

Continuation of work in progress from last term

With European elections held on 23-26 May 2019, the eighth parliamentary term formally ends on 1 July 2019, a day before the constituent part-session of the newly elected Parliament. Despite the efforts of the co-legislators, agreement could not be found on a number of legislative proposals before the end of the parliamentary term, and these form a major part of the business that needs to be picked up again in the new term. In order to ensure continuity in its work, therefore, Parliament has adopted rules on how to deal with unfinished files.

Unfinished business in the European Parliament

'Unfinished business' refers to any procedure on which parliamentary work was still ongoing at the end of the parliamentary term, i.e. where the plenary had not taken a final decision. According to [Rule 240](#) (previously Rule 229) of the EP's Rules of Procedure, 'at the end of the last part-session before elections, all Parliament's unfinished business shall be deemed to have lapsed', unless the Conference of Presidents – at the beginning of the new term – decides 'on reasoned requests from parliamentary committees and other institutions to resume or continue the consideration of such matters'. Furthermore, the EP can ([Rule 61](#), previously Rule 63) ask the Commission to refer a proposal again to Parliament for work to restart.

Unfinished files at the end of the eighth parliamentary term

As of June 2019, there are around 168 [ongoing ordinary legislative procedure files](#) at different stages of the legislative process. Of these, the EP administration has identified 44 files which remained at an early stage in the legislative process at the end of the last term. There are also a number of other unfinished files (e.g. [special legislative procedures](#), [budgetary procedures](#), and [non-legislative procedures](#)). In line with Rule 240, in the early days of the new parliamentary term, the Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC) will invite each committee to provide information on the state of play of unfinished files, and on how they intend to handle them (resume work, or ask the Commission to modify or withdraw the proposal). The Conference of Presidents will then decide on which of the proposed files work will resume and in what manner. On the basis of that decision, the President will then inform the Commission and Council of the EP's plans.

Unfinished files at the end of the seventh parliamentary term

On 16 July 2014, the Chair of the CCC wrote to the chairs of all committees requesting them to examine the unfinished files and inform him on how they proposed to proceed. At its [meeting](#) on 18 September 2014, the Conference of Presidents took a [decision](#) on reasoned requests from parliamentary committees to resume work on 47 files under the ordinary legislative procedure (compared to 23 files carried over from the sixth parliamentary term). The decision lists a further 82 files on which a first-reading position had already been adopted in plenary (Annex I). Work was to resume on 13 files under other legislative procedures (Annex II), while the Commission was asked to withdraw 19 legislative proposals (Annex III) and the Council to re-consult parliament on one file (Annex IV).

The Commission and Council

The Treaties do not set out a specific procedure for handling unfinished legislative files at the end of a parliamentary term, but they do allow the Commission to change a proposal as long as the Council has not acted (Article 293(2) TFEU). For those files where the first reading is concluded in the EP and where Council has already transmitted its first-reading position, [Treaty deadlines](#) for second reading must be respected. It should be noted that the [joint declaration](#) on practical arrangements for the co-decision procedure stipulates that the institutions coordinate their work, to enable proceedings to be conducted in a coherent and convergent fashion (point 6), with maximum efficiency (point 20).

