

The State of the Union

Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, laid out his vision of the European Union in his annual State of the Union address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 13 September 2017. He noted that the overall outlook has changed for the better over the past year, notably thanks to an accelerating economic recovery. ‘The wind is back in the European sails,’ he declared.

Much interest focussed on Juncker’s advocacy of various eurozone and EU institutional reforms. He proposed the designation of a eurozone finance minister, who would preside over the Eurogroup, as well as being a member of the Commission. He supported the development of a European Monetary Fund. However, he opted against the creation of a separate eurozone budget, preferring a dedicated budget line within a general EU budget. He also said there should not be a separate eurozone parliament either. He favoured combining the presidencies of the Commission and the European Council, and he supported the idea a new, additional transnational constituency for the European elections. On the policy front, he advocated a pro-innovation industrial strategy, a reinforced social pillar, an authority to supervise fairness in the single market, better handling of migratory flows, and new trade agreements.

This note offers links to **commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks** on the state of the EU and possible reforms. Brexit-related publications can be found in a [previous edition](#) of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking. Earlier papers on the general condition of the EU are available in [another edition](#) in this series, published in April 2017.

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