European Economic and Social Committee
Press Release

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**Paving the way forward**

**EESC contribution to the Commission's 2018 work programme**

**Creating a positive narrative for the EU, strengthening its economic foundations, fostering its social dimension, facilitating the transition towards a low-carbon and circular economy and empowering and involving Civil Society. These are the main messages** [**of the contribution**](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.publications.43878) **of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) to the European Commission's 2018 Work Programme.**

The EESC, which is the EU body representing civil society in the European legislative process, adopted its contribution to the 2018 Work Programme on 5 July. The Committee calls on the Commission to adopt sustainable development as an overarching approach to its work, with reference to the three "pillars" of sustainability: i) strengthening the economic foundations of Europe; ii) fostering its social dimension; and iii) facilitating the transition towards a low-carbon and circular economy.

To that end, the EESC makes detailed recommendations and proposals for action structured around six priority policy areas:

* further development of the single market;
* promotion of entrepreneurship, innovation and industrial development;
* the social dimension of the EU;
* focusing public finances on sustainable growth, innovation, employment and cohesion;
* protecting Europeans against security threats;
* and the development of a structured civil dialogue.

Earlier today, the EESC President **Georges Dassis** met EC's First Vice-President, **Frans Timmermans**, to present him with the EESC document. President Dassis underlined the focus on sustainable development as a result from the strong link between the economy, employment, people's welfare and the environment.

The EESC President also informed First VP Timmermans about the EESC [Resolution on the Future of Europe](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.institutional-reform-the-future-of-europe-resolution), which was adopted during the EESC plenary session also on 5 July.

On the occasion of this meeting with VP Timmermans, Georges Dassis raised the issue of an appropriate participation of the Committee in the multi-stakeholder platform on sustainable development goals which is being established by the Commission.

**Key policy priorities**

The EESC' key policy priorities for the Commission's 2018 work programme also included:

* Further development of the single market. The EMU is the core of the single market, and measures are particularly needed in the fields of capital markets, and digital, energy and transport markets. An active trade policy is needed, taking into account the need for transparency and the close involvement of civil society.
* Strategy for the promotion of entrepreneurship, innovation and industrial development, including global megatrends such as digitalisation and the Internet of Things, and the transition towards a low-carbon and circular economy.
* Social dimension of the EU aiming to foster quality job creation, improving skills and competences, increasing social investments and the development of the social economy, as well as preventing poverty, inequalities, discrimination and social exclusion, with special emphasis on the inclusion of young people in society.
* Focusing the public financial resources efficiently and responding to future challenges caused by Brexit and the need for sustainable growth, innovation, employment and cohesion – aided by encouragement of private investment.
* Effective control of external borders, to protect Europeans against security threats. Strengthening measures for the EU to be a more effective player on the world stage by means of multilateral cooperation and active conflict prevention, including strengthened cooperation on defence.
* Strategy to bring about structured civil dialogue that is organised efficiently and on a permanent basis, where the EESC offers its support.

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[VIDEO: How has the EESC made a difference](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.videos.41081)

*The European Economic and Social Committee is an institutional consultative body established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The Committee has 350 members from across Europe, who are appointed by the Council of the European Union. It represents the various economic and social components of organised civil society. Its consultative role enables its members, and hence the organisations they represent, to participate in the EU decision-making process.*

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