

EU challenges at a time of transition

The European Union faces numerous challenges, both short and long-term, as it prepares to choose the new executive, a European Commission for the next five years, following elections to the European Parliament in May 2019. The most immediate task is for European Commission President-elect, Ursula von der Leyen, to put together a college of Commissioners and secure its approval by the European Parliament. The EU is also engaged in difficult talks on the terms of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU, currently due on 31 October.

On the economic front, the EU needs to deal with the fallout of a trade conflict between the United States and China, and to boost its competitiveness, as the two other global powerhouses swiftly pursue the digitalisation of their economies. In the face of political volatility in the US, Europe should also consider enhancing its defence capabilities. Last, but not least, the Union must deliver on its pledge to remain the world's leader in efforts to fight climate change.

This note brings together recent **commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes** on challenges facing the EU. More papers analysing the outcome of the European Elections can be found in a [previous edition](#) of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking', published in July.

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