

A New Start for Europe: My Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change

Political Guidelines

for the next
European Commission

Opening Statement

in the European Parliament
Plenary Session

Jean-Claude Juncker

Candidate for
President of the European Commission

Strasbourg, 15 July 2014

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Over the past years, Europe suffered the worst financial and economic crisis since World War II. Unprecedented measures had to be taken by the EU institutions and national governments to stabilise Member States' economies, consolidate public finances and prevent the results of decades of European integration from being undone. The worst was avoided. The internal market and the integrity of the Euro zone were preserved. Slowly but surely, economic growth and confidence are now returning to Europe.

However, the crisis has taken its toll. More than 6 million people lost their job during the crisis. Youth unemployment has reached record highs. Several of our Member States are still far away from sustainable growth and adequate levels of investment. In many countries, trust in the European project is at a historic low.

The measures taken during the crisis can be compared to repairing a burning plane whilst flying. They were successful overall. Yet mistakes were made. There was a lack of social fairness. Democratic legitimacy suffered as many new instruments had to be created outside the legal framework of the European Union. And, after spending several years concentrating on crisis management, Europe is finding it is often ill-prepared for the global challenges ahead, be it with regard to the digital age, the race for innovation and skills, the scarcity of natural resources, the safety of our food, the cost of energy, the impact of climate change, the ageing of our population or the pain and poverty at Europe's external borders.

As we enter the new legislative cycle following the European Parliament elections in May 2014, **the time has come for a new approach.**

As candidate for President of the European Commission, I see it as my key task to rebuild bridges in Europe after the crisis. To restore European citizens' confidence. To focus our policies on the key challenges ahead for our economies and for our societies. And to strengthen democratic legitimacy on the basis of the Community method.

After having campaigned as the lead candidate of the European People's Party for Commission President ahead of the European Parliament elections – next to Martin Schulz for the Party of European Socialists, Guy Verhofstadt for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party, Ska Keller and José Bové for the European Green Party, and Alexis Tsipras for the Party of the European Left – I was proposed by the European Council as candidate for President of the European Commission on 27 June 2014. With this proposal, the European Council took

account of the result of the European Parliament elections – in which my party won the largest number of seats –, after having held appropriate consultations with representatives of the European Parliament.

For the first time, a direct link has thereby been established between the outcome of the European Parliament elections and the proposal of the President of the European Commission. This follows long-standing calls from the European Parliament echoed and repeated over several decades. It has the potential to insert a very necessary additional dose of democratic legitimacy into the European decision-making process, in line with the rules and practices of parliamentary democracy. It also is a unique opportunity for a fresh start.

After the confrontations of the election campaign, we now need to work together. In spite of our differences, there is a large convergence of views on the main priorities to be tackled at European level. And I want to work with all of you to build a broad consensus, across the EU institutions, on what we need to deliver for Europeans. And then follow words with action by delivering on what we have agreed.

This is why, after having exchanged views with all political groups of the newly elected European Parliament, I propose to renew the European Union on the basis of **an Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change**. An agenda that concentrates on the areas where the European Union is able to make a real difference.

My agenda will focus on **ten policy areas**. My emphasis will be on concrete results in these ten areas. Beyond that, I will leave other policy areas to the Member States where they are more legitimate and better equipped to give effective policy responses at national, regional or local level, in line with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. **I want a European Union that is bigger and more ambitious on big things, and smaller and more modest on small things.**

The ten policy areas to be tackled under my Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change are the following:

1. A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment

My first priority as Commission President will be to strengthen Europe's competitiveness and to stimulate investment for the purpose of job creation. I intend to present, within the first three months of my mandate and in the context of the Europe 2020 review, **an ambitious Jobs, Growth and Investment Package**.

I do not believe that we can build sustainable growth on ever-growing mountains of debt – this is the lesson learnt in the crisis that we must now heed. I also know well that it is mainly companies that create jobs, not governments or EU institutions. However, I do believe that we can make much better use of the common EU budget and of Union financial instruments such as the European Investment Bank (EIB). We must make use of these public funds available at Union level to stimulate private investment in the real economy. We need smarter investment, more focus, less regulation and more flexibility when it comes to the use of these public funds. In my view, this should allow us to **mobilise up to € 300 billion in additional public and private investment in the real economy over the next three years**.

For this, the investment environment has to be improved and fund absorption needs to be strengthened. The preparation of projects by the EIB and the Commission should be intensified and expanded. New, sustainable and job-creating projects that will help restore Europe's competitiveness need to be identified and promoted. To make real projects happen, we also have to develop more effective financial instruments, including in the form of loans or guarantees with greater risk capacity. A further increase in the EIB's capital should be considered.

The focus of this additional investment should be in **infrastructure, notably broadband and energy networks as well as transport infrastructure in industrial centres; education, research and innovation; and renewable energy**. A significant amount should be channelled towards projects that can help get the younger generation back to work in decent jobs, further complementing the efforts already started with the **Youth Guarantee Scheme**, the implementation of which must be accelerated and progressively broadened.

The **mid-term review of the Multiannual Financial Framework**, scheduled for the end of 2016, should be used to orient the EU budget further towards jobs, growth and competitiveness.

As regards the use of national budgets for growth and investment, we must – as reaffirmed by the European Council on 27 June 2014 – respect the **Stability and Growth Pact**, while making the best possible use of the flexibility that is built into the existing rules of the Pact, as reformed in 2005 and 2011. I intend to issue concrete guidance on this as part of my ambitious Jobs, Growth and Investment Package.

Jobs, growth and investment will only return to Europe if we create **the right regulatory environment and promote a climate of entrepreneurship and job**

creation. We must not stifle innovation and competitiveness with too prescriptive and too detailed regulations, notably when it comes to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are the backbone of our economy, creating more than 85% of new jobs in Europe and we have to free them from burdensome regulation. This is why I intend to entrust the responsibility for better regulation to one of the Vice-Presidents in my Commission; and to give this Vice-President a mandate to identify, together with the Parliament and the Council, “red tape” both at European and at national level that could be swiftly removed as part of my Jobs, Growth and Investment Package.

2. A Connected Digital Single Market

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

If we do this, we can ensure that European citizens will soon be able to use their mobile phones across Europe without having to pay roaming charges. We can ensure that consumers can access services, music, movies and sports events on their electronic devices wherever they are in Europe and regardless of borders. We can create a fair level playing field where all companies offering their goods or services in the European Union are subject to the same data protection and consumer rules, regardless of where their server is based. **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.

To achieve this, I intend to take, within the first six months of my mandate, **ambitious legislative steps towards a connected digital single market**, notably by swiftly concluding negotiations on common European data protection rules; by adding more ambition to the ongoing reform of our telecoms rules; by modernising copyright rules in the light of the digital revolution and changed consumer behaviour; and by modernising and simplifying consumer rules for online and digital purchases. This should go hand-in-hand with efforts to boost digital skills and learning across society and to facilitate the creation of innovative start-ups. Enhancing the use of digital technologies and online services should become a horizontal policy, covering all sectors of the economy and of the public sector.

3. A Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy

Current geopolitical events have forcefully reminded us that Europe relies too heavily on fuel and gas imports. I therefore 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.

I want to keep our European energy market open to our neighbours. However, **if the price for energy from the East becomes too expensive, either in commercial or in political terms, Europe should be able to switch very swiftly to other supply channels.** We need to be able to reverse energy flows when necessary.

And we need to strengthen the share of renewable energies on our continent. This is not only a matter of a responsible climate change policy. It is, at the same time, an industrial policy imperative if we still want to have affordable energy at our disposal in the medium term. I strongly believe in the potential of green growth. **I therefore want Europe's Energy Union to become the world number one in renewable energies.**

I would also like to significantly enhance energy efficiency beyond the 2020 objective, notably when it comes to buildings, and I am in favour of an ambitious, binding target to this end. I want the European Union to lead the fight against global warming ahead of the United Nations Paris meeting in 2015 and beyond. We owe this to future generations.

4. A Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base

Our internal market is Europe's best asset in times of increasing globalisation. I therefore want the next Commission to build on the strength of our single market and to fully exploit its potential in all its dimensions. We need to complete the internal market in products and services and make it the launch pad for our companies and industry to thrive in the global economy, also when it comes to agricultural products.

I firmly believe that we need to maintain and reinforce a strong and high-performing industrial base for our internal market, as it would be naïve to believe that growth in Europe could be built on the basis of services alone. **We need to bring industry's weight in the EU's GDP back to 20% by 2020, from less than 16% today.** This should ensure that Europe maintains its global leadership in strategic sectors with high-value jobs such as the automotive, aeronautics, engineering, space, chemicals and pharmaceutical industries. To achieve this, we need to stimulate investment in new technologies, improve the business environment, ease access to markets and to finance, particularly for SMEs, and ensure that workers have the skills industry needs.

A continuing priority is to finish fixing the problems of our banking sector and to boost private investment. I have been a strong supporter of the development of **stricter controls on banks** through a Single Supervisory Mechanism and a Single Resolution Mechanism with a Single Resolution Fund that will be built up progressively. My Commission will be active and vigilant in ensuring that we implement the new supervisory and resolution rules fully, making European banks more robust so that they can get back to lending to the real economy.

Over time, I believe we should complement the new European rules for banks with a **Capital Markets Union**. To improve the financing of our economy, we should further develop and integrate capital markets. This would cut the cost of raising capital, notably for SMEs, and help reduce our very high dependence on bank funding. This would also increase the attractiveness of Europe as a place to invest.

Free movement of workers has always been one of the key pillars of the internal market, which I will defend, while accepting the right of national authorities to fight abuse or fraudulent claims. I believe that we should see free movement as an economic opportunity, and not as a threat. We should therefore promote **labour mobility**, especially in fields with persistent vacancies and skills mismatches. At the same time, I will ensure that the **Posting of Workers Directive** is strictly implemented, and I will initiate a targeted review of this Directive to ensure that social dumping has no place in the European Union. **In our Union, the same work at the same place should be remunerated in the same manner.**

We need more fairness in our internal market. While recognising the competence of Member States for their taxation systems, we should step up our efforts to **combat tax evasion and tax fraud**, so that all contribute their fair share. I will notably press ahead with administrative cooperation between tax authorities and work for the adoption at EU level of a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base and a Financial Transaction Tax. The proposed reinforced Union rules against **money laundering** should be adopted swiftly, and with an ambitious content, notably when it comes to the identification of beneficial owners and improving customer due diligence.

5. A Deeper and Fairer Economic and Monetary Union

Over the next five years, I want to continue with the reform of our Economic and Monetary Union to preserve the stability of our single currency and to enhance the convergence of economic, fiscal and labour market policies between the Member States that share the single currency. I will do this on the basis of the “Four Presidents Reports” and the Commission’s Blueprint for a Deep and Genuine Economic and Monetary Union, and always with Europe’s social dimension in mind.

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. The stability of our single currency and the solidity of public finances are as important to me as social fairness in implementing necessary structural reforms.

I want to launch **legislative and non-legislative initiatives to deepen our Economic and Monetary Union** during the first year of my mandate. These would include a stability-oriented review of the “six-pack” and the “two-pack legislation” (as foreseen in this legislation); proposals to encourage further structural reforms, if necessary through additional financial incentives and a targeted fiscal capacity at Euro zone level; and a proposal for a more efficient external representation of our Economic and Monetary Union.

In the medium-term, I believe we need to re-balance the way in which we grant conditional stability support to Euro zone countries in difficulties. In the future, we should be able to replace the “**troika**” with a more democratically legitimate and more accountable structure, based around European institutions with enhanced parliamentary control both at European and at national level. I also propose that, in the future, any support and reform programme goes not only through a fiscal sustainability assessment; but through a **social impact assessment** as well. The social effects of structural reforms need to be discussed in public. I am a strong believer in the *social* market economy. 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.

6. A Reasonable and Balanced Free Trade Agreement with the U.S.

Under my presidency, the Commission will negotiate a reasonable and balanced trade agreement with the United States of America, in a spirit of mutual and reciprocal benefits and transparency. It is anachronistic that, in the 21st century, Europeans and Americans still impose **customs duties** on each other's products. These should be swiftly and fully abolished. I also believe that we can go a significant step further in recognising each other's **product standards** or working towards transatlantic standards.

However, as Commission President, I will also be very clear that **I will not sacrifice Europe's safety, health, social and data protection standards or our cultural diversity on the altar of free trade.** Notably, the safety of the food we eat and the protection of Europeans' personal data will be non-negotiable for me as Commission President. Nor will I accept that the jurisdiction of courts in the EU Member States is limited by special regimes for investor disputes. The rule of law and the principle of equality before the law must also apply in this context.

I will insist on **enhanced transparency towards the European Parliament** – which will, under the EU Treaties, have the last word on the conclusion of the agreement – during all steps of the negotiations.

7. An Area of Justice and Fundamental Rights Based on Mutual Trust

Our European Union is more than a big common market. It is also a **Union of shared values**, which are spelled out in the Treaties and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Citizens expect their governments to provide justice, protection and fairness with full respect for fundamental rights and the rule of law. This also requires joint European action, based on our shared values.

I intend to make use of the prerogatives of the Commission to uphold, within our field of competence, our shared values and fundamental rights, while taking due account of the diversity of constitutional and cultural traditions of the 28 Member States. I intend to entrust a **Commissioner with specific responsibility for the Charter of Fundamental Rights.** This Commissioner will also have the responsibility of

concluding the **accession of the Union to the European Convention of Human Rights**, which is an obligation under the EU Treaty.

Discrimination must have no place in our Union, whether on the basis of nationality, sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, or with regard to people belonging to a minority. I will therefore maintain the proposal for a directive in this field and seek to convince national governments to give up their current resistance in the Council.

Data protection is a fundamental right of particular importance in the digital age. In addition to swiftly finalising the legislative work on common data protection rules within the European Union, we also need to uphold this right in our external relations. In view of recent mass surveillance revelations, close partners such as the United States must convince us that the current safe harbour arrangements really are safe if they want them to continue. They must also guarantee that all EU citizens have the right to enforce data protection rights in U.S. courts, whether or not they reside on U.S. soil. This will be essential for restoring trust in transatlantic relations.

Combating cross-border crime and terrorism is a common European responsibility. We need to crack down on organised crime, such as human trafficking, smuggling and cybercrime. We must tackle corruption; and we must fight terrorism and counter radicalisation – all the while guaranteeing fundamental rights and values, including procedural rights and the protection of personal data.

As citizens increasingly study, work, do business, get married and have children across the Union, **judicial cooperation among EU Member States** must be improved step by step: by building bridges between the different justice systems, by strengthening common tools such as Eurojust; by making progress on new tools such as the European Public Prosecutor's Office which is designed to tackle criminal fraud which damages the EU budget; and by mutual recognition of judgements, so that citizens and companies can more easily exercise their rights across the Union.

8. Towards a New Policy on Migration

The recent terrible events in the Mediterranean have shown us that Europe needs to manage migration better, in all aspects. This is first of all a humanitarian imperative. I am convinced that we must work closely together **in a spirit of solidarity** to ensure that situations such as the one in Lampedusa never arise again.

On the basis of our shared values, we need to protect those in need through a strong **common asylum policy**. The newly agreed common asylum system has to be fully implemented, and divergences in national implementation removed. I also intend to explore the possibility of using the European Asylum Support Office to assist third countries and Member States authorities in dealing with refugees and asylum requests in emergency situations, where appropriate on the ground in a third country that is particularly concerned.

I want to promote **a new European policy on legal migration**. Such a policy could help us to address shortages of specific skills and attract talent to better cope with

the demographic challenges of the European Union. I want Europe to become at least as attractive as the favourite migration destinations such as Australia, Canada and the USA. As a first step, I intend to review the “Blue Card” legislation and its unsatisfactory state of implementation.

I also believe that we need to deal more robustly with **irregular migration**, notably through better cooperation with third countries, including on readmission.

I will entrust a **Commissioner with special responsibility for Migration** to work on this together with all Member States and with the third countries most concerned.

Last but not least, we need **to secure Europe’s borders**. Our common asylum and migration policies will only work if we can prevent an uncontrolled influx of illegal migrants. We therefore need to step up the operational capacities of the European border agency FRONTEX. A budget of just EUR 90 million a year certainly does not equal the task of protecting Europe’s common borders. We need to pool more resources amongst Member States to reinforce the work of FRONTEX and put European Border Guard Teams into action for quick deployment in FRONTEX joint operations and rapid border interventions. This is the joint responsibility of all EU Member States, North and South, which needs to be taken up in a spirit of solidarity.

We also need to apply and vigorously enforce our new common European rules to penalise **human traffickers**. Criminals who exploit the pain and needs of people in distress or suffering from persecution need to know: Europe is on guard and will bring them to justice at every turn.

9. A Stronger Global Actor

We need a stronger Europe when it comes to foreign policy. The Ukraine crisis and the worrying situation in the Middle East show how important it is that Europe is united externally. There is still a long way to go.

I believe we cannot be satisfied with how our common foreign policy is working at the moment. 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 **next High Representative for Europe’s Foreign Affairs and Security Policy** will have to be a strong and experienced player to combine national and European tools, and all the tools available in the Commission, in a more effective way than in the past. He or she must act in concert with our European Commissioners for Trade, Development and Humanitarian Aid as well as for Neighbourhood Policy. This will require the High Representative to more fully play his/her role within the College of Commissioners. To make this possible, I intend to entrust other external relations Commissioners with the task of **deputising for the High Representative** both within the work of the College and on the international stage.

I also believe that we need to work on a stronger Europe when it comes to **security and defence matters**. Yes, Europe is chiefly a 'soft power'. But even the strongest soft powers cannot make do in the long run without at least some integrated defence capacities. The Treaty of Lisbon provides for the possibility that those Member States who wish to can pool their defence capabilities in the form of a permanent structured cooperation. This means those Member States who wish to can engage in joint EU missions in crisis zones if needed, as would have been necessary from the start in Mali or in South Sudan. Member States should also create more synergies in defence procurement. In times of scarce resources, we need to match ambitions with resources to avoid duplication of programmes. More than 80% of investment in defence equipment is still spent nationally today in the EU. More cooperation in defence procurement is therefore the call of the day, and if only for fiscal reasons.

When it comes to **enlargement**, I fully recognise that this has been an historic success that brought peace and stability to our continent. However, the Union and our citizens now need to digest the addition of 13 Member States in the past ten years. The EU needs to take a break from enlargement so that we can consolidate what has been achieved among the 28. This is why, under my Presidency of the Commission, ongoing negotiations will continue, and notably the Western Balkans will need to keep a European perspective, but **no further enlargement will take place over the next five years**. With countries in our Eastern neighbourhood such as Moldova or Ukraine, we need to step up close cooperation, association and partnership to further strengthen our economic and political ties.

10. A Union of Democratic Change

The proposal and election of the President of the European Commission in the light of the outcome of the European Parliament elections is certainly important, but only a first step in making the European Union as a whole more democratic. A European Commission under my leadership will be committed to filling the special partnership with the European Parliament, as laid down in the Framework Agreement of 2010, with new life. **I want to have a political dialogue with you, not a technocratic one.** I intend to always send political representatives of the Commission to important trilogue negotiations and I expect the Council to do the same.

I am also committed to enhanced **transparency when it comes to contact with stakeholders and lobbyists**. Our citizens have the right to know with whom Commissioners and Commission staff, Members of the European Parliament or representatives of the Council meet in the context of the legislative process. I will therefore propose an Inter-institutional Agreement to Parliament and Council to create a mandatory lobby register covering all three institutions. The Commission will lead by example in this process.

I also intend to review **the legislation applicable to the authorisation of Genetically Modified Organisms**. To me, it is simply not right that under the current rules, the Commission is legally forced to authorise new organisms for import and processing even though a clear majority of Member States is against. The Commission should be in a position to give the majority view of democratically

elected governments at least the same weight as scientific advice, notably when it comes to the safety of the food we eat and the environment in which we live.

The relationship with **national Parliaments** is of great importance to me, notably when it comes to enforcing the principle of subsidiarity. I will explore ways to improve the interaction with national Parliaments as a way of bringing the European Union closer to citizens.

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If elected Commission President, my Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change will serve as the starting point for the Union's annual and multiannual programming. For this, we will also be able to draw on the 'Strategic Agenda for the Union in Times of Change', as adopted by the European Council on 27 June 2014, and on the orientations that will be given by the European Parliament in the months to come.

I believe that Europe's policy agenda must be shaped in close partnership between the European Commission and the European Parliament, and in cooperation with the Member States. **Political prioritisation as the basis for a better, more focused Union will only work if it is done in partnership between the Union institutions and the Member States, in line with the Community method.**

The role of the President of the Commission is to defend the general European interest. This involves working with everyone – whether in the euro or not, whether in the Schengen agreement or outside, whether supportive of deeper integration or not. My firm conviction is that we must move forward as a Union. **We do not necessarily all have to move at the same speed** – the Treaties provide for that and we have seen that we can work with different arrangements. Those who want to move further, faster, should be able to do so. This is particularly important in the Euro zone, where we need to continue to strengthen the foundations of the euro through deeper integration. And this should be done in such a way as to preserve the integrity of the single market and to protect the rights of those outside the Euro zone. As in any family, there will be tensions and disagreements from time to time. I made clear throughout my campaign that I am ready to listen to the concerns of every Member State and to help find solutions.

I intend to refocus the work of the new Commission on the basis of my Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change and its ten priorities. I intend to organise the new Commission in a way that reflects these ten priority areas and ensures swift and effective delivery on all of them.

I will do my utmost to ensure **a gender-balanced choice of leading personnel in the Commission, both at political and at administrative level.** Gender balance is not a luxury; it is a political must and should be self evident to everybody, including to the leaders in all capitals of our Member States when it comes to their proposal for the choice of members of the next Commission. This is in itself a test for the commitment of the governments of Member States to a new, more democratic approach in times of change.

On the basis of my Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change and its ten priorities, I am today seeking election by the European Parliament. The larger the majority that supports me and my agenda today, the stronger will my hand be in forming the next Commission, and the more effective I will be in delivering swiftly on this agenda.

“This time it’s different” was the European Parliament’s motto for the election campaign. Let us jointly show that we are able to make this promise a reality. That together we are able to really change and renew Europe. And that we will jointly work to re-gain citizens’ trust in the European project. I will do my utmost to make this difference.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to the right.

Jean-Claude Juncker

A new start for Europe

Opening Statement in the European Parliament Plenary Session

Strasbourg, 15 July 2014



On 25 May the voters of Europe spoke to us. They sent us powerful, if sometimes contradictory, messages. Today, and in the years to come, we have to respond. That means meeting their expectations and addressing their concerns, their hopes and their dreams. Because in Europe there is a place for dreams. It is here, in the European Parliament, the seat of European democracy, that I will set out the broad lines of the work of the new Commission. These broad lines – this outline, if you will – has been sent to you in writing in all the official languages, because all languages have the same dignity. And I would like to thank the translators who worked through the night on a text that I finalised late yesterday evening. The Commission's detailed work programme will be a product of the College as a whole and you will be asked to place your seal on it with your vote in the autumn.

This Parliament, which has just started its term in office, is different from its predecessors. You are the first Parliament to truly elect, in all senses of the word, the President of the Commission. You will elect him in a new spirit. In the aftermath of the elections, you insisted that the results, produced by universal suffrage, had to be taken into account. By so doing, you gave Article 17(7) of the Lisbon Treaty its true democratic and political meaning. If you had not stood firm, that Article would have forever remained a dead letter. You stood up for democracy, and you were right to do so. A Parliament which upholds democracy is performing a noble task and does not deserve to be subjected to bitter, unjustified criticism or to have its motives unfairly challenged. I should also like to thank the other front runners, or 'Spitzenkandidaten', who helped to ensure that our democratic debate was a lively one. If the political group of one of the other front runners had won the election, I would have been the first to call on this assembly to entrust that person with the task of setting up the new Commission.

The European Parliament and the Commission are both Community institutions *par excellence*. It's therefore only right that the President of the Commission and the President of European Parliament, on the one hand, and European Parliament and the Commission on the other, should have a special working relationship with each other. We will be Community players, not working against the European Council or against the Council of Ministers. We are not building Europe in opposition to countries or nations, which are not a footnote in history but here to stay. We, Parliament and Commission, will act in the general interest, and I want us to do it together.

The European Council proposes the President of the Commission. That does not mean he is its secretariat. The Commission is not a technical committee made up of civil servants who implement the instructions of another institution. The Commission is political. And I want it to be more political. Indeed, it will be highly political. Its make-up must reflect the plurality of the majority of ideas which take shape. When the European Council organises its internal structure, I hope it will be inspired by the same principle.

The President of the Commission is elected by your assembly. That does not mean he is at your beck and call; I'm not going to be the European Parliament's lackey. But do not doubt for one moment my willingness to remove a Commissioner who no longer benefits from your trust, or my willingness to take action, in principle by way of a legislative proposal, when you call on me to do so.

In similar vein, no restrictions will be placed on the right to pose questions. The same arrangements will continue to apply.

I intend to ask the Commissioners to be present more often at key moments of important 'trilogues' and I would like the Council to be there too. I will ensure that the lobbyist register is made public and mandatory. I would like ordinary people in Europe to know who has been to see who, and who has spoken to whom, and I would like the other institutions to follow suit.

I will make sure that the procedural rules governing the various authorisations for GMOs are reviewed. I would not want the Commission to be able to take a decision when a majority of Member States has not encouraged it to do so.

In general, let us avoid ideological debates which only sow division. Let us replace them by virtuous debates based on strongly-held beliefs and far-reaching ambitions. Let us opt for a pragmatic approach. Let us focus our efforts on achieving tangible results which benefit all Europeans. Let us not try the public's patience by indulging in institutional debates which prevent us from focusing on what really matters - the people of Europe. And I call on governments to try harder to resist the temptation, when they address their national electorates, to criticise decisions that they actually took together in Brussels.

If you said 'yes' in Brussels, don't say 'no' elsewhere. And never again say after a Council meeting that you won and the others lost. In Europe we win together, and we lose together too.

If Europe seems hard to understand, it is because, all too often, we caricature it. Let us put national navel-gazing to bed. In Europe we should play as a team. Let us apply the Community method. Yes, it is demanding, but it is effective, it is tried and tested and it is more credible than intergovernmental wrangling. We need to restore the Community method.

Europe has lost some of its credibility.

The gap between the European Union and its citizens is widening. One has to be really deaf and blind not to see this.

Very often, the European Union finds itself with some explaining to do, and many times under pressure to deliver when it comes to explaining Europe better.

Europe needs a broad-based agenda for reform.

The status quo does not provide us with a full range of tools. It has to be extended. People are often afraid of reforms. They find them threatening and risky. But taking no risks is far riskier. We must take risks in order to make Europe more competitive.

As the European Union, we have lost some of our international and global competitiveness.

We have fallen behind because we have stood still. Now we must fight to get ahead again.

Competitiveness is often confused with one-sided social regression but competitiveness is not achieved through social regression. Competitiveness is achieved by developing a broad range of approaches. Competitiveness is essential to make the European Union a more attractive location. A location for people, for investors.

This includes the principle that the economy has to serve the people and not the other way round. The economy must serve the people.

This means that internal market provisions cannot be valued more highly than social provisions, which would otherwise just be minimum standards. The internal market does not automatically have priority; social factors must also play a role in Europe.

I am an enthusiastic supporter of the social market economy. 'Prosperity for all' was what Ludwig Erhardt said. Not 'prosperity for just a few'. 'Prosperity for all' must be the maxim followed in both economic and social policies alike. In view of the crisis, people often say that the social market economy has failed. It is not the social market economy which has failed but those who, out of greed for profit, for money and for easy money, have disregarded the cardinal virtues of the social market economy.

The social market economy can only work if there is social dialogue. Social dialogue suffered during the crisis years. Now it must be resumed at national and especially at European level. I would like to be a President of social dialogue.

To keep a place attractive, you need growth, not recovery plans funded by borrowing which generate short-term effects with no long-term impact on the labour market. What we need is sustained growth over decades. What we need is an ambitious package for employment, growth, investment and competitiveness. Why do we need this? Because we have to draw many people in Europe back to Europe, back into the centre of things. Growth packages, competitiveness packages, investment programmes all have one aim which is to bring people back into the centre of society.

A 29th state is currently emerging within the borders of the European Union. It is the state where people without jobs live. A state in which young people became unemployed; a state in which we see people excluded, set back and left by the wayside. I would like this 29th Member State to become a normal Member State

again. This is why I am proposing an ambitious investment programme. By February 2015, I would like to have put forward this ambitious package for growth, investment, competitiveness and jobs.

I would like us to mobilise EUR 300 billion in public and above all private investments over the next three years. We will do this and I would be grateful if the European Parliament would support me on this path. We can do this through the targeted use of the existing structural funds and of the European Investment Bank instruments already in place or to be developed. We need coordinated investment in infrastructure projects; investments in the field of broadband, in energy networks, and we need investments in transport infrastructure in the centres of industry. We need a reindustrialisation of Europe. We also need investments in the industrial sector, in research, development and renewable energies. Renewable energies are not just the purview of ecological do-gooders. Renewable energies and their development is a *sine qua non* if tomorrow's Europe really is going to create lasting, consistent and sustainable locational advantages which are directly comparable with those of other world players.

If Europe invests more, Europe will be more prosperous and create more jobs. Investments are the best allies of the unemployed. In parallel with that, we must develop the Youth Guarantee. I would like us to gradually raise the age limit from 25 to 30. Investments can only be made in a target-oriented fashion if we actually make progress on reducing red tape, especially in relation to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Small businesspeople are not big money men. Small businesspeople work hard and create jobs. We must do more for small businesspeople, especially by resolutely eliminating bureaucratic over-regulation. We must deliver in applying the principle of subsidiarity. Since the Maastricht Treaty, we have been talking about the correct application of the subsidiarity principle. What we are doing, however, is not sufficient. Our speeches last longer than our efforts to make real headway in reducing red tape, and to ensure that the European Commission - and the European Union - concerns itself with the really major European issues instead of interfering from all angles in every detail of people's lives. Not every problem that exists in Europe is a problem for the European Union. We must take care of the big issues.

All this must of course be put in place in line with the Stability Pact. We will not change the main elements of the Stability and Growth Pact. The European Council decided this. I will stick to this in the coming years.

Stability was promised when the single currency was introduced. Stability is not just an entry requirement but an ongoing requirement. Stability was promised. Europe cannot break its promises. I will not break them.

However, the European Council correctly established that we should also use the margins of flexibility which the Stability Pact as reformed in 2005 and 2011 contains in order to maximise the growth factor. We have done this in the past and we will do this to a greater extent in the future. Which brings me to my concern that what we have initiated and achieved in the past should not be underestimated. I was President of the Eurogroup and am glad that I no longer am. It was really no laughing matter. I would also hazard a doubt as to whether the job for which I am applying today will be more agreeable. However, during the crisis, which was not a crisis of the euro but a debt crisis, we had to repair a burning plane whilst flying. This was not easy and does not meet all the demands of great statesmanship or rules of

sophisticated political aesthetics but we did manage to keep the whole Eurozone intact.

A little over a year ago, speculators of every provenance were wagering that the Eurozone would collapse. That did not happen. Bets were placed in many financial centres that Greece would leave the Eurozone.

I did all I could, and I am proud that Greece, this capable people, this great nation, is still a member of the European Economic and Monetary Union.

But we also made mistakes. Repairing a burning plane mid-air is no simple matter; you sometimes get your fingers burnt.

If, in the future, further economic adjustment programmes were to be introduced (although I see no need why this should be the case in the next few years), I would like to see a very rigorous social impact study carried out before any adjustment programme is implemented. I would like to know how adjustment programmes impact on people's lives. In future there will be no adjustment programmes unless they are preceded by a thorough social impact assessment.

I would be glad if we had a plan B whenever adjustment programmes are on the agenda. A plan B we could refer to if macro-economic predictions prove incorrect. If there is less growth in a country than the basis of an adjustment programme demands, then it must be possible to adjust the adjustment programme. I am therefore in favour of setting out a parallel plan B.

I would like us to reconsider the instrument of the Troika.

The European Parliament has stated in reports on the subject that the Troika as it works at present lacks democratic substance. It does lack democratic substance; it lacks a parliamentary dimension. We must review the Troika and make it more democratic, more parliamentary and more political. We will do this.

We cannot spend money we do not have. We have to replace deficits and debts by ideas. The ideas are there: we must make better use of the opportunities of the digital technology which knows no borders. We must break down national silos in telecommunication regulations, in copyright and in data protection standards. We have to break down national silos as far as the management of radio waves is concerned. We must knock down these barriers, these hurdles to growth. Roaming charges in Europe have to disappear and they will disappear. If we are successful in implementing a real digital single market, we can generate €250 billion of additional growth in Europe. We will do it.

We need, as it was so often said during the Ukrainian crisis, a resilient energy union with a forward-looking climate change policy. We have to reorganise Europe's energy policy into a new European Energy Union. We need to pool resources, combine 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.

I want the European Union to become the world number one in renewables. We will contribute significantly to enhancing energy efficiency beyond the 2020 objective notably when it comes to buildings. A binding 30 % objective for energy efficiency by 2030 is to me the minimum if we want to be credible and forward-looking. We cannot pretend to be the leader as far as climate change policy is concerned if we do not become more credible when it comes to energy efficiency.

The internal market has to be completed. If we are successful in this, we will add another €200 billion of added value to the European economy. We have to do it.

We have to complement the new European rules for banks with a Capital Markets Union. To improve the financing of our economy, we should further develop and integrate capital markets. This would cut the cost of raising capital, particularly for small and medium-size enterprises.

Free movement of workers has always been one of the key-pillars of the internal market. I will defend that principle.

Free movement is an opportunity, not a threat. The rules will not be changed. It will be up to national authorities to fight against abuse or fraudulent claims. I will initiate a targeted review of the Posting of Workers directive and of its implementation. We have to fight social dumping and we will do it.

I will combat tax evasion and tax fraud. I am in favour of the adoption at EU level of a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base and a Financial Transaction Tax. We have to fight against money laundering and we will do it.

With regard to economic and monetary union, let us not lose sight of the fact that the crisis is not over.

The crisis is not over.

The crisis is not over as long as there are 25 million men and women out of work. The crisis will be over when full employment has been restored. And if we are going to do that, we need closer coordination of our economic policies. We need to establish economic governance. And we will. We must continue to insist that the necessary structural reforms, which in the medium term, will help to boost European economic growth, are put in place. If the members of the economic and monetary union make a concerted effort, then we should consider financial incentives to accompany that process. We should consider giving the Eurozone its own budget capacity.

It is absurd for one of the strongest currencies in the world to be represented by any number of different parties who very often contradict each other, and we should put a stop to it. I want the Economic and Monetary Union, and the euro, to be represented by a single chair and a single voice in the Bretton Woods institutions.

While I'm on the subject of Bretton Woods, I would like to say a few words on the free trade agreement with the United States. I am in favour of concluding this agreement. It is my view that the two largest economic areas and the two biggest democracies in the world can work together in the interests of Americans and Europeans alike. That said, the agreement will not be concluded at any price. We cannot abandon our health standards. We cannot abandon our social standards. We cannot abandon our data protection standard. I would not want data protection to form part of the negotiations with our American friends. Nor would I want parallel, secret courts set up. We are areas governed by the rule of law, so, in the United States and in Europe, let us apply the law.

And let us ensure that these negotiations are as transparent as possible. I say this to you: if we do not publish the relevant documents – and I do not mean documents on negotiating strategies – this agreement will fail. It will not be accepted by public opinion, it will not be accepted by this Parliament, it will not be accepted by our national parliaments if there is a mixed agreement. So let us be more transparent,

because in fact we have nothing to hide. Let us not give the impression that we are not being upfront, let us operate transparently and make the documents public.

The European Union is a union built on values. And we are credible to the outside world if we demand high standards of ourselves when it comes to fundamental values. I will appoint a Commissioner who will be in charge of applying the Charter of Fundamental Rights. I would like the EU to join the Council of Europe's European Convention on Human Rights at the earliest opportunity.

The Anti-Discrimination Directive will remain on the table and I will try to persuade the Council to adopt at least the core proposals as soon as possible.

Legal immigration and illegal immigration concern our fellow citizens on an almost daily basis. We need a common asylum policy, and I will put one forward. We need to think about the legal immigration that Europe will sorely need over the next five years. Let us do just as well as the United States, Canada and Australia. We can achieve what they have always managed to achieve.

Let us protect our external borders. Let us protect our external borders. Let us combat the criminal groups who make money off of other people's misery. Let us help would-be immigrants in their own countries, before they get on a boat to cross the Mediterranean. And let us establish better solidarity between Northern and Southern Europe. Illegal immigration and the refugee crisis are not the problems of Malta, Cyprus, Italy or Greece, they are the problems of Europe as a whole.

I do not want to say a great deal about foreign policy. We urgently need a common foreign and security policy. It would be fine by me if the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy were no longer thwarted by the Foreign Ministers of the Member States and I will ensure this does not happen. A common foreign policy also needs a common external image.

The High Representative, with a very broad own remit, will be supported by Commissioners responsible for other sectors.

In defence matters, it is not about establishing the European Union as an alternative model to NATO. Both have to work together and cooperate. In the defence sector we must have enhanced cooperation which the Lisbon Treaty also provides for. On procurement, in particular, we need to work together more rather than against each other, to obtain what we both need.

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.

I would have liked to speak to you in greater detail about the industrial policy that we will need to set up in Europe to boost industry's share of European GDP to 20%. I would have liked to speak to you in greater detail about Ukraine, whose people I salute today. We believe that Ukraine is a European nation and that its place is in Europe.

I would have liked to explain to you in detail why I believe it is necessary for all EU Member States to put in place a minimum wage and basic guaranteed income. We will take action to achieve that end.

I would have liked to spell out my belief that services of general interest and public services should be safeguarded and cannot be subject to the fashionable whims of the day. Let us stand up for public services in Europe!

I would have liked to speak to you about Africa, a continent so often unhappy and forgotten. But a continent which is rich in resources, particularly human resources. Let us not forget Africa and let us end the appalling scandal, the absolute tragedy in which a man dies of hunger every six seconds and 25 000 children die of hunger every single day. As long as 25 000 children are dying of hunger every day, Europe will still have work to do. Europe has a responsibility to change this situation.

Yes, we have to start afresh, we have to hear the people who spoke to us on 25 May. But the time is not ripe for a revolution. And it is not ripe for a counter-revolution either. If we want Europeans to fall in love with their Europe again, let's tell them we are proud of Europe. Let's tell them we are proud of what we have achieved in the last few decades.

It is often claimed that the question of war or peace has been settled for good. But in reality, an unhealthy vacillation between war and peace is still part of Europe's present. Indeed, as we have just seen in the border regions of the EU, peace is not a permanent fixture of our continent.

We should be proud of our fathers' and mothers' generation, of our grandparents' generation, who, when they came back from the battlefields and the concentration camps, prayed time and time again that there would be no more war - a political programme which has proven its worth. Yes, we owe our forefathers a great deal.

Let us be proud that in the 1990s we were able to make a success of enlargement, to reconcile European history and geography and to put an end to the disastrous post-war order whereby Europe was divided in two, seemingly for ever. We reunited European geography and history not by force but by conviction, and I would like to pay homage to those in Central and Eastern Europe who decided to take history into their own hands. Not to be victims of history, but to make history. And by the way, let us end this talk about 'old' and 'new' Member States. There are Member States. Full stop.

And let us be proud that we set up the single currency. The single currency does not divide Europe, it protects Europe.

I was my country's Finance Minister for twenty years. Every six months I had to travel to Brussels to organise monetary realignments. Every six months I experienced 'live and in colour' just how dangerous monetary disorder was for the European economy. On very many occasions I witnessed the loss of dignity experienced by a state which had to devalue its currency to remain competitive. I witnessed terrible scenes in which states which needed to boost the external value of their currency agonised over losing markets, and states which needed to devalue were stricken by the fear of a massive incursion and a disorderly return of inflation.

If we had still had the European monetary system when the events in Ukraine erupted and when the economic and financial crisis struck and Europe became the epicentre of a worldwide battle, Europe today would be in the throes of monetary

war. France against Germany, Germany against Italy, Italy against Portugal and Spain, and so on and so forth. Thanks to the discipline and the ambitions of the euro, we have a monetary order which protects us. The euro protects Europe.

Greece, let us not forget, did not want to leave the eurozone. And we did not want Greece to leave either.

If we had not done what we did in the last few decades, if we had not made Europe a peaceful continent, if we had not reconciled European history and geography, if we had not set up the single currency and if we had not established the world's largest internal market in Europe, where would we be now? We would be nobodies, we would be weak, we would be defenceless. Today, thanks to the hard work and convictions of our predecessors, Europe is a continent which ensures that its inhabitants can live in peace and relative prosperity.

I do not want a Europe stuck on the sidelines of history. I do not want a Europe which watches while other powers take action and move forward. I want a Europe at the heart of the action, a Europe which moves forward, a Europe which exists, protects, wins and serves as a model for others. In order to make that happen, let us draw inspiration from the principles and convictions handed down to us by the great Europeans who were there at a time when we were still nowhere. Allow me to pay homage to Jacques Delors, a great President of the European Commission. True, not everyone can be a Delors, but he is my teacher and my friend, and his work will inspire me every day. I would also like to pay homage to François Mitterrand, who said that nationalism leads to war. Mitterrand was right.

And I want to pay homage to Helmut Kohl, the greatest European I ever had the good fortune to meet.

Let us follow their example: they had patience, courage and determination. We should have the same courage, the same determination, the same patience. We should have the courage, the patience and the determination that long journeys and big ambitions demand.

We can do great things together for Europe, for Europeans and for the whole world.

Thank you for your attention.

