENV), DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MARE)

Most recent position held: Minister of Economy and Innovation in the Lithuanian Government

Age at the time of taking office: 29

Virginijus Sinkevičius

Virginijus Sinkevičius was born in Vilnius in 1990. He completed his secondary education in Lithuania and obtained a Bachelor's degree in Economic and Social Studies from the University of Aberystwyth in 2012. He completed a Master's Degree in European Studies at Maastricht University in 2013 and a Digital Policy course at the University of Oxford in 2017.

From 2013 until 2016, Sinkevičius held project management and coordination positions at the Washington-based Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA), the Lithuanian postal service Lietuvos Paštas, and Lithuanian state enterprise Lithuanian Airports. Between 2011 and 2015, Sinkevičius was the author and editor of the news portal The Lithuanian Tribune. In 2016, he served as team leader of the Group for Regulatory Affairs at the public enterprise Invest Lithuania.

Since 2016, Sinkevičius has been a Member of Parliament in Lithuania. He was initially appointed as Deputy Leader of the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union, and between 2016 and 2017 was Chair of the Committee on Economics for the Lithuanian Parliament. Sinkevičius was appointed as Lithuania's Minister of Economy in 2017 and, following the reorganisation of the Ministry of Economy in 2018, has since served as Minister of Economy and Innovation.

As Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Sinkevičius's responsibilities include the implementation of an EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the reformed Common Fisheries Policy, and the EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy.

Nicolas Schmit

Nicolas Schmit was born in Luxembourg in 1953. He obtained a degree in Political Studies from the Institut d'études politiques d'Aix-en-Provence in 1976 and completed a PhD in International Economic Relations at the University of Aix-Marseille in 1982.

Between 1979 and 1982, whilst completing his Doctorate, Schmit served as the attaché in charge of Economic Affairs at the Presidency of Government in Luxembourg. He then held a number of important positions representing Luxembourg on the European platform, notably as Head of Cabinet at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (1984-1989), Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Luxembourg to the EU in charge of the Intergovernmental Conference leading to the Maastricht Treaty (1990-1991), Personal Representative of the Prime Minister to the Intergovernmental Conference leading to the Nice Treaty (2000), and Ambassador from Luxembourg to the EU (1998-2004).

Schmit left his Ambassadorial role to become the Minister Delegate for Foreign Affairs and Immigration, a position which he held until 2009. Schmit then became a Minister to the Government of Luxembourg, first as the Minister for Labour, Employment and Immigration (2009-2013) and then for Labour, Employment and the Social and Solidarity Economy (2013-2018). Schmit became a Member of European Parliament in July 2019, where he has sat on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.

Schmit is entrusted with strengthening Europe's social dimension and the alleviation of poverty, ensuring that those in work earn a decent living and that the unemployed are supported in their search for work. He will also lead the work on developing a European Child Guarantee as a means to combat child poverty and take charge of implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights, which aims to safeguard the need for dignity, fairness and prosperity for Europeans.

LUXEMBOURG



Nicolas Schmit
(Political group – S&D)

S&D

Portfolio: Jobs and Social Rights

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL)

Most recent position held: Member of European Parliament

Age at the time of taking office: 65

MALTA



Helena Dalli
(Political group – S&D)

S&D

Portfolio: Equality

Services/Directorate(s) General:

Task Force for Equality, DG for Justice and Consumers (JUST)

Most recent position held: Minister of European Affairs and Equality

Age at the time of taking office: 57

Helena Dalli

Helena Dalli was born in 1962 in Malta and holds a PhD in Political Sociology from the University of Nottingham. She is also a lecturer in economic and political sociology, public policy and sociology of law at the University of Malta.

In 1996, she was elected to the Parliament of Malta and was appointed as Parliamentary Secretary for Women's Rights in the Office of the Prime Minister for two years. In this role she piloted the Domestic Violence Bill. Later, she also introduced a number of laws to strengthen equality and human rights, including the marriage equality bill between same-sex couples. She is a member of the Labour Party and has been elected as a Member of Parliament in every election since 1996.

Between 2013 and 2017, Dalli was the Minister of Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties to the Government of Malta. Dalli was then appointed Minister for European Affairs and Equality until the Prime Minister Joseph Muscat announced she would be Malta's new Commissioner nominee. She is Malta's first-ever female nominee to the European Commission.

In the von der Leyen Commission, Dalli is responsible for the Equality Portfolio. As part of this, she will strengthen Europe's commitment to inclusion and equality and will lead on the EU's implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She will work under the guidance of Věra Jourová, Vice-President and Commissioner for Justice, Consumers & Gender Equality.

Frans Timmermans

Frans Timmermans was born in 1961 in Maastricht, the Netherlands. He graduated from Radboud University, Nijmegen with a degree in French Language and Literature. He obtained Master's degrees in European Law and French Literature at the University of Nancy.

Timmermans started his career in 1987 as a Policy Officer in the European Integration Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague. In 1990, he was appointed Deputy Secretary of the Dutch embassy in Moscow and, after briefly returning to The Hague as Deputy Head of the Minister for Development Cooperation's EC Affairs Section, Timmermans joined the staff of European Commissioner Hans van den Broek. He went on to become the Senior Adviser and Private Secretary to Max van der Stoel, the High Commissioner on National Minorities for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Frans Timmermans was elected to the Dutch Parliament in 1998, a position he held until 2007, when he became Minister of European Affairs until 2010. Timmermans was re-elected to the Dutch Parliament from 2010-2012, becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2012 to 2014.

In 2014, Timmermans became a Commissioner under the Juncker Commission, holding the position of First Vice-President of the European Commission, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. In this role, Timmermans has received resistance from Hungary, Poland and Romania on rule of law issues.

Timmermans's primary role will be to present and oversee implementation of the flagship European Green Deal, which involves an ambitious plan to make the EU the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050. Amongst other flagship policies, the European Green Deal will include increasing the EU's 2030 emission reduction target, new carbon and emissions taxes, redesigning farming and biodiversity policies and creating a "just transition fund", to help finance the transition to cleaner industries for certain Member States that are dependent upon fossil fuels.

Frans Timmermans ran as a candidate for the Presidency of the European Commission in 2019.

THE NETHERLANDS



Frans Timmermans
(Political group – S&D)



Portfolio: Executive Vice-President, The European Green Deal, Climate Commissioner

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Climate Action (CLIMA)

Most recent position held: First Vice-President of the Commission, Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights

Age at the time of taking office: 58

POLAND



Janusz Wojciechowski
(Political group – ECR)



Portfolio: Agriculture

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Agriculture and Rural
Development (AGRI)

Most recent position held: Auditor
in the European Court of Auditors

Age at the time of taking office: 65

Janusz Wojciechowski

Janusz Wojciechowski was born in 1954 in Rawa Mazowiecka, Poland, and graduated in 1977 from the University of Łódź with a Master's degree in Law. Wojciechowski worked as a Judge from 1991 to 1993, before being elected to the Polish Parliament in 1993. Wojciechowski became a Member of the European Parliament on Poland's accession to the EU in 2004, a position he held until 2016, when he became a Member of the European Court of Auditors for the 2016-2022 term.

Wojciechowski was a member and leader of the Polish Peasants' Party (PSL). Before joining the European Court of Auditors, he was a member of the right-wing Polish Law and Justice (PiS) party. He has been a member of the European People's Party, Europe of Nations and Freedom, and European Conservative and Reformists.

When it was proposed that Poland would receive the agriculture portfolio, the original nominee, Krzysztof Szczerbski, withdrew his candidacy and Wojciechowski was nominated in his place. In contrast to Szczerbski, Wojciechowski has extensive experience in Agriculture, having served as the Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development from 2004 to 2016.

In his role as the Commissioner for Agriculture, Wojciechowski will report to Frans Timmermans, Vice-President and Commissioner for the European Green Deal. His responsibilities include promoting Europe's food standards worldwide and concluding negotiations on, and implementing, the EU's Common Agriculture Policy. Crucially, he is also responsible for ensuring that agriculture and food production contributes to the EU's policies on climate change and biodiversity.

Wojciechowski is currently under investigation by the anti-fraud agency OLAF for alleged irregularities in the reimbursement of travel expenses between 2004 and 2014.

Elisa Ferreira

Elisa Ferreira was born in Porto in 1955 and studied economics there before obtaining a Master's and PhD from the University of Reading in 1985.

She was appointed Minister for the Environment in 1995, and then Minister for Planning in 1999 in the government of António Guterres (the current Secretary-General of the United Nations). She was elected to the Portuguese Parliament in 2002 and then to the European Parliament in 2004, where she spent a total of 12 years. During her stint as an MEP she was an active member of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON) and coordinator for the S&D group for most of that period.

In 2016, Ferreira resigned as an MEP (to be replaced by Manuel dos Santos) to become a Member of the Board of Banco de Portugal, before being named its Deputy Governor a year later. She has been Portugal's representative at the Supervisory Board of the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM ECB) since 2016.

Ferreira's key responsibilities in the Commission include the legislative framework for cohesion funds for the next long-term budget, ensuring Member States make full and effective use of the funds in the current budget. She is also responsible for proposing a new Just Transition Fund, working alongside Frans Timmermans, the Executive Vice-President and Commissioner for the European Green Deal, and Johannes Hahn, the Commissioner for Budget and Administration. In addition, she is responsible for finding an agreement on the Reform Support Programme and the Budgetary Instrument for Convergence and Competitiveness in the euro area.

In her role, Ferreira will work under the guidance of Valdis Dombrovskis, the Executive Vice-President and Commissioner for an Economy that Works for People, and be supported by both the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy and a new Directorate General for Structural Reform Support.

PORTUGAL



Elisa Ferreira
(Political group – S&D)

S&D

Portfolio: Cohesion and Reforms

Services/Directorate(s) General: DG Regional and Urban Policy (REGIO), DG for Structural Reform Support

Most recent position held: Deputy Governor of the Banco de Portugal (Central Bank)

Age at the time of taking office: 64

ROMANIA



Adina Vălean
(political group – EPP)



Portfolio: Transport

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Mobility and Transport (MOVE)

Most recent position held: Member
of European Parliament

Age at the time of taking office: 51

Adina Vălean

Adina Vălean was born in the Prahova county of Romania in 1968. She graduated in Mathematics from the University of Bucharest in 1990, after which she obtained Master's degrees in National Safety and Security Institutions and Mechanisms at the National Defence College in Bucharest, and in European Integration and Security Studies from the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University. She began her career as a mathematics teacher in Bucharest between 1990 and 1997, but left education to become Director of a department within the Romanian Ministry for Youth and Sports. She was also a social activist and was a member of several foundations and associations which promoted tolerance, dialogue and a liberal economic market within Romania.

Her political career began in 1999 when she joined the National Liberal Party. In 2000, Vălean became Secretary-General of the National Liberal Youth organisation and was elected as a member of the Romanian Parliament in 2004. Two years later, Vălean became an observer in the European Parliament and has served as a member of the European Parliament since 2007, when Romania formally joined the EU.

As an MEP, Vălean has developed a reputation for using public financing to complete the European single market, increase competition and incentivise private investment. She has also assumed a number of key roles including Vice-President of the European Parliament (2014-2017), Co-Chair of the Forum for Mobility and Society (2016-2019), Chair of the Committee for Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (2017-2019) and Chair of the Committee for Industry Research and Energy (2019). Through her ongoing involvement with the Committee for Industry Research and Energy, Vălean was appointed as the European Parliament's rapporteur for the Connecting Europe Facility, a financing instrument which aims at funding €33 billion of investment to improve Europe's transport, energy and digital networks.

In her role as Commissioner for Transport, Vălean is responsible for the development and interconnection of transport infrastructure across the European Union, with a focus on digital innovation. This will include putting forward a comprehensive strategy for sustainable and smart mobility, as well as promoting the reduction of global emissions. Her priorities also incorporate securing the highest safety standards and ensuring the respect of passenger rights.

Vălean is married to Crin Antonescu, former president of the Romanian Senate and former interim President of Romania. She became the Romanian Commissioner nominee after the European Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee blocked the original nominee, Rovana Plumb, due to concerns over possible conflicts of interest in carrying out the duties of a Commissioner.

Maroš Šefčovič

Maroš Šefčovič was born in Bratislava, Slovakia in 1966. Šefčovič studied at the University of Economics in Bratislava from 1984 to 1985 and the Moscow State Institute for International Relations from 1985 to 1990. He later earned his PhD in International and European Law at the Faculty of Law of Comenius University in Bratislava.

He began his career as a diplomat and in 1996 was appointed as the Deputy Director of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU and NATO division in 1996. Over the next few years, Šefčovič worked in the Foreign Minister's Office as the Deputy Director and later became its Director. Šefčovič was appointed the Vice-President of the European Commission for Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration in 2010, and acted as the interim Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration, and Health and Consumer Policy, in October and November 2011, respectively.

In 2014, Šefčovič was elected as a Member of the European Parliament. That same year, he was appointed Vice-President of the European Commission for the Energy Union and EU Space Policy, and was temporarily in charge of the Digital Single Market.

In 2019, Šefčovič, unsuccessfully ran as a candidate in the Slovak presidential race. During his campaign he repeatedly spoke against legislative changes which would improve the status of LGBT rights in Slovakia, heavily relying on the position that this would be against "traditional Christian values".

Šefčovič is responsible for the implementation of the Inter-Institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making. Šefčovič will also chair the REFIT platform working on ways to improve EU regulation.

SLOVAKIA



Maroš Šefčovič
(Political group – S&D)

S&D

Portfolio: Vice-President, Inter-Institutional Relations and Foresight

Services/Directorate(s) General:
None

Most recent position held:
Transport & Space Commissioner

Age at the time of taking office: 53

SLOVENIA



Janez Lenarčič

Janez Lenarčič was born in Ljubljana in 1967 and is a career diplomat. He has a law degree from the University of Ljubljana from which he graduated in 1992. He started his career at the Slovenian Ministry for Foreign Affairs before moving to New York, where he worked for the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations from 1994 to 1999.

In 2001, he became an Advisor for Foreign Affairs in the cabinet of the Slovenian Prime Minister, Janez Drnovšek. Two years later he moved to Vienna, where he led the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). In 2005, when Slovenia held the OSCE's Chairmanship, he chaired the Permanent Council in Vienna, the OSCE's regular political decision-making body.

He was appointed State Secretary for European Affairs in 2006, heading the working group for the preparation of the Slovenian Presidency of the EU. In 2008 he returned to OSCE and was appointed as a director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in Warsaw, where he remained until 2014. He currently serves as a Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the European Union in Brussels, and is not affiliated to any of the Slovenian political parties.

In his role as Commissioner for Crisis Management, Lenarčič is in charge of European civil protection and humanitarian aid, as part of which he has assumed the role of European Emergency Response Coordinator.

Janez Lenarčič

(Political group – Independent,
proposed by PM Marjan Šarec –
Renew) **RENEW EUROPE**

Portfolio: Crisis Management

Services/Directorate(s) General: DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), parts of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)

Most recent position held:

Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the EU

Age at the time of taking office: 52

Josep Borrell Fontelles

Josep Borrell Fontelles was born in 1947 to a family of bread-makers in La Pobla de Segur, a small town in Catalonia close to the Pyrenees. He studied aeronautical engineering at Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM), graduating in 1969. Between 1969 and 1976, Borrell obtained a Bachelor's degree and PhD in Economics at the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), a Master's degree in Oil Industry Economics and Technology at the French Institute of Petroleum, and a Master's degree in Applied Mathematics (Operations Research) at Stanford University under a number of scholarships, including the prestigious Fulbright Program.

In 1975, Borrell joined the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) whilst working as a mathematics professor at UCM and, following the PSOE's landslide victory in the 1982 Spanish general election, he assumed the role of General Secretary for the Budget and Public Spending. Whilst serving as a member of the Spanish parliament between 1986 and 2003, Borrell held numerous key roles in government including Secretary of State for Finance (1984-1991), Minister of Public Works, Transport, Telecommunications and the Environment (1991-1996) and leader of the opposition for PSOE (1998-1999).

Borrell was President of the European Parliament from 2004 to 2007 and served as Chairman on Development between 2007 and 2009. Deciding to step back from elected office for a number of years, Borrell returned to politics in 2018 as Minister of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation in the Spanish government after Pedro Sánchez's investiture as Prime Minister.

Borrell will focus on developing a European Defence Union and ensuring the European Union's foreign policy is aligned with its internal strategic aims. In particular, he will need to tackle rising diplomatic tensions with Iran and develop a strategic partnership with the United Kingdom after its departure from the European Union.

SPAIN



Josep Borrell Fontelles
(Political group – S&D)

S&D

Portfolio: High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President, A Stronger Europe in the World

Services/Directorate(s) General:
European External Action Service (EEAS), Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI)

Most recent position held: Minister of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation to the Spanish Government

Age at the time of taking office: 72

SWEDEN



Ylva Johansson
(Political group – S&D)

S&D

Portfolio: Home Affairs

Services/Directorate(s) General:
DG Migration and Home Affairs
(HOME), Parts of the Research
Executive Agency (REA)

Most recent position held: Minister
for Employment in the Government of
Sweden

Age at the time of taking office: 55

Ylva Johansson

Ylva Johansson was born in Huddinge, Sweden in 1964. She followed a programme for teacher education as well as courses in mathematics and physics at the University of Lund from 1985 to 1988. She later spent a year in Stockholm at the Institute of Education from 1991 and holds a Master's degree in Education.

Johansson has been politically active since her twenties; she was elected as a member of the Riksdag for the Left Party Communists in 1988, leaving the party in 1991 for the Social Democrats. She returned to teaching from 1992 to 1994 until she was appointed Minister of Schools in the Swedish Government. However, Johansson left the government in 1998, shortly after publicly announcing her relationship with Erik Åsbrink, Sweden's then Minister of Finance, and worked in the private sector. Johansson returned to the Swedish government in 2004, serving as Minister for Health and Elderly Care until 2006, later returning to the Riksdag as Deputy Chair of the Committee on Health and Welfare (2006-2010) and the Committee on the Labour Market (2010-2014). From 2014 she has served as Minister for Employment, and has tightened labour immigration laws during her time in office.

Ursula von der Leyen has entrusted Johansson with the development of a New Pact on Migration and Asylum, to reform asylum rules by closing loopholes between asylum and return rules. Within the migration framework of the EU, Johansson is in charge of stepping up the fight against human traffickers and smugglers by establishing humanitarian corridors for refugees. She will also focus on a new approach to search and rescue, implementing a reinforced European Border and Coast Guard Agency. The ultimate goal is to return to a fully functioning Schengen Area of free movement. Johansson is partially responsible for building an effective Security Union by increasing efforts to prevent, prosecute and respond to terrorism and emerging threats. Johansson will also lead Europe's efforts to prevent and remove the online presence of terrorist content and propaganda.

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