Glossary of summaries

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Established in 1957, the European Commission now comprises 28 Commissioners including its President. It acts in the EU’s general interest with complete independence from national governments and is accountable to the European Parliament. It has the right of initiative to propose laws in a wide range of policy areas. In the fields of justice and home affairs, it shares a right of initiative with EU countries. Like the European Parliament and the Council, EU citizens may also call on the Commission to propose laws by means of the European Citizens’ Initiative.

The Commission has the right to adopt non-legislative acts, in particular delegated and implementing acts, and has important powers to ensure fair conditions of competition between EU businesses.

The Commission oversees the implementation of EU law. It executes the EU’s budget and manages funding programmes. It also exercises coordinating, executive and management functions, as laid down in the Treaties. It represents the EU around the world in areas not covered by the common foreign and security policy, for example in trade policy and humanitarian aid.

The Commission comprises Directorates-General (departments) and Services which are mainly located in Brussels and Luxembourg.

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