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Oireachtais**
**Houses of the
Oireachtas**

AN COMHCHOISTE UM

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CLÁR OIBRE GRINNSCRÚDÚ AN AONTAIS EORPAIGH

2024

JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

EUROPEAN UNION SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

2024

1. Role and Remit of the Joint Committee

The Joint Committee is required, in line with its orders of reference, to consider draft EU legislative Acts, other proposals for EU legislation and related policy issues, non-legislative documents published by any EU institution in relation to EU policy matters, and matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the relevant EU Council of Ministers and the outcome of such meetings.

The Joint Committee on Justice shadows the Department of Justice (“the Department”). The remit of the Department, in the European context, forms the basis of the Joint Committee’s remit in terms of scrutiny of European matters.

2. Joint Committee Engagement on EU Matters

Scrutiny of EU Legislative Proposals

The scrutiny of draft EU legislative proposals will be a standing agenda item of the Joint Committee. Draft proposals will be brought to the attention of the Joint Committee in line with the 2012 mainstreaming model as agreed by the Working Group of Committee Chairs (WGCC) by setting out priority (Schedule A) and non-priority (Schedule B) items (see section 3 below).

Engagement with Ministers

The Joint Committee will engage with the Minister for Justice in advance of his/her attendance at EU Ministerial Council meetings.

Engagement on the Statutory Departmental EU Scrutiny Report

There is a requirement under S.2(5) of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002 for Ministers to report twice-yearly to both Houses on the measures, proposed measures and other developments in relation to the European Communities and the European Union in relation to which they perform functions. The Joint Committee intends to consider these reports with the Secretary-General of the Department.

Engagement with European Bodies

The Joint Committee will continue to further its engagement with European bodies such as the EU Commission and the EU Parliament and its committees during 2024, including delegation visits where appropriate.

3. Scrutiny of draft EU Legislative Proposals

EU Commission Work Programme 2024 – COM(2023) 638 final

On 17 October 2023, the European Commission published its Work Programme (CWP), setting out its priorities for the coming year. The EU CWP 2024 – ‘Delivering today and preparing for tomorrow’, can be found at: [COM 2023 638 1 EN.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/comwp_2023_638)

This work programme gives an indication of the legislative proposals, initiatives and communications that will be pursued in 2024. The CWP contains five annexes. These are:

- **Annex I** contains a list of 15 new legislative and non-legislative initiatives that the Commission intends to take forward in 2024.
- **Annex II** lists 57 proposals and initiatives adopted by the Commission since March 2023, and additional ones being adopted by the Commission with this work programme or adopted afterwards, which rationalise and streamline EU reporting requirements. The annex also includes upcoming initiatives and the most significant REFIT evaluations and fitness checks that the Commission will undertake in 2024. REFIT actions are those where the Commission screens the EU's regulatory acquis and identifies necessary corrective action. These actions include legislative initiatives to simplify and reduce regulatory burden, the repealing of legislation no longer needed, the withdrawal of proposals without a realistic chance of adoption or where the initial objectives can no longer be achieved, evaluation and 'fitness checks' to assess relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and EU added value of EU legislation and identify further opportunities for simplification and burden reduction.
- **Annex III** lists 154 pending proposals.
- **Annex IV** lists 6 pending proposals that are to be withdrawn or modified.

Priority Items (Schedule A)

The Joint Committee will list priority items as they arise, including matters relating to the prevention and detection of migrant smuggling and human trafficking, fostering law enforcement cooperation and measures combatting child sexual abuse, as set down in the CWP 2024.

Non-Priority Items (Schedule B)

Schedule B will list non-priority items as they arise. However, the Joint Committee has the option of re-classifying any draft legislative or non-legislative proposal as a priority proposal at any time, taking account of the Department's information note regarding its significance.

Typical non-priority items will include the following:

- Technical modifications arising from the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) - Articles 290 and 291 of that Treaty distinguish between acts delegated to the EU Commission and acts that confer implementation powers on it and which are, in general, procedural matters.