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Upcoming EU Commission initiatives

February 26th, 2025

FEBRUARY 26TH INITIATIVES

Published on February 11th, the work programme of the European Commission set out the list of the most important new policy and legislative initiative that will deliver on commitments outlined in the Political Guidelines and the mission letters sent by President von der Leyen to each College Member.

On February 26th several dossiers that will dictate the Union's course of action during this legislature are expected to be presented. These include:

- **Clean Industrial Deal**
- **First Omnibus Package on sustainability**
- **Second Omnibus Package on investment simplification**
- **Affordable Energy Action Plan**

These acts put in place both legislative and non-legislative provisions. Below is a detailed listing of their contents.

CLEAN INDUSTRIAL DEAL

The Communication will present six business drivers that are essential for a thriving new European industrial ecosystem of growth and prosperity. For each of them the European Commission will put in place a series of flagship actions and set the KPIs to be reached.

- 1) Affordable energy
- 2) Lead markets
- 3) Financing
- 4) Circularity and access to materials
- 5) Global markets and international partnerships
- 6) Skills

1) Access to affordable energy and infrastructure

Flagship actions:

- Action Plan on Affordable Energy (Q1 2025)
- EIB Pilot to enable more financial guidelines for PPA off-takers, with a focus on MSEs and energy-intensive industry (Q1 2025)
- Clean Industrial Deal State aid framework (Q2 2025)
- Guidance on combining PPA and CfDs (Q4 2025)
- Guidance on promoting remuneration of flexibility in retail contracts (Q2 2025)
- Recommendations on energy taxation and tariff methods (2026)
- European Grid Package (Q1 2026)
- Legislative proposal to accelerate permitting for renewables, grids, storage and industrial decarbonization (Accelerator act) (Q4 2025)
- Legislative proposal on the extension of the Gas Storage Regulation (Q1 2025)

KPIs:

- Increase economy-wide electrification rate to 32% in 2030 (from 23% today)
- Install annually 100 GW of renewable electricity capacity in the period up to 2030

2) Lead markets: boosting clean supply and demand

- Industrial Decarbonisation Accelerator Act (Q4 2025)
 - Speed-up permitting for decarbonisation in investments
 - Establish a low-carbon product label
 - Apply EU preference in public and private procurement to ensure lead markets for low-carbon products
 - Introduce minimum local content requirements
- Revise the Public Procurement Directive to mainstream the use of non-price criteria in EU funding calls (Q3-4 2026)
- Adopt delegated act on low carbon hydrogen, providing regulatory certainty to producers of low carbon hydrogen (Q1 2025)

KPI:

- Percentage of key components of clean tech products on the EU market: 40% EU based production

3) Public and private investment

Flagship actions:

- Targeted amendment of the European Regional Development Fund (Q1 2025)
- Set-up an Industrial Decarbonization Facility (Q2 2026)
 - Launch a pilot auction under the Innovation Fund (2025)
- Increase InvestEU's risk bearing capacity (Q1 2025)
- EIB vehicle on scale-ups and IPCEI design support hub
- Adopt a new Clean Industrial State aid framework
- Recommend Member States to adopt tax incentives to support the Clean Industrial Deal

4) Powering the circular economy: a secure access to materials and resources

Flagship actions:

- First list of Strategic Projects under the Critical Raw Materials Act (Q1 2025)
- Create and Eu Critical Raw Materials Centre for joint purchases and management of strategic stockpiles (Q4 2026)
- Adopt a Circular Economy Act to build a single market for waste and reusable materials (Q4 2026)
- Green VAT initiative (2026)
- Trans-Regional Circularity Hubs (Q4 2025)

KPI:

- Circular material use rate to 24% in 2030 (current rate 11.8%)

5) Global markets and international partnerships

Flagship actions:

- Launch negotiation for the first Clean Trade and Investment Partnership to address dependencies and crucial global value chains (Q1 2025)
- Trans-mediterranean Energy and Clean tech cooperation initiative (Q4 2025)

- Simplification of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (Q1 2025)
- Comprehensive CBAM review assessing the feasibility of extending to downstream sectors and indirect emissions and support to exporters, closing loopholes (Q3 2025)
- Legislative proposal on an extension of CBAM (Q1 2026)
- Guidelines on Foreign Subsidies Regulation (Q1 2026)

6) Skills and quality jobs for social fairness

Flagship actions:

- Review of State aid GBER rules for social enterprises and recruitment of disadvantaged workers (2027)
- Put in place a European Fair Transition Observatory (Q1 2026)
- Adopt guidance on social leasing for clean products (2025)

KPI:

- Reducing the number of occupations requiring specific skills or knowledge for the green transition where at least five Member States reported a shortage

7) Implementing the Clean Industrial Deal across sectors

Flagship actions:

- Industrial Action Plan for an Automotive Sector (Q1 2025)
- Steel and Metals Action Plan (Q1 2025)
- Chemicals Industry Package (Q4 2025)
- Sustainable Transport Investment Plan (Q3 2025)
- Bioeconomy Strategy (Q4 2025)

FIRST OMNIBUS PACKAGE ON SUSTAINABILITY

As part of a series of Simplification Omnibus Packages, the first Omnibus will cover a far-reaching simplification in the fields of sustainable finance reporting, sustainability due diligence and taxonomy. It will focus on streamlining:

- **Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive** (EU) 2023/2772 (CSRD),
- **Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive** (EU) 2024/1760 (CS3D),
- **EU Taxonomy Regulation** (EU) 2020/852.

SECOND OMNIBUS PACKAGE ON INVESTMENT SIMPLIFICATION

This package will facilitate, among others, the deployment of InvestEU and the European Fund for Strategic Investments and simplify reporting. Namely:

- **InvestEU Programme** Regulation (EU) 2021/523
- **European Fund for Strategic Investments**, the European Investment Advisory Hub and the European Investment Project Portal Regulation (EU) 2015/1017
- **Common provisions** on EU funds Regulation (2021/1060)
 - This includes:
 - European Regional Development Fund

- European Social Fund Plus
- Cohesion Fund
- European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
- Asylum and Migration Fund
- Rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the **common agricultural policy** (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the **European Agricultural Guarantee Fund** (EAGF) and by the **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development** (EAFRD), Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

ACTION PLAN ON AFFORDABLE ENERGY

The **Affordable Energy Action Plan**, through a range of measures aims to ensure that households and industrial customers have a wider direct access to low-cost energy. The plan, divided in four Pillars and eight Actions, will help leverage the energy cost reduction benefits coming from further market integration, expand the use of guarantees and risk reduction instruments to facilitate conclusion of long-term power purchase agreements, incentivise industrial customers to provide demand flexibility services, and encourage a fair allocation of energy system costs through better designed tariffs.

Pillar 1: Lowering energy prices

Action 1: **Making electricity bills more affordable**

- a) *Network Charges*
- b) *Taxes and levies*
- c) *Lower supply costs by increasing retail competition*

Action 2: **Bringing down the cost of electricity supply**

- a) *Long-term electricity supply contracts*
- b) *Reduce permitting times for new clean power supply and energy infrastructure*
- c) *Grids and interconnectors as enablers of the energy transition*
- d) *Boosting flexibility*

Action 3: **Improve gas markets for fair energy prices**

Action 4: **Energy efficiency: delivering energy savings**

Pillar 2: Completing the Energy Union

Action 5: **Completing the Energy Union**

Pillar 3: Attracting investment and ensuring delivery

Action 6: **A tripartite contract for affordable energy for Europe's industry**

Pillar 4: Being ready for potential energy crises

Action 7: **Security of supply for price stability**

Action 8: **Price crisis preparedness**