

Questions and Answers: The 2018 Commission Work Programme

Every year, the European Commission adopts a Work Programme which sets out its key initiatives for the year ahead. The Commission Work Programme informs citizens and our institutional partners and staff how we will deliver on our political priorities and turn them into concrete action.

This is the fourth Work Programme to be presented by the Juncker Commission, and it sets out initiatives to complete the work on the 10 priorities set out in President Juncker's Political Guidelines by the end of the Commission's five-year mandate, as well as more long-term initiatives with a view to shaping the EU's future for 2025 and beyond.

What are the priorities for the Commission in 2018?

The Commission continues to structure its work around President Juncker's [Political Guidelines](#) of July 2014. The Commission's agenda until the end of the current mandate was set out in President Juncker's [State of the Union](#) address of 13 September 2017. This year's State of the Union was built on the back of the Future of Europe debate launched by the Commission with its [White Paper on the Future of Europe](#) published on 1 March 2017. The actions for the year ahead are also grounded in the [Bratislava Declaration](#) of September 2016 on the EU at 27, and the [Rome Declaration](#) agreed by Leaders on 25 March 2017 on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Treaties of Rome. All roads now lead to Sibiu, in Romania, where the first Summit of the EU of 27 Member States will take place; the Juncker Commission is focusing both on short-term delivery and on shaping the future of the EU.

Just as important as the new initiatives set out this year is our continued work with the European Parliament and Council to reach agreement on the ambitious proposals which have already been made in the Commission's first three years in office. The Commission has identified in the Work Programme 66 pending proposals where delivering agreement should be a priority in the next year. The Commission will also pursue its work to make sure that existing European laws are properly applied and enforced and that the body of EU legislation remains fit for purpose. This will include the withdrawal of 15 pending proposals which are obsolete or where agreement is not possible, and the repeal of three existing pieces of legislation.

How is the Work Programme prepared and adopted?

This Commission was elected by the European Parliament on the basis of clear [Political Guidelines](#), which also reflected the European Council's Strategic Agenda. The 10 priorities set out in these Guidelines continue to act as the framework for the Commission's annual planning.

Every year in September, the President of the European Commission delivers his State of the Union speech before the European Parliament. Together with

the [Letter of Intent](#), which is sent the same day by the President and the First Vice-President to the President of the European Parliament and the Council Presidency, it outlines the key priorities of the Commission for the months to come.

The State of the Union speech kick-starts the dialogue with the Parliament and Council to prepare the Commission Work Programme for the following year. This dialogue serves to ensure a shared understanding of the priorities ahead between the Parliament, Member States and the Commission.

The Commission also hears the views of the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions in the preparation of the Work Programme.

Does the Work Programme need to be endorsed by the European Parliament and Council?

In the coming weeks, the Commission will work with the European Parliament and Council to reach an agreement between the three Presidents on a Joint Declaration which will set out the broad objectives and priorities for 2018 and identify proposals that deserve priority treatment in the legislative process. This is a new shared commitment under [the Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making](#) which was proposed by the Commission on 19 May 2015 and signed by the three Institutions on 13 April 2016.

How is the Commission Work Programme structured?

The Commission Work Programme consists of a political Communication and five annexes.

- Annex I includes the key initiatives to be presented in the year ahead, which focus on concrete actions to implement the ten political priorities of the Juncker Commission and actions and initiatives that have a more forward-looking perspective, as the new Union of 27 shapes its own future for 2025 and beyond;
- Annex II contains other key REFIT initiatives where we will review existing legislation in the coming year;
- Annex III lists the priority pending legislative files where we want the co-legislators in the European Parliament and Council to take the swiftest action to deliver results for citizens;
- Annex IV contains a list of intended withdrawals of pending proposals;
- Annex V contains a list of existing legislation which the Commission intends to repeal.

What is REFIT?

[REFIT](#) is the European Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme. Its objective is to review the existing stock of EU legislation to ensure it remains fit for purpose and delivers the results intended. It aims to keep the body of EU law lean and healthy, remove unnecessary burdens and adapt existing legislation without compromising on our ambitious policy

objectives.

The Juncker Commission continues to update and improve existing legislation so it can achieve its objectives effectively and without undue burdens. In identifying REFIT priorities, the Commission has taken into account the Opinions of the REFIT Platform.

What is the REFIT Platform?

The Commission created a high level expert group including Member States, Advisory Bodies, business and civil society to provide advice on how to make EU regulation more efficient and effective reducing costs and burden and without undermining policy objectives.

So far, the [REFIT Platform](#) has adopted 58 Opinions across a wide area of EU regulation including e-privacy, chemicals regulation, financial services, health and food safety, the Common Agricultural Policy, Cohesion Policy and Value Added Tax.

How does the Commission decide which proposals to withdraw?

European citizens and businesses want our time and efforts to be focused on big and urgent things, whilst striving for simple, evidence-based, predictable and proportionate laws which deliver maximum benefits.

The Commission carefully examines each year all pending proposals to assess whether they should be maintained, amended or withdrawn. We have proposed to withdraw 15 pending proposals that are technically outdated or no longer serve their purpose, to allow the co-legislators to focus on the proposals that really matter.

Is this Work Programme a comprehensive list of everything the Commission will do in 2018?

The Commission Work programme highlights the new key political initiatives planned by the Commission for 2018. The Commission also has ongoing obligations to ensure that existing legislation or programmes are well implemented and deliver concrete results on the ground. The Commission can also take unplanned initiatives in response to events throughout the course of the year which require urgent action at European level.

When will the Commission implement the proposals set out in the Work Programme?

In line with the commitments under the new Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making, the Work Programme indicates the envisaged timetable to the extent possible. The Work Programme also gives details, as far as available and on an indicative basis, on the intended legal base, the type of legal act and any other relevant procedural information, including information on impact assessment and evaluation work.

Roadmaps for individual actions have already been published or will be published shortly, giving further details on the planned initiatives and

providing the opportunity for stakeholders and citizens to give feedback on the Commission's plans

For more information

[Press release](#): Commission Work Programme 2018: An agenda for a more united, stronger and more democratic Europe