

Keeping Genoa's Commitments: The 2002 G8 Research Group Compliance Report June 2002

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Overview

Because the G7/G8 consists of autonomous, sovereign states with democratically elected leaders who are driven by differing national interests and domestic demands, there are real limits to how much commitments collectively made at one moment can constrain or produce compliance in national government behaviour the coming year. It makes little sense, however, for the Summit leaders to invest their time and resources, potentially risking their political and personal reputations, in order to generate collective agreements if they do not comply with these commitments once they return home at Summit's end. By this standard, the Genoa-hosted G7/G8 Summit demonstrated that these meetings do matter, for it yielded tangible and credible commitments that were timely, appropriate and highly ambitious.

Since the conclusion of the Genoa Summit in July 2001, the G7/G8 have complied with their priority commitments made across 9 major issue areas 49.5% of the time (see Table A). This average is based on a scale whereby 100% equals perfect compliance, and -100% means that the member governments are in fact doing the opposite of what they committed to.

Compliance scores following the Genoa Summit varied widely by issue area, with commitments focused on international terrorism and debt of the poorest scoring perfect compliance scores across all Summit countries¹. Compliance scores were also high in the areas of international trade, infectious diseases and bridging the digital divide, followed by universal primary education. A "work in progress"² was found for commitments associated with the Genoa African Action Plan, while a score in the negative range was revealed for commitments relating to the strengthening of the International Financial System.

The highest complying Summit member across the 9 major issue areas was Canada, the next country in the hosting order, with a score of 82%. Canada's score is followed by France and the UK, both tied at 69%; Germany with 59%; Italy with 57%; Japan with 44%; the US with 35%; and the newest G8 member, Russia with only 11%.

The overall Genoa compliance average of 49.5% compares favourably with the 39% compliance record of the 1999 Cologne Summit, 45% in Birmingham in 1998, 27% in Denver in 1997, and 36 % in Lyon in 1996 (see pg 4: <http://www.g7.utoronto.ca/g7/evaluations/2001compliance/2001reportComp.pdf>). The Okinawa Summit of 2000, which yielded an exceptionally impressive compliance score of 81.4%, established an extremely high precedent for Summits to follow.

¹ Information on debt of the poorest was not available for Russia.

² "Work in progress" is depicted by an overall average score of "0".

Table A: Summary Scores³

	Canada	France	Germany	Italy	U.K.	U.S.	Japan	Russia	Individual Issue Average
Fighting Terrorism	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1.0
Bridging the Digital Divide	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	-1	+0.75
Infectious Diseases	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	0	+1	+0.75
Genoa African Action Plan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Universal Primary Education	+1	+1	0	0	+1	0	+1	N/A	+0.58
Economic Growth – Trade	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+0.88
Economic Growth – Strengthening International Financial System	+1	0	0	0	0	-1	-1	N/A	-1.0
Economic Growth – HIPC	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	N/A	+1.0
Environment ⁴	+0.34	+0.17	+0.34	+0.17	+0.17	+0.17	0	0	+0.17
Overall Totals	+7.34	+6.17	+5.34	+5.17	+6.17	+3.17	+4.0	+1.0	+4.13
Overall Issue Average									+0.46
Overall Country Average	+0.82	+0.69	+0.59	+0.57	+0.69	+0.35	+0.44	+0.11	+0.53
Overall Compliance Average									+0.495

The average score by issue area is the average of all countries' compliance scores for that issue. The average score by country is the average of all issue area compliance scores for a given country. Where information on a country's compliance score for a given issue area was not available, the symbol "N/A" appears in the respective column and no compliance score is awarded. Countries were excluded from the averages if the symbol "N/A" appears in the respective column.

³ For a complete compliance methodological explanation, visit the G8 web site at: <http://www.g7.utoronto.ca/g7/evaluations/methodology/g7c2.htm>

⁴ Environment commitments for Genoa span across six issue areas including: Conference of the Parties 6 (COP6); Global Environment Facility (GEF); Energy; World Summit on Sustainable Development; Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs); Export Credit Agencies (ECAs); and the OECD. The environment scores for each G8 country represents an average score across the six environment sub-issues assessed.