Commitments made at the hearing of

ADINA-IOANA VĂLEAN
Commissioner-designate
Transport

The Commissioner-designate, Adina-Ioana Vălean, appeared before the European Parliament on 14 November 2019 to answer questions put by MEPs from the Committee on Transport and Tourism. During the hearing, she made a number of commitments which are highlighted in this document. These commitments refer to her portfolio, as described in the mission letter sent to her by Ursula von der Leyen, President-elect of the European Commission, including:

- a sustainable, safe and affordable transport.

Please note that the quotes included in this document only make reference to oral commitments made during the hearing. The verbatim report of the public hearing is available on the Commissioners-designate hearings website. The Commissioner-designate was also sent some written questions in advance of the hearing to which she provided written answers.
A sustainable, safe and affordable transport

Cooperation with the European Parliament

“I know how important it would be for a Commissioner to build on the expertise and experience of the Members of the European Parliament and I commit to you that I will share with you from the very beginning ideas and projects and we will work through the whole chain of producing legislation.”

“I commit to provide good solutions to work with all the stakeholders, to work with the Parliament to solve problems and find the right ways to have people connected, moving, at an affordable price, to have a fair and inclusive transport including aviation.”

“There will be a lot to be done for transport and tourism on which [...] the Commissioner for Transport should commit to, with the European Parliament, and [develop] this work and then [discuss] it in the College of Commissioners.”

Strategy for sustainable and smart transport

“I will work hard to reduce the environmental footprint of mobility and transport activities, and make sure our actions further contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions and improved air quality.”

“I will support value chain partnerships with industry as part of the European Green Deal.”

“I will push to make a fully-developed Single European Sky finally happen [...] I will not go in the direction of saying that we need less flights, but we need to be more efficient, more sustainable and have a better, efficient system on traffic management.”

“If you talk about ports, I would say that maritime is of course a huge business for Europe. We have to protect it, consolidate it, make it more sustainable, more green, but this should be part of a positive solution — greener and competitive [...] all third country actors in our markets should respect our rules, and this is something, part of the job of the Commission to follow and make sure this remains true.”

“[...] sustainable urban mobile planning strategies [...] I would prefer to have a European approach to that and not to have too much fragmentation, because fragmentation in this respect is bad for cross-border travellers [...] we will see if further action is going to be needed at European level.”

Internalisation of externalities/Energy taxation

“By 2050, we want to be carbon neutral and that needs additional policies and efforts.”

“So, we need to internalise part of these externalities [...] the user has to contribute more in what is polluting.”

“I can commit and say that I won’t exclude taxation, it is absolutely obvious [...] I commit on the fact that my focus will be, how we can develop and make train more affordable with lower prices.”

“And then sustainable alternative fuels and then taxation, it is all on the table, I don’t want to hide on anything and I commit to work on all of them to reduce emissions in aviation and to make rail a more attractive way of transport for people and goods.”

The extension of the Emissions Trading System

“Reducing the allowances to airlines, with the aim of eliminating them over time, is part of my mission, as it was entrusted to me, and extending the emissions trading scheme to the maritime sector is something which will bring a valuable change. In general, it should be the users who shoulder the cost of their trips, not society as a whole.”

“[...] ETS in aviation will have to reduce emissions. We have CORSIA: when it is adopted, we will be immediately committed to implement, so we can offset emissions.”

“[...] EU ETS [...] I am committed, and we should be committed together, to introducing such an instrument for cutting emissions in maritime.”

“[...] when we will deploy the EU ETS for maritime [...] we will be careful and will try to maintain the competitiveness of the sector because this is absolutely very important for us.”

Uptake of sustainable and alternative transport fuels for road, maritime and air transport

“I will work with Member States and private investors towards deploying a significant increase in publicly accessible recharging or refuelling points. I want to promote the uptake of sustainable fuels across road, maritime and air transport.”

“[...] the deployment of more sustainable fuels. In maritime [...] my aim – my commitment – would be to support those which are more sustainable and viable at this stage and to encourage new technological developments, new research programmes.”

“So a basket of measures – the important thing is to decarbonise, to be more environmentally friendly and not to lose competitiveness.”

Digital innovation and continued modernisation of key transport systems

“We need to take full advantage of digitalisation to make transport safer, cleaner, more efficient and more accessible.”

“A real market for digital solutions is emerging and I want the EU to remain a leader: from blockchain and
digital mapping and tracking, to connected and automated vehicles, planes and vessels.”

“We need to integrate rail with logistic changes through new technologies, we need to open data for example on expected arrival times and we absolutely need a new signalling system.”

Social dimension

“Jobs will be impacted, therefore I will prioritise investment in reskilling to keep, for example, the automotive regions thriving socially and economically.”

“I want to take the ‘Women in transport’ platform initiative further, and I want to see the potential of gender balance and gender mainstreaming thrive.”

“We have to explain [to the people] and get their support so that they don’t get scared that the modern future for transport means someone will be left behind. I will be completely committed to this approach, and I will follow up on all the work which is already going on.”

“The aviation sector is very competitive...We need all the members on board, the Member States, the airlines, the aircrew associations, workers and employers’ organisations and the Parliament... Actually I’m going to say that I will take all the needed measures, legislative or not, to address all these shortages, all of these issues.”

“I [want] to work together with my [colleagues Commissioners] to take good action in various areas, so that the workers, or the working environment in transport is protected against fraud and abuse, against bad working conditions. So this, I would say, is a humanist commitment.”

Military mobility

“Transport infrastructure is vital for enabling a European defence strategy. Improved mobility for our troops and equipment should not be overlooked when we invest in infrastructure, and dual use facilities, for civilian and military purposes, are a major opportunity for our Union and should be a strategic choice.”

Leading role in international forums

“Thinking globally, the vision of the President-elect is one of a geo-political Commission. This is exactly what we need. We need Europe to maintain its multilateralism on the global stage. For transport, that means Europe needs to be a hub for all neighbouring regions but more importantly, for global supply chains and passenger flows, and this will be extremely important for our competitiveness.”

“Our competitive advantages can be reinforced if we act properly in our international bodies like the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) to take on board the benefits of our success stories.”

Cooperation with key partners

“Then we have agreements and in the agreements we have rules which need to be enforced. And I think we have to have a level playing field for our companies and for those who are accessing our market [...] This will be a continuous part of the work.”

“ [...] we need to enforce competition on the market, so that we will get a good system of prices [...] What I will do is to follow and assess what exactly is going on and what is not implementing and try to enforce implementation.”

“ [...] where things are not progressing, of course, we will come with infringement procedures.”

“Well, we all are aware on this contentious issue you have with the airport in Gibraltar [...] of course there is no doubt that if Brexit happens I will be a Commissioner for the Member States of the European Union.”

Trans-European Transport Networks

“I have opposed the cuts under the current multiannual financial framework (MFF) and I commit before you that I will defend the budget for the Connecting Europe Facility for the next financial framework.”

“We need to complete the core network, we need to support the role of airports and ports in regional and local places.”

“We are also going to revise the guidelines for 20 networks in 2021, I know there is a commitment [...] we have to contribute better to the projects emerging in this network, in rail in particular.”

“ [...] to introduce a single authority to deal with all the procedures [...] it might introduce a supplementary layer of bureaucracy [...] we do not want that, and also to introduce some more shorter periods like two years for implementation.”

Missing infrastructure links and Connectivity links

“So we need to invest on the one hand in the infrastructure itself – in the multimodality.”

“Connectivity remains the most important thing and we are going to invest in connectivity. As I mentioned earlier, local or regional airports and ports will need to be further supported within the framework of the competition policy of the European Union.”

“I favour the night trains as long as they have a competitive case and a PSO can be used for night trains.”

Affordable, reliable and accessible transport for all

“I want to promote mobility as a service, make alternatives to conventional private cars affordable, adjust infrastructure and embrace smart and collaborative solutions.”
Safety standards

“25 000 road deaths per year is simply unacceptable. We should share the objective of halving the number of deaths and serious injuries by 2030 compared to 2020. I will put all resources available into convincing ministers, investors and developers to internalise this safety pledge permanently and I need you to support me in this quest.”

“I think we are committed to a zero vision, meaning zero deaths by 2050. There is a strategy we will put in place and I’m planning to promote it strongly.”

Passenger rights

“Travellers with restricted mobility need to be able to move around with the same ease as everyone else. Those in remote areas need to be better connected to our transport network...Europe has today a very comprehensive passenger rights framework but we need to take this further.”