



## The Future Leadership of the European Union

The European Council discussed and agreed on **nominations for the EU's top jobs** at the Special European Council on 30 June, 1 and 2 July 2019 in Brussels.

The European Council elected **Charles Michel** as the new President of the European Council and proposed **Ursula von der Leyen** as candidate for the President of the European Commission. They have also nominated **Josep Borrell Fontelles** as candidate for the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and **Christine Lagarde** as candidate for the President of the European Central Bank.

The President of the European Council is elected for the period from 1 December 2019 until 31 May 2022. The mandate of two and a half years of the President of the European Council is renewable once. The European Council also welcomed the decision of the heads of state or government of the member states whose currency is the euro to appoint Charles Michel as President of the Euro Summit, for the same term of office.

The candidate proposed for President of the European Commission will need to be elected by the European Parliament by a majority of its component members.

The formal appointment of the High Representative by the European Council requires the agreement of the President-elect of the Commission.

The President of the Commission, the High Representative and the other members of the Commission will be subject as a body to a vote of consent by the European Parliament, before the formal appointment by the European Council. Their term of office will last 5 years from the end of the current Commission until 31 October 2024.

Regarding the candidate for President of the European Central Bank, the European Council will take a formal decision on the appointment on the basis of a Council recommendation, after having consulted the European Parliament and the ECB's Governing Council.



## Charles Michel - The elected President of the European Council



On July 2 2019, Michel was elected by the European Council as the new President of the European Council.

Charles Michel was born in 1975 in Namur, Wallonia. Michel graduated in law at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and the University of Amsterdam in 1998, after which he became lawyer at the Brussels Bar.

Aged 16, he joined the Young Liberal Reformers of Jodoigne, affiliated to the francophone liberal party Mouvement Réformateur (MR). Two years later, in 1994, Michel was elected provincial councillor in Walloon Brabant. In 1999, he was elected to the federal Chamber of Representatives, representing Walloon Brabant.

He became Minister of Home Affairs in the Walloon Government in 2000, as the youngest minister ever in Belgium's history. Also in the year 2000, he was elected city councillor in Wavre and since 2006 he has served as mayor of the city.

In 2007, Michel became Belgian Minister of Development Cooperation in the Verhofstadt III Government and subsequently in the Leterme I, Van Rompuy I and Leterme II governments.

In 2011, Michel became the leader of MR and in 2014 he was appointed Prime Minister of Belgium. In December 2018, Michel resigned over a political crisis over whether to sign the Global Compact for Migration, but he remains the incumbent Prime Minister until a new Federal Government is installed, or until December 1 2019, when his job as European Council President starts.

During his time as the Belgian Prime Minister, he has called for a joint capacity for Europe to act on defence issues and has criticised the perceived shift away from liberal democracy in Hungary. He has spoken in favour of energy union and for more EU action on the question of migration.

Native in French, Michel speaks fluent Dutch and English. He is married with three children. His father is Louis Michel, a previous Commissioner for both research and development, who is also an ex-deputy Prime Minister of Belgium.

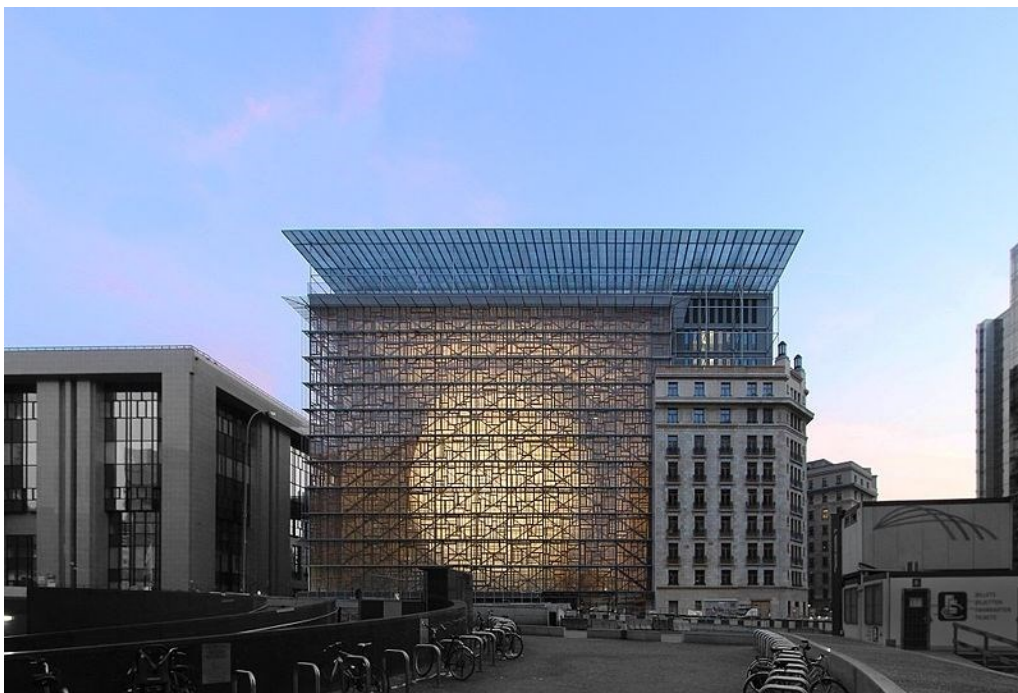
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## Ursula von der Leyen – The nomination for the European Commission President



Ursula von der Leyen was born on October 8 1958 in Brussels, Belgium as Ursula Albrecht. She studied economics at the University of Göttingen and the University of Münster, from 1977 to 1980, and spent one semester at the London School of Economics in 1978. From 1980 to 1987, she studied medicine at the Hanover Medical School and acquired her medical licence. She worked as an assistant physician at the Women’s Clinic of the Hanover Medical School from 1988 to 1992. In 1991, she graduated as a Doctor of Medicine. From 1992-1996, she spent a period as a housewife in Stanford, California and two years later, in 1998, von der Leyen became a member of the academic staff the Department of Epidemiology,

Social Medicine and Health System Research at the Hanover Medical School. In 2001 she earned a Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) degree at the same institution. She speaks both German and French at a native level and fluent English.

She has been a member of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) since 1990. In 2001, she entered local politics in the area of Hannover, where she held various local political positions until 2004. Von der Leyen was elected to the Parliament of Lower Saxony in the 2003 state election and until 2005, she was a minister in the state government of Lower Saxony with responsibility for social affairs, women, family, and health.

In 2005, she was appointed Federal Minister of Family Affairs and Youth in the cabinet of Chancellor Merkel and held that position until 2009. Following her election to the Bundestag, Germany's Parliament, she was reappointed as Family Minister and later that year, she became Minister of Labour and Social Affairs until 2013. Chancellor Merkel appointed von der Leyen as Minister of Defence in 2013, making her Germany’s first female Defence Minister and the only Minister to remain with Angela Merkel since she became chancellor in 2005. She chairs the EPP Defence Ministers Meeting. Her name has been mentioned many times as possible successor to Chancellor Merkel. During her career, she has strongly supported the introduction of a paid parental leave scheme, a women's quota for listed companies' main boards, gay marriage and a nationwide minimum wage. She has publicly expressed her preference for a “United States of Europe” and the formation of an EU army.

She has faced accusations both regarding her academic work, on possible plagiarism in her doctoral dissertation, and her political work, facing criticism for her leadership style, reliance on outside consultants and ignoring government procurement rules, and continued gaps in military readiness.

Von der Leyen has been married to Heiko von der Leyen, professor of medicine and CEO of a medical engineering company, since September 21, 1986 and they have seven children. She is the daughter of the German politician, Ernst Albrecht, who served as Director-General of the Directorate-General for Competition from 1967 to 1970 and as Prime Minister of Lower Saxony from 1976 to 1990. She is Lutheran member of the Evangelical Church of Germany.



## Josep Borrell – The nomination for High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission

Josep Borrell was born in 1947 in La Pobla de Segur in the province of Lleida, Spain. He is a prominent Catalan political figure who has held several Spanish and European posts as a member of the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party).

Borrell became an Aeronautic Engineer, having qualified at the Polytechnic University of Madrid in 1969. He holds a master's degree in Applied Mathematics (Operations Research) from Stanford University, California as well as in Energy Economics from the French Institute of Petroleum in Paris. Borrell is a Doctor in Economics from the Complutense University of Madrid.

In the summer of 1969, Borrell stayed in a Kibbutz (Gal On), in Israel's lowlands where he met his first wife Carolina Mayeur, with whom he has two children. He worked as an engineer at the Compañía Española de Petróleos S.A. (CEPSA), where he also was a union representative (1972-81).

After returning from his studies in the USA, Borrell began his political career by joining the PSOE in 1975. Following the victory of the PSOE in the Spanish general elections, Borrell held many cabinet positions in the Spanish government, including Budget General Secretary (1982-84), State Secretary for Finance (1991-96) and Minister of Public Works, Telecommunications, Transport and the Environment (1991-96). In 1998 he won the PSOE's primary elections as candidate for the Presidency of the Government but resigned a year after due to a financial scandal involving two of his former co-workers when he was State Secretary for Finance.

Borrell began his Parliamentary career as a Deputy for Barcelona (1986-2003). He was later elected to the European Parliament in 2004 and served as President of that institution in the first half of the legislature. In the second half of the legislative term, he was chair of the Committee on Development as well as chair of the Delegation to the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly and co-chair of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat).

After his tenure in the EP, Borrell retreated from politics to continue his academic career, most notably as President of the European University Institute in 2010. However, Borrell was forced to resign from his post after allegations of a conflict of interest when he failed to declare his earnings of €300,000 a year as member of the board of the renewable energy group Abengoa.

Borrell returned to politics in 2017 as an active opponent of Catalonia's secessionist movement. In 2018, the newly sworn Socialist government of Pedro Sanchez appointed Borrell as Spanish Foreign Minister. Politically, Borrell is known for being a staunch EU supporter and is often characterized by his outspokenness and occasional outbursts. As Foreign Minister, he has been active over the crisis in Venezuela and has been open in his criticism of US President Trump. Borrell married Cristina Narbona, president of the PSOE, in 2018, after being in a relationship for the past two decades.

Borrell ran as the PSOE head of list for the 2019 EP elections but gave up his newly won seat to remain as Spanish Foreign Minister. He is the nominee of the European Council to the position of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

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## David Maria Sassoli - The new President of the European Parliament



David Maria Sassoli was born in Florence, Italy, in 1956. A graduate from the University of Florence with a degree in Political Science, he has had a long career in journalism: he worked for seven years for the Italian newspaper *Il Giorno* and then joined Rai, Italy's national public broadcasting company, in 1992. Working in the news and politics section, he served as a special correspondent and later became news presenter of the TG1, Rai's main news programme. In 2006, he was appointed deputy director of the TG1.

It was in 2009 that Sassoli decided to pursue a career in politics by running as a candidate for the centre-left Democratic Party (PD) in the 2009 European Parliament elections. As the most-voted candidate in the Central Italy

constituency, he gained a seat in the Parliament, where he also served as PD's leader.

In 2013, he contested the PD's primaries for the position of mayor of Rome in view of the 2013 municipal elections, but failed to be elected.

In the 2014 European Parliament elections, he managed to secure his seat and was elected Vice-President of the European Parliament, dealing with budget and the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

A long-serving member of the TRAN Committee, rapporteur for the IV Railway Package, he was also a member of the DEVE Committee (2009-2010) and substitute member of the AFET (2009-2012), PECH (2014-2018), INTA (2012), LIBE (2012), REGI (2012-2013), PETI (2013-2014) Committees and CRIM Special Committee (2012).

Sassoli is married with two children.

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## Christine Lagarde – The nomination for the President of the ECB

Christine Lagarde was born in 1956 into a family of academics. After graduating high school in 1973, she spent a year in the United States on a scholarship program at the Holton-Arms school, during which she also interned in the US Congress. Returning to France in 1974, she attended University of Paris X-Nanterre where she graduated in social law, labour law and English. Later, she attended the Aix-en-Provence Institute of Political Studies where she earned her master's degree.



After being admitted to the Paris Bar in 1981, Lagarde joined the Chicago-based international law firm Baker & McKenzie where she specialised in mergers & acquisitions, antitrust, and labour law. She was made partner in 1987. In 1995, she became the first woman member of the firm's executive committee, in 1999 she became chair of its global executive committee, and chair of the global strategic committee in 2004.

Lagarde joined the French government in 2005 as Minister for Foreign Trade, during which time she focused on opening new markets for French technology products. Following a cabinet shuffle in 2007 she was Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries for a month before being named Minister of Finance and Economy – the first woman ever to be named to such a role in a G-7 country. As Finance Minister she implemented several key measures to revitalise the French economy, supporting entrepreneurship and encouraging further competition in the market. On the EU level, during her tenure she attended over 50 Eurogroup and ECOFIN Council meetings and chaired the latter in the second half of 2008.

In July 2011 Lagarde was appointed as the 11<sup>th</sup> managing director of the International Monetary Fund – once again the first woman to occupy the role. Her first mandate was marked by many tumultuous events including the Eurocrisis and the global fallout from the sub-prime collapse in the USA. Throughout her initial tenure she continuously encouraged developed economies to limit their debt elimination policies to avoid killing growth in a fragile world market. She also advocated for a flexible monetary policy and the refinancing of European banks to help them wade through economic challenges of high government debt and weak growth. In 2016 she was appointed for a second mandate at the head of the IMF.

Lagarde speaks French and English, was a member of the French national synchronised swimming team and was named named Officier in the French Légion d'honneur in April 2012.

In July 2019, Lagarde was nominated by the European Council as candidate for President of the European Central Bank.

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