

Common Fisheries Policy: Commission proposes new rules to step up enforcement

An effective control system is key to ensuring that the EU's fisheries are sustainably managed, which in turn guarantees the long-term viability of the EU fishing sector and protects the livelihoods of our fishermen.

Commissioner Karmenu **Vella**, responsible for the Environment, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, said: *"The EU's [Common Fisheries Policy](#) has already gone a long way towards making sure our seas are healthy, while building a strong fishing industry and thriving coastal communities. At the same time, we need to keep up the work and make sure the commonly agreed rules are enforced across the EU. This is why we are proposing improvements to modernise the existing control system to make it more efficient and ensure that all operators in the fishing industry in the EU are treated equally."*

The Commission's proposal includes:

- Measures to improve the enforcement of the Common Fisheries Policy, with a common list of criteria for what qualifies as a serious infringement and corresponding sanctions and strengthening of the existing point system for licenced vessels to work as the systems for traffic offences to motorists in most Member States;
- A more reliable and complete fisheries data system, including fully digitised reporting of catches, applicable to all EU fishing vessels (including vessels below 12 metres), an electronic tracking system for all vessels, new weighing procedures for fisheries products and reinforced catch registration rules for recreational fisheries;
- Enhanced traceability of EU and imported fishery and aquaculture products. Due to digitisation, controls will be made possible all along the supply chain for all fishery and aquaculture products whether imported or coming from the EU;
- Reinforced rules on fishing gear. Abandoned, lost or disposed fishing gear is a source of marine litter in European seas. The Commission is proposing to improve reporting on lost fishing gear, in line with the [proposal](#) to reduce the impact of certain plastic products in the environment in addition to producers helping cover the costs of waste management and clean-up of fishing gear;
- Revising the mandate of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) to fully align its objectives with the Common Fisheries Policy and upgrade its inspection powers.

The revised rules will strengthen compliance, modernise data management and ultimately make control more efficient to the benefit of EU fisheries. Improving the way in which the EU can monitor the enforcement of EU rules on fisheries will intensify the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. It will further support the effective implementation of

the landing obligation, which comes fully into force as of next year and requires that fishermen land all catches to stop the wasteful practice of throwing unwanted fish back to the sea.

Background

The current Control Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009), which entered into force in 2010, has played an important role in stepping up compliance by Member States with the commonly agreed rules of the Common Fisheries Policy. It has also helped foster a level playing field among operators. The control system has been designed to:

- ensure that that only the allowed quantities of fish are caught and [illegal fishing](#) is prevented
- allow data collection to manage fishing opportunities
- clarify [the respective roles of EU countries and the Commission](#)
- ensure rules and sanctions are uniformly applied across the EU
- enable the tracing and checking of fisheries products throughout the supply chain, from net to plate.

The Commission's proposal will now go to the European Parliament and Council for adoption.

For More Information

[Commission proposal](#)

[Questions and Answers](#)

[EU's Common Fisheries Policy](#)

[European Fisheries Control Agency \(EFCA\)](#)

"Tobacco consumption still a threat to our societies": Statement by Commissioner Andriukaitis on World No Tobacco Day

Tobacco use remains the single biggest cause of chronic disease and avoidable death in the EU. [Statistics](#) on deaths in the EU from lung cancer, the cancer most associated with smoking, show that in 2015, there were 273 400 deaths from lung cancer alone, 273 400 too many. Somebody lost their child, parent, brother, sister or a friend. Lung cancer accounts for a fifth of all cancer-related deaths. On top of this, tobacco is also a major risk factor in many

other forms of cancer, as well as other major diseases such as cardiovascular disease.

I am very concerned by the fact that the EU smoking rate has remained stagnant at 26% since 2014. Even more worrying is that amongst people aged 15 to 24, [the rate has increased](#) from 25% in 2014 to 29% in 2017. Having been personally affected by the loss of loved ones to the terrors of tobacco, I am deeply upset by the statistics of young people smoking. We need to reverse this trend. One of the key aims of the new [Tobacco Products Directive](#), which became fully applicable in the EU two years ago, is to make tobacco products less attractive to young people. However, the growing popularity of new products such as electronic cigarettes among the young generation worries me a lot.

That being said, we have taken important steps towards better protecting our citizens' health from tobacco consumption, in particular via the implementation of the [Tobacco Products Directive](#) (TPD) as well as the [Tobacco Advertising Directive](#). We also reached an important milestone on 6 May this year when the [EU track and trace system](#) entered into force, making the EU the first jurisdiction worldwide to have put in place the legal framework to tackle illicit tobacco trade. A ban on menthol cigarettes also comes into effect in May 2020. Moreover, at the end of last year we launched the [Joint Action on Tobacco Control](#), allocating nearly €2 million to help Member States implement the TPD during the next three years. Non-governmental organisations can also play a big role here, which is why in April this year I launched the [EU Health Award for NGOs](#), to highlight the outstanding initiatives of international, European, national and regional NGOs that have significantly contributed to prevent tobacco use within the EU. The deadline for submissions is **15 June 2018**, and I will be presenting the Award this November.

As a medical doctor, I have seen first-hand the devastation tobacco use has on health, and how important it is to attack the problem from all angles. We should all step up our efforts to inform, educate and protect our citizens from the harmful effects of tobacco.

Follow us on Twitter: [@V_Andriukaitis](#) [@EU_Health](#)

For more information:

https://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/overview_en

https://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/products_en

[ESMA updates the CSDR Q&As](#)

The CSDR Q&As provide common answers to question regarding practical issues

on the implementation of the new CSDR regime. The newest of CSDR Q&A concerns the CSDs' investment policy and clarifies the requirement to have "access to assets" on the same business day when a decision to liquidate those assets has been made.

Q&As are an important tool to promote common supervisory approaches and practices in the application of CSDR. The content of this document is aimed at competent authorities under the Regulation to ensure that in their supervisory activities, their actions are converging along the lines of the responses adopted by ESMA. It should also help investors and other market participants by providing clarity on the CSDR requirements.

The aim of CSDR is to harmonise certain aspects of the settlement cycle and settlement discipline and to provide a set of common requirements for CSDs operating securities settlement systems across the EU. ESMA will continue to develop this Q&A on CSDR in the coming months and will review and update them where required.

EU budget: A new Social Fund, Globalisation Adjustment Fund and Justice, Rights and Values Fund

For the period 2021-2027, the European Social Fund Plus would be worth €101.2 billion, and the Globalisation Adjustment Fund €1.6 billion. Both are geared to invest in people: ensuring they are equipped with the right skills needed to deal with challenges and changes on the labour market, following up on the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Justice, Rights and Values Fund will be worth €947 million over 7 years. It will further support the development of a European Area of Justice based on the rule of law and mutual trust and ensure people can enjoy their rights.

Vice-President for the Euro, Social Dialogue, Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, Valdis **Dombrovskis**: *"These proposals follow the fundamental questions we have been asking since the White Paper on the future of Europe and subsequent reflection papers: what European Union do we want, how will we shape it, and how do we pay for it? Our ambitions for a more social Europe are fully reflected: we need EU funding to fit our policies both to pro-actively support the most vulnerable in our societies, and to react when globalisation and digitisation make their impact felt."*

Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, said: *"Europe wants to empower people. We put our money where our mouth is. Our new, flexible and simplified social funds are focused on investing in people: to make sure they have the right skills, to make sure they have modern social protection adapted to new forms of work, and to show*

solidarity with those who need it most.”

Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, stressed that: *“Health is a fundamental value therefore it makes sense that the future EU budget envisions integrating the Health programme in ESF+ under the cluster of “values”. This will lead to new and stronger synergies with the other building blocks of the European Pillar of Social Rights and will allow better coordination of health related investments. It will also support health promotion and disease prevention, improving effectiveness, accessibility and resilience of health systems as well as reducing health inequalities and making healthcare better and safer for the benefit of patients and society at large.”*

Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality said: *“With today’s proposal for a new Justice, Rights and Values Fund, we make sure we can give the best support possible for initiatives upholding EU rights, values and the rule of law.*

At a time where European societies are confronted with extremism, radicalism and divisions, it is more important than ever to promote, strengthen and defend justice, rights and EU values. NGOs and civil society play a crucial role in standing up for these European values. At the same time we need to support Member States in our joint effort to improve judicial cooperation and increase mutual trust in our common area of justice.”

1. A European Social Fund Plus

The European Social Fund Plus will focus on investment in people and support the delivery of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#). This helps to respond to global challenges, maintain social fairness but also to drive Europe’s competitiveness forward. The European Social Fund Plus will be a more flexible and simpler version of the current European Social Fund by merging a number of existing funds and programmes. Pooling resources will allow the EU and Member States to provide more integrated and targeted support in response to the social and labour market challenges that people in Europe face today. For instance, integrating support to the most deprived into the ESF+ will benefit eligible persons through a better mix of material assistance and comprehensive social support.

Specifically, the European Social Fund Plus will merge:

The main features of the new Fund are:

- **Putting citizens’ concerns and key priorities at the centre:** In consultation with Member States, resources will be allocated to measures that address key priorities and Europeans’ concerns. The ESF+ programmes will concentrate in particular on challenges identified under the [European Semester](#) and the European Pillar of Social Rights;
- **A focus on youth unemployment and social inclusion:** Member States with a high rate of young people not in employment, education or training will have to dedicate a minimum of 10% of the ESF+ funding to support youth employment. The Fund will continue to contribute to the [Skills Agenda for Europe](#) and at least 25% of ESF+ funding should be allocated to

measures fostering social inclusion and targeting those most in need. The ESF+ will also support Member States efforts to integrate legally present non-EU nationals into their labour markets and societies by focusing on measures that foster long-term integration. In this way, it complements the Asylum and Migration Fund which supports short-term integration measures;

- **Cutting red tape:** The Commission proposes to make the rules less complex in the next long-term EU budget with less red tape and easier access to funding from different sources for authorities, citizens or organisations benefitting from EU support;
- **Tailored support to healthcare:** the health strand will focus on the priority areas where EU cooperation has a proven benefit: strengthening cross-border crisis-preparedness, assisting Member States' health authorities, digitising health and care, supporting EU health legislation and enhancing cross-border cooperation, for instance on rare and complex diseases via the European Reference Networks.

2. The post-2020 European Globalisation Adjustment Fund

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund will be revised so that it can intervene more effectively to support workers who have lost their jobs. Currently, workers can only get support from the Fund when their dismissals are due to changing trade patterns or consequences of the financial and economic crisis. Under the new rules, other reasons for restructuring, such as automation, digitalisation and more, can be eligible for support, taking account of new challenges on the labour market.

The new rules will also lower the threshold of dismissed workers for a case to be eligible from 500 to 250, which will allow more workers to get support. Other proposed changes include an improved mobilisation process to simplify and speed up the procedures. Finally, the Fund's co-financing rate, which currently stands at 60%, will be aligned with the highest ESF+ co-financing rates for a given Member State. In several cases this would mean that the EU co-finances a higher share of the total cost.

3. EU Justice, Rights and Values Fund

The Commission is also proposing a new Justice, Rights and Values Fund, comprising of the Rights and Values, and Justice programmes. The Fund has a proposed budget allocation of €947 million over the 7 years, €642 million for the Rights and Values programme and €305 million for the Justice programme.

At a time where European societies are confronted with extremism, radicalism and divisions, it is more important than ever to promote, strengthen and defend justice, rights, and EU values. For instance, this programme will help fight inequalities and discrimination, better protect children, and improve judicial cooperation to better fight criminality and terrorism. The Fund will contribute to the further development of a European area of justice based on the rule of law, on mutual recognition and mutual trust. It will also enhance and support the key role of Non-Governmental Organisations and civil society in promoting, safeguarding and awareness raising for EU common values and ensuring people can enjoy their rights.

The creation of the new Fund represents a simplification as compared to the current situation of 3 programmes. In particular, the area of citizenship, which is currently dealt with by 2 different programmes, will be covered by the new Rights and Values programme.

Next steps

A swift agreement on the overall long-term EU budget and its sectoral proposals is essential to ensure that EU funds start delivering results on the ground as soon as possible.

Delays similar to the ones experienced at the beginning of the current 2014-2020 budgetary period would mean that 100,000 EU-funded projects could not start on time; that many people in need of support, including urgent material and food assistance, would have to wait unnecessarily; that trainings, increased job opportunities, actions to improve the quality of key services would be delivered late, or that schools would not be able to implement new quality educational programmes in time for the school year.

An agreement on the next long-term budget in 2019 would provide for a seamless transition between the current long-term budget (2014-2020) and the new one and would ensure predictability and continuity of funding to the benefit of all.

Background

The European Social Fund is Europe's oldest and main instrument to invest in people.

It was established together with the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Today it is an important driver of job creation, promoting better education, more modern public administrations and social inclusion, and therefore a means of ensuring fairer opportunities for all citizens.

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund is an expression of EU solidarity with European workers who lost their jobs because of the impact of the combination of changing global trade patterns and technological change. Its objective is to retain or reintegrate workers into the labour market.

Today's proposals related to ESF+, EGF and the Justice, Rights and Values Fund are part of the [Commission's proposals for the long-term EU budget adopted by the Commission on 2 May 2018](#). The Commission's proposal for the ESF+ is closely related to the proposal for a [Common Provisions Regulation](#) adopted on 29 May 2018 which establishes the framework for action for a number of EU shared management Funds.

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