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The
G20 Research Group
at Trinity College at the Munk School of Global Affairs
in the University of Toronto
presents the

2016 G20 Hangzhou Summit Interim Compliance Report

6 September 2016 to 17 February 2017

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“The University of Toronto ... produced a detailed analysis to the extent of which each G20 country has met its commitments since the last summit ... I think this is important; we come to these summits, we make these commitments, we say we are going to do these things and it is important that there is an organisation that checks up on who has done what.”

— *David Cameron, Prime Minister, United Kingdom, at the 2012 Los Cabos Summit*

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Preface

Since the G20 leaders met at their first summit in 2008 in Washington, the G20 Research Group at the University of Toronto and the Center for International Institutions Research of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA), formerly with the International Organizations Research Institute at the National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE), in Moscow have produced reports on their progress in implementing the priority commitments made at each summit. These reports monitor each G20 member's efforts to implement a carefully chosen selection of the many commitments produced at each summit. The reports are offered to the general public and to policy makers, academics, civil society, the media and interested citizens around the world in an effort to make the work of the G20 more transparent, accessible and effective, and to provide scientific data to enable the meaningful analysis of the causes of compliance and the impact of this important informal international institution. Previous reports are available at the G20 Information Centre at <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/analysis>.

The G20 Research Group has been working with Marina Larionova's team at RANEPA and previously at HSE since initiating this G20 compliance research in 2009, after the Washington Summit in November 2008. The initial report, covering only one commitment made at that summit, tested the compliance methodology developed by the G8 Research Group and adapted it to the G20.

To make its assessments, the G20 Research Group relies on publicly available information, documentation and media reports. To ensure accuracy, comprehensiveness and integrity, we encourage comments from stakeholders. Indeed, scores can be recalibrated if new material becomes available. All feedback remains anonymous. Responsibility for the contents of this report lies exclusively with the authors and analysts of the G20 Research Group.

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Introduction and Summary

The G20 2016 Hangzhou Interim Compliance Report is prepared by the G20 Research Group based at the University of Toronto and its Russian partners at the Center for International Institutions Research of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA). The report analyzes compliance by G20 members with a selection of 19 priority commitments of a total of 213 commitments made at the Hangzhou Summit hosted by China on 4-5 September 2016. The report covers relevant actions taken by the G20 members between 6 September 2016 to 17 February 2017. This timeframe allows for an assessment of compliance at the midway point between the 2016 Hangzhou Summit and the 2017 Hamburg Summit, which will be hosted by Germany on 7-8 July 2017.

Methodology and Scoring System

This report draws on the methodology developed by the G8 Research Group, which has been monitoring G7/8 compliance since 1996 (the International Organisations Research Institute at the Higher School of Economics (IORI HSE) joined this multiyear project in 2005, and Bond University participated in 2014). The use of this methodology builds cross-institutional and cross-member consistency and also allows compatibility with compliance assessments of other institutions.

The methodology uses a scale from -1 to +1, where +1 indicates full compliance with the stated commitment, -1 indicates a failure to comply or action taken that is directly opposite to the stated instruments or goal of the commitment, and 0 indicates partial compliance or work in progress, such as initiatives that have been launched but are not yet near completion and whose full results can therefore not be assessed. Each member assessed receives a score of -1, 0 or +1 for each commitment. For convenience, the scores in the tables have been converted to percentages, where -1 equals 0 per cent and +1 equals 100 per cent.¹

A -1 compliance score does not necessarily imply an unwillingness to comply on the part of G20 members. In some cases, policy actions can take multiple compliance cycles to implement and measure. As the G20 Research Group and RANEPA (formerly the research team at IORI HSE) continue to monitor developments, progress made by members can be recorded in future compliance reports.

The Compliance Coding Manual that describes the methodology in detail is available on the G20 Information Centre website at <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/analysis/index.html#method>.

Commitment Breakdown

The G20 made a total of 213 commitments at the Hangzhou Summit.² These commitments, as identified by the G20 Research Group and RANEPA, are drawn from the official G20 Leaders' Communiqué, Blueprint on Innovative Growth and the Hangzhou Action Plan.

Selection of Commitments

For each compliance cycle (that is, the period between summits), the research team selects commitments that reflect the breadth of the G20 agenda and also reflect the priorities of the summit's host, while balancing the selection to allow for comparison with past and future summits, following the methodology developed by the G8 Research Group. The selection also replicates the breakdown of issue areas and the proportion of commitments in each one. Primary criteria for

¹ The formula to convert a score into a percentage is $P = 50 \times (S + 1)$, where P is the percentage and S is the score.

² A commitment is defined as a discrete, specific, publicly expressed, collectively agreed statement of intent; a promise by summit members that they will undertake future action to move toward, meet or adjust to an identified target. More details are contained in the Reference Manual for Summit Commitment and Compliance Coding).

priority commitment selection are the comprehensiveness and relevance to the summit, the G20 and the world, as well as individual and collective pledges. Selected commitments must also meet secondary criteria of performance measurability and ability to comply to some degree within a year, as well as tertiary criteria of significance as identified by scientific teams and relevant stakeholders in the host country.

For the 2016 Hangzhou Interim Compliance Report, 19 priority commitments were selected for assessment by the University of Toronto and RANEPa teams from the 213 commitments made at the Hangzhou Summit (see Table 1).

Interim Compliance Scores

The assessment is based on relevant, publicly available information relating to actions taken from 6 September 2016 to 17 February 2017. The interim compliance scores by commitment are contained in Table 2. Country rankings are listed in Table 3 and commitment rankings are listed in Table 4.

For the period from 6 September 2016 to 17 February 2017, G20 members achieved an average final compliance score of +0.45, which translates to 72%.

Interim Compliance by Member

For compliance with the Hangzhou Summit's priority commitments at the midway point between summits, Canada and Australia have the highest rate of compliance at +0.79 (89%), followed by China at +0.63 (82%), and Germany, France and the European Union at +0.58 (79%). The lowest scoring member is Italy with +0.16 (58%). The difference between the highest and lowest G20 member compliance scores is +0.63. For more information about compliance by G20 members, see Table 3.

Interim Compliance by Commitment

This particular compliance cycle has produced a high level of compliance for several areas so far. The commitment on technologies and innovation (knowledge diffusion and technology transfer) ranked highest at +1.00 (100%), followed by the commitment on investment at +0.95 (98%) and on development (tax administration) at +0.90 (95%). The lowest score was on energy (fossil fuels subsidies) at -0.80 (10%). For more information on scoring by commitment, see Table 4.

Table 1: 2016 G20 Hangzhou Summit Commitments Selected for Compliance Monitoring

1	Macroeconomics: Growth policy tools	“We are determined to use all policy tools — monetary, fiscal and structural — individually and collectively to achieve our goal of strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
2	Innovation	“To achieve innovation-driven growth and the creation of innovative ecosystems, we support dialogue and cooperation on innovation, which covers a wide range of domains with science and technology innovation at its core.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
3	Development: Tax administration	“[We will continue our support for international tax cooperation to achieve a globally fair and modern international tax system and to foster growth, including advancing] tax capacity-building of developing countries” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
4	Corruption	“We endorse the 2017-2018 G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan to improve public and private sector transparency and integrity, implementing our stance of zero tolerance against corruption, zero loopholes in our institutions and zero barriers in our actions.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
5	Energy: Fossil Fuel Subsidies	“We also reaffirm our commitment to rationalize and phase-out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption over the medium term, recognizing the need to support the poor.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
6	Climate Change	“We reiterate our commitment to sustainable development and strong and effective support and actions to address climate change.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
7	Trade: Anti-protectionism	“We extend our commitments to standstill and rollback of protectionist measures till the end of 2018, reaffirm our determination to deliver on them.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
8	Trade: E-commerce	“[We endorse the G20 Strategy for Global Trade Growth, under which the G20 will lead by example to] promote e-commerce development” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
9	2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development	“We commit to contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by setting an example through bold, transformative collective and intended national actions in a wide range of areas.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
10	Employment: Gender	“We will further develop the G20 employment plans in 2017 to address these commitments and monitor progress in a systemic and transparent manner in achieving the G20 goals especially on youth employment and female labor participation.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
11	Migration and Refugees	“The G20 will continue to address forced displacement in 2017 with a view to developing concrete actions.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
12	Financial Regulation: Terrorism	“In confronting terrorism, we remain committed to effectively exchanging information, freezing terrorist assets, and criminalizing terrorist financing.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
13	Technologies and Innovation: Knowledge diffusion and technology transfer	“We support effort to promote voluntary knowledge diffusion and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and conditions.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)

14	Financial Regulation: Financial Sector Reform Agenda	“To this end, we remain committed to finalizing remaining critical elements of the regulatory framework and to the timely, full and consistent implementation of the agreed financial sector reform agenda, including Basel III and the total-loss-absorbing-capacity (TLAC) standard as well as effective cross-border resolution regimes.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
15	Tax: Base erosion and profit shifting	“We will continue our support for international tax cooperation to achieve a globally fair and modern international tax system and to foster growth, including advancing on-going cooperation on base erosion and profits shifting (BEPS)” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
16	Energy: Energy efficiency	“We encourage members to significantly improve energy efficiency based on the specific needs and national circumstances of each member” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
17	Trade: Trade costs	“We endorse the G20 Strategy for Global Trade Growth, under which the G20 will lead by example to lower trade costs” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
18	Investment	“We endorse the G20 Guiding Principles for Global Investment Policymaking, which will help foster an open, transparent and conducive global policy environment for investment.” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)
19	Corporate governance	“We support the effective implementation of the G20/OECD Principles of Corporate Governance” (G20 Hangzhou Leaders’ Communiqué)

Table 2: 2016 G20 Hangzhou Summit Interim Compliance Scores

	Argentina	Australia	Brazil	Canada	China	France	Germany	India	Indonesia	Italy	Japan	Korea	Mexico	Russia	Saudi Arabia	South Africa	Turkey	United Kingdom	United States	European Union	Average		
1	Macroeconomic: Growth	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	-1	0	+0.65	83%	
2	Innovation	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	0	0	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+0.80	90%
3	Development: Tax administration	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+0.90	95%
4	Corruption	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	0	0	+1	0	0	+1	-1	0	0	-1	-1	+1	+1	0	+0.30	65%
5	Energy: Fossil fuel subsidies	0	-1	-1	-1	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-0.80	10%
6	Climate change	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	+1	0	0	+1	-1	0	0	+1	-1	0	-1	0	+1	+1	+1	+0.35	68%
7	Trade: Antiprotectionism	0	+1	0	+1	+1	0	0	0	0	0	+1	+1	+1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	+1	+0.30	65%
8	Trade: E-commerce	0	+1	-1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	0	-1	0	0	+1	-1	+1	0	0	0	0	+0.25	63%
9	Sustainable development	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	-1	+1	-1	0	-1	0	+1	0	0	0	-1	+1	-1	+0.20	60%
10	Labour and employment: Gender	-1	0	-1	+1	-1	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	+1	0	+1	-0.10	45%
11	Migration and refugees	+1	0	+1	+1	0	0	+1	0	0	+1	+1	0	0	0	0	+1	0	+1	+1	+1	+0.45	73%
12	Financial regulation: Terrorism	+1	+1	-1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	0	+1	0	+1	+1	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+0.70	85%
13	Technologies and innovation	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1.00	100%
14	Financial regulation	0	+1	0	0	0	0	+1	+1	0	0	0	0	0	+1	0	0	+1	0	+1	+1	+0.30	65%
15	Taxes: Base erosion and profit shifting	0	+1	0	0	0	+1	+1	0	0	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	0	0	+1	+1	+1	+0.50	75%
16	Energy: Energy efficiency	0	+1	0	+1	0	+1	+1	-1	0	-1	+1	+1	+1	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	+0.20	60%
17	Trade: Trade costs	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	0	+1	0	+1	+1	0	0	+1	+1	+0.70	85%
18	Investment	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+0.95	98%
19	Corporate governance	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	+1	0	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+0.85	93%
	Average	+0.42	+0.79	+0.32	+0.79	+0.63	+0.58	+0.58	+0.32	+0.37	+0.16	+0.37	+0.37	+0.42	+0.53	+0.26	+0.21	+0.21	+0.53	+0.53	+0.58	+0.45	72%
		71%	89%	66%	89%	82%	79%	79%	66%	68%	58%	68%	68%	71%	76%	63%	61%	61%	76%	76%	79%	+0.72	

Table 3: 2016 G20 Hangzhou Summit Interim Compliance by Member

Rank	Member	Average	
1	Canada	+0.79	89%
	Australia		
3	China	+0.63	82%
4	European Union	+0.58	79%
	Germany		
	France		
7	United States	+0.53	76%
	Russia		
9	United Kingdom	+0.53	76%
10	Argentina	+0.42	71%
	Mexico		
12	Korea	+0.37	68%
	Indonesia		
	Japan		
15	India	+0.32	66%
	Brazil		
17	Saudi Arabia	+0.26	63%
18	South Africa	+0.21	61%
	Turkey		
20	Italy	+0.16	58%

Table 4: 2016 G20 Hangzhou Summit Interim Compliance by Commitment

Rank	Commitment	Average	
1	Technologies and Innovation: Knowledge diffusion and technology transfer	+1.00	100%
2	Investment	+0.95	98%
3	Development: Tax administration	+0.90	95%
4	Corporate governance	+0.85	93%
5	Innovation	+0.80	90%
6	Financial Regulation: Terrorism	+0.70	85%
	Trade: Trade costs		
7	Macroeconomics: Growth policy tools	+0.65	83%
8	Base erosion and profit shifting	+0.50	75%
9	Migration and refugees	+0.45	73%
10	Climate Change	+0.35	68%
11	Corruption	+0.30	65%
	Financial regulation: Financial sector reform agenda		
	Trade: Antiprotectionism		
12	Trade: E-commerce	+0.25	63%
13	2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development	+0.20	60%
14	Energy efficiency	+0.20	60%
15	Employment: Gender	-0.10	45%
16	Energy: Fossil fuel subsidies	-0.80	10%

Table 5: G20 Compliance by Member, 2008–2016

Member	Final		Final		Final		Final		Final		Final		Final		Final		Final		Final		Interim	
	Washington 2008		London 2009		Pittsburgh 2009		Toronto 2010		Seoul 2010		Cannes 2011		Los Cabos 2012		St. Petersburg 2013		Brisbane 2014		Antalya 2015		Hangzhou 2016	
Argentina	0	50%	-0.60	20%	-0.13	44%	0	50%	-0.08	46%	0	50%	+0.31	66%	+0.06	53%	+0.06	53%	+0.53	76%	+0.42	71%
Australia	n/a	–	+0.60	80%	+0.50	75%	+0.56	78%	+0.85	93%	+0.67	84%	+0.94	97%	+0.63	81%	+0.59	79%	+0.65	82%	+0.79	89%
Brazil	+1.00	100%	+0.20	60%	-0.63	19%	+0.29	65%	+0.42	71%	+0.60	80%	+0.56	78%	+0.31	66%	+0.12	56%	+0.53	76%	+0.32	66%
Canada	+1.00	100%	+0.60	80%	+0.63	82%	+0.78	89%	+0.69	85%	+0.73	87%	+0.75	88%	+0.44	72%	+0.71	85%	+0.65	82%	+0.79	89%
China	0	50%	-0.40	30%	+0.13	57%	+0.38	69%	+0.42	71%	+0.53	77%	+0.38	69%	+0.19	59%	+0.59	79%	+0.59	79%	+0.63	82%
France	+1.00	100%	+0.80	90%	+0.63	82%	+0.56	78%	+0.77	89%	+0.60	80%	+0.69	85%	+0.69	84%	+0.63	81%	+0.71	85%	+0.58	79%
Germany	+1.00	100%	+0.80	90%	+0.63	82%	+0.56	78%	+0.54	77%	+0.67	84%	+0.56	78%	+0.75	88%	+0.69	84%	+0.71	85%	+0.58	79%
India	0	50%	-0.40	30%	-0.38	31%	-0.29	36%	+0.42	71%	+0.60	80%	+0.50	75%	+0.63	81%	+0.59	79%	+0.65	82%	+0.32	66%
Indonesia	n/a	–	-0.40	30%	-0.63	19%	-0.13	44%	+0.36	68%	+0.14	57%	+0.47	74%	+0.50	75%	+0.12	56%	+0.18	59%	+0.37	68%
Italy	+1.00	100%	0	50%	+0.13	57%	+0.56	78%	+0.77	89%	+0.80	90%	+0.19	60%	+0.44	72%	+0.13	56%	+0.71	85%	+0.16	58%
Japan	+1.00	100%	+0.20	60%	+0.50	75%	+0.56	78%	+0.62	81%	+0.47	74%	+0.50	75%	+0.31	66%	+0.65	82%	+0.35	68%	+0.37	68%
Korea	n/a	–	0	50%	+0.75	88%	+0.56	78%	+0.46	73%	+0.60	80%	+0.63	82%	+0.38	69%	+0.65	82%	+0.53	76%	+0.37	68%
Mexico	+1.00	100%	0	50%	+0.25	63%	-0.14	43%	+0.58	79%	+0.67	84%	+0.69	85%	+0.38	69%	+0.47	74%	+0.53	76%	+0.42	71%
Russia	0	50%	+0.40	70%	+0.38	69%	+0.13	57%	+0.59	80%	+0.60	80%	+0.63	82%	+0.44	72%	+0.47	74%	+0.47	74%	+0.53	76%
Saudi Arabia	n/a	–	+0.20	60%	-0.13	44%	-0.13	44%	+0.08	54%	+0.21	61%	+0.50	75%	+0.06	53%	-0.24	38%	+0.35	68%	+0.26	63%
South Africa	+1.00	100%	+0.40	70%	+0.63	82%	-0.14	43%	+0.33	67%	+0.47	74%	+0.47	74%	+0.25	63%	-0.12	44%	+0.24	62%	+0.21	61%
Turkey	n/a	–	+0.20	60%	-0.25	38%	-0.14	43%	+0.17	59%	+0.20	60%	+0.25	63%	+0.25	63%	0	50%	+0.41	71%	+0.21	61%
UK	+1.00	100%	+1.00	100%	+0.50	75%	+0.78	89%	+0.77	89%	+0.87	94%	+0.81	91%	+0.75	88%	+0.76	88%	+0.71	85%	+0.53	76%
US	0	50%	+0.40	70%	+1.00	100%	+0.33	67%	+0.38	69%	+0.53	77%	+0.81	91%	+0.69	84%	+0.76	88%	+0.71	85%	+0.53	76%
EU	+1.00	100%	+0.60	80%	+0.38	69%	+0.57	79%	+0.82	91%	+0.85	93%	+0.75	88%	+0.63	81%	+0.75	88%	+0.81	91%	+0.58	79%
Average	+0.67	83%	+0.23	62%	+0.24	62%	+0.28	64%	+0.50	75%	+0.54	77%	+0.57	79%	+0.44	72%	+0.42	71%	+0.55	77%	+0.45	72%

n/a = not available

Conclusions

G20 compliance performance for the chosen priority commitments, measured as a summit average, improved incrementally from the 2009 London Summit and 2009 Pittsburgh Summit (both at 62%) to the 2010 Toronto Summit (64%) and then rose with the 2010 Seoul Summit (75%), the 2011 Cannes Summit (77%) and the 2012 Los Cabos Summit (79%). With the 2013 St. Petersburg Summit, compliance dropped to 72% and the compliance with the 2014 Brisbane Summit commitments dropped to 71%. The final score for the 2015 Antalya Summit was 77%. The interim score for the 2016 Hangzhou Summit is 72%. If the G20 can improve its performance on delivering on its promises, it may validate its claim for legitimacy as a global governance institution.

Many of the commitments assessed in this report have timelines that extend beyond the 2016 Hangzhou Summit or reflect medium- and long-term priorities. A unique feature of this report is the incorporation of deadlines for commitments monitored over multiple compliance cycles. The convergence of medium- and long-term commitments and those with deadlines in the near future reflects the nature of G20 decisions as a crisis management forum and a global governance steering institution. It also illustrates the multifaceted nature of compliance assessment. As the relationship among short, medium, and long-term commitments becomes clearer, the compliance landscape for many of these priority commitments may change over the course of future compliance periods.

Future Research and Reports

The information contained in this report provides G20 members and other stakeholders with an indication of their compliance in the period immediately following the Antalya Summit. This report has been produced as an invitation for others to provide additional or more complete information on compliance during the period under study. Feedback should be sent to g20@utoronto.ca.

Considerations and Limitations

Several elements affect the findings contained in this report. While the purpose of the report is to monitor compliance with G20 commitments, it is necessary to ensure that the monitoring mechanism is realistic and considers the context within which the commitments are made. With new commitments, more attention must be paid to the initial implementation constraints faced by members. One way to accommodate these constraints is to regard the intent to implement policy measures as an illustration of compliance, or being “on track” towards compliance. This initial leeway should only be granted for new commitments; intent is not a suitable indicator of compliance for medium-term or longstanding commitments. Over time as commitments become integrated in the G20 compliance mechanism, compliance guidelines should become more stringent (as members become more accustomed to the nature of the issue and the requirements for compliance).

See also Appendix: General Considerations.

Appendix: General Considerations

In evaluating the results of this report, the following considerations should be kept in mind.

Assessments contained in this report apply to commitment-related actions taken by G20 members only since the commitments were declared publicly at the last summit.

Compliance has been assessed against a selected set of priority commitments, rather than all commitments contained in the summit documents. The selection is intended to produce a representative subset of the total body of commitments. An ideal set of priority commitments represents proportionally the amount of attention paid to each policy area in summit documents, reflects the relative ambition of summit commitments, and holds as many G20 members to account for compliance as possible.

In addition to producing commitments, summits provide value by establishing new principles and norms, creating and highlighting issues and issue areas and altering the traditional discourse used to discuss priorities. Some of the most important decisions reached at summits may be done in private and not encoded in the public record of the summit documents.

Some commitments cover several years and thus compliance takes longer than the summit-to-summit timeframe applied in this report. For this reason, full compliance (denoted by a +1 score) might not require that G20 members carry out a given commitment completely, but might instead demand clear, visible progress commensurate with the overall timetable as well as public statements of support of commitment objectives.

In some cases, a G20 member might choose not to comply with a particular summit commitment for good reason, for example if global conditions have changed dramatically since the commitment was made or if new knowledge has become available about how a particular problem can best be solved.

As each G20 member has its own constitutional, legal and institutional processes for undertaking action at the national level (and in the case of the European Union at the supranational level), each member is free to act according to its own legislative schedule. Of particular importance here is the annual schedule for creating budgets, seeking legislative approval and appropriating funds.

Commitments in G20 summit documents might also be included, in whole or in part, in documents released by other international forums, as the decisions of other international organizations or even national statements such as the State of the Union Address in the US, the Queen's Speech in the UK and the Speech from the Throne in Canada. Merely repeating a G20 commitment in another forum does not count fully as compliant behaviour.

This report assesses G20 members' action in accordance with the text of actual, specific commitments made in G20 summit documents. Because commitments demand that policymakers and regulators act specifically to meet the identified objectives, this report holds policymakers accountable for pushing and passing recommended policies. Furthermore, compliance is assessed against the precise, particular commitment, rather than what might be regarded as a necessary or appropriate action to solve the problem being addressed.

As individual members can take different actions to comply with the same commitment, no standardized cross-national evaluative criterion can be universally applied. The interpretive guidelines attempt to provide an equitable method for assessing compliance.

Because the evaluative scale used in this compliance report runs from -1 to +1, any score in the positive range represents at least some degree of compliance.