

*What concrete measure or initiative would you propose to apply the "[Think Small First Principle](#)" to? And why?*

The European Union in itself is a paradox – simultaneously a daring project at its core and a place where ideas of the same nature go to die, choked by a cacophony of regulations and jurisdictions. We need to change that. Europeans need to be fearless again. European businesses need to be adventurous again. This is what ‘Silicon Europe 2030’ is about.

There are a few specific things that governments can do to incentivize and aid small companies to innovate. They can tax property and sales, not income. They can continue careful deregulation and fiscal simplification, help companies that do research through tax breaks and ensure that universities put up shop on the market with their new ideas. The Commission can step up here and establish clear guidelines and rules that achieve that in every Member State. Finally, we must make good on our promise regarding the establishment of a uniformly-regulated "Société privée européenne" (SPE) at the level of the EU, thus making it so European entrepreneurs save time, money and energy when setting up a company. We must make it so Europeans in France, Romania, Poland and Spain can open businesses and access the European market with the same ease. This will not only help them, but every one of us. When SMEs thrive, Europe thrives.

International trade should also be encouraged. Europe should not seek to become an autarchic island closed off to the world, but a leader of international trade – and SMEs can help lead the charge. Small-scale entrepreneurial firms that act locally but sell and buy internationally are the prime movers and employers of society, and we must not forego them in favor of corporate giants.

As a European Commissioner, one gets swamped by policy proposals. It is easy to get lost in the bureaucratic language, however vital it may be. However, I want people to understand what we want to do here and why we think it is so important. The Amazon forest is often called the lungs of the Earth. That is why every one of us felt it was personal when the forest caught fire. We were all losing something. Well, small businesses are the lungs of European economy. And we must see that they grow, not perish. Thank you.