



## STATE OF THE UNION 2020

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# The von der Leyen Commission: One year on

#SOTEU

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# **ACHIEVEMENTS**

## A NEW COURSE FOR EUROPE

One year ago, the von der Leyen Commission made Europe a promise: we promised to be bold and daring, whenever we saw the need for action at European level. In the early days of the mandate, the new Commission set a **new and ambitious course** for the European Union.

We presented the **European Green Deal** and its first building blocks, putting our Union on the path towards climate neutrality. We came up with a package to make Europe a global leader in **digital innovation**. We presented an **industrial strategy** to define a new way forward for industry in Europe during the green and digital transition. In a fast-changing geopolitical context, Europe needs to transform its economy towards a green and digital future, and to strengthen its competitiveness on the global stage. We therefore created the most ambitious roadmap possible towards these goals.

Then came the **coronavirus pandemic** – with the human tragedy, the lockdowns and the economic backlash. This crisis called for a truly European response, and we have responded with the greatest collective mobilisation in our Union's history. At first, the Commission worked to organise a **concerted and coordinated European response** to the emergency – procuring and distributing protective equipment, repatriating stranded Europeans and securing doses of a future vaccine. This was uncharted territory for the European Union: we reacted boldly when our citizens' health and safety called for EU action.

The next step was to act swiftly and kick off the recovery of our economy. **NextGenerationEU** – the recovery plan proposed by the Commission, agreed by the European Council and submitted to the European Parliament and all Member States – breaks new ground in the EU's history. It is the centrepiece of the most powerful **long-term EU budget** ever designed, and together they are worth EUR 1.8 trillion of firepower.

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**We have adapted to unforeseen and dramatic circumstances while sticking to the principles and aspirations outlined in our political guidelines 1 year ago.**

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In putting this plan together, we have adapted to unforeseen and dramatic circumstances while sticking to the principles and aspirations outlined in our **political guidelines** 1 year ago. The twin green and digital transitions are now even more firmly at the core of our programme, with new resources to accelerate the transformation. We are not just repairing the damage to our economy; we are building better for the **next generation**.



Frontline workers have performed their duties heroically, citizens have accepted sacrifices to their fundamental freedoms and unprecedented measures have been taken to stem the spread of the virus.



# 1. The first 100 days

During the first 100 days, the von der Leyen Commission laid out a unique set of aspirations to address the great challenges of this generation. Sixty-four proposals have been agreed by and with the other EU institutions since 1 December 2019. These include the building blocks of a **new growth strategy for Europe**, structured around three pillars: the European Green Deal, a Europe fit for the digital age and an economy that works for people.

for how to make Europe the **first climate-neutral continent by 2050** while at the same time enhancing growth, providing new and better jobs and improving people's well-being. Climate change and environmental degradation are existential threats to Europe and the world. To overcome these challenges, Europe needs a new growth strategy that transforms the Union into a **modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy** that works for people.

Our generational challenges – the twin green and digital transitions – have become even more urgent now than they were before the crisis began. The time for the green transition is now. The investment wave that we are about to unleash will have the **European Green Deal** as its compass. Likewise, the coronavirus crisis and subsequent lockdowns have shown that access to **digital solutions** is essential for people and businesses alike – and that the lack thereof can turn into a source of new inequalities.

## LEADING THE GREEN AND DIGITAL TRANSITIONS

Eleven days into its mandate, the von der Leyen Commission presented **the European Green Deal**. With this initiative, the EU has embarked on the greatest transition by design in history, setting out a roadmap

## A new growth strategy, structured around three pillars





On 14 January, the Commission announced the **European Green Deal investment plan**, to mobilise private money in support of the green transition. The investment plan also includes the **Just Transition Mechanism**, which will ensure an inclusive and prosperous road ahead. The transition towards climate neutrality will provide opportunities and challenges for regions and sectors. While some will reap the benefits immediately, for others it will take longer.

To ensure a more even distribution of opportunities, the Commission has proposed to mobilise at least **EUR 100 billion through the Just Transition Mechanism** to help **those regions, industries and workers** that will face the greatest challenges relating to the green transition. We will succeed only if citizens and communities are empowered to become agents of the transition.

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On 4 March, the von der Leyen Commission proposed a **European climate law**, to transform political promises into legal obligations. We set a legal commitment to achieving a climate-neutral EU by 2050 and a mechanism to keep everybody on track.

On the same day, we launched a public consultation on the **future climate pact** for regions, local communities, civil society, industry and schools. Together, they will design and commit to a set of pledges to bring about a change in

behaviour, from the individual to the largest multinational.

On 11 March the European Commission adopted a new **circular economy action plan**, with a view to making our economy fit for a green future, strengthening our competitiveness while protecting the environment, and giving new rights to consumers.

The second pillar of our new growth strategy is a new push to make Europe a global leader in digital innovation. On day 81, the Commission announced its agenda for **shaping Europe's digital future**, opening up new opportunities for businesses while focusing on trustworthy technology for citizens. This second pillar encompasses everything from cybersecurity to digital education, and from supercomputing to global competitiveness, with two specific strategies on **data and artificial intelligence**.

The Commission and the Member States have also defined a common approach to ensure the secure **deployment and functioning of 5G networks** in the EU, thereby broadening connectivity while creating jobs and opportunities. According to estimates<sup>1</sup>, artificial intelligence and robotics alone could create almost 60 million new jobs worldwide in the next 5 years.

Technologies such as artificial intelligence, 5G networks and super- and quantum computers have the potential to revolutionise our way of life, and to create **new and exciting opportunities** for all European industries (such as artificial intelligence to help analyse medical symptoms), increasing job opportunities while also enhancing the EU's global competitiveness.

On 20 May, we presented a comprehensive new biodiversity strategy to bring nature back into our lives and a farm to fork strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system. The two strategies are mutually reinforcing, bringing together nature, farmers, businesses and consumers to work towards a competitively sustainable future.

<sup>1</sup> <http://reports.weforum.org/future-of-jobs-2018>





Technologies such as artificial intelligence, 5G networks and super- and quantum computers have the potential to revolutionise our way of life and to create new and exciting opportunities for all European industries, increasing job opportunities, while also enhancing Europe's global competitiveness.

Around a quarter of industrial and service robots are produced by companies headquartered in Europe. **A European approach to the digital transformation** deepens our democratic foundations, respects fundamental rights and contributes to a sustainable, climate-neutral and resource-efficient economy. Citizens can only feel confident and empowered in a trustworthy environment where they know their privacy is respected.

European industry can lead the way in the transition towards climate neutrality and digital leadership. On day 101, the von der Leyen Commission presented a new **industrial strategy** to empower European businesses to achieve their ambitions while strengthening their global competitiveness.

**20 %**

of the total EU economy relates to European industries

**35**

million jobs in industry

**99 %**

of all European firms are small and medium-sized enterprises

**80 %**

of all exporting small businesses sell to other Member States

**No one will be left behind, whether women or men, whether from the east, west, south or north, whether young or old.**

**A more integrated and fully functional single market** would provide European businesses with opportunities, and would generate additional annual growth of EUR 183–269 billion for manufacturing and EUR 338 billion for services. This represents a rise of approximately 12 % in the EU's gross domestic product. The single market is a success story that continues to provide prosperity and opportunities for EU citizens and businesses alike.

**The foundation of Europe's economy** is the ability to reconcile the market with the social aspect, growth with fairness and disruptive innovation with age-old values. On day 45, the Commission launched a first-phase consultation of social partners – businesses and trade unions – on the issue of **a fair minimum wage for workers** in the EU, which will act as a stepping stone towards a strong social Europe for just transition. No one will be left behind, whether women or men, whether from the east, west, south or north, whether young or old.



© Wikipedia

## BECOMING THE GEOPOLITICAL COMMISSION



The European Union has a unique asset in global affairs, beyond its economic and financial strength: we are an unparalleled '**convening power**'; we are at the centre of a global network of alliances; we are a pillar of the **multilateral system**; we can rally broad coalitions in support of a common cause; and we know how to bring regional powers and rival nations around the same table.

We have put this convening power at the service of our friends in need and of the common good – during the first 100 days of our mandate and beyond. When a devastating earthquake ravaged **Albania**, we mobilised the entire international community to raise funds for the emergency and the reconstruction. Countries that usually do not even talk to one another joined forces for a common cause.

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**With the start of the pandemic, the need for a coordinated global response became obvious – and the von der Leyen Commission explored new ways of putting the EU's convening power to use.**

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We worked closely with multilateral institutions, national governments and non-governmental organisations to raise resources for a cure and a vaccine. Together with this diverse international coalition, we launched the **Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator**, a global cooperation platform to accelerate research, development and the equitable distribution of medicines and, eventually, a vaccine. We worked hand in hand

not only with the **World Health Organization** and nations from across the planet, but also with global health actors such as **GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance** and **CEPI**, and with civil society organisations such as Global Citizen. It was a marathon of global solidarity, and we were proud to have been a leading force in making this possible.

Throughout this work, we have made sure that treatments and a future vaccine are also **accessible to low-income countries**, which could not otherwise afford to pay for it. It is in this spirit that we joined the COVAX Facility, which aims to guarantee fair and equitable access to a vaccine for every country in the world. Caring for others makes Europe strong too.

Since day 1, the von der Leyen Commission has defended European interests and values on the international stage – working to strengthen climate action, to defuse trade disputes, to address crises in our neighbourhood and to reform the multilateral system.

President von der Leyen chose Africa and the African Union's headquarters in Addis Ababa as the destination for her first foreign visit. On day 100, we presented a new '**strategy with Africa**' to bring our partnership to the next level. The strategy proposes to boost cooperation in the areas of sustainable growth and jobs; the green transition; the digital transformation; peace, security and governance; and migration and mobility.

On day 67, the Commission adopted a **new methodology for EU accession negotiations**, to make them more credible, predictable and dynamic, all with a stronger political steer. This cleared the way for the European Council to open **accession negotiations with Albania**





and **North Macedonia**, the draft negotiating frameworks for which have already been submitted to the Council by the Commission. The European Commission stood in full solidarity with our friends in the **Western Balkans** during the coronavirus crisis, providing immediate and long-term support and including them in many initiatives normally reserved for the Member States.

Together with the leaders of our six **Eastern partners**, we have agreed on a new set of priorities to shape the Eastern Partnership's second decade. This agenda can make the entire European continent more resilient to all sorts of shocks, from economic crises to climate change.

Globalisation is not a one-way street. The EU is sponsoring a root-and-branch reform of the **World Trade Organization**, precisely to enable our Union to continue reaping the opportunities of global openness and integration, while addressing the vulnerabilities of our economic and political systems.

We want to find an agreement that fixes the **Organization's dispute settlement system**. Yet, as the system is currently not working, the Commission has decided to strengthen its trade enforcement rules: in the event of a trade dispute, we are ready to use countermeasures that protect European

interests, in full compliance with international law.

## PROTECTING EU CITIZENS

Still within its first 100 days, the European Commission presented its **strategy for equality between women and men** in Europe, notably to address persistent gender-based violence and stereotypes. This strategy sets out key actions for 2020–2025 and commits to including an equality perspective in all EU policy areas.

Protecting EU citizens means **protecting their health**. Before the pandemic hit Europe, and as announced in the political guidelines, the European Commission launched an EU-wide public consultation on **Europe's beating cancer plan** as early as 4 February. Every year, 3.5 million people are diagnosed with cancer in the European Union. 1.3 million people die of the disease annually, yet evidence indicates that over 40 % of cancers are preventable.

The focus moved dramatically when in the following weeks, the coronavirus virus spread in Europe and was characterised as a pandemic. The mandate took a different turn, calling for leadership to face a public health crisis, and what would soon become an economic crisis.



Europe's role in the world as a credible leading development and humanitarian partner continues. Our **'Team Europe' approach** – combining the resources and expertise from the European Commission, the Member States and the EU financial institutions – has already yielded more than **EUR 36 billion** to address the emergency response and consequent humanitarian needs, strengthen health, water/sanitation and nutrition systems and mitigate the economic and social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic worldwide.

## 2. Europe's unprecedented response to an unprecedented crisis



The **coronavirus pandemic** has shaken Europe and the world to the core. What began with isolated cases quickly turned into an emergency that affects every country, region and person. Since the beginning of the year, nearly 150 000 lives have been lost in the EU because of COVID-19; many more have lost their lives in other parts of the world.

And yet hundreds of thousands of lives have been saved. If the European Union and its Member States had not acted swiftly and decisively to **protect EU lives and livelihoods**, the tragedy would have been much greater. Frontline workers have performed their duties heroically, citizens have accepted sacrifices to their fundamental freedoms and unprecedented measures have been taken to stem the spread of the virus.

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**Europe has become the beating heart of world solidarity.**

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Europe has become the beating heart of world solidarity. Hospitals have welcomed and treated patients from across borders; Member

States have teamed up to purchase medical equipment; mobile health teams have been despatched to answer the most urgent needs; more than 600 000 stranded EU citizens have been repatriated from beyond the borders of the European Union; and public and private investment, at European and national levels, has been mobilised to find a vaccine for everyone across the world. This crisis has shown **European solidarity** at its best.

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**The great majority of public health, mobility, tourism and economic measures were designed to address the immediate public health crisis directly.**

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The Commission has pulled out all the stops to fight the pandemic and its economic fallout: **828 measures** have been adopted since March, including 373 State aid decisions giving European companies a lifeline. The great majority of public health, mobility, tourism and economic measures have been designed to address the immediate public health crisis directly. Meanwhile, the Commission has worked to make our economies, our societies and our Union more resilient to the challenges of tomorrow.

## FIGHTING A GLOBAL HEALTH CRISIS

Saving lives was our first priority. We delivered urgently needed aid through numerous **humanitarian air bridges** organised by the Commission. We brought Member States together to jointly procure medical equipment. Strategic rescEU stockpiles and distribution hubs were established to serve as a common European reserve for vital medical equipment. Equipment such as life-saving ventilators, masks and disinfectants was channelled through the **European Emergency Response Coordination Centre** to those Member States most in need.

In addition, under the newly created **Emergency Support Instrument**, some 10 million masks to protect healthcare workers were purchased and delivered in batches over the summer to countries that requested them. We sent medical teams from across the continent to hospitals in Milan and Bergamo in Italy. We made **medical imports** cheaper by waiving customs duties. We helped **scientists** gather and share their data. We gave additional resources to the most promising **research projects**. And, through the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** and its **Emergency Response Coordination Centre**, we organised and coordinated 369 flights to repatriate close to 82 000 EU citizens and 10 000 non-EU citizens stranded abroad.

In the area of **public health**, the EU achieved what no Member State could have done alone. Guidelines on testing methodologies and free movement of healthcare professionals, medical devices and protective equipment, along with voluntary contact tracing applications, guaranteed that best practices were shared and scaled up. The **'European roadmap towards lifting coronavirus**

**containment measures'** set out common principles and accompanying measures for exiting lockdown in a coordinated way.

In line with the EU's **vaccine strategy**, the Commission and some Member States are conducting intensive negotiations with several vaccine developers to build a diversified portfolio of vaccines for EU citizens at fair prices. And the Commission's **communication on short-term EU health preparedness for COVID-19 outbreaks** outlines key measures to be taken in the coming months.

The Commission has safeguarded the integrity of the **single market**. As long queues of trucks started to form at border crossings inside the EU, the Commission created the **'green lanes' system** to ensure that essential goods could be transported swiftly across borders, and acted against disproportionate internal restrictions that were creating new shortages.

All the while, the EU has provided as much information as possible to its citizens. The EU has developed a new online tool – **'Re-open EU'** – that brings together information on travel, transportation and tourism restrictions across all Member States. 'Re-open EU' has been used by tens of millions of people in Europe and beyond.

The EU has also led the global response to the crisis. Throughout the pandemic, President von der Leyen has kept in constant contact with G20 leaders and other international partners. Together with the **World Health Organization** and many other partners, we have set up a new collaborative framework – the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator – to accelerate the **development and deployment of vaccines, treatments and tests**.



Thanks to the Coronavirus Global Response, led by the Commission, a total of EUR 15.9 billion in pledges has been raised.

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On 4 May, the European Commission kick-started a global pledging effort that by the end of the month had raised **EUR 9.8 billion** for universal access to affordable coronavirus vaccination, treatment and testing, and support for health systems worldwide.

Later, on 27 June, on the initiative of President von der Leyen with Global Citizen, in a landmark moment for global solidarity, the **'Global Goal: Unite for our Future'** pledging summit and concert brought together artists, scientists and world leaders to ensure universal access to coronavirus medicines.

This helped to mobilise an additional EUR 6.15 billion to provide **universal access to affordable coronavirus vaccination**, treatment and testing, strengthen health systems and support the economic recovery of vulnerable countries.

The European Commission has so far concluded talks with six pharmaceutical groups to secure doses of a **future vaccine for Europeans**.

In our external action against the coronavirus, we have always acted as **'Team Europe'**. This means that the European Commission, the EU financial institutions and the Member States have joined forces to achieve a shared set of goals, as

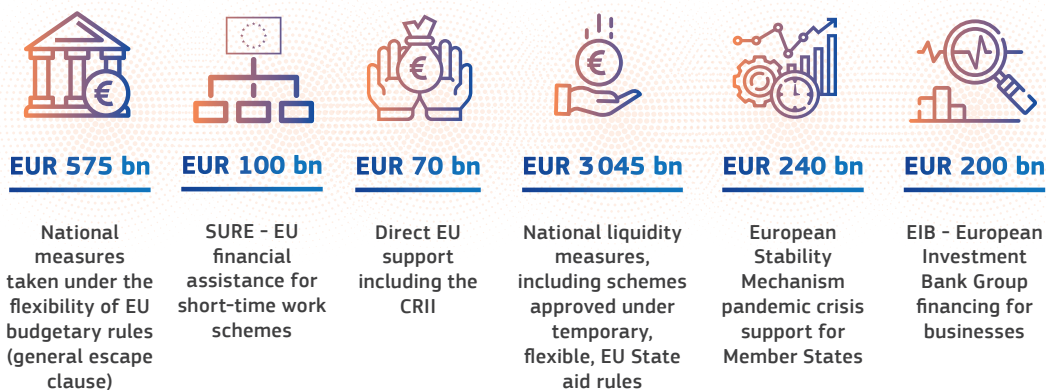
outlined in the communication on the global EU response to COVID-19, presented in early April. One team for a stronger EU in global affairs.

## REPAIRING THE ECONOMY AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

What began as a public health crisis has morphed into a major economic shock. To prevent mass lay-offs, the Commission set up a EUR 100 billion European instrument to support short-time work – **Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency (SURE)**.

To further cushion the blow, the Commission applied – as promised in its political guidelines – the full flexibility of the EU's State aid rules, and activated for the first time ever the general escape clause of the Stability and Growth Pact. The **Coronavirus Response Investment Initiatives (CRII)** – worth up to EUR 54 billion – were set up in record time to provide liquidity to businesses and support to the healthcare sector.

**The Coronavirus Response Investment Initiatives – worth up to EUR 54 billion – were set up in record time to provide liquidity to businesses and the healthcare sector.**



**Total: EUR 4.2 trillion**



The European Union and its Member States have acted resolutely to **support workers and businesses**. The Commission triggered the general escape clause of the **Stability and Growth Pact** to leave Member States maximum flexibility, which will allow them to support everybody - their healthcare systems and staff, as well as the people so severely affected by the crisis. The total firepower mobilised so far has reached **EUR 4.2 trillion**, which represents more than 30 % of the EU's gross domestic product.

The magnitude of the crisis has been such that, despite a swift and decisive public response, the EU economy will experience a **recession** this year. The necessary measures to contain the spread of the virus have slowed down social and economic life – almost to a standstill in some cases. In 2020, the EU economy is expected to contract by 8.3 %. All Member States have been hit differently, and this risks creating divergences between our economies. At the same time, the impact of this crisis will be felt by all.

**Unemployment** is set to rise to 9 % in the EU in 2020, disproportionately hitting women, young people, low-skilled workers and those in temporary work. Poverty, social exclusion and inequalities are likely to rise, underlining the importance of an **inclusive and fair recovery** for all. The economy is expected to rebound to positive growth in 2021, but the outlook is uncertain and how the public health situation evolves will prove crucial. The EU is taking no chances: the recovery plan proposed by the Commission is unprecedented in its design and ambition.

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The Commission's **recovery plan for Europe** will repair the damage and secure the future for the next generation. At the July European

Council, EU leaders – on the basis of the Commission's proposal – reached agreement on a major recovery package. It is made up of the **EU's long-term budget** worth EUR 1 074 billion – agreed by the European Council, subject to the European Parliament's consent – topped up with an additional EUR 750 billion recovery instrument, **NextGenerationEU**. It will support Member States in kick-starting the recovery, facilitate public and private investment with a special focus on the twin transition, and help learn from the crisis.

The Commission will borrow **EUR 750 billion** on financial markets, channelling the funds to Member States via the EU budget, as grants and loans. According to a model simulation, it is estimated that the investment mobilised will **raise real EU gross domestic product levels** by around 1.75 % in 2021 and 2022, rising to 2.25 % by 2024. This investment wave will create up to 2 million jobs by 2022. A EUR 672.5 billion **Recovery and Resilience Facility** will support essential investment and reforms in the Member States through grants and loans.

By reinventing the way it works, the European Union is rediscovering its true vocation. We have given **unprecedented firepower to the EU budget**. We have agreed to use the European Commission's very strong credit rating to raise resources that will be used by all Member States, including those in greatest need and with limited spending capacity. By doing so, the European Union is reviving the founders' original idea: prosperity in each European country depends on prosperity in all other European countries. **Our unity is our strength.**



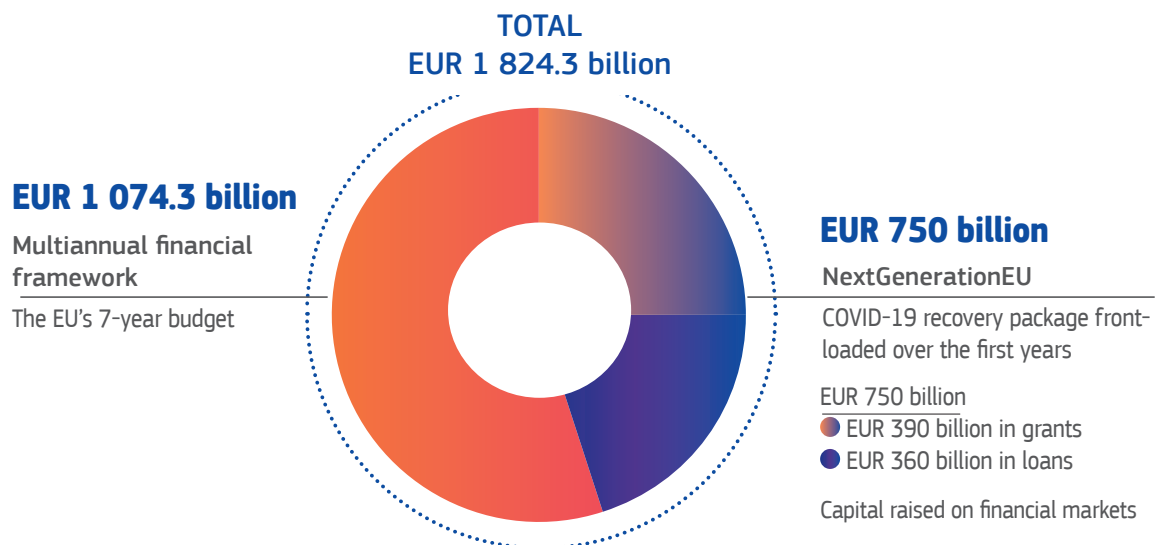


The reinforced **budget for 2021–2027** will drive the green and digital transitions, building a fairer and more resilient economy. More than half of the overall budget will be invested in **modernising the European economy**, to make it fit for our 2050 climate-neutrality goal and for the digital age.

In addition, the Commission has adjusted its **2020 work programme** in response to the crisis. While focusing on initiatives that deliver an immediate and impactful response to the crisis, the Commission is also delivering on its strategic priorities.

**Prosperity in each European country depends on prosperity in all other European countries. Our unity is our strength.**

OVERALL BUDGET 2021-2027



### 3. A better Europe after the pandemic

Our generational challenges – the twin green and digital transitions – have become even more urgent now than they were before the crisis began. The time for the **green transition** is now. The investment wave that we are about to unleash will have the European Green Deal as its compass. Likewise, the coronavirus crisis and subsequent lockdowns have shown that **access to digital solutions** is essential for people and businesses alike – and that the lack thereof can turn into a source of new inequalities.

The work on the Commission's strategic priorities has never stopped, in spite of the pandemic. On 20 May, the Commission presented a comprehensive new **biodiversity strategy** to bring nature back into our lives, and a **farm to fork strategy** for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system. The two strategies are mutually reinforcing, bringing together nature, farmers, businesses and consumers to work towards a competitively sustainable future.

On 8 July, the Commission adopted the **EU's strategies for energy system integration and hydrogen**. The latter addresses how to transform the potential of the decarbonisation of industry, transport, power generation and buildings across Europe into reality, through investments, regulation, market creation and research and innovation. The work to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 continues.

The vision of the von der Leyen Commission was to become **geopolitical**. The pandemic has highlighted to a greater degree than ever the necessity of doing so: the EU will only successfully recover if our partners around the world also recover. The Commission has worked closely with multilateral institutions, national governments and non-governmental organisations to fight the pandemic. We have led the **global cooperation** to secure resources for a cure and a vaccine. We have been driven by the belief that good healthcare must be a universal right, not a privilege for those who can afford it.

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**The Commission has worked closely with multilateral institutions, national governments and non-governmental organisations to fight the pandemic.**

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We have sought cooperative solutions whenever possible, and we have not refrained from speaking the language of firmness when it was necessary. We have worked to place our relationship with **China** on a more solid footing, with more reciprocity and a level playing field in trade, investment and beyond. The **EU–China Summit** was an opportunity to deepen our cooperation – from the coronavirus crisis to climate action – and to discuss our disagreements, including on human rights and the situation in **Hong Kong**.

We have supported the UN Secretary-General's call for a **global ceasefire**, and we continue to take a leading role in mobilising the international community in situations of concern, co-organising major conferences on **Venezuela, Sudan** or **Syria**.

The von der Leyen Commission has worked non-stop to reach an agreement on a new partnership with the **United Kingdom**. We have engaged constructively in negotiations to achieve a mutually beneficial result and protecting the **European interests**. In parallel, the full and timely implementation of the **Withdrawal Agreement** remains our priority.

The EU's role in the world as a credible leading development and humanitarian partner continues. Our **'Team Europe' approach** – combining the resources and expertise of the European Commission, the Member States and the EU financial institutions – has already yielded more than **EUR 36 billion** to address the emergency response and consequent humanitarian needs, strengthen health, water/sanitation and nutrition systems and mitigate the economic and social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic worldwide.

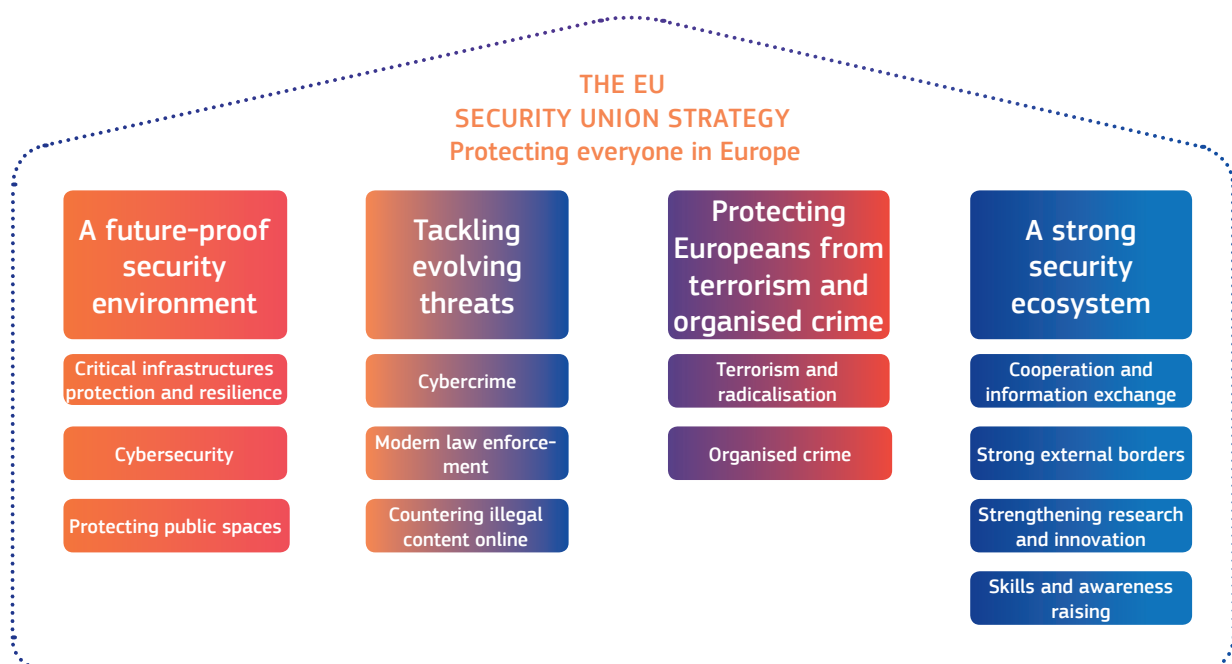
The European Commission has kept **EU citizens** at the heart of its decision-making and has looked after their interests in a whole variety of different ways, notably in the following areas.

It adopted its **first-ever EU strategy on victims' rights** on 24 June, with the overall objective of ensuring that all victims of crime can rely fully on their rights, no matter where in the EU the crime took place. The strategy focuses firstly on empowering victims to report crime, claim compensation and ultimately recover from the consequences of the crime; and secondly on working together with all relevant actors on victims' rights.

On 1 July, the European Commission launched the **youth employment support**, a bridge to jobs for the next generation, focused on vocational training and education, apprenticeships, support for youth employment and funding.

Security ranks as the highest priority for and concern of people in the EU. From combating terrorism and organised crime to cybersecurity, from preventing hybrid threats to increasing the resilience of our critical infrastructure, the **EU security union strategy** unveiled on 24 July will help strengthen security in our physical and digital environment over the next 5 years. The Commission has also presented a new **action plan on preventing money laundering and terrorist financing**.

The Commission has put forward the first **EU strategy to protect children from sexual abuse**, a crime that has demonstrably been exacerbated during the coronavirus crisis by physical isolation and increased online activity, along with new strategies to combat the illegal drugs and firearms that fuel organised crime.



The Commission has stepped up the **fight against misinformation, disinformation and foreign interference** by working with online platforms, civil society, academia and researchers. Together with the European External Action Service, it outlined all of these efforts and the next steps in a joint communication. This will not only reinforce public trust in the Union, but also protect people living in the EU from potential economic and bodily harm due to scams and fake coronavirus cures.

The work of the European Commission in the next 12 months will be crucial for the years and decades to come. The coronavirus pandemic has once again shown that **Europe's strength lies in its unity**, and that the great challenges that we face are bigger than any single country can deal with.

The investments through our strategic priorities will **kick-start our recovery and build a stronger Union** for the next generation. The Commission will double down on the priorities

set in the first 100 days, particularly the green and digital transitions. **NextGenerationEU** and the **new long-term EU budget** will give us the means to meet the expectations of citizens. The coming months and years represent a pivotal moment in European history and for future generations.

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At the beginning of its mandate, the Commission envisioned a green, prosperous and healthy future. Now is Europe's moment to power on, to realise that future and to deliver on its citizens' expectations.

# TIMELINE



## Legend

| Political priorities

| Response to the coronavirus crisis

| Negotiations with the United Kingdom

2019

DECEMBER



11.12

Launch of the **European Green Deal**, setting out a roadmap for how to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050

2020

JANUARY

8.1

Meeting between President **Ursula von der Leyen** and British Prime Minister **Boris Johnson**



14.1

**The European Green Deal investment plan** to mobilise EU funding and stimulate public and private investments needed for the transition to a climate-neutral, green and inclusive economy

**The Just Transition Mechanism**, a key tool to ensure that the transition towards a climate-neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind

First-phase consultation of social partners – businesses and trade unions – on a **fair minimum wage** for workers in the EU

19.1

Berlin International Conference on **Libya**



21.1

Meeting between President **Ursula von der Leyen** and US President **Donald Trump**



31.1

The **United Kingdom** leaves the European Union



29.1

**Secure 5G networks**: the Commission endorses the EU toolbox agreed by Member States

## FEBRUARY

The EU starts facilitating the repatriation of citizens to Europe, as part of its response to the coronavirus pandemic

4.2

Public consultations to shape Europe's **'beating cancer'** action plan

3.2

Presentation of the Commission's proposal for a Council recommendation on directives for the **negotiation of a new partnership with the United Kingdom**



5.2

New methodology for **EU accession negotiations** – to make them more credible, predictable and dynamic, as the first element in the Commission's renewed enlargement strategy

17.2

EU and international donors pledge EUR 1.15 billion for reconstruction after the **earthquake in Albania**



19.2

Publication of the agenda to **shape Europe's digital future**, a strategy on data and a White Paper on artificial intelligence, opening up new opportunities for businesses, while focusing on trustworthy technology for citizens



25.2

The European Commission receives a mandate to begin **negotiations with the United Kingdom**



## MARCH

4.3

With the **European climate law**, the Commission proposes a legally binding target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050



5.3

A new **gender equality strategy** for 2020-2025 sets out key actions to ensure equality between women and men in Europe

9.3

A new EU strategy paves the way for a stronger, more ambitious **partnership with Africa**



10.3

A new **industrial strategy** prepares the green and digital transformations of European industry



11.3

A new **circular economy action plan** aims to create a cleaner and more competitive Europe



13.3

The Commission calls for a decisive coordinated economic response to **the coronavirus crisis**

The new **Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative** (CRII) to help Member States fund their individual responses

16.3

An **advisory panel on coronavirus** brings together epidemiologists and virologists from different Member States



18.3

A temporary restriction is introduced on non-essential travel **to the EU** (until 30 June)



The Commission proposes new **policy objectives for the Eastern Partnership**

19.3

A **temporary framework** enables Member States to use the full flexibility under State aid rules to support the economy in the context of the coronavirus outbreak

20.3

The general escape clause of the **Stability and Growth Pact** is activated

23.3

'**Green lanes**' are implemented to ensure the availability of goods and essential services



26.3

European Council members give the green light to **accession talks with Albania and North Macedonia**

30.3

First meeting of the **EU-UK Joint Committee** on the implementation and application of the Withdrawal Agreement

## APRIL

2.4

Launch of the new instrument for temporary Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency (**SURE**) worth EUR 100 billion

15.4

A European roadmap sets out the path towards **common lifting of containment measures**



20.4

The **global EU response** to coronavirus, to help partner countries' efforts in tackling the pandemic, with the EU contribution reaching EUR 15.6 billion

24.4

**Round 2 of negotiations** on the future relationship with the United Kingdom

29.4

Package to support the **transport sector**



30.4

Measures to support the **agricultural sector**



## MAY

4.5

During the **Coronavirus Global Response** pledging event, EUR 7.4 billion in pledges is raised from donors worldwide for universal access to vaccines



6.5

A videoconference takes place between EU and **Western Balkans** leaders



7.5

Action plan for a comprehensive Union policy on **preventing money laundering and terrorist financing**



8.5

The **EU humanitarian air bridge** is set up to transport humanitarian workers and emergency supplies to some of most critical areas around the world



13.5

The Commission presents guidance on how to safely resume travel and **reboot Europe's tourism** in 2020 and beyond

15.5

**Round 3** of the negotiations with the United Kingdom

20.5

The **EU biodiversity strategy for 2030** addresses the five main drivers of biodiversity loss, and ensures the full implementation of EU legislation

The **farm to fork strategy** to enable the transition to a sustainable EU food system that safeguards food security and ensures access to healthy diets



26.5

Videoconference meeting takes place between leaders of the **EU and Japan**



27.5

The Commission presents a new recovery instrument, **NextGenerationEU**, embedded within a powerful, modern and revamped long-term EU budget

JUNE

5.6

**Round 4** of the negotiations with the United Kingdom

15.6

High-level meeting between **President von der Leyen**, President **Michel** and President **Sassoli** and the British Prime Minister **Boris Johnson**

17.6

**EU vaccine strategy**

White Paper on **levelling the playing field as regards foreign subsidies**

The **'Re-open EU'** web platform is established, containing essential information allowing a safe relaunch of free movement and tourism across Europe



18.6

**Eastern Partnership** leaders' videoconference



22.6

The 22<sup>nd</sup> **EU-China Summit** takes place via videoconference



24.6

Launch of the **EU strategy on victims' rights** (2020-2025)

27.6

The '**Global Goal: Unite for our Future**' pledging summit organised by the European Commission and Global Citizen mobilises EUR 6.15 billion in additional funding to help develop and ensure equitable access to coronavirus vaccines, tests and treatments



30.6

**EU and Republic of Korea leaders** discuss how to foster global cooperation in the recovery phase



The **repatriation of close to 78 000 EU citizens and 10 000 non-EU citizens**

to Europe is facilitated by the European Civil Protection Mechanism.

JULY

2.7

**Restricted round** of negotiations with the United Kingdom



1.7

The **youth employment support** package is based on 4 building blocks: reinforcing the Youth Guarantee, training policy, apprenticeships and additional measures

The **European skills agenda** for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience sets out objectives for upskilling and reskilling for the next 5 years

9.7

The Commission adopts a communication to help national authorities, businesses and citizens prepare for the inevitable changes that will arise at the **end of the transition period with the UK**



8.7

Powering a climate-neutral economy: **an EU strategy for energy system integration** is published

**A hydrogen strategy** for a climate-neutral Europe is published

The first interinstitutional meeting takes place on **NextGenerationEU** and the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework

15.7

The **EU-India Summit** takes place via videoconference



21.7

EU leaders agree on the **recovery plan and multiannual financial framework** for 2021-2027

23.7

**Round 6** of the negotiations with the United Kingdom

## AUGUST

4.8

Within hours of the deadly **explosion in Beirut**, the **EU's Civil Protection Mechanism** is activated. Twenty EU Member States and participating countries respond with in-kind emergency assistance, including nearly 300 search-and-rescue experts



21.8

**Round 7** of the negotiations with the United Kingdom

27.8

The Commission signs its **first contract with a pharmaceutical company**, AstraZeneca, which will allow the purchase of a vaccine against COVID-19 for all EU Member States



31.8

The Commission confirms its interest in participating in the **COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX)** for equitable access to affordable COVID-19 vaccines and, as part of a Team Europe effort, announces a contribution of EUR 400 million in guarantees to support COVAX

## SEPTEMBER

10.9

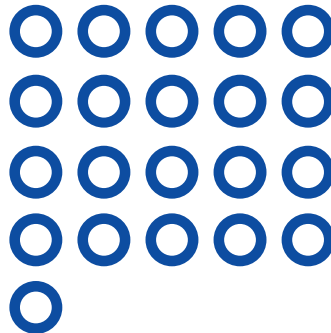
**Round 8** of the negotiations with the United Kingdom

## | LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS SINCE 1 DECEMBER 2019

64 agreed proposals



210 pending proposals  
(of which 19 announced for withdrawal)



36 pending proposals related to the coronavirus response



### CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE

828 decisions

and other legislative or non-legislative acts using oral, written and empowerment procedures, including **373 State aid decisions**

