

QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE**Thierry BRETON****Commissioner-designate for the Internal Market****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?

“Our countries have become too small for today's world, when compared to the potential of modern technical means and in relation to the dimension of America and Russia today, China and India tomorrow”.

These are the words of Jean-Monnet from 1954. His statement is still totally accurate today. We need a strong Europe, and we Europeans need to work together to compete at a global level. At the same time, though, we must not forget the component parts that make up Europe, its regions and its people.

All my life, I tried to contribute, wherever the responsibilities took me, to the building of our Europe.

Graduated as Engineer from Supelec in computer sciences, I began my professional life starting my own software company.

At the age of 30, I was elected as regional councillor and vice president in Poitou-Charentes for 6 years. I lead the work of the building of the Futuroscope, the first thematic park in Europe dedicated to technology. My ambition was to help our society to grasp without fear the future and – already – the opportunities of the digital domain.

Then President of a global company specialised in image technology, I defended the European innovation and research capacity at global level.

President of the French historical telecommunication operator, I contributed to push, for the first time in the industry, the convergence between the landline, mobile and internet. I tried to anticipate the impact of the digital on the future of media and audio-visual, which are now fully integrated.

As French Minister of Economy, Finance and Industry, I fought to reduce the debt, public as well as private, as it hampers the future and creates dependences. All my strategy was designed to bring back France within the Maastricht criteria, which I did. I took this commitment as a direct contribution to European stability.

Finally, I have been President of a European and global group in digital technologies and cybersecurity, a European Society (SE), organised with one headquarter in France and one in Germany. The first in the industry to be zero-carbon emission. There is one common feature to my experience, my motivation and my life: passion. Passion for technology first, passion for the economy, entrepreneurship, passion for the public good, and definitely passion for the European project.

Becoming Commissioner, if I am accepted, would allow me to contribute to my passion for the European project, being able to consolidate all the various aspects of my career; from entrepreneur of SME to CEO of global European company, while having served as a Minister and elected representative.

How will you contribute to putting forward the strategic agenda of the Commission?

The Political Guidelines issued by President-elect von der Leyen set out her ambition for a Europe that ‘must lead the transition to a healthy planet and a new digital world’. If you approve my nomination, I will do my utmost to help turn this ambition into reality. In doing so, I will work with my colleagues in the College, under the leadership of the President and the three Executive Vice-Presidents, as well as with you, the European Parliament, and the Council. More than ever, we need to work together to address the geopolitical challenges that Europe faces. I believe in a Europe that ‘can reconcile the Social and the Market’ – as the President-elect said in the Guidelines. This is a Europe that helps everyone achieve their potential. It is a Europe that is open to the world but that defends its interests. A Europe that sees the world around it, in all its complexities, without being naïve.

I will contribute to the delivery of the strategic agenda set out by the President-elect, through the following:

- **A Single Market that works for people and makes Europe a global player**

The Single Market is one of the most important achievement of the European construction. It means opportunities for people. It means more choice and better protection for consumers. It means being able to live and work easily in another Member State. A Single Market that works must ensure that its rules are applied. I will not shy away from enforcing those rules. I will resist any temptation of national protectionism and rebuilding economic borders between our countries. I want a continent where every business, regardless of size, can grow easily across borders, and considers the Single Market as their home base. It is by addressing fragmentation that Europe can be strong and operates as a true global player.

- **Shaping the digital space**

Like the spaces already conquered and shaped by humans – land, sea, air and finally outer space – we must make our mark on the digital space by ensuring that it is safe and opening it up to everyone. I want to propose clear rules that protect the rights and freedoms of Europeans while providing the legal certainty that our companies, especially the smallest ones, need. Areas of focus will include artificial intelligence (AI), data, cybersecurity and the role of the platforms through the Digital Services Act. I will pay a specific attention to the media and audiovisual sectors because of their vital role for our democracy and European identity, on top of their contribution to growth and jobs.

- **Supporting the transition to climate-neutral economy**

Our goal of becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 will frame all European policies. The European Green Deal will need a strong industrial dimension. I will make sure that the EU supports our industrial base in getting further organised for the green transition and that new technologies play a key role in achieving our goal. It is also crucial to ensure that all companies – big and small – take part in this transition, and that we accompany and foster new opportunities for people and regions affected by the shift to cleaner, greener industry.

- **Building Europe’s technological sovereignty**

Europe cannot make its digital and green transition happen without establishing technological sovereignty. This is not a protectionist concept, it is simply about having European technological alternatives in vital areas where we are currently dependant. We need to work together at European level in areas of strategic importance such as defence, space, and key technologies such as 5G and quantum. In doing so, we must focus on bridging the digital gap and involving all Europe’s regions.

To implement this vision of turning Europe into a digital, technological and industrial leader, with an integrated Single Market at its basis, I will define clear objectives for each priority that can be assessed over the course of the mandate. I will make sure that these priorities are defined with the European Parliament and Council but also with civil society and industry. I am convinced that together we can help Europe to be globally competitive, while putting our people and environment at the core of our technological development.

How will you implement gender mainstreaming and integrate a gender perspective into all policy areas of your portfolio?

It is essential that women can play a full part in all areas of the economy. As chairman of my last company, I placed a high value on ensuring that women had just as many opportunities to succeed as men. The company ran many successful initiatives, and regularly features on lists of top inclusive employers. I also overhauled the hiring procedures to make them as gender-blind as possible.

If I am confirmed as Commissioner, I undertake to bring this attitude with me to the Commission and its policy-making. I am fully committed to improving gender balance and to implementing gender mainstreaming in all the areas and structures under my responsibilities.

In addition, I will continue the work of my predecessors in this area, including the initiatives launched by Directorates-General Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) and Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT) to raise awareness to promote female entrepreneurship, including through the launch of an e-platform for women entrepreneurs, the creation of a European Network for Women Business Angels and the Network of Women’s Web Entrepreneurs Hubs. I will also work closely with the Commissioner for Equality to pursue the Commission’s Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019.

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 commit to comply without exceptions or hesitation, as soon as I am appointed, with the Treaty obligations on independence, transparency, impartiality and availability, as defined in Article 17(3) of the Treaty on European Union and in Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

If I am confirmed as Commissioner, I will fully respect the letter and spirit of the Treaty, in particular the obligation to act in the European interest and without taking any instructions. I will also honour the Code of Conduct of Members of the European Commission and its provisions on conflicts of interest. My Declaration of Interests is complete and accessible to the public.

As explain in my Declaration of Interest, I decided to take radical steps to prevent any potential conflict of interests regarding my past activities.

Without waiting for my hearing in front of the European Parliament, I sold the entirety of my portfolio of shares and I resigned from any sort of mandates in companies or associations. Today I have no shares and no mandate of any sort.

Additionally, I will apply exactly the same intransigence as when I became Minister of Economy, Finance and Industry in France, coming from the private sector. Therefore, I will apply with utmost strictness the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Commission, in particular Article 2(6) concerning the obligation to avoid any situation which may give rise to a conflict of interest or which may be perceived as such. I will thoroughly follow the procedure set out in Article 4 of the Code in case of potential conflicts of interest. In this context, and in agreement with the President, I will recuse myself automatically from any financial, contractual or similar management decision which would directly concern Atos or one of its entities.

I decided to take all these measures in order to work in full confidence with all the Members of the European Parliament, in the deepest respect for the mandate that I may be granted through the European Parliament, on behalf of all our European fellow citizens.

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

- **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?**

If confirmed as Commissioner, I will fully respect the principle of collegiality and I will take full political responsibility for the activities in my area of competence, as set out in the Mission

letter sent to me on 7 November. The portfolio that the President-elect intends to entrust me with is at the heart of the headline ambitions for a European Green Deal, an Economy that works for people, a Europe fit for the digital age, , and a stronger Europe in the world. I will cooperate in the work of the Executive Vice-Presidents and I will coordinate my actions with the whole college of Commissioners to make sure these ambitions are met.

If you give me your trust, I will work with the highest commitment to design initiatives for the future of Europe, its economy and its citizens. This is why I will rely on an open and cooperative approach throughout the legislative process, seeking feedback and support of the European Parliament. The European Parliament represents the voice of the European citizens and I will fully take into account its views. I will come to the European Parliament and its committees to listen, to exchange views, and to work together with its Members.

I will take the principle of accountability before the European Parliament very seriously. I will come to the Committee meetings, to the European Parliament plenaries, and to trilogue discussions. I will take my political responsibility in front of the Parliament in line with the 2010 Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission and apply its rules.

I will always treat the European Parliament on an equal footing with the Council as co-legislator and provide to both institutions the same amount of information and documents. I will also ensure that the European Parliament is regularly briefed, notably before major events and at key stages of international negotiations in areas under my responsibility.

Trust, transparency, and openness will always govern the relationships that I, my cabinet and services will have with the European Parliament.

Transparency

President-elect von der Leyen's Political Guidelines stress that in order to regain citizens' faith in the Union, our institutions should be open and beyond reproach on transparency issues.

I am therefore fully committed to implementing the wide-ranging provisions on transparency and the flow of information in the Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission and the Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making. In particular, I will ensure that these provisions are respected in my structured dialogues and other contacts with Parliament committees.

I will also contribute to the Commission's continued efforts to inform citizens on the Commission's role in the EU's institutional set-up. In addition, policy proposals under my responsibility will be based on proper consultations of experts and the public, in line with Better Regulation principles.

Follow-up to Parliament's positions and requests for legislative initiatives

President-elect Ursula von der Leyen supports a right of initiative for the European Parliament. She committed that her Commission will follow-up to Parliamentary resolutions adopted by a majority of its members with a legislative act, in full respect of proportionality, subsidiarity and better law-making principles. I fully support this objective.

I will work hand in hand with Parliament at every stage in debating resolutions. I commit to

work closely with the relevant parliamentary Committees, and be active and present during the preparation resolutions. I strongly believe that this will improve dialogue, foster confidence and a sense of working together towards a common goal.

Provision of information and documents

Further to my statement above about ensuring that parliamentary committees are involved in any major developments under my responsibility at the same time as and on an equal footing with the Council, I am fully aware that the provision of information and documents is an essential aspect of deepening the partnership between the European Parliament and the Commission. I therefore commit to fully implement the relevant provisions of the Framework Agreement between the two institutions, and of the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making. The Treaties establish the equality of Parliament and Council as co-legislators, and I will ensure that this is respected in terms of how information is shared in areas under my responsibility.

Questions from the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

What are the main policy priorities you intend to pursue within the main part of your portfolio which falls within the remit of the ITRE Committee, namely Digital Economy and Society, Industry, SMEs, Defence Industry and Space? What are the specific legislative and non-legislative initiatives, including financial instruments, you envisage for achieving those priorities, in particular with regard to initiatives in the field of Europe's technological sovereignty, including cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, distributed ledger technologies, high-performance computing, communications networks, data, as well as key value chains in the defence, space and other sectors? What would be the main content and timetable for those initiatives? How will you ensure that the new Circular Economy Action Plan feeds into the EU overall industrial strategy? How will you concretely apply the 'One In, One Out' principle in relation to the legislative proposals in your portfolio?

The years to come will define the role of Europe in the world. The speed of technological and digital revolution, the need to adapt our society and economy to climate change, and increased competition from outside Europe are challenges that we collectively face, with an additional risk of increasing social disparities. My priority will be to help European citizens and businesses to adapt to these changes and to grasp the opportunities they offer.

Digital economy and society

New technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), 5G, high-performance and quantum computing, and robotics promise to improve the quality of life, safety and prosperity of Europeans. To deliver on this potential, we need a sustainable human-centric approach to innovation and digitalisation. Creating growth while remaining true to our values should be the trademark of "digital made in the EU".

Thanks to the strong support of the European Parliament, Europe has made major progress towards a Digital Single Market. I will now make sure the adopted rules are properly enforced. But we need to go further.

In line with my mission letter, I will lead the work on a regulatory framework for the deployment of human-centric AI, in coordination with the Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age. This initiative will help define strong global standards for trustworthy AI, with strong consumer protection, while limiting regulatory burdens on innovation and business development. It will also look to avoid the fragmentation of the Single Market that could result from various national initiatives. The new AI regulatory framework will build on the work of the high-level expert group and on the results of the consultation and testing of the key requirements for a trustworthy AI.

AI relies on data. I want to make sure we are moving toward a true Single Market for data. With the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Europe has a world-class regulatory framework on personal data. However, work still needs to be done to incentivise data flows, between businesses and between business and government. There is an opportunity for Europe to establish a model for the data economy which puts citizens and companies, including SMEs, in control over their data while ensuring better availability of data. We need to support the emergence of the right ecosystems for data to circulate within the Single Market and feed our industrial capacities. I want to promote the emergence of 'common European data spaces' in

different sectors. I intend to build on the Regulation on Free Flow of Non-personal Data and the Open Data Directive to improve the availability of data, its flow across borders and sectors and its re-use.

The President-elect has also tasked me to prepare the Digital Services Act. This should reinforce the Single Market for all digital services, enabling in particular small businesses, start-ups and scale-ups to benefit from legal clarity across the EU while taking due account of the greater scale of certain market players. The Act will seek to provide a European framework for the next waves of innovations and market opportunities in digital services while promoting European values. I will work closely with the Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age, and following a rigorous consultation and evaluation process, to define the precise scope and measures for the Digital Services Act.

The transition to the digital economy raises many other policy and regulatory issues, from competition issues related to market power, to labour issues related to the platform economy or taxation. I will ensure robust enforcement of the transparency and fairness rules introduced in the Platform-to-Business Regulation. I will work closely with the Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age to assess whether further measures are necessary in this field. I will also strongly support the work of the Commissioner for Jobs to look at ways to improve the labour conditions of platform workers, in line with the Pillar of Social Rights.

The audio-visual and media sectors are going through a convergence trend between content and online services. Video is now an integral part of the offerings of major online platforms and audio-visual works will account for 80% of all Internet traffic by 2022. I therefore want to present a holistic approach for the sector, with our regulatory framework and financial instruments including the MEDIA programme. I will present an action plan on the competitiveness and the wealth pluralism of the audio-visual sector and the media. I intend to focus on the implementation of the amended Audio-visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) and a smart use of our financial programmes and instruments to support the media and audio-visual sectors as they embrace the digital transformation.

Further action related to cybersecurity and connectivity are detailed below.

Industry and SMEs

Europe's 25 million SMEs are the backbone of the EU economy. They represent 99.8% of all EU companies in the non-financial business sector, employ two-thirds of the workforce, and contribute over 50% to EU value-added. SMEs also have close interlinkages with larger companies either through value chains or through the innovation that they can bring to large companies. We need to tackle the challenges they face, from administrative burden to finding the workforce they need. SMEs should be at the heart of our industrial strategy, as well as of our efforts to enhance the Single Market and drive Europe's transition towards sustainability, digitalisation and innovation.

It will be a priority for me to contribute to the new SME strategy and new industrial strategy announced by the President-elect. Both will fully integrate our objective to be the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 and support the circular economy. I will give more details about these strategies in the following answers below.

Technological sovereignty

Over-reliance on foreign technology in strategic sector of the economy exposes the EU, its Member States and businesses to supply chain disruptions, increased foreign influence and control, and security concerns. As part of the industrial strategy, I will therefore put forward measures to strengthen Europe's technological sovereignty, making use of all instruments at my disposal. I will develop the specific measures in this regard in the question on the industrial strategy.

Defence and space

The progress over recent years regarding European defence cooperation is unprecedented. In particular, I will make sure that the European Defence Fund and its pilot programmes deliver. And I will pursue a clear and ambitious agenda to promote European defence industrial cooperation in the next five years, towards a genuine European Defence Union.

Europe is a space power, the second in the world. This is due to large investments, especially through two major programmes, Galileo, the European satellite navigation system, and Copernicus, Europe's earth observation system. Through the EU Space programme, I will develop an ambitious space agenda for Europe.

I will further detail my approach for space and defence in the dedicated questions and answers below.

'One-in, one-out' principle

President-elect von der Leyen has clearly indicated that European legislation needs to deliver benefits to the EU without increasing bureaucratic burdens. Each new EU proposal introducing obligations on businesses and citizens therefore needs to be accompanied with an equivalent reduction of those burdens in the same policy area. It will be a challenging task but I am confident that with my experience and oversight of the whole portfolio, I will be able to come up with efficient and effective solutions.

What will be your main priorities on Digital Economy and Society, for instance regarding cybersecurity, deployment of next generation networks and future mobile technologies and in support of the European Electronic Communications Code? With respect in particular to cybersecurity, how do you intend to establish a Joint Cyber Unit (as regards inter alia its composition, tasks and impact on existing Union actors in the field), and would you commit to proposing a new horizontal legal instrument to establish binding cybersecurity obligations (e.g. with respect to software updates) for all connected products?

In addition to what I set out in my reply to the previous question, I would like to set out my priorities in the areas of cybersecurity, next generation networks and future mobile technologies as well as the Communications Code. These are all crucial enablers of the digital transition, and I look forward to working together with you on them.

Cybersecurity & Joint Cyber unit

The EU has made significant progress in the domain of cybersecurity thanks to the strenuous support of the European Parliament, especially that of the ITRE and IMCO committees. Adopting the first ever horizontal cybersecurity legislation (the Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems, i.e. “NIS Directive”), making the EU Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) permanent, with a strengthened mandate and launching the globally pioneering cybersecurity certification framework for ICT products and services all helped increase the level of trust between Member States.

But we need to keep improving and strengthening our cybersecurity framework and capabilities as key new technologies such as 5G and AI become part of the everyday lives of Europeans. Building on past achievements and ongoing work, at the start of my mandate I will launch a renewed approach on cybersecurity with four key actions.

First, we need to move from a ‘need to know’ to a ‘need to share’ attitude amongst Member States so that cybersecurity cooperation and the sharing of information become the guiding principle in all areas. That is why the President-elect von der Leyen asked me to lead the work on setting up a new Joint Cybersecurity Unit, which will ensure a reinforced cooperation as well as a mutual assistance mechanism in times of crisis at EU level. This initiative will further improve the EU’s cyber resilience in key areas, including the law enforcement and defence dimension, as it will necessarily tap into and build on existing expertise and cooperation frameworks at Member State and EU level.

Second, building on the experience of the first horizontal legislation on cybersecurity, I will launch a review of the NIS Directive at the latest by spring 2021.

Third, the Cybersecurity Act established a common cybersecurity certification approach across the continent. With the implementation of the Act, the Commission and ENISA will roll-out certification schemes in priority areas such as 5G or cloud computing. Introducing voluntary certification schemes was a step in the right direction. I will assess the need for mandatory certification for certain ICT products and services, in line with the provisions of the Cybersecurity Act.

Last but not least, if Europe is to be at the forefront of cutting-edge technologies, both in terms of research and industrial capabilities, we will need to pool our widely dispersed but significant knowledge on cybersecurity. Europe has no fewer than 660 centres of expertise dispersed among Member States. To connect and pool this well of expertise is precisely the aim and the spirit for establishing a European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and the Network of National Coordination Centres. I will work with the European Parliament and Council to give a new push to this proposal.

Connectivity

Fast connectivity is an absolute must to take advantage of the economic and social benefits of the Single Market. However, we are not yet there and many of our citizens, small businesses, schools and hospitals still lack sufficiently fast connections, which deepen the current digital divide. I will therefore work closely with Member States to ensure that all achieve the strategic connectivity goals set for 2025. I will make it a priority to promote much needed private investments while reducing the cost of roll-out in very high capacity networks, including, if necessary, with a possible revision of the Broadband Cost Reduction Directive. I will also continue to pursue the WIFI4EU initiative to ensure a wider coverage of free Wi-Fi access in public spaces in municipalities across the EU.

To bridge the connectivity divide, the new Electronic Communications Code is an essential tool which makes it easier to invest in secure high capacity networks while protecting consumers (including a strengthened 112 emergency number). I will make sure that it is transposed on time and that the secondary acts are swiftly adopted.

I will work with Member States to speed up the process towards allowing the use of the frequency bands required for the deployment of 5G to meet the legal deadline of end 2020. Investment in 5G must remain a priority and I will rely on the new tools of the next long-term EU budget, in particular the Connecting Europe Facility Digital, the Digital Europe Programme, InvestEU and venture capital instruments.

But we need to go forward and look at further advances in technology such as AI, Big Data or the Internet of Things, and ultimately enable planning for the next generation: 6G. A strategic institutionalised partnership on smart networks and services beyond 5G and towards 6G could help address the challenges ahead. I will personally drive Europe's efforts to develop the technologies beyond 5G that will be needed in the future.

Cybersecurity of 5G networks

It is vital that our 5G networks are resilient and secure. In this matter, being naïve is not an option. I am committed to the ambitious process set out in the Commission's 5G Recommendation on the Cybersecurity of 5G networks. Following the EU coordinated risk assessment prepared jointly with Member States, I trust that the market will have more clarity on the measures the types of risks that Member States will wish to address. The objective is to have a common toolbox of best risk management by the end of this year.

I will also make sure that technology is put at the service of security. Governments, military, banks, agencies, hospitals, space-based systems, and airlines, will all need to ensure that security and encryption guarantee that their confidential information cannot be accessed by unauthorised third parties. As part of the high-impact projects to ensure EU technological sovereignty, I will provide strong support for developing and deploying in the EU a certified secure end-to-end quantum communication infrastructure based on the concept of quantum key distribution within the next 10 years. This will be key for securing communications in Europe. I would encourage research centres, private companies and other public entities to join forces to develop and deploy a fully secure end-to-end quantum communication infrastructure that will integrate satellite and terrestrial technologies. I will assess how it may be financed under the next Multiannual Financial Framework under different programmes.

In the political guidelines for the next European Commission, the President-elect mentioned a new industrial strategy without providing concrete details. How will you ensure that the new EU long-term integrated industrial strategy contributes, amongst others, to the creation of high-quality jobs, raising the industrial contribution to the Union's GDP, reducing the risk of industry relocation outside the EU, ensuring that third country participation in strategic industries and infrastructure is adequately screened, and promoting synergies amongst the various EU policies to reduce the risk of damaging consequences on EU industries, while complying with the objectives of the Paris Agreement? To that end, would you consider the creation of an "Industry Union" (similar to the concept of the "Energy Union") to consolidate and coordinate the efforts towards reaching the above objectives?

The future European industrial strategy will be one of the key initiatives of the next

Commission. I see it as an overarching and ambitious plan aiming at making our industry green, digital, globally competitive while ensuring the quality of life of our citizens.

Its development needs to be inclusive from the beginning. I will closely work with the Executive-Vice Presidents and with the College to make sure that it is coherent and comprehensive and builds on synergies across policies. I will contribute to the work of the Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal to make sure that it is aligned with that Deal. I will come to you and the Council to hear your views before the new industrial strategy is adopted.

I believe that proposing measurable milestones achievable through a mix of soft and strong tools – as was done with the Energy Union - is the right approach. However, how to do it or label it will be a decision that we take together.

Setting the right regulatory framework: a stronger Single Market.

A strong Single Market (both physical and digital) is a prerequisite for a competitive EU industry. The relative size and importance of services for manufacturing is rising. I will therefore work to improve the functioning of the Single Market, especially in the area of services through a better implementation of existing rules, removing the existing barriers and preventing the emergence of new ones.

I will make sure that our regulatory framework is fit for the digital age, with initiatives on AI, data, cybersecurity and the Digital Services Act, as explained above.

Ensuring workers have the skills they need

Europe's best asset is its talent. We need to create the right conditions for everyone to achieve their potential and to acquire the skills they need in the context of the digital and green transitions. I will work closely with the Commissioner for Innovation and Youth and the Commissioner for Jobs so that we can propose initiatives that will support and complement national strategies. We need to work together with industry, trade unions, education and training institutions and public authorities to best identify the skills which are and will be needed, on a demand-based approach.

Grasping the opportunities of the digital transformation

I will make sure that sectorial legislation is reviewed and made fit for the digital age to seize the opportunities offered by digitalisation. Sectors such as machinery, automotive, construction, creative industries, fashion or beauty products will benefit greatly from an integrated approach.

I will launch a series of sector-specific dialogues to define a work plan for their successful digitalisation. In addition, I will take into account the specific needs of the audiovisual sector and media in a dedicated action plan.

Accelerating a transition to climate-neutral and circular EU industry

Beyond the financial support to low-carbon projects, including improved sustainable financing at EU and Member State levels, I will propose measures to ensure that our industry builds on its leadership in clean technologies, taps into international growth opportunities, and becomes resource-efficient. I will also propose to set up an industrial transition observatory to monitor industry's progress towards climate-neutrality and circularity.

I will contribute to the work of the Commissioner for Environment and Oceans on a second, far-reaching new circular economy action plan. It will cover the whole lifecycle of products and materials, some key value chains and horizontal issues. I will also support initiatives to ensure that the public sector uses its collective purchasing power strategically to shape the market and ensure the development of sustainable solutions. And, together with the Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, I will ensure that no region is left behind (especially those in transition). I will boost our engagement with social economy actors and our efforts to develop business models rooted in the local environment.

I will ensure that digital technologies contribute to climate neutrality and the circular economy (ICT for green) for examples in the areas of renewable energy storage or AI-driven climate impact modelling. At the same time, I will take measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the ICT industry. I will push for a greener ICT sector through the promotion of energy efficiency in data centres, AI, block chain and telecom networks.

Finally, cleaner vehicles will play an important role in delivering on our clean air agenda. I will take all necessary steps on the path towards low- and zero-emission vehicles, especially in the post “Dieselgate” scandal. This will include the work on battery electric cars as well as the next generation of pollutant emission limits.

Building Europe’s technological sovereignty

Technological sovereignty and industrial leadership require large-scale projects of strategic interest. No Member State alone can respond to the current strategic challenges adequately.

Pooling resources across Member States and industry to support the development of strategic value chains and high-impact projects across Europe will result in the development of a strong eco-system and strengthen Europe’s technological sovereignty. Successful initiatives such as Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEIs) in the area of microelectronics and batteries or the efforts in the area of high-performance computing have shown that it is possible to achieve a step change by joining forces. I will coordinate and support projects in key areas such as AI, cybersecurity, high-performance and quantum computing, low power processors, blockchain, cloud federation and smart networks, 5G and beyond. I will use all the instruments at my disposal to deliver on this (funding programmes – in particular Horizon Europe and Digital Europe, public-private partnerships, joint undertakings, IPCEIs).

I will propose to introduce a permanent high-level governance forum to ensure a continuous dialogue with Member States and industry to identify new strategic value chains where large cross border investment are needed. I will also pay specific attention to the question of critical raw materials which are at the start of many strategic value chains.

I will make sure we use the potential of public procurement to accelerate the transition to climate neutrality and, more generally, boost innovation. I will work to ensure that our Intellectual property (IP) framework is coherent and adapted, where needed.

Another element to maintain Europe’s technological sovereignty is the Regulation on screening of foreign direct investments, allowing the Commission to scrutinise and, where relevant, issue opinions on acquisitions of EU companies if they present a risk to security and public order. I will make sure that the three Directorates-General whose work I will oversee will closely scrutinise the relevant investments that may affect projects or programmes of EU interest falling in the areas under my responsibility.

What are your concrete plans to promote the Union’s policy on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), especially with regard to mainstreaming the ‘Think Small First’ principle, updating the definition of ‘SME’, if necessary, according to the latest ECJ ruling, and giving special attention to ‘micro-enterprises’ and ‘start-ups’? How will you ensure that SMEs have appropriate and easily accessible funding and that their administrative burden is further reduced? How will the ‘dedicated SME strategy’ set out in the political guidelines for the next European Commission be implemented? Moreover, what would be the function of the ‘SME Envoy’ mentioned in your mission letter and how will she or he be selected?

My main tool will be the new SME Strategy. I will adopt a bottom-up approach, involving all relevant actors in developing solutions to SMEs’ challenges. I will make a special effort to visit Member States, capitals and regions, and talk to businesses and workers, as well as to governments and national parliaments. I see three broad areas that we need to address:

1. Improving SMEs’ access to finance;
2. Helping them tap opportunities in the new digital and sustainable economy;
3. Reducing the regulatory burdens that they face.

First, I will work together with the Executive Vice-President-designate for an Economy that Works for People on improving financing opportunities. I intend to do more under the InvestEU fund, helping thousands more SMEs. I will make sure that SMEs have a single entry point for all enquiries on EU financing opportunities rather than having to look at a large range of different individual programmes.

We will also do more to support SMEs in making use of Initial Public Offerings (IPOs). We should make sure that financing is available along the entire lifecycle of a company and raise the number of SMEs benefiting from IPOs by broadening the coverage of existing financial instruments. This approach should be operational as soon as 2021 under the umbrella of InvestEU.

We also need to ensure that SMEs are paid on time. We cannot accept that in many cases, SMEs are paid more than 100 days late. I will not hesitate to launch infringement procedures against Member States whose authorities do not pay on time. I will also examine different options to ensure a better enforcement of the Late Payments Directive.

Second, I will help SMEs tap opportunities in the new digital and sustainable economy. I will make stronger use of the existing Enterprise Europe Network, the biggest SME support network in the world, linking over 600 local, regional and national organisations across Europe. I will also strengthen Intellectual Property protection. So far, only nine percent of our SMEs use IP and as a result, their inventions risk not being commercialised in Europe. I will upgrade the designs system to make them work for SMEs, reducing costs and complexity.

Through the Digital Europe Programme, I will reinforce the European Digital Innovation Hubs to enable SMEs to benefit from advice and to test digital innovations. We will also launch a series of sector-specific dialogues.

I will set up dedicated ‘Sustainability Advisors’ within the Enterprise Europe Network and look at making it easier for SMEs to access finance to invest in sustainability. I will also make sure that they can benefit from dedicated actions on skills and public procurement.

I will build on the Commission’s 2016 Start-up Initiative and Startup Europe programme, looking at the possibilities for an easier EU-wide company formation system, access to high tech workers from within and outside the EU (employment visa) and taxation referral of employee stock options at the time of divesting. To facilitate the scaling-up of existing companies, new initiatives such as the new Deep Tech Europe 100 initiative could help 100 deep-tech high growth businesses to grow their business worldwide.

Third, I will reduce the regulatory burdens that SMEs face. I will ask the Regulatory Scrutiny Board to deepen its scrutiny of the SME dimension in all impact assessments.

I will start a dialogue with the Parliament and Council to strengthen impact assessments on the effect of major legislative amendments on SMEs. Through our SME Envoy network, I will work with Member States to establish common priorities in areas where regulatory competence is mixed.

I will also make sure Single Market rules take into account SMEs’ specific needs – e.g. work on facilitating on labour mobility to address regional skill shortages, together with the Commissioner for Jobs. I will ensure that the Digital Services Act gives SMEs and start-ups the predictability and legal clarity that they need.

Underpinning all this, I will appoint a full-time SME Envoy. (S)he will listen to SMEs’ concerns, drive the SME strategy forward and bring together Europe’s SME community. (S)he will be supported by a new SME cross-DG Task Force.

What actions do you envisage to contribute to the competitiveness of the EU industry? Will you take sector-specific measures to support European industrial sectors where there is cutthroat global competition, such as the aerospace industry (including helicopters and drones), defence industry, telecommunications industry, automobile industry, energy-intensive industries, and the manufacturing industry? How will you ensure that the components of strategic value chains located in the EU will remain part of future worldwide value chains in particular for new technologies? Furthermore, how will you ensure that the industrial transformation boosts the uptake of climate-friendly and safe products, processes and technologies, while preventing carbon leakage to third countries? What specific measures do you envisage to prevent carbon leakage?

As described in detail in my previous answer, I believe the competitiveness of Europe’s industry depends on its ability to make the transition to sustainability and digitalisation, while ensuring Europe’s technological sovereignty and strengthening its Single Market.

The development of strategic value chains across Europe is a key element of Europe’s competitiveness. As described above, my intention is to focus on a limited number of technologies having impact on several sectors, in order to develop Europe’s wide value chains, allowing Europe to compete at the global stage.

In addition to these technologies and related sectors, I want also to focus on Tourism. Representing 10% of EU's GDP, this sector is very important for Europe and its regions. It is challenged by the issues of mass tourism which is hardly sustainable, the emergence of new actors such as the platforms, and the necessity to have a skilled workforce. I want to support its transformation so that our continent can remain the first touristic destination in the world.

Uptake of climate-friendly and safe products, processes and technologies

The uptake of climate-friendly and safe innovation requires efforts on both the demand and supply side. Following the example of the Plastics Strategy, I will work with the main actors of the most important value chains to help match demand and supply for innovative technologies, recycled materials and environmental services. Furthermore, as mentioned above, the digital transformation can encourage the uptake of climate-friendly solutions. First, digital technologies can improve the environmental efficiency of industrial processes, products and services become greener. Secondly, I will work to reduce the environmental footprint of the ICT industry.

Another priority will be to accelerate the transition of energy-intensive industries towards climate-neutrality - such as steel and chemicals - and the automotive value chain. The work within the High Level Group on Energy Intensive Industries provides a strong basis for the work ahead.

Carbon leakage to third countries

While I am committed to guarantee the highest level of safety and sustainability for all products, processes and technologies, I am also aware that different levels of ambitions in terms of climate policies can distort competition and create risks of carbon leakage. The President-elect has announced the introduction of a carbon border tax to be designed by the Commissioner for the Economy, in full compliance with WTO rules. I will support this work.

How do you intend to support, including through competition rules, European companies and start-ups to scale up, grow and even become world leaders? Will you pursue an 'EU champions policy'? In that context, what are your views on the future development of antitrust and state aid rules?

I believe in healthy and strong European companies that are able to compete, first at home, and then at the global level with the world giants from the U.S., China and elsewhere.

Competition policy does not prevent per se the creation of strong and competitive European players. For instance I managed to build a fairly large and competitive European company able to compete on the world stage in IT services. Fair competition in the Single Market is a major driver of companies' competitiveness, because it requires companies to innovate and invest. Competition policy enables us to establish an efficient, competitive and innovative industry.

However, as the President-Elect wrote in the mission letter to the Executive Vice-President for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age, we need to ensure that our competition policy and rules are fit for the modern economy and contribute to a strong European industry at home and in the world. In this context, there is a need to evaluate and review Europe's competition rules.

We also need to put in place a strong industrial policy devoid of any naivety towards our international competitors. This includes actions to address the distortive effects of foreign subsidies in the internal market, as foreseen in the EU-China strategy.

An important obstacle to the emergence of strong European players with a global dimension is the lack of integration of the Single Market. To be competitive abroad, our companies first need to be competitive at home, and have a market to grow in. No digital start-up can grow to compete with world giants if they face 27 different legal regimes. This is why I will continue the work towards deepening and strengthening the Single Market.

As described above, we should strengthen our technological capabilities and industrial assets as well as make adequate use of the tools at our disposal (trade, public markets, and financial programmes) to enable European companies to operate under the same conditions as their global competitors.

What measures will you take to ensure that the EU Space Policy fosters the development and uptake of space applications and services downstream, thus ensuring that the Union catches up with other major international actors in support of growth and the securitisation of European society and economy? In this context, will you support specific actions aimed at facilitating the research and deployment of specific technologies, such as quantum, in the space sector? What is your vision on the ‘crucial link between space and defence and security’, as mentioned in your mission letter, and what measures do you intend to take to improve that link?

EU Space policy

My first priority will be to ensure continuity and complete the constellation of Galileo and Copernicus. The new budget will be used first to maintain and upgrade the existing infrastructures of Galileo and Copernicus, so that our systems remain world-leading.

My second priority will be to adapt our assets to new needs, such as climate change, security, or the Internet of Things. I want that Copernicus contributes to Europe’s political leadership in fighting climate change and in the Big Data economy and AI. Galileo must become an enabler of the Internet of Things, connected and automated cars and the app economy, with both contributing even more to Europe's security.

My third priority is to adapt our Space policy to the new realities. Our EU Space Programme is of strategic importance for Europe: it is a question of strategic sovereignty and technological independence from third countries:

- As there is no true Space policy for Europe without independent access to Space, I will support European access to Space in particular by aggregating our institutional demand and deploying new technologies.
- Space is an enabler of security. Two new initiatives will serve this: (i) Space Situational Awareness (SSA) to avoid collisions and other Space hazards and (ii) a Governmental

Satellite Communication (GOVSATCOM) initiative to provide Member States and EU institutions with reliable and secure satellite communication.

Thanks to the new approach set out in the future Space programme Regulation, I will also streamline the governance of our action on Space matters towards efficiency and clear allocation of roles and responsibilities, seeking complementarities.

I will ensure synergies between Space and Defence: The EU Space infrastructures have a defence and security dimension, and the European Defence Fund has an important Space component. I have set out more details below in my reply to the question on the links between Space and Defence.

Finally, the European space sector will have to react to the massive changes the sector is going through. On the one hand, Space-enabled services are becoming more and more important for our economy and society. Almost 10% of our economy depends on Space. On the other hand, the Space sector is going through a profound transformation with new actors, both private and public, with disruptive solutions (small satellites, reusable launchers).

We urgently need to develop a coherent European answer: a European approach on “New Space”, both in the upstream and in the downstream sector. For this, I will fully use the provisions of the future regulation establishing the EU Space Programme to support:

- Space Research and disruptive innovation, in combination with Horizon Europe and InvestEU financing to develop strategic technologies such as robotics, electric propulsion, quantum technologies.
- Space start-ups in their access to finance, procurement and first contracts.
- The development of downstream applications such as in the field of the Internet of Things and autonomous cars.

We have an excellent space industry in Europe, we have a clear vision for the future of the European Space eco-system, and in the next long-term budget we will have a coherent set of tools to shape our Space policy to the best advantage of the European citizens and society, including its security, and its economy.

I will work with the European Parliament, the Council and the industry to make sure the EU delivers.

Quantum technologies

It will be essential for Europe’s long-term prosperity, technological sovereignty and security to be at the forefront of the quantum technology developments. My objective is to stimulate the emergence of European value chains in these technologies and help them reach wide markets. To do so, Europe will need to translate its excellence in quantum physics research into commercial deployment, and support entrepreneurs and researchers to test, qualify and develop their technology in operational systems for civil applications, as well as for their uptake in the Space and military domain.

For example, with the advent of quantum computing, all our present cryptographic methods may soon become vulnerable with important consequences for trust in our information systems. It will be essential for Europe to invest in the development of next generation cryptography which is future-proof and unbreakable. As mentioned above, I will support the deployment of

the Union-wide quantum communication infrastructure (QCI), building on both terrestrial and Space technology components and systems.

Links between space, defence and security

Space is a strategic asset for Europe. This is an industrial question as well as a question of EU strategic sovereignty. There is indeed a 'crucial link between space and defence and security.

I would like to stress that improving the link between space, defence and security does not mean that the EU will alter the civilian dimension of EU investments in space. Galileo and Copernicus are and will remain civil programmes under civil control, even though they can serve security and defence needs as well. Maintaining the civilian nature of EU investments in space will allow us to reap the full benefits that space-based technologies and services provide for smart growth, and for the well-being of the citizens in their daily life through a wide range of Space-based applications.

On the link between space, defence and security, the following linkages exist:

First, from an industrial perspective, space and defence technologies are (intrinsically) linked, as many Space technologies are dual-use. Defence actors rely on space-enabled services, such as global positioning, satellite communication or Earth observation. Space industrial actors are also defence technology and capability providers and share some common characteristics (high-tech, high risk, and capital-intensive with long development cycles). They require public research and development spending to maintain expertise and industrial capabilities, in particular in critical technologies. Defence and Space industries face unprecedented global competition and major technological challenges with the emergence of cutting edge and rapidly evolving technologies (robotics, the Internet of Things, AI, cyber, etc.). By seeking synergies and cross-fertilisation, where relevant, between space and defence in EU programmes, we aim to use our resources and technologies efficiently and to create economies of scale.

Secondly, space is a key enabler of EU independence of action. It is an important tool for all security actors, such as police, civil protection, emergency managers or border management actors. The Space programmes Galileo and Copernicus already provide security-related services. The Copernicus security and emergency services, and in particular the Galileo Public Regulated Service can be used by governments for emergency services, operations and crisis management. I will support Member States in increasing the uptake of these services.

In the next long-term EU budget, we are proposing to also have two new security-related Space initiatives, which rely largely on the principle of pooling and sharing of existing assets:

- Governmental satellite communications will provide secure satellite communications to civilian and security actors.
- Space Situational Awareness, including in particular Space Surveillance and Tracking, will keep our satellites and launches safe from space debris and other hazards in and from Space.

Under the European Defence Fund, I will work with the Member States to continue to identify priorities with a view to improving the link between space and defence. This could include capabilities and sensor development needed for Space Surveillance and Awareness, as well as resilient and secured Positioning, Navigation and Timing, and government satellite

communication capabilities.

In her political guidelines, the President-elect stated her intention to strengthen the European Defence Fund (EDF) to support research and capability development. What concrete measures, including financial ones, do you intend to take in order to strengthen the EDF? How do you plan to ensure that the Fund will promote cooperation among companies and countries across the Union and facilitate the establishment of new cooperative networks including those involving SMEs?

Over the last years, Europeans have committed to strengthening European security and defence by enhancing defence investment, capability development and operational readiness. All these defence initiatives are ultimately aimed at fostering defence cooperation in Europe and strengthening the EU's ability to act as a security provider. With the tools available to me, in particular in the area of defence industry, I will support the initiatives towards a genuine Defence Union, working closely with the High Representative/Vice-President.

I want to strengthen cooperation in defence on both the supply and demand side. The European defence industry is highly fragmented with Member States spending their defence budgets nationally and defining their technical requirements for military equipment nationally. For example, Member States have 17 types of battle tanks, while the U.S. has only one. The lack of cooperation between Member States in the field of defence and security industries is estimated to cost between €25 billion and €100 billion every year. Because of inefficient spending, the European industry risks lacking the technological ability to build the next generation of critical defence capabilities and losing competitiveness at home and globally. Ultimately, this will affect the strategic sovereignty of the EU and its ability to act as a security provider. I will ensure the implementation of all the initiatives adopted to foster cooperation and support the competitiveness of the European defence industry and allow it to benefit from the opportunities offered by the Single Market.

A key contribution is the launch of the European Defence Fund (EDF): it is a game changer as it incentivises Member States and European defence industry, including SMEs, to cooperate in jointly developing technologies and capabilities which are necessary to ensure Europe's security.

My first priority will be to conclude, in the context of the overall negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework, the negotiation on the regulation establishing the European Defence Fund, and especially its funding allocation.

My second priority will be to ensure its successful implementation. In this, I will benefit from the experience of its two pilot programmes (the Preparatory action on Defence Research which financed already 18 projects, and the European Defence Industrial Development Programme which will finance over the next two years around 20 industrial projects). I will also benefit from a new structure within the Commission, a Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space, adapting the administrative structure to the specific needs deriving from defence projects. In particular, we will reinforce our cooperation with Member States and the defence industry, thereby attracting defence expertise from Member States to underpin our own experience.

My third priority will be to ensure coherence with the other defence initiatives and long-term

planning. Indeed, for EDF to have an impact, it is essential, that we focus the means on projects which are of strategic added value for Europe's security. At the same time, it is important for cooperation to be effective that some medium term planning is foreseen between Member States. So I will work closely with Member States as part of the programme committee of the Fund, but also in full coherence with the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) projects (allowing to trigger a 10% bonus, if selected, as part of the European Defence Fund). I will also ensure that the European Defence Fund strengthens NATO. The European Defence Fund will be consistent with the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP) through the EU Capability Development Plan (CDP) priorities, taking into account other regional priorities such as the ones agreed within NATO. I will inform regularly the European Parliament on both the annual priorities of the EDF and on the longer term strategic planning.

Fourth, I will implement the provisions planned in the European Defence Fund on the participation of SMEs. One of the Fund's objectives is to open up the defence value chains across Europe, to support defence industry of all sizes and from all Member States. This will be incentivised through the Fund (with specific bonuses attached to the participation of SMEs or with dedicated SME categories of projects) but it needs more. I will organise SMEs focused workshops in every Member State to maximise their awareness about the opportunities offered by the European Defence Fund, and organise matchmaking events so SMEs can integrate relevant defence projects.

Fifth, I want to develop the disruptive innovation dimension of the Fund and make sure that the dedicated budget allocated to this in the Fund (between 4 and 8%) has a real impact in attracting non-defence companies, start-ups, entrepreneurs and in ensuring Europe's leadership in strategic technological solutions.

Finally, I will ensure maximum synergies between all the funding instruments, in particular the European Defence Fund, the EU Space Programme and the Digital for Europe Programme.

The portfolio that Ursula von der Leyen entrusted you with covers industry and SMEs, digital services, space, defence industry, audio-visual services, internal market, etc. To coordinate and lead policy initiatives across this unprecedentedly broad portfolio, covering two existing and one new DG, while also maintaining a high level of quality, will be challenging. How will you manage and coordinate such a large portfolio while ensuring synergies and smooth cooperation between the three DGs?

Management of the portfolio

As Minister of Economy, Finance, Industry, Telecom, Foreign Trade, Budget, SMEs and Tourism from 2005 to 2007 in France, I was directly in charge of 22 structures from 14 Directorate Generals and 8 State agencies, leading the work of over 180 000 civil servants.

What is of utmost importance is the coherence of the portfolio: digital impacts all the other dimensions of this portfolio. Integrating the competences for digital, industry, single market, audio-visual, defence, and space makes sense as it will allow to activate the necessary tools to deliver on the political priorities and ambitions. It sends a clear and strong signal that Europe understands very well the intrinsic links between all these aspects in the digital age.

I recognise the broadness of this portfolio, but I believe I have acquired in my professional life the capacity to manage very large organisations in full respect of their context and their culture, which are not necessarily the same in the public or the private sector.

I know that, whatever the size of the organisation, it all boils down to a human approach to management, and to people.

When the objectives are clear, we can put organisations in movement.

And my objectives are clear: to put at the service of the Internal market, all the tools which support the digitisation of all the dimensions of our economy and society in the new world in front of us, whether it is, environment, social, industry, media, space, defence industry, tourism or SMEs.

I will make sure that the three Directorates-General under my leadership are moving in the same direction from the first day of the new Commission and that collectively we deliver on high quality policy designs.

This is what I have been doing my all life for every organisation under my responsibilities with always the same spirit of full commitment of my sole mission statement. That will be my priority to deliver on the ambition of the President-elect.

Synergies and cooperation

In our fast-changing economy, the Commission has to offer to public and private sector actors a holistic vision bringing together all relevant strands of work

Synergies and the sense of cooperation between the 3 Directorates-General could be delivered through a number of "transversal common missions".

Digitisation brings radical improvements to the entire industrial cycle from products design up to manufacturing, commercialisation and after-sales services. A forward-looking industrial policy can therefore no longer make a distinction between the physical and digital dimension. Such a strategy should propose an integrated approach on the existing work of the three Directorates-General, starting with an enabling regulatory framework. We need also to ensure Europe's technological sovereignty while preserving and enhancing our industrial landscape

Delivering this, means addressing a number of horizontal issues in an integrated manner, bringing various strands of work of the three Directorates-General together. I will ask the Directorates-General to jointly launch a series of sectoral dialogues to develop coherent but impactful strategies. For example, I want to launch immediately a task force about the way Internet of Things and edge computing will change within the next 5 years, European industry landscape from all our SMEs to large industrial companies.

We need to make the single market digital by default. As such, I will exploit the synergies of Directorates-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT) and the new DG Defence Industry and Space to develop a common vision in the development of digital services legislation. The upcoming Digital Services Act will build on these synergies by bringing more legal clarity for businesses, and better protecting citizen's rights and safety online.

In parallel, we need better implementation of Single Market rules, both online and offline. I

will propose to set up a joint Single Market enforcement team across the three Directorates-General. This will be a single interface dealing with all enforcement issues, guaranteeing synergies and consistency in our scrutiny of implementation of Single Market rules.

Regaining technological sovereignty and maintaining Europe's industrial leadership requires large-scale projects of strategic interests that go across borders and beyond the resources of a single company or Member State. In this context, the three Directorates-General will complement each other by combining their expertise on industrial governance, on Space and defence and on key technological areas such as high performance and quantum computing, AI, cybersecurity, and 5G and next.

There are already fruitful synergies between creative digital and traditional industries. For example, 3D printing allows for unprecedented blending of eco-design and creative architecture. Virtual reality productions by professional content producers allow training of operators of complex machinery. Given the importance of the audiovisual sector for the EU economy (more than € 110 billion turnover and 1 million job creation), I will do the utmost to make them succeed.

Furthermore, I want to pool the expertise and resources across the portfolio to tackle one of the greatest challenges of our time: cybersecurity everywhere. Bringing unity and sense of purpose across the three Directorates-General will maximise our impact in fighting cyber-threats.

Similarly, I want a cross-cutting approach to SMEs. This is why I will set up a new SME Task Force bringing together SME units in the three Directorates-General which will support the work of the SME envoy. One area of common focus will be on helping start-ups to scale up in Europe.

To conclude, bringing this knowhow together offers a unique opportunity not only to meet existing objectives such as to promote European companies, but also to enable the Commission more effectively meet the challenge of building a sustainable, carbon-neutral industrial sector, where only a joined-up approach can avoid the lowest common denominator trade-offs that would result from the existing, siloed set-up.

Furthermore, how will you ensure full and effective implementation of existing legislation within your portfolio, in particular towards the Digital Single Market? What concrete means and measures will you apply to ensure implementation and enforcement of the EU acquis by the Member States?

A functioning Single Market is only possible when the rules are coherently applied across Member States, regardless of their size. I will therefore put forward an implementation and enforcement strategy to ensure full and effective application of the rules.

I will build on a careful evaluation of the remaining obstacles, identifying those which have particular impact on economic growth and the creation of jobs. I will pursue a sector-specific approach, basing enforcement actions on where they will have the strongest impact, both in economic and regulatory terms. In a given sector, I will launch specific analysis to check proactively if EU law is well implemented by Member States, rather than basing infringement action on the individual complaints received.

My intention is to work in partnership with the Member States to ensure that EU law is effectively applied. We will prioritise the Commission support to the correct implementation of directives by issuing guidance and by assisting Member States authorities. I would also like to rely even more on the notification procedures of new Member States' laws to ensure adequate and continuous implementation of existing EU rules (e.g. under the E-Commerce or under the Transparency Directives). I will launch in-depth dialogue with Member States before they adopt laws that could fragment the Single Market. The Digital Single Market will be a priority area for implementation. The 28 recent legislative instruments adopted as part of the DSM strategy have the potential to be a real game changer for citizens and businesses but the new rules need to be implemented swiftly. Working closely with national authorities and regulators, I will conduct an evaluation of the state of the implementation, encourage the sharing of best practices and identify the key obstacles where enforcement action is necessary. Where breaches persist, I will not hesitate to pursue infringement actions as a matter of priority.

Citizens, businesses and public authorities should be involved in this process as appropriate. A case in point is the recently adopted Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market. The copyright rules are starting to be transposed by Member States and we need to ensure the directive is applied effectively and uniformly across the EU. Stakeholder dialogues, that are being organised, allow interested parties to express their views on the implementation methods. The European Parliament is involved in this process. Following the dialogues, the Commission will issue guidance in 2020, as set out in the Directive.

How will you and your services ensure efficient coordination with other Commissioners whose policy areas have an impact on, or are affected by, your portfolio, and in particular the Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age and the Executive Vice-President for An Economy that Works for People? 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, in particular concerning the impact of all proposed legislation on SMEs?

I will contribute actively to the design of the new industrial strategy and new SME strategy, under the joint guidance of Executive Vice-Presidents for a Europe fit for the Digital Age and for An Economy that Works for People. In this way, we will ensure that these two strategies avoid silo approaches, and are designed to have a real impact, using all the tools at our disposal at European level.

For the Single Market files, especially all the digital initiatives announced in the President-elect's political guidelines and in my mission letter, I will work under the guidance of Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age. This will be the case especially for the Digital Services Act and a European approach to AI.

I also intend to contribute actively to the objective of a Green Deal, as any major green transformation of our economy requires a deep change in the way we produce and consume. My intention is to ensure that the Green Deal has a strong and credible industrial pillar. I will particularly work on this objective with the Executive Vice-President for a Green Deal and with the Commissioner for the Environment and Oceans.

In order to ensure a coherent approach in the field of defence with the aim to establish a genuine Defence Union, I will work closely with the High Representative/Vice-President.

I will also work in close coordination with different colleagues on specific, highly important files such as:

- On the European Semester with the Commissioner for the Economy under the guidance of the Executive Vice-President for An Economy that Works for People;
- On the platforms worker protection and on the Social Economy, with the Commissioner for Jobs;
- On audiovisual media-related issues and the Digital Education Action Plan with the Commissioner for Innovation and Youth;
- On media pluralism and tackling disinformation with the Vice-President for Values and Transparency and the Commissioner for Justice;
- On countering hybrid threats with the Commissioner for Home Affairs and the Vice-President for Protecting our European Way of Life.

Finally, as member of the College, I will actively contribute to and participate in the collegiality of the decisions taken by the Commission to promote the European general interest.

I intend to establish strong partnership with my colleagues based on mutual trust, openness and respect.

Quality of legislation, consultation of stakeholders, impact on SMEs, transparency

It is my strong conviction that any legislation must be based on a thorough analysis of its potential impact and is proportionate to the objective which is sought for. I will therefore ensure that any legislation I present is based on a strong impact assessment, allowing evaluating the shortcomings of the current regulatory environment, presenting several options and a careful and detailed analysis of the impact of the legislation, especially on SMEs. Efforts are needed to avoid disproportionate burdens on SMEs. I will therefore ensure that my services apply the principles of the SME Test when carrying out impact assessments. I will use also all channels to receive feedback directly from SMEs.

I will make sure to give all stakeholders an opportunity to be heard through thorough consultation. No stakeholder will have a privileged position or privileged access. I will ensure that the different views and perspectives are heard and taken into account in the preparation of Commission proposals: industry and SMEs of different sectors and regions, social partners, and of course civil society organisations. Given Europe's diversity, this is a crucial element for good policy-making.

I want also to be able to consult regularly MEPs and representatives of the Member States.

As for the crucial issue of transparency, my services and I will respect firmly the rules on transparency and will use of the Transparency Register in accordance with the applicable Commission rules when consulted by any stakeholders.

How will you and your services ensure enhanced cooperation with the ITRE Committee? What concrete steps will you take to ensure that the ITRE Committee is given in a timely and proactive manner the same information, as Council and Member States, with respect to planned legislative initiatives or other major initiatives? How will you facilitate scrutiny by the ITRE Committee of legislative and non-legislative procedures, providing at an early stage all necessary information concerning the preparation of legislative acts, delegated and implementing acts, and facilitate monitoring of their implementation? How do you intend to ensure that ITRE is kept appropriately informed and involved in relation to any international agreements in your policy area?

I am aware of the importance of trust, cooperation and transparency between the European Commission and the co-legislators in the European Parliament and Council. I strongly believe that we best serve the interests of European citizens when we all work together in this spirit.

Clearly, this cooperation works best if it begins early on in the legislative process. I want to work with the European Parliament and its Committees from the very start. The same approach is valid for every file, legislative or non-legislative, for policy-making and for political dialogue. I will be happy to attend regularly Committee meetings and I will ensure that all the relevant Parliamentary Committees are involved in any major developments under my responsibility.

I will be in regular contact and meet with Committee members, especially with the coordinators and rapporteurs on each individual file. I look forward to working closely with you in a spirit of openness and flexibility to design, develop and agree the policies and strategies we need for the future. I will also make sure that this openness and availability extends to my services in the relevant DGs.

Questions from the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

The fragmentation of the internal market poses challenges for both consumers and businesses. What long-term measures/tools will you propose to strengthen the internal market and ensure that the existing rules are properly and timely implemented and enforced, supporting the competitiveness of European businesses and bringing concrete benefits to consumers? Given the need to ensure a balance between consumer protection and simplifications for business, how would you tackle regulatory complexity and unjustified national regulatory and non-regulatory barriers within the internal market?

The Single Market, in all its dimensions, plays a key role in making sure that the economy works for everyone: businesses, consumers and workers. This is one of the most remarkable achievements of European integration. The better the Single Market works, the better for Europe. However it is not yet fully integrated.

I will therefore make sure that our common European rules are implemented and applied consistently. Not only because they are the rules we commonly agreed upon, but because I believe firmly in the principle of the Single Market. I will not hesitate to enforce EU laws, using the same degree of determination for all Member States, big or small, east, west, north or south, moving away from the growing fragmentation, which could be witnessed in certain important areas of the Single Market during the last years. I want to bring a vision and energy to move again together instead of diverging.

My goals to improve the enforcement approach are the following:

- Defining sectoral enforcement priorities that have the biggest impact for our companies and citizens;
- Reinforcing problem-solving tools based on cooperation between Member States and the Commission such as the SOLVIT network;
- Speeding up the Commission treatment of infringements;
- Putting forward, together with relevant colleagues, an action plan on Single Market enforcement, identifying the barriers that harm our economies the most; and
- Working with Member States to make sure that they notify their technical rules in equal measure.

I will also work on improving our systems of market surveillance and mutual recognition, as detailed in the following answer.

To improve the actual delivery of the Single Market on the ground, I will broaden access to information and advice for citizens and businesses. The Your Europe portal will become the backbone of a single digital gateway. I will also further strengthen cooperation between national administrations via the Internal Market Information system (IMI). The ongoing upgrade of the Single Market Scoreboard will also enhance the monitoring and benchmarking of the performance of Member States, hence creating peer pressure and supporting evidence based decision making. I will continue to work with all my colleagues involved in the European Semester as a way to implement the Single Market principles.

In all this, it will be essential to strike the right balance between consumer protection and simplification for businesses. Effective and efficient rules enhance consumers' trust and helps firms selling their products and services. I look forward to working closely with other College members, and in particular the Commissioner for Justice, to ensure the necessary coordination.

What measures do you foresee in the area of free movement of goods, taking also into account recently adopted legislation on mutual recognition and market surveillance of products? In this regard, what are your plans to ensure that EU legislation on goods is fit for the digital era, reaping the benefits and addressing the challenges of technical progress in digitalisation, such as those related to artificial intelligence, while preventing non-compliant or unsafe products from circulation on EU market, providing consumers with extensive information thereof, and ensuring a level-playing field for businesses?

The Regulation on Mutual Recognition will ensure that businesses and consumers can easily access the relevant information on the national rules that apply to their products and what they can do if national laws diverge. I will suggest to Member States to implement partnerships at government level that would allow de facto mutual recognition in specific sectors: if a product is considered compliant in one Member State, it will automatically be recognised in another. This will boost trade and economic growth in areas where there is no harmonisation at EU level.

The Regulation on Market Surveillance and Compliance of Products enhances enforcement, addresses products sold online and improves cooperation between enforcement authorities. I will tackle the issue of non-compliant goods. Non-compliant products are dangerous for consumers but also undermine the level playing field for businesses by providing competitive advantages to companies which do not follow the rules. In 2017, as many as 32% of toys and 58% of electronics, that were inspected did not meet the EU requirements for safety or consumer information. To tackle these issues, the Commission's proposal on a Single Market Programme (SMP) notably foresees an increased focus on market surveillance activities. I am also convinced of the benefits of establishing the EU Product Compliance Network.

This network will:

- Build common risk based methodologies to identify non-compliant products;
- Launch collective actions amongst EU market surveillance authorities;
- Ensure better cooperation with customs authorities and harbours to better protect us against non-compliant products coming from third countries; and
- Map all existing European laboratories for testing of products to increase synergies

Furthermore, more aspects of the legislative framework on the free movement of goods need to be revised with regard to digitalisation. The lines between products, services and digital solutions are more and more blurred. This has also consequences on how we trade in the Single Market. The deployment of AI across all sectors will have a profound impact on our economy and society. In the first 100 days of the new Commission taking office, together with Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age, I will lead the work on proposals for a common European approach for AI.

I will build on the Cybersecurity Act and roll-out cybersecurity certification schemes in priority areas such as 5G, cloud and connected devices. In accordance with the provisions of the Cybersecurity Act and in cooperation with ENISA and the Member States, I will review the need for mandatory certification for certain categories of ICT products in due time.

We will have to review the current *acquis* and adjust it if necessary. The Machinery Directive is the core European legislation for the safety of, for example, robots or 3D printers. I want to oversee the revision of this Directive to adapt it to AI, Internet of Things (IoT) and the new generation of robots. Moreover, we should use the Radio Equipment Directive to strengthen the mandatory rules (privacy, protection against frauds, upload of software) for placing on the market a broad range of wireless connected products, including IoT wireless devices.

Any legislative initiatives in this area will follow a robust evidence-based analysis and an inclusive stakeholder dialogue. I will look carefully at its impact across the board and make sure that our new rules are targeted, proportionate and easy to comply with, without creating any unnecessary red tape.

Which concrete policy initiatives and enforcement measures will you propose to improve the single market for services, including professional services and qualifications, collaborative economy services, public services and procurement, especially in view of the opportunities offered by digital technologies, in order to reduce unjustified administrative burden, promote entrepreneurship and make the European services sector globally competitive in the coming decades? Given that Europe's productivity and growth is strongly linked to the services sector, what ambitious actions will you take to promote the free movement of digital services and the development of trustworthy AI-enabled services?

Services are by far the biggest part of the economy in all Member States. In the EU as a whole the services sector accounts for around 70% of GDP and employment. But the Single Market for services is not working as well as it could. I want to change this.

I plan to develop and deepen the partnership with Member States to ensure that the existing rules are properly applied. We already have legislative instruments in place, notably the Services Directive. My focus will be on ensuring their enforcement and application. I will explore new ways to achieve this objective, for example by establishing a European Single Market network of national authorities. This will reinforce the dialogue and partnership between the European and the national level while ensuring a better understanding and application of the rules.

I will make sure that the instruments in place like the Regulation on the Single Digital Gateway, the Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Proportionality Test Directive are implemented ambitiously. Again, although transposition is the primary obligation of the Member States, this requires building on the existing partnership that the Commission has with them. I will pay close attention to how this happens, to ensure an increased competitiveness of EU service providers. I will also make sure that the European Professional Card, a fully electronic procedure for cross-border recognition of professional qualifications, is adapted to the latest economic and technological developments. I am keen to expand this recognition beyond the so far limited number of professions for which it is currently available.

Buying and selling services and goods through online platforms has become a key part of the EU economy. Over 1 million firms trade through online platforms. I am fully aware that we need to ensure that the largest firms act fairly and do not succumb to temptations to exploit the increasing dependence of businesses, especially SMEs, on their services. The recently adopted Platform-to-Business Regulation, the first global regulation of online platforms of its kind, is a vital step in this regard. As a priority, we will have to enforce these rules effectively, continuously monitor the sector and assess whether more needs to be done in particular with regard to the largest platforms operating in the EU.

In some cases, new legislation is needed to strengthen the Single Market. I will put forward new rules fit for the digital age in the area of digital services and AI.

With the Digital Services Act, I intend to establish a stronger and coherent regulatory framework around the provision of digital services, including online platforms. It will support European start-ups and scale-ups, open up the Single Market to innovative companies, protect citizens and safeguard their rights, not least their freedom of expression, and create an effective system of supervision, cooperation and enforcement of rules.

These rules will complement the progress already made to tackle specific types of illegal content through targeted legal instruments (e.g. the Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market, the amended Audiovisual Media Services Directive, the Directive on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, the proposal for a Regulation on online terrorist content) as well as via supporting actions, such as codes of conduct and other forms of voluntary cooperation. The preparation of the Act will be based on a robust analysis and an inclusive stakeholder dialogue.

We also need to continue reflecting on how best to address other emerging challenges related to the platform economy, such as the labour conditions of platform workers or concerns on collaborative economy platforms. Services provided via online platforms have opened up new opportunities for labour, such as flexibility for working time, but there is growing uncertainty on a number of issues, including their employment status, working conditions, access to social protection, and access to representation and collective bargaining. In close cooperation with Commissioner-designate for Jobs, I will contribute to finding ways to improve labour conditions of platform workers. I will conduct analysis of where Single Market instruments could be used to this end.

As I explained in my previous response, under the guidance of the Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age, I will lead the work on the proposals for a common European approach for AI. The regulatory framework for AI needs to guarantee that the development and deployment of AI systems in products and services is undertaken in full respect of the EU's fundamental rights acquis, and its provisions should enable such systems to function in a trustworthy manner (lawful, ethical and robust) across the Single Market. This framework will strengthen and complement the existing comprehensive body of safety and liability legislation. It is essential that Europe's AI policy prevents any fragmented approach that would be problematic from the viewpoint of the Single Market.

On procurement, I will consider proposing to create a specific vehicle for the digital transformation of public procurement to support Member States in four areas: i) fully digitalising the procurement life cycle; ii) experimenting with new AI-enabled solutions to pave the way, in particular, to automating public procurement processes; iii) promoting data collection and analytics; and iv) increasing digital literacy of buyers. I will also propose new initiatives, in cooperation with Member States, aiming at climate-proofing large public infrastructure projects and to facilitate cooperative procurement for climate and environment. Public buyers should use their market power strategically to shape the industry and ensure the development of innovative solutions.

Actions in these four areas will facilitate access to public procurement through greater transparency for all stakeholders. Simplified processes will particularly benefit SMEs, start-ups, scale ups and social enterprises. New tools will increase competition in public procurement, provide opportunities to companies, and choice to public buyers. I will specifically facilitate cross border procurement in border regions. Both in a multilateral and bilateral context, and in close cooperation with the Commissioner for Trade, I will promote European solutions as international standards. Solutions such as eCertis increase transparency and legal certainty and will ensure that European companies are able to compete on similar grounds to their competitors.