Joint Declaration of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on the EU legislative priorities for 2026

In a rapidly evolving and challenging global landscape, the European Union must act with unity, urgency and ambition. The Political Guidelines 2024-2029 and the Strategic Agenda for 2024-2029 will guide our collective action. We are committed to reinforcing the EU's competitiveness and resilience. Our legislative action must be focused to respond effectively to current challenges and protect citizens' and businesses' interests, guided by an ambitious simplification approach across the board. With this in mind, we will work towards a swift agreement on the next Multiannual Financial Framework and the new Own Resources Decision. Drawing on the Commission work programme for 2026, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission agree to give the utmost priority to the following key policy objectives:

Usher in a new era for European defence and security

We will continue to work towards bringing about a surge in cooperation and mobilisation of investment to increase the resilience of our infrastructure and secure our defence readiness by 2030. We will take work forward on the Commission's legislative proposals on common development and procurement, increase the supply of European defence products, boost our defence technological and industrial base[1] whilst also strengthening interoperability, and delivering the critical defence capabilities needed to decisively ramp up Europe's defence readiness by 2030, all while advancing the development of a genuine Single Market for defence material. We will work to bolster our common security, from a stronger and more coordinated crisis response to protecting our critical infrastructure, external borders, improving military mobility, and tackling organised crime. We will sustain our support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and continue a merit-based accession process for candidate countries. We will strive to eliminate Russian oil and gas from our energy mix and continue to develop European efforts for a just and lasting peace.

[1] Without prejudice to the specific character of the security and defence policies of certain Member States, and taking into account the security and defence interests of all Member States, and in accordance with the Treaties.

Secure Europe's sustainable prosperity, competitiveness and simplification

We will double down on our efforts to tackle the bottlenecks holding back our competitiveness – from ensuring an ambitious and horizontally-driven simplification and better regulation agenda, to unlocking access to capital and bringing down energy prices, boosting investment, supporting research, innovation and scale-ups, deepening the Single Market, and building a genuine Energy Union before 2030. We will accelerate the work, as a matter of utmost priority, on all proposals with a simplification and competitiveness dimension. We will stay the course on the Union's climate goals, while ensuring a fair and just, pragmatic, cost-effective, socially balanced, affordable and competitive clean transition. We will work to strengthen our technological sovereignty and support investment in key technologies, including Artificial Intelligence. We will work to strengthen Europe's economic security by reducing strategic dependencies, strengthening our supply chains, ensuring that public procurement incentivises investments in Europe, building technological leadership and indispensability and by deepening our partnerships, in particular, through trade.

Strengthen our societies and our social model and quality of life

We will promote the creation of high-quality jobs to ensure that modern employment keeps pace with the evolving needs of the labour market, in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights. We will take measures to address the cost of living, affordability and housing crisis faced by many Europeans, with the aim of supporting and complementing Member States' efforts. We will also continue to promote economic, social, and territorial cohesion, supporting the development of thriving, sustainable and inclusive regions and cities. We will strengthen the competitiveness of our farmers and fishers and work to ensure a level playing field for them. We will work to safeguard the health of our natural heritage, which is a key part of our European way of life, our health, our food security and our prosperity.

Ensure a comprehensive approach to border management and migration

We will continue addressing migration in a comprehensive manner, notably through full implementation of existing legislation. We will also intensify and swiftly complete legislative work on the prevention and countering of irregular migration and efforts to facilitate, increase and accelerate returns, as well as the fight against instrumentalisation, human trafficking and smuggling. We are determined to promote an effective management and control of the EU's external borders, in line with EU and international law.

Protect our democracy and uphold our values

We will continue to strengthen our action to uphold the rule of law, including by supporting independent and effective judicial systems and through the conditionality mechanism. We will continue to strengthen our tools for countering hybrid threats, including disinformation and foreign interference. We will support independent journalism and promote media literacy. We will focus on ensuring a safe and inclusive online environment, especially to protect minors. We will uphold human rights and civil liberties.

Leverage our global influence and partnerships

In an uncertain world, the European Union must project stability, fairness, solidarity and strength, including through an undeterred commitment to the rules-based order and maintaining EU leadership on development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. We will deepen mutually beneficial international partnerships.

The three Institutions commit to working with speed and efficiency on these shared priorities, guided by the principles of mutual and sincere cooperation. We also commit to accelerating work on legislative proposals that spur economic growth, aim to simplify legislation, reduce regulatory burdens and ensure proper implementation and enforcement.

As Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, we will closely monitor the timely and effective implementation of this Joint Declaration.

Particular attention will be paid to the legislative proposals listed in the accompanying document to this Joint Declaration which the three Institutions commit to prioritise in 2026. Progress on these proposals should be regularly monitored throughout the year, both to provide updates on the state of play and to allow for early warning of any developments that risk any delay in their progress.

Legislative proposals to be prioritised in 2026

The three Institutions commit to prioritise the following proposals in 2026:

Proposals	Topic	JD26 heading
28th Regime for Innovative Companies	Competitiveness, single market and innovation	Secure Europe's sustainable prosperity, competitiveness and simplification
Automotive package	Competitiveness	Secure Europe's sustainable prosperity, competitiveness and simplification
Critical Medicines Act - 2025/0102 (COD)	Competitiveness	Secure Europe's sustainable prosperity, competitiveness and simplification
European Affordable Housing Plan	Social dimension	Strengthen our societies and our social model and quality of life
European grids package	Energy	Secure Europe's sustainable prosperity, competitiveness and simplification
Fair labour mobility package	Social dimension	Strengthen our societies and our social model and quality of life
MFF sectoral proposals	Budget dimension	Strengthen our societies and our social model and quality of life
Return Regulation - 2025/0059 (COD)	Migration and security	Ensure a comprehensive approach to border management and migration
Savings and Investments Union proposals	Prosperity and competitiveness	Secure Europe's sustainable prosperity, competitiveness and simplification
Simplification proposals • Omnibus IV - SMEs and small mid-cap enterprises (2025/0130, 0131 (COD)), digitalisation (2025/0133, 0134 (COD)). • Omnibus V - Defence readiness (2025/0172, 0176, 0177 (COD)) • Omnibus VI - Chemical products - 2025/0531 (COD) • Omnibus on digital (AI (2025/0359 (COD)), cybersecurity and data (2025/0360 (COD)))	Simplification	Secure Europe's sustainable prosperity, competitiveness and simplification Usher in a new era for European Defence and Security