

Commitments

made at the hearing of

KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA

**Vice-President of the Commission,
Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources**



In her answers to the questionnaire and during the hearing on 2 October 2014 before the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Budgetary Control and the Committee on Legal Affairs, the commissioner-designate Kristalina Georgieva made a number of commitments. They are highlighted in this document.¹

Multiannual Financial Framework post-electoral revision

Revision together with review

"The new Commission would take up on the promise of the outgoing Commission, which I am a member of, to table a proposal for the revision of the MFF."

Four issues to be tackled

"I intend to examine, in particular, four issues in this context:

- (1) The global margin for payments;
- (2) The global margin for commitments;
- (3) The requirements of Horizon 2020 and
- (4) The possible alignment of the duration of the post-2020 MFF with the political cycles of the institutions. I will fully honour this commitment."

Prior and wide consultations

"Ahead of making proposals for the next MFF, I will, of course, intensively consult with Parliament and all other relevant stakeholders."

Own resources

Wish to contribute to the High level group on own resources

"I look forward to participating actively in this group. I aim to seek very early contact with its chairman, Prof. Mario Monti, as well as with all the members."

Own resource initiative if appropriate

"I will fully honour the commitment made by the Commission to assess, in parallel with the mid-term review of the MFF, if new Own Resource initiatives are appropriate on the basis of the results of the Group's work."

Unpaid bills in the EU budget (payments issues)

Three-fold approach

"We can start to melt down the snowball of unpaid bills. I am in my heart of hearts convinced that not doing so is self-inflicted injury (...) my second

point: we have to be very careful about managing how we structure projects and programmes so we can implement them successfully. (...) thirdly, and this is where the mid-term review is so important, we have to look into the future and say, given the challenges we face, how we approach delivery of the European budget."

Applying flexibility

"In the next few months we must apply flexibility to be able to stabilise payments and provide scope for what is absolutely crucial – an ability to use our budget more productively without delays, without postponements."



Applying prioritisation

Example from her current DG ECHO: "we have prioritised life-saving activities and we looked activity by activity, at what can be postponed (...) we have structured our partners into two categories: those who could bear a slower payment schedule and those who cannot (...) look at the implementation of these projects in the context of our partners."

Investment package, Juncker's proposal

Details in 3 months

"We will come in three months, as promised with the details of how we think about the EUR 300 billion. We are a team, we should do it together and then come to you."

Role of the EU budget

"My job would be to make sure that as much as possible we will lean forward with European budget to contribute to generating more investments.(...) We have tripled the so-called innovative financial instruments. How can we use them to generate more investments? We have a very, very good project on SMEs.(...) To assess this experience – say this is good, this is not so good – and move forward would be a big priority for me and for the other Commissioners."

Discharge procedure

Compliance with budgetary procedure and treaty requirements

"I am committed to improving compliance and respect of procedures, quality accounting and reporting."

In favour of national declaration

"I am very much in favour of national declaration. It is regrettable that only four Member States have decided to adopt it."

Zero tolerance toward fraud

"Zero tolerance to fraud. Zero, zero, zero. And again I would repeat it."

Suspension of payments in repeated cases of persistent irregularities and fraud

"On freezing categorically yes, especially if it is repetitive, and especially when it could have been seen but was not, or it was seen and it was not acted upon."

Control of funds:

locate problems where they are

"My approach would be to put information out. Make sure that it is very visible and the red light is flashing, and then work as hard as possible to create more knowledge, more conditions and more understanding of that problem at the level of Member States."

Pursuit and simplification of risk-based control

"I want to pursue risk-based control. The Commission has committed itself to report

regularly on the implementation and I fully and personally assume this responsibility. (...) We are moving towards a risk-based control system more and more. We are looking very carefully where the risks are repetitive, where they are bigger, what are the origins of these risks and what needs to be done. But we also are very mindful that we have to simplify."



Independent OLAF

*"On the policy side I have responsibility and on the investigation side I have none, actually. I **do believe** that **OLAF's independence** is paramount and thus I would be the last person to do anything that in any way can even create an impression that I might be stepping out of lines as regards my responsibility...What I see that I can do in my position as responsible for policies is to **engage very closely** with OLAF and see whether we are prioritising well."*

Transparency

In favour of a Mandatory Transparency Register

"I will strive to achieve a mandatory register covering all three institutions."

Full personal transparency

"I commit to making public all contacts and meetings I hold with professional organisations or self-employed individuals on any matter relating to EU policy making and implementation."

Financial transparency system on beneficiaries of EU funds

Increase transparency, improve quality and comparability of data, assessment of costs

"I would like to further increase this transparency – and am committed to two tangible steps. First, improving the quality and comparability of data provided. I want to make the information available in an interactive way, on all modern devices, while fully respecting personal data protection. Secondly, I will ask for a full assessment of the costs and requirements for a single searchable database. As I will be responsible for the budget, optimizing the cost/benefit equation will be an important concern for me."

Equal treatment of legislators

In line with procedure

"I fully intend to treat the European Parliament and the Council equally, as required in the context of the ordinary legislative procedure but also as Commissioner who is accountable to the directly elected Members of the European Parliament."

Follow up to legislative initiative reports

In line with framework agreement and treaty requirement

"...make sure that the Commission responds to parliamentary resolutions or requests made on the basis of article 225 TFEU, within 3 months after their adoption."

Global warming

20% of MFF climate related

"I am convinced... that climate change is for real. Obviously, my objective is to see that we achieve the 20% and I would be very happy if we exceed that."

Gender balance

Target 40% female in management

"I take to heart the task I am given to achieve 40% of female senior and middle managers in the Commission by the end of our mandate."

Geographical balance

Take care of

"I will watch this very carefully because it is a matter of genuine fairness and also because everybody can and must make a contribution."



¹ Quotes are either taken from the commissioner-designate's answers to the questionnaire or from the hearing held on 2 October 2014. In case of multiple quotes on the same issue, only one is reported here to enhance legibility. Some quotes may be free translations of the original language spoken.

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