



**Tithe an
Oireachtais**
**Houses of the
Oireachtas**

EU SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2013
JOINT COMMITTEES' PRIORITIES

CLÁR OIBRE GRINNSCRÚDAITHE AE 2013
TOSAÍOCHTAÍ NA gCOMHCHOISTÍ

AN COMHCHOISTE UM GHNÓTHAÍ AN AONTAIS EORPAIGH
JOINT COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN UNION AFFAIRS

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EU Scrutiny Work Programme 2013 Joint Committees' Priorities

1. Background

In its Annual Report on the Operation of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002¹, which was laid before both Houses on 20 July 2012, the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs recommended that:

- (a) sectoral committees² should identify on an annual basis those proposals, both legislative and non-legislative, from the European Commission's Annual Work Programme which they would subject to detailed scrutiny;
- (b) these should be forwarded to the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs for inclusion in an agreed list of priorities; who should then report to the Houses on the agreed list of priorities, and
- (c) the agreed list should be adopted by motion of both Houses of the Oireachtas as the Oireachtas EU Scrutiny Work Programme.

This is the first such Oireachtas EU scrutiny work programme prepared following the above recommendations. Each of the sectoral committees has identified its own priorities based on the European Commission's Annual Work Programme 2013³.

Section 2 outlines the general remit of sectoral committees as regards EU scrutiny matters.

Section 3 sets out the priority proposals identified by each committee.

2. EU Scrutiny in Sectoral Committees

The current Dáil (31st) and Seanad (24th) have decentralised the consideration of certain EU matters by "mainstreaming" them across the sectoral committees. This model was introduced in October 2011.

This mainstreaming of EU scrutiny across the sectoral committees allows the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs to focus on matters concerning the strategic direction of the EU as well as those of a cross-sectoral nature.

The orders of reference for each of the sectoral committees require them inter alia to consider the following matters in respect of the relevant department/departments:

- (i) Draft EU legislative acts within a committee's remit, including the compliance of such acts with the principle of subsidiarity;

¹ http://www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/media/committees/euaffairs/9th-Annual-Report_Operation-of-Scrutiny-Act-2002.pdf

² The term 'sectoral committee' is used to refer to those Oireachtas Joint Committees that shadow the work of a particular government department or departments. As of May 2013, there are 9 such committees.

³ http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/pdf/cwp2013_en.pdf

- (ii) Other proposals for EU legislation and related policy issues, including programmes and guidelines prepared by the European Commission as a basis of possible legislative action;
- (iii) Non-legislative documents published by an EU institution in relation to EU policy matters: and
- (iv) Matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of Ministers in the relevant configuration of the Council of the European Union.

This year, on foot of the recommendations referred to in section 1 above, each of the sectoral committees has drawn up, as part of its overall work programme for 2013, an EU Scrutiny work programme. This includes its priorities based on the European Commission's Annual Work Programme 2013. These priorities are reproduced together, in section 3 below.

Individual proposals will be checked against the principle of subsidiarity. The overall list of priorities does not preclude other proposals from being added and scrutinised in the course of the year.

In addition to the identification of priority proposals for scrutiny that fall under their remit, the individual committee work programmes referred to above also outline how each committee intends to engage with:

- (a) Ministers in advance of Council meetings,
- (b) Secretaries General on the twice yearly reports under S.2(5) of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002 on measures, proposed measures and other developments in relation to the European Communities and the European Union in relation to which he/she performs functions, and
- (c) other EU related work that the Committee intends to carry out. This may include work started in 2012, which it is intended to bring to conclusion in 2013, work arising out of provisions in the Lisbon Treaty, such as Ireland's Opt in/Opt out options in relation to new EU legislation concerning justice and home Affairs.

Finally, while not directly related to EU scrutiny work, during the first six months of 2013, as part of the parliamentary dimension to Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Houses of the Oireachtas is hosting an ambitious programme of eight inter-parliamentary meetings, where many of the priority issues identified for scrutiny will be discussed by parliamentarians from across the EU.

3. Priority proposals for 2013

As referred to in section 2 above, each of the sectoral committees has drawn up, as part of its overall work programme for 2013, an EU Scrutiny work programme. This includes its priorities based on the European Commission's Work Programme 2013. These priorities are reproduced together below.

The number indicated in the first column of each table relates to the number of the initiative in the Annex to the Commission's Work Programme⁴ ..

3.1 Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Nº	Title	Type of initiative	Description of scope of objectives
36.	Review of EU political and legal framework for organic production	Legislative	The policy objectives of the current framework for organic production (Regulation 834/2007 and Communication COM(2004) 415) are to: - establish a sustainable management system for agriculture and - produce high quality products and a high variety of products responding to consumers' demand for processes that do not harm the environment, health, or animal welfare. The review will verify whether they are still relevant and adapted to the future evolution of organic production.
52.	Animal medicines	Legislative	New framework for veterinary medicines and certain aspects of their use to establish a level playing field in the EU, and decrease administrative burden.
53.	Use of cloning technique for food production	Legislative/ Non-legislative	Follow up Commission's report on cloning of animals for food production, in the context of the good functioning of the internal market.

3.2 Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection

Nº	Title	Type of initiative	Description of scope of objectives
20.	Access for regulated professions	Non-legislative	This proposal will aim to take stock of recent developments in Member States in the area of regulated professions and to devise a methodology for facilitating the mutual evaluation exercise

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/pdf/cwp2013_annex_en.pdf

			foreseen in the proposal modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive. The mutual evaluation foreseen in the proposal will focus on restrictions (qualifications and reserved activities).
30.	Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion – including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020	Non-legislative	This initiative will provide guidance on increasing efficiency, effectiveness, and adequacy of social protection systems; improving activating and enabling policies; social inclusion and adequate livelihoods. The Communication will contribute to implementing the Europe 2020 strategy/European Semester, support the design of social investment in the NRPs and assist Member States in making best use of EU funds, ESF in particular.
32.	Effective Institutions for Occupational Retirement Pensions	Legislative	A review of this Directive is required in view of the importance of ensuring that appropriate structures are in place to fund retirement.
33.	Internationalisation of Higher Education	Non-legislative	Europeans need to be prepared for an increasingly global, open and competitive labour market. European universities are subject to growing global competition to attract talent and exchange knowledge. The Communication will review the different policies and programmes that can support them in furthering their internationalisation efforts.
34.	Modernisation of Public Employment Services	Legislative	This package will cover all elements of the reform of EURES ¹ including the delivery of a European Employment Guarantee, and set up a formal European network of Public Employment Services, to help develop and implement a European Labour Mobility Action Plan for modernisation and strengthening of Public Employment Services to help transitions on labour markets.

35.	European platform to fight undeclared work	Legislative	This draft decision establishes a European platform between labour inspectorates and other enforcement bodies. It aims for a more coherent approach by covering all the key areas influenced by undeclared work and supporting a more effective fight against undeclared work by way of improving cooperation, sharing best practice and identifying common principles.
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¹ EURES is an information exchange network to facilitate the mobility of workers within the countries of the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Members of the network include public employment services, their public and private partners, and social partners at cross-border level

3.3 Joint Committee on Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht

Nº	Title	Type of initiative	Description of scope of objectives
37.	EU's Strategy on adaptation to climate change	Legislative / Non-legislative	To contribute effectively to a more climate-resilient Europe. This means enhancing the preparedness and capacity to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change of the EU, its Member States and regions.
38.	New climate & energy framework for the period up to 2030	Legislative / Non-legislative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To meet 80-95% GHG emission reduction objective in 2050 compared to 1990 - To foster long term competitiveness, security of supply and sustainability - To provide a long-term perspective for investments until 2030.
39.	Review of the Thematic Strategy on air pollution and associated legislation	Legislative	The initiative will assess the implementation and achievements of current air pollution and air quality policies and will include legislative proposals to revise the NEC Directive and other air quality legislation as appropriate in order to deliver enhanced protection from the impacts of air pollution for human health and the natural environment whilst contributing to Europe 2020.
40.	Review of Waste Policy and Legislation	Legislative	This initiative will review key targets in EU waste legislation (in line with the review clauses in the Waste Framework Directive, the Landfill Directive and the Packaging Directive) and carry out

			an ex-post evaluation of waste stream directives, including ways to enhance coherence between them.
41.	Environmental climate and energy assessment framework to enable safe and secure unconventional hydrocarbon extraction	Legislative/non-legislative	Against the background of existing EU legislation the initiative will examine options to ensure that opportunities to diversify energy supplies and improve competitiveness, including by production of unconventional gas, can be taken up. The framework would target a level playing field across the EU, clarity and predictability for both market operators and citizens including for exploration projects, full consideration of greenhouse gas emissions and management of climate and environmental risks in line with public expectations.
42.	Nuclear insurance and liability	Legislative	Improvement of victim compensation in case of nuclear accident and creation of an internal market/level playing field for investors.

3.4 Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform

Nº	Title	Type of initiative	Description of scope of objectives
1.	Annual Growth Survey (2014)	Non-legislative	The Commission will present an Annual Growth Survey accompanied by a Communication which will be the main input for discussions at the Spring European Council 2014. The survey will include both a review, reporting on progress, and a forward-looking part proposing strategic policy guidance horizontally across Member States. The survey will launch the European Semester process for 2014.
2.	Shadow Banking	Legislative	Following the Green Paper of March 2012 and the international work coordinated by the Financial Stability Board (FSB), the Commission will adopt a legislative proposal designed to address the systemic problems related to shadow banking entities and practices e.g. money market funds, securitisation and activities

			such as securities lending and repurchase agreements performed by all types of financial entities.
4.	Review of the European System of Financial Supervision	Legislative/Non-Legislative	The regulations establishing the EFSF (the three European Supervisory Authorities and the Systemic Risk Board) require the Commission to carry out an in-depth review in 2013, in view of making proposals for changes.
5.	Providing long-term finance through actions to ensure the effectiveness of financial institutions, markets and instruments	Legislative	The Commission will propose policy actions to improve the conditions for long term finance in Europe.
8.	Reforming the framework for collective investment funds/UCITS VI (focus on long-term investments, product rules and depositaries)	Legislative	The Commission proposal will address a number of issues relating to systemic risks, the efficiency, competitiveness and integration of the market for UCITS funds in order to preserve the UCITS attractiveness.
19.	Making the VAT system more efficient through a review of the rates structures	Legislative	The aim is to readjust the scope of the reduced rates in order to increase the efficiency of the VAT system.
22.	Bank account initiative	Non-legislative/Legislative	An initiative aimed at increasing the transparency and comparability of bank account fees, as well as to render bank account switching easier for consumers.

3.5 Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade

Nº	Title	Type of initiative	Description of scope of objectives
54.	Preparing an EU position on the post - 2015 development agenda	Non-legislative	As part of a process to pursue a linked strategy for the MDGs, the follow-up to Rio+20 and the Sustainable Development Goals process, this Communication will pursue agreement on an ambitious post-2015 global development framework with a strong emphasis on shared responsibility and accountability
55.	Preparing an EU position on the follow-up to Rio + 20 including the development of Sustainable	Non-legislative	As part of a process to pursue a linked strategy for the MDGs, the follow-up to Rio+20 and the Sustainable Development Goals process, this Communication will

	Development Goals		set out the EU follow-up to Rio+20 including sustainable development goals.
58.	Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Management outside the EU	Non-legislative	The European Union more than any other international actor, has a unique array of tools at its disposal to promote the resolution of complex external crises. These tools need to be used coherently and in close cooperation with Member States addressing the whole crisis cycle, from crisis prevention to reconstruction.

3.6 Joint Committee on Health and Children

The European Commission Work Programme 2013 does not list any proposals that fall under the remit of the Joint Committee on Health and Children. In line with its EU Scrutiny work programme for 2013, the Joint Committee will, as a matter of priority, bring to finality scrutiny of such draft proposals published in 2012 which had not been concluded by end 2012.

3.7 Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

Nº	Title	Type of initiative	Description of scope of objectives
9.	State aid Modernisation: General block exemption Regulation (800/2008)	Legislative	The GBER set the most appropriate conditions for State aid, exempted from the notification requirement, to be compatible with the internal market. This will reduce administrative burden for national authorities.
10.	State aid modernisation in key sectors	Non-legislative	Reviews of the compatibility criteria included in the following guidelines for aid to Research & Development & Innovation; for aid to risk capital, for regional aid, for environmental aid, for industrial Rescue and Restructuring aid; and for aid to airports and airlines. These revisions aim at supporting the EU's strategy for economic growth, at giving a better focus to the Commission's enforcement work, and at taking Commission decisions quicker.
11.	Review of the Technology Transfer Block exemption Regulation and its Guidelines	Non-legislative	The objective is to improve framework conditions for licensing of technology for production thereby stimulating innovation and growth while ensuring effective competition.
13.	Reforming the internal market for industrial	Legislative/non - legislative	The objective is to enhance the quality and efficiency of the

	products		internal market legislation for industrial products. This initiative will address the elimination of remaining trade barriers, in particular for products with high-growth potential, ensure more consistency in the application of the legislation, and simplify its management and implementation.
15.	Initiative on E-invoicing in the field of public procurement	Legislative	This initiative would eliminate the fragmentation of the Internal Market by promoting the use of B2G e-invoicing in the public sector and enhancing the interoperability of national e-invoicing systems. It would help to reduce the operating costs of enterprises and the procurement costs of public authorities by fostering the automation of procedures related to invoicing.
17.	Proposals for reinforced partnering in research and innovation under Horizon 2020	Legislative	Leveraging investment and pooling efforts in key industrial sectors and in global development assistance through the renewal and creation of Public-Private Partnerships. These partnerships will leverage substantial private investment in key industrial sectors, such as pharmaceuticals, energy, transport, aeronautics, electronics, air traffic management and bio-based products. The initiative also includes Public-Public Partnerships for the joint implementation of national research programmes, to underpin industrial competitiveness by supporting R&D-performing SMEs, cutting-edge metrology, and ICT-based products and services for the elderly.
20.	Access for regulated professions	Non-legislative	Take stock of recent developments in Member States in the area of regulated professions and to devise a methodology for facilitating the mutual evaluation exercise foreseen in the proposal modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive. The mutual evaluation foreseen in the proposal will focus on restrictions

			(qualifications and reserved activities).
21.	Fighting misappropriation of trade secrets	Legislative/non - legislative	This initiative aims at providing effective protection against trade secret theft which can act as a significant disincentive for innovative companies who rely on trade secrets to expand their businesses through licensing deals with partners, notably given the protection existing in other jurisdictions harmonising existing rules on protection of trade secrets.

3.8 Joint Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality

Nº	Title	Type of initiative	Description of scope of objectives
31.	Integration of the Roma	Soft Law	Commission Recommendation aimed at fostering implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies, based on the work of a Pilot Group of Member States representing a geographical balance and the diverse situations concerning Roma within the EU and identifying good practices and effective approaches to Roma Integration.
43.	Initiative on firearms: reducing gun-crime in Europe	Non-legislative	Trafficked firearms are being used by criminal networks and lone criminals. Legally-held firearms are also used illegally. The aim of the Communication will be to present: the nature/scale of the problem and current action including external dimension; new/increased EU actions (e.g. increased role of Europol; funding); law enforcement policy orientations in view of the 2015 review of the Firearms Directive 91/477, including possibly a Directive on criminal sanctions based on Art. 83(1) TFEU.
44.	Framework for administrative measures for the freezing of funds, financial assets and economic gains of persons and entities suspected of terrorist activities inside the EU	Legislative	The EU legal framework on the freezing of funds, financial assets and economic gains of persons and entities suspected of terrorist activities only covers terrorists who represent an international, global threat. However, no such framework currently exists for the realisation of the objectives of the

	(Article 75 TFEU)		area of freedom, security and justice. This initiative aims at using the new legal basis of the Lisbon Treaty to set up a coherent and effective legal framework for administrative measures for the freezing of funds, financial assets and economic gains of such persons and entities.
45.	Special safeguards in criminal procedures for Suspected or Accused Persons who are Vulnerable	Legislative/non-legislative	A directive to ensure that special attention is shown in criminal procedures throughout the EU to suspected or accused persons who cannot understand or follow the content or the meaning of the proceedings, owing, for example, to their age, mental or physical condition.
47.	EU Citizenship Report 2013: Progress towards eliminating obstacles to EU citizens' rights	Non-Legislative	Report on progress made since the 2010 Citizenship Report and identify further actions towards completing the removal of obstacles to EU citizens' enjoyment of their rights under the Treaty. It will be one of the deliverables of the European Year of Citizens.
48.	Establishment of a European Public Prosecutor's office (EPPO) to protect the financial interests of the Union	Legislative	This initiative intends to set out the framework and conditions for establishing the European Public Prosecutor's office to focus on the protection of the financial interests of the Union. It will be accompanied by proposals on the reform of Eurojust and on protection of the financial interests of the EU.
49.	Fighting money laundering	Legislative	As one of the 'Eurocrimes', money laundering is a criminal offence in all EU Member States. However, EU Member States do not have the same definition of money laundering and also apply different sanctions. Because this hinders cross-border investigations and police cooperation, there is a need to harmonise the offence of money laundering at EU level.
50.	Fighting cigarette smuggling	Non- legislative	This strategy would propose a comprehensive response at EU level to illicit trade in cigarettes, taking into account the losses caused to public revenue and its role as an outlet for organised

			crime. Better coordinated and more targeted action would include exchange of information, standard setting and international cooperation.
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3.9 Joint Committee on Transport and Communications

Nº	Title	Type of initiative	Description of scope of objectives
12.	Energy Technologies and Innovation in a future European Energy Policy	Non-legislative	To foster energy technologies development according to the energy roadmap 2050, to promote energy research, demonstration and market deployment actions at EU level and to remove market, regulatory and behavioural barriers to the market deployment of energy innovation (via the Intelligent Energy Europe III programme).
23.	Reducing the costs of broadband infrastructure Deployment	Legislative	The draft regulation aims to substantially reduce the cost of deploying high-speed broadband networks across the EU. This would incentivise investment in line with Digital Agenda high speed internet targets. The Regulation would mainly set out rights and obligations directly applicable to telecom operators and other utilities.
24.	Action Plan on Wireless Communications for a Connected Europe	Non-legislative	The aim of the Communication is to lay down a policy action plan meeting the challenges the EU is facing in the next few years with regard to dynamic market developments and exponential traffic growth in wireless services. Policy objectives include accelerating the roll-out of wireless broadband networks, fostering shared spectrum use, exploitation of EU R&D results on wireless communications and enhancing global spectrum harmonisation.
26.	Single European Sky package - Single Sky II plus	Legislative / Non Legislative	This package (Communication, SES Regulation, EASA Regulation) addresses a number of issues that were left unresolved during the SES development. These concern in particular the performance of air navigation service provision and the need to clarify the institutional landscape at

			EU level to ensure the roles and responsibilities of various organisations support each other, but do not overlap.
27.	A Blue Belt for a single market for maritime transport	Legislative / Non legislative	To reduce the administrative burden for intra-EU maritime transport to a level that is comparable to that of other transport modes by avoiding multiple controls including customs. This will be supported by modern ICT technologies, which permit the reliable tracking of ships and cargo with a sufficient level of certainty when shipping operates within the Single Market.
28.	Framework on the future EU ports' policy including a legislative proposal	Legislative / Non legislative	Enhancing the efficiency and overall quality of port services, addressing the obligations of Member States regarding the sound planning of ports and hinterland connections, transparency of public funding and port charges, and administrative simplification efforts in ports, and reviewing restrictions on the provision of services at ports.
29.	Internal Road Market - Access to the road haulage market and access to occupation of road transport operator	Legislative	The initiative will improve the economic and environmental efficiency of road freight transport by further lifting the restrictions to cabotage. It will create a more even playing field by including provisions to apply social rules of the host country in the case of long stay of drivers and provisions for a more uniform enforcement.
38.	New climate & energy framework for the period up to 2030	Legislative / Non legislative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To meet 80-95% GHG emission reduction objective in 2050 compared to 1990 - To foster long term competitiveness, security of supply and sustainability - To provide a long-term perspective for investments until 2030.
41.	Environmental climate and energy assessment framework to enable safe and secure unconventional hydrocarbon extraction	Legislative/Non legislative	Against the background of existing EU legislation the initiative will examine options to ensure that opportunities to diversify energy supplies and improve competitiveness, including by production of unconventional gas, can be taken up. The framework

			would target a level playing field across the EU, clarity and predictability for both market operators and citizens including for exploration projects, full consideration of greenhouse gas emissions and management of climate and environmental risks in line with public expectations.
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