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Pioneers – some of the architects of the European project


Their contribution to lasting peace and prosperity...

A collection of six black and white portraits of key figures in the European project, arranged over a background image of a war-torn city. The portraits are: Konrad Adenauer (top left), Simone Veil (top middle), Alcide De Gasperi (top right), Robert Schuman (bottom left), Winston Churchill (bottom middle), and Jean Monnet (bottom right).


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The EU symbols







The motto:
United in diversity




The European anthem



The euro



The European flag



Europe Day, 9 May

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24 official languages





Български	English	latviešu valoda	português
Čeština	español	lietuvių kalba	Română
dansk	français	magyar	slovenčina
Deutsch	Gaeilge	Malti	slovenščina
eesti keel	hrvatski	Nederlands	suomi
Ελληνικά	Italiano	polki	svenska

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The big enlargement: uniting east and west



- 1989** Fall of Berlin Wall – end of Communism
EU economic help begins: Phare programme
- 1992** Criteria set for a country to join the EU:
- democracy and rule of law
 - functioning market economy
 - ability to implement EU laws
- 1998** Formal negotiations on enlargement begin
- 2002** Copenhagen summit agrees to a big enlargement of 10 new countries
- 2004** Ten new EU members: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia
- 2007** Bulgaria and Romania join the EU
- 2013** Croatia joins on 1 July




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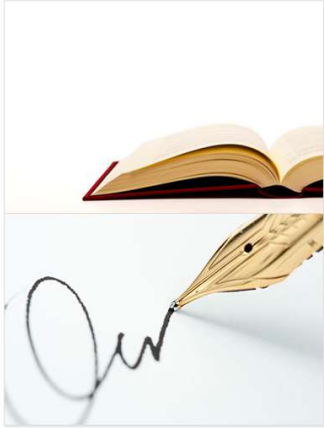
Candidate countries and potential candidates



Country	Population (millions) in 2018
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.5
Montenegro	0.6
Kosovo under UN Security Resolution 1244	1.8
North Macedonia	2.1
Albania	2.9
Serbia	7.0
Turkey	79.8

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The treaties – basis for democratic cooperation built on law 



1952	The European Coal and Steel Community
1958	The treaties of Rome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The European Economic Community • The European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM)
1987	The European Single Act: the Single Market
1993	Treaty on European Union - Maastricht
1999	Treaty of Amsterdam
2003	Treaty of Nice
2009	Treaty of Lisbon

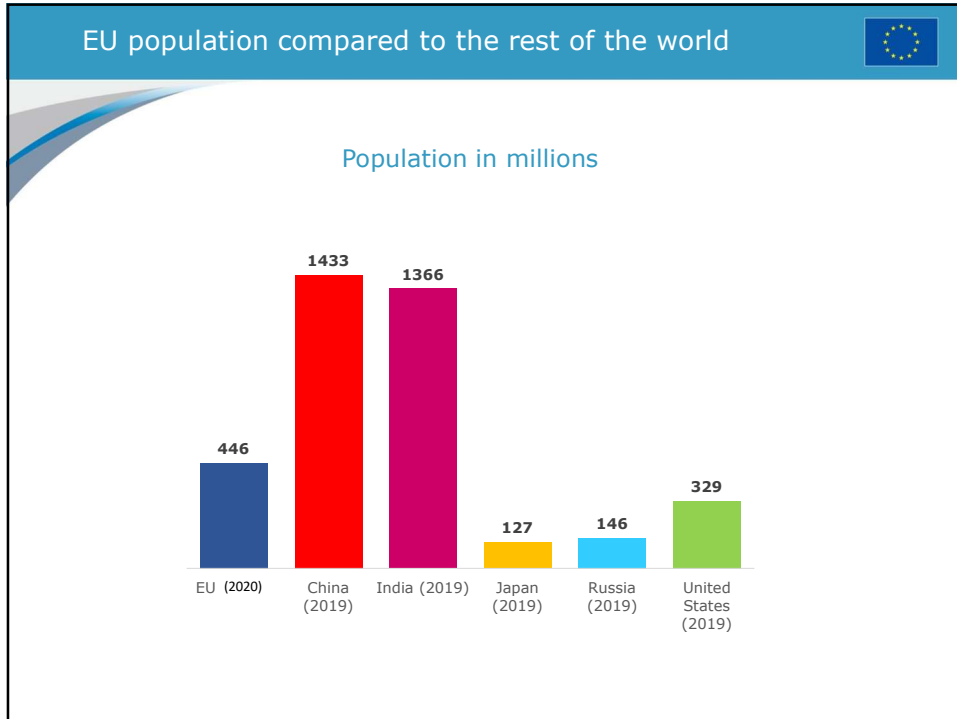
7

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights 

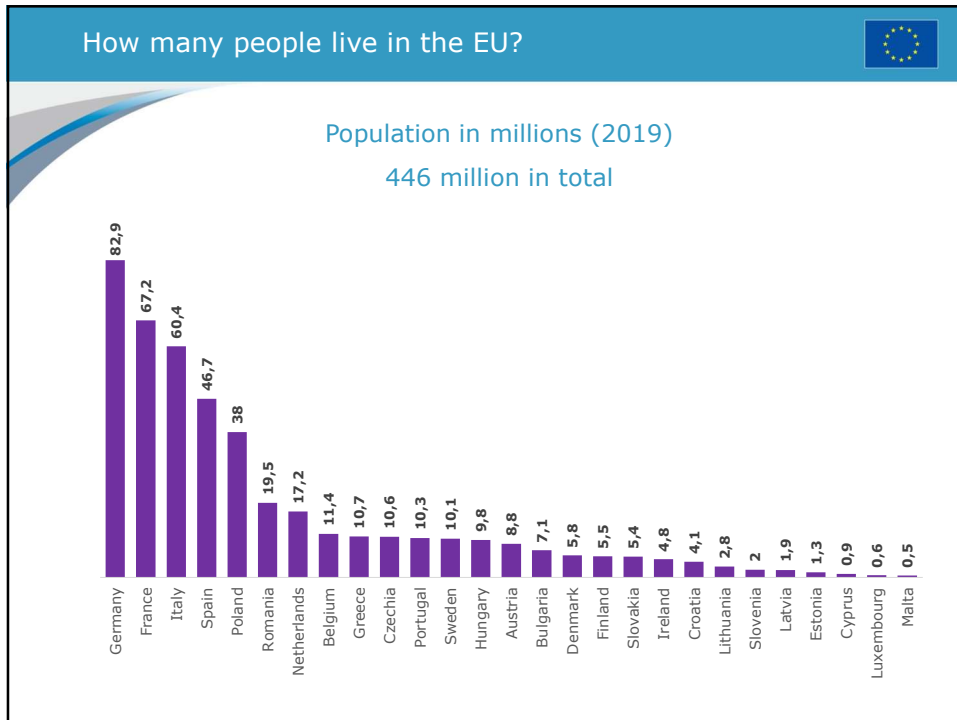
Binding for all the EU's activities
54 articles under 6 titles:

<p>Dignity</p> 	<p>Freedom</p> 	<p>Equality</p> 
<p>Solidarity</p> 	<p>Citizens' rights</p> 	<p>Justice</p> 

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10

The European economy: stronger together

2008: Worldwide financial crisis starts in the United States.
Coordinated response from European leaders:

- **Commitment to the euro and to financial stability**
- **New crisis management tools and reforms of rules:**
 - European Stability Mechanism: fund to help countries in extraordinary economic difficulties
 - New laws for stability of banks
 - Banking Union: EU-wide supervision of banks and a mechanism to close down failing banks
- **Better economic governance:**
 - European Semester: annual procedure to coordinate public budgets
 - Euro+ pact, 'Fiscal compact treaty': mutual commitments to sound public finances

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An investment plan for Europe

The European Fund for Strategic Investments

The Investment Plan for Europe, adopted in November 2014, uses public guarantees to stimulate private investment.


The plan's **European Fund for Strategic Investments** has already mobilised €439 billion worth of investments (by October 2019), exceeding expectations.

The plan's investments have supported the creation of 1.1 million jobs, a figure set to rise to 1.7 million by 2022.

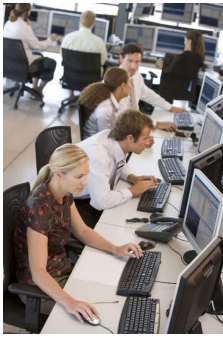
More than one million small and medium-sized companies are set to benefit from improved access to finance and the plan has helped to boost EU Gross Domestic Product by 0.9%.

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Banking union: safe and reliable banks



The EU's response to the financial crisis:



- **Rulebook:**

New laws to ensure that banks have adequate capital and better risk control
- **Supervision:**

The European Central Bank supervises the +/- 130 of the most important banks


National bank supervisors work closely together
- **Resolution:**

A Europe-wide Single Resolution Board can decide to wind down a failing bank


This is backed by a fund that banks themselves pay into, thus ensuring that taxpayers do not have to pick up the bill.

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How does the EU spend its money?




Areas financed by the EU budget (2014-2020) in billion EUR

420  **Sustainable Growth: natural resources**

- Agriculture
- Rural development
- Fisheries
- Environment and others


17.7  **Security and citizenship**


- Migration and home affairs
- Health and food safety
- Culture
- Justice
- Others

66.3  **Global Europe**


- Development and international cooperation
- Humanitarian aid
- Neighbourhood and enlargement
- Foreign policy instruments
- Others

1087

69.6  **Administration**

371.4  **Economic, social and territorial cohesion**

- Research and innovation
- Information and communications technology
- Small and medium-sized enterprises
- Low-carbon economy
- Climate change and risk
- Environment and resource efficiency
- Transport and energy
- Employment
- Social inclusion
- Vocational training
- Others

142.1  **Competitiveness for growth and jobs**


- Education
- Energy
- Industry and small and medium-sized enterprises
- Networks and technology
- Research and innovation
- Transport
- Others

Note: Commitments, adjusted for 2018. Source: European Commission

The annual EU budget in 2019 was around €165.8 billion – a large sum in absolute terms, but only about 1% of the wealth generated by the economies of the Member States every year.

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Climate change – The EU’s ambitious targets



Increasing the EU’s climate ambition for 2030 and 2050

Becoming the world’s first climate-neutral continent by 2050 is the greatest challenge and opportunity of our times. To achieve this, the European Commission presented **the European Green Deal** in December 2019.

The Green Deal is an integral part of the Commission’s strategy to implement the United Nation’s 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals.




The Commission will propose the first European ‘climate law’ by March 2020. This will enshrine the 2050 climate neutrality objective in legislation.

The EU has already started to modernise and transform the economy with the aim of climate neutrality. Between 1990 and 2018, it reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 23%, while the economy grew by 61%.

By summer 2020, the Commission will present an impact assessment plan to increase the EU’s greenhouse gas emission reductions target for 2030 to at least 50% and towards 55% compared with 1990 levels in a responsible way.

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The euro – a single currency for Europeans



Why the euro?


- No fluctuation risk and foreign exchange cost
- More choice and stable prices for consumers
- Closer economic cooperation between EU countries

Can be used everywhere in the euro area

- Coins: one side with national symbols, one side common
- Notes: no national side



■ EU countries using the euro
■ EU countries not using the euro



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The single market: freedom of choice



Four freedoms of movement:

- goods
- services
- people
- capital

The single market has led to:

- significant reductions in the price of many products and services, including airfares and phone calls
- more choice for consumers
- millions of new jobs
- more opportunities for businesses

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Connecting Europe: The Digital Single Market

Since May 2015, the European Commission has delivered most of the proposals announced in its Digital Single Market strategy. These include:

- Roaming charges ended in June 2017, so people can use their mobile device when travelling in the EU, paying the same prices as at home.
- Strong new EU rules on personal data protection came into force on 25 May 2018.
- The WiFi4EU initiative supports installing free public Wi-Fi hotspots in local communities across the EU.
- New tools to help defend people and businesses against cyberattacks.
- From 2018, new rules let people use their online subscriptions to films and TV, e-books, video games and music services when travelling within the EU.
- In 2018, plans to invest €1 billion in building a world-class European supercomputers infrastructure.

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Social Europe

Europe has the best levels of social protection in the world and ranks highly in terms of quality of life and wellbeing.

It maintains these through a number of initiatives:

- **The European Social Charter** guarantees fundamental social and economic rights. It guarantees a broad range of everyday human rights related to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare
- The **European Social Fund** is Europe's main instrument for supporting jobs, helping people get better jobs and ensuring fairer job opportunities for all EU citizens. Investment of €10 billion a year improves job prospects for millions of Europeans, in particular those who find it difficult to get work
- The **European Employment Strategy's** main aim is the creation of more and better jobs throughout the EU
- The **Youth Guarantee** is a commitment by all Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good quality offer of:
 - employment
 - continued education
 - apprenticeship
 - traineeship
 within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

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Free to move

Schengen

- No police or customs checks at borders between most EU countries, and Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Iceland.
- Controls strengthened at the EU's external borders
- More cooperation between police and immigration authorities from different EU countries
- Buy and bring back any goods for personal use when you travel between EU countries



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Going abroad to learn or volunteer



Erasmus+

Every year, more than 400 000 young people study or pursue personal development in other European countries with the support of the EU's **Erasmus+** programme for education, training, youth and sport.

In addition, Erasmus+ supports **the European Solidarity Corps** and **the European Voluntary Service**.



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An area of freedom, security and justice



- EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- Joint fight against terrorism
- Cooperation between police and law-enforcers in different EU countries
- Coordinated asylum and immigration policies
- Civil law cooperation

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The EU: an exporter of peace and prosperity

Common foreign and security policy.

The EU pursues an ambitious trade negotiation agenda and a balanced and progressive trade policy to harness globalisation.

New trade agreements with:

- Canada (2017)
- Japan (2018)
- and many more...



Development assistance and humanitarian aid.

- Civil Protection Mechanism: governmental aid delivered in the immediate aftermath of a disaster
- rescEU, a new system intended to increase overall disaster-response capacities.

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The EU: strengthening security and defence cooperation

The EU's foreign and security policy is centred on:

- Promoting international peace and security,
- Development cooperation,
- Human rights and the rule of law
- Responding to humanitarian and climate emergencies.

Internationally, the EU uses its diplomatic, political, economic, security and humanitarian tools for peaceful solutions to conflicts, in particular in Libya, Syria and Ukraine.

In December 2017, 25 Member States agreed to establish a Permanent Structured Cooperation, a legally binding framework to work together more closely on security and defence.

In 2017, a European Defence Fund was launched for cooperation in research and development for joint industrial defence products and technologies. The Fund will invest €90 million in research and €500 million in development by 2020.

In April 2019, the European Parliament endorsed plans for the Fund to receive an estimated €13 billion in the EU's next long-term budget between 2021 and 2027, and finance collaborative research projects mainly through grants.

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The EU is the biggest provider of development aid in the world



Through aid and cooperation, the European Union supports developing countries and their transition to economic and social stability.

The European Union and its Member States continued to be the world's leading provider of official development assistance in 2018 and stepped up their efforts directed at developing countries.

Collective assistance from the European Union and its Member States amounted to more than €74.4 billion in 2018.

In September 2018, the Africa–Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs was launched. Its aim is to take the EU's partnership with Africa to the next level by helping to improve job creation in Africa by supporting education and skills, boosting trade and mobilising investment in strategic economic sectors.



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Gender equality



Equality between women and men is a fundamental value of the EU

The EU aims to help women get the jobs they want and the same pay as men, and help them strike a better balance between work and other areas of life:

- **Employment:** In 2017, the share of women in work in the EU went up to 66.6%, compared to nearly 80% of men
- **Equal pay:** On average, women earn 16% less than men in the EU. In November 2017, the EU presented New Start, an Action Plan to close the gap between what women and men are paid
- **Funding:** Investing in specific actions to help get women into work include schemes to retrain and improve skills; helping women return to work after a career break, by providing quality childcare, providing individual guidance to women improving employers' awareness of the challenges faced by women
- **The Economy:** The gap in employment between men and women costs the EU economy €370 billion per year. Improving gender equality could create 10.5 million jobs by 2050 and boost the EU economy by between €1.95 and €3.15 trillion



Another major priority is to stop violence against women and girls. The EU-funded **NON.NO.NEIN campaign**, encourages men and women to take a stand on violence against women.

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Improving health and the environment



Pollution knows no borders – joint action needed



EU action has helped bring about:

- cleaner bathing water
- much less acid rain
- lead-free petrol
- easy and safe disposal of old electronic equipment
- strict rules on food safety from farm to fork
- more organic and quality farming
- more effective health warnings on cigarettes
- registration and control of all chemicals (REACH)

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Protecting consumers' rights



As a consumer you are protected by basic laws all over the EU, even when you travel or shop online

- Clear labelling
- Health and safety standards
- Unfair practice in contracts prohibited
- Passengers' rights, such as compensation for long delays
- Help to resolve problems



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Three key players



The European Parliament
- **voice of the people**

Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament



The European Council and the Council
- **voice of the Member States**

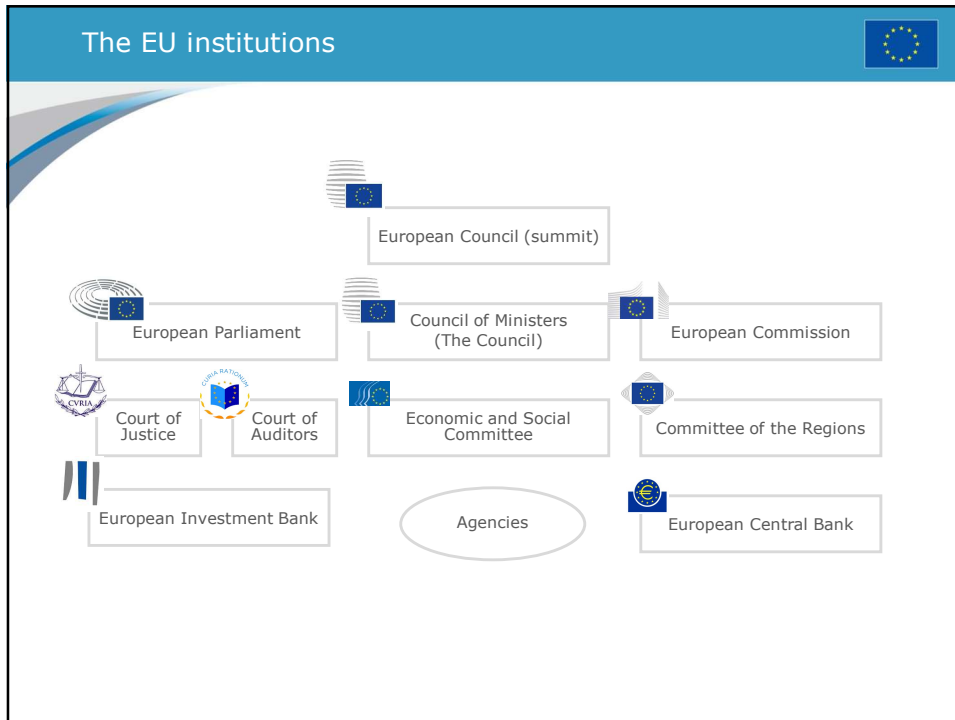
Charles Michel, President of the European Council



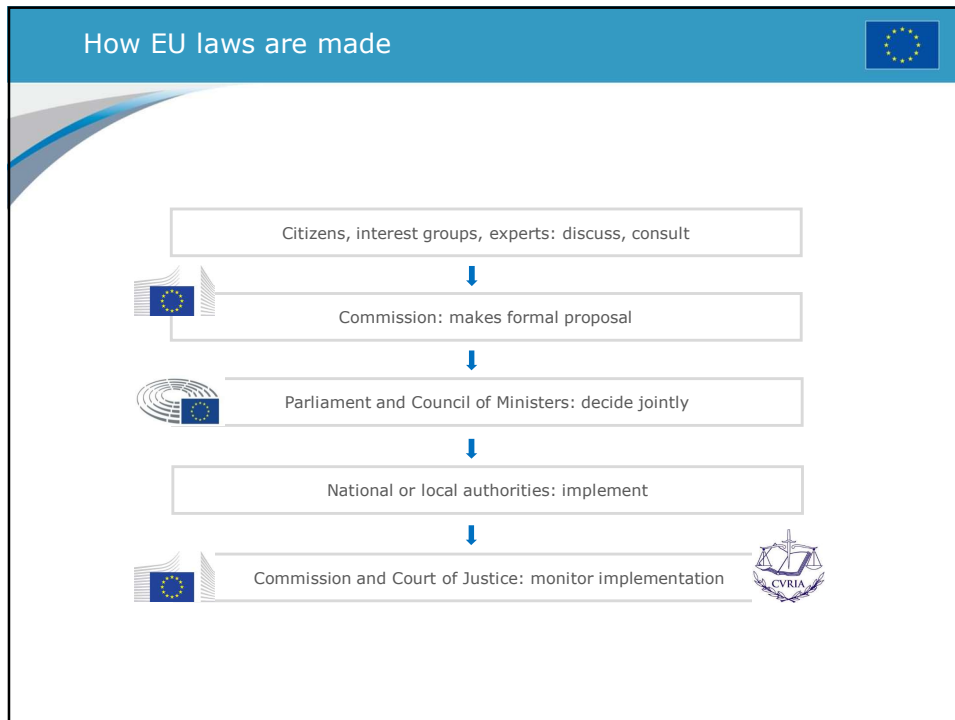
The European Commission
- **promoting the common interest**

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

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The European Parliament

The photograph shows the interior of the European Parliament's hemicycle. Numerous members are seated at desks, facing a central area where the President of the Parliament and the President of the Council of Ministers are seated. The room is large and well-lit, with a high ceiling and a semi-circular arrangement of desks.

- The [European Parliament](#) is the EU's only directly-elected institution. Its 705 Members are there to represent citizens. Elections take place every 5 years.
- The Parliament acts as a **co-legislator**, sharing with the Council the power to adopt and amend legislative proposals and to decide on the EU budget.
- It also supervises the work of the Commission and other EU bodies and cooperates with national parliaments of EU Member States to get their input.

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The European Parliament



Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) sit in groups organised according to [political affiliation](#), not by nationality. Some members do not belong to any political group and are known as non-attached Members.

The 705 MEPs, according to [political groups](#) (May 2021):

- 187 European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
- 145 Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
- 97 Renew Europe
- 74 Identity and Democracy Group
- 73 Greens/European Free Alliance
- 63 European Conservatives and Reformists
- 39 The Left group (GUE/NGL)

- 27 Members who are not attached to a political group

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Council of Ministers – voice of the Member States



- One minister from each EU country
- Presidency: rotates every six months
- Decides EU laws and budget together with Parliament
- Manages the common foreign and security policy



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Council of Ministers – how they vote



Most decisions in the Council are taken by '**double majority**'.

A decision must have the support of at least:

- 55% of Member States
- Member States that represent 65% of the EU's population

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Summit at the European Council



Summit of heads of state and government of all EU countries




- Held at least 4 times a year
- Sets the overall guidelines for EU policies
- President: Charles Michel

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The high representative for foreign affairs and security

Josep Borrell

- Double role:
 - chairs meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council
 - Vice-President of the European Commission
- Manages the common foreign affairs and security policy
- Head of the European External Action Service



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The European Commission – promoting the common interest

27 Commissioners, one from each EU country

- Proposes new legislation
- Executive organ
- Guardian of the treaties
- Represents the EU on the international stage



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The Court of Justice – upholding the law



27 independent judges, one from each EU country

- Rules on how to interpret EU law
- Ensures EU countries apply EU laws in the same way



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The European Ombudsman



Emily O'Reilly
The European Ombudsman



- Investigates complaints about poor or failed administration by the EU institutions
- For example: unfairness, discrimination, abuse of power, unnecessary delay, failure to reply or incorrect procedures
- Anyone in the EU can make a complaint

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The European Court of Auditors: getting value for your money



27 independent members

- Checks that EU funds are used properly
- Can audit any person or organisation dealing with EU funds



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The European Central Bank: managing the euro



Christine Lagarde
President of the Central Bank



- Ensures price stability
- Controls money supply and decides interest rates
- Supervises that banks are safe
- Works independently from governments

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The European Economic and Social Committee: voice of civil society



- Represents trade unions, employers, farmers, consumers and so on
- Advises on new EU laws and policies
- Promotes the involvement of civil society in EU matters



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The Committee of the Regions: voice of local government



- Represents cities and regions
- Advises on new EU laws and policies
- Promotes the involvement of local government in EU matters



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Questions about the EU? Europe Direct can help



- By phone, email or webchat
- Regional information centres across the EU

europa.eu/europedirect