European Enterprise Alliance

EEA Brief on the European Commission's 2027 Work Programme

On 4 November 2026, the European Commission presented its Work Programme for 2027, outlining its broader policy goals of the coming year, unveiling its planned forthcoming legislative proposals, and highlighting which files currently under negotiation it considers priorities for adoption. This brief unpacks the key takeaways from the Work Programme and its expected impact on European businesses, and presents the most important upcoming legislative files that will shape the coming year.

From New Initiatives to Successful Implementation

The most substantial change in the Commission's approach for 2027 as opposed to the last few years is the reduction in new proposals and a greater focus on adopting and implementing files already under negotiation. Compared with the 45 and 38 proposals introduced in the 2025 and 2026 Work Programmes, respectively, the Commission plans to introduce only 23 new initiatives, shifting its attention towards delivering on the existing legislative agenda. To support this, the Commission will strengthen implementation and enforcement, including through a planned "Pact against Gold-Plating" meant to increase transparency around additional requirements introduced by Member States when transposing EU legislation and address unnecessary burdens brought about by gold-plating.

Key Policy Priorities

Simplification and Competitiveness

Reduced regulatory burdens, a more integrated Single Market, and strengthened investment conditions remain central to the Commission's competitiveness agenda for the next year. New measures will aim to prevent barriers and market segmentation in the Single Market, while proposals to complete the Savings and Investments Union include reforms to the venture capital framework and a Bank Competitiveness and Simplification Package. The Commission also plans to establish a European Corporation on Critical Raw Materials, which will work alongside the Critical Raw Materials Centre to secure the resources which the EU's strategic sectors depend on.

Digital Policy

Digital files make up the second most prominent category of open proposals that the Commission will prioritise for adoption in 2027 – only slightly outnumbered by simplification initiatives – with the aim of helping European businesses keep pace with technological developments. These efforts will be reinforced by a review of the Digital Decade targets and a broader Digital Transformation Package, alongside a blueprint for accelerating the uptake of AI in the health, transport, agri-food, advanced manufacturing, and defence and space sectors

Defence and Security

Strengthening European defence capabilities and integrating the European and Ukrainian defence industries more closely are the focus of the Commission's security priorities for 2027. Air and missile defence, drone and counter-drone systems, and ammunition are the priority areas, with the EU-Ukraine Defence Industrial Pact and a joint modular air defence system as the main vehicles for cooperation. A new European Instrument for Strategic Enablers would cover assets such as strategic transport, space, and cyber defence, while a European Security Emergency Protocol would give Member States facing a credible threat access to a swift common response. The Military Mobility proposal from 2025 is also among the tabled files prioritised for adoption.

Energy and Climate

The Commission's approach to energy in 2027 centres on bringing down costs for European industry while keeping decarbonisation objectives within reach. A post-2030 energy framework and simplification package is intended to reduce regulatory complexity, while ensuring that the 2040 framework continues to deliver on climate goals. Pending work on network charges and the review of the Emissions Trading System will bear directly on the energy costs faced by businesses, particularly in industrial sectors. On the climate side, the Commission will review CO_2 standards for heavy-duty vehicles and revise RefuelEU Aviation, and will complement these with a European Water Initiative, a European Heatwave Plan, and a review of the nature protection Directives.

Future of the Union

Beyond the immediate legislative agenda, the next long-term budget and the enlargement process will shape the Union's direction for the years ahead. Preparations for the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework will accelerate, with agreement on the proposed Own Resources revenue streams being

considered particularly important to avoid a funding gap.[1] The Commission will also advance its enlargement agenda, with Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, and Moldova all progressing in their accession efforts, while pre-enlargement policy reviews will aim to ensure that a larger Union retains the capacity to act decisively.

Conclusion

In summary, EEA finds that the European Commission's Work Programme for 2027 contains some promising elements that have the potential to address the pressing needs of European businesses. The reduced number of new proposals is a meaningful step toward limiting overregulation in the EU and to instead ensure the successful adoption and implementation of the initiatives already being deliberated. We also welcome the continued commitment to simplification and streamlining, as well as the efforts being taken to mitigate gold-plating and fragmentation across the Single Market. That being said, we urge the Commission to ensure that these commitments are delivered upon and that their benefits are experienced by companies across all sectors and in all Member States. To this end, EEA will continue to closely monitor the legislative processes and maintain a strong line of communication with policymakers, to ensure that a business-friendly regulatory landscape is maintained in the year ahead.

[1] For more information about these Own Resources, read the press release from the recent EEA and ZPP event "Boosting Competitiveness through Evidence-Based Taxation Policies: Balancing European Ambitions with Economic Realities".

Overview of Upcoming Proposals

Bolded entries reflect those we expect to be most impactful for our members and which we will be monitoring particularly closely.

Q1	
Sector	*Initiative*
Banking	**Bank competitiveness and simplification package**
Transportation	**Transport simplification package**
Energy	**Post-2030 framework and simplification package**
Migration	Update of visa rules
Cohesion	Right to stay
Politics	Commission Recommendation on safety in politics

Q2	
Sector	*Initiative*
Digital	**Digital transformation package, simplification and copyright**
Transportation	**RefuelEU Aviation**
Internal security	International data exchange for police cooperation (Prüm international)
Housing	**Housing simplification package**
Social	European care deal
Water	European water initiative
Climate	European heatwave plan
Equality	Commission Recommendation on banning conversion practices

Q3	
Sector	*Initiative*
Single Market	**Preventing market segmentation by suppliers**
Single Market	**Single market barriers prevention**
Competitiveness	**Proposal on permitting acceleration**
Skills	Skills guarantee
Climate	**Review of the heavy-duty vehicles CO2 standards**
Climate	Review of nature protection directives including Birds, Habitats, Natura 2000

Q4	
Sector	*Initiative*
Higher education	European Universities alliances 2.0 (including A legal status for European Universities alliances and European Universities alliances: driving innovation and boosting Europe's competitiveness)

Date Not Specified	
Sector	*Initiative*
Critical Raw Materials	**European Corporation on Critical Raw Materials**
Politics	Review of the political advertising Regulation

Overview of Prioritised Pending Proposals

The Work Programme lists the following currently tabled proposals as priorities for adoption. Where available, previously indicated targets for agreement have been drawn from the One Europe, One Market roadmap.

Sector	*Initiative*	*Target for agreement*
Competitiveness	European Product Act	(Pending proposal)
Competitiveness	Public Procurement Act	Q4 2027
Climate	Emissions trading system (ETS) review	Q1 2027
Energy	Network charges and taxation	Q2 2027
Simplification/digital	Omnibus VII: digital	Q2 2026
Simplification/climate	Omnibus VIII: environmental legislation	Q4 2026
Simplification/ automotive	Omnibus IX: automotive	Q4 2026
Simplification/ agriculture	Omnibus X: food and feed safety	Q4 2026
Simplification/finance	Omnibus XI: taxation	Q4 2027
Simplification/ energy	Omnibus XII: energy product legislation	Q4 2027
Digital	Chips Act 2.0	Q2 2027
Digital	Cloud and AI Development Act	Q4 2027
Industry	Industrial Accelerator Act	Q4 2027
Digital	Digital Networks Act	Q4 2027
Digital	EU Cybersecurity Act	Q4 2026

Automotive	Automotive package	
Pharmaceutical	Revision of medical devices Regulations	
Pharmaceutical	Biotech Act	
Energy	European Grids Package	Q3 2027
Finance	Savings and Investments Union	
Competitiveness	European Business Wallets	Q4 2026
Simplification/ competitiveness	28th Regime/EU Inc.	Q4 2026
Competitiveness/ digital	Digital euro	Q4 2026
Defence	Military mobility package	
Labour	Fair labour mobility package	Q3 2027
Housing	European affordable housing Act	
Budget	Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034	