

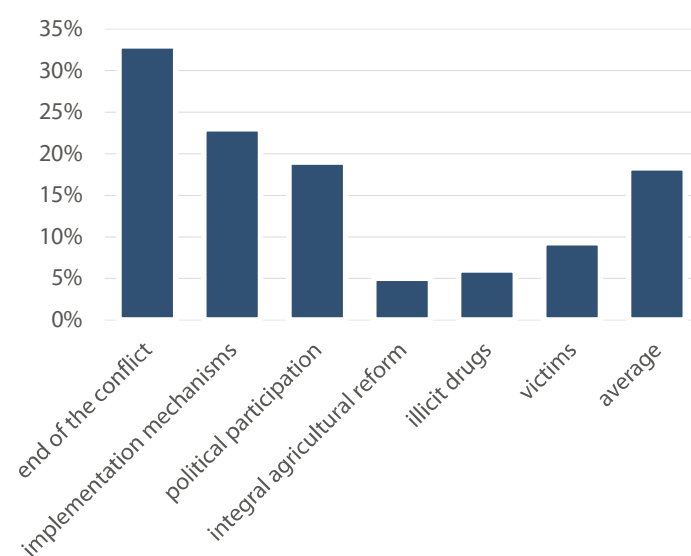
Implementation of Colombia's peace agreement

In the year since the signature of the new final peace agreement on 24 November 2016, the peace process in Colombia has not progressed smoothly. Although the disarmament of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and its transformation into a political party, as well as the reduction in violence associated with the conflict, have been a success, aspects such as reintegrating FARC members into civilian life, legal implementation, and rural reform are lagging behind. This is likely to influence the country's presidential and legislative elections due to be held in 2018.

State of play

According to the Observatory for the Follow-up of the Agreement's Implementation (OIAP), in its [fifth report](#) of 5 January 2018, an average of only 18.3 % of all elements of the new final peace agreement have been implemented (see Figure 1). The [new agreement](#) replaces the original version that was rejected by the Colombian people in a 2016 plebiscite, and was revised to meet opposition proposals. Although some aspects, such as those related to ending the conflict, implementing mechanisms, and political participation, have seen greater progress, much remains to be done, in particular on rural reform, illicit drugs, or victims' rights.

Figure 1 – Legal and institutional implementation of the Peace Agreement in 2017 (%)



Source: OIAP fifth report 'La Paz en Deuda', 5 January 2018.

Fifth report of the Observatory for the Follow-up of the Agreement's Implementation (OIAP)

According to the report, a) progress has been made in bringing the conflict to an end, but much remains to be done on building peace; b) implementation must be integral, more forceful, and more intense; c) political participation for victims continues to be denied, and substantial reforms (rural reform, elimination of illicit drugs) lack consolidation; e) stable and durable peace will not be possible without completing these reforms; f) the 2018 legislative and presidential elections will probably serve as a second plebiscite on the final agreement and its implementation; g) the agreement is not just a matter of domestic policy, but also a state commitment to the international community; h) victims and excluded communities do not yet enjoy the rights derived from building peace; i) Colombian institutions seem unable to adopt the necessary reforms and adapt to peace; j) Colombian society must still find a way to make a national pact towards peace; and k) if the pending issues are not properly addressed, new forms of rural and urban violence might arise.

This document provides an update of a [briefing](#) on the Colombian peace process published in October 2016, following the rejection by the Colombian people of the initial peace agreement.



Peace talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN)

The peace talks initiated with the ELN were [suspended](#) on 29 January 2018 after the ELN perpetrated three terrorist attacks against Colombian security forces, ending a 101-day [truce](#) agreed in September 2017. The public phase of [negotiations](#) between the Colombian government and the ELN was launched in October 2017 in Quito (Ecuador), following a series of [exploratory dialogues](#) in Caracas (Venezuela).

2018 elections

Legislative and presidential [elections](#) will be held in Colombia in March and May 2018, respectively. The FARC, which has transformed itself into a political party (Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común), will participate for the first time, with its leader Rodrigo Londoño (sometimes known as 'Timochenko') as presidential candidate, and 74 candidates for the legislative elections – where the party has [10 seats](#), guaranteed by the peace agreement. Londoño has recently denounced right-wing [paramilitary violence](#) against FARC members, claiming that 47 have been murdered since the agreement's signature. The final peace agreement and its implementation are likely to be an important issue in the forthcoming elections, and election results, in turn, may influence the agreement's implementation.

EU support for the process

Since 2000, [EU support](#) for the Colombian peace process reached [almost €2 billion](#) (including the [€575 million](#) announced by the EU for the post-conflict period, and €910 million allocated bilaterally by Member States between 2010 and 2015). The EU has focused on local production and income generation, citizens' participation and victims' rights. From 2002 to 2012, [EU PEACE laboratories](#) supported 614 projects, benefiting over 300 000 persons and 220 municipalities. Since 2012, bilateral cooperation through budget support (€120 million) has targeted rural development policy, social sustainable development and regional competitiveness. In December 2016, the [EU Trust Fund](#) for Colombia was established, with a total contribution of €95 million from the EU budget and from 19 Member States, to support the implementation of the peace agreement in the early recovery and post-conflict stabilisation phase, and with the main focus on rural development; projects for over 60 % of the Fund have already been approved. In addition to the Trust Fund, the Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace ([IcSP](#)) has mobilised an [extra €40 million](#) for critical elements of the peace process, such as achieving an effective transitional justice system. On 6 December 2017, the EU signed four human and gender rights [projects](#) for over €1.7 million. EU cooperation focuses on areas such as victims' rights, reintegration of ex-FARC guerrillas into civilian life, de-mining (over €17.8 million over the last five years), rural development, land restitution, environment, conflict resolution, rapid reaction projects related to peace and the post-conflict period, as well as the establishment of a [Special Investigation Unit](#) in the Prosecutor-General's office to combat crime and protect activists. EU Special Envoy, Eamon Gilmore, considers the EU role in this process a great success, and a [model](#) to follow for EU external policy.

European Parliament follow-up

In its [resolution](#) on EU political relations with Latin America of 13 September 2017, the European Parliament reiterated its support for the peace process. The EP stressed 'the importance of involving the whole of Colombian society' and of 'guaranteeing the safety and protection of human rights activists and community leaders'. It urged the EU and its Member States 'to continue their political and financial support', and backed 'the role of the VP/HR's Special Envoy for Colombia' (currently Eamon Gilmore). Parliament had previously expressed its support for the process in a [resolution](#) of 20 January 2016, and sent a [delegation](#) to accompany the peace process and witness the [plebiscite](#) on the agreement in September 2016.

The European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, [Christos Stylianides](#), on behalf of Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) Federica Mogherini, made a [statement](#) in the Parliament's January 2018 [plenary session](#), to take stock of the achievements in the peace process to date as well as EU support. He particularly stressed the EU efforts to protect victims of violence and human rights defenders. He ensured that the EU will make use of all its instruments for humanitarian aid and its strategies in the fields of gender, human rights and democracy-building; noted the decision to propose the extension of bilateral cooperation with Colombia until 2020; and concluded that there is a vital interest in supporting the peace process in Colombia. This statement was followed by a debate.