

MISSION LETTER

Brussels, 17 September 2024

Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Stéphane Séjourné

Executive Vice-President-designate for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy

Dear Stéphane,

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

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

Together, we will respond to the real and legitimate concerns and expectations that Europeans expressed at the last elections. We will be closer to people and businesses where it really matters with practical support and sustained investment. We will strive to **make Europe faster and simpler** in the way that we act – and in the way we interact

with people. And we will work towards European unity at every turn, starting from within our College.

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

New Commission, new approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Working together for Europe, working closer to Europeans

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Fourth, every Member of College must show a **true European commitment** beyond doubt and be fully independent in their action. I expect full adherence to all applicable integrity, impartiality and ethical rules from all, starting with the **Code of Conduct**. You will ensure that the rules on transparency and meetings with interest representatives are fully respected, including for your staff and services. We will **strengthen our transparency system** by extending the requirements of the Transparency Register to all managers.

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

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

Making Europe simpler and faster

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

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

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

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

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

Centre, our internal scientific service, can support you in that work.

Your mission

I would like to entrust you with the role of Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy.

You will also be responsible for the **Industry, SME and Single Market portfolio**.

Europe's prosperity and industrial strategy

Europe's goals – from security to social fairness, decarbonisation to digital, tech sovereignty to leader on the world stage – all depend on starting a **new era of productivity, innovation and competitiveness**. This was the message I outlined in the Political Guidelines for a new plan to ensure Europe's prosperity and also reflects the vision laid out in the Draghi report. We have a lot to draw on that gives us a competitive edge and a head start in the race to develop the economy of tomorrow – from the Single Market to our trading power and our innovation potential. There are also many emerging challenges, from greater – sometimes unfair – competition from abroad and lower access to overseas markets, to threats to our economic security.

There can be no naivety: **Europe needs a new industrial strategy**. Better coordination, more investment, more innovation and a bolder use of our Single Market and our economic and trade policies.

I would like you to help guide the work, in partnership with all Members of College. We must put in place the conditions for our industries and companies to invest, to decarbonise, to become more competitive and to strengthen Europe's sovereignty in the sectors and technologies that will shape tomorrow's economy.

This work starts with **speeding up and simplifying** so that the **Single Market** allows business and innovation to thrive by tackling fragmentation and remaining barriers and ensuring that rules are easy to implement and report on.

Central to our efforts to decarbonise and industrialise will be the **Clean Industrial Deal**, for which you will work together with the Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition and the Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth. You will also work with other Members of College to follow up on the Draghi report's call to significantly improve coordination at all levels so we can better target our policies and investment, notably through a **Competitiveness Coordination Tool**.

We must ensure that **innovation and research**, science and technology are at the heart of our economy and more focused on our strategic priorities and on disruptive innovation and fundamental research. This includes the industrial dimensions of Artificial Intelligence, quantum and high-performance computing. We must focus on massively boosting private and public financing to invest together in high-growth projects and have **capital markets** that invest in innovation. Underpinning this work must be an economy that ensures

stability and fiscal sustainability while promoting reforms and investment and you will work with the Commissioner for Economy and Productivity in this regard.

Crucially we must ensure that our **trade and economic security** policies enables our companies to benefit from markets around the world and fair global competition and European competitiveness. Free and fair trade will continue to be essential, notably when it comes to reducing our dependencies, diversifying our supply and ensuring our **sovereignty**. You will help guide the work on the reform of our **customs** systems and on the implementation of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.

Industry, SMEs and the Single Market

- I would like you to develop, with the Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth, the **Clean Industrial Deal** in the first 100 days of the mandate, notably with a focus on decarbonisation, clean technologies and incentivizing investment. You will help build a growth-conducive regulatory framework, supporting industry in its efforts to innovate, scale up, manufacture products and provide services. You should build on the Clean Transition Dialogues and work in **partnership** with all stakeholders to ensure targeted solutions for each value chain.
- You will work to boost investment, create lead markets for clean tech and put in place conditions for companies to grow and compete globally.
- As part of this, you will present an **Industrial Decarbonisation Accelerator Act**, to support European lead markets for the development, production and diffusion of clean tech in industry and speed up related planning, tendering and permitting processes, in particular for energy intensive sectors. You will also lead on the implementation of the **Net Zero Industry Act**.
- You will develop the future **European Competitiveness Fund** to ensure that we invest in the innovation and technologies that will shape our economy and drive our transitions. You will work with the Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition to ensure coherence between State Aid policy and the European Competitiveness Fund.
- You will lead the work on the set up of new **Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEIs)** for the most strategic sectors and technologies.
- You will also lead the work on **risk-absorbing measures** to maximise the impact of public resources and ensure continued implementation of the **InvestEU programme**, in cooperation with the **European Investment Bank** and other implementing partners.
- You will revise the **Public Procurement Directives** to help ensure security of supply for certain vital technologies, products and services, while simplifying the rules and reducing administrative burden. It should enable preference for European products in public procurement for certain strategic sectors and technologies.

- You will develop a **horizontal Single Market Strategy** for a modernised and deeper Single Market that promotes the cross-border provision of services and cross-border movement of goods, including essential goods. You should ensure the existing rules are fully implemented and speed up the removal of barriers.
- You should work closely with Member States through the Single Market Enforcement Taskforce and seek to reinforce it. You should consider the need for a **Single Market Barriers Prevention Act** to fill gaps in the existing ex ante instruments, without re-opening existing directives.
- You will focus on improving access to finance, simplifying the regulatory environment, and promoting innovation for SMEs. You should explore the feasibility of a **dedicated SME passport** to reduce administrative burden and costs.
- You will lead the work to introduce a new category of **small midcaps** and assess whether existing regulation unjustifiably hinders their development.
- To reduce administrative burden, you will strengthen the **Single Digital Gateway** as a one-stop-shop for anyone who wants to work, study or do business in another EU country. You will consider how to expand it with new information areas and procedures, for instance labelling, certification or permitting.
- You will lead the work on critical raw materials. You will set up a dedicated **EU Critical Raw Materials Platform**, notably to support joint purchasing and manage strategic stockpiles, and to implement the **Critical Raw Materials Act**.
- You will work with the Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy to present the **Circular Economy Act**, helping to create market demand for secondary materials and a single market for waste, notably in relation to critical raw materials.
- You will also work with the Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy on a new **Chemicals Industry Package**, to simplify REACH and provide clarity on “forever chemicals”, or PFAS, working with sustainability, competitiveness, security and safety considerations in mind.
- You will contribute to the **European Biotech Act**, leveraging the potential that biotechnologies can bring to our economy, and to the European Strategy on Life Sciences.
- You will develop a **steel and metals action plan**.
- Following the evaluation of the **Standardisation Regulation**, you will seek to speed up development of systemic standards for our resilience and twin transitions.
- You will ensure our **intellectual property** policy continues to reward innovation and creativity and step up enforcement of the current rules.
- You will work to **enforce the Foreign Subsidies Regulation** in coordination with other Members of College.

You will work under my guidance on all the above issues. The Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs will support you in your work linked to the industry, SMEs and Single market portfolio.

Way forward

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

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

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

I look forward to working closely together for Europe.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

