



An Roinn Gnó,
Fiontar agus Nuálaíochta
Department of Business,
Enterprise and Innovation

Report of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation to the Oireachtas

Under Section 2(5) of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act, 2002
for the period from January to June 2018

August 2018
www.dbei.gov.ie

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Part I – Developments in the EU	3
1. Competitiveness Council (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)	3
1.1. Meetings of the Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry).....	3
1.1.1. Informal Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry) – Sofia, 1 February 2018	3
1.1.2. Formal Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry) – Brussels, 12 March 2018....	4
1.1.3. Formal Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry) – Brussels, 28 May 2018.....	6
1.2. Meetings of the Competitiveness Council (Research and Space).....	9
1.2.1. Informal Competitiveness Council (Research) – Sofia, 2 February 2018.....	9
1.2.2. Formal Competitiveness Council (Research and Space) – Brussels, 29 May 2018.....	10
2. Foreign Affairs Council (Trade)	11
2.1. Meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council (Trade)	11
2.1.1. Informal Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) – Sofia, 27 February 2018.....	11
2.1.2. Formal Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) – Brussels, 22 May 2018	11
3. Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU (July – December 2018)	12
3.1. Schedule of Meetings during Austrian Presidency	12
3.2. Overview of key issues likely to arise in relevant Councils during Austrian Presidency.....	12
Part II – Oireachtas Scrutiny Proposals January–June 2018	15

Introduction

Under the terms of the European Union (Scrutiny Act) 2002, Ministers submit Reports to the Oireachtas every six months on developments at European Union level in their area of responsibility. This Report summarises the key legislative and policy developments during the six-month period January to June 2018 during which time Bulgaria held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

This report has two parts. The first part sets out the principal developments in the policy areas which fall within the responsibility of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation at EU level and provides an overview of the incoming Austrian Presidency. The second part provides an update on the EU legislative proposals for which information notes were submitted to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Business, Enterprise and Innovation under the European Union (Scrutiny) Act, 2002 during the period from January to June 2018.

Part I – Developments in the EU

The policy areas which fall within the responsibility of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation at EU level are in the main dealt with by the Competitiveness Council under the headings of Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space, and the Foreign Affairs Council under the heading Trade.

1. Competitiveness Council (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)

The Competitiveness Council is normally held over two days, with Day 1 dedicated to Internal Market and Industry agenda items, and Day 2 dedicated to Research and Space agenda items.

1.1. Meetings of the Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry)

The Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry) met on three occasions during the period January to June 2018:

- Informal Competitiveness Council - Sofia, 1 February 2018
- Formal Competitiveness Council - Brussels, 12 March 2018
- Formal Competitiveness Council - Brussels, 28 May 2018

1.1.1. Informal Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry) – Sofia, 1 February 2018

Ireland was represented at the meeting by officials from the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation. Council was chaired by Minister of Economy of Bulgaria, Emil Karanikolov.

The theme of the meeting was *The Future of Industrial Policy*. The meeting set out to address the requirements for an EU Industrial Strategy for 2030.

During the plenary session there were key note presentations from Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elżbieta Bieńkowska; Director General of BusinessEurope, Markus J. Beyrer; Vice President of the European Economic and Social Committee, Gonçalo Lobo Xavier; European Committee of the Regions, Heinz Lehmann; and Director General of the European Chemical Industry Council, Marco Mensink.

The plenary session looked at the factors that will shape the industry of 2030, both at a global and at a European level. Council Conclusions of 30 November 2017 had called on the Commission to develop a comprehensive EU Industrial Strategy with a focus on 2030 and beyond. The meeting examined what the

overall objectives and key priorities of the new Industrial Strategy should be to ensure that European industry will be competitive in the future. Key areas included mobility, the automotive industry and energy, as well as a call for a new innovative package in the low carbon economy.

The session included conclusions taken from the previous day's conference which had been held on the theme of *Innovation for Competitiveness: Basic Industries – a drive for growth*, and which focused on the challenges and opportunities for core industries in Europe.

Following the plenary session Ministers split into two parallel break-out sessions. Session A covered *New trends for industrial development – digitalisation of industry and the human dimension in the process of economic development*. This Session examined the digital transformation of industry and the specific objectives in relation to the development of digital skills and promotion of digital entrepreneurship. Session B, attended by Ireland, concerned *Value chains and the development of competitive advantages for the European economy*. Here the focus was on the present competitive advantages of Europe, including its infrastructure and technological knowledge, and how best these can be developed and strengthened to assist European industry.

During the working lunch, ministers discussed the challenges and opportunities for energy intensive industries, particularly in the context of digitalisation and in the area of climate change.

1.1.2. Formal Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry) – Brussels, 12 March 2018

Ireland was represented by Minister of State for Trade, Employment, Business, EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection, Pat Breen, T.D. Council was chaired by Minister of Economy of Bulgaria, Emil Karanikolov. The Commission was represented by Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society, Mariya Gabriel; Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Vera Jourová; Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elżbieta Bieńkowska; and Commissioner for Competition, Margrethe Vestager.

The main items discussed at the March Formal Competitiveness Council meeting included:

European Semester 2018: Digitalisation of the EU Economy

Commissioner Gabriel emphasised the need for EU investment in new technologies (Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, High Performance Computing) and the need for greater alignment between national and European investments in these areas.

The discussion between Ministers was guided by a Presidency document which noted that the EU is making steady progress in digitising its economy. However, some large disparities exist between the top performing countries and Member States looking to catch up. Ministers highlighted the need for a policy focus on investment in skills and lifelong learning. Among the priorities for promoting the digital transformation, the following were mentioned:

- Uptake of digitisation by industry
- Further development of European digital platforms and digital innovation hubs
- Implementing policies addressing the shortage of digital skills
- Increasing support for knowledge transfer and open data policies
- Speeding up the expansion of digital infrastructures and broadband networks
- Increasing cooperation between enterprises, research centres and academic institutions

Conclusions on EU Industrial Policy Strategy for Competitiveness, Growth and Innovation

Council held a debate on industrial policy, and adopted conclusions on a future EU industrial policy strategy. The conclusions call on the Commission to develop a forward-looking EU industrial strategy with a focus on 2030 and beyond, to enhance competitiveness, growth and innovation in Europe.

During the debate Ministers identified a number of elements that should be part of the future strategy:

- Implementation of dedicated policies to help SMEs, start-ups and scale ups to grow
- Continued focus on innovation and new technologies with more effective investment in research and development
- Promotion of a robust trade policy to foster a global level playing field
- Support for companies in their digital transformation
- Further development of public-private partnerships to facilitate the emergence of new value chains
- Smart use of public procurement policies
- Systematic mainstreaming of industrial policy across all EU policy areas, taking into account European environmental and social standards

25 years Single Market: The Way Forward

On the 25th anniversary of the European Single Market, Ministers took the opportunity to celebrate its achievements and look at the areas where progress is needed in the future.

For 25 years the Single Market has allowed European citizens to benefit from a common market which abolished internal barriers to allow the free movement of goods, people, services and capital.

Member States stressed the importance of implementing initiatives contained in EU strategies such as the Digital Single Market, the Energy Union and the Capital Markets Union as a way of consolidating and further deepening the Single Market. While it has contributed significantly to economic growth and consumer welfare, the Single Market has not yet reached its full potential. This is especially true in the context of the cross-border provision of services within the EU. The European Commission's Single Market Strategy, adopted in October 2015, comprises a series of targeted actions, including a Services Package, to be progressed over the period 2016 to 2018.

Competitiveness 'Check-Up': Restrictions in Services Markets

Commissioner Bieńkowska gave a presentation on productivity in the retail sector and the costs resulting from undue restrictions in services markets. It was stressed that there was a need to remove these restrictions to increase productivity gains in manufacturing sectors.

Ministers also took note of a presentation by the chair of the High-Level Group on Competitiveness, Dr Ulrich Schuh. Dr Schuh looked at the costs in the retail sector and the benefits of removing any unjustified barriers. It was noted that for the services sector it must also be kept in mind that regulation was required to cover the areas of competition and the rights of consumers and employees.

Any Other Business:

Industry Days: Industry 2030 Roundtable

Commissioner Bieńkowska updated Council on the Industry Days initiative and the High-Level Industry 2030 Roundtable. These initiatives form part of the industrial policy strategy launched by the Commission in September 2017: *Investing in a smart, innovative and sustainable industry – A renewed EU Industrial Policy Strategy*.

The Industry Days, which took place this year on 22-23 February, served as a forum for stakeholders contributing to European industrial competitiveness to showcase their activities, learn from each other, discuss cross-cutting issues and develop joint visions for the future.

The High-Level Industry 2030 Roundtable brings together a group of 20 high-level experts in industry to meet and discuss the challenges and opportunities ahead for industry in the medium to long term, with the group meeting for the first time on 22 February 2018.

Plastics Strategy and Review of REACH Regulation

The Commission presented its recent *European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy*, which it had issued on 16 January 2018. The goal of the Strategy is to protect the environment whilst, at the same time, laying foundations for a new plastic economy, where design and production fully respect reuse, repair and recycling needs and where more sustainable materials are developed.

The strategy is built around 4 key actions:

- Improving the economics and quality of plastics recycling
- Curbing plastic waste and littering
- Driving innovation and investment towards circular solutions and
- Harnessing Global Action

The Commission also presented the latest review of the REACH regulation, covering the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals. The review concluded that overall REACH is effective, but opportunities for further improvement, simplification and burden reduction have been identified.

Better Regulation

The Presidency briefed Ministers on the outcome of the conference on *Scientific Integrity, Public Policy and Better Regulation*, which was held in Brussels on 20 February 2018. This event brought together high-level representatives from Member States, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the scientific community and civil society.

One of the key messages from the conference was that EU policies must be transparent, based on solid evidence and backed by citizens and stakeholders in order to effectively support EU competitiveness.

Barriers for Scale Ups in State Aid Rules

Council took note of the concerns of the Belgian delegation regarding the impact of State-aid rule barriers on SME scale ups. Belgium noted that the definition of an Undertaking in Difficulty in the State-aid rules is impacting negatively on attempts to support scale-ups through innovation subsidies. The definition is based on a 50% equity to share capital threshold ratio, to be met before any government support can be given.

Lunchtime Discussion

During the lunchtime discussion the Commission updated member states on preparations to launch the *New Deal for Consumers* in April 2018. This new legislative package aims to ensure a higher level of protection for consumers and traders, to increase trust and help the development of cross-border e-commerce. It will introduce stronger sanctioning powers for Member States consumer authorities and strengthen redress rights for consumers.

1.1.3. Formal Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry) – Brussels, 28 May 2018

Ireland was represented by Minister of State for Trade, Employment, Business, EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection, Pat Breen, T.D. Council was chaired by Minister of Economy of Bulgaria, Emil Karanikolov. The Commission was represented by Commission Vice President Andrus Ansip; Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elżbieta Bieńkowska; Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Vera Jourová; and Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariya Gabriel.

The main items discussed at the May Formal Competitiveness Council meeting included:

Competitiveness ‘Check-Up’: Linkages between the Single Market and Industry from a value chain perspective on integration and competitiveness

Commissioner Bieńkowska introduced the topic, pointing to the importance of the legal framework and enforcement to stimulate trade and cross border value chains both in the single market and globally. Value

chains are the process or activities by which a company adds value to an article, including production, marketing, and the provision of after-sales service.

Ministers stressed the relevance of value chains for better long-term productivity performance and for boosting competitiveness. They called on the Commission, Member States and stakeholders to identify initiatives and investments to be made in the value chains of the future. Ministers referred to the importance of rapid adjustment to digital technologies, the promotion of strategic value chains and clusters, and the need for highly specialised skills.

Ministers also referred to the fragmentation of some sectors with a large untapped potential in the internal market, such as the energy sector, construction, information technologies, insurance and financial services.

Goods Package: Regulation on Mutual Recognition

Following debate, Council agreed a General Approach on the Mutual Recognition of Goods Regulation. The objective of the Regulation is to improve the application of the principle of mutual recognition and, thus to ensure that goods lawfully marketed in one member state can be sold in any other member state. Member States can still deny access to goods on defined public policy grounds, such as health and safety, the environment and public morality.

Goods not subject to harmonised EU legislation that fall within the scope of the Regulation include furniture, shoes, tableware, bicycles and jewellery. Ireland fully supports the Regulation which will benefit Irish SMEs exporting certain goods, and is consistent with Ireland's support for a deeper and fairer integration of the Single Market.

Regulation on Platforms-to-Business Relations

Ministers exchanged views on the Commission's recently published proposal for a Regulation on Platforms to Business Relations. The Regulation follows a two-year fact-finding exercise conducted by the Commission. Commission Vice President Ansip spoke on the topic, underlining the importance of platforms to business. Online platforms and search engines are gateways to markets reshaping the way business is done. Six out of ten SMEs rely on platforms to promote their goods and services.

The proposed Regulation aims to increase fairness and transparency to enhance consumers trust in online trade. Platforms will be obliged to provide greater transparency on all terms and conditions offered, with clear rules listed for dispute settlement. Member States stressed the need to develop a fair digital environment for companies and platforms, which can generate good conditions for innovation, whilst avoiding overregulation. Many delegations supported a step by step approach focused on transparency and appropriate redress mechanisms. Council instructed its preparatory bodies to continue examination of the proposal with a view to reaching an agreement within the current legislative term.

Any Other Business:

Recent initiatives in the Digital Single Market

Commission Vice President Ansip provided Council with an update on recent initiatives in the Digital Single Market. On 26-27 April 2018 the Commission delivered its remaining actions to complete the legislative framework envisaged for the Digital Single Market Strategy. Included were actions on fairness and transparency for online platforms, a European approach on the future of Artificial Intelligence and measures to tackle disinformation online. Many of the announcements related to Data, including the re-use of public sector data. Other areas covered included data from the utilities and transport sectors, access to and retention of scientific information and the safe access and careful use of data in the field of health.

Copyright Package

Presidency informed Council of the agreement reached at Coreper on 25 May, regarding the proposal for a Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market. The Copyright Package has two main aims, to allow better access for citizens to copyright content, and to provide fair remuneration to all authors.

An update was also provided, as negotiations continue, on the Commission's Proposal for a Regulation drawn from the Satellite and Cable Directive (SatCab Directive). This arose due to the changes in technology since the SatCab Directive was introduced in 1993. The proposal aims to promote the cross-border provision of online services ancillary to broadcasts, and to facilitate digital retransmissions over closed networks of TV and radio programmes originating in other member states.

New deal for Consumers Package

Council took note of an update from Commissioner Jourova on the *New Deal for Consumers Package*, which was launched on 11 April 2018. The package is composed of proposals for two new Directives, one of which aims to improve the tools for stopping illegal practices and also looks to facilitate redress for consumers in a mass harm situation, where there have been a number of victims suffering the same infringement of their rights. The second proposal provides for substantive amendments on unfair consumer practices and looks for more effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties for infringements.

Ireland broadly welcomes the proposals, but considers there is a need for detailed consideration to assess whether the proposals strike a reasonable balance between the interests of consumers and of traders.

Company Law Package

The Commission presented its recently published Company Law Package. The Package comprises two elements. The first deals with cross-border conversions, mergers and divisions of companies. It sets out procedures on how a company can move from one EU member state to another, merge or divide into two or more new entities across borders.

The second element covers the registering of companies and the filing of changes online. Under the new package companies will be able to register, set up new branches and file documents to the online business register in all member states.

Supplementary Protection Certificate (SPC) for medicinal products

Commissioner Bieńkowska introduced the new proposal to amend the Regulation on Supplementary Protection Certificates (SPCs). SPCs are a unique intellectual property right that constitute an extension (of up to 5 years) to the term of a patent right (of 20 years). The aim of the new proposal is to offset the loss of effective patent protection that can occur for medicinal products due to the compulsory and lengthy testing and clinical trials that products require prior to obtaining regulatory marketing approval.

Outcome of Initiatives and Conferences in the field of Tourism in the First Semester of 2018

Presidency informed Council on a number of initiatives and conferences relating to tourism that were held during the Bulgarian Presidency. This included a look back at the high-level meeting on tourism which had taken place in Sofia on 13 February 2018. At this meeting countries discussed how to better support the development of the sector, with particular attention on EU tourism regulations, security, possibilities for boosting international cooperation and a proposal to establish a European Tourism Fund to promote the sustainable development of the sector.

Unitary Patent and Unified Patent Court

Presidency updated Council on the current position of the Unitary Patent and Unified Patent Court (UPC). The UPC will, when operational, function as a specialised court for resolving legal conflicts in patent law. To come into effect, the Agreement must be ratified by a minimum of 13 participating States and must include France, UK and Germany. To date 16 MS, including France and the UK have completed the ratification process. A constitutional complaint was filed with the German Federal Constitutional Court

which has resulted in the German ratification process being put on hold for now. Ireland has not ratified the Agreement, as a referendum on the UPC must first be passed in Ireland before ratification.

SOLVIT

Presidency informed Council on the outcome of the informal meeting of the SOLVIT network, which was held in Sofia on 19 and 20 April 2018, one year on from the publication of the SOLVIT Action Plan. The theme of the meeting was *Strengthening SOLVIT*.

SOLVIT, which primarily operates online is an informal problem-solving network, was created to solve problems which EU citizens or business are experiencing with the public administrations of EU Member States. These problems must be associated with a denial of their Single Market rights. At the meeting in Sofia, the national SOLVIT centres both welcomed the positive steps undertaken by the Commission through the adoption of the SOLVIT Action Plan, and recommended an increased emphasis on the implementation of the core actions of the Plan.

Lunchtime Discussion

Over an informal working lunch, Ministers, together with Commission Vice-president Ansip, discussed the development and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Delegates shared the view that AI will become one of the most significant resources for increasing the competitiveness of the EU and enhance the well-being of its citizens.

Council examined where AI might create the highest added value for the EU. Member States looked at how to bring Europe on a par with the world's major players in AI, and at how countries could ensure effective commercialisation of the strong EU research base.

1.2. Meetings of the Competitiveness Council (Research and Space)

The Competitiveness Council (Research and Space) met on two occasions during the period January to June 2018:

- Informal Competitiveness Council (Research) – Sofia, 2 February 2018
- Formal Competitiveness Council (Research and Space) – Brussels, 29 May 2018

1.2.1. Informal Competitiveness Council (Research) – Sofia, 2 February 2018

Ireland was represented by Minister of State for Training, Skills, Innovation, Research and Development, John Halligan, T.D. Council was chaired by Bulgarian Minister for Education and Science, Krasimir Valchev. The Commission was represented by Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos Moedas.

For this meeting Presidency organised two parallel breakout sessions. Ireland participated in Session 1 on *The Future of Research & Innovation in Europe: Boosting Innovation*.

While Europe is a global leader in producing excellent scientific knowledge, it lags behind the top performing countries (e.g. US, China, Japan) in turning that knowledge into new products and services. The European Innovation (EIC) pilot, which Commissioner Moedas launched in October 2017, aims to support top-class innovators, entrepreneurs, small companies and researchers with bright ideas and the ambition to scale-up internationally.

Ministers welcomed the EIC pilot, which can play an important role in improving Europe's innovation performance. There was a wide-ranging discussion on the challenges for the EIC, the importance of investing in people, and the need for greater collaboration between academia and enterprise. Ministers also shared their experience of national innovation supports that have been successful in their countries.

The second parallel session focused on research and innovation skills needs. As well as highlighting the need for continued investment in people, the second group also discussed the importance of research mobility. The brain drain of researchers is a significant challenge in many countries.

1.2.2. Formal Competitiveness Council (Research and Space) – Brussels, 29 May 2018

Ireland was represented by Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, Joe Hackett. Council was chaired by Bulgarian Minister for Education and Science, Krasimir Valchev. The Commission was represented by Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society, Mariya Gabriel.

The main items discussed at the May Formal Competitiveness Council meeting included:

Research:

Conclusions on accelerating knowledge circulation in the European Union

Council adopted Council Conclusions on accelerating knowledge circulation in the EU. Commissioner Gabriel noted that the priority actions of the Council Conclusions would help shape future policy and strengthen the coherence of infrastructures.

Council Conclusions on the European Open Science Cloud

Council adopted Council Conclusions on the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC). Both the Presidency and Commissioner Gabriel stated that the development of EOSC will assist the spreading of open science throughout the EU, and will play an important role in Horizon Europe.

Regulation on the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Committee (2019-2020) complementing the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

The Council agreed a general approach on the draft regulation. The aim of the regulation is to extend the research and training activities carried out under the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) framework programme by two years, aligning it with the timeline of Horizon 2020.

Regulation on establishing the European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking - Progress report

A progress report was prepared which acknowledged the advancements and key developments of the Commission's proposal for a Regulation on establishing the European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking. Presidency noted the substantial importance of High-Performance Computing (HPC) and recalled the Commission's proposal for a Joint Undertaking on 11 January 2018. The Commission further highlighted the necessity to have the HPC technology to support scientific research, mentioning the significant investments other countries, including China, Japan and the United States, have made to develop HPC capabilities. The Commission stated that it is essential for the Union to remain in the HPC race.

The Council took note of the Progress Report and called upon the Council and preparatory bodies to achieve a common approach. This Regulation was since adopted on 22 June 2018.

Research and Innovation within the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

Ministers exchanged views on research and innovation within the context of the next MFF. The Presidency and the Commission both outlined how important the next MFF would be for research and innovation. Most Member States welcomed the proposed increase in budget, and identified the establishment of a European Innovation Council as crucial. A focus on both basic and applied research will also be needed in the new Framework Programme.

Space:

Future of the European Space Policy - Policy Debate

The Council held a policy debate on a background paper provided by the Bulgarian Presidency, *Future of the European Space Policy*. The Commission noted that the next MFF, 2021-2017, has allocated €16 billion to space and, furthermore, stated the importance for the Union to give a clear signal that the EU is here as a space power.

The debate focused on the benefits of the space sector for the whole economy and Ministers stressed that the continuation of the EU's flagship programmes, which includes Copernicus (Earth Observation) and Galileo (Satellite Navigation), is essential to preserve the Union's investment in space. Furthermore, the EU's goal to achieve autonomous and efficient access to space for the benefit of European citizens was highlighted. The Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA), of which Ireland is a member, Jan Wörner, presented ESA's views on the future of the European Space policy. Mr. Wörner noted the long-term partnership between the EU and ESA and the need to coordinate the long-term planning of both establishments in relation to space.

2. Foreign Affairs Council (Trade)

2.1. Meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council (Trade)

The Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) met on two occasions during the period January to June 2018:

- Informal Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) – Sofia, 27 February 2018
- Formal Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) – Brussels, 22 May 2018

2.1.1. Informal Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) – Sofia, 27 February 2018

Ireland was represented by Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Heather Humphreys, T.D. Council was chaired by Minister of Economy of Bulgaria, Emil Karanikolov.

Council discussed the follow up to the 11th World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference which took place from the 10 to 13 December 2017, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Ministers also discussed the state of play on the ongoing EU Trade negotiations with Mexico and Mercosur.

Council received a debrief on the recent developments of the Section 232 investigations in the United States in the steel and aluminum sector from Commissioner Malmström.

Council also held an informal discussion on the establishment of a Multilateral Investment Court as well as the European Commission's proposal for a draft Regulation on screening of foreign direct investment into the EU. On the latter point, the Minister acknowledged the concerns of some Member States regarding acquisitions by non-EU investors and called for a proportionate response to such concerns.

2.1.2. Formal Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) – Brussels, 22 May 2018

Ireland was represented by Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation Heather Humphreys, T.D. Council was chaired by Minister of Economy of Bulgaria, Emil Karanikolov.

Council had a useful exchange of views regarding developments in Trade negotiations with Australia and New Zealand, as well as Singapore and Japan. Commissioner Malmström also provided Ministers with an update as to the state of play of ongoing trade negotiations, with Mexico, Chile, Vietnam, as well as Mercosur.

During a working lunch, based on an oral presentation by Commissioner Malmström, Ministers discussed the recent developments in the EU's trade relations with the United States and possible next steps.

The key points discussed at the May Formal Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) included:

Negotiations on Free Trade Agreements with Australia and New Zealand

Council adopted the Decisions on the opening of negotiations with Australia and New Zealand and the respective negotiating directives.

Conclusions on the negotiation and conclusion of EU trade agreements

Council adopted the set of conclusions, representing the consensus among Member States on the new architecture of trade agreements.

11th World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference

Council took stock of the latest developments regarding the post-Buenos Aires process and discussed the EU's priorities on the possible future WTO agenda.

EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement and EU-Singapore Investment Protection Agreement

Council exchanged views on all three agreements and confirmed Ministers' agreement on the ambitious timetable for the signing of these Agreements as soon as possible.

3. Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU (July – December 2018)

Austria assumed the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU on 1 July 2018 and will prioritise the protective role of the European Union. The programme of the Austrian Presidency will focus on three key areas:

- Security and the fight against illegal migration
- Securing prosperity and competitiveness through digitalisation
- Stability in the European neighbourhood – EU perspective of the Western Balkans/South Eastern Europe

3.1. Schedule of Meetings during Austrian Presidency

Scheduled European Council meetings (EU Heads of State or Government)

- Informal meeting - 20 September 2018 (Salzburg)
- European Council - 18 October 2018 (Brussels)
- European Council – 13/14 December 2018 (Brussels)

Scheduled Competitiveness Council meetings

- Informal Council: Internal Market, Industry and Research – 16/17 July 2018 (Vienna)
- Formal Council: Internal Market, Industry and Research - 27/28 September 2018 (Brussels)
- Formal Council: Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space - 29/30 November 2018 (Brussels)

Scheduled Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) meetings

- Informal Council: 4/5 October 2018 (Innsbruck)
- Formal Council: 9 November 2018 (Brussels)

3.2. Overview of key issues likely to arise in relevant Councils during Austrian Presidency

Competitiveness Council (Internal Market and Industry)

Industrial Policy

The Austrian Presidency will focus on Industrial Policy and will look to build on the work of the Bulgarian Presidency. The Austrian Presidency will ask the Commission to develop the long-term strategy to 2030. The focus of industrial policy discussions will include Industrial Policy and SMEs, Digitalisation and Skills. The Austrian Presidency intends to promote artificial intelligence as a field with the potential for a reindustrialisation of Europe, and plans to stimulate developments in this respect in close cooperation with the relevant stakeholders.

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

The Austrian Presidency will seek to achieve as much progress as possible in the negotiations on the new MFF spending programme proposals. Key areas include Horizon Europe, Space, and the Single Market

Programme. The Austrian Presidency will look to take the SMP as far as they can, with a Progress Report scheduled for the November Council. The SMP will strengthen the governance of the EU's internal market. It will support businesses' and, in particular, SMEs. It is a modern, simple and flexible programme which consolidates a large range of activities that were previously financed separately, into one coherent programme.

Better Regulation

The Austrian Presidency will continue the Better Regulation Agenda using existing tools and initiatives. The aim is for EU policies to be transparent, based on solid evidence, and backed by citizens and stakeholders in order to effectively support EU competitiveness.

Digitalisation

Regarding the Digital Single Market, the Austrian Presidency will work on finalising the proposed legislation on the establishment of a Single Digital Gateway. Austria will continue the reforms of copyright and company law, not least to meet the increasing challenges of digitalisation in these areas of legislation. A priority is to remove bureaucratic hurdles.

New Deal for Consumers

The Austrian Presidency will seek to make as much progress as possible on the two proposals under the New Deal for Consumers Package, a draft Framework addressing a number of shortcomings under the consumer acquis, and a proposal to amend the Injunctions Directive.

Single Market Strategy

On the Single Market Strategy legislative proposals, the Austrian Presidency will aim to achieve a Council General Approach on the Market Surveillance Regulation, and look to advance the Mutual Recognition Proposal which aims to ensure that goods lawfully marketed in one member state can be sold in any other member state.

Competitiveness Council (Research and Space)

Research

The main focus of the Austrian presidency will be the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation – Horizon Europe. Focus will be placed on the initial negotiations for a future R&I programme of the EU that will underpin the European Research Area and contribute to strengthening the competitiveness of Europe and improving the lives of European citizens. Austria would like to facilitate the design of the strategic planning process for Horizon Europe between the European Commission and Member States by September. Depending on the progress of the Horizon Europe negotiations, the Austrian Presidency intends to have reached a Partial General Approach on Horizon Europe by the November Council. Austria also intends to develop conclusions relating to the European Research Area activities at this Council.

Space

It is anticipated that the Austrian presidency will focus on the Commission's proposed Regulation to establish the space programme of the Union and the European Union Agency for the Space Programme.

Foreign Affairs Council (Trade)

Priorities

The Austrian Presidency, in continued support of the multilateral trading system, will oversee post MC11 work programmes in Council. The Austrian Presidency will actively support the EU's efforts to develop an innovative, multilateral approach to investments, taking into account the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. One of the goals of the Austrian Presidency will be to strengthen the EU's position as a global economic player, negotiating up-to-date and well-balanced free trade and investment agreements. Negotiations on the trade parts of a new EU-Mexico association agreement have been completed and the

Austrian Presidency will continue the work to formalise the agreement. Negotiations have formally begun with Australia and New Zealand, and these will be a priority for the Austrian Presidency.

Legislative files

Regarding Trade Legislation, Austria's highest priority will be ensuring that the Investment Screening Draft Regulation reaches agreement at trilogues before the end of the year. The Austrian Presidency also wish to move forward on the draft regulation on control of trade in dual-use items and to progress with the Horizontal Safeguard Clause.

Part II – Oireachtas Scrutiny Proposals January–June 2018

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 008	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION on establishing the European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking	Innovation, Research & Development Programmes	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The proposal COM (2018) 008 was endorsed by the Council of Ministers on 25 June 2018. On 3 July 2018, the European Parliament voted in favour of the proposal. The proposal will be formally adopted by the Council of the European Union in September 2018. The proposal has been amended since it was first submitted by the Commission on 11 January 2018. The most recent text (10175/18) was published on 22 June 2018.</p> <p>Ireland has not yet joined the European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking and DBEI is currently considering Ireland’s options for participation. The Joint Undertaking is expected to start operating in 2019.</p>
COM (2018) 054	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION establishing the position to be taken on the Union's behalf in the EPA committee set up by the Stepping Stone Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between Côte d'Ivoire, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, on the adoption of the rules of procedure of the EPA Committee	Trade Policy Unit	<p>8 May 2018</p> <p>For no further scrutiny</p>	<p>This proposal has not yet been adopted.</p> <p>It is currently unclear what the timeframe for adoption might be.</p>

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 072	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, and provisional application of the Agreement for scientific and technological cooperation between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco setting out the terms and conditions for the participation of the Kingdom of Morocco in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)	Innovation, Research & Development Policy Unit	8 May 2018 For no further scrutiny	The text of the Agreement was initialled on 22 January 2018, following the Council's authorisation to the Commission on 30 May 2017 to negotiate on behalf of the European Union an international agreement between the Union and the Kingdom of Morocco laying down the terms and conditions for participation of the Kingdom of Morocco in PRIMA. The Council adopted the decision on 19 April 2018.
COM (2018) 074	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the conclusion of the Agreement for scientific and technological cooperation between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco setting out the terms and conditions for the participation of the Kingdom of Morocco in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)	Innovation, Research & Development Policy Unit	8 May 2018 For no further scrutiny	The text of the Agreement was initialled on 22 January 2018, following the Council's authorisation to the Commission on 30 May 2017 to negotiate on behalf of the European Union an international agreement between the Union and the Kingdom of Morocco laying down the terms and conditions for participation of the Kingdom of Morocco in PRIMA. On the 16 March 2018, the Permanent Representatives Committee was invited to recommend that the Council forward the draft decision to the European Parliament for its consent.

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 141	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the extension of the Agreement for scientific and technological cooperation between the European Union and the Government of the United States of America	Innovation, Research & Development Policy Unit	8 May 2018 For no further scrutiny	On 22 March 2018, the Commission published a proposal for a Council decision to extend the existing agreement for scientific and technological cooperation between the EU and the US by five years. On 15 May 2018, the Permanent Representatives Committee was invited to recommend that the Council forward the draft decision to the European Parliament for its consent.
COM (2018) 171	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Directive 2004/37/EC on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work	Safety Health & Chemicals Policy Unit	8 May 2018 For no further scrutiny	This proposal is currently under discussion at the Working Party on Social Questions in Brussels.
COM (2018) 184	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on representative actions for the protection of the collective interests of consumers, and repealing Directive 2009/22/EC	Competition & Consumer Policy Unit	19 June 2018 For no further scrutiny	Proposal currently being considered at EU Council Working Group level.

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 185	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Council Directive 93/13/EEC of 5 April 1993, Directive 98/6/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Directive 2011/83/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards better enforcement and modernisation of EU consumer protection rules	Competition & Consumer Policy Unit	19 June and 3 July 2018	<p>The Committee requested an additional note from the Dept. of Business, Enterprise and Innovation at its meeting on 19 June 2018. This was supplied to the Committee which, at its meeting on 3 July 2018, deemed that no further scrutiny was required.</p> <p>Proposal currently being considered at EU Council Working Group level.</p>
COM (2018) 192	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the conclusion of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Japan	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>Council decision (2018/0091) was adopted by written procedure on 29 June.</p> <p>The final vote by the EU Parliament is to take place during the plenary in December. The Japanese parliament must also vote on the accord.</p>
COM (2018) 193	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Japan	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>Council decision (2018/0092) was adopted by written procedure on 29 June.</p> <p>The final vote by the EU Parliament is to take place during the plenary in December. The Japanese parliament must also vote on the accord.</p>

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 194	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the conclusion of the Investment Protection Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Singapore of the other part	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The Decision has not yet been adopted.</p> <p>The “Legal Scrubbing” of the text is ongoing with a finalised text to be produced by the Legal-Linguists in mid-September</p> <p>The text is due to be discussed at Coreper on 10 October with the aim of presenting it to Council for adoption on 15 October.</p> <p>The signature of the Agreement is planned for the 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit which takes place on 18–19 October 2018.</p>
COM (2018) 195	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, of the Investment Protection Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Singapore of the other part	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The Decision has not yet been adopted.</p> <p>The “Legal Scrubbing” of the text is ongoing with a finalised text to be produced by the Legal-Linguists in mid-September</p> <p>The text is due to be discussed at Coreper on 10 October with the aim of presenting it to Council for adoption on 15 October.</p> <p>The signature of the Agreement is planned for the 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit which takes place on 18–19 October 2018.</p>

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 196	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Singapore	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The Decision has not yet been adopted.</p> <p>The “Legal Scrubbing” of the text is ongoing with a finalised text to be produced by the Legal-Linguists on 2 October.</p> <p>The text is due to be discussed at Coreper on 10 October with the aim of presenting it to Council for adoption on 15 October.</p> <p>The signature of the Agreement is planned for the 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit which takes place on 18–19 October 2018.</p>

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 197	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, of the Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Singapore	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The Decision has not yet been adopted.</p> <p>The “Legal Scrubbing” of the text is ongoing with a finalised text to be produced by the Legal-Linguists on 2 October.</p> <p>The text is due to be discussed at Coreper on 10 October with the aim of presenting it to Council for adoption on 15 October.</p> <p>The signature of the Agreement is planned for the 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit which takes place on 18–19 October 2018.</p>
COM (2018) 206	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL implementing the safeguard clauses and other mechanisms allowing for the temporary withdrawal of preferences in certain agreements concluded between the European Union and certain third countries	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	This Proposal has not yet been adopted. It continues to be discussed at EU Council Working Party on Trade Questions.
COM (2018) 238	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on promoting fairness and transparency for business users of online intermediation services	DSM & Digital Economy Unit	19 June 2018 Committee requested further information from the Unit which was provided on 11 July 2018	Examination of the proposal has commenced. Further meetings are expected during the Austrian Presidency, who are aiming for a General Approach agreement by end of November 2018.

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 239	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Directive (EU) 2017/1132 as regards the use of digital tools and processes in company law	Company Law Policy Unit	19 June 2018 For no further scrutiny	Examination of the proposal has commenced. Further meetings are expected during the Austrian Presidency.
COM (2018) 241	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Directive (EU) 2017/1132 as regards cross-border conversions, mergers and divisions	Company Law Unit	19 June 2018 For no further scrutiny	Examination of the proposal has commenced. Further meetings are expected during the Austrian Presidency.

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 264	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Regulation (EU) No 1388/2013 opening and providing for the management of autonomous tariff quotas of the Union for certain agricultural and industrial products	Inward Investment and North/South Units	Not yet examined by the Committee	Regulation came into effect EU-wide on 1 July 2018. This regulation is updated twice a year – January and July - to include new suspensions and delete old ones and operates in tandem with 1387/2013. Discussions take place one year in advance so there is currently no action required.
COM (2018) 312	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the apportionment of tariff rate quotas included in the WTO schedule of the Union following the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 32/2000	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The draft Regulation is under discussion at the Working Party on Customs Union in Brussels (CUG), attended by Revenue colleagues who are coordinating the Irish position on the file during the Council Working Party negotiations.</p> <p>The anticipated date for adoption of the Proposed Regulation is not known.</p>
COM (2018) 316	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (codification)	Trade Licensing and Control Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The purpose of this proposal is to undertake a codification of Council Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 of 27 June 2005, and subsequent amendments, concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The purpose of the exercise is to simplify and clarify the legislation. The new Regulation preserves the content of the legislation being codified and hence does no more than bring them together with only such formal amendments as are required by the codification exercise itself.</p> <p>As of 30 June 2018, the proposal was under consideration at EU Council Working Party Level.</p>

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 317	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Regulation (EC) No 469/2009 concerning the supplementary protection certificate for medicinal products	Intellectual Property Unit/Patents	3 July 2018 The Committee has agreed to conduct further scrutiny of the proposal and has requested an additional note outlining the possible impact of the proposal on pharmaceutical companies in Ireland	Examination of the proposal by the Intellectual Property Council Working Party has commenced. Further meetings are expected during the Austrian Presidency.
COM (2018) 343	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Regulation (EU) No 1387/2013 suspending the autonomous Common Customs Tariff duties on certain agricultural and industrial products	Inward Investment and North/South Units	Not yet examined by the Committee	Regulation came into effect EU-wide on 1 July 2018. This regulation is updated twice a year, January and July, to include new suspensions and delete old ones and operates in tandem with 1388/2013. Discussions take place one year in advance so there is currently no action required.

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 344	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the position to be adopted, on behalf of the European Union, in the CETA Joint Committee established by the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part, as regards the adoption of the Rules of Procedure for the CETA Joint Committee and specialised committees	Trade Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>On 25 May 2018, the EU Commission submitted the proposal to the Council. The proposal for a Council Decision was examined by the Trade Policy Committee (Deputies) at its meetings on 8 June and 6 July 2018, and modified on the basis of a Presidency compromise proposal to take into account a number of necessary adjustments.</p> <p>The Council Decision was endorsed by the Trade Policy Committee (Deputies) at its meeting on 6 July 2018. The Presidency will send a compromise proposal to Coreper for adoption by the Council as an “A” point on the agenda.</p>
COM (2018) 398	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Council Regulation (EU) 2015/1588 of 13 July 2015 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to certain categories of horizontal State aid	Finance for Growth & State Aid Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The proposal was submitted by the European Commission on 6 June 2018 and forms part of the proposal for the next EU long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework.</p> <p>The proposal is to have targeted modifications to the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) to maximise the objective of leveraging additional funds for investment in EU economic priorities, by solving the problem of incoherence in funding rules and state aid rules. Its contents are under negotiation in the Competition Working Party.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the proposal will remain under negotiation until the end of 2018.</p>

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 435	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination	Innovation, Research & Development Policy Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>This proposal forms part of the proposal for the next EU long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework, specifically the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.</p> <p>The proposal is the subject of ongoing negotiation between the Member States and the EU Commission at the Research Working Party. It is anticipated that the proposal will remain under negotiation into 2019.</p>
COM (2018) 436	Proposal for a DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation	Innovation, Research & Development Policy	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>This proposal forms part of the proposal for the next EU long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework, specifically the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.</p> <p>The proposal is the subject of ongoing negotiation between the Member States and the EU Commission at the Research Working Party. It is anticipated that the proposal will remain under negotiation into 2019.</p>

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 439	Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the InvestEU Programme	Finance for Growth & State Aid Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The proposal was submitted by the European Commission on 6 June 2018 and forms part of the proposal for the next EU long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework.</p> <p>The proposal is to establish the InvestEU Programme which provides for a single EU investment support mechanism for the 2021-2027 MFF. It will integrate and simplify the financial offer under a single budgetary guarantee scheme.</p> <p>It has recently been decided that lead responsibility for coordination of this proposal comes under the remit of the Department of Finance and not the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the proposal will remain under negotiation into 2020.</p>
COM (2018) 441	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the Programme for single market, competitiveness of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and European statistics and repealing Regulations (EU) No 99/2013, (EU) No 1287/2013, (EU) No 254/2014, (EU) No 258/2014, (EU) No 652/2014 and (EU) 2017/826	Single Market Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>This proposal is in the early stages of examination at EU Council Working Party Level.</p> <p>The proposal groups a number of existing EU programmes, which fall within the remit of a number of Government Departments.</p> <p>The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation is consulting colleagues in the other involved Departments to ensure the component parts of the Single Market Package best meet Irish needs. It is also working with the Department of Finance and the Department of Foreign Affairs who are coordinating Irish interests in the EU Multiannual Financial Framework.</p>

COM Number	Subject	Section	Date Examined by Committee	Current Update on Proposal
COM (2018) 447	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the space programme of the Union and the European Union Agency for the Space Programme and repealing Regulations (EU) No 912/2010, (EU) No 1285/2013, (EU) No 377/2014 and Decision 541/2014/EU	Innovation, Research & Development Programmes Unit	Not yet examined by the Committee	<p>The proposal was submitted by the European Commission on 6 June 2018 and forms part of the proposal for the next EU long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework. The proposal concerns the allocation of EUR16 billion to the space programme between 2021 and 2027.</p> <p>The proposal contents are in the early stages of examination at the Space Working Party. It is anticipated that the proposal will remain under negotiation into 2019.</p>