



Jean-Claude Juncker,
President of the European Commission

Mission Letter

Brussels, 16 May 2017

Mariya Gabriel

Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society

Dear Mariya,

You are becoming a Member of the European Commission at a particularly challenging time for the European Union. Since the beginning of the mandate of this Commission, we have an exceptional opportunity, but also an obligation, to make a fresh start, to address the difficult geo-political situation, to strengthen economic recovery and to build a Europe that delivers jobs and growth for its citizens.

I want the Commission which I preside to be a strong and political team. And I want you, with your political skills and experience, to fully play your part in this team.

We will have a lot to do in the years to come and we will have to show a united and clear sense of purpose at all times. In the Political Guidelines for the new European Commission that I presented to the European Parliament on 15 July 2014, I set out a new Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change, focused on ten priorities. I had discussed and developed this Agenda in detail in meetings with all the political groups in the European Parliament. The Political Guidelines are, therefore, somewhat akin to a political contract that I concluded with the European Parliament to mark the beginning of a new mandate and to prioritise the work of the new Commission. Today, in the light of the Bratislava roadmap and the Rome declaration, these Guidelines are more relevant than ever. I will be looking for your support, creativity and action to help deliver concrete results.

Following our recent discussions, I would like you to be the **Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society**. In this Mission Letter, I set out what I expect from you as a Member of the Commission as well as specific goals you will be responsible for during our mandate.

A new way of working

Delivering the priorities of the Political Guidelines required a reform of the way the Commission had operated in the past. This is why I introduced a number of important reforms in the working methods of the Commission when I took office in 2014. Reform means change. I want all Commissioners to show that we are open to change and ready to adapt to it.

I want the Commission as a whole to be more than the sum of its parts. I therefore want us to work together as a strong team, cooperating across portfolios to produce integrated, well-grounded and well-explained initiatives that lead to clear results. I want us to overcome silo mentalities by working jointly on those areas where we can really make a difference. We cannot and should not do everything: I want the European Commission to be bigger and more ambitious on big things, and smaller and more modest on small things. I also want us to focus our energy and efforts on ensuring effective implementation and follow-up on the ground. I count on you to play your part in this new collaborative way of working.

To facilitate this, I decided in 2014 to organise the Commission differently from its predecessors. I have entrusted a number of well-defined priority projects to the Vice-Presidents and asked them to steer and coordinate work across the Commission in the key areas of the Political Guidelines. This allows for a better focus and a much stronger cooperation amongst Members of the College, with several Commissioners working closely together as a team, led by the Vice-Presidents, in compositions that may change according to need and as new projects develop over time.

To empower them to deliver on their priority projects, the Vice-Presidents act on my behalf and help exercise my rights and prerogatives in their area of responsibility. In particular, the Vice-Presidents are in charge of:

- Steering and coordinating work in their area of responsibility. This involves bringing together several Commissioners and different parts of the Commission to shape coherent policies and deliver results.
- Assessing how and whether proposed new initiatives fit with the focus of the Political Guidelines. As a general rule, I will not include a new initiative in the Commission Work Programme or place it on the agenda of the College unless this is recommended to me by one of the Vice-Presidents on the basis of sound arguments and a clear narrative that is coherent with the priority projects of the Political Guidelines.
- Managing and organising the representation of the Commission in their area of responsibility in the European Parliament, the Council, national Parliaments and other institutional settings as well as at international level.
- Promoting a proactive and coordinated approach to the follow-up, implementation, and communication of our priority policies across the Union and internationally.

Respect for the principles of subsidiarity, proportionality and better regulation is at the core of the work of this Commission. We concentrate our efforts on those areas where only joint action at European level can deliver the desired results. When we act, we always look for the most efficient and least burdensome approach. Beyond these areas, we should leave action to the Member States where they are more legitimate and better equipped to give effective policy responses at national, regional or local level.

I therefore pay particular attention to the opinion of the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, before including any new initiative in the Commission Work Programme or putting it on the agenda of the College. This Vice-President is also entrusted with the regular monitoring of procedures linked to the preparation of delegated and implementing acts to ensure full political ownership.

I also pay particular attention to the opinion of the Member of the Commission in charge of Budget and Human Resources as regards the impact of our activities on the financial resources and staff of the European Commission. We have the privilege of being supported by an excellent, highly motivated European civil service and a professionally well-run administration, but its resources are limited and have to be used to best effect. This is also why I want resources to be allocated to our priorities and to make sure that every action we take delivers maximum performance and value added. I also want all Commissioners to ensure sound financial management of the programmes under their responsibility, taking all necessary measures to protect the EU budget from fraud.

Under my supervision, Vice-Presidents are supported by the Secretariat-General in their tasks but primarily rely on close cooperation with the relevant Commissioners and the services that report to them. In addition, Vice-Presidents are able to draw on any service in the Commission whose work is relevant for their area of responsibility, in consultation with the relevant Commissioner.

With regard to the Union's external action, I have launched a pragmatic partnership with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who, according to the Treaties, is one of the Vice-Presidents of the Commission. The High Representative and I have agreed at the beginning of the mandate that she will play her role as a Commission Vice-President to the full. She notably steers and coordinates the work of all Commissioners with regard to external relations through a Commissioners' Group on External Action to develop a joint approach. This Group meets at least once a month in varying thematic and/or geographic formats, according to the needs identified by the High Representative/Vice-President or by me. The High Representative/Vice-President regularly reports back to me and the whole College about geopolitical developments. To liaise more effectively with the other Members of the College, we agreed that she has her Headquarters in the Berlaymont, and that the Commission puts a Cabinet of an appropriate size at her disposal, about half of which will be Commission officials. We also agreed that, whenever she sees the necessity to do so, she will ask the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations and other Commissioners to deputise in areas related to Commission competence.

Working together in this new way across the Commission helps ensure that the final decisions we take as a College are well-prepared and focused on what is important and that we are all equipped to explain and defend them. We need to show a team spirit to make the system work. Our success depends on each and every one of you: on the team leadership of the Vice-Presidents and on the readiness of Commissioners to be strong team players. I would ask you all to work together to ensure that this new system works well.

The Digital Economy and Society portfolio

You will be the Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society. You will, in particular, contribute to projects steered and coordinated by the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market and the Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness. For other initiatives requiring a decision from the Commission, you will, as a rule, liaise closely with the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market.

We must make much better use of the opportunities offered by digital technologies which know no borders. To do so, we will need to break down national silos in telecoms regulation, in copyright and data protection legislation, in the management of radio waves and in the application of competition law. The

more markets are regulated transnationally, the more competition rules can become transversal or even continental. You should offer legal certainty to the sector and create the right regulatory environment to foster investment and innovative businesses. You should also ensure that users are at the centre of your action. They should be offered access to services, music, movies and sports events on their electronic devices wherever they are in Europe and regardless of borders. You will also need to ensure that the right conditions are set, including through copyright law, to support cultural and creative industries and exploit their potential for the economy.

During our mandate, on the basis of the work already started by the Commission since 2014, I would like you to focus on the following:

- Facilitating, under the coordination of the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, the adoption by the European Parliament and the Council, of all the legislative proposals presented over the past two years by the Commission to complete the Digital Single Market. Delivering on these proposals is of essence for citizens and businesses.
- Preparing, as part of the project team steered and coordinated by the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, ambitious proposals for the completion of a connected Digital Single Market. They should be based on the mid-term review of the Digital Single Market adopted by the Commission on 10 May 2017, and on a clear assessment of the main obstacles still to be removed through EU action, either by implementing existing policies or proposing new measures. A concrete set of initiatives is expected for autumn 2017.
- Developing and implementing measures to make Europe more trusted and secure online, so that citizens and business can fully reap the benefits of the digital economy. I would like you to work with the Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, and the Commissioner for the Security Union on a strategic and ambitious plan to make the EU a leader in cyber security preparedness and trustworthy information and communication technologies, and to increase the confidentiality of communications.
- Contributing, as part of the project team steered and coordinated by the Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, to the ongoing work on jobs, growth and investment to bring about the conditions necessary for investment decisions and ensure that the EU can be a catalyst for public and private investment. You should focus on supporting the deployment of a high-quality, digital network infrastructure, underpinning all sectors of the economy across borders, progressively on a continental scale. In this respect, I would ask you also to work very closely with the Member of the Commission in charge of Budget and Human Resources.
- Supporting the development of creative industries and of a successful European media and content industry able to reach out to new audiences, adapt to the digital era and thrive in the connected Digital Single Market. In this respect, I would ask you to work very closely with the Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.
- Continuing to promote a sustainable business model for Euronews, including by further developing its public service remit, by helping to identify new partners and by making better use of digital transmission technologies, in full respect of the editorial independence of Euronews. In this respect,

I would ask you to work very closely with the Member of the Commission in charge of Budget and Human Resources.

- Supporting, in close cooperation with the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, freedom of expression, freedom of information, freedom and pluralism of the media, the openness of the internet and cultural and linguistic diversity. The Commission needs to look into the challenges the online platforms create for our democracies as regards the spreading of fake information and initiate a reflection on what would be needed at EU level to protect our citizens.
- Contributing to activities that turn digital research into successful European innovation stories, encouraging entrepreneurship and providing a framework that drives start-ups, the take-up of new businesses and job-creation. The Commission needs to play its role in ensuring that promising new developments such as the cloud, the Internet of Things and big data can thrive in Europe and that citizens, innovative web entrepreneurs and other businesses can take full advantage of their potential. In this respect, I would ask you to work closely with the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation.
- Working closely with the Member of the Commission in charge of Budget and Human Resources to make the European Commission and its administration more open and effective through a better use of digital technologies and eGovernment solutions at all levels, including by promoting cyber security preparedness, providing staff with the right IT tools, platforms and services enabling users to work in secure, collaborative ways.
- Working closely with the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, the Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport and the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality to reinforce digital skills and learning across society, with a view to empowering Europe's workforce and consumers for the digital era.
- Working with the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality to prepare citizens, business and public administrations for the direct application of the General Data Protection Regulation as of 25 May 2018, in close consultation with the Article 29 Working Party/the new European Data Protection Board. This work should include dedicated outreach, awareness and information activities. You may draw on the support of the Directorate-General for Communication and the Commission Representations for this purpose.
- Working with the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market and the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality in developing legislative and non-legislative initiatives to allow the non-personal data economy to thrive. You should also work with them to ensure the adoption of the proposal on the e-Privacy Regulation and of the EU rules on the protection of personal data when processed by EU institutions and bodies.

- Working with the Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to develop the relationship with strategic partners in order to build a global governance architecture for the Internet which is legitimate, transparent, accountable, sustainable and inclusive. This includes ensuring the Internet remains open, a driving force for innovation and an international resource that benefits the European economy and citizens.

To help you fulfil your responsibilities, the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT) and the Directorate-General for Informatics (DG DIGIT) will report to you.

Our principles: ethics and transparency

We must abide by the highest possible professional and ethical standards at all times. I want the European Commission to lead the way as a modern, efficient and transparent public administration, open to all input that helps us deliver work of a consistently high quality, in full independence and impartiality. Our conduct must be unimpeachable. You have received the Code of Conduct of the Members of the European Commission. I expect all of us to honour both the word and the spirit of the Code.

You will have seen that the Political Guidelines include a new commitment to transparency. Transparency should be a priority for the new Commission and I expect all of us to make public, on our respective web pages, all the contacts and meetings we hold with professional organisations or self-employed individuals on any matter relating to EU policy-making and implementation. It is very important to be transparent where specific interests related to the Commission's work on legislative initiatives or financial matters are discussed with such organisations or individuals.

Working in partnership for Europe

The Commission's partnership with the other EU institutions and the Member States, as defined in the Treaties, is fundamental. The Union only succeeds when everyone is pulling in the same direction: this is why we should continue to work to forge a common understanding between the institutions about what we want to achieve and how we will go about it.

The Commission's relationship with the European Parliament is the source of our democratic legitimacy. This must, therefore, be a political and not a technocratic partnership. I expect all Commissioners to invest in this relationship and to make themselves available for and to take an active part in plenary sessions, committee meetings and trilogue negotiations. The meetings with the parliamentary committees over the weeks to come will be an opportunity for you to lay the foundations for a productive working relationship, to explain how your work will contribute to joint political priorities, and to demonstrate your commitment and suitability for your broader role as a Member of the College.

Effective policy-making also requires a deep understanding of every one of the Member States, of their common challenges and of their diversity. While fulfilling your obligation to participate in Commission meetings and engage with the European institutions, I want you all to be politically active in the Member States and in dialogues with citizens, by presenting and communicating our common agenda, listening

to ideas and engaging with stakeholders. In this context, I want all Commissioners to commit to a new partnership with national Parliaments: they deserve particular attention and I want, under the coordination of the First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, important proposals or initiatives to be presented and explained in national Parliaments by Members of the Commission. This should also allow us to deepen the country-specific knowledge within our institution and to build mutual understanding and effective channels of communication between the national and the European level.

The European Union is in one of the most testing periods in its history. As I said in my Mission Letters at the beginning of the mandate, the effects of the economic and financial crisis are still causing great hardship in many parts of Europe. We live in a Union with a 29th state of unemployed people, many of them young people who feel side-lined. Until this situation has changed, this 29th state must be our number one concern. In addition, we have to cope with the refugee crisis and with the increased threat of terrorism. In the context of the negotiations with the United Kingdom on the basis of Article 50 of the Treaty on the European Union, and in line with paragraph 27 of the Guidelines of the European Council adopted on 29 April 2017, while the United Kingdom is still a member, all ongoing EU business must continue to proceed as smoothly as possible at 28. The European Council has expressed its commitment to continue to drive forward with ambition the priorities the Union has set itself. Negotiations with the United Kingdom will be kept separate from ongoing Union business, and shall not interfere with its progress. This is why I need all Commissioners to be very determined and very responsible in carrying out their work as Members of this Commission, in full independence and without seeking or taking instructions from any Government or other institution, body, office or entity and with only the promotion of the general interest of the Union in mind.

I am looking forward to working with you on the new start that our European Union needs now.



Jean-Claude JUNCKER