

# European Union – an overview

Alexsandra Hodgson, ANME  
vice president, Nov. 06

## What is the EU



- n Union of 25 member states
- n Based on treaties
- n Delegation of sovereignty
- n Historically cooperation in economy and trade
- n 3 main organs or bodies

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## Treaties of Europe

- n Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) 1952
- n Treaty of Rome 1958
- n Merger Treaty 1967
- n Single European Act (SEA) 1987
- n Treaty on European Union Maastricht 1993
- n Treaty of Amsterdam 1999
- n Treaty of Nice 2003
- n Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe ???

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## Structure

- n A convention is missing
- n 3 main forces are balanced in the EU:
  - n Parliament
  - n Commission
  - n Council

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# The European Parliament: Voice of the people



## Competences:

- n in over 75 % of the legislation processes it is now an equal partner of the Council
  - n EU Budget has to gain approval of the parliament (except obligatory expenses like Agriculture and others)
  - n Supervision of Finances
  - n Parliament has the power to dismiss the European Commission
- n Directly elected by the people
- n has 732 members from all 25 EU countries

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Country	Population	Seats in EP bis 2004	Seats in EP from 2004	Seats in EP from 2009
Malta	400.000	--	5	5
Luxemburg	460.000	6	6	6
Zypern	800.000	--	6	6
Estland	1.400.000	--	6	6
Slowenien	1.900.000	--	7	7
Lettland	2.400.000	--	9	8
Litauen	3.600.000	--	13	12
Irland	3.700.000	15	13	12
Finnland	5.200.000	16	14	13
Dänemark	5.300.000	16	14	13
Slowakei	5.400.000	--	14	13
Bulgarien	7.500.000	--	--	17
Österreich	8.200.000	21	18	17

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Country	Population	Seats in EP bis 2004	Seats in EP from 2004	Seats in EP from 2009
Schweden	8.900.000	22	19	18
Portugal	10.000.000	25	24	22
Ungarn	10.100.000	--	24	20
Belgien	10.200.000	25	24	22
Tschechien	10.300.000	--	24	20
Griechenland	10.600.000	25	24	22
Niederlande	15.900.000	31	27	25
Rumänien	22.400.000	--	--	33
Polen	38.600.000	--	54	50
Spanien	39.400.000	64	54	50
Italien	57.800.000	87	78	72
Frankreich	59.400.000	87	78	72
Großbritannien	59.500.000	87	78	72
Deutschland	82.200.000	99	99	99
EU gesamt		626	732	732

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# Organs of the Parliament

- n President
- n Parties
- n 20 permanent committees
- n Delegations
- n Inter-groups
- n Administration of the EP

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## Parties of the EP

	MEPs
<b>Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten) und europäischer Demokraten (EVP-ED)</b> European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats (PPE-DE)	266
<b>Sozialdemokratische Fraktion im Europäischem Parlament (SPE)</b> Socialist group in the European Parliament (SPE)	201
<b>Fraktion der Allianz der Liberalen und Demokraten für Europa (ALDE)</b> Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)	89
<b>Fraktion der Grünen / Freie Europäische Allianz (Grüne/EFA)</b> Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance (Verts/ALE)	42
<b>Konföderale Fraktion der Vereinigten Europäischen Linken/Nordische Grüne Linke (KVEL/NGL)</b> Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)	41
<b>Fraktion Unabhängigkeit und Demokratie (IND/DEM)</b> Independence and Democracy Group (IND/DEM)	35
<b>Fraktion Union für das Europa der Nationen (UEN)</b> Union for Europe of the Nations Group (UEN)	27
<b>fraktionslose Abgeordnete (FL)</b> Not member of a group	29

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## President of the EP



- n Joseph Borell, Spain, Social Democrat
- n Leading of the Parliament and it's committees
- n Represents parliament
- n Together with his 14 vice presidents responsible for Parliamentary Budget

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## 20 permanent committees

- n foreign affairs (**AFET**)
- n Development (**DEVE**)
- n international Trade (**INTA**)
- n **Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection (ENVI)**
- n Civil Liberties, Justice and Home affairs (**LIBE**)
- n **Industry, Research and Energy (formerly Trade) (ITRE)**
- n regional Development (**REGI**)
- n Transport and Tourism (**TRAN**)
- n Social affairs and Employment (**EMPL**)
- n Economy, Currency and Industry (**ECON**)
- n EU Budget (**BUDG**)
- n Agriculture (**AGRI**)
- n Common Market (**IMCO**)
- n Fishing (**PECH**)
- n Budget control (**CONT**)
- n Culture and Education (**CULT**)
- n constitutional Affairs (**AFCO**)
- n Jurisprudence (**JURI**)
- n Petitions (**PETI**)
- n Woman's rights and Gender Equality (**FEMM**)

## Work in the EP permanent committees

- n the real deals are discussed here
- n meetings usually take place in Brussels, in the week after the plenary session in Strasbourg
- n on average 50 permanent members, with the same amount of deputies
- n members are elected for 2,5 years
- n for every proposal of legal act from the commission or from the parliament, a leading committee is appointed
- n a rapporteur for each special act is appointed by the committee, who writes the outlines of a report on the subject
- n the rapporteurs for each law are appointed by a very complicated system
- n this report is then discussed, possibly changed and voted on by the members of the committee
- n on the grounds of this report, the plenum decides

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## Inter-groups of the Parliament

- n informal
- n often regular
- n meetings on different topics from various MEPs of different parties with common interest.
- n important for the inter-party-dialogue
- n help to inform MEPs about subjects
- n Currently Health and Consumer Inter-group

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## Administration of EP

- n Plenary sessions normally in Strasbourg, followed by a week of working in the committees in Brussels.
- n The secretariat is in Luxembourg, hence the many employees of the parliament, 45 % of which work in translation.
- n About 15 000 People are working for the EP
- n General secretariat:
  - n responsible for a smooth order of events of the EP
  - n scientific advice for the MEPs
  - n Translation

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## The European Commission: Promoting the common interest



José Manuel Barroso, President



- n 25 Commissioners one from each of the member states
- n They are not directly elected by the people.
- n 24 000 civil servants work for the commission, mainly in Brussels, some in Luxembourg.

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## Competences of the EU Commission:

- n It represents and upholds the interests of Europe as a whole.
- n It is independent of national governments.
- n It drafts proposals for new European laws
- n It manages the day-to-day business of implementing EU policies and spending EU funds.
- n Keeps an eye out to see that everyone abides by the European treaties and laws.
- n It can act against rule-breakers, taking them to the Court of Justice if necessary.

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## 36 Directorate General

- n **DG Health and Consumer Protection** (public health, food safety, animal health, monitoring of health, tobacco and alcohol policies)
- n **DG Environment** (chemicals, pesticides, soil, air and water pollution, bio-diversity, nature reserves)
- n **DG Employment and Social Affairs** (health and safety at work, combating discrimination and poverty, maternity and parental leave).
- n **DG Internal Market** (Recognition of professional qualifications)
- n **DG Competition** (approving mergers eg; Pharma companies)
- n **DG Agriculture** (Common Agriculture Policy)
- n **DG Development** (EU is the world largest source of overseas aid)
- n **DG Education and Culture** (sport, youth policies)
- n **DG Trade** (TRIPS, GATS, access to medicines)
- n **DG Research** (scientific research on genomics, food safety, causes of diseases, environmental health)
- n **DG Information Society** (e-health applications)
- n **DG Transport and Energy** (energy generation, rail transport, road safety)
- n **DG Enterprise** (pharmaceuticals and medical devices)
- n **DG Tax and Customs** (excise duties on tobacco/alcohol)

## DG Health and Consumer Protection



- n **Markos Kyprianou,**  
Greece  
Commissioner for Health  
and Consumer Protection



- n **Robert Madelin;** UK  
Director General of  
DG Health and Consumer  
Protection

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## DG Enterprise and Industry



- n **Günter Verheugen**  
Germany, Vice President of  
the Commission  
Commissioner for  
Enterprise and Industry



- n **Heinz Zourek**  
Austria  
Director General

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## The Council of the European Union: Voice of the Member States

- n **Competences:**
  - n Legislative Organ of the EU, decides which law comes into force
  - n Since Amsterdam treaty shared responsibility in some areas together with parliament
  - n Should balance national interests to reach consensus for the community;
  - n In the areas of Employment, Economic and Currency affairs: coordination of national policies

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## Assembly of the Council

The European Council consists of the Prime-Ministers of the National Governments

The Council of Ministers: 9 different versions

- One minister or secretary of state of the corresponding field of each member state, (so i.e. Minister of foreign affairs for the council of common and foreign affairs, or the ministers of environment for the environment council etc.)
- One of the versions is the council for **Employment, Social Policy, Health and consumer Protection**

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## Meetings of the Council of ministers

- n mostly in Brussels (Justus Lipius House)
- n Some in Luxembourg
- n Some Councils meet monthly
- n Others 2-6-times a year
- n Formal and informal meetings



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## Vote proceedings:

- n unanimity decisions  
(before Amsterdam and Maastricht treaties this was the only way for EU decisions, today retained especially for monetary affairs)
- n simple majority decisions
- n in both of the above decision making proceedings every country has one vote
- n qualified majority decisions
- n here the different countries have votes according to their population

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## Supporting Organs of the Council

- n **The General Secretariat**
- n **Committee of permanent representatives**
- n **About 300 different supporting Working groups**
- n **EU Presidency**

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## The General Secretariat



- n **Javier Solana** as current General Secretary
- n his cabinet
- n Legal Service
- n 10 General Directorates (not to be mixed with the DGs of the Commission)

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## Committees of permanent representatives

- n 2 Committees are composed of the EU Ambassadors and their deputies
- n Various Committees of the permanent representatives of the Council
  - n Employment, common market, Industry, Energy
  - n Policy of common foreign affairs, security, policing, cooperation in legal/ criminal trials
- n They prepare the council meetings
- n 80 % of the decisions are pre-decided here

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## EU - Presidency



- n **Matti Vanhanen**, Finnish Prime Minister and President in office of the European Council

- n Finnland Juli-Dezember 2006
- n Deutschland Januar-Juni 2007
- n Portugal Juli-Dezember 2007
- n Slowenien Januar-Juni 2008
- n Frankreich Juli-Dezember 2008
- n Tscheche Republik Januar-Juni 2009
- n Schweden Juli-Dezember 2009
- n Spanien Januar-Juni 2010
- n Belgien Juli-Dezember 2010
- n Ungarn Januar-Juni 2011
- n Polen Juli-Dezember 2011

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## EU-Policy Making

- n 4 different Decision making (Legislation) proceedings
  - n Hearing of the Parliament
  - n Approval/ Consent with Parliament
  - n Cooperation with Parliament
  - n Co-Decision
    - n Since the treaty of Nice in 2003 there are 43 Areas of co-decision, amongst them social politics and consumer protection

Remember: the council always has the final vote on the budget...

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## Health relevant EU Institutions

- n **European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMA)**  
authorization of drugs, pharmacovigilance
  - n Herbs
  - n Homeopathic Remedies
  - n Anthroposophic Remedies
  
- n **European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)**
- n **European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)**
- n **European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)**
- n **European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)**

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vice president, Nov. 06

**Thank you for your patience**

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vice president, Nov. 06