

## EU commission objectives and personnel, 2024 to 2029

# Prosperity, security and democracy

Ahead of the European Parliament's conference of political group leaders, EU commission president Ursula von der Leyen outlined the goals of the new commission and presented her proposed vice-presidents and commissioners. Before the commissioners can take office, the EU parliament will scrutinise the personnel table in detail until November.

The EU commission president also presented her key priorities for the next five years. They revolve around prosperity, security and democracy against the backdrop of the EU's competitiveness in the digital and ecological transformation currently underway. "We have dissipated the former rigid stovepipes of responsibility. This was one of the main recommendations of the Draghi report."

### Six priorities

Von der Leyen outlined six points: "Strengthening our tech sovereignty, security and democracy. Building a competitive, decarbonised and circular economy, with a fair transition for all. Designing a bold industrial strategy with innovation and investment at its heart. Boosting European cohesion and regions. Supporting people, skills and our social model. Ensuring Europe can assert its interests and lead in the world. And this is reflected in the titles of the six executive vice-presidents."

The new structure of the EU commission stipulates that each commissioner has an equal responsibility to deliver on the commission's priorities. For von der Leyen, that means that all commissioners must work together. She explained that there will be

no additional level of vice presidents. In von der Leyen's first commission, a number of executive vice-presidents led groups of vice presidents and junior commissioners.

While the two-tier vice-presidencies will be abolished, the president will continue to make the executive vice-presidents responsible for a group of commissioners in a specific policy area. Nevertheless, von der Leyen succeeded in doubling the number of commission vice-presidents in her new college.

The commission president also sees a good balance in her work in terms of gender, thematic focus and geography. The proposed college includes 11 women, representing a share of 40 per cent. In recent weeks, following the first nominations from the member states, von der Leyen had attempted to increase the share of women among the EU commissioners. It is against this background that she wants her nomination of the six executive vice-presidents to be understood: "Four women, two men. Three from member states that joined before the fall of the Iron Curtain. And three from member states that joined after Europe was reunited. From the Baltics, the Nordics and Eastern Europe. Ministers and prime ministers. Different backgrounds. But all with one common goal—and that is to make Europe stronger."

## Executive vice-presidents

Von der Leyen surprised everyone with her decision to nominate Roxana Mînzatu from Romania and Henna Virkkunen from Finland as vice-presidents. This meant that three incumbents were given less important positions. Two of them are considered veterans of the commission: Maroš Šefčovič of Slovakia and Valdis Dombrovskis of Lithuania. Dubravka Šuica of Croatia was also demoted.



**Teresa Ribera** (Spain, Socialists and Democrats—S&D) will be Executive Vice-President of a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition. Currently Minister for Ecological Change, Ribera will now also be responsible for competition policy. She will lead the work to keep Europe on track to meet the targets set out in the European Green Deal. The aim is to decarbonise and

industrialise the economy at the same time.



**Henna Virkkunen** (Finland, European People's Party—EPP) will be Vice-President for Tech-Sovereignty, Security and Democracy. She will also be in charge of digital and frontier technologies, as well as aspects of internal and external security, the foundations of democracy and the rule of law.

**Stéphane Séjourné** (France, Renew Europe) will be Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy. He will also be responsible for the Industry, SMEs and Single Market portfolios and will be tasked with helping to create the conditions for European businesses to thrive, from investment and innovation to economic stability and trade, to economic security.



**Kaja Kallas** (Estonia, Renew) will be High Representative and Vice-President. She will have to be the bridge between European domestic and foreign policies. She will also have to ensure that “the EU commission remains a geopolitical commission”.



**Roxana Mînzatu** (Romania, EPP) will be the Executive Vice-President for People, Skills and Preparedness. She will be responsible for skills, education and culture, quality jobs and social rights at a time of demographic challenges.





**Raffaele Fitto** (Italy, European Conservatives and Reformers—ECR) will be the Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms. His nomination is not without controversy in the EU parliament. He is called upon to help modernise Europe and strengthen cohesion and growth policies.

### Commissioners nominated



**Maroš Šefčovič** (Slovakia, S&D) will have two portfolios. He will be the Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security, which also includes customs policy. He will also be responsible for interinstitutional relations and transparency. In his second role, he will report directly to von der Leyen.



**Valdis Dombrovskis** (Latvia, EPP) will also have a dual role. He will be the Commissioner for Economy and Productivity and the Commissioner for Implementation and Simplification. He, too, will report directly to von der Leyen in his second role.



**Dubravka Šuica** (Croatia, EPP) will be the Commissioner for the Mediterranean. She will work closely with Kaja Kallas and many other commissioners to develop our shared interests with the region.



**Olivér Varhelyi** (Hungary, Patriots for Europe) has been nominated as Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare. He will be responsible for building the European Health Union and continuing the fight against cancer and promoting preventive health.



**Wopke Hoekstra** (Netherlands, EPP) will be the Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth. He will continue to work on the implementation of climate targets and adaptation, climate diplomacy and decarbonisation. He will also be in charge of taxation.



**Andrius Kubilius** (Lithuania, EPP) will be the Commissioner for Defence and Space. He will work on developing the European Defence Union and boosting the EU's investment and industrial capacity in this area.



**Marta Kos** (Slovenia, Renew) is slated to become the Commissioner for Enlargement, including the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood. She will work to support Ukraine, continuing the work on reconstruction, and help candidate countries to prepare for accession.



**Jozef Síkela** (Czech Republic, The Greens/European Free Alliance) will be the Commissioner for International Partnerships. He will lead the work on the Global Gateway and ensure the development of mutually beneficial partnerships that invest in a shared future.



**Costas Kadis** (Cyprus, EPP) will be the Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans. His mission will be to help build a resilient, competitive and sustainable sector and present the first European Oceans Pact.



**Maria Luís Albuquerque** (Portugal, EPP) will be the Commissioner for Financial Services and the Savings and Investment Union. Her task will be to strengthen and complete the Capital Markets Union and to ensure that private investment drives productivity and innovation even more than it does today.



**Hadja Lahbib** (Belgium, Renew) will be the Commissioner for Preparedness and Crisis Management. This is another new portfolio dealing with resilience, preparedness and civil protection. She will be responsible for leading the efforts of the EU Commission's efforts in crisis management and humanitarian aid.



**Magnus Brunner** (Austria, EPP) will be the Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration. He will also focus on the implementation of the Pact on Asylum and Migration, but also on strengthening the borders and developing a new internal security strategy.



**Jessika Roswall** (Sweden, EPP) will be the Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy. She will be responsible for protecting the environment and recognising that a sustainable economy cannot function without an intact environment. She will also lead the work on water resilience.



**Piotr Serafin** (Poland, EPP) will be the Commissioner for Budget, Anti-Fraud and Public Administration. He will report directly to von der Leyen and focus on preparing the next long-term budget.



**Dan Jørgensen** (Denmark, S&D) will be the Commissioner for Energy and Housing. His work should help to bring down energy prices. He will look at investment in clean energy and will be the first housing commissioner to look at all aspects: from energy efficiency to investment and construction.



**Ekaterina Zaharieva** (Bulgaria, EPP) will be Commissioner for Research and Innovation. Research and innovation, science and technology must be placed at the heart of the EU's economy. She will help ensure that the EU invests more and focuses its spending on strategic priorities and on breakthrough innovations.



**Michael McGrath** (Ireland, Renew) will be Commissioner for Democracy, Justice and the Rule of Law. He will be responsible for taking forward the European Democracy Shield. He will

also lead the work on the rule of law, the fight against corruption and consumer protection.

**Apostolos Tzitzikostas** (Greece, EPP) will be Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism. He will be responsible for the mobility of goods and people. These are essential sectors for competitiveness but also for the transition, for connecting people and driving local economies.



**Christophe Hansen** (Luxembourg, EPP) will be the Commissioner for Agriculture and Food. His task will be to give life to the report and recommendations of the Strategic Dialogue. Based on the Strategic Dialogue, he will develop a Vision for Agriculture and Food in the first 100 days of his mandate.



**Glenn Micallef** (Malta, EPP) will be Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Culture, Youth and Sport. He will be responsible for striking the right balance in our society.



Following the presentation of the candidates nominated by the President of the European Commission, the EU parliament will examine the proposals in a confirmation hearing—but only once all national confirmations have been received. The appointment of Marta Kos has not yet been finalised. She was the second choice after von der Leyen persuaded Ljubljana to replace the original candidate, Tomaz Vesel, with a woman, causing tension between the Slovenian government and opposition. Her official confirmation by Slovenia had not yet been received at the time of going to press.

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Sources: EU Commission; Euractiv

