

HILL & KNOWLTON'S GUIDE TO

THE FIRST 100 DAYS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION





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FOREWORD



Welcome to Hill & Knowlton's guide to the First 100 Days of the new European Commission!

Towards the end of May 2010, the new European Commission quietly celebrated 100 days in office. To mark this symbolic milestone, Hill & Knowlton is pleased to present you with an analysis of the most significant actions of the "Barroso II" Commission to date, and a look ahead to what to expect in the coming months and years.

If a week is a long time in politics, 100 days must seem like an eternity to many of the 27 Commissioners, several of whom have taken over newly created or reshuffled portfolios. While some high profile initiatives were already in the pipeline - such as the launch of the "Europe

2020" strategy for green growth and jobs, a revamped Digital Agenda for Europe and an all new European External Action Service – other developments that would keep the new administration very busy in its "honeymoon period" could only have been fully anticipated by the most expert of economists and volcanologists.

The Greek sovereign debt crisis has threatened to have a profound impact on the eurozone as a whole and has led to the establishment of an unprecedentedly large rescue mechanism to stabilize the euro. This has led to discussions on the nature and scope of economic governance at EU level that would not have been conceivable even six months ago.

Meanwhile, the eruption of an ash cloud from Iceland played havoc with transport systems across Europe in April. This not only complicated the travel plans of individual Commissioners. It also raised questions on the role of Europe's executive arm in ensuring the safety of European skies and guaranteeing passenger rights, while at the same time avoiding unnecessary further damage to the EU economy.

Our guide to an eventful first 100 days for President Barroso includes a report card on each member of his new team, reflecting on their achievements since taking office and looking forward to the challenges they are likely to face over the rest of their mandate. In addition, in a series of longer articles we provide a more in-depth analysis of important cross-cutting policy areas including Foreign Affairs, Economic and Monetary Policy, Energy and Environment and the Digital economy.

All these can also be found on our [interactive webpage](#).

Happy reading!

Jeroen van Seeters
CEO, Hill & Knowlton International Belgium s.a./n.v.
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EU FOREIGN POLICY – TACKLING KISSINGER’S CONUNDRUM

By Giles Keane, Director of Corporate Communications

Winston Churchill once said that “Soviet Union foreign policy is a puzzle inside a riddle wrapped in an enigma, and the key is Russian nationalism”. Just a few months after her appointment as the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs, Catherine Margaret Ashton, (Baroness Ashton of Upholland – to give her full title) could say similar things about the European Union’s (EU) foreign policy. However, for her the key is EU decision making.

Ashton’s initial appointment to High Representative was marked by accusations that she was a compromise candidate and a political light-weight. Indeed, the Baroness herself was said to be as surprised as anyone on hearing of her appointment.

Three jobs for the price of one

After this inauspicious beginning, her first few months in office have yielded little in terms of concrete action. However, any criticism of Ashton’s work to date has to take account of the sheer scale of the task she has been given. One the one hand it involves taking over the responsibilities of what were previously two separate foreign policy posts and dealing with the day to day challenges they bring. At the same time she has to oversee one of the largest and most politically charged organizational management projects ever undertaken at EU level.

Few envy Ashton the responsibility of creating a new EU diplomatic corps, or European External Action Service. Not only does Ashton have to navigate her way through the infighting among the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council, but she also has to maintain relations with 27 individual

Foreign Ministries. Unsurprisingly, not all of these parties have a common vision of how exactly the new service should be set up.

Ashton does not have much institutional guidance on the nature of her mandate either. The Lisbon Treaty that created her position failed to offer much detail as to how exactly the EU diplomatic corps should be organised—an omission that some diplomats now regret.

Europe as a global actor

When not dealing with human resource issues, Ashton is also responsible for representing the EU on the world stage in her capacity as both the High Representative on Foreign Affairs and the Vice-President of the European Commission. So far she has been accused of struggling to handle the role of leading lady.

Over the past 100 days, Ashton has traveled to the Balkans, the Middle East and Haiti. However, her statements and actions have often been overshadowed by media frenzies over softer topics e.g. whether she should have access to an official aeroplane for her travels. After the dust of this particular debate settled, Ashton was then criticized for arriving too late to post-earthquake Haiti and for undermining the EU’s international visibility in this important humanitarian crisis.

Despite all these challenges and distractions, when she does manage to speak above the critical chatter that surrounds her, Ashton tends to be well-received. This was evident in her trip to the Balkans, where she found a warm welcome from an often difficult-to-please audience. Similarly, her presentation of a re-

newed peace plan in the Middle East went as smoothly as could be realistically hoped in the circumstances.

Whether Ashton can move beyond the bureaucratic scraps that have defined her first 100 days is an open question. In early May there was widespread speculation in the British press that she might resign in the face of widespread international criticism for not making her mark on the world stage. While these rumours were categorically denied by the Commission, what issues Ashton wants to prioritize and which parts of the world will be highest on the EU's future agenda remain largely unclear.

Many see the next few months as a 'make or break' period for Ashton. But no matter how her personal story unfolds, it is likely that the position she holds will endure. This will undoubtedly have an impact on how the European institutions engage with the outside world. While the detail of the European External Action Service has yet to be agreed, what is clear is that the EU has the ambition and tools to become more assertive in international affairs. Eventually, it may confidently be able to answer Henry Kissinger's famous question of "who do I call if I want to call Europe?" ■

GREEN GROWTH IS THE NEW BLACK

By Glen Hodgson, Head of Transport and Energy Practice

Climate change is at the top of the agenda of EU policymakers, the business community and citizens alike. The EU has set itself ambitious climate targets, the so called 20-20-20 goals. This threefold approach to climate change involves reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020, increasing energy efficiency to save 20% of the EU's primary energy consumption and ensuring that renewable energy resources fuel at least 20% of Europe's energy consumption. This bold set of targets needs to be achieved against the backdrop of the disappointing COP 15 Climate Change conference that occurred in Copenhagen last December.

Although the Copenhagen negotiations failed to yield any concrete results, European policymakers are seemingly undaunted. Not only have they put green growth at the heart of Europe's 2020 Strategy, but the European Commission is even considering the possibility of upgrading Europe's 2020 carbon reduction target from 20% to 30%, compared to 1990 levels. As Europe looks to transition to a sustainable, low-carbon economy, a key issue in the overall debate will be the definition of the relationship between climate change and Europe's overall energy policy priorities.

Hedegaard, Potocnik and Oettinger in the hot seat

Over the past 100 days, EU Climate Action Commissioner Connie Hedegaard, Energy Commissioner Gunther Oettinger and Environment Commissioner Janez Potocnik have sat in some of the hottest seats in Brussels, and they have wasted no time in getting to

work after confident performances during their hearings before the European Parliament.

Given the current economic situation, Commissioner Hedegaard has stressed the importance of the EU reallocating funds from areas like agriculture and devoting those resources to combating climate change. This would mean modernising European agriculture and making all the related processes greener. Hedegaard is also working on a Transport and Climate package with Transport Commissioner Siim Kallas. In this regard, she certainly wants to establish Europe as a global leader on climate change and to set the pace for the rest of the world.

The Commissioners have also underlined energy efficiency as a priority, especially as it relates to the construction of new buildings and the renovation of older ones. As usual, the devil of these initiatives is in the details, and therefore, the Commissioners have acknowledged that enforcement of any new legislation among EU Member States will be just as important as the creation of the legislation.

A busy agenda

The European Commission has a whole host of policy initiatives that it will pursue this year. The European Council will discuss the EU's 2010-2014 Energy Action Plan in June. Currently, it is taking stock of the situation, with a view towards adopting the plan early next year. In the second half of 2010, the Commission will consult stakeholders on a low-carbon energy roadmap

for 2050. The results of that consultation are due out in 2011.

Security of energy supplies also remains a key issue for European stakeholders and citizens, particularly in light of recent gas crises that left EU citizens without heat in the middle of winter. Many leaders would like to prevent energy supplies being used as geopolitical bargaining chips.

DG Energy will also soon receive an interim report from the task force on smart grids. Smart grids and smart metering will help the EU bring about efficiency savings. Additionally, they will facilitate micro-generation and the roll-out of green technologies such as the charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. Later this year, a legislative package on energy infrastructure is expected.

Over the past 100 days, the Commissioners have also begun addressing the role of nuclear energy in Europe's energy mix. Some do not see nuclear as being a sustainable energy source but have nonetheless underlined that safety and R&D are very important. Vast amounts of money will likely be devoted to nuclear R&D but not to the detriment of renewable sources.

Having launched a public consultation on nuclear energy in March 2010, the Commission has indicated that the further use of nuclear power will be a major political issue. In that vein, policymakers are exploring a possible EU legislative proposal on the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. Not surprisingly, public opinion is strongly in favour of stronger rules on radioactive waste management, so this is an area in which policymakers can gain a few easy political points. The Commission will also adopt a Communication on nuclear energy (including an update on the Nuclear Illustrative Programme) later this year.

The Commissioners certainly have a busy schedule but when it comes to shaping the future agenda for environment, climate and energy policy, there really is no time like the present. ■

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FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS: A HOT-SEAT FOR CONTROVERSY

By Ulrich Adam, Head of Food and Consumer Affairs Practice

When John Dalli started his work as Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, he found the powers of the post considerably increased: not only had the Commission's internal reshuffling merged the previously split responsibilities of health and consumer protection into the domain of one single Commissioner, but it also added the responsibilities for pharmaceuticals and pesticides to this (already) broad portfolio. These developments notwithstanding, it was on two well-established battlefields of DG SANCO that Mr Dalli has faced the most controversy so far: the approval process for GMOs as well as the ongoing debates on health claims and nutrient profiles for food products.

Mr. Dalli has named 'responsible innovation' as his guiding principle when dealing with issues such as GMOs, cloning and nanotechnology. He defended the approval of the Amflora potato as a logical step of science-based policy making in light of the various favourable safety assessments carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). This, however, has not spared him from intense criticism from NGOs

such as Greenpeace. These groups have petitioned the Commission to take other factors – such as socio-economic and ethical issues – into account as part of the overall GMO approval process.

The Amflora approval was the first of several gauntlets that Commissioner Dalli will have to run. The long-term challenge for him will be to strike workable balances not only on GMOs (particularly in the Commission's roadmap on GMOs, which is expected to be published later this month), but also with regards to other innovative technologies such as nanotechnology and the cloning of food and animals.

Food legislation and the fight against obesity have also been focal points of Mr Dalli's first 100 days. Mr. Dalli's self-proclaimed guiding principle in this area is to expand information for consumers so as to allow them to make informed choices – or, in his own words, not to tell consumers what to eat but rather what they are eating.

During recent weeks, the ongoing EU review and approval of health claims made on food has been the

most controversial issue in this field. Mr. Dalli faced strong criticism from the industry over the lack of transparency in the approval process and the risk of market distortions arising from the considerable time differences in the approval (or rejection) of different health claims dossiers. Again, Mr. Dalli was quick to defend the Commission's and EFSA's work as fact- and science-based and promised to take counter measures should there be any clear proof of competitive distortions in the foods and drinks sector.

Another hot potato in this field is the issue of nutrient profiling, which had been put on hold by the previous Commission in March 2009 following severe criticism from stakeholders, the European Parliament and a number of Member States. Mr. Dalli has publicly come forward in defence of nutrient profiling, even though he has not given indications of his exact position on this issue. Notwithstanding the possibility of a future deletion of the very concept of nutrient profiles by the European Parliament, Mr. Dalli is poised to present a modified proposal later this year. Controversy will follow for sure, even if the new proposal might not differ-

entiate substantially from the so-called 'Barroso profiles' draft that concluded the first debate in 2009. As such, it appears that Mr. Dalli is likely to remain in the hot-seat for controversy for the foreseeable future. ■

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EUROPE'S UNFOLDING DIGITAL ERA

By Giovanni Colombo, Member of Digital Practice

On 19 May the European Commission published its Communication on a Digital Agenda for Europe. This is one of the flagship initiatives included in the Europe 2020 strategy presented by President Barroso at the beginning of his second mandate. Once again, the Commission has not been afraid to come forward with an ambitious action plan in a key policy area. The challenge, as ever, will be to live up to these ambitions.

Towards an EU internal digital market

The Digital Agenda is essentially an attempt to develop a truly integrated internal digital market. It will help Europe to revamp its economy by boosting the uptake of new information and communication technologies and the development of high value-added digital services. In turn the ICT sector (which currently accounts for 5% of the EU's GDP) will increase the productivity of other sectors, with innovations trickling down into many aspects of citizens' everyday life.

The Agenda is a mix of supply side and demand side measures. The former includes the deployment of universal broad coverage and – in the longer term – of next generation access networks; the facilitation of online commerce; and a review of the European standardisation policy to increase interoperability. Demand side measures focus on greater protection of personal data and privacy, plus a code of EU online consumer rights and actions to promote digital literacy.

Reasons to hope

In early May 2010, former Internal Market Commissioner Mario Monti presented his report on reinvigorating the European single market, which concluded that the market is not complete and work needs to be done to deepen it. For Mr. Monti, the lack of political commitment and economic nationalism are the main

culprits.

While the same issues may well threaten the future of the Digital Agenda, there are reasons to hope that the digital single market will realise its full potential.

First of all, the EU is undergoing a sweeping process of technological change, which is overhauling not only its telecommunication sector but its entire service economy. In many respects the Digital Agenda takes stock of an already existing process, which is advancing by its own inertia. The switch of television broadcasting services from analogue to digital technology is one of the main drivers of this process. It will need to be completed by 2012.

The growth of broadband access is another key driver. Average EU take up of fixed broadband per capita reached 24.8% as of January 2010, while mobile broadband uptake almost doubled to 5.2% from January 2009 to January 2010. Broadband connections also allow multi-platform access, i.e. the connection to the internet via digital TV and 3G mobile phones. Thus previously separate services are converging, radically changing the landscape of content distribution, with the integration of internet service providers (ISPs), telecom companies, digital TV broadcasters, websites, online shops, social networking platforms etc. For example, at the end of May, Google announced a partnership with Intel and Sony to create Google TV.

Secondly, these digital technologies are often transnational by default. The internet is non-territorial by nature. The challenge for legislators is to ensure a consistent interpretation and application of laws across national borders so that digital services can prosper and avoid redundant regulatory burdens.

This is an area where Brussels maintains a competi-

tive advantage due to its supranational nature and its exclusive competence on the internal market. This advantage can bring the EU some quick wins in its effort to build the governance structure that will allow the Digital Agenda to deliver. In March the EU introduced price caps on internet roaming to protect consumers from “billing shocks” when surfing the web from abroad, while last year the EU passed a regulation on mobile roaming charges, which will help to develop the market for cross border telecomm services.

Moreover the non-territorial nature of digital services will make economic nationalism and protectionism irrelevant, thus removing one of the traditional obstacles to the creation of an internal market.

The copyright challenge

However, questions will be raised about the ultimate economic benefits and profits that the Agenda – and the internal digital market – will be able to deliver. More precisely one of the key questions, which still needs to be answered, is who reaps the profits from shared content. In the dispute pitting cultural industries against users, the challenge for the EU is to find an effective regulatory regime ensuring an adequate reward for authors, producers, and all the right-holders involved, without setting up excessive barriers to access to content and information.

According to Internal Market Commissioner Michel Barnier, Europe lost 186,000 jobs and creative indus-

tries lost some 10 billion euro due to online piracy in 2008. On 21 May Mr Barnier announced in *Le Monde* his plan to propose a pan-European licensing system for the collective management of (online) copyrights and a legal framework for the digitisation of orphan works. Meanwhile in April European Commission President José Manuel Barroso announced the creation of a reflection group which will examine the Google Books project and copyright issues.

It remains to be seen whether these initiatives will succeed. In 2009 talks on copyright levies between technology companies (which make electronic goods such as MP3 players and printers) and collecting societies (which represent authors and other rights-holders) collapsed after 18 months of discussion without concrete results.

Yet, striking the right balance between new forms of digital protectionism and legitimate industry requests will be crucial to make the internal digital market a reality. ■

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THE COMMISSION'S CHALLENGE: CREATING LONG-TERM ECONOMIC STRATEGIES AMID FINANCIAL CHAOS

By Philipp Bröchert, Head of Financial Services Practice

As major banks started to tumble in 2008 (with little chance for many of them to get up again by themselves), Europe slipped into a major economic recession in 2009. Against this tumultuous backdrop, the idea of bringing in an entirely new European Commission in early 2010 was daunting. At the time, there were many measures that urgently needed to be adopted in order to prevent the European economy from coming to a full standstill. The rapid deterioration of public finances in certain EU Member States, and Greece in particular, in the first half of this year and the subsequent weakening of the Euro are constant reminders that the European Union needs strong, established leadership. Adding to the European chaos of early 2010, the EU was also struggling to implement the Lisbon Treaty, the new legal framework that governs how EU institutions operate. With the fanfare of a new Commission being introduced amid the economic chaos, even a casual European observer might begin to wonder whether the Commission, the Parliament and EU Member States really had their priorities right.

Around the world, 2008-2009 was a period of firefighting and addressing immediate economic crises, and while the need to address the immediate threats of financial instability and sovereign debt will continue for the foreseeable future, EU policymakers should try to make 2010 a year in which more systemic, long term reforms are undertaken. In this context, a fresh Commission with new drive and perhaps new ideas is a positive development.

100 days after their installation in Brussels, the new Commissioners are ready for their first economic report card. What have they managed to achieve so far, and perhaps more importantly, what can they realistically achieve in the months to come?

After the economic turmoil of 2008-2009, the world has recently started to see signs of economic recovery. While that is a positive indication, the reality is that this recovery is modest and fragile, and it comes at a huge price. Massive rescue packages and fiscal stimuli were adopted by various European and international governments over the past 1 ½ years. These have left tremendous gaps in the Member States' public budgets. Extremely high levels of public deficit and debt, combined with longtime sloppy handling of public finances in some Member States, have again brought uncertainty to the financial markets and the economy as a whole. As Olli Rehn, the current Economic and Monetary Policy Commissioner, rightly put it, the critical question now is whether the real economic recovery can sustain the renewed financial turbulence.

In 2009, the old Commission focused on preparing legislation to address shortcomings on the financial markets and financial institutions. Going forward, the new Commission will need to do more; it will have to closely cooperate with the Member States and other stakeholders to ensure sustainable economic growth. While it is the Member States' role to ensure fiscal discipline and to control their revenues and expenses in an efficient manner, the Commission must ensure that

we see a coherent approach in Europe and to prevent individual Member States from taking off in different directions.

Luckily, the Commission seems to be doing just that. In May, it outlined proposals to reinforce economic governance in the EU. Key elements include:

- A reinforced compliance with the Stability and Growth Pact and deeper fiscal policy coordination. This should be achieved through better ex-ante coordination. Also, recurrent breaches of the pact should be treated more expeditiously, and more attention should be provided to public debt than has been done previously.
- Strengthening and broadening surveillance of macroeconomic developments in the euro area. Among various measures, the Commission could assess macroeconomic imbalances and developments and could issue early warnings to a Euro-area Member State or the Euro-area as a whole. This could also be done through a formal Council act on a proposal by the Commission.
- A European semester. This would involve developing an early coordination system for Member States as they prepare their national budgets and reform programmes. The Council, based on the Commission's assessment, could formally provide its assessment and guidance at a time when important budgetary decisions are still in a preparatory phase at national level.
- A robust framework for crisis management for

Euro-area Member States. Similar to the temporary European stabilisation mechanism agreed in May (mainly in response to the current Greek crisis and its negative effects on the currency as a whole), the Commission will make a proposal for a permanent crisis resolution mechanism.

These proposals have the potential to create a proper framework for a better coordination between the Member States and have now been picked up by a special task force on economic governance. This task force is composed of the EU's finance ministers, Commissioner Rehn, European Central Bank President Trichet, Eurogroup-head Juncker and EU Council President Herman Van Rompuy. They will aim to find an agreement while the Commission starts drafting legislative proposals.

All-in-all, it appears that the Commission has started to act on the most pressing economic issues and is starting to look at long term solutions. The question will be whether it will be able to deliver concrete and efficient proposals that are acceptable to the EU's Member States. But the truth is that addressing these issues requires a concerted effort by all EU institutions. Without help and support from other EU institutions, the Commission will not achieve much. ■

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PROFILES OF THE EU COMMISSIONERS

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José Manuel Durão Barroso

President of the European Commission

(Portugal, Christian Democrat)



Background

José Manuel Durão Barroso hardly needs any introduction. As the previous President of the Commission his re-appointment was not entirely smooth as he initially encountered strong opposition by the European Parliament (mainly in the Socialist group) who saw him as too business-friendly and right-wing. However, a lack of any viable alternative ultimately made him something of a shoo-in for a second term. Under his previous tenure as President of the Commission he managed to have the Lisbon Treaty ratified by all 27 Member States – no easy feat especially after the Constitutional Treaty was shot down in several referendums. As a result of the successful Lisbon Treaty ratification, as well as for his work on other issues including promoting the role of the EU in climate change, the 2007 Enlargement and pushing forward groundbreaking legislation such as the REACH Directive, he gained the respect – if not always the support – of EU heads of government. Also, by promoting the role of the EU in key international issues he raised the profile of the office of Commission President and ensured the EU was more present on the world stage. Prior to his appointment as the President of the Commission in 2004, he was the Prime Minister of Portugal.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To gain concrete progress on the 2020 Strategy;
- To help Europe get out of the financial crisis;
- To combat climate change;
- Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion making full use of 2010 being the European Year to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion;
- Full implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon.

Members of the Cabinet

- Johannes LAITENBERGER, Head of Cabinet
- Fernando FRUTUOSO DE MELO, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- António José CABRAL, Senior Adviser, EU 2020 Strategy and Economic and Monetary Affairs
- Clara MARTINEZ ALBEROLA, Adviser, Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship
- Laurence DE RICHEMONT, Adviser, Industry and Entrepreneurship
- Arianna VANNINI, Adviser, Agriculture and Rural Development

- Paulo VIZEU PINHEIRO, Adviser, External Relations, EEAS
- Olivier DANDOY, Member, Inter-institutional Issues and Regional Policy
- Henning KLAUS, Member, Inter-institutional Issues and the Digital Agenda
- Ines SERVULO CORREIA, Member, Culture
- Agnieszka SKURATOWICZ, Member, EU 2020 Strategy
- Hugo SOBRAL, Member, Climate Action and Energy
- Michelle SUTTON, Member, Inter-institutional Issues and Internal Market and Services
- Koen DOENS, Head of Service, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Directing and facilitating the negotiations between Member States on the financial situation of Greece;
- Presenting the EU 2020 Strategy to the public and Member States;
- Placing the issue of Climate Action on top of his agenda, including the creation of the new Commissioner for Climate Change.

What to expect

In his second term as EU Commission President, Barroso will be dealing with a number of priorities, such as economic growth, climate change, enlargement and EU institutional development. Although he has the benefit of experience, the challenges he now faces have undoubtedly taken on a whole new meaning in the current economic climate. Member States will be looking to him to maintain a steady hand on the EU ship as it deals with some of the biggest crises the Community has ever faced. In his first 100 days Barroso faced much criticism for appointing an old friend as the head of the Commission's delegation to Washington, and with the future of a European economic policy in doubt, his second term has undeniably gotten off to an eventful start. Ironing out the inter-institutional creases with the new Lisbon Treaty rules will take up a lot of his time. Moreover, he will be increasingly linked to the success (or failure) of the new High Representative for Foreign Affairs. These are no easy topics on his agenda, and his second tenure as President will present even more challenges than the first. ■

Dacian Cioloș

Agriculture and Rural Development

(Romania, Independent)



Background

Dacian Cioloș has a strong connection with the European Commission. He first started as a stagiare in the Directorate General for Agriculture in 1997 and in 2002-2003 worked for the European Commission Delegation to Romania. In 2005 he became an adviser to the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture, and in 2007 was appointed as the Minister for European Affairs and subsequently the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development. In 2009 he was the head of the Presidential Commission on Agricultural Policy for the government of Romania, before being appointed to the European Commission. Mr Cioloș holds several academic qualifications, including a PhD in agriculture and agronomy, and he has spent considerable time working in France. He is also fluent in French and married to a French national – traits that led to the French President Nicolas Sarkozy to describe Cioloș as the “second French Commissioner”.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To negotiate the 2013 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform – this is by far the biggest issue he faces;
- To reform the issue of Direct Payments to farmers to achieve a better balance between incomes and market-led prices;
- To discuss and implement new mechanisms to prevent agricultural price fluctuations;
- To make no further concessions on WTO negotiations.

Members of the Cabinet

- Georg HAEUSLER, Head of Cabinet
- Sorin MOISA, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Yves MADRE, Member, Agricultural Markets and Post-2013 CAP Consultation Process
- Ico VON WEDEL, Member, Inter-institutional Relations
- Gwilym JONES, Member, External Relations and Trade
- Alexandra CATALAO, Member, Agricultural Markets and Rural Development
- Alina UJUPAN, Rural Development and Direct Payments
- Roger WAITE, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Launching a consultation on the future of the CAP;
- Participating in discussions of the High Level Group on the milk sector, which aims to make recommendations for further EU support to dairy farmers. Action on this initiative is expected by the end of the year.

What to expect

His task to reform the CAP is a risky one, as whatever he does he will inevitably be criticized by at least one side of the debate. CAP reform is the *bête noire* of the EU, and few envy the task. Making matters more difficult, milk prices collapsed in 2009, which triggered a wave of violent demonstrations by farmers. This will only complicate the difficult tasks ahead of this Commissioner. His long-standing background in agricultural issues – including his experience working with the European Commission – will help give him credibility in negotiations, but it remains to be seen whether he will succeed in making everyone happy. His strong personal and professional ties to France (see President Sarkozy’s comments above) may help him gain credibility with an important Member State but also may make more ‘liberal’ countries (as well as international trading partners) more wary of him and to see him as being a ‘puppet’ of France when tackling agricultural subsidies reform. ■

Connie Hedegaard

Climate Action

(Denmark, Christian Democrat)



Background

Connie Hedegaard entered politics at the age of 23 when she was elected to the Danish parliament as a member of the Conservative People's Party. After a stint in journalism (1990-2004) where she worked for several print and TV outlets, Hedegaard returned to politics in 2004 as the Danish Minister for Environment. She later became Minister for Nordic Cooperation. In 2007, the then Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen appointed Hedegaard to the post of climate and energy minister. It was in this capacity that Hedegaard hosted the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 15) in December 2009.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To continue to push other countries to set more ambitious targets to tackle climate change;
- To increase the emission reduction target from 20% to 30% by 2020 from 1990 levels;
- To adopt regulatory measures necessary for the implementation of the revised Emission Trading System directive;
- To reduce emissions from transport and promote low-carbon and green technologies.

Members of the Cabinet

- Peter VIS, Head of Cabinet
- Michael STARBAEK CHRISTENSEN, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Anne BERGENFELT, Adviser, Climate Action negotiations, International Transport, European Environment Agency and Green NGOs
- Niels LADEFOGED, Personal assistant
- Caroline LAMBERT, Member, Financial and Budgetary Issues Related to Climate Action Adaptation
- Jurgen MULLER, Member, Inter-institutional Relations, Monitoring of EU GHG emissions
- Lukasz KOLINSKI, Member, Mainstreaming Climate Action and EU 2020 Strategy
- Maria KOKKONEN, Spokeswoman

Main actions to date

- Presenting a strategy to "help maintain the momentum of global efforts to tackle climate change". Through this the EU would swiftly begin implementing the Copenhagen Accord and continue to push for a robust and legally binding agreement replacing Kyoto;
- Launching a consultation with the international partners to explore specific action-oriented decisions that can be taken at the next round of negotiations in Cancun;
- Assessing the costs of a possible change of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 from 20% to 30%. A policy paper on this issue will be presented this June.

What to expect

Following a convincing performance during her hearing in the European Parliament in January, Commissioner Hedegaard has one of the most challenging portfolios in the new Commission due to its horizontal nature as well as the impact of climate change on growth, competitiveness, jobs and energy security. In this regard, Hedegaard will have to work closely with Commissioner for Energy Günter Oettinger and the Directorate-General for Energy to address the priorities and challenges of her portfolio. One of Hedegaard's primary ambitions is to see Europe become the most climate friendly region in the world by the end of her five-year mandate. Naturally, the focus in the coming months will be the international climate talks. Hedegaard strongly believes that it is important to have a set of concrete decisions coming out of the climate meetings in Cancun in November. The discussions of a 30% target and the need for the EU to speed up efforts to retain its leadership will be fundamental as industry and environmentalists become increasingly vocal in expressing their views. In addition, Hedegaard will also face the challenge of transforming the EU into a low-carbon economy, with a policy initiative on this matter expected in the coming months. ■

Joaquín Almunia

Competition

(Spain, Socialist)



Background

Joaquín Almunia has been a European Commissioner since 2004, first for Economic and Monetary Affairs (succeeding Pedro Solbes who returned to domestic Spanish politics in Spring 2004) and now for Competition in Barroso II. In Barroso I, Almunia was charged with ensuring that EU Member States respected their commitment to the Stability and Growth Pact and gained valuable experience in withstanding political pressure from Member State Governments. At the same time, it allowed him to build close ties with the key financial decision-makers around Europe and more specifically on the Ecofin Council.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To overcome the crisis and ensure that Europe comes out of it better equipped for balanced and sustainable growth and for generating more jobs;
- To ensure strict compliance with European competition rules;
- To establish effective action against cartels;
- To adapt the general exemption scheme for agreements between manufacturers and retailers to the new patterns of trade, particularly e-commerce;
- To examine ways to “modernise” and “expedite” state aid control procedures;
- To guarantee access and provide affordable high quality public services to all EU citizens.

Members of the Cabinet

- Carlos MARTINEZ MONGAY, Head of Cabinet
- Guillaume LORIOT, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Antitrust and Merger Control
- Anna JAROSZ-FRIIS, Member, State Aid policy and enforcement in financial services and regional aid
- Elisabetta RIGHINI, Member, State Aid policy and enforcement in the real economy
- Sofia ALVES, Member, Cartels, Antitrust and Merger control in basic industries, transport and pharmaceuticals
- Eliana GARCÉS TOLÓN, Member, Antitrust and Merger control in energy, environment, information industries and financial services

- Ignacio PEREZ CALDENTEY, Member, Inter-institutional relations
- Soledad BERNABÉ CASADO, Assistant to the Cabinet
- Amelia TORRES, Spokeswoman

Main actions to date

- Ensuring close cooperation between regulators and competition law enforcers so that markets work for consumers;
- Reviewing how the Directorate-General for Competition makes decisions in order to ensure companies rights’ are respected;
- Drafting plans on EU collective redress measures;
- Developing plans to implement personal sanctions in cartel cases;
- Using the settlement procedure for the first time against 10 producers of memory chips from 1998-2002 which allowed the Commission to speed up its investigations after the companies acknowledged the violations;
- Adopting new rules on the Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation, which expires on 1 June.

What to expect

After six years in Brussels, Almunia is a well established and respected figure in the EU political landscape. His term as Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, where he demonstrated competence and experience in confronting powerful EU Member State governments, will certainly serve him well during his term as Competition Commissioner. In his new role, he will have even more power, and given his CV, one can expect him to make full use of it to impose compliance with EU competition rules on economic actors. The biggest challenge facing Commissioner Almunia will no doubt be to ensure an orderly exit from the financial crisis. To this effect, he will have to monitor and closely watch the compliance of the financial institutions and other economic actors with the EU restructuring plan. He must be constantly vigilant to ensure these companies stay in line with EU competition law. ■

Andris Piebalgs

Development

(Latvia, Christian Democrat)



Background

Andris Piebalgs is an experienced Latvian politician, who has held many government posts before joining the Commission. This is his second term as a Commissioner; in 2004 he was appointed as Energy Commissioner. As successful as he was in this role, his nomination for the position of Development Commissioner came as a surprise, as he has little experience in this field.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To eradicate poverty and progressing towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- To ensure that Member States deliver what they have promised on the issue of increasing development aid contributions;
- To improve aid effectiveness to ensure that EU development cooperation programmes respond to the real situations that partners are facing on the ground;
- To ensure that all EU policies have a development component.

Members of the Cabinet

- Christopher JONES, Head of Cabinet
- Pēteris USTUBS, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Relations with new donors, Migration, Election monitoring, UN relations, Cotonou agreement
- Antti KARHUNEN, Adviser, Relations with AIDCO, Budgetary control
- Maud ARNOULD, Member, Pan-African issues, EU-Africa strategy, Food, Agriculture, Water
- Philippe LATRICHE, Member, Millennium Development Goals, G8, G20, Relations with the USA
- Kristin ARP, Member, Relations with the European Parliament, Climate Change
- Elīna MELNGAILE, Member, Human and Social development
- Catherine RAY, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Publishing a Communication on an EU Action Plan to support the MDGs. This 12-point plan proposes ways to ensure the increase of development aid by the EU Member States and supports the need for innovative sources of financing;
- Travelling to Haiti and Ethiopia;
- Representing the Commission at the G8 meeting in Halifax devoted to development issues;
- Visiting Washington to re-launch the EU-US development dialogue and cooperation after a 12-year break.

What to expect

Drawing from his experience as Energy Commissioner, Piebalgs is likely to pursue the ambitious plans he set out during the European Parliament hearing. He clearly wants to maintain the European Union's role as a champion in the development support and believes all EU policies should have a clear development angle. Before tapping into daily tasks to achieve these goals, Piebalgs faces the challenge of solving numerous competence division dilemmas starting with a compromise on the task division between the newly created European External Action Service and the Development Directorate General. On top of that, the European Commission and Member States are now battling over where to draw the line between the responsibilities of controlling billion of Euros that the EU gives to developing countries. The Commission wants to retain control over relations with countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) and to continue managing the assistance provided to these countries from the European Development Funds. For the time being Piebalgs' promise that "there will be no real battles on development policy against foreign policy goals" has not been realized, and the future of clear competence division seems at least blurred. ■

Neelie Kroes

Digital Agenda

(The Netherlands, Liberal)



Background

A prominent figure under Barroso I, then European Commissioner for Competition Neelie Kroes developed a reputation for being a hard-hitting and assertive Commissioner, unafraid to stand up to business infringements of EU competition regulation. During her tenure, the Commission's Directorate-General for Competition brought landmark fines against companies such as Microsoft and Intel for unfair business practices and set the standard for a fully regulated and fair internal market. Before moving to Brussels in 2004, Kroes sat on the board of 12 companies, including Volvo and the French defence group Thales. Despite concerns about her proximity to big businesses and her ability to make tough decisions as Competition Commissioner, Kroes imposed record fines on cartels, including the biggest-ever (nearly 1bn euros) on four lift and escalator makers.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To create a single online market;
- To push Europe to invest more in the development of a globally competitive ICT sector;
- To modernise the EU digital infrastructure so that it provides ubiquitous broadband access;
- To reduce the 'digital divide';
- To take advantage of new digital opportunities.

Members of the Cabinet

- Anthony WHELAN, Head of Cabinet of Cabinet: Anthony Whelan
- Lorena BOIX ALONSO, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Audiovisual and information technologies, international relations, digital internal market, EU2020 strategy.
- Constantijn VAN ORANJE, Member, Economic analysis, Converged networks, Emerging technologies, ICT
- Giuseppe CONTE, Member, Broadband and internet infrastructure, Digital TV, Digital dividend and spectrum
- Hervé DUPUY, Member, Digital content, ICT for Health, General affairs
- Arnoud BADER, Member, Electronic Communications, Inter-institutional affairs
- Carl-Christian BUHR, Member, Research and innovation, Components and systems

- Lucas JOSTEN, Policy Assistant, Parliamentary relations
- Jonathan TODD, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Mapping out a European Digital Agenda, which will form one of the pillars of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The action plan focuses on 7 key goals, including the creation of a digital single market and improving areas such as security, standards, infrastructure and green ICT;
- Launching a public consultation for the creation of a Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP). The Programme will map out the EU's short term strategy towards the reallocation of radio spectrum frequencies to allow for greater broadband access across Europe;
- Securing the support of the telecoms ministers of the Council for an agenda to maximise the social and economic potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Europe;
- Highlighting the lack of investment in networks, fragmented digital markets and low ICT skills as key challenges to overcome during her term.

What to expect

Commissioner Kroes has made a solid start to her term in office as head of Europe's Digital Agenda. As well as setting the foundations for Europe's future ICT policy, she has also dealt with the need for greater investment in ICT research and initiated a consultation on Europe's radio spectrum reform. The recent launch of the EU Digital Agenda has set a challenging policy programme to improve e-commerce, accessibility and privacy for EU citizens in the online world, however, as her term continues, her greatest challenge will be her ability to coordinate and develop a truly online digital market in Europe. At the time of writing, Ms Kroes' VVD Party was ahead in the opinion polls for the upcoming Dutch general election, leading to rumours that she may be appointed Prime Minister following the election. However political commentators in the Netherlands have been sceptical about the likelihood of such an outcome. ■

Olli Rehn

Economic and Monetary Affairs

(Finland, Liberal)



Background

Before becoming Economic and Monetary Affairs Commissioner, Olli Rehn held the Commission's Enlargement portfolio. Rehn also briefly served as European Commissioner for Enterprise and Information Society (July-November 2004) when he replaced Erkki Liikanen, who left the Commission to become Governor of the Bank of Finland. As the Commissioner for Enlargement, Rehn presided over the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, as well as continuing negotiations with Croatia and the opening of negotiations with Turkey. Prior to joining the Commission, Rehn was economic advisor to the Finnish Prime Minister. A keen footballer, Rehn played for his hometown club Mikkelin Palloilijat in Finland's top division in his youth. When not tackling Europe's economic crisis, he has devoted some time to playing for the football teams of the Finnish Parliament as well as the European Commission.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To ensure an EU response to the financial crisis in Europe;
- To maximise all EU tools to ensure a return to growth and higher rates of employment
- To help coordinate the financial package of aid to Greece and ensure that the problems do not spread elsewhere;
- To create a proposal for a permanent crisis resolution mechanism so that earlier economic coordination at the EU level will help ensure that future financial crises in Europe are averted.

Members of the Cabinet

- Timo PESONEN, Head of Cabinet
- Stéphanie RISO, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Vesa VIHRIÄLÄ, Adviser, Relations with the European Central Bank and EU 2020 Strategy
- Taneli LAHTI, Member, Euro Coins and Notes, Member State Economic Situation Surveillance
- Risto ARTJOKI, Member, Eurostat, Financial Programming and Budget
- Nina HYVÄRINEN, Member, Coordination with International Financial Institutions
- Amadeu ALTAF AJ TARDIO, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

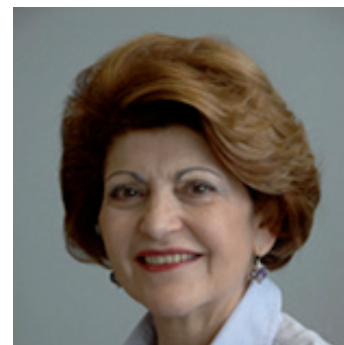
- Coordinating an unprecedented financial rescue package for the ailing European economy. Along with EU finance ministers, Rehn agreed to emergency measures worth €750 billion to restore faith in Europe's monetary union;
- Arguing that the EU should look to broader and deeper surveillance of national economic policies;
- Achieving consensus among the Member States and reinforcing economic governance in the European Union.

What to expect

Since taking office, Olli Rehn has arguably been one of the busiest European Commissioners, primarily focusing his efforts on coordinating a European solution to Greece's financial woes. In order to maintain Europe's competitiveness, Rehn is also calling on countries such as Spain and Portugal to swiftly reduce their budget deficits while at the same time urging other stronger economies such as Germany to sustain the EU's economic development. In order to ensure an effective coordinated exit strategy from the current crisis, Commissioner Rehn will need to establish the basis for sustainable and smart growth across all Member States. In this regard, the primary challenges facing the Commissioner will be to ensure fiscal consolidation together with structural measures to encourage growth and the capacity to create employment across all Member States. ■

Androulla Vassiliou

Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth
(Cyprus, Liberal)



Background

An experienced lawyer and former legal advisor to Standard Chartered Bank and Bank of Cyprus, Androulla Vassiliou became First Lady of Cyprus in 1988 and later became President of the World Federation of United Nations Associations. Vassiliou formally entered politics in 1996 as a Member of the Cyprus House of Representatives and served on the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Committee on Education and Culture. She later became Vice-President of the European Liberal Democrats and Reform Party and chairperson of the European Liberal Women's Network. Before her appointment to Barroso II, Vassiliou served as European Commissioner for Health for almost two years.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To modernise higher education through the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, Marie Curie actions, the Erasmus and the Erasmus Mundus programme;
- To boost youth mobility by launching the 'Youth on the Move' initiative (due for launch in July 2010);
- To revise and propose new objectives for the future of higher education policy agenda and for the modernisation of European Vocational and Training (VET) policies;
- To present proposals for the implementation of the new competence on sport as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty, which includes establishing a framework for political cooperation;
- To enhance digital cinema and publish a communication on 'Opportunities and Challenges for European Cinema in the Digital era';
- To cooperate with fellow Commissioners on copyright issues in the new Digital Agenda and to support a fair remuneration for the artists.

Members of the Cabinet

- Philippe BRUNET, Head of Cabinet
- Themis CHRISTOPHIDOU, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Youth on the Move, Lifelong Learning, Vocational Education

- Jonathan HILL, Member, Interinstitutional relations
- Zenon SEVERIS, Member, Youth policy, Sport policy
- Catherine SUSTEK, Member, Cultural policy, Multilingualism
- Fabrice COMPTOUR, Member, Innovation and Technology, Universities
- George Michael ZISSIMOS, Member, Agenda and communication
- Dennis ABBOTT, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Preparing a Communication on an EU agenda on sport and a proposal for a first EU Sport Programme, which will initially run in 2012-13;
- Proposing the establishment of the 'European Heritage Label,' an EU-wide initiative to highlight sites that celebrate and symbolize European integration, ideals and history. The label, which will hopefully come into effect in 2011/2012, would set up an independent panel to select sites that celebrate and symbolize European integration, ideals and history;
- Launching the 'Spring Day for Europe 2010' campaign, which will run until 30 June 2010 and intends to introduce European themes into school lessons in innovative and creative ways;
- Announcing a public consultation on the future of cultural and creative industries. The consultation is linked to a new Green Paper that highlights the need to improve access to finance, especially for small businesses, as key to enabling the sector to flourish and to contribute to sustainable and inclusive growth.

What to expect

As Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, Vassiliou has been given a broad mandate in Barroso II. However, her experience in national politics as well as her brief stint as Commissioner for Health will be invaluable as she faces cross-cutting challenges such as sport, education and culture. ■

László Andor

Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

(Hungary, Socialists)



Background

Before being appointed to as Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor, a Hungarian, represented the Czech Republic on the Board of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Prior to that, he worked as an advisor to the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic as a political appointee from the Hungarian Socialist Party. He is an economist by training and has numerous academic accolades including research fellowships in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To rethink the European Employment Strategy;
- To fight poverty by promoting policies that support vulnerable groups and addressing the root causes of poverty, which include seizing the opportunities in the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion;
- To guarantee faster and more effective use of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF);
- To renew and intensify the dialogue with the EU's social partners;
- To remove obstacles to the free movement of workers.

Members of the Cabinet

- Anabela GAGO, Head of Cabinet
- Éva TÖRÖK, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Legislative Programme, Health and Safety
- Csaba KÁNCZ, Adviser, Employment Strategy, Social Responsibility
- Gyula HEGYI, Member/Personal Assistant to the Commissioner, Inter-institutional relations, Poverty, Green jobs
- Denis GENTON, Member, Social Fund, Relations with the European Parliament
- Max UEBE, Member, Labour law and Social Dialogue
- Gyula CSEREY, Member, International Dimension, Demographic Analysis
- Maria JAVOROVA, Spokesperson
- Cristina ARIGHO, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Launching the EU's new strategy for jobs and growth "Europe 2020;"
- Launching the "New Skills for New Jobs" initiative under the EU 2020 Strategy.

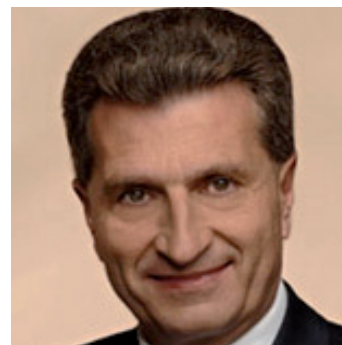
What to expect

Unlike the typical Euro-politician, Andor embraces his position as an outsider and has a unique way in which he communicates his ideas. His academic background has marked him as a bit of an intellectual, and this is reflected in his public speeches in which he tends to lack the finesse that is so typical of the political professional. Some might say that he lacks the 'grandeur' of his colleagues, but he has nonetheless proven to be very competent, dedicated and confident. He is a self-proclaimed "post-Keynesian" and is expected to advocate strong pan-EU level initiatives to stimulate the economy and the job market. One of the key dossiers he has to manage is the stagnant working time directive. His consensual style will certainly come in handy. ■

Günther Oettinger

Energy

(Germany, Christian Democrat)



Background

A lawyer by training, very little was known of Günther Oettinger at the European level before his appointment as Energy Commissioner earlier this year. Oettinger entered German national politics in 1998 when he became a member of the Baden-Württemberg parliament. From 2005, Oettinger held the position of Minister President of the Region. As a member of the Christian Social Union (CSU) and not of Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union party, Oettinger may exercise his duties as European Commissioner in Brussels with a certain degree of freedom from the German executive.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To promote energy security through improved cooperation between Member States and to consider possible binding measures to ensure EU solidarity on gas supplies;
- To propose an energy efficiency action plan in the course of 2011 with binding targets, if these prove necessary;
- To ensure that the EU can adopt a better coordinated stance on international energy issues.

Members of the Cabinet

- Michael KOEHLER, Head of Cabinet, Relations with DG ENER, International Energy Relations (Coordination)
- Olivier ONIDI, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Overall coordination of Energy policy
- Marzena ROGALSKA, Member, Energy Efficiency, Relations with the IAEA, Nuclear Safeguards, Euratom Supply Agency, Non nuclear Energy research
- Paula PINHO, Member, Security of supply and Networks
- Heinrich HICK, Member, Energy Research coordination, Nuclear Energy, Euratom research, Energy wholesale markets
- Michael HAGER, Member, Communication, Inter-institutional relations, Internal market
- Marlene HOLZNER, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Redirecting unspent European Economic Recovery funds towards European cities to boost energy efficiency and renewables at the local and regional level;
- Initiating the preparation of a new long term strategy to 2050, which should be published after the summer;
- Confirming the EU's commitment to untangle the Nabucco gas pipeline project, considered to be of strategic importance for the EU security of supply;
- Easing energy tensions with Russia by making his first visit outside of the EU to Russia, where he met with the Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller, among others.

What to expect

Reaction in media and industry circles to a couple of slightly uninformed early comments by Commissioner Oettinger on Nabucco and on electricity prices, highlights the political and commercial sensitivity of his portfolio.

Oettinger will have to play a balancing act on both energy security and energy efficiency issues. On energy security, he will need to improve the situation by ensuring the diversification of the supply routes and the establishment of solidarity measures while also maintaining good relationships with Moscow. On energy efficiency, the Commission is already two years behind schedule with an action plan, and Oettinger will want to avoid further delays. Moreover, it will be up to him to ensure that the plan includes measures to practically ensure that the 20% objective can be met.

With the deadline for the publication of the National Renewable Energy Action Plans at the end of June 2010, the Commissioner will at least have to comment on those plans and may, depending on the quality of these documents, need to pressure some Member States to improve them. This will certainly be interesting and will serve as a test of his political influence with Member States. ■

Štefan Füle

Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

(Czech Republic, Socialist)



Background

Štefan Füle has a long history in Czech diplomacy and government. Before being appointed to the Commission, he was the Czech Minister for European Affairs. Previous posts include First Secretary of the Czech Republic's Mission to the UN, Ambassador to Lithuania and the United Kingdom, and Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to NATO. In 2000 he also briefly served as the First Deputy Minister of Defence.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To show candidate and neighbouring countries that there are real advantages of EU membership and this should be communicated more to the citizens;
- To manage the process following the government of Iceland's application for EU membership;
- To finalize the accession negotiations for Croatia;
- To complete the outstanding visa facilitation agreements in the Balkans and maintain the momentum towards EU accession in the region;
- To ensure that Turkey's accession remains a key leverage tool for achieving political reform and that the EU stands firm on membership requirements;
- To maintain the use of the EU Neighbourhood Policy with regard to EU-Ukraine relations.

Members of the Cabinet

- Simon MORDUE, Head of Cabinet
- Jana Katarina LOLIĆ ŠINDELKOVÁ, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Gilles BERTRAND, Member, Neighbourhood Policy, Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and the Union for the Mediterranean
- Rudiger BOOGERT, Member, Cyprus issues, Iceland and Turkey
- Claus GIERING, Member, Inter-institutional relations, Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Iwona PIORKO, Member, Eastern partnership, Belarus and Ukraine
- Alena OBRUSNÍKOVÁ, Member, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova
- Pavel BOUDA, Member, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Occupied Palestinian Territories and Syria
- Angela FILOTE, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Visiting many of the key countries in his remit, including the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe;
- Addressing the outcome of the recent Ukrainian elections and the wide-spread belief that the country would be taking a more Russian perspective on future relations;
- Organising the response to the application of Iceland to join the EU;
- Giving the green light for the Commission to propose to waive short-term visa requirements for the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania.

What to expect

Štefan Füle appears to have made a solid start to his mandate. His statements and speeches on the countries in Eastern Europe and the Balkans appear to be largely well received and have met with increased enthusiasm for EU accession in certain parts – in particular Croatia and Albania, with the latter pushing hard to speed up EU membership talks. The Commission has very recently proposed visa-free travel for the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania – the two countries that had delayed national implementation – which will allow them to catch-up with their regional neighbours in terms of integration with the rest of Europe. ■

Janez Potočnik

Environment

(Slovenia, Liberal)



Background

An economist by training, this is Potočnik's second term as a European Commissioner having previously served a term as Commissioner for Science and Research under Barroso I. Before moving to the European Commission, Potočnik was Head of the Negotiating Team for the accession of Slovenia to the EU for a period of six years. He was also Minister for European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia (2002-2004) and acted as Minister Counselor in the Slovenian Prime Minister's cabinet from 2001-2002. From 1993 – 2001 he was Director of the Institute of the Macroeconomic Analysis and Development in Ljubljana.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To increase resource efficiency and to break the link between economic growth and resource use;
- To present a new biodiversity action plan by the end of 2010 (the EU has failed to meet the 2010 targets);
- To push for the implementation of existing environmental legislation;
- To focus on "smarter regulation and simplification of existing legislation".

Members of the Cabinet

- Kurt VANDENBERGHE, Head of Cabinet
- Matjaž MALGAJ, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Vesna VALANT, Member, Nature and Biodiversity, Forests, Soil and Biotech
- Bénédicte CAREMIER, Member, Water, Marine, Environment and Health and Animal Welfare
- William NEALE, Member, Sustainable Production and Consumption, Waste
- Elena Višnar MALINOVSKÁ, Member, Legal Affairs and Governance, Regulation
- Joe HENNON, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Calling for increased actions to ensure that the stocks of blue-fin tuna are managed in a sustainable way;
- Announcing a strategy to improve the management of bio-waste;
- Fighting against illegal timber exports by signing the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade Voluntary Partnership Agreement with the Republic of Congo;
- Initiating a public debate on protecting Europe's forests against climate change;
- Launching a handbook on how to assess the environmental impact of products in order to promote more sustainable consumption and production patterns across Member States;
- Launching a €35 million call for eco-innovation projects to be funded under the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme.

What to expect

One of the main challenges facing Potočnik is that the scope of his portfolio has been reduced by the creation of a new Directorate-General for Climate Change. Although it is still too early to judge the impact that this change will have on Potočnik's term as Commissioner for Environment, he has however a number of important policy priorities to focus on including advancing the first reading of the Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive and the RoHS Directive. Other issues that will be high on his agenda include the International Plant Protection Convention and illegal logging. During his term as Commissioner, Potočnik will need to work closely with Commissioner Hedegaard and Commissioner Damanaki, amongst others, in order to ensure a streamlined approach to environment policy. ■

Janusz Lewandowski

Financial Programming and Budget

(Poland, Christian Democrat)



Background

As a member of Poland's opposition group under communism, Janusz Lewandowski became an active politician at the end of the Polish communist era. He served twice as Poland's Minister of Privatisation, first in 1991 and then in 1992-3. Between 1991 and 1993, he was also a member of the Polish Parliament, and from 1997 to 2004, he served as Deputy Chairman of the Committee for State Treasury and Privatisation. Lewandowski is known in Brussels primarily as a member of the European Parliament's Budgetary Committee (2004-2006). This experience will hopefully help him navigate the contentious and hot-button issues surrounding next year's budget. Lewandowski is also responsible for overseeing the development of the EU's financial perspective beyond 2013, a challenging task in the aftermath of one of the biggest economic crisis ever.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To ensure a smooth adoption of the 2011 budget and beyond in accordance with the rules set out by the new institutional framework deriving from the Lisbon Treaty;
- To actively manage the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) in order to improve the implementation of the annual budget and respond to the upcoming challenges;
- To facilitate an inter-institutional consensus on and a smooth adoption of the next financial package, including a new and reformed MFF;
- To present the triennial revision of the Financial Regulation.

Members of the Cabinet

- Marc LEMAÎTRE, Head of Cabinet
- Piotr SERAFIN, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Maria José SOUSA FIALHO, Adviser, Policy Planning and Strategy
- Angelika CHOMICKA, Member, Budget and Financial Programming
- Andreas SCHWARZ, Member, Annual Policy Strategy, Own Resources

- Przemyslaw SLOWIK, Member, Financial Regulation, Internal Control and Accounting
- Marianna PARI, Member, Budget and Financial Programming, Relations with the Budgetary Authority
- Patrizio FIORILLI, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Presenting the Draft Budget for 2011 on April 27;
- Planning for a budget of €130 billion, an increase of almost six percent.

What to expect

The European Commission is expected to present a review of budget spending in September. The mid-term review is intended to analyse spending priorities and to assess who pays how much into the EU's budget. Part of the review will address the issue of whether the EU should introduce its own tax, possibly in the form of a new value added tax or fuel levy. Not surprisingly, there has been a lack of member state enthusiasm over this proposal, and the Commission is skeptical about the initiative's success. In the spring of 2011, the EU will announce its spending plans for the period from 2014-2020, with the intention of reaching an agreement in 2012. Given the Commissioner's nationality and his recent statements, it is clear that he will be looking to allocate a substantial budget share to the new Member States. ■

John Dalli

Health and Consumer Policy

(Malta, Christian Democrat)



Background

John Dalli has a long history in the Maltese government including serving as the Minister for Industry, Economy, Finance, Foreign Affairs and Investment Promotion. More recently, he was in charge of Maltese social policy. Before entering politics, Commissioner Dalli was a trained accountant and has worked as a management consultant in the private sector.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To complete the food chain strategy;
- To push for better regulation in the internal market on agricultural products;
- To expand information available to consumers so that they can make more informed decisions;
- To ensure that consumer rights are not compromised in online transactions.

Members of the Cabinet

- Joanna DARMANIN, Head of Cabinet
- Nils BEHRNDT, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Pharmaceuticals,
- Rossella DELFINO, Member, Consumer and legal affairs
- Edward DEMICOLI, Member, Inter-institutional relations, food and veterinary office
- Harry VASSALLO, Member, Animal health and welfare
- Paula DUARTE GASPAS, Member, Public health and risk assessment
- Harald KANDOLF, Member, Safety of the food chain
- Frederic VINCENT, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Authorizing the use of the 'amflora' potato, a genetically modified organism. The environmental NGO Greenpeace responded with a media campaign in which it depicted Commissioner Dalli as the "chef" of EU genetically modified organisms (GMO);
- Launched an EU-wide database for medical devices with the aim to boost market surveillance of the sector.

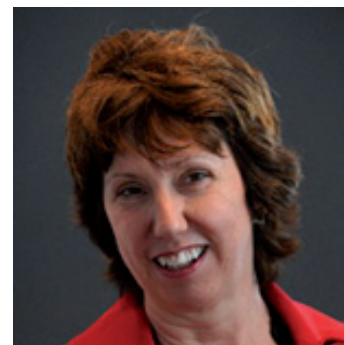
What to expect

The amflora GMO potato has attracted a lot of attention, and the issue will not die down soon. How this GMO 'hot potato' is dealt with in the future and the interventions of other Commissioners as well as MEPs, NGOs and Member States who are traditionally GMO-wary, will definitely be high on the agenda. The Commissioner has also recently announced his intention to visit China to discuss with the government issues of counterfeiting and, less controversially, the safety of toys. The DG was recently reorganised with oversight of pharmaceutical policy being transferred from Directorate General of Enterprise and Industry. This means additional responsibility for the Commissioner, and many key players will be looking closely to ensure that this reorganization results in improved policies. ■

Catherine Ashton

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

(United Kingdom, Socialist)



Background

Before becoming the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Baroness Catherine Ashton was the European Commissioner for Trade, where she replaced Peter Mandelson. She has also held several positions in the UK government, including Leader of the House of Lords, and has also held ministerial portfolios in the UK Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Constitutional Affairs and the Ministry of Justice.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To coordinate the European Foreign Policy response to global challenges and issues;
- To ensure that the European Parliament has full scrutiny over the European diplomatic service;
- To work with the US to ensure a coordinated policy towards Afghanistan, the Middle East and Iran, which are at the top of the list of priorities;
- To ensure a strong relationship with Russia, especially to deal with energy issues.

Members of the Cabinet

- James MORRISON, Head of Cabinet
- Helene HOLM-PEDERSEN, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Renate NIKOLA, Expert attached to the Office
- Pelayo CASTRO ZUZUARREGUI, Expert attached to the Office

Main actions to date

- Highlighting the importance of the region, Ashton very early on visited three countries in the Balkans – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo;
- Travelling to the Middle East including visiting Gaza – which was described as the most high-profile visit since Hamas took power;
- Visiting Haiti after the devastating earthquake;
- Conducting fact-finding missions and meeting and greeting some of the key international players she will be working with on a daily basis;
- Continuing to negotiate the establishment of the European External Action Service.

What to expect

The most notable aspect of HR Ashton's first 100 days in office is the amount of criticism she has sustained. Widely reported as a 'light-weight' figure when she was originally nominated, she has not managed to put a stop to the constant sniping coming from all corners of Europe – and even further afield from the US. The job she has been given is unprecedented and the task of setting up an entirely new bureaucracy – the so-called European External Action Service – has proven to be a bigger job than many expected (see article on EU Foreign Policy – "Tackling Kissinger's Conundrum"). She has now submitted detailed plans on how the service will be constructed and how the Member States react will be the litmus test of her success at this job: if rejected her already weak credibility might slide further; if a success, it could be the foundations of an increasingly assertive new voice in the EU. Currently, she is in negotiations with the European Parliament on the precise make-up of the service and plans to submit the main proposal to the EU Member States on June 17th. To add to her problems she has been criticized for not being able to speak French – which led to her accepting an invitation by the French Minister of Europe for an intensive one-week language course in the south of France. Not long afterwards, she faced another language issue with the German Foreign Minister who requested that the new European diplomatic corps speak German in addition to both English and French. The High Representative refused this request. ■

Cecilia Malmström

Home Affairs

(Sweden, Liberal)



Background

Cecilia Malmström was nominated to the Commission following a term as Sweden's Europe Minister from 2006-2010. In that position, Malmström was responsible for organising the 2009 Swedish Presidency of the EU. Prior to that experience, Malmström sat in the European Parliament as a member of the Liberal People's Party from 1999 to 2006. She was recalled from that position to join the new centre-right coalition government led by Fredrik Reinfeldt. As an MEP, she served on the Foreign Affairs, Constitutional Affairs and Internal Market Committees. Before entering politics, Malmström gained diverse professional experience, working at as a researcher at Gothenburg University, as a social studies teacher and as a psychiatric nurse. She studied at the Sorbonne and was awarded a PhD from Gothenburg University following her doctoral thesis on regional politics in Europe.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To come up with a proposal on unaccompanied migrant minors;
- To harmonise the reception conditions for migrants and offer legal ways to come to Europe;
- To draft legislation on the transnational transfer of staff within companies;
- To make proposals on the rights of seasonal workers;
- To adopt an immigration policy that would benefit the 'countries of origin;'
- To review the existing tools for the fight against terrorism including the internal security strategy;
- To revise the Data Protection directive in 2011.

Members of the Cabinet

- Maria ÅSENIUS, Head of Cabinet
- Laurent MUSCHEL, Deputy Head of Cabinet, External Relations, Migration and Development
- Karolina KOTTOVA, Member, Schengen border code, Visa policy, Irregular migration
- Kristina LINDAHL, Member, Legal and Labour migration, Relations with the European Parliament

- Søren SCHØNBERG, Member, People trafficking, cybercrime, financial crime, child pornography, counterfeiting, information exchange
- Ian VOLLBRACHT, Member, Drugs agency, budget
- Erik WINDMAR, Internal Security Strategy
- Michele CERCONE, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Proposing a directive to block access to child pornography, providing stronger sanctions for child sex offences and calling for criminal prosecution for grooming and child sex tourism;
- Issuing a proposal on human trafficking that will oblige Member States to act on the three fronts: prosecuting criminals responsible for trafficking human beings, protecting the victims and preventing the offences;
- Trying to build parliamentary consensus on the issue of transferring bank details to US authorities as part of US terrorist financing prevention policies.

What to expect

Malmström is a proven political performer, and as a former MEP, she is well-placed to handle discussions with the Parliament, which will play an important role in her policy field during her term. Her liberal, Scandinavian credentials mean that she will continue to attach a large importance to citizens' rights and liberties in her policies, and she will make the guaranteeing of liberty the litmus test of her work as a Commissioner. Furthermore, her work to date is already highly transparent and will continue to be so. This will be a similar tone to last year's Swedish Presidency, which she headed. While serving as an MEP, Malmström set up the 'One Seat' campaign, which calls for the European Parliament to be based entirely in Brussels. Although this campaign has gathered over a million signatures already, the campaign has said that it will not use the European Citizens' Initiative to push this any further. already, Commissioner Malmström no longer considers this a priority, and she has said that she will not use the European Citizens' Initiative to push this any further. ■

Antonio Tajani

Industry and Entrepreneurship

(Italy, Christian Democrat)



Background

Before entering politics, Antonio Tajani, a law graduate, served as an officer in the Italian Air Force. Following this, he pursued a career in journalism where he worked for publications such as *Il Settimanale* and *Il Giornale*, and as a presenter on the Radio 1 news programme. He later acted as spokesman for the Italian prime minister before becoming one of the founding members of the Forza Italia political party. Tajani has been very active on the Brussels scene since he was first elected to the European Parliament in 1994. Having served as leader of Forza Italia in the European Parliament, Tajani also served as Vice President of the EPP in 2002 and again in 2006, and took part in the Convention on the Future of Europe, aimed at creating the European Constitutional Treaty. In Barroso I, Tajani served as Commissioner for Transport starting in May 2008.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To develop a new industrial policy focused on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and greening the economy;
- To maintain competitiveness and employment in the European automotive sector by working within the CARS21 strategy and by ensuring that the industry becomes greener and safer;
- To work closely with the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy John Dalli to revise the current legislation on transparency in the pharmaceutical sector and to establish task forces which will examine the contribution of the pharmaceutical industry to health and social systems across Europe;
- To address problems with regard to the translation of the guidelines on REACH;
- To launch a communication and awareness campaign on EC conformity marks with regard to toy safety;
- To use opportunities such as Expo 2015 and the 2012 Olympic Games in London as platforms to promote Europe as a tourist destination;
- To resolve remaining problems with regard to the harmonisation of Galileo.

Members of the Cabinet

- Antonio PRETO, Head of Cabinet
- Diego CANGA FANO, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Ruth PASERMAN, Member, Industrial Policy and Economic Reforms
- Johann FRIEDRICH COLSMAN, Member, EU Space Policy and EU Satellite Navigation Programmes
- Mattia PELLEGRINI, Member, New Approach Industries, Competition, Trade and Development
- Massimo BALDINATO, Member, Regulatory Policy
- Silvia BARTOLINI, Member, Inter-institutional Relations and Communication
- Fabio PIROTTA, Spokesperson
- Andrea MARESI - Press officer

Main actions to date

- Publishing a communication for a strategy on clean and energy efficient vehicles;
- Emphasizing the smooth implementation of the registration of high-volume chemicals by REACH and implementing solutions to practical problems to support industry's work, in particular SMEs;
- Announcing the relaunch of the CARS21 high-level group, which was agreed at an informal meeting with EU ministers responsible for the automotive industry;
- Emphasizing the importance of tourism particularly in the context of the Commission's programme for entrepreneurship and competitiveness. In this regard, Tajani hopes to include a dedicated instrument for tourism in the new multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020.

What to expect

President Barroso is thought to have moved Tajani from the justice, freedom and security portfolio over fears that he would be too partisan as a result of his strong political links to the European Parliament. Tajani is sometimes accused of focusing on politics as opposed to policy but as the European Union seeks to develop an effective exit strategy from the economic recession, Tajani's portfolio for industry and entrepreneurship will no doubt play a central role in achieving this. ■

Maroš Šefčovič

Inter-institutional Relations and Administration

(Slovakia, Socialist)



Background

Maroš Šefčovič is a career diplomat, having begun his career in the foreign ministry of Czechoslovakia in the early 1990s. A native of Bratislava, he chose to join the nascent foreign service of Slovakia after Czechoslovakia split. In that capacity, he served as director of the Foreign Minister's private office, deputy head of the Slovakian Mission to the EU, Ambassador to Israel and Permanent Representative to the EU following Slovakia's accession in 2004. In late 2009, Mr Šefčovič was called upon to replace Ján Figel' as Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth following the latter's resignation from the Commission in order to lead the Christian Democratic Movement in Slovakia.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To help set up the European External Action Service;
- To spearhead a new formula on pay and pensions;
- To create a joint register of interest representatives for the Commission and Parliament;
- To improve the code of conduct for Commissioners;
- To give support to the idea of transnational lists for the European elections, to condense the election period into two days, and to possibly move elections from June to May to coincide with 'Europe Day'.

Members of the Cabinet

- Juraj NOCIAR, Head of Cabinet
- Bernd BIERVERT, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Relations with the Council, Citizens' Initiative, External Action Service
- Dora CORREIA, Member, European Parliament, National Parliaments, Delegated and Implementing Acts
- Marie-Hélène PRADINES, Member, Human Resources
- Christian LINDER, Member, Transparency Initiative
- Gabriela KEČKÉŠOVÁ, Member, Relations with the European Parliament and National Parliaments
- Michael MANN, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Launching the Citizens' initiative proposal on March 31. This initiative allows European citizens to directly suggest legislation to the Commission. It would require at least a million signatories collected over 12 months, from at least one third of Member States, with minimum numbers of signatories for each Member State. This initiative would oblige the Commission to produce a Communication, but not necessarily legislation;
- Seeking a stronger role for the Economic and Social Committee and greater cooperation with National Parliaments, following the new powers given to both by the Lisbon Treaty.

What to expect

While this is by no means the most glamorous of posts, it carries a wide range of responsibilities, especially under the Lisbon Treaty. Mr Šefčovič's experience as a diplomat has given him a profound insight into the dynamics of institutional relations, and his level-headedness and speedy career advancement is testament to his mastery of this real life chess game. With an ongoing, inter-institutional argument over the staffing and control of the External Action Service and the growing role for national parliaments under Lisbon, it would appear the Mr Šefčovič's skills are right for the job. ■

Michel Barnier

Internal Market and Services

(France, Christian Democrat)



Background

A long-standing French politician and member of President Sarkozy's Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (UMP) party, Michel Barnier has previously served as French Minister for the Environment (1993-1995), European Affairs (1995-1997), Foreign Affairs (2004-2005) and Agriculture (2007-2009). He is also a former Senator and a current member of the French Council of State. A prominent player on the Brussels scene for some time, Barnier served as EU Commissioner for Regional Policy and the Reform of European Institutions from 1999 to 2004. Before his return to the Commission, Barnier served as special adviser to the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso from 2006.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To put citizens at the heart of the European market;
- To strengthen European citizens' confidence in the opportunities and the protection of internal market offers, in particular in the context of e-commerce;
- To promote creation and innovation;
- To enable the internal market to create new growth;
- To create well supervised, capitalized and responsible financial institutions.

Members of the Cabinet

- Olivier GUERSENT, Head of Cabinet
- Kerstin JORNA, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- François ARBAULT, Member, Implementation of the Internal Market, Services, Postal Services, Europe 2020
- Paulina DEJMEK, Member, Free movement of capital, insurance, pensions, payments
- Bertrand DUMONT, Member, Financial services and markets, banking
- Georg RIEKELES, Member, Inter-institutional relations
- Grégoire SCHÖLLER, Personal Assistant, Corporate law, financial crime, professional qualifications
- Erwan DE RANCOURT, Special Assistant, Agenda and digital communications
- Chantal HUGHES, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Pursuing all the initiatives launched under the previous Commission, most notably the Hedge Funds Directive, Capital Requirements and upcoming Derivatives legislation which is expected for June;
- Planning action in the area of retail investors (PRIIPs), the review of Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) and may team up with Employment Commissioner Lazlo Andor in the area of pensions;
- Emphasizing the development of a strict copyright law to protect both consumers and rights holders;
- Intends to present the relevant draft legislation on patents in the autumn 2010.

What to expect

Most of the upcoming legislation in financial services was already set out prior to Barnier's appointment, but it will nonetheless be up to him to deliver and to meet the expectations of such measures. At the same time, he will have to take into account the concerns of the financial industry which is becoming increasingly worried about the combined effects of the different legislative proposals and certain Member States' commitment to reform financial markets, despite their grand political declarations.

Barnier has said, "Financial stability is a public good; it is our responsibility to guarantee it". With that in mind, Barnier has started to travel to the different Member States to meet decision-makers and representatives of civil society with a view to entering into a proper dialogue with Europe's citizens with regard to the internal market. Politically, Barnier has probably managed to allay some of the initial fears expressed by the City of London that a Frenchman was being put in charge of financial services. However, it remains to be seen how Barnier will manage the weight of responsibility facing him, especially given the sheer amount of work and the fundamental nature of current and upcoming regulatory proposals in the financial sector. ■

Kristalina Georgieva

International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response

(Bulgaria, Christian Democrat)



Background

Prior to becoming Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response Kristalina Georgieva, who holds a doctorate in Environmental Protection Policy and Economic Growth, served as Vice President and Corporate Secretary of the World Bank Group. Georgieva, who began working there in 1993, held various other positions, including that of an environmental economist and Director of Environment and Social Development.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To oversee the establishment of a European Voluntary Humanitarian Corps in accordance with article 214 of the Lisbon Treaty;
- To strengthen the capacity to cope with the humanitarian impact of climate change;
- To ensure continuous investment in disaster risk reduction;
- To advocate for a greater respect of international humanitarian law;
- To present proposals on the renewal of the Civil Protection Mechanism and the Civil Protection Financial Instrument, and to work with the European Parliament and Council to establish a financing instrument for humanitarian aid.

Members of the Cabinet

- Florika FINK-HOOIJER, Head of Cabinet
- Herve DELPHIN, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Humanitarian assistance, Civilian-military cooperation, relations with the UN, international organizations and other EU institutions
- Martijn QUINN, Member, Disaster response
- Mariana HRISTCHEVA, Member, Financial control
- Dessy CHOUMELOVA, Member, Humanitarian law, Refugees, Legal affairs
- Denis CHAIBI, Member, Food assistance, Health and Sanitation, ECHO offices worldwide
- Ferran TARRADELLAS ESPUNY, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Adopting a Communication on Humanitarian Food Assistance which examines food shortages in emergency situations as well as recovering from emergencies and the prevention of subsequent crises. Identifying the close ties between humanitarian and development assistance, the Communication provides direction for achieving long-term food security and building stronger national capacities for mitigating food stresses;
- Presenting the seventh DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) Action Plan which will target the most vulnerable local communities in El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama;
- Working to provide aid to Haiti in the aftermath of the devastating 2010 earthquake and promising to make the EU's response to such disasters faster, more coherent and more visible in the future.

What to expect

After Georgieva's confirmation hearing at the European Parliament, it was widely acknowledged that she performed considerably better than Rumiana Jeleva, Bulgaria's first choice for the job who was forced to withdraw her candidacy amid questions about her qualifications and business dealings. During her five-year term, one of the primary tasks facing Georgieva will be dealing with natural and man-made disasters which, in the context of climate change and the increasing incidence of man-made disasters as a result of international terrorism, has become increasingly challenging. Furthermore, as the whole world looks to the EU as an aid-donor in international disasters, Commissioner Georgieva has the difficult task of coordinating humanitarian aid and civil protection and making the best use of available resources. Her credibility as a good manager and her commitment to deliver efficient aid will be crucial to promote trust and confidence and therefore achieve a high-level of coordination. In this regard, Georgieva's experience at the World Bank will be an important asset. ■

Viviane Reding

Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship

(Luxembourg, Christian Democrat)



Background

Viviane Reding was a Parliamentarian in Luxembourg for over 20 years and then an MEP between 1989 and 1999. In 1999 she was appointed as the Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth, Media and Sport. In 2004 she was reappointed by the government of Luxembourg and served a second term as the Commissioner for Society and Media. In that role she carved out a substantial reputation for herself, spearheading many legislative reforms including the Telecoms Package and on the issue of mobile telephone roaming charges.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To reorient policies in the fields of Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, and to turn them into practical results;
- To make the Charter of Fundamental Rights be the guiding principle of all EU policies;
- To ensure a “Zero Tolerance Policy” as regards violations of the Charter;
- To strengthen the EU position in data protection;
- To launch a new gender equality strategy;
- To create a European response to violence against women and strengthen children’s rights;
- To propose an applicable law in matrimonial affairs.

Members of the Cabinet

- Martin SELMAYR, Head of Cabinet
- Viviane HOFFMANN, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Bartho PRONK, Advisor, Inter-institutional Relations
- Michael SHOTTER, Legal Adviser
- Telmo BALTAZAR, Member, Criminal Law and General Justice issues
- Dana TRAMA-ZADA, Member, Gender Equality and Anti-discrimination
- Jan OSTOJA-OSTASZEWSKI, Member, Data Protection and External Relations in the Field of Justice and Home Affairs
- Matthew NEWMAN, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Proposing a new solution to achieve legal certainty in cross-border marriages;
- Putting forward new legislation to help people exercise the right to a fair trial anywhere in the EU where they cannot understand the language of the case;
- Assessing the possibility of proposing a multi-disciplinary package of actions, including harmonisation of criminal offences and sanctions for female genital mutilation.

What to expect

Viviane Reding is considered as one of the success stories of the previous Commission and as someone who made an impact and produced clear results, attracting substantial (and largely positive) media coverage. She is now a Vice-President of the Commission and, if her first 100 days in office are a barometer, appears to intend to maintain a high profile under Barroso II. On her new portfolio it is likely that she will not be afraid of stepping on the toes of Member States on issues where she has a strong personal connection. ■

Maria Damanaki

Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

(Greece, Socialist)



Background

An engineer by training, Maria Damanaki has been involved in politics for forty years and is most recognized for her involvement in the uprising against the Greece's military dictatorship in November 1973. By the age of 25, she was known to all as 'kokkini (red) Maria', the one who had inspired Greeks to rise up against the hated colonels through a clandestine radio station that had been set up on the premises of Athens Polytechnic. After the regime crushed the rebellion, Ms. Damanaki spent seven months in prison. Damanaki was then propelled into the political arena when she became the youngest member of parliament in 1977. Since then she has held a number of positions, including Vice-president of Greece's parliament and President of the Coalition of Left and Progress. Damanaki is also well known for her work on human rights and anti-racism campaigns, both inside and outside of the parliament.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To reform funding of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP);
- To develop environmentally-sustainable fishing;
- To ensure competitiveness and guarantee income for fishermen through re-education and training;
- To explore providing assistance to the European Social Fund;
- To develop a coherent and consistent aquaculture policy;
- To protect EU fishing vessels from piracy.

Members of the Cabinet

- Georgios MARKOPOULIOTIS, Head of Cabinet
- Maja KIRCHNER, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Coordination of Fisheries policy
- Andreas PAPACONSTANTINOU, Member, External Dimension, Mediterranean, Aquaculture
- Yves AUFFRET, Member, Integrated Maritime Policy, Transport, Energy, Science & Research
- Dimitri GIOTAKOS, Member, Structural policy for fisheries, economic analysis for fisheries
- Soultana PASCHALIDOU, Member, Justice, Freedom & Security, Employment, Social Affairs

- Miriam SCHOEPS, Cabinet Assistant, Inter-institutional relations
- Constantin KOURKOULAS, Cabinet Assistant, Agenda, Communication, International Development

Main actions to date

- Working to reform the Common Fisheries Policy, including insisting on the importance of tackling past deficits in order to achieve better results in an environmental, social and economic context;
- Reaffirming her plans to continue to implement the Mediterranean Regulation no. 1967/2006, which aims to improve fisheries management in the Mediterranean so as to achieve sustainable fisheries and a level playing field.

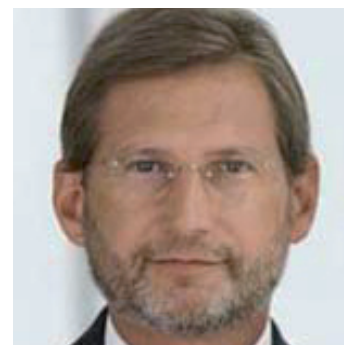
What to expect

Commissioner Damanaki seems determined to make significant progress on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and she plans to publish legal proposals in early 2011 so that the new legislation can enter into force in 2013. Concerned stakeholders are no doubt closely watching these developments as views differ on whether a new policy should place greater emphasis on conserving fish as opposed to social and economic priorities. ■

Johannes Hahn

Regional Policy

(Austria, Christian Democrat)



Background

Johannes Hahn's career in politics started in 1996 when he was elected to the Regional Parliament of Vienna. From 2003 he was a member of the Regional Government and became a Federal Minister for Science and Research in 2007. Before his political career, he had a long career in the private sector, working for the Federation of Austrian Industries and as the Secretary General of the Austrian Managers Association.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To ensure that investment in the regions is maintained, as it is essential to economic recovery and an integral part of the EU 2020 strategy;
- To promote more green and sustainable growth in the regions;
- To ensure that there is enough flexibility in implementation programmes in all regions.

Members of the Cabinet

- Hubert GAMBS, Head of Cabinet:
- Nicola DE MICHELIS, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Spain, Italy, Malta, Future of Cohesion policy, Council relations
- Hanna JAHNS, Member, Slovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Future of Cohesion policy, Audit
- Madeleine MAHOVSKY, Member, Germany, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, Greece, Cyprus, Territorial Cohesion
- Emma UDWIN, Member, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Portugal, candidate countries, Outermost regions, Territorial Cooperation
- Stefan ZOTTI, Member, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, Inter-institutional relations
- Loredana VON BUTTLAR, Member, Ireland, United Kingdom, Romania, Solidarity Fund, Roma
- Ton VAN LIEROP, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Travelling extensively to Xynthia in Southern France, which had suffered a substantial storm in March as well as to Madeira to help assess how the Commission could help with the efforts after terrible landslides;
- Announcing that Greece will not receive additional regional funding to help it with the economic crisis in the country – nor should Greece be penalized for financial irregularities, as that is not the role of regional funds.

What to expect

Commissioner Hahn has one of the less controversial portfolios but with the economic crisis, regional policy can be used to increase competitiveness and give a welcome need to boost employment rates. However, there will be many other DGs that will want to take the credit if the economy picks up again. Ensuring that regional policy maintains its proportion of the EU's overall budget will also be a challenge for Hahn in the near future. On a lighter note, in a media interview at the beginning of the year Commissioner Hahn was quoted as describing himself as the "Daddy" of the Regions. ■

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn

Research, Innovation and Science

(Ireland, Liberal)



Background

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn (or MGQ as she is more commonly referred to) has played an active role in Irish politics since 1975 when she was elected to the Irish Parliament. She has held many posts in government, and in 1979, she became the first female Irish cabinet minister. Her past government positions include Minister for Education; Minister for European Affairs; Minister for Tourism, Transport and Communications and Minister for Justice. In 1997 she announced her retirement from politics and held a number of private sector positions including the executive director of two Irish companies. She has also worked as a broadcaster for Ireland's Irish-language television station, TG4. In 2000, she took up a post at the European Court of Auditors where she served two terms before moving to Brussels to become European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To push the EU to become "a true innovation union";
- To tackle "five grand challenges" which include climate change, food, energy security, economic recovery and the health and well-being of an ageing population;
- To create an "i-conomy" and completing the European Research Area;
- To increase EU funding for research in the EU's next budget.

Members of the Cabinet

- John BELL, Head of Cabinet
- Ana ARANA ANTELO, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Waldemar KÜTT, Expert, Science & Simplification
- David HARMON, Member, Parliament and International Relations
- Shane SUTHERLAND, Member, Regulatory Strategy; Single Market Innovation + Research
- Patricia REILLY, Member, Science & Society
- Marion DEWAR, Member, Innovation & Research Policy
- Mark ENGLISH, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Planning to launch Europe's new Research and Innovation Strategy, which will be published in the autumn;
- Establishing a subgroup of at least eight Commissioners for whom innovation is a priority to ensure a cross-cutting approach to research and innovation policies in the EU;
- Establishing a second group of Commissioners who have an interest in research and who would meet on an ad hoc basis;
- Developing a new "innovation indicator".

What to expect

Since assuming her role as Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, 'MGQ' has appeared confident and has demonstrated her extensive political experience. Her term at the European Court of Auditors and her period as Minister for European Affairs as a member of Daíl Eireann (Ireland's lower house of parliament) will serve her well during her five year term as Commissioner. Ms Geoghegan-Quinn has promised to be robust and independent in her work. Her efforts to foster an innovation culture in Europe have already progressed, specifically through her plans to launch Europe's new Research and Innovation Strategy that will take place this autumn. ■

Algirdas Šemeta

Taxation and Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud

(Lithuania, Christian Democrat)



Background

An economist by training, Algirdas Šemeta served as the Director General of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics from 2001 to the end of 2008. He has had a busy time since. He started with a six month stint as Finance Minister (a decade after first holding the post) during which time he introduced unpopular but much needed austerity measures. He was then posted to Brussels in June 2009 to replace his country's new President Dalia Grybauskaitė as Budget Commissioner, before taking over an enlarged portfolio under the new Commission covering the existing combination of taxation and customs, with added responsibility for anti-fraud and audit.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To promote a "green taxation" agenda including the revision of the Energy Directive/introduction of a CO2 tax;
- To put forward proposals to create a harmonised corporate tax base (CCCTB);
- To reform the system of VAT in the EU;
- To complete the reform of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

Members of the Cabinet

- Kestutis SADAUSKAS, Head of Cabinet
- Baudoin BAUDRU, Deputy Head of Cabinet, Audit
- Maria Elena SCOPPIO, Member, Taxation
- Valere MOUTARLIER, Member, Taxation
- Elisabeth KOTTHAUS, Member, OLAF
- Lotte TAYLOR, Member, Customs
- Ignacio PEREZ CALDENTEY, Member
- Daiva NORKEVICIENE, Assistant to the Commissioner
- Emer TRAYNOR, Spokeswoman

Main actions to date

- Helping to push through an agreement on simplifying rules and procedures for VAT e-invoicing which stands to save EU business 18 billion euro in the medium term;
- Navigating a baptism of fire in the European Parliament over the appointment of an interim Director General of OLAF in the wake of the sudden death of previous incumbent Franz Hermann Brüner;
- Leading a marathon bus journey back to Brussels from the informal Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) from Madrid at the height of the volcano season.

What to expect

Despite a tricky hearing in the European Parliament where he was accused of lack of conviction on key issues, Šemeta has begun to gain respect behind the scenes for his mastery of a complex and expanded portfolio. His skills are likely to be put to the test as he attempts to push forward proposals on CO2 taxation and the reform of OLAF – neither of which are likely to be in any way straightforward. ■

Karel De Gucht

Trade

(Belgium, Liberal)



Background

A lawyer by training, Karel De Gucht has returned to the Commission for a second term after having briefly served as European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid (replacing Commissioner Louis Michel in 2009). De Gucht is no stranger to the European political scene having served as a Member of the European Parliament between 1980 and 1994. De Gucht was also a prominent player in Belgian politics where he held the position of Minister for Foreign and European Affairs (2004 – 2009). Until January 2004, De Gucht was chairman of the Flemish Liberals and Democrats (VLD) in Belgium.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To further strengthen the multilateral trading system and to complete the Doha round of trade talks;
- To pursue an open market policy through the EU's Market Access Strategy and to update and modernise the EU's trade defence instruments;
- To deepen trade and investment links with India, Canada, Ukraine, Latin America and Euromed;
- To take economic cooperation with the US within the Trans-Atlantic Economic Council to a higher level and to improve the High Level Economic Dialogue with China;
- To successfully conclude the Economic Partnership Agreements with ACP countries and to renew the General System of Preferences (GSP);
- To ensure that European companies are treated fairly and given opportunities to expand their businesses.

Members of the Cabinet

- Marc VANHEUKELEN, Head of Cabinet
- Frank HOFFMEISTER, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Damien LEVIE, Member, Intellectual Property, Investment and Services
- Marjut HANNONEN, Member, Biotech, Market Access and Sectoral Trade Issues
- Gwendolyn RUTTEN, Member, Inter-institutional Relations, Trade, Energy and Raw Materials

Main actions to date

- Working closely with the EU's partners in the WTO to ensure the effective conclusion of the Doha Development Round;
- Enhancing the EU-Asia trade relationship by advancing the EU's bilateral trade relationship with China and Japan, agreeing to launch bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with Vietnam in the near future, officially launching FTA negotiations with Singapore, reviving the bilateral FTA negotiations with India and continuing talks with ASEAN;
- Re-launching the negotiations on an Association Agreement with Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay), following the suspension of trade talks in 2004;
- Furthering discussions with the US on the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC) in the aftermath of the economic recession;
- Launching a public consultation to support the review of the EU's General System of Preferences (GSP), with the aim of promoting aid effectiveness and sustainable development;
- Initiating public dialogue on the future of trade policy in the EU in the current economic environment.

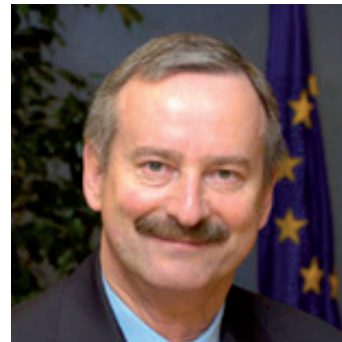
What to expect

Although he can be expected to follow the trade policy objectives pursued by his predecessors Catherine Ashton and Peter Mandelson, De Gucht will certainly make his own mark. Known for his blunt political style, De Gucht is also seen as a pragmatist. De Gucht has set the reaching of an agreement on the Doha Development Round as his primary objective and has emphasized his goal to reach agreement on 90% of the topics discussed by the end of 2011. It is expected that De Gucht will adopt a hands-on approach in implementing his objectives, in particular in the context of the EU's bilateral and multilateral negotiations at the WTO. ■

Siim Kallas

Transport

(Estonia, Liberal)



Background

Siim Kallas is enjoying his second term as Commissioner having previously served as Commissioner for Administration, Audit and Anti-Fraud where he oversaw the introduction of the EU Transparency Agenda and the Register for Lobbyists. Before his career in the EU, he was the Prime Minister of Estonia and has held many other top government posts including Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Finance. In 1991 he was appointed as President of the Bank of Estonia where he was responsible for reforming the country's monetary policy.

Stated objectives on taking office

- To achieve a sustainable European Transport policy that “truly benefits citizens and businesses”;
- To lead the way in the decarbonisation of the European transport sector –he has described this as “an ultimate goal, not debatable”;
- To accelerate the introduction of Intelligent Transport Systems;
- To promote investment in infrastructure through the new instruments such as the European Infrastructure Investments Fund.

Members of the Cabinet

- Henrik HOLOLEI, Head of Cabinet
- Keir FITCH, Deputy Head of Cabinet
- Margus RAHUOJA, Senior Adviser, Air Transport
- Veronica MANFREDI, Member, Decarbonisation and Climate Agenda
- Desirée OEN, Member, TEN-T and Inter-institutional Relations
- Hanna HINRIKUS, Member, Personal Assistant to Siim Kallas
- Max STROTMANN, Member, Maritime Transport Policy
- Marit RUUDA, Member, International Transport, Enlargement and Road Safety
- Uille LOHMUS, Member, Transport Financing and economic analyses
- Helen KEARNS, Spokesperson

Main actions to date

- Coordinating the European response after large parts of the airspace were closed because of the threat of ash from an erupting Icelandic volcano. Kallas's actions included calling a extraordinary meeting in Brussels bringing together all relevant national authorities as well as representatives of the airline and airport industry;
- Pushing for the implementation of the Single European Skies package which has recently been cleared by the Member States;
- Prioritizing the implementation of the European Rail Traffic Management System in the wake of the Belgian train crash in February 2010.

What to expect

The drama surrounding the ash from the Icelandic volcano and the seemingly disjointed European response mean that Kallas is facing an eruption of activity on his agenda. Due to the closure of airspace over a sustained period, the European aviation industry is estimated to have lost several billion Euros. On the issue of potential compensation, Kallas was quoted as saying: “There is no sack of money available”. However, activity on the fallout of the volcano could be leveraged in order to give the Transport Commission more authority in its sector. Previously, both transport and energy were under the same umbrella, but they have now been split into two departments. At the time, it was thought that this split would weaken the Commission's mobility directorate, but now that the transport sector is under the spotlight, there will most certainly be a greater push for the Commission to show concrete action in the areas of European airspace, terrorism and airport security. One of the key issues that has come up as a result of the “ash cloud crisis” relates to EU air passenger rights, with Commissioner Kallas currently looking into the possibility of having a single European Charter in this area. ■





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