

*Twenty-Third Quarterly
Accession Watch Report*

LAST STOP - BRUSSELS!?

**WHERE DOES THE NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S
ENLARGEMENT POLICY LEAD?**

September 2014

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Where Does The New European Commission's Enlargement Policy Lead? Twenty-Third Quarterly Accession Watch Report

Publisher:

Foundation Open Society - Macedonia

For the publisher:

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Prepared by:

Macedonian Center for European Training

Proofreading and Translation into English:

Abacus

Design & Layout:

Brigada design, Skopje

Print:

Skenpoint

Circulation:

500

Free/Noncommercial circulation

CIP – Каталогизација во публикација
Национална и универзитетска библиотека „Св. Климент Охридски“, Скопје

341.171.071.5(4-672ЕУ:497.7)“2014”

ПОСЛЕДНА станица Брисел!?: каде води политиката за проширување на новата Европска комисија.
- Скопје : Фондација отворено општество - Македонија, 2015. - 74, 72 стр. ; 18x24 см

Насл. стр. на припечатениот текст: Last stop-Brussels!?: where does the new European commissions's enlargement policy lead?. - Обата текста меѓусебно печатени во спротивни насоки. - Текст на мак. и англ. јазик. - Фусноти кон текстот

ISBN 978-608-218-221-6

а) Македонија - Зачленување - Европска унија - 2014

COBISS.MK-ID 98076938

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WHERE ARE WE IN SEPTEMBER 2014?

In September 2014, there is no progress in terms of Republic of Macedonia's accession in the EU. This Accession Watch Report is drafted in anticipation of the European Commission's 2014 Progress Report for the Republic of Macedonia and in the midst of post-election calculations and combinations at the European Parliament about the new College of Commissioners, in the shadow of May 2014 elections for the European representative house. In short, the period covered in this report is of vital importance for drafting EU's new enlargement policy, under the leadership of the European Commission President, and for anticipating the scope of remarks in EC's Progress Report, including the likelihood of another recommendation for the Republic of Macedonia to start accession negotiations with the EU, which the European Commission has granted Macedonia for five consecutive years without effective start of these negotiations.

The post-election period saw major turbulences at EU institutions about priorities of the new European Commission, especially about the appointment of new European Commission President. This time around, main political groups (European People's Party, Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, European Green Party, etc.) promoted the so-called Spitzenkandidat system for nomination of candidates for European Commission President who will defend his/her programme and team before the European Parliament. According to this concept, the political group with highest number of MEP seats won at the European elections will nominate the candidate for European Commission President. All political groups announced their candidates for this position at the onset of their election campaigns and put them on top of their lists of candidates, thereby making them the faces of their campaigns in the process known as Spitzenkandidat system. This principle was hinted in the Lisbon Treaty,¹ where it is stipulated that when nominating new European Commission President, the European Council shall take into account the election results. Such practices should result in decreased democratic deficiency at EU institutions.

All processes and political games around nominations for the European Commission President have led to power struggles between different political groups at EU level, but also between influential Member-States. Epilogue of political struggles in the elections' aftermath is the nomination of Jean-Claude Juncker, Luxembourg's former Prime Minister with the longest service, as President of the European Commission. Juncker was the European People's Party's Spitzenkandidat and was endorsed by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Opponents to Juncker's nomination and the Spitzenkandidat

principle for appointing President of the European Commission, UK Prime Minister David Cameron and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, were outvoted at the European Council. Hence, expectations are that once these political struggles are behind them, the "outvoted" European leaders will demonstrate low level of optimism for further EU integrations. Moreover, not all supporters of Juncker and the Spitzenkandidat model are overjoyed with this decision (for example, Prime Ministers of Sweden, the Netherlands, Estonia, etc.). Because of the high political price paid, political circles in the EU already started contemplating revision of the principle for appointment of the European Commission President or at least for allowing greater flexibility in interpreting the wording whereby election results for the European Parliament should be taken into account.²

Here we provide detailed analysis of key processes within and outside EU institutions concerning the new European Commission, however, it should be duly noted that Macedonia had again failed to inform itself and discuss its interests vis-à-vis new composition of the EP and, more importantly, new composition of the EC, which has the final word in the EU enlargement policy. As reminder of Macedonia's path towards the EU, first we provide chronological overview of key events until September 2014 and their political implications on Macedonia's integration in the EU.

¹ Article 17, paragraph 7 of the Treaty on European Union

² <http://euobserver.com/eu-elections/124796>

1. MACEDONIA IN THE EU: FROM FORERUNNER TO LONGTERMER!

On **17th December 2005**, the EU Council granted the Republic of Macedonia status of candidate country for membership in the European Union.³ In that, the Council did not set date for start of accession negotiations, but postponed this decision for the next convenient occasion when the enlargement policy will be discussed and once it is assessed that the state has fulfilled relevant membership requirements. In its Conclusions, the EU Council laid down several additional requirements/key priorities for opening accession negotiations with Macedonia, those being: promotion of constructive and inclusive dialogue; ensuring effective implementation of the Law on Police; strengthening the independence and overall capacity of the judiciary; establishing sustained track record on implementation of anti-corruption legislation; public administration reform, especially in regard to introducing merit-based carrier system; reducing impediments to youth employment and enhancing the general business climate.⁴

Fifth round of parliamentary election in Macedonia took place on **5th July 2006** and, according to the European Commission, had been characterized with significant irregularities on the Election Day (*ballot stuffing, family voting, intimidation and pressure, etc.*), while the election campaign had been marred by number of violent incidents involving the Albanian parties. Incidents referred to in EC's 2006 Progress Report⁵ remained unaddressed for a long period after the elections and

³ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/87642.pdf

⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32008D0212>

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2006/nov/fyrom_sec_1387_en.pdf

on several occasions became the tripping stone in the EU integration process. Moreover, the EC had established that country's success in reform implementation is not adequate to the previous years and there is slower pace of reforms, especially noted in relation to judiciary reforms.⁶

At the EU Council meeting held on **15/16 December 2006**, the Foreign Ministers of EU Member-States reiterated the country's past success and the status of candidate country being granted on progress demonstrated in the past, but did not address the issue of setting a date for start of accession negotiations.

In **2007**, the Republic of Macedonia signed the Financial Agreement for 2007 IPA National Programme and Framework Agreement on the Rules for Cooperation Concerning EC's Financial Assistance. Earlier that year, the European Commission adopted the new Accession Partnership setting down new priorities and objectives. Unfortunately, lack of political dialogue in the course of 2007 (*DUI's boycott of the Parliament, poor cohabitation between the Government and President of State*), incidents at the Parliament (*fight between MP Vejseli from PDP and MP Duraku from DUI*),⁷ i.e. *physical attack/apprehension and prevention of journalists from several media outlets to perform their duties by the private security of political parties*),⁸ as well as the start of "antiquization" were issues that took primacy over the reform agenda and the EU accession.⁹

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2006/nov/com_649_strategy_paper_en.pdf

⁷ <http://www.idividi.com.mk/vesti/makedonija/765610/index.html>

⁸ <http://www.nvoinfocentar.org.mk/event.asp?site=nvo&menu=3&lang=mak&id=815>

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/strategy_paper_en.pdf

On this account, at the meeting held on **7th December 2007**,¹⁰ the EU Council made note of EC's findings and called for unity among all actors in regard to the country's accession in the EU, urging them to accelerate the pace of reforms in priority areas defined in the Accession Partnership. Having in mind these Council Conclusions, when adopting the Accession Partnership for the next year, the European Commission upgraded the key priorities to the level of benchmarks.

In this period, Gabriela Koneska-Trajkovska from VMRO-DPMNE was Vice President of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia responsible for EU integration.

In **February 2008**, the EU Council adopted the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Macedonia which included key priorities for progress and areas that require better implementation track record and achievements in terms of the country's accession process. It was that year that Macedonia, regretfully, had to pay the price for its "atiquization" policy. At the NATO Summit in Bucharest, despite expectations that Macedonia will be invited to membership, the NATO Council did not reach a consensus about the country's admission in the Alliance. Greece declared this as victory over nationalistic politics in Macedonia, while VMRO-DPMNE's government interpreted it as signal for early parliamentary elections at which populism defeated the democracy, making Macedonian people pay double the price. 2008 early parliamentary elections resulted in one casualty and marked the beginning of the end of democracy in Macedonia.¹¹ From June 2008, the EU agenda has been irreversibly abandoned.

¹⁰ <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?!=EN&f=ST%2016003%202007%20REV%203>

¹¹ <http://utrinski.mk/?ItemID=3F7786026F0AB64386D7B2E545944541>

In **November 2008**, the European Commission concluded that *"the Republic of Macedonia made some progress in the course of the last year, but does not yet meet the political criteria"*. In other words, this conclusion refers to Macedonia as *"unfinished state"*, incapable of organizing fair and democratic elections. By association, Ivica Bocevski, who at that time was Vice President of the Government responsible for EU integration, will be remembered as the least successful holder of this public office.

Early 2009 marked the start of MCET's Accession Watch Project, i.e. drafting and publishing quarterly accession watch reports, and already in **June 2009** a major breakthrough in Macedonia's EU integration happened. Vice President of the Government, Ivica Bocevski, resigned from this public office. State Secretary of the Government's Secretariat for European Affairs, Pero Dimovski,¹² followed suit and referred to the fact that Macedonia needs new Prime Minister, not Deputy Prime Minister, responsible for EU integration. Vasko Naumovski, PhD, professor at the New York University in Skopje,¹³ was appointed new Vice President of the Government responsible for EU integration and his tenure in this office will be remembered only by the fact that it had secured him the next employment (tenure) at the Faculty of Law in Skopje.¹⁴

According to progress made by the Republic of Macedonia in implementing the Stabilization and Association Agreement, progress made in fulfilment of the political criteria, alignment with the EU *acquis* and progress made in all areas covered by the visa liberalization dialogue, in October 2009 the European Commission recommended withdrawal of

¹² <http://www.utrinski.mk/?ItemID=3563EFA61DE9C94B9F9AAC7F52A56034>

¹³ <http://www.novamakedonija.com.mk/NewsDetal.asp?vest=739940358&id=9&setIzdanaie=21728>

¹⁴ <http://www.time.mk/cluster/04e3d0ebae/vasko-naumovski-i-vicepremier-i-profesor-na-fakultet.html>

the visa regime for Macedonia and start of accession negotiations for EU membership. At the same time, the European Commission proposed start of second stage of SAA implementation. The visa regime for the Republic of Macedonia was abandoned on **19th December 2009**.

From 2008, when the EC adopted the renewed Accession Partnership with the benchmarks, there is no new Accession Partnership signed with the Republic of Macedonia. Reforms continued, but Macedonia struggled with delivery of results in key priority areas defined back in 2008. In spite of the second recommendation for start of accession negotiations, several events in the course of 2010 clearly demonstrated that the state is not able to address the crisis and the political dialogue was exceptionally low. In **July 2010**, adoption of the Law on Redundancy Workers and exchange of insults at the Parliament escalated into an incident where parliamentary security officers clashed with opposition MPs.¹⁵ This incident was an introduction into deeper crisis and replication of clashes two years later, on 24th December 2012.

By the end of 2010, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia managed to build upon the incident from earlier that year (July 2010),¹⁶ first by lustrating the former president of the Constitutional Court, and later by adopting the Antidiscrimination Law and by forging several odd “alliances” with various undemocratic regimes worldwide, and only after the EC’s Progress Report was published, it completed the year with an intrusion in the biggest private television *A1 TV*,¹⁷ arresting its owner Velija Ramkovski and almost his entire family, including most of the editorial and management staff at the television. The ep-

ilogue: A1 TV was closed within a year, marking the end of an important chapter in the history of Macedonia’s independence. From that moment, freedom of speech that had been brought under question on several occasions in the past demonstrably became a problematic issue.

The crisis that started with clashes between parliamentary security and opposition MPs in July 2010 and continued with the intrusion in A1 television did not end by mid-2011, i.e. by the new round of early parliamentary elections held on **5th June 2011**. While assessed democratic, the elections did end with one casualty - young Martin Neskovski was battered to death by member of the special unit “Tigers” on the Macedonia Square in Skopje. Once it became obvious that the police intents to keep silent about this murder, young people spontaneously took to the streets and protested against police brutality. Demands put forward by young people protesting in mass numbers were completely and utterly ignored, while the ruling authorities confirmed their immoral and irresponsibility by re-appointing Gordana Jankulovska as Minister of Interior in the old-new Government led by Prime Minister Gruevski.

In the meantime, capitalizing on opposition’s absence, i.e. its boycott of the Parliament, the ruling majority initiated a hyper-production of laws in the Parliament. Within a period of only two months (20th February - 15th April), the Parliament adopted a total of 185 laws. Only 3 of them were so-called EU-flagged laws, i.e. laws transposing the EU *acquis*. Aware of the possible outcome without foreign, i.e. European intervention, after a longer period of time President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, visited Macedonia in **April 2011**. During his official visit, in addition to meetings with state and political elites, Barroso delivered a joint lecture with President Ivanov, attended

¹⁵ <http://www.time.mk/cluster/147e08efd0/nema-zakon-za-stecajcite.html>

¹⁶ <http://mcet.org.mk/mk/documents.asp>

¹⁷ <http://brif.mk/?p=107390>

by civil society representatives, academic community, the media, etc. In that, the high representative used this opportunity to reiterate the fact that his visit aims to revive the EU agenda in the state and duly warned about dangers of lagging behind in EU integration processes and of losing EC's recommendation to start accession negotiations. Barroso stressed that track record in reform implementation had been of key importance for granting Macedonia the candidate country status in 2005 and the recommendation to start accession negotiations in 2009, however, he stressed that "[...] *to get over that threshold, it will not be enough to rely on past achievements*".¹⁸ Finally, fully aware of rhetoric pursued by his collocutors, EC President Barroso proposed initiation of high level political dialogue between the EU and Macedonia.

In parallel with efforts to disguise Martin Neskovski's murder, the police had their hands full just one day after the elections. On **6th June 2011**, in a spectacular police action organized at the restaurant "Mulino" in Skopje, leader of the opposition party "United for Macedonia", Ljube Boskovski, was arrested and charged with abuse of office as the political party's authorized person and illegal financing of party's election campaign. Under extremely shady circumstances, Ljube Boskovski shared destiny with many others - first, he spent several months in inhumane conditions at the Skopje Prison detention ward in Suto Orizari and was later charged with an additional criminal offence for which his court trial is still not completed. In that, the most peculiar and loudest critic of ruling authorities, the man who could understand, but also dismantle, actions and projects of the ruling VMRO-DPMNE, is now completely silenced.

After 2011 parliamentary elections, the old-new Government led by VMRO-DPMNE entrusted the portfolios on Euro-Atlantic integrations to its coalition partner DUI. Hence, Teuta Artifi was appointed new Vice President of the Government responsible for EU integration.

In **October 2011**, on the occasion of presenting the new enlargement package and instigated by recent developments in Macedonia, Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fule delivered his harshest speech to date and, at one point, hinted the prospect of Macedonia losing the recommendation to start accession negotiations next year. Unfortunately, events that ensued completely destroyed the process envisaged as mechanism for reversing reform standstill.

The High Level Accession Dialogue was introduced on **15th March 2012**. HLAD's first session was chaired by Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fule. While this dialogue was to inject new dynamism in EU-related reform processes, it failed to deliver essential reforms in the priority areas defined (freedom of expression and media freedoms; the rule of law; public administration reform; electoral reform; and strengthening the market economy), and brought only cosmetic improvements, with all factors in the state qualifying it as checkbox exercise!

On **11th December 2012**, the EU Council on General Affairs held its regular meeting in Brussels dedicated to reconsidering Progress Reports for the enlargement countries, candidate countries and potential candidates for EU membership published two months earlier (mid-October 2012). Hence, the EU Council adopted conclusions for the entire region, but also for individual countries.

¹⁸ http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/documents/press_corner/barroso-speech-ohrid-09042011_en.pdf

In Macedonia, the Council Conclusions did not constitute a sufficient reason for serious debate about what the state should expect in the next period or about the Council's findings on EC's Progress Report and the actual progress made by the state. Truth to be told, the limited discussion that did take place on the initiative from strong pro-governmental speakers instigated and additionally fuelled Europhobic feelings among citizens. According to high number of media outlets and, regretfully, high number of experts, the new wave of Europhobia was allegedly a response to the EU Council's decision not to set a date for start of accession negotiations with the Republic of Macedonia.

There were few, if any, attempts to interpret the Council Conclusions as qualitative improvement for the Republic of Macedonia, let alone analyse them in the context of the forgotten Agenda 2014, especially in the wake of Greece's EU Presidency in the first half of 2014. In its Conclusions, the EU Council noted: *"[...] with a view to a possible decision of the European Council to open accession negotiations with the Republic of Macedonia, the EU Council will examine, on the basis of a report to be presented by the Commission in spring 2013, implementation of reforms in the context of the HLAB [...] In this perspective, the Council will assess the report during the next Presidency"*.¹⁹ Wording used in the Council Conclusions renders the start of accession negotiations highly likely, especially knowing that the state has never been closer to unlocking the reform standstill and to opening the accession negotiations.

On **24th December 2012**, the ruling authorities brutally evicted from the Parliament the opposition MPs and journalists covering the plenary session for adoption of 2013 Budget of the Republic of Macedo-

nia. This event was dubbed "Black Monday", although it would be more appropriate to call it "Black 24th December", knowing that for several years back different scandals are taking place on this day and, by rule, deteriorate democracy in Macedonia.

Here is the short chronology of events leading to 24th December 2012:

- » 17th November – The opposition MPs (SDSM with its coalition partners, DPA and NDP) motioned a total of 1,200 amendments to the 2013 proposed budget;
- » 19-22 November - Start of the marathon discussion in the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia for the 2013 proposed budget, with parallel political negotiations between the opposition and the Minister of Finance to find a solution to the budget deadlock. In the meantime, the Parliament Speaker, Trajko Veljanovski, made an attempt to force parliamentary bodies to complete the budget discussion and the ruling majority MPs to reject proposed amendments and complete the discussion by abusing their position and violating the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia and the Parliament's Rules of Procedure.²⁰
- » 23rd December – At an extraordinary session, the Government adopted the proposed budget and forwarded it to the Parliament for final adoption. In protest against blatant disrespect for procedure and their proposals and amendments, the opposition MPs spent the night in the parliament building, anticipating the plenary session scheduled for the next day.

¹⁹ http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/134234.pdf

²⁰ <http://mcet.org.mk/ckfinder/files/AW16%20Q04-12%20-%20MK.pdf>

» 24th December - Several key developments occurred and irreversibly deteriorated relations among main political factors in the state, hence pushing Macedonia into deep political crisis. First, following the opposition's futile attempts to prevent the plenary session to take place, notably by standing in the parliamentary hall, group of them (from SDSM, NSDP, PEI, SL, LP and their coalition partners) formed the living shield around Parliament Speaker Trajko Veljanovski. Contrary to common parliamentary practices, according to which MPs are given their attendance and voting cards immediately after entering the parliament building, on this day the cards were not distributed and MPs were referred to take them from the Parliament's General Secretary. After the living shield was formed, parliamentary security services and other members of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) forcefully evicted the journalists covering day-to-day events at the Parliament and removed them from the parliamentary gallery. Several minutes later, all MPs from above enlisted opposition parties forming the living shield around Parliament Speaker Veljanovski and several other MPs from SDSM standing aside, observing and filming events, were forcefully removed from the parliament hall by policemen. Immediately afterwards and as if nothing happened, MPs from the ruling majority adopted the 2013 state budget.

After 24th December 2012, HLAD completely lost its purpose, with the results thereof being either annulled or seriously brought under question. However, most worrying is the fact that "Black Monday" events ruined all chances for positive interim report, referred to in the Council Conclusions from December 2012, and the possibility for Macedonia to advance in its EU accession.

In the meantime, starting from 24th December 2012, the opposition organized protests in Skopje and other towns across the country, to publicly condemn violence in the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia and to mobilize greater constituency support. Moreover, the opposition permanently left the Parliament, using fierce rhetoric for "boycott" and "resistance". The resulting political crisis was resolved only under the auspices of three Members of the European Parliament and Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fule with the signing of the Agreement brokered on 1st March 2013, whose implementation was added to the list of key accession priorities that remain undelivered by the Republic of Macedonia.

On **16th October 2013**, the European Commission published its Enlargement Package comprised of the Enlargement Strategy 2013-2014 and 2013 Progress Report for the Republic of Macedonia. In both documents, the European Commission duly noted democratic shortcomings in the state, including poorly organized local elections in March 2013, while the Conclusions of the Council on General Matters from 17th December 2013 noted that "*the political crisis which followed events in parliament late last year exposed deep divisions among political parties, affecting the functioning of parliament, and demonstrated the need for constructive politics in the national interest*".²¹ In addition, the Council identified all priority areas that require efforts aimed at essential improvement of state-of-affairs in the country, especially in areas such as the rule of law and democracy. Separating the state and party, improving interethnic relations, ensuring actual independence of the judiciary, reducing unemployment and finding a solution to the name dispute with Greece are just few items on the list of efforts needed.²²

²¹ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/140144.pdf

²² Ibid

Accordingly, the conclusion is inferred that absence of political dialogue and recurring incidents in the Parliament, which is the single state body where VMRO-DPMNE endures different and dissenting opinions, are becoming standard manner of the ruling coalition's conduct and regular form of exercising power. Therefore, all actions on the part of the ruling majority are merely continuation of practices established back in 2007.

2. WAITING FOR GODOT: AWAITING THE SIXTH RECOMMENDATION WITHOUT ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS!?

As noted in the last Accession Watch Report, Greece's EU Presidency ended on 30th June 2014, thus completing the Trio Presidency comprised of Ireland, Lithuania and Greece. Italy assumed the EU Presidency on 1st July 2014 and will be followed by Latvia and Luxemburg. Early parliamentary elections in Macedonia took place almost in parallel with elections for the European Parliament, in the aftermath of which the attention was focused on the functioning of EU institutions. Establishment of the European Parliament and its Bureau, appointment of the European Commission President and other high level officials in the EU (*President of the EU Council, High Representative and Vice President of the European Commission and President of the Euro Group*) preoccupied attention of the Union and European leaders, and the only topic discussed outside these matters was the situation in Ukraine and EU's relations with Russia.

In the domestic arena, the state has to deal with two hurdles in its efforts to unblock the EU integration process. First is the name dispute between Greece and Macedonia, which is on the negotiation table for

more than 20 years and represents direct impediment to start of accession negotiations and NATO membership in the last several years. On the other hand, the state is faced with another serious political crisis that is a result of numerous irregularities observed during the last round of parliamentary elections,²³ which compelled the decision of opposition MPs to submit letters of resignation and not to participate in parliament's work.

In this context, the issue about possible withdrawal of EC's recommendation for start of accession negotiations²⁴ re-emerged in the public for the first time after a long period of time. Such debate was first raised by ruling authorities (in particular, pro-governmental media outlets and political analysts) and offered arguments on the futility of opposition's parliament boycott because "*it can have unforeseeable consequences on the state's reputation in the international arena*".²⁵ In that, pro-governmental analysts in advance declared the opposition as the culprit for such outcome, arguing that the opposition should return to the Parliament and that if opposition MPs are determined to resign from their elected offices, they should pursue that in "regular procedure", i.e. from the speaking podium, instead of buying time to work on internal party cohesion by boycotting the Parliament. Some media outlets went one step further and argued that possible revocation of EC's recommendation to start accession negotiations would also harm

²³ Irregularities were identified by civil society organizations closely monitoring the election process, but also by OSCE/ODIHR mission tasked to monitor the elections in Macedonia on behalf of the international community. The report of CSO "Civil" is available on here: : <http://civil.org.mk/publikacii/?lang=mk>, while OSCE/ODIHR Report is available here: <http://www.osce.org/mk/odihr/elections/fyrom/121926?download=true>.

²⁴ http://www.kanal5.com.mk/vesti_detail.asp?ID=40391

²⁵ Ibid.

the EU's image and credibility, and supported the EC's need to maintain the recommendation with justifications that the political crisis in Macedonia cannot be resolved overnight and therefore it would not be fair for Macedonia to be judged harshly only on the account of this issue. Few pro-governmental analysts interpreted the possible loss of EC's recommendation as pressure to find solution to the name dispute with Greece, although they do not believe the EU will retreat from its recommendation *"as easily as some political parties in Macedonia change their decisions"*.²⁶

This discussion shows that EC's 2014 Progress Report is anticipated in an atmosphere of uncertainty, especially among ruling authorities, about the scope of criticism and the likelihood that Macedonia will be awarded another, sixth in a row, recommendation to start accession negotiations with the EU. Such uncertainty triggers nervousness and prevents public discussion about the status and the future of Macedonia's EU integration. Be that as it may, it is valid to conclude that authorities in Macedonia lack stable EU accession policy, especially in regard to fulfilment of basic political criteria, on the account of which the public is often faced with perplexities and Hamlet-like dilemmas, fearing that somebody will inflict us "injustice" and failing to grasp consequences of policies led by governing parties in Macedonia.

3. METHODOLOGY

This Accession Watch Report aims to provide in-depth analysis of changes that have taken place, but also of changes that are to take place in the aftermath of May 2014 European Parliament elections, relying on available official documents and multifaceted analyses that provide both information and arguments. In that, the report describes the actual situation in the EU political scene resulting from the European elections outcome. In that regard, the analysis will focus on success of political groups in the European Parliament, as well as their positions on EU enlargement that directly affects the Republic of Macedonia.

Reason behind the decision to focus this analysis on these matters is to answer the most basic question: What can Macedonia expect from the new composition in the European Parliament and from the new College of Commissioners (although it might be premature to discuss the new European Commission College)? At the same time, this report analyses pre- and post-election debate in several influential EU Member-States, which should provide insight in the election campaigns led for the European Parliament. Moreover, the analysis addresses messages and points made at the EU-Western Balkans Summit in Berlin held in August 2014, which was announced and treated as new momentum in EU's approach to the Western Balkans, similarly to the 2003 Thessaloniki Summit. In other words, the Berlin Summit sets the agenda and defines the key factors in terms of EU enlargement for the next five years and represents an important signal about EU's policy towards Macedonia.

²⁶ <http://www.novamakedonija.com.mk/NewsDetal.asp?vest=52814651339&id=9&setIzdanie=23185>

Baseline for this analysis are documents prepared by the EU institutions, European political parties and media coverage of events related to elections for the European Parliament, and relevant analyses thereof. Key documents subjected to analysis include: *Conclusions of the EU Council and the European Council from December 2013* and *EC's Enlargement Strategy 2013-2014*. The analysis presented below also relies on arguments presented in the recent, tenth edition of the regional analysis titled *EU-28 Watch*, compiled under auspices of the Institute for European Policy - Berlin, which of recently includes contributions by MCET in the form of comments and analyses about state-of-affairs in Macedonia.²⁷ Moreover, the present Accession Watch Report includes commentaries related to debates about the EU and integration processes taking place in all 28 Member-States and candidate countries. Another section of the analysis presented here is based on media coverage, interviews and analyses of topics addressed in this document.

As was the case with previous reports, this analysis relies on the instrument for free access to public information, interviews and desk research. Moreover, it refers to relevant reports and articles from a broad spectrum of media outlets.

²⁷ <http://www.eu-28watch.org/>



ANALYSIS

1. OFFICIAL POSITION OF EU INSTITUTIONS

As reminder, the most recent Conclusions of the EU Council and the European Council concerning EU enlargement policy and Macedonia were adopted in December 2013. Therein, the Council noted that “[...] *the political crisis which followed events in parliament last year exposed deep divisions among political parties, affecting the functioning of parliament, and demonstrated the need for constructive politics in the national interest*”.²⁸ Not only did the above described situation remain unaddressed, but was further complicated with parliament’s early dissolution on 5th March 2014 and events in the course of and after the early elections. Notably, the parliamentary elections on which, in the opinion of MP Vlatko Gorcević, VMRO-DPMNE was not victorious only on the Moon and maybe couple

²⁸ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/140142.pdf

of planets in neighbouring galaxies,²⁹ were described by OSCE Monitoring Mission as merely “efficiently implemented”,³⁰ while opposition SDSM qualified them as “systemic theft”.³¹ Immediately after balloting pools were closed, on 27th April 2014, Leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev publicly announced the opposition’s decision not to accept election results qualifying the elections as systemic theft, and presented future steps to be taken by the coalition he chairs. Dramatic developments surrounding the institutional and political crisis in Macedonia continue, without foreseeable positive resolution (for the state).

Recently, all representatives of EU institutions urged the ruling authorities and the opposition to start serious political dialogue that would result in an agreement ending the political crisis and guaranteeing stability of the political system. Commonly, messages announced in the public included those whereby the international community, but governmental representatives as well, urged opposition MPs to return to the Parliament and start work under the new composition.³² These efforts, however, did not yield any results, except for the fact that three female MPs (Roza Topuzovska Karevska, Solza Grceva and Ljubica Buralieva) abandoned the opposition’s official decision and accepted their MP seats under the current composition of the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia.

Near the end of its term-of-office, EC Enlargement Commissioner’s Cabinet made a statement that “[...] as long as the concerns of the Commission are not being properly addressed, concerns like freedom of

media or political dialogue, it’s very hard to help the country to move, if the country doesn’t want to move”.³³ By doing so, Commissioner Füle’s team clarifies that Republic of Macedonia has much bigger problems on its road towards the EU that go beyond the name dispute with Greece, and that state authorities need to take urgent measures so as to prevent situation in which the EC will no longer be able to maintain its recommendation for start of accession negotiations.

2. EU AT THE CROSSROAD: SNAPSHOT OF 2014 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

This section attempts to answer series of questions. First, we are interested in main topics/issues discussed in the forefront of campaigns for the spring 2014 European Parliament elections in the three most influential EU Member-States - France, Germany and the United Kingdom. Second, did and to what extent the public in these states discussed EU enlargement policy and what are the official positions of different actors on this issue? Finally, what are the final election results for the European Parliament, reasons thereof and how they affect the EU enlargement policy?

²⁹ <http://kurir.mk/makedonija/vesti/156207-Gorcev-izrazi-blagodarnost-do-dijasporata>

³⁰ <http://lider.mk/2014/04/28/opseodih-izborite-efikasno-sprovedeni/>

³¹ <http://brif.mk/?p=149155>

³² <http://fokus.mk/brisel-k-e-pomaga-opozitsijata-da-se-vrati-vo-sobranieto/>

³³ <http://www.sitel.com.mk/file-ne-kreva-race-od-makedonija-0>

2.1. Germany

2.1.1 Spitzenkandidaten in the Shadow of National Issues

In Germany, the main topic discussed throughout the pre-election period focused on migration policy and related findings on abuse of the social welfare system by immigrants. The political parties discussed the efficiency of EU bureaucracy, extent of EU competences vis-à-vis national states, the principle of subsidiarity, and youth unemployment in the context of austerity measures.³⁴

Among all topics raised, the migration policy stirred the most heated debate and raised controversies in the public. In general, national issues took primacy over other EU issues, meaning that EU-related matters were discussed exclusively in the context of national issues/interests.

As regards politicians, In Germany the public's attention was captured by Martin Schulz, Spitzenkandidat of the Party of European Socialists nominated for European Commission President. Banking on such climate, in the last minute campaign Martin Schulz advertised "Vote Social-Democratic to have a German become the Commission President". According to the last polls before the elections, 39% of voters in Germany wanted Schulz to become the next European Commission President and only 22% of them favoured the Luxembourgian Juncker, Spitzenkandidat of the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU), a political group to which the popular German Chancellor Merkel belongs.

Frontrunners for European Commission President, Schultz and Juncker, participated in two televised debates and were criticized for

their political similarity. In Germany, the governing Christian Democratic Union (CDU) decided not to promote Juncker as the face of their election campaign, and instead capitalized on Chancellor Angela Merkel's popularity to gain support for other candidates. In this regard, CDU pursued a modest campaign for its frontrunner for the European elections, David McAllister, a German with British ancestry.

In the context of growing tensions in Ukraine, the election campaign's focus has shifted away from EU enlargement policy towards EU neighbourhood policy. Another prominent feature of this election campaign and of the overall context in the period leading to the European Parliament elections is the growing scepticism among all political actors about Turkey's accession in the EU. In that, CDU did not reiterate their already known position that enlargement should be done "by the book", but stressed failure on the part of Turkey to fulfil EU membership criteria.

The Christian Socialist Union (CSU), sister party of CDU in the German Province of Bavaria, clearly opposed Turkey's accession in the EU, arguing that it would "overburden both, the EU and Turkey".

Even political parties that had previously favoured Turkey's membership in the EU adjusted to the general pre-election climate and were more reluctant to speak about this issue. Only the Social-Democrats openly supported continuation of accession negotiations with Turkey, while the Greens agreed that Turkey does not currently fulfil membership criteria, but believe that democracy and EU-related reforms in Turkey should be supported. This debate was strongly influenced by memories of events that have taken place at Gezi Park in 2013, as well as recently deteriorated media freedoms in Turkey. These issues were discussed widely and extensively in February 2014, i.e. around

³⁴ This section is drafted on the basis of source materials available at <http://www.eu-28watch.org/>

the Turkish Prime Minister's visit to Cologne, which was interpreted as pre-emptive campaigning for the forthcoming presidential elections among the vast Turkish community in Germany.

Analysts interpreted the high turnout on the European elections as consequence of spitzelkandidaten's visibility in the campaign, which increased public perceptions about the elections being more democratic. Second reason for the high turnout is identified in the fact that, in parallel with European elections, various referenda and local elections were organized in several provinces, with citizens voting on the same day.

2.1.2 Traditional Parties Maintain Solid Rank, but...

As regards the European elections result, the governing CDU lost 0.7% of its constituency compared to the previous election cycle (from 30.65% in 2009 to 30% in 2014), while the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) increased its constituency by 6.5 % (from 20.8% in 2009 to 27.3% in 2014).

In terms of the number of MEP seats, in 2009 CDU had 34 and SPD had only 23 seats in the European Parliament. In 2014, the difference between these parties is reduced to two MEP seats in favour of CDU, as it won 29 seats compared to 27 seats won by SPD. Reduced support was noted in the case of CSU, which won only 5 MEP seats compared to 8 MEPs on the previous elections. In other words, CSU won 7.4% of votes at 2009 elections and 5.8% of votes at 2014 elections.

Biggest surprise at these elections came from the new political party established in 2013, Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), which secured 7% of constituency votes by advocating for Germany's exit from the Eurozone. Public polls showed that support for this political party known for its Euroscepticism and populism is equally distributed

among all social classes and enjoys surprisingly high support among educated constituency groups. AfD campaigned with the slogan "Germany is not a global welfare office", alluding to findings on abuses of the social welfare system by immigrants.

Except for the Greens, all political parties advocated for greater subsidiarity, with CSU speaking openly against freedom of movement for workers and labelling them as applicants for social benefits. Elmar Brok, also known to the Macedonian public, demanded mandatory fingerprint controls for citizens moving from Bulgaria and Romania.

2.2. United Kingdom

2.2.1 Pro-European, but Distinct

In the recent years, EU debate in the United Kingdom has been dominated by the same issues that were in the focus of the election campaign for the European Parliament: EU accountability, the amount of legislation coming from Brussels; the consequences of freedom of movement on UK's social welfare system; and the need for referendum on UK's continued EU membership.³⁵

In the two-year period before the European elections, there were renewed calls for referendum on UK's membership in the EU, resulting in the pledge of the Prime Minister David Cameron in January 2013 that such referendum will take place by the end of 2017 the latest. This pledge was reiterated in the Conservative Party's manifesto for 2014 European elections.

³⁵ This section is based on House of Commons, Library Research Paper 14/32, available at www.parliament.uk

Similarly to the British public, the Government believes that Member-States should have more competences on the account of reduced or revoked powers entrusted to the EU. Be that as it may, the official line does not advocate for UK to leave the Union, but for reformation and adjustment of EU policies to UK's "particularity". In his speech from January 2013, Prime Minister Cameron claimed that "Britain is an island nation, but not un-European" and enlisted five principles underlying the vision for new European Union: 1) competitiveness, meaning less bureaucratic Union, relentlessly focused on helping its Member-States; 2) flexibility, i.e. creating a differentiated structure that can accommodate the diversity of its members by means of different integration patterns pursuant to Member-States' needs and wishes; 3) power must flow back to Member-States, which in practice means greater subsidiarity; 4) democratic accountability by stressing the role of the national parliaments that are the true source of the Union's legitimacy because there is not a single European demos; 5) fairness of the Eurozone, i.e. the new arrangements must work fairly both for those inside it and out.

Similar messages and key priorities were noted in the Conservative Party's election campaign. First issue they raised concerns freedom of movement for which they agree is central principle of the EU, but cannot be abused. Their second commitment implied putting an end to the existing system where immigrants can claim social welfare payments for their relatives abroad. Finally, they committed to changing the principle of admitting new members in the EU with enhanced focus on conditioning new countries to achieve particular economic growth, which would ultimately prevent immigration from acceding countries to EU Member-States.

The opposition Labour Party did not make explicit statements and did not assume a final position on this issue, but stressed the need for reforms that would prevent the state to rely on unqualified labour force. Moreover, they explicitly accepted the referendum for UK's membership in the EU, as pledged by the Conservatives. In the same line of thinking, the Liberal-Democrats supported the referendum and opposed abuses of the social welfare system. The only political party that did not indulge negative position towards immigrants was the Green Party.

Nevertheless, the most explicit discourse against immigration was pursued by the populist United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). Led by the charismatic Nigel Farage, UKIP developed a political fable whereby immigration is to be blamed for all evils in the British society ranging from the financial and economic crisis to the expansion of construction works on the detriment of green spaces.

Actually, UKIP's general attack on the entire British political establishment was the main topic during the European election campaign. EU issues were an important part of this attack, but far from forming their entire political offense. It should be noted that, in general, the Conservatives shared UKIP's fears, while Labourists feared that part of their traditional constituency would agree with UKIP's attack on the EU. Hence, the Conservative Party's strategy to mitigate consequences of UKIP's attack with the pledge that an in/out referendum will be organized after 2015 general elections. In this context, only Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal-Democrats, openly advocated for pro-European positions, which ultimately proved to be a strategy that does not guarantee election results.³⁶

³⁶ The British Liberal-Democrats have seen the biggest defeat on the European election by having won only 1 MEP seat compared to 12 MEPs in 2009.

In an anti-political climate full of distrust and disdain towards established political elites and pessimism for the future, primarily as result of the seven-year economic stagnation (with the exception of the most developed regions, such as London), UKIP's result on the European elections did not come as surprise. Reasons thereof include the fact that this party managed to convince most of UK voters that the EU is, to great extent, responsible for social and economic problems in Britain. In that, a major advantage for them was EU's extremely negative image in the public, created by the British (printed) media over the last two decades.

2.2.2 Is UKIP's Election Result a Surprise?

On the May 2014 European elections, UK citizens voted to elect 73 Members of the European Parliament. As expected, UKIP won 24 MEP seats with 27.5% of votes. Compared against 2009 elections for the European Parliament, this party's constituency has increased by 11%, just as the number of MEP seats has increased by 11 (from 13 in 2009). The Labourists also received increased support from 14.7% in 2009 to 25.4% in 2014, which is duly reflected in increased number of MEP seats from 13 in 2009 to 20 in 2014. Reduced support was noted in the case of ruling Conservatives, which have won the previous European elections with 27.7% of votes and 27 MEP seats, but won 23.9% of votes on these elections, resulting in 19 MEP seats. Nevertheless, Nick Clegg's Liberal-Democrats were declared the ultimate losers in terms of decreased constituency support, despite being the only party whose campaign was unquestionably pro-European. In 2009, this party had won 12 MEP seats accounting for 13.8% of total number of votes. However, earlier this year they won only 1 MEP seat, accounting for 6.9% of all votes. In conclusion, UKIP is the biggest winner at these elections, with the biggest los-

ers being established political parties, especially those that campaigned with clear and straightforward pro-European positions.

2.3. France

2.3.1 Success of Right-Wing Party Owed to Political Bid or Protest Vote?

The pre-election public polls predicted the win of the right-wing Front National (FN) led by the charismatic politician Marine Le Pen. According to poll results, governing Socialist Party of the unpopular President of France, François Hollande, is expected to come third, with 14 MEP seats, similarly to this party's defeat at the local elections held in March 2014, mainly due to constituency's disappointment with the high unemployment rate (10%).³⁷

On the account of overwhelming feeling of estrangement from the Union, the elections for the European Parliament in France are considered second-order national elections, when people have the chance to cast their protest vote. However, the local elections held two months earlier absorbed most of political parties' resources and created conditions for a so-called Manichean debate, i.e. "for or against" the EU, and transformed 2014 European Parliament elections into third-order national elections. Truthful presentation of the apolitical climate in France includes the fact that by late 2013 the public's confidence in President Hollande's political leadership reached a record low level of only 21%.³⁸

³⁷ <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2014/05/22/european-parliament-elections-a-final-look-at-the-national-campaigns/>

³⁸ The European Elections in France: The paradox of a more European yet more Eurosceptic campaign. <http://www.ceps.eu/book/european-elections-france-paradox-more-european-yet-more-eurosceptic-campaign>

The fact that right-wing populist discourse pursued by FN resonated with the public is understandable when reconsidered against these circumstances. As was the case with other Member-States covered in this analysis, migration was among key issues addressed in the course of European election campaigns in France. General atmosphere in France was truly anti-European, in particular due to common perception that the European Union deals with insignificant matters, irrelevant for common people (such as the size of cucumbers and tomatoes) and pays little attention to vital issues, such as the crisis in Ukraine. Moreover, the political debate in the election campaign period focused on national economy. Actually, it was the Front National that dictated campaign topics and pace. Leader of FN, Marine Le Pen, started talking about Europe on the night the local elections ended, i.e. two months before the European elections.³⁹ EU enlargement policy was not directly addressed in the election campaigns.

2.3.2 Front National's Enormous Success

The turnout on the European Parliament elections in France accounted for 42.43%, representing minor increase compared to 2009 (40.63%). FN won the highest share of votes, i.e. one fourth (24.86%) of all votes and highest number of MEP seats (24 from total of 74). This party's MEP seats are now increased by 21 (from 3 seats in 2009), with four time multiplied share of votes (from 6.34% in 2009), which is indicative of its enormous election success. The right-centrist Union for Popular Movement (UPM) came second on these elections with 20.8% of votes, representing decline by 7% compared to 2009 election

results, when this party was declared victorious. In terms of MEP seats, this party lost 7 seats (20 in total) compared to the situation under the European Parliament's previous composition (27 MEPs). The ruling Socialist Party, led by President François Hollande, came in third, with 13 MEP seats and almost 14% of votes, which is not significantly different from its result on the previous European elections.

3. EXPECTATIONS FROM THE NEW EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COMMISSION COLLEGE

This section of the report attempts to offer slightly different perspective of EU developments in the aftermath of May 2014 European Parliament elections, notably by providing the bigger picture about events in the European Parliament and EU political circles around the new European Commission. First, we address the manner in which elections were conducted and their winner. In doing so, due consideration will not be made only of the election outcome, but also of voting results and dilemmas about the emerging election model. Next, we address Spitzenkandidaten for European Commission President, i.e. frontrunners for this prominent office. By the end of this section, we will attempt to answer questions about distribution of portfolios and the final College of Commissioners, and we will conclude the analysis with EU enlargement's priority on the EC's agenda and initial positions and views of Johannes Hahn, candidate for Enlargement Commissioner.

³⁹ <http://www.debatingeurope.eu/2014/06/23/front-national-well-france/#.VAhbCBaR0So>

3.1. Who is the Biggest Loser of 2014 Elections?

As indicated in previous sections of this analysis, key topics debated in the course of and after the European Parliament elections included economic crisis and financial stability, migration policy, war conflicts in EU neighbourhood and EU relations with Russia. Therefore, quite expectedly and explained in previous section of this report, election results for the European Parliament are indicative of increasing support for Eurosceptic and political parties committed to their states' exit from the European Union. Be that as it may, with the exception of France, United Kingdom, Greece and Denmark, Eurosceptic parties did not achieve serious results on the European Parliament elections. Actually, final tally of votes for 2009 elections showed that number of MEP seats won by these parties has doubled.⁴⁰ The final tally of votes in all 28 Member-States confirmed the European People's Party as the largest political group in the European Parliament.⁴¹

3.2. More Votes, More Parliament Seats!?

Although success of Eurosceptic parties does not come as surprise and was perceived as sobering call, one cannot disregard the fact that big pro-European parties won almost 75% of votes, securing them an overall election victory. Particularly important are election results of the Democratic Party (Partido Democratico)⁴² led by the Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi which, in addition to the election victory, facili-

tated his reform efforts and efforts aimed at dealing with the Eurosceptic opposition in Italy. After the final tally of votes, the European People's Party was declared victorious. According to official results, this party won 221 seats in the European Parliament, followed by the Party of European Socialists (PES), which won 191 MEP seats. Nevertheless, the debate about election model's adequacy started before the final tally of votes and raised the issue whether election results truly and actually reflect citizens' will. Namely, at the level of Member-States, the European Parliament elections apply the model of proportionality, with the final number of MEP seats per Member-State defined in the Lisbon Treaty.

For the purpose of reconsidering election success achieved by the two biggest European political groups, we will analyse election results in Luxembourg, homeland of the candidate for President of the European Commission, and Italy, the country in which populist parties were defeated and is among Member-States with highest population. According to the Lisbon Treaty, Luxembourg is entitled to 6 and Italy to 73 seats in the European Parliament. On the other hand, official statistics from the last census in Luxemburg show that it has a population of 536,761 inhabitants,⁴³ while Italy has a population of 60,923,964.⁴⁴ Application of most basic computing skills shows that Luxembourg has 1 MEP seat per 90,000 citizens, while Italy has 1 MEP seat per 835,000 citizens.

⁴⁰ <http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2014/05/daily-chart-16>

⁴¹ <http://www.results-elections2014.eu/en/election-results-2014.html>

⁴² Ibid 2

⁴³ <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/luxembourg-population/>

⁴⁴ <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/italy-population/>

3.3. Matteo Renzi as Counterbalance to Angela Merkel

The Christian Socialist Party won the European elections in Luxembourg⁴⁵ with 3 MEP seats and 37.66% of votes. In Italy, it was the Democratic Party⁴⁶ led by the Prime Minister Renzi, accounting for 31 MEP seats and 40.81% of votes. In practice, these results show that the election winner in Luxembourg received around 173,000 votes, while the election winner in Italy received 14,500,000 votes.

Factoring all Member-States in the analysis with due consideration of political groups in the European Parliament results in confirmation that the European People's Party is the overall winner of May 2014 European Parliament elections, however, only in terms of mandates, i.e. MEP seats. The size of respective constituencies and weight of MEP seats per individual Member-State provide the conclusion that the Party of European Socialists (popularly known as Social-Democrats) received the highest support of voters across the EU.

Matteo Renzi's election result is more important when reconsidered against the fact that his political group in the European Parliament won the highest number of MEP seats (31) within the Party of European Socialists, and is the second biggest group in the European Parliament, immediately behind the political group of German Chancellor Merkel. According to official data, the Christian Democratic Union and the Christian Social Union won the European elections in Germany with 35.30% of votes, however, in absolute numbers they account for almost 500,000 less votes compared to Italian Prime Minister's Democratic Party. On this account, Matteo Renzi is the single European

leader that can actually counterbalance Chancellor Merkel,⁴⁷ which was later confirmed in the debate for top offices in the EU.

4. LESSON LEARNT FROM THE SPITZENKANDIDAT SYSTEM

4.1. Decreased Democratic Deficit

Until the recent cycle in May 2014, the European Parliament elections were the first and the last act of immediate democracy in the EU. On these elections, citizens were able, for the first time, to indirectly elect the European Commission President, notably by casting their vote for Spitzenkandidaten of political groups in the European Parliament. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the EC President is directly elected or appointed by citizens, especially in the light of the rule that the European Council must approve the nomination, but it represents compliance with requirements put forward in the Lisbon Treaty.⁴⁸ Actually, the Spitzenkandidat system originates in the decision of the Party of European Socialists not to allow Member-States and the European Council agree on the future European Commission President.⁴⁹ Under the leadership of Martin Schulz, who was the European Parliament President at that time, this political group started the so-called Spitzenkandidat campaign. Once Schulz was nominated

⁴⁵ Ibid 2

⁴⁶ Ibid 2

⁴⁷ <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/europe/masterful-renzi-emerges-as-merkel-s-only-eu-rival-1.1849148>

⁴⁸ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:C:2010:083:FULL&from=EN; Article 17, Consolidated Treaty of the European Union>

⁴⁹ http://www.ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_five_lessons_from_the_spitzenkandidaten_european_parliament_c281

as Spitzenkandidat of his political group,⁵⁰ Liberal-Democrats and Greens followed suit, ultimately forcing the European People's Party to nominate their campaign frontrunner, which also serves as nomination for President of the European Commission. That moment marked the start of debates, especially among connoisseurs of EU matters, and raised dilemmas about this process, i.e. appointment of the new Commission College.

4.2. Legitimacy of the European Commission

First dilemmas and questions raised around this selection system concerned the EC's legitimacy and the need to overcome the democratic deficit in EU institutions. In the opinion of many, Spitzenkandidaten's visibility in the European Parliament elections contributes to greater legitimacy of the European Commission before the European Parliament,⁵¹ i.e. before the citizens. According to arguments they offered, this election system relieves the European Commission from Member-States' pressure, renders it more independent and is in line with Article 17 of the Consolidated Treaty on the European Union.⁵²

In the past, nomination for the European Commission President depended on Member-States horse trading behind closed doors. In that, citizens were not involved in this process and the candidates had to accommodate wishes and interests of those appointing them. In truth, this was the main trigger indicated by supporters of the Spitzenkandidat model. Moreover, all Spitzenkandidaten were selected in transparent procedure, i.e. they had to present their programmes and their

activities were adequately covered in the media. Without engaging in detailed analysis of the extent to which EU voters used this newly acquired influence in the overall election process, valid is the conclusion that these elections were closer to citizens and have contributed to increased acceptance of the Union and its institution by citizens..

4.3. European Commission's Independence at Stake

Opponents to this concept offered their arguments and linked them with the Treaties. In their opinion, the European Commission is entrusted with the role "Guardian of the Treaties" and has to promote general interests of the Union. EC members need to be independent and unbiased and should work in the best interest of the Union, rejecting any guidelines and directions from national governments or other authorities. On this account, new rules for appointment of the European Commission President render this process highly politicized and strengthen his/her political liaisons, while the concept of independence becomes utterly and completely irrelevant. In their opinion, appointment of a political group's Spitzenkandidat as European Commission President puts this candidate in position of loyalty and liable to influences from European leaders that belong to the political group. In that, the Commission will be exposed to day-to-day politics and will become highly unpredictable.⁵³ Finally, opponents to this concept stressed that even before the Spitzenkandidat system was introduced, the candidate nominated for President of the European Commission was subject to approval by the European Parliament, ahead of negotiations concerning distribution of portfolios among the College of Commissioners.

⁵⁰ http://www.spd.de/111458/20131106_schulz_eu_nominierung.html

⁵¹ <http://euobserver.com/opinion/124854>

⁵² Ibid 9

⁵³ <http://www.slovview.com/double-trouble-spitzenkandidaten-for-the-european-commission-presidency/>

4.4. Was the Spitzenkandidat Approach a Mistake?

An additional argument in support of the Spitzenkandidat concept implied that having a campaign frontrunner will secure a central figure, a candidate who will unite the political group and will be sufficiently appealing for EU citizens to turnout on elections and vote for their Members of European Parliament. However, analysis of election results for the European Parliament shows that the average turnout on these elections is by 0.46% lower compared to previous election cycles. In other words, the average turnout on 2009 European elections was 43% and dropped to 42.54% on these elections. Even in Luxembourg, homeland of the current candidate for President of the European Commission, the turnout was lower compared to previous election cycles. Such trends are indicative of the fact that EU citizens do not vote for the European political groups, but for their national parties which are members of these political groups, and that selection of Spitzenkandidaten cannot secure desired election outcomes and cannot increase the turnout on European Parliament elections.

Finding a key person that would unite an entire political group is extremely difficult. Selection of Spitzenkandidaten must be careful and should take into account all variables - something that can be pulled only by European leaders. Finally, finding a key person often does not yield results, i.e. does not produce the desired results.

Although all political groups in the European Parliament had their own Spitzenkandidat, the main battle was between Jean-Claude Juncker, former Prime Minister of Luxembourg, and Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament. One of them is Brussels-savvy, familiar with the manner in which EU bureaucracy works and learned in compromise-making, while the other is the creator the Spitzenkandidat

model and is successful in alliance-building. Common denominator of both candidates is the fact that they did not come from the governing parties in their states.

Jean-Claude Juncker lost the Prime Minister office in Luxembourg on the 2013 national elections,⁵⁴ while Schulz's Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats – in spite of being part of the wider coalition in Germany - is not the major coalition partner after the last parliamentary elections.⁵⁵ Having this in mind, Martin Schulz's future could have easily be predicted, similarly to the fate of perhaps the most successful Commissioner under Barroso's second mandate as EC President, Viviane Reding, who transformed fundamental rights and protection thereof from a new portfolio into exceptional success story of the EU.

4.5. Juncker Takes the Victory

Although the post-election period was abounding in dilemmas and concerns about the Spitzenkandidat concept for appointment of the European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker's nomination for this office was confirmed by the European Council. In truth, he was endorsed in unprecedented procedure where 26 Member-States supported his nomination, except for the United Kingdom and Hungary.⁵⁶ The European Parliament confirmed Juncker's nomination on 16th July 2014.

The process with exceptionally high effect on internal transformations in the EU allows several lessons for the future:

⁵⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-24599621>

⁵⁵ <http://www.economist.com/blogs/charlemagne/2013/09/german-election-results>

⁵⁶ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/27/david-ferman-loses-jean-claude-juncker-vote-eu>

- » The Spitzenkandidat system will be applied on all future European elections. Of course, political groups will not enter European elections unprepared and will be careful in selecting their frontrunners.
- » Although limited, horse trading among European leaders will continue to play crucial role in establishing the Commission College and in balancing interests between the European Parliament and Member-States.
- » The process of internal reforms, in particular at the Commission, will be a difficult task and Juncker might not be the best person for that task. Member-States' pressure on this office will continue to increase and the European Parliament, wishing to emphasize its role and "victory" won with his nomination, will not miss any chance to remind him of that.

5. PIECE OF THE PIE

5.1. Juncker's Priorities

After having discussed the programme for organization of the European Parliament elections and for winning over constituency votes, in the course of election campaigns supporters of the Spitzenkandidat system were exposed to different concepts and programmes offered by these candidates and made their final decision in the third week of May 2014. EU citizens have chosen the concept promoted by Jean-Claude Juncker, a concept of growth, jobs and development, in which many recognized austerity messages of the German Chancellor Merkel.

As part of his election bid, Juncker presented five priorities⁵⁷:

1. Policies that create **growth** and **jobs**, based on **the digital single market** for consumers and businesses;
2. New **European Energy Union**, by reforming and reorganizing the energy policy with a view to improve infrastructure and EU's position vis-à-vis our partners, and with a view to diversify energy sources;
3. Opening negotiations and signing new **reasonable and balanced trade agreement with the United States of America**, contributing towards complete abolishment of trade barriers, including mutual recognition of product standards or developing new and joint **transatlantic standards**;
4. Having in mind Europe's social dimension, continuation of **monetary union reforms**, with focus on three areas of change:

⁵⁷ <http://juncker.epp.eu/my-priorities>

- > *re-balance the relationship between elected politicians and the European Central Bank in daily management of the Eurozone, by strengthening the position of the President of the Euro Group;*
- > *re-balance the conditional stability support to Eurozone countries in financial difficulties, by means of social impact assessment concerning financial stability packages granted to Member-States;*
- > *strengthen the external projection of the European Monetary Union with international financial institutions (for example, IMF), thereby ensuring that the euro is stable on the inside, but also has strong common voice on the global stage.*

5. To give an answer to the **British question**, by means of further **integration within the Eurozone** and **respecting UK's opt-outs**, without jeopardizing stability of the euro, the single market and its four freedoms.

On the occasion of his first address in front of the European Parliament on 15th July 2014 in the capacity of endorsed candidate for European Commission President,⁵⁸ Jean-Claude Juncker expanded his list of five priorities and presented the main guidelines underlying the EC's programme aimed at bringing the Union closer to its citizen and reducing the democratic deficit. New priorities of the EC President candidate included: 1) **deeper and fairer internal market with a strengthened industrial base**, by bringing the industry's weight in the EU's GDP back to 20% by 2020; 2) strengthened shared values among Member-States and **improved area of justice and fundamental rights based on mutual trust**, fight against discrimination on all bases, combating cross-border crime and terrorism, and improved judicial coop-

eration among EU Member-States; 3) improved legislation and **policy on legal migration** aimed at improved attractiveness of the EU for talented and skilled labour force, while securing Europe's borders and **fighting against human trafficking**; 4) improved dialogue with the European Parliament and **strengthened democratic capacity of the EU**, by means of greater cooperation with and involvement of national parliaments, as well as by improving the Union's transformative power. Finally, the expanded list of priorities refers to improved image of the EU as stronger global player able to cope with current challenges in the international community, and able to deal with its enlargement.

Below is Juncker's statement on EU enlargement provided at the plenary session in the European Parliament on 15th July 2014:

"In the next five years, no new members will be joining us in the European Union. As things now stand, it is inconceivable that any of the candidate countries with whom we are now negotiating will be able to meet all the membership criteria down to every detail by 2019. However, the negotiations will be continued and other European nations and European countries need a credible and honest European perspective. This applies especially to the Western Balkans. This tragic European region needs a European perspective. Otherwise the old demons of the past will reawaken".

This statement sparked major interest and was commented throughout the process for establishment of the new European Commission, even in the course of portfolio distribution and EC's internal structure. Be that as it may, the media in Macedonia covered only the first half of his statement⁵⁹ where it is said that *"In the next five years, no new members will be joining us in the European Union"*, thereby adding fuel to the

⁵⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/about/juncker-commission/docs/pg_en.pdf

⁵⁹ <http://www.time.mk/?q=%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%88%D0%B8%D1%80%D1%83%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%9A%D0%B5+%D0%88%D1%83%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%B5%D1%80&search=news>

anti-European sentiment and perplexity of ordinary citizens. This statement hallmarked the start of Juncker's term of office and his position on the EU enlargement policy. To make matters worse, Eurosceptic circles in Macedonia and the Western Balkans used this statement to instigate greater pessimism and create a context for validation of arguments that the EU does not want us and that we need to find other alternatives.

In truth, such interpretation of Juncker's statement is nothing but skilled manipulation and twist of facts, notably because he provided a realistic image about the enlargement process. In truth, from the pool of candidate or potential candidate countries, only Serbia and Montenegro have started accession process, but are in early stage of negotiations, Macedonia has not started the accession negotiations, while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Kosovo are far from any kind of accession negotiations in the near future. Even under the assumption that these countries will start this process tomorrow, it would take five to six years, on average, to complete negotiations. Once accession negotiations are completed, all EU Member-States have to ratify the Accession Agreement, including the ratification at the European Parliament, while the acceding countries would have to organize national referendum on EU accession and transferring portion of its sovereignty to EU decision-making bodies. Accordingly, even the fastest and most efficient accession negotiations cannot result in full-fledged membership within a period of five years. Hence, Juncker did not announce anything new or unknown; on the contrary, he merely confirmed what was broadly and publicly known. Here, it should be noted that his address targeted the EU public which perceives enlargement as basic priority of the EU, as well as that the term enlargement implies urgent accession in membership of new countries, not discontinuation of the negotiation process for admitting new Member-States.

5.2. 100-Meter Hurdles

End of election race marked the start of official race. This time around, the process resembled 100-meter hurdles, instead of usual sprint. First, the European Council President, Herman Van Rompuy, declared his intent to withdraw from politics, followed by series of events that intensified political struggles for piece of the election cake. Suddenly, the European Council had to decide not only about the European Commission President, but also about the European Council President and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. In the meantime, the European Parliament had already put its matters into order by re-electing Martin Schulz as President of the European Parliament. In parallel with many and varied interests, the number of candidates increased as well. According to statements made by the German-French leadership duo after Juncker's candidacy was confirmed, the second high-ranking position (High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and EC Vice-President) had to be recruited with "a woman from the membership of the Party of European Socialists". On this account and, of course, on the account of his election victory, Matteo Renzi expected his closest associate, Federica Mogherini, to be immediately endorsed and appointed to this office.⁶⁰ This matter was not resolved immediately, as the final appointment of candidates for top offices was completed in late August.⁶¹

On the tenth anniversary of their EU accession, Member-States from the Eastern Block aspired to have their Commissioners in high-ranking

⁶⁰ <http://www.euractiv.com/video/renzi-angered-after-eu-leaders-fail-appoint-mogherini-high-representative-307745>

⁶¹ <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/eu-priorities-2020/eu-summit-live-foreign-policy-chief-top-jobs-table-303503>

offices, wishing to demonstrate that they are part and parcel of the EU. At the same time, Poland which spent most of its 10-year membership on improving its image and seeking recognition as part of “big” Member-States expected yet another recognition, after Jerzy Buzek served his term as the first President of the European Parliament from East Europe. Nominations for the office of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and European Commission Vice-President were made by Poland, which nominated its Minister of Foreign Affairs, Radosław Sikorski, and Bulgaria, which nominated Kristalina Georgieva, Commissioner in the current European Commission.⁶² Delayed decision-making on the final Commission College is understandable in the light of these nominations and Chancellor Merkel’s statement⁶³ that nominations are closely linked with and conditioned by portfolio distribution within the Commission. The final decision was taken on 30th August 2014 and implied appointment of the Polish Prime Minister, Donald Tusk (EPP), as President of the European Council and the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federica Mogherini (PES), as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and European Commission Vice-President.

Next hurdle in the process on establishing the Commission College implied Juncker’s failure to motivate Member-States to nominate more female candidates. Namely, only in the late stages of the process and after having reiterated that nomination of several female candidates can secure better portfolios for the Member-States, EC President Juncker managed to secure at least identical number of female Commissioners with Barosso’s second commission (9).

⁶² <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/eu-elections-2014/eastern-europe-blocks-nominations-top-jobs-303543>

⁶³ Ibid 23

On the other hand, countries in the region and the few honest supporters of enlargement⁶⁴ were concerned with the fact that not a single Member-States fought for the enlargement portfolio or what has remained of it, once it was established that enlargement is not among top priorities for this five-year period. Many analysts forecasted and expected a new Member-State to be given this portfolio, but it remained to be seen which one. Analysis of candidates for Commissioners provided the conclusion that none of them holds relevant experience or background in this matter. In the end, Austria’s economic interests in developing cooperation with its neighbourhood and, of course, in assuming leadership under the EU enlargement with the Western Balkans, placed the experienced Johannes Hahn in the office of future Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

⁶⁴ <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/eu-elections-2014/bildt-slams-juncker-over-absence-enlargement-portfolio-308245>

5.3. Commission with a Dozen Chiefs⁶⁵

At the plenary session held on 22nd October 2014, the European Parliament officially vetted the new European Commission⁶⁶. EC's composition enlists as many as 7 Vice-Presidents, Federica Mogherini included. Frans Timmermans from the Netherlands was appointed the First Vice-President. In the words of President Juncker, this position is linked with super powers, including decision-making authorities in issues such as the principle of subsidiarity, sustainable development, several EU policies, and all European Commission portfolios. Similar powers are entrusted to Vice-President Kristalina Georgieva, who is now responsible for human resource development and the EU budget. Remaining Vice-Presidents chair a number of related portfolios and will act as filters for blocking or stopping adoption of particular decisions, acts or policies.⁶⁷

Compared against the current European Commission, Juncker's College includes an identical number of female commissioners, and replicated the human resource decision on having a woman appointed to the joint office of First Vice-President and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. In terms of the age structure, the average age of Juncker's Commission is lower by two years, i.e. 51.3 years compared to 53.7 years for Barroso's Commission. In terms of political affiliation, breakdown of commissioners per political

⁶⁵ Annex 1 to this report provides an overview of President-elect Juncker's Commission, organized into project teams coordinated by individual Vice-Presidents.

⁶⁶ <http://euranetplus-inside.eu/one-week-in-europe-climate-deal-political-compromises-and-the-juncker-commission/>

⁶⁷ Annex 2 to this report provides an overview of portfolio and competences distribution within President-elect Juncker's Commission, including the Directorates General and other Agencies.

group is as follows: 14 commissioners are members of EPP, 8 - PES, 5 - ALDE and 1 commissioner is member of ECR. Barroso's Commission included lower number of members from EPP and PES in favour of ALDE, and did not include a commissioner from ECR.

Finally, in terms of previous political experience at EU level, Juncker's Commission includes as many as 7 former commissioners and 7 former MEPs. In terms of relevant background in national politics, 4 commissioners are former Prime Ministers, and 4 commissioners are former Deputy Prime Ministers. This Commission College includes one former Minister of Finance, three former Ministers of Foreign Affairs and one former Minister of European Affairs. As many as 10 commissioners are former ministers or other government members at the rank of ministers, with only 5 commissioners coming from other offices prior to their appointment in the European Commission..

5.4. Who is Johannes Hahn?

Candidate for EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations and current Commissioner for Regional Policy (2009-2014) is the former local leader of the Austrian People's Party from Vienna and member of the Vienna City Council. At one point in his political career he was the Minister of Science and Research in the Austrian Federal Government. In the opinion of many, including the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sebastian Kurz,⁶⁸ assignment of this portfolio implies recognition and appreciation of the Austrian policy and Commissioner Johannes Hahn is the right person for this job.

⁶⁸ <http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/the-ministry/press/announcements/2014/09/minister-for-foreign-affairs-kurz-key-portfolio-european-neighbourhood-policy-enlargement-negotiations-shows-appreciation-of-commissioner-hahn-and-austria/>

For Austria, economic relations with Ukraine and Russia are exceptionally important, with the business community closely monitoring the conflict in East Ukraine and the political sparring with Russia. Therefore, Commissioner Hahn is expected to put his calmness into work and bring new life and direction to diplomatic negotiations geared at coping with the crisis. On the other hand, as far as enlargement is concerned, Commissioner Hahn declared that this process will continue no matter the circumstances and tasked himself with “[...] *helping the countries aspiring to become EU Member-States*”.⁶⁹

Macedonia has nothing to expect from the new Enlargement Commissioner. To present, it had been clearly indicated and reiterated that the country has failed to do its homework. However, according to announcements made by the Commissioner’s Cabinet, his first visit to enlargement countries will include Macedonia, in November 2014⁷⁰, because, as he said at the hearing in the European Parliament: *“the appetite for reforms in Macedonia is reduced, and that is one of my greatest concerns”*.⁷¹

⁶⁹ <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/eu-elections-2014/austrian-enlargement-commissioner-turkey-important-partner-us-308831>

⁷⁰ <http://www.sitel.com.mk/prvata-poseta-na-noviot-komesar-za-proshiruvanje-johanes-han-na-makedonija-0>

⁷¹ <http://novatv.mk/index.php?navig=8&cat=2&vest=17045>

6. BERLIN AGENDA FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS: LAST CHANCE FOR MACEDONIA!?

6.1. Is the 2003 Thessaloniki Agenda Exhausted?

2003 Thessaloniki Agenda, i.e. EU-Western Balkans Summit held in Thessaloniki, marked the start of EU’s open support for the Western Balkans’ membership in the EU. At the Summit, the EU clearly expressed its unequivocal dedication to the European perspective of the countries in this region. In the period from June 2003 to present, different countries demonstrate varied pace of EU-related reforms. Namely, from the Thessaloniki Summit, Croatia become full-fledged EU Member-State (2013), while Serbia (2014) and Montenegro (2012) started their accession negotiations, Macedonia (2005) and Albania (2014) have been granted candidate country status, whereas Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are still in the stage of having signed their respective Stabilization and Association Agreements. In the aftermath of EU’s big-bang enlargement in 2004 with 10 new Member States,⁷² it seems that EU enlargement agenda has become a second-ranked objective. This situation is a result of 2009 financial crisis across Europe, rendering the objective for coping with and overcoming the economic downturn the first and foremost priority of the Union.

Five years later, a new situation has emerged and pushed the issue of Western Balkans’ EU perspective higher on the EU’s list of priorities. Today, in response to the political crisis in Ukraine, intensified rivalry between EU Member-States and Russia, and entrance of far-right-wing

⁷² From then, Bulgaria and Romania became Member States in 2007 and Croatia in 2013

anti-European parties in the European Parliament, the Union needs to demonstrate unity and stability more than ever before. In summer 2014, the EU demonstrated its serious commitment to the enlargement process and again reaffirmed the unfinished Thessaloniki Agenda. In this respect, three processes explain the EU's intention to strengthen Western Balkans's integration processes.

First among these efforts is dealing with the political crisis in Ukraine, notably by signing Association Pacts with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, whose goal is to create close political and economic ties between these countries and the EU,⁷³ and ultimately lead to their accession in the European Union.⁷⁴ It is certain that EU enlargement, i.e. integration of these countries would further strengthen and empower the EU, and will result in establishment of the EU as strong player not only on the continent, but also in the world, notably by promoting its successful political and economic models that attracts non-member countries.

The second process signalling an intensified EU enlargement agenda is the candidate country status granted to Albania earlier this year, as a result of all reform processes and efforts made by the state, primarily successful organization of the last round of parliamentary elections.

The third and last process confirming the EU's commitment to enlargement with the Western Balkans is the high-level EU-Western Balkans Conference in Berlin held on 28 August 2014, on the initiative of German Chancellor Angela Merkel.⁷⁵

⁷³ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-430_en.htm

⁷⁴ <http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/ukraine-georgia-and-moldova-sign-eu-deals/>

⁷⁵ <http://www.dw.de/%D0%B1%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BE%D1%82-%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D0%B3%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%BE%D1%82-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%87%D0%BA%D0%B8-%D1%84%D0%BE%D0%BA%D1%83%D1%81/a-17695682>

6.2. Dubrovnik as Herald of the Berlin Summit

Activities around the new plan for EU enlargement with the Western Balkans started way ahead of the Berlin Summit, with new policy contours emerging at preparatory meetings from July 2014, held in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Namely, the Ninth Croatian Forum was held in the period 10-12 July with a focus on the Western Balkans and their accession in the EU. This conference was attended by ministers from EU Member-States, EFTA countries, and the Western Balkans. Moreover, meetings held a part of this conference included the Enragement Commissioner Stefan Fule, Commissioner for Consumer Protection Neven Mimica, EU High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina Valentin Inzko, EU Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Peter Sorensen, etc. List of state officials in attendance included representatives from Turkey, the United States, Japan, Russia and New Zealand.⁷⁶

At the Croatian Forum in Dubrovnik, German Chancellor Merkel reiterated that when it comes to EU enlargement, it is always a matter of political approach to conflict resolution. In On that occasion, she stated: *"15 years ago, in Dubrovnik there were visible traces of the wartime. Therefore, I would like to stress the crucial meaning of having the climate of destruction replaced with construction and reconstruction. Great progress has been noted in normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, with their respective leaderships pursuing politics for better future"*. German Chancellor Merkel continued in the same context:

%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D0%B3%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%BE%D1%82-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%87%D0%BA%D0%B8-%D1%84%D0%BE%D0%BA%D1%83%D1%81/a-17695682

⁷⁶ <http://www.mvep.hr/en/special-projects/croatia-forum/croatia-forum-2014/participants/>

*“I would like to say that courage is needed to take new paths, and would like to emphasize the issue between Macedonia and Greece which still burdens the relations between these two countries. We need to solve this problem. I have been personally engaged in the matter contemplating about all possible combinations of the name. Germany is ready for constructive cooperation to solve the issue, but nothing can be done without a compromise. When everyone is equally dissatisfied, then it is a fair compromise, and I think this is very important for Macedonia”.*⁷⁷

6.3. What Did the Berlin Summit Bring?

According to German Chancellor Merkel *“the countries from the Western Balkan have a clear European perspective. Of course, they have a long road before them. They have the support from the EU, but progress will depend on the country itself”*. The Berlin Conference organized under the auspices of Chancellor Merkel extended invitations to Prime Ministers, Chiefs of Diplomacy and Ministers of Economy from the Western Balkans (Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia), as well as from Croatia and Slovenia. Chancellor Merkel’s decision to host a conference on this issue is in line with the statement given by Jose Manuel Barroso immediately after his visit to Albania that *“it would be a major mistake to turn our back to the Western Balkans”*.⁷⁸

Representatives of the European Commission and the European

⁷⁷ <http://dubrovacki.hr/clanak/64926/angela-merkel-treba-pokazati-hrabrost-da-se-kroci-novim-putevima>

⁷⁸ <http://www.tvz.tv/index.php?c=events&s=more&id=14457>

Council were also invited to attend the conference. The idea is to make this conference an annual tradition, with different EU Member-States as hosts. Austria and France will host such conferences in 2015 and 2016, respectively. In the capacity of host and initiator of the first conference, Germany sent strong signal of support for integration of the Western Balkans in the EU, thereby guaranteeing that this process is backed by one of the most powerful EU Member-States.

According to the joint declaration endorsed by all participants, the conference aims to establish *“four-year framework for furthering endeavours to make additional progress in the reform process, in resolving outstanding bilateral and internal issues, and in achieving reconciliation within and between the societies in the region. The Western Balkan is united in the aim of enhancing regional economic cooperation and laying the foundations for sustainable growth”*.⁷⁹

After the event, German Chancellor Merkel, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, in the capacity of Conference Chair and representative from the Western Balkans, organized a joint press conference.

The conclusions reached during the Berlin Summit were presented in the form of Joint Declaration of the Conference on the Western Balkans, held on 28th August 2014 in Berlin, Germany.

The summary conclusions can be grouped under several points:

- Regional cooperation in the Western Balkans as precondition for the stability in the region. This section from the Joint Declaration underlines the need to resolve outstanding bilateral issues on the

⁷⁹ http://www.shqiptarja.com/pdf/new/Konferenca%20e%20Berlinit%20-%20Deklarata%20permyllese.Engl_001.pdf

Balkan, as precondition for further reforms. Key problems in this regard include three major issues that need to be resolved in the next four years, those being: a) normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo; b) improved constitutional arrangements in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and c) urgent resolution of the name dispute between Greece and Macedonia. Further intensification of regional cooperation is encouraged among the Western Balkans by means of joint projects and actions geared towards stability in the region and accession in the EU.

- Good governance is the second point, and the states have to demonstrate commitment to their integration in the EU. Young democratic states must demonstrate serious commitment to fight against corruption and organized crime. Good governance necessitates creation of strong civil society, enhanced role of the opposition in parliament and independent media.
- Next issue concerns the need for the Western Balkans to deliver results in terms of sustainable economic growth. This primarily implies positive business climate and legal security for small and medium enterprises. Sustainable economic growth will also be created by means of investments in developed transport and energy networks.
- Youth unemployment is the last point on which governments in the Western Balkan should work by creating conditions for quality academic and vocational education relevant to the labour market demand.

All these efforts cover the most important issues on which the Western Balkans will have to deliver results in the next four years. The fact that European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and Enlarge-

ment Commissioner Stefan Fule attended this Conference is a sign of the EC's support to reform processes in the Western Balkans, including the EU's renewed commitment to enlargement with the Western Balkans, as reiterated during the Berlin Summit. Financial assistance committed under the new Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) amounts to 12 billion EUR for the period 2014-2020. The fact that such financial assistance is granted to the Western Balkan states at times of economic crisis speaks highly of the EC's support to reforms that need to happen in these states, however, the results and progress achieved will depend solely on the pace of reforms pursued by the individual countries. Although there will be no new enlargement in the next five years, i.e. during the mandate of the new European Commission (according to the programme presented by the new European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker), the Western Balkan states must continue their EU-related reforms in order to fully integrate in the Union.

6.4. The Eternal (False) Dilemma of Candidate Countries: Which Western Balkan State Should Join the EU First?

EU accession process is complex, especially when it comes to political elites getting accustomed to the system of checks-and-balances, the indisputable rule of law, the practice of democracy and transparency, which are defined as the pillars of EU integration. These practices are accompanied by adoption and alignment of national legislation with the EU *acquis*, adoption and transposition of European standards and quality assurance policies. What is of vital importance, albeit extremely

difficult to measure, is the will of citizens and political elites in the Western Balkans to engage in and implement these processes.

During his recent visit to Albania, European Commission President Barroso stated that *“the candidate status recognizes the commitment and actions demonstrated by the government in the recent months, to pursue the process of EU-related reforms in the fight against corruption and organized crime and judicial reforms”*.⁸⁰ Albanian Prime Minister added to this recognition and recommendation *“[...] we do not receive the EU candidate status as trophy, nor do we consider it as partial achievement [...], but as an appreciation for what we have done and as new level of responsibility for what we have to do [...] we still have difficult homework to complete”*.⁸¹

Similar preparedness and desire to join the EU was demonstrated by Serbia, which seriously and diligently worked on stabilizing its relations with Kosovo, and was awarded start of accession negotiations with the EU in January 2014.

As part of his last Balkan tour, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso visited only Serbia and Albania. This concept was announced with the words *“in addition to Serbia, my intention is to visit other countries in the region that have progressed on their path towards the EU, so after Belgrade and leave for Tirana”*.⁸²

Signals sent by Brussels show that Macedonia is part of the Western Balkans, but is not in the focus of its efforts. Barroso’s visits to Albania and Serbia and the fact that Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama was asked to chair the EU-Western Balkans Conference in Berlin provide a clear signal about the direction in which the European Commission’s enlargement energy will be geared in the next period. The moment Macedonia demonstrates actual progress and will to implement reform processes, Brussels’ attention will be directed towards it.

⁸⁰ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-521_en.htm

⁸¹ <http://www.kryeministria.al/en/newsroom/press-releases/barroso-the-status-a-new-chapter-for-the-challenges-of-albania&page=3>

⁸² <http://libertas.mk/%D0%B1%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BE-%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D0%BD%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D1%81%D1%80%D0%B1%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B0-%D0%B-F%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B1/>



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Before the publication of EC's Progress Reports for the Republic of Macedonia and other Western Balkans, but after establishment of the new European Parliament and European Commission, and after Croatia became full-fledged member in 2013, clear is that the EU opens a new chapter in its enlargement policy. Allow us to provide a brief overview of the new enlargement policy emerging from events that took place in the last three months, i.e. during the election campaign for the European Parliament and in the midst of post-electoral calculations based on election results, including the new approach to appointment of European Commission President, which is best represented by the German word *spitzenkandidat*.

Enlargement is not high on the agenda of the new European Commission, but that does not mean there is no enlargement policy or Enlargement Commissioner. Although many had speculated that there will be no European Commissioner for Enlargement, Johannes Hahn was given competences on this issue. Moreover, it is true that the

new European Commission President issued a statement wherein he declared there will be no new enlargement of the European Union in the next five years, i.e. during the mandate of the new Commission College, but that does not necessarily mean there will be no enlargement process which, after five years, would lead to EU's enlargement with the Western Balkans. Truth to be told, EC President Juncker only depicted the realistic situation as the states that have or are about to start the accession negotiations will be engaged in this process for at least five or six years, followed by ratification of their Accession Treaties by EU Member-States, while acceding countries will have to organize referendum for their accession in the EU. Having in mind this reality, even if Commission President Juncker did not make such statement, the EU will not have another full-fledged member before 2020.

EU Member-States are now given new proactive role in the enlargement process with the Western Balkans. EU-Western Balkans Summit in Berlin represents a new dynamic in Member-States' pledge to EU enlargement. Namely, in the past it was the European Commission that acted as advocate for EU's enlargement with the Western Balkan, but in the aftermath of the Berlin Summit, Germany, France, Austria and other Member-States emerge as promoters of this process and have an active role. In political terms, the Berlin Summit has the same role as 2003 Thessaloniki Summit, when the European perspective for the countries in the region was first recognized.

States from the Western Balkan will have to work more diligently for their reform agendas to be assessed as satisfactory. At the Berlin Summit, Chancellor Merkel noted that „the Balkan countries are progressing, but the process is moving with the speed of a snail“. In that, reform agenda's priorities include the rule of law, fight against corruption

and organized crime, media freedoms and securing economic growth and jobs for youth. These requests are specific and there will be more pressure on the Western Balkans because this region's failure to deliver results can no longer be excused with ethnic conflicts and wars, as they have ended long ago, but reform processes in above-enlisted areas are far from satisfactory. This approach and its focus on Europeanization should result in improved performance of state institutions, but also in improved living and economic conditions for citizens in the region.

Bilateral issues are high priority of the conditionality policy and the EU does not wish to import such problems, but will work on their resolution before the accession of candidate countries, possibly in the next four years. Conclusions from the Berlin Summit refer to three key disputes in the Western Balkan region that need to be addressed in the next four years and whose resolution implies intensive efforts on the part of EU institutions and Member-States. They include relations between Serbia and Kosovo, constitutional arrangements in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and name dispute between Macedonia and Greece. Hence, the EU will focus its agenda on these three problems of key importance and assumes responsibility for their resolution in the next four-year period.

Above presented developments and events provide several lessons for Macedonia that must be inevitably reconsidered and integrated in the country's EU accession strategy. Below are several recommendations and conclusions that could and should be adopted by the Government when defining the agenda (if any) for bringing Macedonia back on its EU track, in particular because analyses presented here and in our previous Accession Watch Reports provide the conclusion that Macedonia is one of the most problematic points in the Western Balkan.

First and without delay, Macedonia must draft a comprehensive state strategy on its EU accession covering the next five-year period. Namely, public policies in Macedonia are neither aligned with EU strategies (Europe 2020) nor are fully in line with regional development strategies (Southeast Europe 2020). Moreover, Macedonia does not have a clear plan for unblocking its path towards the EU and does not show any plans for public debate that would determine steps to be taken for the country to achieve its top political, economic and social priority defined as membership in the EU.

All states in the region, in particular those with unresolved bilateral issues with their neighbours, have put in place plans for exiting the political crisis that threatens to endanger their EU membership. For example, in the last two years Serbia is engaged in negotiations aimed at normalizing its relations with Kosovo, while Bosnia and Herzegovina is repeatedly proposing new concepts to improve functionality of its complicated state, institutional and political system. Unfortunately, Macedonia is assuming an utterly passive position, with the ruling authorities pursuing only one policy – to depict Macedonia as victim of its neighbours and powerful states. Undoubtedly, our state has been put in unfavourable position with the name dispute imposed by Greece, but unlike other states in the region, we are not making efforts to unlock the deadlock. On the contrary, with every passing year Macedonia is distancing itself further from its EU perspective. Of course, responsibility for unlocking this deadlock also lies with the EU institutions and Member-States, but in order for the latter to progress in their endeavours, they need to find reliable partners in Macedonian state institutions.

The time period leading to establishment of the new European Parliament and European Commission is very important for Macedonia, and for other Western Balkan states, to develop new policies and positions, find new friends and utilize new opportunities. This also includes new composition of the EU-Macedonia Joint Parliamentary Committee and appointment of new EP Rapporteur for Macedonia and new Enlargement Commissioner. All these actors would be in much better position to lobby for Macedonia if the reform processes in the state are progressing in the right direction, especially if the country delivers a satisfactory track record in policy areas such as the rule of law, media freedoms, political dialogue, public administration, anticorruption, etc. Regretfully, the state demonstrates continuous deterioration in these areas and, by doing so, distances itself from fulfilment of essential requirements for EU membership, but also from securing better living conditions for its citizens. In the next five years, the Western Balkans are given a fresh chance to complete their roads towards the EU, and if Macedonia misses this chance it would further solidify the deadlock situation to the detriment of both, the state and the citizens, although they unquestionably wish to become part of the European Union in all ways possible.

IV

ANNEX 1

This annex includes overview and explanation of the Commission College under EC President Jean-Claude Juncker, including the internal grouping into project teams and per programme priority. Furthermore, the organogram below shows new roles of individual Commission Vice-Presidents and their tasks and duties according to the priorities defined in President Juncker's programme. Each organogram shows the role of individual Vice-Presidents in the capacity of "Super Commissioner" coordinating much broader portfolio comprised of individual portfolios led by different "Regular Commissioners". In that, the Super Commissioner is directly linked with Regular Commissioners whose portfolios fall under his/her competences and with other Regular Commissioners whose portfolios he/she coordinates. Different organograms provide overview of coordination and supervision roles of individual Super Commissioners, i.e. Vice-Presidents, highlighted by different colour. Boxes in darker nuances of the colour assigned to an individual Vice-President indicate commissioner

portfolios under direct competences of the Super Commissioner, while boxes marked with lighter nuances of the assigned colour indicate commissioner portfolios under coordination of the Super Commissioner. Only difference is observed in the case of Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President, and in the case of the Kristalina Georgieva, Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources, who directly control all the Vice-Presidents and Commissioners.

Materials provided in this annex are publicly available documents published by the European Commission and can be downloaded from:

http://ec.europa.eu/about/structure/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/about/structure/docs/structure_en.pdf

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-523_en.htm



JEAN-CLAUDE JUNCKER
PRESIDENT-ELECT



FRANS TIMMERMANS
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT



FEDERICA MOGHERINI
HIGH REPRESENTATIVE



KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA
VICE-PRESIDENT



ANDRUS ANSIP
VICE-PRESIDENT



MAROŠ ŠEFCOVIČ
VICE-PRESIDENT



VALDIS DOMBROVSKIS
VICE-PRESIDENT



JYRKI KATAINEN
VICE-PRESIDENT



GÜNTHER OETTINGER



JOHANNES HAHN



CECILIA MALMSTRÖM



NEVEN MIMICA



MIGUEL ARIAS CAÑETE



KARMENU VELLA



VYTENIS ANDRIUKAITIS



DIMITRIS AVRAMOPOULOS



MARIANNE THYSSEN



PIERRE MOSCOVICI



CHRISTOS STYLIANIDES



PHIL HOGAN



JONATHAN HILL



VIOLETA BULC



ELŻBIETA BIEŃKOWSKA



VĚRA JOUROVÁ



TIBOR NAVRACSIKS



CORINA CREȚU



MARGRETHE VESTAGER



CARLOS MOEDAS

#teamJunckerEU

PROJECT TEAM: A NEW BOOST FOR JOBS, GROWTH AND INVESTMENT

Jean-Claude Juncker:

“My number one priority and the connecting thread running through each and every proposal will be getting Europe growing again and getting people back to decent jobs.”

The team leader is **Jyrki Katainen**, Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness.

One of the Commission’s top priorities will be to strengthen Europe’s competitiveness and to stimulate investment and create jobs. The Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness will notably be tasked with steering, coordinating, presenting and implementing an ambitious Jobs, Growth and Investment Package which should allow us to mobilise up to €300 billion in additional public and private investment in the real economy over the next three years.

He will therefore need to steer and coordinate the work of several Commissioners, who will all be contributing their part to the Package and, more generally, to the overarching goals. He will, in particular, steer and coordinate the work of the Commissioners for Economic and Financial Affairs; Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; Regional Policy; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union;

Digital Economy and Society; Climate Action and Energy; and Transport and Space.



European
Commission

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Budget & Human Resources

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Commissioner <i>Migration, Home Affairs & Citizenship</i>	Commissioner <i>Health & Food Safety</i>	Commissioner <i>Financial Stability, Financial Services & Capital Markets Union</i>	Commissioner <i>Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship & SMEs</i>	Commissioner <i>Climate Action & Energy</i>	Commissioner <i>International Cooperation & Development</i>
Commissioner <i>Competition</i>	Commissioner <i>Transport</i>	Commissioner <i>Trade</i>	Commissioner <i>Environment, Maritime Affairs & Fisheries</i>	Commissioner <i>Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Management</i>	
Commissioner <i>Education, Culture, Youth & Sport</i>	Commissioner <i>Research, Science & Innovation</i>	Commissioner <i>Agriculture & Rural Development</i>			

PROJECT TEAM: A DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET

Jean-Claude Juncker:

„By creating a connected digital single market, we can generate up to € 250 billion of additional growth in Europe in the course of the mandate of the next Commission, thereby creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs, notably for younger job-seekers, and a vibrant knowledge-based society. The EU should become a leader in the creative industries, but in full respect of cultural diversity.“

The team leader is **Andrus Ansip**, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market.

To make better use of the opportunities offered by digital technologies, national silos in telecoms regulation, in copyright and data protection legislation, in the management of radio waves and in the application of competition law need to be broken down. Copyright rules, in the future under the responsibility of the Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society (Günther Oettinger), should also be modernised in the light of the digital revolution and new consumer behaviour. They should help build a successful European media and content industry. Cultural diversity will remain a Commission priority in this context.

The Vice-President for the Digital Single Market will notably be tasked with presenting ambitious legislative steps towards a connected digital single market. He will steer and coordinate the work of, in particular, the Commissioners for Digital Economy and Society; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality; Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs; Regional Policy; and Agriculture and Rural Development.



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*Humanitarian Aid
 & Crisis Management*

PROJECT TEAM:

A RESILIENT ENERGY UNION WITH A FORWARD-LOOKING CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Jean-Claude Juncker:

„I want to reform and reorganise Europe’s energy policy into a new European Energy Union. We need to pool our resources, combine our infrastructures and unite our negotiating power vis-à-vis third countries. We need to diversify our energy sources, and reduce the high energy dependency of several of our Member States.“

The team leader is **Maroš Šefčovič**, Vice-President for Energy Union.

The European Union needs a resilient Energy Union. Diversifying our energy sources, and reducing the high energy dependency of several of our Member States will make the European Union more independent whilst strengthening the share of renewable energies and increasing Europe’s energy efficiency will help create jobs and reduce costs. **This will notably include a binding 30 % objective for energy efficiency by 2030, as called for by President-elect Juncker in his speech before the European Parliament on 15 July.** The Vice-President for Energy Union will notably be tasked with reforming and reorganising Europe’s energy policy into a new European Energy Union. The Vice-President for Energy Union will steer and coordinate in particular the work of the Commissioners for Climate Action and Energy; Trans-

port and Space; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries; Regional Policy; Agriculture and Rural Development; and Research, Science and Innovation.



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PROJECT TEAM: A DEEPER AND FAIRER ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION

Jean-Claude Juncker:

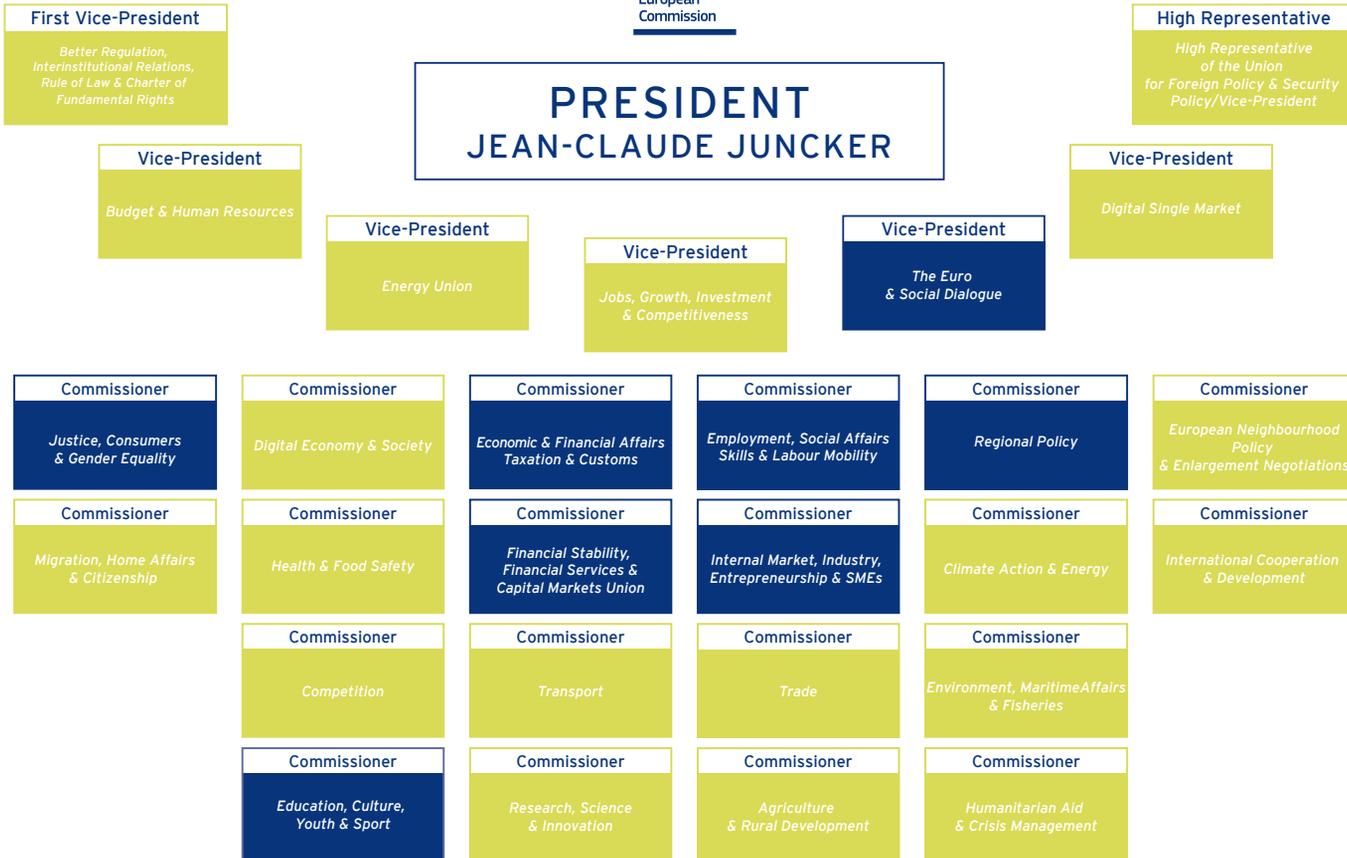
„The crisis has only been paused. We must make use of this pause to consolidate and complement the unprecedented measures we have taken during the crisis, simplify them and make them more socially legitimate. It is not compatible with the social market economy that during a crisis, ship-owners and speculators become even richer, while pensioners can no longer support themselves.“

The team leader will be **Valdis Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue.

On the basis of the “Four Presidents Reports” and the Commission’s Blueprint for a Deep and Genuine Economic and Monetary Union, and with Europe’s social dimension in mind, the Commission must continue with the reform of Europe’s Economic and Monetary Union to preserve the stability of the euro. The Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue will notably be tasked with overseeing the European Semester (Europe’s economic governance cycle) and with coordinating, presenting and implementing initiatives to enhance the convergence of economic, fiscal and labour market policies between the Member States that share the euro.

Economic reforms and adjustment programmes need to be accompanied by flanking social measures. This can only be achieved through a constant dialogue with European social partners, business representatives and trade unions. The social market economy can only work if there is a social dialogue, notably when it comes to sensitive issues such as maintaining wages and wage indexation. It is for this reason that a specific Vice-President, the Vice-President for the Euro and the Social Dialogue, has been made responsible for promoting and supporting the European social dialogue.

He will steer and coordinate in particular the work of the Commissioners for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs; Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; Education, Culture, Youth and Citizenship; Regional Policy; and Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality.



FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT, IN CHARGE OF BETTER REGULATION, INTER- INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS, THE RULE OF LAW AND THE CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

The creation of a First Vice-President, who will be in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights (**Frans Timmermans**), follows the commitment made by President-elect Juncker to the European Parliament. The First Vice-President will act as the right-hand of the President. As Vice-President in charge of Better Regulation, he will notably ensure that every Commission proposal respects the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, which are at the heart of the work of the Commission. The First Vice-President will also act as a watchdog, upholding the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Rule of Law in all of the Commission's activities. This is a strong symbol of the Commission's commitment to the respect of the rule of law and fundamental rights.

He will thus work with all Commissioners and particularly closely with the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality and the Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs due to their close link with fundamental rights and the rule of law.

As the President's deputy, he will be tasked with overseeing the European Commission's relations with national Parliaments and with the other European institutions.



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VICE-PRESIDENT FOR BUDGET AND HUMAN RESOURCES

In economically challenging times, it is more important than ever that human and budgetary resources are used to best effect.

To ensure that resources are allocated according to the Commission's political priorities and to ensure that every action delivers maximum performance, the Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources (**Kristalina Georgieva**) will vet all Commission initiatives for their budgetary and personnel implications. She will also be asked to further modernise European public administration, including by making stronger use of digital technologies. She will be tasked to bring female representation in the Commission's senior and middle management to 40% by the end of the mandate. She will work with all Commissioners.



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THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY POLICY

Jean-Claude Juncker:

„We need better mechanisms in place to anticipate events early and to swiftly identify common responses. We need to be more effective in bringing together the tools of Europe’s external action. Trade policy, development aid, our participation in international financial institutions and our neighbourhood policy must be combined and activated according to one and the same logic.“

The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (**Federica Mogherini**) is Europe’s “Foreign Minister”, conducting the European Union’s foreign policy and representation in third countries and international organisations. She has a unique status under the Treaties, at once representing Member States as the Union’s High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy and, at the same time, representing the Commission as one of its Vice-Presidents.

In the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President will be responsible for the project of ‘**A Stronger Global Actor**’, helping steer all of the Commission’s external relations activities.

In order to combine the tools available in the Commission in a more effective way, the High Representative will steer and coordinate the work, in particular, of the Commissioners for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations; Trade; International Cooperation and Development; and Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management. The High Representative, as a Vice-President in the European Commission,

must play her role fully within the College of Commissioners. To make this possible, whenever she sees the necessity to do so, she will ask the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and other Commissioners to deputise in areas related to Commission competence. This will free up the High Representative to focus her efforts on tackling the real geopolitical challenges.



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ANNEX 2

This annex attempts to provide explanations and the overall structure of President Juncker's Commission. Namely, here we provide tabular presentation of the Commission's organizational set-up, allowing overview of individual commissioners' competences, as well as the manner in which Directorates General, Agencies and other Executive Bodies within the Commission are reorganized. Moreover, the organizational set-up includes description and explanation of tasks and duties awarded to Commission Vice-Presidents that complement explanation of project teams within the Commission given in Annex 1.

Materials used in this annex are publically available documents published by the European Commission and can be downloaded at:

http://ec.europa.eu/about/structure/docs/annex-portfolios_en.pdf

EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2014 – 2019

Allocation of portfolios and supporting services¹

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
President of the Commission	Jean-Claude Juncker	Secretariat General (SG) Legal Service (SJ) DG Communication (COMM), including the Spokesperson's Service (SPP) Bureau of European Policy Advisors (BEPA) <i>Changes for DG COMM:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The part of Unit COMM A2 (Media Networks and Contracts) dealing with multimedia actions funded by budget line 16.03.01.01 (Euronews, Euranet, European Audiovisual Observatory) moves from DG COMM to DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology (CONNECT).</i> - <i>The part of Unit COMM C2 (Citizens Programme) covering the management of the Europe for Citizens Programme, and the responsibility for the Preparatory Action "New Narrative on Europe" 2015, moves from DG COMM to DG Education and Culture (EAC).</i>
High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President	Federica Mogherini	European External Action Service Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI)

¹ The structural changes in the services listed here will be implemented within three months following the entry in office of the new Commission. The names of some services will be adapted where necessary to reflect their new scope (in the list below, current names are used). The re-organisation of services will be an occasion to ensure synergies and should also contribute to the Commission's staff reduction objectives. The role of Vice-Presidents is explained in greater detail in their mission letter.

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
<p>First Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights</p>	<p>Frans Timmermans</p>	<p>As first Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-Institutional relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, Mr Timmermans will work closely with the other Vice-Presidents, and all Commissioners will liaise closely with him when it concerns the implementation of the better regulation agenda. In addition, for initiatives requiring a decision by the Commission in their area of responsibility, he will guide the work of the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality and the Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs.</p> <p>Internal Audit Service (IAS)</p>

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources	Kristalina Georgieva	<p>As Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources, Ms Georgieva will work closely with the other Vice-Presidents and, in her area of responsibility, will guide the work of all Commissioners.</p> <p>DG Budget (BUDG)</p> <p>DG Human Resources and Security (HR)</p> <p>European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)</p> <p>DG Translation (DGT)</p> <p>DG Interpretation (SCIC)</p> <p>The office for the administration and payment of individual entitlements (PMO)</p> <p>The office for infrastructure and logistics in Brussels (OIB)</p> <p>The office for infrastructure and logistics in Luxembourg (OIL)</p> <p><i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <p>The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) and the European School of Administration (EUSA)</p> <p>The European Schools</p> <p>The Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CdT)</p> <p><i>Changes for OLAF:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Unit OLAF D5 (Hercule, Pericles & EURO Protection) moves from OLAF to DG Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN).</i>

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Vice-President for the Digital Single Market	Andrus Ansip	As Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, Mr Ansip will work closely with the other Vice-Presidents. In his area of responsibility, he will steer and coordinate the work of several Commissioners, in particular the Commissioners for Digital Economy and Society; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality; Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs; Regional Policy; and Agriculture and Rural Development.
Vice-President for Energy Union	Maroš Šefčovič	As Vice-President for Energy Union, Mr Šefčovič will work closely with the other Vice-Presidents. In his area of responsibility, he will steer and coordinate the work of several Commissioners, in particular the Commissioners for Climate Action and Energy; Transport and Space; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries; Regional Policy; Agriculture and Rural Development; and Research, Science and Innovation.
Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue	Valdis Dombrovskis	As Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, Mr Dombrovskis will work closely with the other Vice-Presidents. In his area of responsibility, he will steer and coordinate the work of several Commissioners for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs; Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; Regional Policy; Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality.
Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness	Jyrki Katainen	As Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, Mr Katainen will work closely with the other Vice-Presidents. In his area of responsibility, he will steer and coordinate the work of several Commissioners, in particular the Commissioners for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs; Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; Regional Policy; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union; Digital Economy and Society; Climate Action and Energy; and Transport and Space.

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Agriculture and Rural Development	Phil Hogan	DG Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) The relevant parts of the Research Executive Agency (REA)
Climate Action and Energy	Miguel Arias Cañete	DG Climate Action (CLIMA) DG Energy (ENER) The Euratom Supply Agency (ESA) The relevant parts of the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EASME) The relevant parts of the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) Responsible for relations with: The Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER)
Competition	Margrethe Vestager	DG Competition (COMP)

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Digital Economy and Society	Günther Oettinger	<p>DG for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (CONNECT)</p> <p>DG Informatics (DIGIT)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EASME)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Innovation & Networks Executive Agency (INEA)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Research Executive Agency (REA)</p> <p><i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <p>The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)</p> <p>The Office for the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG CONNECT:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Unit MARKT D1 (Copyright), the part of Unit MARKT D3 (Fight against Counterfeiting and Piracy) dealing with copyright enforcement, and the part of unit MARKT E3 (Online and postal Services) dealing with online services moves from DG Internal Market and Services (MARKT) to DG CONNECT.</i> - <i>Unit EAC E3 (Creative Europe Programme - MEDIA) moves from DG Education and Culture (EAC) to DG CONNECT.</i> - <i>The part of Unit COMM A2 (Media Networks and Contracts) dealing with multimedia actions funded by budget line 16.03.01.01 (Euronews, Euranet, European Audiovisual Observatory) moves from DG Communication (COMM) to DG CONNECT.</i>

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs Union	Pierre Moscovici	DG Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN) DG Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD) <i>Changes for DG ECFIN:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Unit OLAF D5 (Hercule, Pericles & EURO Protection) moves from the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) to DG ECFIN.</i> - <i>Unit ECFIN B3 (Labour Market Reforms) moves from ECFIN to DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL).</i> - <i>Unit ECFIN E1 (Financial Markets and Infrastructures) and Unit ECFIN E2 (National Financial Systems) move from DG ECFIN to the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union.</i> - <i>The part of Unit ECFIN E3 (Financial Institutions and Stability Mechanisms) dealing with Financial Integration and Regulatory Policy moves from DG ECFIN to the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, with the exception of the part covering the European Stability Mechanism firewall, which, together with the rest of Unit ECFIN E3 (including the part dealing with euro coin issues), remains in DG ECFIN.</i>

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Education, Culture, Youth and Sport	Tibor Navracsics	<p>DG Education and Culture (EAC)</p> <p>Joint Research Centre (JRC)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Research Executive Agency (REA)</p> <p><i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <p>The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)</p> <p>The Publications Office of the European Union (OP)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG EAC:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The part of Unit COMM C2 (Citizens Programme) covering the management of the Europe for Citizens Programme, and the responsibility for the Preparatory Action “New Narrative on Europe” 2015 move from DG Communication (COMM) to DG EAC.</i> - <i>The parts of Unit EAC A3 (Skills and Qualification Strategies; Multilingualism Policy) dealing with Skills and Qualification, and of Unit EAC B2 (Vocational Training and Adult Education; Erasmus +) dealing with Vocational Training and Adult Education policy move from DG EAC to DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL).</i> - <i>Unit EAC E3 (Creative Europe Programme - MEDIA) moves from DG EAC to DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology (CONNECT).</i>

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility	Marianne Thyssen	<p>DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL)</p> <p>Eurostat (ESTAT)</p> <p><i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <p>The European Agency for Occupational Safety and Health (EU-OSHA)</p> <p>The European Centre for Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)</p> <p>The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)</p> <p>The European Training Foundation (ETF)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG EMPL:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unit ECFIN B3 (Labour Market Reforms) moves from DG Economic and Financial Services (ECFIN) to DG EMPL. - The parts of Unit EAC A3 (Skills and Qualification Strategies; Multilingualism Policy) dealing with Skills and Qualification, and of Unit EAC B2 (Vocational Training and Adult Education; Erasmus +) dealing with Vocational Training and Adult Education policy move from DG Education and Culture (EAC) to DG EMPL. - Unit JUST D3 (Rights of Persons with Disabilities) and part of Unit JUST D1 (Equal Treatment Legislation) dealing with the Directive establishing a general Framework for Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation, move from DG Justice (JUST) to DG EMPL.

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	Karmenu Vella	<p>DG Environment (ENV)</p> <p>DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MARE)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EASME)</p> <p><i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <p>The European Environment Agency (EEA)</p> <p>The European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG ENV:</i></p> <p>- <i>The parts of Unit ENV A2 (Waste Management and Recycling) dealing with Food Waste, and of Unit ENV A3 (Chemicals) dealing with biocides, move from DG ENV to DG Health and Consumers (SANCO).</i></p>
European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations	Johannes Hahn	<p>DG Enlargement (ELARG)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG ELARG (which will be called “European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations”):</i></p> <p>- <i>Unit ELARG D1 (Task Force Turkish Cypriot Community) moves from DG ELARG to DG Regional Policy (REGIO).</i></p> <p>- <i>Directorate DEVCO F (Neighbourhood) moves from DG Development and Cooperation – EuropAid (DEVCO) to DG ELARG.</i></p>

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union	Jonathan Hill	<p>A new DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union <i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The European Banking Authority (EBA) The European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) The European Systemic Risks Board (ESRB) The Single Resolution Board (SRB) <p><i>The new DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union will include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directorate MARKET F (<i>Capital and Companies</i>) moves from DG Internal Market and Services (MARKT) to the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, except Unit MARKET F2 (<i>Corporate Governance, Social Responsibility</i>), which moves from DG Internal Market and Services (MARKT) to the Directorate-General for Justice (JUST). - Directorate MARKET A (<i>Resources and Communications</i>), Directorate MARKET G (<i>Financial Markets</i>), Directorate MARKET H (<i>Financial Institutions</i>), the MARKET task force for the establishment of the Single Resolution Board and Unit MARKET 02 (<i>Financial services policy, relations with the Council</i>), which move from DG Internal Market and Services (MARKT) to the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union. - Unit ECFIN E1 (<i>Financial Markets and Infrastructures</i>) and Unit ECFIN E2 (<i>National Financial Systems</i>), which move from DG Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN) to the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union. - The part of Unit ECFIN E3 (<i>Financial Institutions and Stability Mechanisms</i>) dealing with Financial Integration and Regulatory Policy, which moves from DG Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN) to the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, with the exception of the part covering the European Stability Mechanism firewall, which, together with the rest of Unit ECFIN E3 (including the part dealing with euro coin issues), remains in DG Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN).

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Health and Food Safety	Vytenis Andriukaitis	<p>DG Health and Consumers (SANCO)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA)</p> <p><i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <p>The Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)</p> <p>The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDPC)</p> <p>The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG SANCO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Units SANCO B2 (Health Technology and Cosmetics), SANCO D5 (Medicinal Products – Authorisations, European Medicines Agency) and SANCO D6 (Medical Products – Quality, Safety and Efficacy) move from DG SANCO to DG Enterprise and Industry (ENTR). - Directorate SANCO B (Consumer Affairs) moves from DG SANCO to DG Justice (JUST), except for Unit SANCO B2 (Health Technology and Cosmetics), which moves from DG SANCO to DG Enterprise and Industry (ENTR). - The parts of Unit ENV A2 (Waste Management and Recycling) dealing with Food Waste, and of Unit ENV A3 (Chemicals) dealing with biocides, move from DG Environment (ENV) to DG SANCO.
Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management	Christos Stylianides	<p>DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)</p>

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs	Elżbieta Bienkowska	<p>DG Enterprise and Industry (ENTR) DG Internal Market and Services (MARKT) The relevant parts of the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EASME) <i>Responsible for relations with:</i> The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) The European Medicines Agency (EMA) The Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market (OHIM) <i>Changes for DG MARKT and DG ENTR:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The two DGs are merged. - Unit MARKT D1 (Copyright), the part of Unit MARKT D3 (Fight against Counterfeiting and Piracy) dealing with copyright enforcement, and the part of unit MARKT E3 (Online and postal Services) dealing with online services, move from DG MARKT to the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (CONNECT). - Directorate MARKT F (Capital and Companies) moves from DG MARKT to the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, except Unit MARKT F2 (Corporate Governance, Social Responsibility), which moves from DG MARKT to the Directorate-General for Justice (JUST). - Directorate MARKT A (Resources and Communications), Directorate MARKT G (Financial Markets), Directorate MARKT H (Financial Institutions), the MARKT task force for the establishment of the Single Resolution Board and Unit MARKT 02 (Financial services policy, relations with the Council) move from DG MARKT to the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union. - Units ENTR G1 (Space Policy and Research), ENTR G2 (Copernicus: services), ENTR G3 (Copernicus: Infrastructures) and Directorate ENTR H (EU Satellite Navigation Programmes) move from DG ENTR to DG Mobility and Transport (MOVE). - Unit ENTR G4 (Policy and Research in Security) moves from DG ENTR to DG Home Affairs (HOME). - Units SANCO B2 (Health Technology and Cosmetics), SANCO D5 (Medicinal Products – Authorisations, European Medicines Agency) and SANCO D6 (Medical Products – Quality, Safety and Efficacy) move from DG Health and Consumers (SANCO) to DG ENTR.

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
International Cooperation and Development	Neven Mimica	<p>DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DEVCO)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG DEVCO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directorate DEVCO F (Neighbourhood) moves from DG DEVCO to DG Enlargement (ELARG).
Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality	Věra Jourová	<p>DG Justice (JUST)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Consumer, Health and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA)</p> <p><i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) The European Union Judicial Cooperation Unit (EUROJUST) <p><i>Changes for DG JUST:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unit MARKT F2 (Corporate Governance, Social Responsibility) moves from DG Internal Market and Services (MARKT) to DG JUST. - Directorate SANCO B (Consumer Affairs) moves from DG Health and Consumers (SANCO) to DG JUST, except for Unit SANCO B2 (Health Technology and Cosmetics), which moves from DG Health and Consumers (SANCO) to DG Enterprise and Industry (ENTR). - Unit JUST B3 (Anti-Drugs Policy) moves from DG JUST to DG Home Affairs (HOME). - Unit JUST D3 (Rights of Persons with Disabilities) and the part of Unit JUST D1 (Equal Treatment Legislation) dealing with the Directive establishing a general Framework for Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation, move from DG JUST to DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL).

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship	Dimitris Avramopoulos	<p>DG Home Affairs (HOME)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Research Executive Agency (REA)</p> <p><i>Responsible for relations with:</i></p> <p>The agency for the management of large IT systems (EU-LISA)</p> <p>The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX)</p> <p>The European Asylum Support Office (EASO)</p> <p>The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)</p> <p>The European Police Office (EUROPOL)</p> <p>The European Police College (CEPOL)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG HOME:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unit ENTR G4 (Policy and Research in Security) moves from DG Enterprise and Industry (ENTR) to DG HOME. - Unit JUST B3 (Anti-Drugs Policy) moves from DG Justice (JUST) to DG HOME.
Regional Policy	Corina Crețu	<p>DG Regional Policy (REGIO)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG REGIO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unit ELARG D1 (Task Force Turkish Cypriot Community) moves from DG Enlargement (ELARG) to DG REGIO.

PORTFOLIOS	NAMES	SERVICES
Research, Science and Innovation	Carlos Moedas	<p>Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (RTD)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the European Research Council executive agency (ERCEA)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Innovation and Networks executive agency (INEA)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Research Executive Agency (REA)</p>
Trade	Cecilia Malmström	DG Trade (TRADE)
Transport and Space	Violeta Bulc	<p>DG Mobility and Transport (MOVE)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA)</p> <p>The relevant parts of the Research Executive Agency (REA)</p> <p>Responsible for relations with:</p> <p>The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)</p> <p>The European GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA)</p> <p>The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)</p> <p>The European Railway Agency (ERA)</p> <p><i>Changes for DG MOVE:</i></p> <p>- Units ENTR G1 (Space Policy and Research), ENTR G2 (Copernicus: services), ENTR G3 (Copernicus: Infrastructures) and Directorate ENTR H (EU Satellite Navigation Programmes) move from DG Enterprise and Industry (ENTR) to DG MOVE.</p>