

SPRING 2019 REFORM BAROMETER – BELGIUM

European Semester - Overall assessment of 2018 cycle

	To what extent do you agree with these statements:		Detailed comments
1.	The National Reform Programme submitted by your Government (March 2018) is appropriate.	To a large extent	
2.	The Commission's country specific recommendations for your country are appropriate.	To a large extent	
3.	The Commission assessment of reform implementation the year before is appropriate.	To a large extent	
4.	The Commission assessment of excessive imbalances (in-depth review) is appropriate.	To a large extent	

Assessment of Country Specific recommendations 2018 in detail

		Q1: The recommendation is:	Q2: implementation on effort is:	Detailed comments
CSR 1	<p>Ensure that the nominal growth rate of net primary government expenditure does not exceed 1.8 % in 2019, corresponding to an annual structural adjustment of 0.6 % of GDP. Use windfall gains to accelerate the reduction of the general government debt ratio.</p> <p>Pursue the envisaged pension reforms and contain the projected increase in long-term care expenditure. Pursue the full implementation of the 2013 Cooperation Agreement to coordinate fiscal policies of all government levels.</p> <p>Improve the efficiency and composition of public spending at all levels of government to create room for public investment, notably by carrying out spending reviews.</p>	Important	Mixed	
CSR 2	<p>Remove disincentives to work and strengthen the effectiveness of active labour market policies, notably for the low-skilled, people with a migrant background and older workers.</p> <p>Pursue the education and training reforms, including by fostering equity and increasing the proportion of graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.</p>	Important	Mixed	

		Q1: The recommendation is:	Q2: implementation on effort is:	Detailed comments
CSR 3	Reduce the regulatory and administrative burden to incentivise entrepreneurship and increase competition in services, particularly retail, construction and professional services. Tackle the growing mobility challenges, in particular through investment in new or existing transport infrastructure and reinforcing incentives to use collective and low emission transport.	Important	Unsatisfactory	

Reform Progress in your Member State in 2018

How would you assess reform progress in 2018, for the following broad areas:

Taxation and Public Finances	Satisfactory
Business environment (regulation/access to markets)	Satisfactory
Labour market	Mixed
Innovation and skills	Satisfactory
Access to finance and Financial stability	Satisfactory

Reform priorities for 2019

	I. Policy Area	II. Concrete Recommendations	III. Are the proposed recommendations already in the agenda of your Government?
Priority 1	Labour market mismatch and labour mobility	<p>1) More cooperation and coordination between the different agencies responsible for the activation of the unemployed. Encourage trainings that meet the needs of employers.</p> <p>2) Better information for students regarding the possible outcome of their scholarship's choice. Also, more cooperation between schools (and college) and private firms (more internship as part of the cursus for example)</p> <p>3) Increase labour flexibility, mainly regarding work schedule (mainly for evening, night and week-end shifts in retail)</p>	yes
Priority 2	Public investment	Public investment has been too low for too long. Because of this accumulated lack of infrastructure investment, transport and mobility are a big liability that needs to be addressed. Also, a good way to enhance growth potential.	yes
Priority 3	Active labour market policies	In some part of the country, unemployment rate is already at its frictional rate while still very high in other areas. Better targeted activation policies and encouraging mobility of the unemployed should be aimed.	yes

	I. Policy Area	II. Concrete Recommendations	III. Are the proposed recommendations already in the agenda of your Government?
Priority 4	Sector specific regulation (telecom, energy)	Energy pact has been worked on, but still too vague and its concrete application needs coordination between entities that do not exist at the time. Ensuring affordable and the security of supply of energy while matching climate goals should be aimed.	no
Priority 5	Public sector efficiency	Easing administration procedure and improving cost efficiency of public offices should be done in order to generate fiscal (for priority 2 and public investment). This would greatly enhance growth potential.	no