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Oireachtais
Houses of the
Oireachtas

An Comhchoiste um Ghnóthaí an Aontais Eorpaigh

Clár Oibre

Eanáir – Nollaig 2023

Joint Committee on European Union Affairs

Work Programme

January - December 2023

Joint Committee on European Union Affairs



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1. Introduction

The Joint Committee on European Union Affairs was established following orders of Dáil Éireann on 23 July 2020 and Seanad Éireann on 18 September 2020.

Standing Orders [DSO 100(4); SSO 77(4)] require that “As soon as may be following its appointment and thereafter at annual intervals, each Select Committee shall prepare a work programme and shall lay such programme before [Dáil/Seanad] Éireann”.

2. Joint Committee

The duties of the Joint Committee are discharged in two ways,

(1) it selects business for consideration itself, from the policy areas within its Terms of Reference; and

(2) there will be items of business referred to it by the House(s) and expressly detailed in the Terms of Reference.

This section of the Annual Work Programme identifies business of the Joint Committee that may arise from its terms of reference or be selected by the Joint Committee for consideration. Broadly, this business comprises of institutional engagement, legislative engagement, and key policy issues.

2.1 Institutional Engagement

The Joint Committee will monitor, review and report on the likely implications of the strategic direction, policies and programmes pursued by the institutions of the European Union for people in their daily lives and for the longer-term future of Ireland and the European Union.

As part of this process, the Joint Committee may invite presentations from Ministers of the Government, European Commissioners including the Irish nominee to the Commission, officials of Government departments and the European institutions and other interested individuals and groups in order to hear their views and perspectives on matters under consideration. The Joint Committee may also, if the need arises,

engage with persons with specialist or technical knowledge to advise and assist it in its work.

2.1.1 Council of the European Union

The Joint Committee will examine matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the General Affairs Council (of Ministers) of the European Union and the outcome of such meetings. The Joint Committee will engage with the Minister of State for European Affairs on their attendance at such meetings.

The Joint Committee may engage with representatives of the Swedish and Spanish Governments in relation to the priorities for their respective presidencies of the Council of the European Union.

2.1.2 European Commission and Strategic Planning

The Joint Committee will consider and, if necessary, comment upon the key strategic planning documents of the European Commission, specifically, inter alia, the State of the Union Address and the Annual Work Programme and continue strong engagement with the European Commission Office in Dublin.

The Joint Committee may also engage with representatives of the European Commission in the course of its work on other policy issues that may be referred to it or may arise from its Terms of Reference.

2.1.3 Engagement with the European Parliament

Members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland may attend meetings of the Joint Committee and take part in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments. Members of the European Parliament from other constituencies may also attend meetings of the Joint Committee by invitation.

The Joint Committee will consider other opportunities for engagement with the European Parliament. Such opportunities may include taking part in interparliamentary committee meetings hosted by the European Parliament, inviting Members of the European Parliament with expertise in policy areas relevant to issues being considered by the Joint Committee to give evidence, continuing the

Joint Committee's engagement with the European Parliament Liaison Office in Ireland, and other opportunities for adhoc engagement.

2.1.4 COSAC and Interparliamentary Engagement

The Joint Committee shall represent both Houses of the Oireachtas at the Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) and shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas thereon.

The Joint Committee will also seek opportunities for other forms of interparliamentary engagement, such as undertaking bilateral engagements with member state parliaments and considering opportunities to take part in interparliamentary engagements that arise from time to time.

2.1.5 Adhoc engagement with other institutional stakeholders

The Joint Committee will consider opportunities for engagements with a broad range of institutional stakeholders, such as –

The European Court of Auditors – the Joint Committee has held regular engagements with the Irish member on the European Court of Auditors and will continue that engagement.

Local Government and the Committee of Regions – the Joint Committee has previously engaged with local authorities and with Irish members on the Committee of Regions regarding regional perspectives on EU issues and will consider opportunities to continue that engagement.

European Economic and Social Committee – the Joint Committee will consider opportunities to arise with Irish members of the European Economic and Social Committee regarding its work on representing the social partners on EU issues.

EU Agencies and Other Bodies – the Joint Committee may engage with officials of key EU agencies and other bodies under the remit of its institutions, for instance as expert witnesses on policy areas being considered by the Joint Committee.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe – members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe may attend meetings of the Joint Committee and take part in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments.

Representative groups, thinktanks, academia, and independent experts – there are a broad range of representative groups, thinktanks, academic institutions, and independent experts that are active on EU issues and who may be in a position to offer a valuable perspective to the Joint Committee.

2.2 Legislative Engagement

2.2.1 Operation of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002

The Joint Committee is responsible for reporting, on an annual basis, on the operation of the Act in the Oireachtas, and will prepare a Report that does that and lay it before both Houses. If warranted, the Joint Committee may consider calling for a debate on the Report.

2.2.2 Oireachtas EU Scrutiny Work Programme

The Joint Committee will prepare a Report, based on input from the sectoral committees of proposals they have identified as priorities for scrutiny during the year.

2.2.3 Infringements and Transposition of EU Law

The Joint Committee has the role of examining issues arising from Ireland's adherence to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, as it may select and which are not referred to any other Committee. In this regard the Joint Committee may engage with the relevant Minister regarding Ireland's transposition record and current unresolved infringement cases against Ireland because of inadequate or late transposition.

2.2.4 Amendments to the EU Treaties

The Joint Committee will examine notifications of proposals for the amendment of the Treaties received from the European Council pursuant to Article 48.2 of the Treaty on European Union.

2.2.5 Enlargement

The Joint Committee will examine notifications of applications for membership of the European Union received from the European Council pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union.

2.2.6 Secondary Legislation

The Joint Committee may examine such regulations under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009 and other instruments made under statute and necessitated by the obligations of membership of the European Union. This may include post-enactment scrutiny of such regulations.

The Joint Committee notes the establishment of the Seanad Select Committee on Scrutiny of Draft EU-related Statutory Instruments and will engage with the Select Committee where appropriate.

2.3 Key Policy Issues

The Joint Committee may select issues of cross-sectoral significance and issues that arise from its terms of reference for elective policy work. Some of the topics that the Joint Committee intends to examine, and where appropriate report to the Houses on, are identified below.

In addition to the topics outlined below, the Joint Committee will continue to monitor ongoing policy developments and may reprioritise its intended policy priorities accordingly.

2.3.1 Implementation of the new EU-UK relationship

The Joint Committee will examine the implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, the Withdrawal Agreement, and the Windsor Framework, along with other issues arising from the new relationship between the EU and the United Kingdom.

The Joint Committee will also examine the impacts of the new EU-UK relationship on Ireland. Such impacts may include Irish-British relations, border regions, trade connectivity on the island of Ireland, and interparliamentary relations between the Houses of the Oireachtas and the UK Parliament and devolved assemblies.

The Joint Committee will also consider the impacts of Brexit on Ireland's place in Europe, such as the development of new bilateral and multilateral relationships with EU partners and the strengthening of Irish engagement with the EU.

2.3.2 EU50

The Joint Committee will identify opportunities to reflect on the fiftieth anniversary of Ireland's accession to the European Communities.

2.3.3 EU Budgetary Cycle and Fiscal Rules

The Joint Committee will examine issues arising from the EU Budgetary Cycle and the implementation of EU fiscal rules, with regard to the remit of other Committees active in this area. In particular, the Joint Committee will engage with the Minister of State for European Affairs regarding the preparation of Ireland's National Reform Programme and progress on Ireland's Recovery and Resilience Plan.

2.3.4 EU support to Ukraine

The Joint Committee will continue to examine the role of the EU in supporting the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Issues arising from EU support to Ukraine include the application of sanctions and planning for post-war reconstruction.

The Joint Committee will also examine the impacts of the war in Ukraine on the European Union, such as security and defence, the humanitarian response to the war, and the application of sanctions.

2.3.5 Enlargement

In addition to the Joint Committee's formal role in considering notifications of enlargement under Article 49, the Joint Committee will maintain an ongoing interest on the topic of EU enlargement, and will seek opportunities for engagement with relevant stakeholders from applicant states.

2.3.6 Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights

The Joint Committee has had regular engagements with the European Commission on its Annual Rule of Law Report, and will continue to engage on this topic.

2.3.7 Climate Action

Climate Action is a major cross-sectoral policy priority for the European Union, and the Joint Committee will examine issues arising from EU policies in this area.

2.3.8 Sustainable Development

The Joint Committee will consider EU-level implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The Joint Committee will also consider opportunities to examine the role of the EU in international development, with a particular focus on food security.

2.3.9 Future of Europe

In addition to the Joint Committee's formal role in considering proposals for Treaty amendment under Article 48.2, the Joint Committee will monitor and participate in debate on the future direction of the European Union more generally. This will include engagement on the outcomes of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

2.3.10 Migration and Asylum

The Joint Committee will continue its work in considering issues relating to migration and asylum in the European Union, particularly the proposed new pact on migration and asylum.

2.3.11 Engagement with young people

The Joint Committee had productive engagements with young people and representatives of the youth engagement sector throughout 2022, which was designated as the European Year of Youth. The Joint Committee will consider opportunities to continue this engagement.

2.3.12 Engagement with Local Government

The Joint Committee will engage on the issue of the role of Local Government in EU affairs, including on the appointment of relevant officers and on opportunities for funding.

2.3.13 Common Foreign and Security Policy / Common Security and Defence Policy

The Joint Committee has previously engaged on issues arising from the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), such as cybersecurity and strategic autonomy. The Joint Committee will continue to engage on issues arising from these policy areas, particularly in the context of the Consultative Forum on International Security planned for 2023.

3. Committee Travel

The Joint Committee may decide, subject to financial, administrative, and procedural restraints, to undertake travel as it considers necessary to further progress the Work Programme. Such travel may include study visits, attendance at conferences or meetings, or delegation visits on European-related issues, within its remit. Reports will be completed for all travel undertaken. In light of the Joint Committee's role, three types of travel are foreseen:

3.1 Cooperation between national parliaments and the European Parliament under the aegis of COSAC

The Joint Committee will continue to represent the Oireachtas at meetings of COSAC (Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the EU) at both the COSAC Plenary Meetings and the COSAC Chairpersons meetings, and other meetings that may arise under the aegis of COSAC.

3.2 Engagement with the European Parliament

When practical and appropriate, the Joint Committee will participate in inter-parliamentary committee meetings organised by the European Parliament, when the issues under consideration fall within the remit of the Joint Committee.

3.3 Bilateral Relations: Ireland's Partners in Europe

To progress its work and to continue to develop relations with European Affairs Committees in National Parliaments and Assemblies along with other stakeholders,

the Joint Committee may seek to visit with their counterparts in other Member States or candidate states.

4. Incoming Parliamentary Delegations

The Joint Committee continues to be interested in receiving visits and engaging with Members of parliaments, including European Affairs Committees, of other European Member States, for discussion and exchange of information and ideas on matters of mutual interest. The Joint Committee will also consider engagement with members of parliaments and members of devolved and regional assemblies of third countries or candidate states.

The Joint Committee may, when appropriate, issue invitations to other Parliaments and/or Committees.

5. Number and Frequency of Meetings

It is anticipated that the Joint Committee will meet once a week. When required, the Joint Committee will hold additional meetings. The Joint Committee may also have informal meetings and exchanges with incoming delegations, visiting Ministers from other European Union Member States and other stakeholders.

6. Select Committee

The Select Committee will convene, as necessary, to consider such matters as are referred to it.

7. Agreement of Work Programme

This Work Programme for 2023 of the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs was agreed by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 24 May 2023. In accordance with Standing Orders of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann, it was agreed that the Work Programme be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas.

It was also agreed that the Work Programme would be published on the Joint Committee's page of the Oireachtas website.



Colm Brophy T.D.
Cathaoirleach, Joint Committee on European Union Affairs.

24 May 2023

Appendix: Committee Terms of Reference

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| <p>(1) Go gceapfar Roghchoiste, dá ngairfear an Roghchoiste um Ghnóthaí Eorpacha, ar a mbeidh 9 gcomhalta de Dháil Éireann, chun breithniú a dhéanamh ar cibé nithe a éiríonn—</p> <p>(a) as ballraíocht na hÉireann san Aontas Eorpach, agus</p> <p>(b) as Éirinn do chloí leis an gConradh ar an Aontas Eorpach agus leis an gConradh ar Fheidhmiú an Aontais Eorpaigh,</p> <p>a roghnóidh sé agus nach bhfuil tarchurtha chuig aon Choiste eile.</p> <p>(2) Gan dochar do ghinearáltacht mhír (1), breithneoidh an Roghchoiste—</p> <p>(a) cibé Billí a bpléann an Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus an Roinn Cosanta leis an dlí reachtach ina leith,</p> <p>(b) cibé tograí a bheidh in aon tairiscint, lena n-áirítear aon tairiscint de réir bhrí Bhuan-Ordú 220, agus</p> <p>(c) cibé nithe eile,</p> <p>a tharchuirfidh an Dáil chuige.</p> | <p>(1) That a Select Committee, which shall be called the Select Committee on European Union Affairs, consisting of 9 members of Dáil Éireann, be appointed to consider such matters arising from—</p> <p>(a) Ireland's membership of the European Union, and</p> <p>(b) Ireland's adherence to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,</p> <p>as it may select and which are not referred to any other Committee.</p> <p>(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Select Committee shall consider such—</p> <p>(a) Bills the statute law in respect of which is dealt with by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Defence,</p> <p>(b) proposals contained in any motion, including any motion within the meaning of Standing Order 220, and</p> <p>(c) other matters,</p> <p>as shall be referred to it by the Dáil.</p> |
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| <p>(3) Beidh an tAire Gnóthaí Eachtracha (nó comhalta den Rialtas nó Aire Stáit a ainmneofar chun gníomhú ina áit nó ina háit chun na críche sin), ina chomhalta nó ina comhalta <i>ex officio</i> den Roghchoiste chun na nithe atá leagtha amach i mír (2)(a) agus (b) a bhreithniú agus beidh sé nó sí i dteideal vótáil in imeachtaí an Roghchoiste.</p> | <p>(3) The Minister for Foreign Affairs (or a member of the Government or Minister of State nominated to act in his or her stead for that purpose) shall be an <i>ex officio</i> member of the Select Committee for the purpose of consideration of the matters outlined at paragraph (2)(a) and (b) and shall be entitled to vote in Select Committee proceedings.</p> |
| <p>(4) Beidh ag an Roghchoiste na cumhachtaí a mhínítear i mBuan-Ordú 96, seachas míreanna (6) go (10).</p> | <p>(4) The Select Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 96, other than paragraphs (6) to (10).</p> |
| <p>(5) Déanfar an Roghchoiste a chomhcheangal le Roghchoiste arna cheapadh ag Seanad Éireann chun bheith ina Chomhchoiste um Ghnóthaí Eorpacha, agus, gan dochar do ghinearáltacht mhír (1), déanfaidh an Roghchoiste an méid seo a leanas a bhreithniú—</p> | <p>(5) The Select Committee shall be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann, to form the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs, which, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), shall consider—</p> |
| <p>(a) doiciméid phleanála straitéiseacha an Choimisiúin Eorpaigh lena n-áirítear Clár Oibre an Choimisiúin,</p> | <p>(a) the European Commission's strategic planning documents including the Commission Work Programme,</p> |
| <p>(b) forbairtí beartais tras-earnála ag leibhéal an Aontais Eorpaigh,</p> | <p>(b) cross-sectoral policy developments at European Union level,</p> |
| <p>(c) nithe a liostaítear lena mbreithniú ar an gclár gnó i gcomhair cruinnithe de Chomhairle (Airí) Gnóthaí Ginearálta an Aontais Eorpaigh agus toradh cruinnithe den sórt sin.</p> | <p>(c) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the General Affairs Council (of Ministers) of the European Union and the outcome of such meetings,</p> |
| <p>(d) cibé rialacháin faoi Achtanna na gComhphobal Eorpach, 1972 go 2009 agus ionstraimí eile arna ndéanamh faoi reacht agus is gá de dhroim na n-oibleagáidí a ghabhann le ballraíocht san</p> | <p>(d) such regulations under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009 and other instruments made under statute and necessitated by the obligations of membership of</p> |

Aontas Eorpach a roghnóidh an Coiste,	the European Union as the Committee may select,
(e) fógraí arna dtarchur ag an Dáil faoi Bhuan-Ordú 134(1)(a),	(e) notifications referred by the Dáil under Standing Order 134(1)(a),
(f) fógraí i dtaobh tograí chun na Conarthaí a fuarthas ón gComhairle Eorpach de bhun Airteagal 48.2 den Chonradh ar an Aontas Eorpach a leasú,	(f) notifications of proposals for the amendment of the Treaties received from the European Council pursuant to Article 48.2 of the Treaty on European Union,
(g) fógraí i dtaobh iarratais ar bhallraíocht san Aontas Eorpach a fuarthas ón gComhairle Eorpach de bhun Airteagal 49 den Chonradh ar an Aontas Eorpach, agus	(g) notifications of applications for membership of the European Union received from the European Council pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, and
(h) cibé nithe eile a tharchuirfidh an Dáil chuige ó am go ham.	(h) such other matters as may be referred to it by the Dáil from time to time.
(6) Tabharfaidh an Comhchoiste tuarascáil do dhá Theach an Oireachtais ar oibriú Acht an Aontais Eorpaigh (Grinnscrúdú), 2002.	(6) The Joint Committee shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas on the operation of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002.
(7) Beidh ag an gComhchoiste na cumhachtaí a mhínítear i mBuan-Ordú 96, 133 agus 135 agus beidh aige an chumhacht chun moltaí a chur faoi bhráid an Aire Gnóthaí Eachtracha (nó faoi bhráid Aire Stáit) i dtaobh nithe a bhaineann leis an Aontas Eorpach.	(7) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 96, 133 and 135 and shall have the power to make recommendations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs (or Minister of State) on European Union matters.
(8) Féadfaidh na daoine seo a leanas freastal ar chruinnithe den Chomhchoiste agus páirt a ghlacadh in imeachtaí gan ceart vótála a bheith	(8) The following may attend meetings of the Joint Committee and take part in proceedings without having a

acu ná ceart tairiscintí a dhéanamh ná leasuithe a thairiscint:	right to vote or to move motions and amendments:
(a) Comhaltaí de Pharlaimint na hEorpa arna dtoghadh ó thoghcheantair in Éirinn,	(a) Members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland,
(b) Comhaltaí de thoscaireacht na hÉireann chuig Tionól Parlaiminteach Chomhairle na hEorpa, agus	(b) Members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and
(c) ar chuireadh a fháil ón gCoiste, Comhaltaí eile de Pharlaimint na hEorpa.	(c) at the invitation of the Committee, other Members of the European Parliament.
(9) Déanfaidh an Comhchoiste ionadaíocht do dhá Theach an Oireachtais ag Comhdháil na gCoistí um Ghnóthaí Comhphobail agus Eorpacha de chuid Pharlaimintí an Aontais Eorpaigh (COSAC) agus tabharfaidh sé tuarascáil ar an gcéanna do dhá Theach an Oireachtais.	(9) The Joint Committee shall represent both Houses of the Oireachtas at the Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) and shall report to both Houses of the Oireachtas thereon.
(10) Beidh Cathaoirleach Roghchoiste na Dála ina Chathaoirleach nó ina Cathaoirleach ar an gComhchoiste freisin.	(10) The Chairman of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be the Chairman of the Joint Committee.