

**ANSWERS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE**

**Carlos MOEDAS**

**Research, Science & Innovation**

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

**What aspects of your personal qualifications and experience are particularly relevant for becoming Commissioner and promoting the European general interest, particularly in the area you would be responsible for? What motivates you? How will you contribute to putting forward the strategic agenda of the commission?**

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

I served my country's Government during one of the worst economic crises in recent decades. Under the direct authority of the Prime Minister, I was in charge of monitoring the Portuguese Adjustment Programme agreed with the EU/IMF (€78 bn.). The severity of the crisis, the level of social and political pressure, the inherent policy complexity of the process and the scrutiny of global financial markets, gave me a real insight on the various challenges faced by Europe today.

I led a team that worked across policy silos and negotiated with different stakeholders on the implementation of a difficult adjustment but also of an ambitious agenda of structural reforms. These reforms were necessary to create an environment where newcomers and new forms of innovation and creativity could flourish. My experience in working across sectors to deliver results, also gained from my previous experience in the private sector, can be particularly relevant in an area where a multidisciplinary approach is essential to ensuring results.

I want to help build a European Union that increasingly has the tools to ensure that the crisis will never repeat itself. I am particularly motivated to take up the challenge of promoting research, science and innovation across Europe because I am firmly convinced that these are the key ingredients to build a sustainable and dynamic European economy, one based on knowledge and creativity, not on the debt and stagnant business models.

My main contribution to the strategic agenda of the Commission will be aligning the work of the portfolio with the priorities laid out in the Political Guidelines presented by President-elect Juncker to the European Parliament, in particular the new boost for jobs, growth and investment. In this respect, I am convinced that my private sector experience is very relevant: I spent 18 years working in different sectors, from environment, water supply and treatment, to the financial industry and real estate. I also intend to contribute fully to other linked priorities such as the digital single market, the energy union, the Euro and social dialogue and even the goal of making Europe a stronger global actor, through international scientific cooperation. Excellence in science and research, and a culture of innovation across companies and to tackle social challenges are key drivers for a new cycle of prosperity and self-confidence in Europe.

I take very seriously the obligations of complete independence laid down notably in Article 17 of the Treaty on the European Union as well as articles 245 and 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Code of Conduct for Commissioners. My Declaration of interests is complete and accessible to the public. If confirmed by the European Parliament, I will defend the general interest of the European Union and ensure the application of the Treaties. My past activities demonstrate, I believe, both a capacity and a willingness to work towards the advancement of the European project and the upholding of its rules. On a personal front, I am also a

direct beneficiary of the many achievements of the European Union, from the Erasmus programme to the freedom of movement of workers.

## **2. Management of the portfolio and cooperation with the European Parliament**

**How would you assess your role as a Member of the College of Commissioners? In what respect would you consider yourself responsible and accountable to the Parliament for your actions and for those of your departments?**

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

As stressed by President-elect Juncker, the complex challenges faced by Europe require a new way of working within the European Commission. In my past governmental experience I learnt that in order to overcome tough obstacles and implement reforms, it is necessary to break artificial silos and work as a team. My overriding concern will be the steadfast pursuit of the interest of the European Union in a collegial way

It is also crucial to prioritize and focus on areas where real change can indeed be achieved. My portfolio in particular requires strong coordination and horizontal work and, if confirmed, I will be privileged to work on a daily basis with four Vice Presidents and with various commissioners, coordinating research and innovation policies across all areas, as requested in my mission letter.

Naturally, this extends to the articulation with the European Parliament. In this context, I am committed to co-operating closely with the European Parliament so that we can effectively address the serious economic and societal challenges facing the European Union, which we can tackle through research, science and innovation. I believe that much more can be achieved if there is a regular exchange of ideas, between both institutions. I will be particularly present in the important debates we will need to have, and I will regularly attend the ITRE Committee, guaranteeing a direct flow of information with its Chair. As regards accountability, I will of course meet with the Committee on Budgetary Control, in particular in the context of the Discharge Procedure. I will be also available for bilateral meetings with the Members of the European Parliament, and I will deal with their political requests in a fair, complete, and impartial manner.

I therefore confirm to you my strong support for President-elect Juncker's intention to reinforce the special relationship between the Parliament and the Commission, my intention to participate personally in important trilogue negotiations, and my commitment to work closely with the Parliament on the basis of the Framework Agreement.

President-elect Juncker was also very clear and vocal on the importance of enhanced transparency. I commit to fully implementing the set of measures and provisions as regards transparency and the flow of information between the two institutions as provided for in the Framework Agreement, and I will give it my full cooperation, including the publication of all meetings with stakeholders and lobbyists and working towards the goal of a new Inter-institutional agreement regarding a mandatory lobby register.

Concerning the follow-up to Parliament's positions and requests for legislative measures, I will fully implement the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and the Framework Agreement in my area of responsibility and make sure that the Commission responds to parliamentary resolutions or requests made on the basis of Article 225 TFEU, within 3 months after their adoption. In this context, I support and fully endorse the commitment made by President-elect Juncker that the future Commission will be particularly attentive to legislative initiative reports.

Moreover, it will be a priority for me to fully respect and implement the provisions of the Framework Agreement in relation to planned initiatives or ongoing procedures, by ensuring equal treatment in my relations with the Parliament and the Council, where these institutions have equal competences.

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

#### **Policy-related questions decided by the ITRE Committee**

**3. What are the main priorities you intend to pursue as part of your proposed portfolio, taking into account the emphasis on jobs, growth, competitiveness and sustainable development? What timetable do you envisage for achieving those priorities?**

My overarching objective as Commissioner will be advancing the framework conditions that enable the full potential of European research, science and innovation. We need to finalize the European Research Area, improve policy coordination and ensure widening participation so that all Member States advance. For this reason, I will further pursue the completion of the European Research Area and accelerate the actions of Innovation Union. Strengthening research capacities and innovation strategies across all Member States will also be a priority. In this context, an upgraded monitoring of action at national level can contribute to the work on the European Semester of economic policy coordination. I will also facilitate investment in education, research and innovation infrastructures and seek to maximise synergies with the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds at national and regional level.

A major priority for me will be ensuring that the €80 billion Horizon 2020 programme is implemented in the most effective and efficient way, paying special attention to the goal of tackling the societal challenges, building the "stairway to excellence", fostering the public and private partnerships under the Innovation Investment Package, innovative financial instruments, including for SMEs, energy efficiency and competitive low-carbon energy, especially on renewables. These are priorities for the European Parliament and crucial for delivering on President-elect Juncker's main priority of boosting jobs, growth and investment.

Another major priority is ensuring that both our policies and funding strategy respect the value of excellence in science and research. The foundation for Europe's global standing and potential in research, science and innovation rests on the excellence and creative freedom of its scientists and researchers. The European Research Council and other important initiatives are critical in this context. We should also aim higher in terms of international engagement with the rest of the World by fostering science diplomacy and international cooperation.

**4. What are the specific legislative and non-legislative initiatives you intend to put forward, and according to what timetable? How will you personally ensure the good quality of legislative proposals, full transparency of lobbying activities (directed at you and your services), and consistent and balanced consultation of all stakeholders taking also into account the need to carry out thorough impact assessments?**

Two major legislative initiatives have recently been approved with your full support: Horizon 2020 and the Innovation Investment Package.

If I am confirmed as Commissioner, my priority will be to implement these impressive initiatives and I count on your support in this. These initiatives will be subject to review – for example the mid-term evaluation of Horizon 2020 – and I will fully involve the Parliament in this process.

As regards future initiatives, I will certainly reflect on possible new initiatives that could be developed to support President-elect Juncker's agenda, in particular in the areas of innovative financing for SMEs, increasing the manufacturing capabilities of Europe, energy efficiency and competitive low-carbon energy, particularly on renewables, which I know are also important to the Parliament.

I will also consider whether any further initiatives are necessary to implement the commitments of Innovation Union and to achieve the European Research Area.

Any proposed new initiative will have to go through a very robust impact assessment to ensure that the action proposed will bring European added value, that it fully respects subsidiarity and that it will be effective and efficient. Stakeholders will be consulted during the development of any new policy initiative or instrument. With these objectives in mind, I will work very closely with Vice-President designate Timmermans.

Stakeholders will be consulted during the development of any new policy initiative. This type of consultation helps to make EU policy-making transparent, well targeted and coherent. Consultations, together with impact assessments, evaluation and expertise, are a key tool for transparent and informed policy making.

The Commission consults widely before making a policy proposal, and applies the principles of openness and transparency. It is in the Commission's genuine interest to consult interested parties on the widest possible basis

and to ensure that they are heard properly in the policy making process. This helps to improve the policy outcome and it increases the legitimacy of EU action from the point of view of stakeholders and citizens.

I will publish information of all meetings with stakeholders and lobbyists and I will contribute towards the goal of a new Inter-institutional agreement regarding a mandatory lobby register.

**5. As Commissioner responsible for Research, Science and Innovation, how will you ensure coordination with the Vice-Presidents in whose teams your policy area falls and with the other Commissioners in your teams and how will you ensure enhanced cooperation with the Committee on Industry, Energy and Research? In particular, what steps will you take to facilitate scrutiny by the Committee of legislative and non-legislative procedures (including preparation of legislative acts and delegated and implementing acts) and scrutiny of their implementation? How do you intend to ensure that the Committee is kept appropriately informed in relation to any international agreements in your policy area, bearing in mind the experience gained in connection with the TTIP negotiations?**

Research, science and innovation have the potential to improve all areas of the economy and society, and help us tackle our main societal challenges. Working in silos is not an option.

My experience in government has taught me that it is necessary to break artificial silos and work as a team in order to tackle major challenges, overcome tough obstacles and implement reforms. It is also crucial to prioritize and focus on areas where real change can indeed be achieved.

My portfolio in particular requires strong coordination across the Commission on research, science and innovation matters, to make sure that Commission proposals and activities are based on sound scientific evidence and contribute to our jobs and growth agenda. If confirmed as Commissioner, I will be privileged to work on a daily basis with four Vice Presidents (for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, for the Euro and Social Dialogue, for the Digital Single Market and for Energy Union) and with various Commissioners, coordinating innovation policies across all areas.

For other initiatives, I will as a rule liaise closely with the Vice President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness.

I will strive to ensure that all relevant Committees are fully informed at the same time as the Council about any major developments. I would be also delighted to attend regularly meetings of your Committee and I will do my utmost to be at your disposal also for bilateral meetings. I will ask my collaborators to assist you and give you detailed explanation of legislative, non-legislative, delegated and implemented acts including on their implementation.

I am aware that the distinction between delegated and implementing acts has led to some inter-institutional controversies in the legislative process over the last years. This is a subject of common interest to all institutions and we will need to work together to find joint, treaty-compliant solutions to these issues. Reflections are ongoing on how to ensure more ownership and transparency. I fully support these efforts. I consider that they need to be taken forward at a horizontal level in the Commission, as they touch on all portfolios and are of an inter-institutional nature.

In the areas under my responsibility, my colleagues and I will ensure that the Commission's existing commitments in line with the Common Understanding on delegated acts and the Framework Agreement are fully respected. This concerns in particular the commitment to carry out appropriate and transparent consultations at expert level in the preparation of delegated acts and to ensure that the Parliament and the Member States receive the relevant information. It also means full respect of the provisions in the Framework Agreement in relation to the participation of Parliament's experts in expert groups meetings. This should also facilitate the Parliament's scrutiny, in particular of delegated acts, where the Parliament has ex-post control rights. For implementing acts the rules set out in Regulation EU 182/2011/EC need to be respected and transparency is ensured via the Comitology Register.

Lastly, I recall the Commission's declaration at the time of the adoption of Horizon 2020, according to which upon request, the Commission will present the adopted work programmes to the responsible Committee in the European Parliament.

In relation to international agreements in my policy area, I will also fully respect the Framework Agreement. The European Parliament will continue to be immediately and fully informed at all stages of the negotiation and conclusion of international agreements which fall under my responsibility.

As regards trade agreements, I understand that all relevant committees will be appropriately involved when necessary, especially on the TTIP negotiations, which cover a wide range of issues. On my side, I intend to pay a particular attention to the framework conditions needed to ensure a constructive cooperation in the field of research, science and innovation.