ANSWERS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE

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Digital Economy and Society

1. General Competence, European commitment and personal independence

What aspects of your personal qualifications and experience are particularly relevant for becoming Commissioner and promoting the European general interest, particularly in the area you would be responsible for? What motivates you? How will you contribute to putting forward the strategic agenda of the Commission?

What guarantees of independence are you able to give the European Parliament, and how would you make sure that any past, current or future activities you carry out could not cast doubt on the performance of your duties within the Commission?

The first two elements of the strategic agenda outlined by President-elect Juncker in his political guidelines are ambitious Jobs, Growth and Investment Package and a connected digital single market. As Commissioner for the digital economy and society, I have a contribution to make to both of these priorities.

My career began as a Member of Parliament in the Baden-Württemberg Parliament and, from 1991-2005, as leader of the CDU parliamentary group in that House. Subsequently, I was for five years Minister-President of this state ("Land"). As the responsibility for cultural issues is in the hand of the individual states ("'Länder"), I dealt with various aspects of cultural and media policy. Furthermore, in my political party I acted as Chairman of the Committee on media policy from 1999 until 2006 and was Chairman of the expert group on media policy from 2006 until 2010. I therefore have a good knowledge of the different stakeholders in this sector, I have experienced their ways of reasoning and functioning, their expectations towards policy makers and I also have learnt how to broker compromises within this sector, but also with other relevant stakeholders.

In Baden-Württemberg many IT firms have grown up or settled – on becoming the world leader of office software, and important IT research is done by research institutions. As importantly however, this region is also home to a multitude of companies of all sizes in more traditional sectors that could not thrive without an understanding for, and an ever increasing integration of – digital input into their products, production and services. This region's prosperity therefore depends on the interaction of digital and non-digital companies, and it has given me an early appreciation of the importance of fostering technology and innovation and of the potential benefits to citizens and society as a whole.

From the IT applications used in modelling and forecasting for the energy sector to the smart grids that bring greater stability, I have seen in my current role as energy Commissioner the role digital plays in our economy.

On the basis of my experience in the past five years and my numerous contacts with the co-legislators and other important actors in Brussels, I am looking forward to create a European digital Single market together with the European Parliament and the Council. I am strongly motivated to bring this important policy area to the forefront and to make sure that Europe can remain amongst the world-leading economies in this field. I am convinced that only by breaking down national silos and creating a truly European market will allow us to succeed.

As part of my responsibility for energy under the outgoing Commission, I have had the positive experience of working collegially with the whole of the Commission. I have at all times respected both the letter and spirit of the EU Treaties and the obligation to act in the European interest. Since entering the Commission, I have not held other offices and have had no other occupation . Also for the next 5 years, I commit to fully respect the Treaty obligations on independence and integrity, impartiality and availability, as defined in paragraph 3 of Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union and in Article 245 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European

Union. I solemnly declare to comply with the ethical standards as set out in the articles mentioned and the Code of Conduct for Commissioners.

I have ensured that the required Declaration of interests foreseen in the Code of Conduct for Commissioners is both complete and accessible. And I will undertake to update it should there ever be any relevant changes and to inform immediately the President-elect thereof.

In my past five years in the Commission I have carefully listened to a wide array of stakeholders – that includes of course governments, members of the European Parliament, civil society, industry and other stakeholders. But having listened, I take pride in forming my own views that I then discuss with my fellow commissioners. And think my past record shows this. I will of course continue working in full transparency and comply by the new rules announced by President-elect Juncker in his political guidelines.

I am committed to avoid any position or situation that would place in question my independence, impartiality and availability to the Commission. I will also inform President-elect Juncker of any situation that might involve a conflict of interest in performance of my duties.

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

How would you assess your role as a Member of the College of Commissioners? In what respect would you consider yourself responsible and accountable to the Parliament for your actions and for those of your departments?

What specific commitments are you prepared to make in terms of enhanced transparency, increased cooperation and effective follow-up to Parliament's positions and requests for legislative initiatives? In relation to planned initiatives or ongoing procedures, are you ready to provide Parliament with information and documents on an equal footing with the Council?

If confirmed, I will take full responsibility for the activities of the Commission services acting under my authority.. Relations in my team and between the services will be conducted on the basis of trust, integrity, respect and high ethical standards.

I am committed to working closely with my fellow Commissioners so that we, as a College, deliver collectively the objectives set out in the President-elect's political guidelines and in the mandate letters addressed to individual Commissioners. With the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market I will prepare further steps to be taken towards a connected Digital Single Market. I will contribute to the efforts of the Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness in creating the necessary environment for promoting investment and support the European industrial base and boost its competitiveness. Together with the Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources I will make the European Commission more open and effective through a better use of digital technologies. And I will liaise closely with the first Vice-President, in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-institutional relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights to ensure that better regulation principles are applied.

Given my previous career as Member of Parliament, I fully understand the expectations you may have towards the European Commission. I can assure you that – like during the past five years – I am committed to working openly and transparently with the honourable Members during my term in office, while any specific commitments will of course have to be decided by the College as whole. I have already had the privilege to work with both Parliament and Council under the ordinary legislative procedure on key energy files and I am committed to fully adhere to the equal treatment of both co-legislators in line with the provisions of the Framework Agreement.

I took over the responsibility for energy in 2010, and have thoroughly enjoyed the dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders. It is always a priority for me to interact with the Parliament and its relevant Committees – in the past on energy files primarily with ITRE and ENVI. In the future I hope to engage in the same constructive way with ITRE, CULT, IMCO, JURI and LIBE on a regular basis.

I hope to build on past relations and from the onset of this term establish a solid working relationship based on mutual trust, regular meetings, and exchange of information and views. This will allow the Parliament to inform the Commission's deliberations on its work programme and to exercise its democratic oversight of the Commission.

I want good relations with the relevant Committees, Chairs and Members so that our common objectives can be handled efficiently and quickly achieved. This is part of the relationship the President-elect has already signalled, and I am fully committed to play my part, making myself available to the relevant Committees, and honourable Members.

Questions from the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

3. Priorities

What are the main priorities you intend to pursue as part of your proposed portfolio, taking into account the emphasis on jobs, growth, competitiveness and sustainable development? What timetable do you envisage for achieving those priorities? What are the specific legislative and non-legislative initiatives you intend to put forward, and according to what timetable? How will you personally ensure the good quality of legislative proposals, full transparency of lobbying activities (directed at you and your services), and consistent and balanced consultation of all stakeholders taking also into account the need to carry out thorough impact assessments?

Before I get to the priorities themselves, I will recall what President-elect Juncker said in his political guidelines: "To deliver change, the Commission needs to be open to reform".

I think this is very relevant as far as the quality of our legislative proposals is concerned. Quality is linked to transparency and openness. Public sector reform is a political imperative if we are to deliver growth and close the gap that exists today between the EU and the expectations of our citizens. The Commission must be at the cutting edge, set an example and work with Member States, and with the Parliament. Open government is already a reality in several member states, and I am fully committed to making full use of digital technologies to drive public sector modernisation and promote greater transparency, more participation, better interoperability and more openness in the way we work with our stakeholders.

EU institutions need to give the lead in structuring our changes, and we now need a sustained and broad conversation between the many different parties. To build this digital society, we cannot afford to have small conversations on small aspects in small fora. On issues such as Internet Governance, we need a broad consensus on the way forward. On even previously intractable issues such as copyright, I am convinced that we can get people around the table to achieve consensus.

In terms of policy priorities, my immediate priority will be contributing, as part of the project team steered and coordinated by the Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, to the jobs, growth and investment package to be presented within the first three months of our mandate.

I will focus on supporting the deployment of a high-quality, digital network infrastructure underpinning all sectors of the economy across Europe by working with Member States to improve the conditions for investment; and ensuring that the EU can be a catalyst for public and private investment. This will be matched by support for digital re-industrialisation via a wider and faster integration of digital innovations in all types of products, processes and services.

I will set long-term strategic goals to offer legal certainty to the telecom sector and create the right regulatory environment to foster investment and innovation.

In this respect I believe that harmonization of telecom and spectrum assignment rules might create the right conditions for Europe to be competitive in the global arena. I fully share the Parliament's objective to make sure that mobile phones can be used across Europe without having to pay roaming charges. Early conclusions on the Telecom Single Market (TSM) package will constitute both early progress for this Parliament, and clear the way for more ambitious legislative steps towards a connected Digital Single Market. I am pleased to learn that the Italian Presidency recently tabled a compromise text on the TSM, and that Parliament's Conference of Presidents confirmed that it will carry over TSM into this legislature. I will work in a constructive spirit with Council and Parliament for an early adoption.

This will enable me, as part of the project team steered and coordinated by the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, based on the results of an assessment of the main barriers, to develop within my first six months ambitious legislative steps towards a connected Digital Single Market. In its own research report earlier this year, Parliament put the cost of non-Digital Europe at €340 billion - I am anxious to ensure we can unlock this potential.

The outgoing Commission has put proposals on the table aiming at helping Europe to rise to the new security challenges put by new technological developments. I believe we can conclude swiftly the negotiations on the Network and Information Security to make Europe more trusted and secure online, so that citizens and business can fully reap the benefits of the digital economy. .

The final ongoing piece of legislation on which I will be looking forward to making progress is the proposed Directive on Web accessibility.

Looking to 2015, my legislative priority will be to support the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market and the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality in finalising the negotiations on an ambitious Data Protection Regulation in 2015. This will allow to prepare a reform of the e-Privacy Directive.

It is clear that further efforts are needed on copyright to complete the Digital Single Market. I am confident that, on the basis of the preparatory work carried out under the current Commission, we can prepare together in the first part of the new Commission's mandate a targeted proposal on the reform of copyright, to take account of new technologies, new uses and new market conditions, which, while supporting innovation, will ensure fair remuneration for creators and allow creative industries to exploit the potential of the digital single market while increasing consumers' choice beyond national borders.

I believe I am in a good position to help the development of creative industries and of a successful European media and content industry able to reach out to new audiences, adapt to the digital era and thrive in the connected Digital Single Market. Because content is not just about leisure time. It's also about the kind of software and applications that power "Industry 4.0". Europe's software industry is world-class. For example, both Boeing and Airbus design their aeroplanes using software developed by Dassault Systems.

If confirmed, I will seek to promote digital industrial innovation aiming at a wider and faster integration of digital innovations in all types of products, processes and services across Europe with a focus on non-tech sectors and SMEs. 85% of my staff and 90% of the funds which I manage are invested in research & innovation.

I hope the Parliament will support me, not only in terms of the mid-term reviews of the Multiannual Financial Framework and of Horizon 2020, but also in ensuring that in the constituencies that you represent, in the regions you know best, research can be translated into concrete achievements that will help put our young people in work and our industry into a more competitive position.

Last but by no means least; I will work with the High Representative /Vice-President on the development of the relationship with strategic partners in order to build a global governance architecture for the Internet which is legitimate, transparent, accountable, sustainable and inclusive.

4. Cooperation / scrutiny

As Commissioner responsible for Digital Economy and Society, how will you ensure coordination with the Vice-Presidents in whose teams your policy area falls and with the other Commissioners in your teams and how will you ensure enhanced cooperation with the Committee on Industry, Energy and Research? In particular, what steps will you take to facilitate scrutiny by the Committee of legislative and non-legislative procedures (including preparation of legislative acts and delegated and implementing acts) and scrutiny of their implementation? How do you intend to ensure that the Committee is kept appropriately informed in relation to any international agreements in your policy area, bearing in mind the experience gained in connection with the TTIP negotiations?

My policy priorities will be carried forward with the Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, the Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness and the Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources.

I have a number of very important responsibilities which require me to work closely with these colleagues. More generally, I am committed to working closely with all my fellow Commissioners so that we, as a College, deliver collectively the objectives set out in the President-elect's political guidelines and in the mandate letters addressed to each of us.

As Commissioner with responsibility for IT in the Commission, and working closely with the Vice-President for Budget and Human Resources, I will promote the development of a Connected Commission, in which digital technologies are fully exploited to deliver policies better with enhanced stakeholder relations, to enable people to work, collaborate and share knowledge together effectively, and to drive up efficiency and productivity of the

administration. I will devote particular attention to cyber security: the Commission has just designated a CISO (Chief Information Security Officer) charged with defining and implementing its own information security strategy, and I am also responsible for the CERT-EU (Computer Emergency Response Team) which is now 2 years old and promotes cyber security on behalf of all EU institutions.

Maintenance of a large part of the EU acquis depends on external agencies or on cooperation with independent bodies. I will be responsible for relations with two of these bodies, the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) and the Office for the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC). I will also be assisted in the exercise of my portfolio responsibilities by officials from four agencies, the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA); the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EASME); the Innovation & Networks Executive Agency (INEA); and the Research Executive Agency (REA).

I am committed to working openly and transparently with the honourable Members on all steps of preparation of legislative acts and delegated and implementing acts. I have already had the privilege to work with both Parliament and Council under the ordinary legislative procedure on key energy files.

I will continue a proactive approach regarding the exchange of information with ITRE. This also includes up-to-date information, in cooperation with my colleague responsible for trade on negotiations concerning international agreements.

I will strive to ensure that all relevant Committees are fully informed at the same time as the Council about any major developments. I would be also delighted to attend regularly meetings of your Committee and I will do my utmost to be at your disposal also for bilateral meetings. I will ask my collaborators to assist you and give you detailed explanation of legislative, non-legislative, delegated and implemented acts including on their implementation.

I am aware that the distinction between delegated and implementing acts has led to some inter-institutional controversies in the legislative process over the last years. This is a subject of common interest to all institutions and we will need to work together to find joint, treaty-compliant solutions to these issues. Reflections are ongoing on how to ensure more ownership and transparency. I fully support these efforts. I consider that they need to be taken forward at a horizontal level in the Commission, as they touch on all portfolios and are of an inter-institutional nature.

In the areas under my responsibility, my colleagues and I will ensure that the Commission's existing commitments are in line with the Common Understanding on delegated acts and the Framework Agreement are fully respected. This concerns in particular the commitment to carry out appropriate and transparent consultations at expert level in the preparation of delegated acts and to ensure that the Parliament and the Member States receive the relevant information. It also means full respect of the provisions in the Framework Agreement in relation to the participation of Parliament's experts in expert groups meetings. This should also facilitate the Parliament's scrutiny, in particular of delegated acts, where the Parliament has ex-post control rights. For implementing acts the rules set out in Regulation (EU 182/2011/EC need to be respected and transparency is ensured via the Comitology Register.

Questions from the Committee on Culture and Education

5. Portfolio

Article 167, paragraph 4 foresees that cultural aspects are taken into account in a horizontal way in all Union policies. How would you personally ensure this will be duly taken into account in the policies and actions you intend to implement? Considering their specificities, how would you ensure that the cultural and creative sectors are not subordinate to economic interests solely? In the new distribution of portfolios, the Creative Europe Programme has been split: the MEDIA and the Culture sub-programmes now fall in the remits of two different Commissioners. How would you endeavour to ensure consistency and synergy with regard to the implementation and the management of this essential programme? In particular, how concretely will the cross-sectoral strand of this programme be addressed?

Artistic creativity and critical thinking are essential for innovation in today's digital world. Already, highly innovative companies thrive on a strong link between artists and their engineers; Daimler has set up a lab exploring futures of urban transport with artists; and eminent art centres like BOZAR engage more and more with technology. The EU's digital funding programmes help support such multidisciplinary teams. In the H2020 programme we are supporting Arts for ICT with €6 million over 2016-17. We are also encouraging our EU-funded ICT projects to spend 1% of their budgets on links with the Arts.

I will ensure, in close cooperation with my colleague in charge of Education, Culture, Youth and Citizenship, that the variety of instruments under my responsibility are mobilised in favour of both the cultural sector and the cultural and creative industries.

The creative sector already accounts for 4% of EU GDP. However, it still suffers from a slow uptake of ICT technologies, difficulties in accessing finance and a fragmented regulatory framework (including copyright) which means that many creative industries operate within regional silos. I will steer through a reform of the EU copyright rules to ensure that they enable and incentivise content providers and distributors and unlock the creativity of content creators.

The Creative Europe programme has not been split; there is one Single Programme Regulation, and one Single Programme Committee. I consider it part of our overall vision to ensure each EU policy benefit from other policies' achievements. I believe today I am in a better position than my predecessors to support culture in Europe as a whole and not only via one particular programme. I will see that my services will contribute to our overall cultural goals through instruments and policies such as CEF - the Connecting Europe Facility, Europeana, copyright and other Intellectual Property Rights rules, tools supporting cultural SMEs, the Nexus prize, the Open Disruptive Innovation scheme under Horizon 2020 also meant for SMEs, Horizon 2020 Creativity, Media support and policy etc.

Regarding Creative Europe's cross-sectorial strand, my services and those of my colleague responsible for Education, Culture, Youth and Citizenship are already putting in place the necessary arrangements for its effective delivery.

6. Priorities

What are your main priorities and how do you intend to guarantee the protection and the promotion of cultural and creative content and works? What are the specific legislative and non-legislative initiatives you intend to propose in the audio-visual sector taking into account the challenges caused by the on-going media convergence and what are their respective timeframes? In particular how do you intend to prepare the new audio-visual media services directive (AVMSD) and what ambitions do you have for this new Directive? Could you commit yourself to make available to the European Parliament, as soon as they are completed, the preparatory works, such as preliminary studies in that regard?

Europe must be a source of growth and jobs in the media and content sectors, with more cross-border and globally successful creative content, and more innovative projects and services.

My ambition is that Europeana becomes the major European digital cultural platform for borderless access and use of all types of cultural content (text, visual and audio-visual). The CEF funds complemented by funding from other sources, such as the Member States or the participating cultural institutions will help achieve this objective. Drawing in private sector financing from the cultural world would also be key and a sure sign of Europeana's appeal.

The main objective of the Audio Visual Media Services Directive is to ensure that both citizens and the industry reap the benefits of audio-visual services. The Directive has helped create a real single market and facilitate business activity in the EU. In looking at the future in this area, and any possible legislative proposals, I will be guided by the results of the recent consultation on the Green Paper "Preparing for a Fully Converged Audio-visual World".