



European Council

Brussels, 22 March 2018

European Council conclusions on Jobs, Growth and Competitiveness, as well as some of the other items (Paris Agreement and Digital Europe), 22 March 2018

I. JOBS, GROWTH AND COMPETITIVENESS

Single Market

1. The European Council calls for increased efforts to deliver, before the end of the current legislative cycle, on the Single Market strategy, the Digital Single Market strategy, the Capital Markets Union Action Plan and the Energy Union, including through the swift examination of recent Commission proposals. Decisions already taken must be implemented effectively. Looking beyond the completion and implementation of the strategies, the EU needs to keep working towards a future-proof and fair single market that is fit for the digital age and an enabler for competitiveness, innovation and sustainability. The European Council therefore invites the Commission to present to the Council, before the Leaders' Agenda discussion in December 2018, a state of play regarding the implementation, application and enforcement of existing legislation that is key for the functioning of the Single Market and an assessment of remaining barriers to and opportunities for a fully functioning Single Market. To reap the maximum benefits of the Single Market the EU needs a strong industrial policy.

Trade

2. The European Council reaffirms its commitment to an open and rules-based multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core, firm in the belief that free and fair trade is one of the most powerful engines for growth, supporting millions of jobs and contributing to prosperity. The European Council encourages progress on all ongoing negotiations for ambitious and balanced free trade agreements, in particular with Mexico and Mercosur. It looks forward to the signature and conclusion of the agreements reached with Japan and Singapore. The Commission will examine how to strengthen the enforcement of commitments undertaken by third countries. The EU will continue to pursue a robust trade policy, to promote its values and standards globally and to seek a level playing field. In this context, the European Council calls on the co-legislators to make progress on the pending legislative proposals in the fields of investment and public procurement.
3. *p.m. USA*

European Semester

4. The European Council endorses the policy priority areas of the Annual Growth Survey and invites Member States to reflect them in their forthcoming National Reform Programmes and Stability or Convergence Programmes. The European Council also endorses the draft Council recommendation on the economic policy of the euro area.

Social issues

5. Delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights is a shared political commitment and responsibility of the EU and its Member States. Its implementation will be monitored with due regard to the respective competences of the Union and Member States. The European Council invites the Council to examine the initiatives presented by the Commission under the Social Fairness package, including the proposal on a European Labour Authority.

II. OTHER ITEMS

Paris Agreement

6. The European Council invites the Commission to present by the first quarter of 2019 a proposal for a Strategy for long-term EU greenhouse gas emissions reduction in accordance with the Paris Agreement, taking into account the national plans.

Digital Europe

7. Social networks and digital platforms need to guarantee transparent practices and full protection of citizens' privacy and personal data. EU and national legislation must be respected and enforced. This important issue, together with other issues relating to Digital Europe, including the adoption of all the legislative instruments establishing the Digital Single Market in 2018, and the promotion of research and innovation, such as artificial intelligence and the means to support breakthrough innovation and the development of digital skills, will be discussed by the Heads at their informal meeting in Sofia in May.