

European Commission Work Programme 2017



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Commission Work Programme 2017: Delivering a Europe that protects, empowers, and defends

The European Commission released its annual Work Programme for the year ahead on 25 October 2016, entitled: “Delivering a Europe that protects, empowers, and defends”. As the title suggests, the Programme aims to work towards a stronger, more secure Europe in the wake of a turbulent year for the European Union, addressing issues such as the migration crisis, the UK referendum result, and terrorism. The paper outlines the legislative and non-legislative initiatives to be introduced or withdrawn by the European Commission in 2017.

The third Work Programme to be adopted under Jean-Claude Juncker’s Commission Presidency, the paper makes 21 new proposals and a further 18 initiatives under the REFIT programme, which aims to assess and improve existing EU legislation. Jean-Claude Juncker, promising a “Europe that delivers”, has pledged to “select a number of initiatives of major political importance that should receive priority treatment in the legislative process in the months to come”.

As with previous Work Programmes under the Juncker Commission, the document focuses on advancing the ten political priorities set out in 2014: Jobs, Growth and Investment; Digital Single Market; Energy Union and Climate; Internal Market; Economic and Monetary Union; EU-US Free Trade; Justice and Fundamental Rights; Migration; EU as a Global Actor; and Democratic Change.

The main focus of the 2017 Programme is on improving processes already in place, rather than introducing new initiatives. There is an emphasis on improving the way in which the European institutions are perceived from the outside, for example through a new Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register.

Youth employment remains a central pillar for 2017, including a New Skills Agenda for Europe, the Youth Employment Initiative, and the Youth Guarantee. Additionally, the recently-announced European Solidarity Corps – a volunteering project for under-30s – is due for implementation before the end of 2016.

Planned changes to existing initiatives include a review of the Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020) under the next programming period (‘Financial Framework Beyond 2020’) and modernisation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in order to better meet targets set under the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite having been listed under last year’s Work Programme, the European Pillar of Social Rights has once again been named a ‘new initiative’ following the completion of its public consultation. In light of recent development surrounding trade, it is interesting to see that the EU will pursue bilateral trade negotiations with Japan, Chile, Australia and New Zealand.

In line with global developments, a number of projects are being put in place to help the EU secure its position as a “Stronger Global Actor”, including implementation of a European Defence Action Plan, an EU Strategy for Syria, an EU-Africa Framework, and progress towards a Security Union.

This briefing outlines the initiatives from the Work Programme of relevance to the work of Scotland Europa and our members. The three tables listed below correspond with the first three annexes to the Commission’s Work Programme; New Initiatives; Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) Programme Initiatives; and Priority Pending Proposals.

Scotland Europa will take the Commission’s Work Programme into account while drafting the Scotland Europa Members’ Discussion Paper and Planning Paper 2016-17. The Discussion Paper will be discussed at our Members’ Meeting in February 2017.

Further Information

[European Commission Work Programme 2017](#)

New Initiatives – To Be Proposed in 2017		
Title	Description	Type
Employment, Skills and Education		
Youth Initiative	The initiative proposes a creation of a European Solidarity Corps and measures to implement the youth aspects of the Skills Agenda. This includes a framework for apprenticeships, modernising schools and higher education, and improved tracking of outcomes for graduates and for those who have taken vocational training.	Legislative / non-legislative
European Pillar of Social Rights	A proposal will be outlined for a Pillar of Social Rights and will present related initiatives; such as initiatives to address work-life balance, access to social protection, implementation of the Working Time Directive, and a REFIT revision of the Working Statement Directive, which concerns the employer’s obligation to inform employees of their contractual conditions.	Legislative / Non-legislative
Energy, Climate Change, Transport		
Energy Union Strategy	To implement the Energy Union Strategy of low-emission travel and mobility, the Commission will review legislation highlighted in the Low-Emissions Mobility Action Plan, the Clean Vehicles Directive and the Eurovignette and European Electronic Toll Service Directives. The international agreement on emissions from aircraft will also be implemented.	Legislative / Non-legislative
Enterprise and Industry		
Implementation of the Digital Single Market Strategy	There will be a mid-term review on the implementation of the Digital Single market Strategy.	Non-legislative
Implementation of the Single market Strategy	Deliverables will include a revision of the legislation on goods, a company law initiative to facilitate the use of digital technologies, an initiative on coordinated health technology assessments and measures for better enforcement of single market rules; including proposals for a Single Digital Gateway and a Single Market Information Tool. The initiative will also include measures to empower national competition authorities to be more effective enforcers.	Legislative / Non-legislative
Trade for All Strategy	As part of the implementation of the Trade for All Strategy, and in parallel to pursuing bilateral negotiations with Japan and opening new negotiations with Australia and New Zealand, there will be a further reinforcement of the EU’s Trade Defence Instrument with a proposal to amend the EU’s antidumping legislation.	Legislative / Non-legislative
Data Protection Package	There will be an alignment of rules on the protection of personal data when processed by EU Institutions to the new general data protection rules, a REFIT review of the ePrivacy Directive as well as a framework for adequacy decisions on exchange of personal data with third countries.	Non-legislative
Space Strategy for	To implement the Space Strategy for Europe there will be	Legislative /

Europe	legislative proposals on governmental satellite communication services and measures to facilitate market uptake of space services and data.	Non-legislative
Environment		
Action Plan on Circular Economy	Prioritising the implementation of the Action Plan on Circular Economy, there are proposals for a strategy on plastics use and recycling, and for a Regulation on minimum quality requirements for re-used water. There is also a proposed impact assessment of the Drinking Water Directive and an initiative to address bottlenecks affecting chemical, product and waste legislation.	Non-legislative
Financial Services		
Capital Markets Union Action Plan	A mid-term review will evaluate the progress of the implementation of the Capital Markets Union and identify additional measures to improve the financing of the economy. New measures will include a framework for an EU personal pension product, a REFIT revision of the European Market Infrastructure Regulation, an Action Plan on retail financial services and legislation to facilitate the funding of infrastructure corporates by institutional investors.	Legislative /Evaluation
Financial framework beyond 2020	A comprehensive proposal for the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework (the EU's long-term budget framework), including on own resources.	Legislative / Non-legislative
General EU policy		
Implementation of the EU Global Strategy	The implementation of the EU Global Strategy includes efforts to foster state, economic, environmental/ climate and societal resilience in third countries, in particular among EU neighbours and wider surrounding regions.	Non-legislative
REFIT (Regulatory Fitness and Performance) Initiatives 2017¹		
Title	Description	Type
A Connected Digital Single Market		
ENISA (European Union Agency for Network and Information Security)	Revision of legislation on ENISA, the centre of expertise for cyber security in the EU, including a review of its mandate, objectives and actions.	Evaluation follow up / Legislative
Towards a New Policy on Migration		
Visa Information System	Proposal to amend the existing legislation on the Visa Information System (VIS) in order to ensure better exchange of visa-related data between Member States.	Legislative
Enterprise and Industry		
Consumer Law	Revision of a number of Directives relating to consumer protection, following on from a Fitness Check and an evaluation. This revision aims to protect consumers against	Legislative

¹ REFIT is the Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme, which aims to make EU law simpler and to reduce regulatory costs, with the ultimate goal of "contributing to a clear, stable and predictable regulatory framework supporting growth and jobs". http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/refit/index_en.htm

	unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market	
Financial Services		
Cross-border payments	Revision of legislation on cross-border payments to include non-Euro Member States and currencies in order to reduce fees and improve transparency.	Legislative
Energy and Transport		
Combined Transport	Revision of legislation to establish common rules on combined transport of goods between Member States, with a view to promote use of intermodal transport in the EU. This legislation follows up an evaluation completed in 2016.	Legislative

Priority Pending Proposals	
Title	Description
Employment, Skills and Education	
EFSI 2.0	Proposal to extend the duration of the European Fund for Strategic Investments, as well as introduction of technical enhancements
Posting of workers	Proposal for a Directive concerning posting of workers in the context of service provision
Environment	
Circular Economy Package	Proposals for four regulations covering the following topics: electrical waste (including end-of-life vehicles and batteries), landfill waste, waste, and packaging/packaging waste.
Financial Services	
MFF Mid-term Review	Proposal for a Council Regulation setting out the terms for the future of the multiannual financial framework
Energy, Climate Change, Transport	
Port Services	Proposal for a Regulation establishing a framework on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports
EU Emissions Trading System	Proposal for a Directive amending a previous initiative to promote cost-efficient emissions reduction and investment in low carbon technologies
Efforts Sharing Decision	Proposal on a Regulation holding Member States to binding annual greenhouse gas reductions from 2021-2030 in order to meet commitments set out under the Paris Agreement
Enterprise and Industry	
WiFi4EU voucher scheme for local authorities	Proposal for a Regulation for the promotion of internet connectivities in local communities
Cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market	Proposal for a regulation ensuring cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market
Swift ratification of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with Canada	Proposal for a Council Decision in order to finalise the EU-Canada free trade agreement (CETA)
General EU Policy	
An Area of Justice and Fundamental Rights based on Mutual Trust	
Directive on Terrorism	Proposal on a Directive to replace a Council Framework Decision in order to better combat terrorism
Exit/entry system (smart borders)	Proposal for a Regulation in order to better secure the EU's external borders through compulsory exit/entry registration – including potential refusal of entry – to third country nationals
Towards a New Policy on Migration	
Reform of the Common European Asylum System	This includes proposals for a Regulation establishing criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged by a third-country national or stateless person, as well as the establishment of "Eurodac" for the comparison of finger prints to establish these persons, proposals for a Directive laying down standards for the reception of applications for international protection as well as proposals for a

	Regulation establishing a common procedure for international protection in the EU
New resettlement framework and Crisis Relocation Mechanism	Proposals for a Regulation establishing a Union Resettlement framework and establishing a crisis relocation mechanism for third party nationals or stateless person across the EU
Safe Countries List	Proposals for a Regulation establishing an EU common list of safe countries of origin for granting and withdrawing international protection
Schengen Border Code/External Borders Checks	Proposals for a Regulation amending Regulation no 562/2006 (EC) (Schengen Borders Code) regarding the reinforcement of checks against relevant databases at external borders
A Stronger Global Actor	
Capacity building in support of security and development in third countries	Proposals for a Regulation amending Regulation No 230/2014 establishing an instrument contributing to stability and peace
External Investment Plan	Proposal for a Regulation on the European Fund for Sustainable Development and establishing the EFSD Guarantee, proposal for a Decision granting an EU guarantee to the European Investment Bank against losses under financing operations supporting investment projects outside the EU and a proposal for a Regulation establishing a Guarantee Fund for external actions