

Ursula von der Leyen

■ **1958:** Born in Brussels to **Ernst Albrecht** – state premier of Lower Saxony and former director-general of European Commission

■ **1971:** At age 13, moves with family to Germany – goes on to study economics in Hanover

■ **1977-80:** Studies at **London School of Economics** using pseudonym “Rose Ladson” due to concerns she might be targeted, as daughter of prominent politician, by left-wing guerrillas active in West Germany

■ **1980:** Switches to studying medicine in Hanover, specialising in gynaecology and graduating as doctor in 1991

■ **1986:** Marries **Heiko von der Leyen**, scion of aristocratic family which had made fortune in silk. They have seven children

■ **1990:** Joins **Angela Merkel's** conservative **Christian Democrats**

■ **2003:** Elected to Lower Saxony's state parliament before becoming cabinet member as minister for social affairs, women, family affairs and health

■ **2005:** Appointed federal minister of family affairs in Merkel's first administration

■ **2009:** Becomes federal minister of labour and social affairs. During tenure, enacts revolution in family policy, introducing parental allowances for fathers and improving access to childcare

■ **2013:** Becomes Germany's first female defence minister, but period marked by scandals over awarding of contracts, right-wing extremism in Bundeswehr, as well as criticism about gaps in military readiness

■ **July 16:** European Parliament confirms Ursula von der Leyen as first woman to be president of EU Commission

