European Commission - Press release

A New Start: European Commission work plan to deliver jobs, growth and investment

Strasbourg, 16 December 2014

Today the European Commission adopted its Work Programme for 2015 – setting out the actions the Commission intends to take over the next 12 months to make a real difference for jobs, growth and investment and bring concrete benefits for citizens. This is an agenda for change.

Citizens want less EU interference in their daily lives, especially where Member States are better placed to act and provide solutions. They expect the EU to make a difference on the big economic and social challenges, such as fighting unemployment and improving competitiveness. Citizens expect the EU to be more open about what it does and how it does it. The adoption of the Work Programme is a good starting point as its outlines in all transparency what the EU will and will not do in 2015.

President Jean-Claude Juncker said: “This Commission was elected on the basis of a clear political mandate: the ten priorities set out in our Political Guidelines. Today’s Work Programme is the translation of those ten priorities into concrete first deliverables. Citizens expect the EU to make a difference on the big economic and social challenges and they want less interference where Member States are better equipped to give the right response. That is why we committed to driving change and to leading an EU that is bigger and more ambitious on big things, and smaller and more modest on small things.”

First Vice-President Frans Timmermans said: "What we are presenting today is a roadmap for getting Europe back to work, based on clear priorities. 2015 will be the year for delivering the announced Investment Plan to boost our economy, opening up the opportunities of the Digital Single Market for citizens and business, launching European Energy Union, and putting forward a new, balanced European Agenda on Migration.

We need to clear the decks so political efforts are focussed on the real priorities: we have looked through every pending proposal currently on the table of the EU institutions and decided whether we want to maintain, amend or withdraw them. We want results on the ground, so where it is clear existing proposals will not be agreed in a way that meets our objectives, we will propose alternative approaches. This way we will make sure that our Union focuses both on what truly matters and on delivering concrete results for citizens. This time things really are different."

The Commission's 2015 Work Programme sets out: 23 new initiatives proposed by the Juncker Commission, following the Political Guidelines presented to the European Parliament; 80 existing proposals which the Commission proposes to withdraw or amend for political or technical reasons. The Work Programme presents focused actions where the Commission will deliver in 2015. In addition, in many areas, the Commission will also continue to work hard to ensure that existing policies and rules are fit for purpose, deliver concrete results on the ground and are properly implemented.

23 New Initiatives to Make a Difference

The programme adopted today sets out the 23 initiatives the Commission is politically committed to delivering in 2015. This twelve-month ‘to do list’ focuses on the ‘big things’ like jobs, growth and investment, in line with the ten priorities of President Juncker’s Political Guidelines.

The Commission notably committed to deliver in 2015:

- **An Investment Plan for Europe**: the legislative follow-up to the Plan announced last month, unlocking public and private investments in the real economy of at least € 315 billion over the next three years.

- **An Ambitious Digital Single Market Package**: creating the conditions for a vibrant digital economy and society by complementing the telecommunications regulatory environment, modernising copyright rules, simplifying rules for consumers making online and digital purchases, enhancing cyber-security and mainstreaming digitalisation.

- **The first steps towards a European Energy Union**: to ensure energy supply security, further integrate national energy markets, reduce European energy demand and decarbonise the energy mix.
- **A Fairer Approach to Taxation**: An Action Plan on efforts to combat tax evasion and tax fraud, including measures at EU level in order to move to a system on the basis of which the country where profits are generated is also the country of taxation; including automatic exchange of information on tax rulings and stabilising corporate tax bases.

- **A European Agenda on Migration**: developing a new approach on legal migration to make the EU an attractive destination for talent and skills and improving the management of migration into the EU through greater cooperation with third countries, solidarity among our Member States and fighting human trafficking.

- **Deeper Economic and Monetary Union**: Continued efforts to promote economic stability and attract investors to Europe.

See the full list of the 23 new initiatives in each of the 10 priority policy areas in [Annex 1](#).

**Applying Political Discontinuity**

In preparing the Work Programme, the Commission examined around 450 proposals that are currently awaiting decision by the European Parliament and the Council, and is proposing to withdraw or amend 80 of them. Some are proposed for withdrawal because they do not match the new Commission’s priorities. But in many cases, the Commission remains strongly committed to the objectives sought – but proposals are of no use if they are simply sitting dormant on a negotiating table or if they will be so watered down in negotiations they can no longer achieve their original purpose. When that’s the case, the Commission will propose new, better ways of achieving these objectives. The Commission will wait for the views of the European Parliament and the Council on these proposals before formalising the withdrawals.

See the full list of the proposals for withdrawal in [Annex 2](#).

First Vice-President **Frans Timmermans**, explained: "We want to achieve results. This Commission agrees that Europe needs to be ambitious, including on environmental and social standards. But it would be pointless to let the EU institutions waste time and energy on proposals which have no chance of being adopted – that will not deliver the results we want to see on the ground. So whenever that’s the case we will think of other, more effective ways to achieve our common objectives."

**Cutting Red Tape and Removing Regulatory Burdens**

The 2015 Work Programme reflects the Commission’s strengthened commitment to Better Regulation, building on the Regulatory Fitness Programme, which seeks to cut red tape and remove regulatory burdens, contributing to an environment conducive to investment. The College of Commissioners has identified a series of proposals and existing legislation, which will be reviewed and amended to make them work better for Europe’s citizens and businesses. This also includes simplification efforts, for example of the Common Agricultural Policy.

See the full list of REFIT proposals in [Annex 3](#).

**Background**

For the first time, the Commission has worked in dialogue with both the European Parliament and the Member States to build support for the work programme before presenting it. The Commission believes that proposals are only useful if they are adopted, accepted and implemented properly on the ground, and so the support of the co-legislators is imperative.

**For More Information**

- [President Juncker’s Political Guidelines](#)
- [European Commission Work Programme 2015 Website](#)
- [The Commission at Work website](#)
- [Past European Commission Work Programmes and key documents](#)
- [European Commission REFIT programme website](#)
- [Fact Sheet on Commission Work Programme](#)
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