

# **Crisis as catalyst for the socio-ecological transformation:**

Europe's role for a successful socio-ecological transformation in times of Covid-19 economic stimulus packages

# Svenja Schulze

Federal Minister for the Environment, Germany

German Federal Ministry for the Environment,  
Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety



## CURRICULUM VITAE

On 15 March 2018, Svenja Schulze took up office as Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of the Federal Republic of Germany.

She attended the Ruhr University Bochum where she graduated with a Master of Arts degree in German studies and political science. She initially worked in the field of advertising and public relations on a freelance basis and later as a business consultant, specialising in the public sector.

Schulze joined the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in 1988.

From 1997 to 2000, and from 2004 to 2018, she was a member of the North Rhine-Westphalia state parliament. She was general secretary of the North Rhine-Westphalia SPD from 2017 to 2018. She has been a member of the SPD party executive (Parteivorstand) and the SPD executive committee (Präsidium) since 2017.

In July 2010, she was appointed Minister for Innovation, Science and Research of the state government of North

Rhine-Westphalia. She held this position until 2017.

Svenja Schulze is a member of the Arbeiterwohlfahrt (workers' welfare association), the Mining, Chemical and Energy Industrial Union (IG BCE), the service-sector trade union ver.di and the Nature Conservation Union (NABU). She is a co-founder of the Frauenzeiten network.

Svenja Schulze was born on 29 September 1968 in Düsseldorf in North Rhine-Westphalia.

HOW IS THE TOPIC OF THE PANEL RELATED TO YOUR EVERYDAY PROFESSIONAL LIFE AND/OR YOUR VITA?

We want to emerge from the coronavirus crisis stronger than before. I firmly believe that the right way forward is to combine economic stimulus with effective climate action. We need to support our economy and our workforce through the process of environmental restructuring, preparing them

to meet the challenges of the future. The focus of my daily work is restructuring our economy and society in line with social and environmental interests.

During Germany's Council Presidency, my goal was and is for the EU to demonstrate that it is putting the European Green Deal at the heart of its strategy for the future. With this deal, the EU aims to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. We are now approaching the final furlong of our Presidency. My main undertaking for the remaining weeks of the German Council Presidency is to reach an agreement on raising the EU 2030 climate target. I am confident that we will achieve this.

LINKS

 <https://www.bmu.de/en/>

# Jean-Eric Paquet

Director-General DG Research and Innovation

European Commission



## CURRICULUM VITAE

Jean-Eric Paquet became Director-General of DG Research and Innovation on 1st April 2018; however, his involvement in EU research policy dates back from 2002, as Deputy Head of Cabinet of Philippe Busquin, then Commissioner in charge of Research and Development. Jean-Eric's career at the European Commission started in 1993. Since then he contributed in shaping EU policy in various fields, notably in DG Transport, where he led the development of the Trans-European Transport Network Policy and was responsible for Europe's transport infrastructure policy and investment strategies. He also gained considerable experience at international level notably as EU Ambassador in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. In 2015, he was appointed Deputy Secretary-General of the European Commission. In all his endeavours, he puts co-creation and systemic change at the heart of the decision-making process, and strongly believes that citizens should be more involved in shaping public policy agendas.

HOW IS THE TOPIC OF THE PANEL RELATED TO YOUR EVERYDAY PROFESSIONAL LIFE AND/OR YOUR VITA?

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT REGARDING THE PANEL AND/OR THE TRANSFORMATION CONFERENCE IN GENERAL?

Already before the current pandemic, the EU had launched the European Green Deal, which is the most transformative and ambitious political initiative in recent decades. Next Generation EU, the recovery package agreed by the EU to help overcome the economic crisis caused by Covid-19, puts the European Green Deal at the centre of the new growth strategy. The pandemic reinforced the insight that we cannot invest anymore in the economy of the past.

As Director-General for Research and Innovation, one of my objectives is to define innovative policy agendas. Only by empowering and involving all stakeholders in a co-created decision-making process will we achieve

ambitious objectives and deeply change the way we live, produce and consume. In Horizon Europe, we strongly emphasise citizens' engagement, synergies and partnerships. Conferences like this are crucial to exchange knowledge and solutions on how to achieve a sustainable and resilient future.

## LINKS

- Press release European Green Deal Call: <https://bit.ly/2UA4qAq>
- ESIR website: <https://bit.ly/3pzpTHX>
- R&I Paper Series website : <https://bit.ly/2UCd29A>

# Delara Burkhardt

Member of the European Parliament



## CURRICULUM VITAE

Delara Burkhardt is a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), based in Kiel, in the very North of Germany. In 2019 she became the youngest German MEP.

As a member of the European Parliament's committee on the environment, she works mainly on climate and biodiversity protection and the circular economy. In particular, as rapporteur on this issue, she is currently working on introducing European rules for deforestation-free supply chains. She is also the spokeswoman on environmental policies for the SPD delegation in the European Parliament. Moreover, she works on the topic of migration in the European Parliament's committee on home affairs.

Before becoming a Member of the European Parliament, she was Vice-President of the SPD's youth organisation (Jusos) and worked in the project management at a Hamburg-based communications agency. She studied social sciences and socio-economy in Kiel and Hamburg.

HOW IS THE TOPIC OF THE PANEL RELATED TO YOUR EVERYDAY PROFESSIONAL LIFE AND/OR YOUR VITA?

As a member of the European Parliament's Environment Committee, I am and will be working on many files that directly affect the Green Deal. As environmental spokeswoman of the delegation of German social democrats in the European Parliament, I am coordinating my delegation's approach to the Green Deal.


WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT REGARDING THE PANEL AND/OR THE TRANSFORMATION CONFERENCE IN GENERAL?

Keeping momentum for an ambitious implementation of the Green Deal, despite the pandemic crisis. Showing that environmental protection does not harm, but rather is beneficial to economic recovery, jobs and social justice.

LINKS

 <https://www.delara-burkhardt.eu/>

 <https://twitter.com/delarabur?lang=en>

 <https://www.instagram.com/delarabur/?hl=en>