

Review of the Juncker Commission

Prior to his election as President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker set out the policy priorities that would serve as the political mandate for the Commission's 2014-2019 term of office. Although the new Commission will not take office on 1 November as scheduled, Juncker is due to make a statement during the October II plenary session on his term as President, and a debate will review the work of his Commission.

Background

In July 2014, President-elect Juncker published an [Agenda for jobs, growth, fairness and democratic change](#) to mark a 'new start for Europe'. The aim of those political guidelines was to make a difference and deliver concrete results for citizens on [ten priorities](#), ranging from the digital single market and energy union, to justice and fundamental rights, migration and security.

Changes and challenges

Since the Juncker Commission took office in November 2014, every year has brought its share of changes and challenges. For example, 2015 started with a series of terrorist attacks, followed later that year by record-high numbers of migrants and asylum-seekers arriving in the European Union. In 2016, the UK's referendum vote to withdraw from the EU, and the election of a new administration in the United States, required the EU to adapt its priorities in several areas, from security and defence to trade. Furthermore, ensuring energy independence, guaranteeing the respect of the rule of law in Member States and strengthening economic and monetary union were additional challenges influencing the agenda and ultimately forcing the Commission to adapt, through its [annual work programmes](#) and [State of the Union addresses](#), its response and initiatives to an ever-changing environment.

To what extent has the Commission delivered?

In May 2019, the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) published an [end-of-term assessment](#) to assess, quantitatively and qualitatively, the Juncker Commission's performance on the basis of its own standards, and examine what the EU institutions collectively have been able – or not – to enact.

The results indicate that, at the end of the 2014-2019 legislature, of the 547 proposals envisaged, 512 had been submitted (94 %), of which 361 had been adopted (66 %). There are 151 proposals (28 %) which have not so far been adopted, and where the outcome may depend on the institutional transition this year. Of these, 115 (21 %) have been proceeding normally through the legislative process, whereas 36 (7 %) have either been proceeding slowly or are blocked.

The qualitative evaluation shows that, in some areas, the Commission transformed difficulties into opportunities (in the area of trade, and in security and defence, for example). In others, the evaluation suggests that some Commission proposals lacked the necessary ambition or complexity to meet the challenges (such as in the digital single market and economic and monetary union). Some proposals were tabled too late (for example on the single market), or progressed on one aspect at the expense of stepping back on another (as was the case with some aspects of migration policy and proposals to make the EU more democratic, open and accountable).

Overall, the EPRS analysis reveals that, while two thirds of the proposals tabled by the Commission had been adopted by the end of the legislature, almost one third had not reached agreement and one in ten had been withdrawn. In priority areas such as the digital single market, the internal market, justice and fundamental rights, and Europe as a stronger global actor, almost three quarters of the proposals submitted have been adopted; in others, such as jobs, growth and investment, and trade, progress has been much slower.

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Author: Anja Radjenovic, Members' Research Service

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eprs@ep.europa.eu (contact) <http://www.eprs.ep.parl.union.eu> (intranet) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank> (internet) <http://epthinktank.eu> (blog)