



**C L I F F O R D**  
**C H A N C E**

A Guide to the European Union  
November 2011

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# The European Union – An Overview

**The European Union** (the EU) is the name given to the formal association of 27 European countries, or Member States, and is used to describe the geographical area covered by those countries as well as the abstract concept of the association. The establishment and operation of the EU is based on inter-governmental treaties by means of which the Member States have granted certain powers and functions to centralised EU institutions, of which the most important are the European Commission, the Council, the European Parliament and the two supranational Courts. The distribution of power both between EU institutions and Member State governments and amongst the institutions themselves is still shifting and is the subject of continuing debate.

**The European Commission** is the central administrative and policy-making body of the EU. It is made up of 27 Commissioners (nominated by the Member States and approved by the European Parliament), one of whom acts as President. The Commission formulates legislative proposals, implements Council decisions, negotiates international agreements on behalf of the EU and supervises

compliance with, and implementation of, EU law by the Member States.

**The Council** (or Council of Ministers) is the EU's principal decision-making body. At the top level it comprises government ministers of all the Member States with responsibility for a particular sector, e.g. transport ministers will convene to discuss proposed legislation on transport. The details of legislation are usually worked out at lower levels by more junior representatives of the Member States, the most important of these being the **Committee of Permanent Representatives** ("COREPER"). The European Council, a twice-yearly meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the Member States, reviews and decides on the overall policy of the EU.

**The European Parliament** is a democratically elected body with members ("MEPs") elected directly from each of the Member States and grouped according to political, rather than national, affiliation. The number of MEPs from each Member State is roughly proportionate to the Member State's population. It shares with the Council the power to legislate and it exercises democratic supervision over the Commission.

Other EU bodies such as the **Economic and Social Committee** and the **Committee of the Regions** may also play an advisory role in the legislative process.

The Commission initiates most **EU legislation**. Its proposals are then considered by the Council and the Parliament and follow one of a number of procedures as dictated by the Treaties. The most commonly used of these is the ordinary legislative procedure (formerly known as co-decision, see page 14). Legislation may be in the form of Regulations which are directly applicable in all Member States, or Directives, which need to be implemented into national law by the law-making bodies of each Member State. The EU can only legislate in areas in which there is specific authority to do so in one of the EU treaties, which are sometimes referred to as primary legislation as opposed to regulations and directives, which are referred to as secondary legislation (see *A Brief History of the European Union* below). The Treaties and, in certain circumstances, some secondary legislation, take precedence over any inconsistent national law.

## European Commission

27 Commissioners, supported by the Directorates-General and Services

## Council

consisting of Ministers from each of the 27 Member States

## European Parliament

736 MEPs\*

## Primary legislation

The Treaties, of which the most important is the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU

## Secondary legislation

Regulations, Decisions, Directives

\* From 2014, the Treaty of Lisbon allows for 751 MEPs.

# Introduction

## A Brief History of the European Union

The Treaty of Rome, which became operative on 1 January 1958, established the European Economic Community (the “EEC”) between the original six Member States – Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. The EEC – later known as the European Community (the “EC”) but now succeeded by the EU – built upon a number of principles and institutions developed within the European Coal and Steel Community (the “ECSC”) which was created in 1952 by the ECSC Treaty (also known as the Treaty of Paris). The scope of the ECSC was limited to developing a common strategy for coal and steel. Similarly, the European Atomic Energy Community (“EURATOM”), established by the EURATOM Treaty in 1958, was limited to achieving a common policy for nuclear energy. The EEC, in contrast, covered a whole range of economic activity which has been progressively increased by subsequent amending Treaties to such an extent that it is unlikely that any business could exist today in Europe without having at least some part of its operations influenced by laws deriving from the Treaty of Rome.

In 1986, the Single European Act (“SEA”) was signed, entering into force on 1 July 1987. This Treaty made significant procedural amendments, particularly in the area of law-making, where it increased the influence of the Parliament and the use of qualified majority voting in the Council at the expense of unanimity for proposed legislation. This made possible a relatively rapid creation of the internal market.

The Treaty on the European Union, more commonly known as the Maastricht Treaty, built on the foundations of previous Treaties to extend the area of European competence still further. The Maastricht Treaty, which came into force on 1 November 1993, created the

“European Union”. This was often described as a three pillar structure. The first pillar was constituted by the existing Communities (the ECSC, EURATOM and the EC), albeit with new institutions and powers (or competencies) added to those provided for in the Treaty of Rome. The EEC Treaty, by which name the Treaty of Rome was also known, was renamed the “EC” Treaty to emphasise its broader scope. The Maastricht Treaty identified the goal of Economic and Monetary Union but also gave the EU new competencies (or a more active role) in areas such as consumer protection, trans-European networks, public health, development co-operation, visa policy, industrial policy, education and culture. The other two pillars of the European Union deal with the Common Foreign and Security Policy and increased co-operation in Justice and Home Affairs.

The functioning of the European Union, as established by the Maastricht Treaty, was reviewed by an Intergovernmental Conference (“IGC”), which culminated in the signing of the Amsterdam Treaty in October 1997. The Amsterdam Treaty, which came into force on 1 May 1999, failed, however, to make institutional reforms necessary for further enlargement. Another IGC on institutional reform was held in 2000. Agreement was reached in December 2000 on the draft of a new treaty, known as the Treaty of Nice, which amended the Treaty on the European Union, the Treaties establishing the European Communities and the Protocol on Enlargement of the European Union.

A new draft Constitutional Treaty for Europe (“the Constitutional Treaty”) was adopted by the European Council in June 2004 but was never ratified due to its failure in referenda in France and the Netherlands in 2005.

The Lisbon Treaty, which was signed on 13 December 2007 and entered into force on 1 December 2009, significantly extended the powers of the European

Parliament and extended qualified majority voting in the Council to policy areas that had required unanimous agreement to legislate on. This latest treaty also gave the EU legal personality, created the roles of President of the European Council and High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, abolished the three pillar structure and incorporated the Charter of Fundamental Rights into primary EU legislation. In addition, the Lisbon Treaty renamed the EC Treaty the “Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union” (“TFEU”) and extended the powers of the EU in various areas including energy, climate change, intellectual property, sport, humanitarian aid, civil protection, space research, tourism and administrative cooperation.

The European Union has undergone a process of steady enlargement, beginning with the entry of the UK, Ireland and Denmark on 1 January 1973, Greece on 1 January 1981 and Spain and Portugal on 1 January 1986. Austria, Finland and Sweden became members of the EU on 1 January 1995. On 1 May 2004, the EU was enlarged to include Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Bulgaria and Romania joined on 1 January 2007. On 16 December 2004, EU Heads of State and Government agreed to open accession negotiations with Turkey. Negotiations started on 3 October 2005, with no guaranteed outcome, although the ultimate goal is EU membership. On 30 June 2011, EU Member States decided to close accession negotiations with Croatia; its accession is foreseen for 1 July 2013. After the formal opening of negotiations with Iceland on 27 July 2010, the first four chapters of negotiations on Iceland’s accession to the EU were opened at an intergovernmental conference on 27 June 2011. As to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Commission recommended the opening of accession

negotiations in October 2009. On 17 December 2010, the European Council granted Montenegro candidate status.

Member State(s)	Date of Accession	Total Number of Members
Belgium France Germany Italy Luxembourg The Netherlands	Founding Members – 1958	6
Denmark Ireland United Kingdom	1973	9
Greece	1981	10
Portugal Spain	1986	12
Austria Finland Sweden	1995	15
Cyprus Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Malta Poland Slovakia Slovenia	2004	25
Bulgaria Romania	2007	27

## Status and Objectives of the European Union

As explained above, the European Union was brought into existence by a series of multilateral treaties between sovereign states, signed and ratified in accordance with their customary constitutional procedures. These treaties, as amended, are the source of constitutional law of the EU. They set out the objectives of the EU, create its institutions and regulate its functioning. The extent to which the institutions can make laws directly affecting business and people in the Member States within the EU's defined objectives and competencies gives the European Union a very different and much more powerful character than other international organisations.

The EU's objectives and competencies are set out in the preambles and sections of the various treaties. Its fundamental task is to establish an internal market, Economic and Monetary Union, and "an ever closer Union among the peoples of Europe". The internal market is to be achieved through the establishment of four "freedoms": free movement of goods, persons, services and capital. In addition to this, the Member States of the EU are to develop common economic policies in the areas of fair competition, the environment,

consumer protection, research and development, transport, energy, agriculture and external trade. To this, the Maastricht Treaty added the political goals of a Common Foreign and Security Policy together with cooperation in the fields of Justice and Home Affairs. The Amsterdam Treaty added an employment chapter and provides for the gradual introduction of common rules on immigration, asylum and visa policy. The Lisbon Treaty elevated the role of human rights protection and the promotion of social justice and cohesion. It also added combating climate change on an international level as a specific objective.

# The Institutions

The main institutions of the European Union are the European Commission, the Council, the European Parliament, the Court of Justice and the General Court. Their powers and duties derive from the treaties. This chapter describes how each of the institutions is structured and briefly outlines their functions. Some other European Union bodies are also covered.

## The European Commission

The European Commission is the executive and administrative organ of the EU and of central importance to its functioning. It is located in various buildings in Brussels; a small number of its services are based in Luxembourg. All Commissioners have their offices in the Berlaymont building.

### Structure

The Commission comprises 27 members ("Commissioners"). The administrative functions of the Commission are carried out by Directorates-General ("DGs") and Services such as the Legal Service and Secretariat-General; the latter essentially acts as the interface between the 27 Commissioners and the Directorates-General and between the Commission and the other EU institutions (see Annex A).

The Commissioners are drawn from the Member States of the EU – one from each (see Annex B). There has been much discussion about capping the number of Commissioners and introducing a system of rotation but for the moment, Member States have opted to maintain each country's Commissioners.

Commissioners are required to act independently of their national governments and in the sole interest of the EU, but need not renounce their party political allegiances. In practice, they have a natural affinity with their own Member State, if only for linguistic reasons. This is worth bearing in mind in any approach to the Commission.

Many Commissioners have a background in national politics while

others have experience as senior administrators, trade union leaders, academics or businessmen.

The Treaty of Nice changed the procedure for nominating Commissioners. The nomination of the President is a matter for the European Council acting by qualified majority. The chosen candidate is then subject to approval by the European Parliament. Thereafter, the Council, acting by qualified majority and in agreement with the appointed President, will adopt the entire list of the other persons it intends to appoint as members of the Commission.

The President decides on the allocation of portfolios and may reassign responsibilities in the course of the Commission's term of office. The President is also entitled to demand a Commissioner's resignation, subject to the Commission's approval.

### Approval of the Commission

The Parliament must approve the appointment of a new Commission and its President and has the ultimate power of dismissing the whole Commission (but not part of it). Under the Amsterdam Treaty the proposed Commissioners are presented to the Parliament, which must vote on each nomination.

The Commission, including its President and five Vice-Presidents, are appointed for a term of five years. The current President is José Manuel Barroso, former Prime Minister of Portugal and this is his second term in the post.

Each Commissioner has a *cabinet* (private office) to assist him or her. The *cabinets* comprise internal Commission staff, members of national administrations and others brought in by the Commissioner. Cabinet members work for the Commissioner personally and are seen as the Commissioner's representatives, each specialising in particular policy areas. Each *cabinet* is

headed by a *Chef de Cabinet* (Chief of Staff) who may deputise for the Commissioner at Commission meetings.

The Commission functions as a collegiate body in the sense that it bears collective responsibility for its acts. It functions by means of a majority vote and normally meets each Wednesday (or Tuesday when in Strasbourg – see European Parliament p. 7).

### Functions

The Commission has four main functions: (i) initiation and preparation of legislation; (ii) implementation; (iii) supervision; and (iv) international representation of the European Union.

#### (i) Initiation and preparation of legislation

In most cases, the Commission has the sole right to initiate legislation within the treaties. In this sense, it is the catalyst of the European Union. It may act on the basis of submissions by other EU institutions, interest groups and individuals, or on its own initiative. In the case of political co-operation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy and in Justice and Home Affairs, the Commission shares its right of initiative with the Member States. The Lisbon Treaty introduced the possibility of a "Citizens' Initiative" to give EU citizens the power to request that specific legislation be proposed by the Commission, if a petition collects one million signatures from a "significant" number of Member States. In March 2010 it submitted a proposal for a regulation on the initiative to the European Parliament and Council. Finally, an agreement was reached in December 2010 which led to the formal adoption of Regulation No. 211/2011 dated 16 February 2011.

Once the Commission has decided to make a proposal in a particular area, it will normally consult widely with interested parties before drafting and adopting its final proposal. These

consultations may take place at the political, Member State, civil service and trade union levels and may involve industry, consumers and political elements. The Commission is often reliant on external expert evidence and consequently wants, and needs, contact with outside interest groups. Generally, therefore, the Commission is open to receiving the views of any party potentially affected by a legislative proposal.

Within the Commission, the proposal will be discussed by the Commissioners and their cabinets, the specialist Directorates-General concerned and by the Legal Service.

Consultation with Member States typically takes place at meetings with national civil servants who will be able to advise the Commission on the acceptability of its proposal. Consultations with other interested parties such as industry may be carried out on a formal basis (e.g. via Green and White Papers and public hearings) or informally, with those interested in putting their views to the Commission by means of written or oral submissions.

### **(ii) Implementation**

As the executive of the EU, the Commission is responsible for:

- the implementation of legal acts adopted by the Council and Parliament;
- the implementation and administration of EU policies delegated to it by the Council such as competition policy, external trade policy, the common agricultural policy and coal and steel. In these areas it has substantial autonomous powers;
- administering the various funds established by the treaties, e.g. the social, structural and regional funds;
- negotiating certain international agreements on behalf of the EU; and

- preparing a draft budget for the EU to be approved by the Council and Parliament.

The Commission's decisions in these areas can have a substantial impact on business.

### **(iii) Supervision**

The Commission has been given the role of "guardian of the treaties". As such it:

- has a general responsibility to ensure the treaties' provisions are properly carried out;
- supervises the implementation of EU law by Member States; and
- where necessary, it must consider taking steps to remedy any breaches of EU law it identifies, ultimately, if necessary, by bringing an action against the offending Member State in the Court of Justice. The Commission can also, since the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty, bring a further case against a Member State that fails to comply with a judgment and may suggest the amount of a suitable fine to be imposed. The Lisbon Treaty made it quicker and easier for the Commission to bring proceedings for enforcement of prior rulings and extended its power to fine Member States to include as a penalty for failing to implement a directive.

### **(iv) International representation**

The Commission also represents the European Union and conducts international negotiations (for example in the World Trade Organisation).

## **The Council**

The Council of the European Union is the centre of political control and the primary decision-making body of the EU. The Presidency of the Council rotates every six months between the Member States. Meetings of the Council mainly take place in Brussels, although in April, June and October Ministers meet in Luxembourg.

Voting is mostly by qualified majority (although some decisions require unanimity). The number of votes attributed to Member States is set out in the Lisbon Treaty; the votes that are attributed are weighted to reflect the fact that the Member States are equal as members of the EU but different in terms of population. This system will continue until 2014. Thereafter, a qualified majority will consist of "a double majority" (*The Legislative Procedure*).

### **Structure**

The Council consists of Member States' representatives who are empowered to commit their government. It takes various forms. These are set out below in order of seniority.

#### **(i) The Council of Ministers**

The composition of the Council of Ministers varies depending on the subject under discussion. The General Affairs Council (composed of the foreign ministers of all the Member States and now chaired by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (currently Catherine Ashton)) will discuss a variety of topics and generally co-ordinate the work of other ministerial councils. Sectoral Councils such as Agriculture, Transport, Energy or Environment deal with these topics and are made up of the relevant national Ministers (e.g. all 27 Ministers of Agriculture attend the Agriculture Council meeting; all 27 Transport Ministers attend the Transport Council meeting and so on). A Commission representative will also attend, though not as a full member.

The frequency of sectoral Council meetings depends on the subject area. The General Affairs, Economic and Financial Affairs and Agriculture Councils meet once a month, while the Transport, Environment and Industry Councils meet two to four times a year.

#### **(ii) COREPER (Committee of Permanent Representatives)**

The COREPER meets weekly in two

different formations, COREPER II, consisting of Members States' Permanent Representatives (i.e. their Ambassadors to the EU) and COREPER I, consisting of Deputy Permanent Representatives.

A large number of decisions are taken at COREPER meetings. Many legislative proposals are adopted subject only to formal endorsement by the Council of Ministers.

**(iii) Working Groups**

These consist of representatives from the Permanent Representations to the EU and officials from the national government departments. There are many different sectoral working groups which meet as necessary. They consider proposals in detail and prepare them for discussion by the COREPER and Council of Ministers. No formal minutes are taken of these meetings, although national officials may take their own notes.

**The European Council**

The European Council became an institution with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. It consists of the Heads of State or Government, who may be accompanied by a government minister when the agenda so requires, and the Commission President (who, unlike the Commission representative in the Council of Ministers, is treated as a full member and entitled to vote). It meets twice a year, normally in June and in December, for two days to decide the most important issues of EU policy and strategic direction. The Maastricht Treaty also gave it certain operational responsibilities in relation to Common Foreign and Security Policy and Economic and Monetary Union.

The European Council has its own President, elected by EU leaders for fixed two and a half year terms, renewable once. However, the President can be removed by a qualified majority of the members of the European Council. The President's role was created by the

Lisbon Treaty and includes representing the EU externally on issues of Common Foreign and Security Policy. The current President is Herman Van Rompuy.

**The European Parliament**

The European Parliament is the only directly elected institution of the European Union and, as such, adds an element of democratic control and accountability. Its powers were narrowly restricted in the past but it has steadily acquired greater influence and power through a series of treaties. When adopting legislation, the Parliament is now on an equal footing with the Council in most policy areas. Elections to the European Parliament take place every five years, in advance of a new Commission taking office (MEPs must approve the new team of Commissioners). The next European elections are due in June 2014.

**Structure**

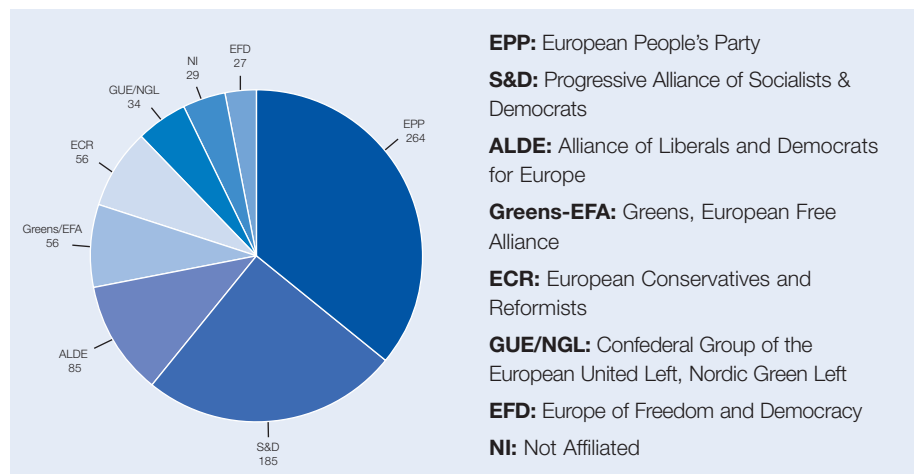
The last elections in the European Parliament were held in June 2009 when the Nice Treaty was still in force. In line with that Treaty, 736 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) were elected and are now in office. However, with the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009, the number of seats was due to increase to 751, with 18 additional seats for 12 Member States, and three fewer seats for Germany.

The additional three German MEPs elected in the 2009 elections have been allowed to continue to the end of the current legislature. The arrival of the 18 additional members would temporarily raise the total number of seats to 754 (736 + 18). A transitional change in the Lisbon Treaty is therefore required to allow this temporary increase from 751 to 754 and to enable the 18 new MEPs to take their seats.

National parliaments must ratify these changes. The 18 additional MEPs will take up their functions once the ratification process is finalised.

The number of MEPs from a Member State depends roughly on the population of that Member State. Germany, as the most populous country of the EU, is entitled to 99 seats, the UK 72 and Malta 5. MEPs sit in political rather than national groupings. Following the most recent elections in June 2009, the largest of these groups is the European People's Party (centre right) with 265 seats. The Parliament includes political groups as well as non-attached or independent MEPs.

The Parliament meets once a month (except in August) for a plenary session lasting for one week in Strasbourg. Some shorter plenary sessions take place in Brussels where there are also monthly committee meetings usually lasting two to three days as well as meetings of the political groups.





### Site

The Parliament normally holds monthly plenary sessions in Strasbourg, but most committee meetings take place in Brussels. The bulk of its Secretariat is based in Luxembourg. Some plenary sessions (known as minisessions) take place in Brussels.

### Function

The role of the European Parliament is not strictly comparable to that of the Member States' parliaments, although there are similarities. The Parliament's functions can be categorised as legislative, budgetary and supervisory.

#### (i) Legislative Functions

The role of the European Parliament in the legislative process varies according to the procedure to be followed. Successive treaties have increased its powers (see *The Legislative Procedure* below).

#### (ii) Budgetary Functions

Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the Parliament has an equal right of decision with the Council over budgetary matters, including adoption of the entire annual budget.

#### (iii) Supervisory Functions/Institutional Control

### The Ombudsman

The Maastricht Treaty provided for the appointment of a Parliamentary Ombudsman. EU Citizens or legal entities with registered offices in a Member State may complain to the Ombudsman about instances of maladministration in the activities of EU institutions or bodies. The Ombudsman can also decide to conduct inquiries on his/her own initiative. The Ombudsman has no power to impose legal sanctions. The most effective weapon of the Ombudsman is therefore likely to be the threat of bad publicity for the relevant EU institution. Under the Treaty, the Ombudsman is appointed by the Parliament for a period of five years.

### Committees of inquiry and of petition

The Maastricht Treaty also gave Parliament the power to set up temporary committees of inquiry to investigate contraventions of, or maladministration in, the implementation of EU law. Detailed provisions of the right of inquiry have been adopted by common accord of the Parliament, Commission and Council.

The right of inquiry means that anyone resident in the European Union may petition Parliament on matters where the European Union has competence.

### Written and oral questions

Written and oral questions provide MEPs with an opportunity to obtain information from the Commission and Council, or to highlight issues which they consider important or relevant. Detailed information can be obtained through written questions, although they usually take weeks to be answered. A more rapid response can be obtained at the monthly question time.

### Committees

Twenty standing committees carry out much of the work of the Parliament, each covering a different area. In addition, the Parliament sets up temporary committees, sub-committees and committees of inquiry to examine specific problems (see Annex C). There are 18 delegations dealing with relations with other parliaments and international institutions around the world.

The main work of the committees is the detailed examination of legislation involving the drawing up of reports and opinions on proposals for legislation. A *rappporteur* (lead MEP) chosen from amongst the committee members drafts a report which is presented to the full committee and, if adopted, submitted to the plenary session to be voted on together with an accompanying resolution which constitutes the Parliament's Opinion on the particular draft legislation. More than one

committee will typically consider a proposal, but the primary responsibility for formulating the Parliament's Opinion will be given to a single lead committee.

### The Bureau

The Bureau is a regulatory body consisting of the Parliament's President, fourteen Vice-Presidents and five Quaestors and has responsibility for Parliament's budget, administrative and financial organisation and staff matters. The President of the Parliament is elected by the MEPs and either he (or she) or one of the Vice-Presidents presides over plenary sessions of the Parliament. The Conference of Presidents (the President together with the Chairmen of the political groups) has considerable political influence and is responsible for all legislative planning and relations with other institutions, national parliaments and non-EU countries. Administrative support for the Bureau consists of a Secretariat and seven Directorates-General. Officers drawn from these may attend the twice-monthly meetings of the Bureau and the Conference of Presidents.

### The Secretariat

The Parliament's work is organised by the Secretariat, headed by a Secretary-General with a permanent staff of about 4,000. The Secretariat's staff comprises permanent officials of the European Union who provide support to the President of the Parliament, the Bureau and the committees. It is based in Luxembourg but also has offices in Brussels.

### The Court of Justice of the European Union

The Court of Justice of the European Union (formerly the "Court of Justice of the European Communities") is responsible for the interpretation of EU law. The Court includes:

- the Court of Justice (previously the "European Court of Justice" ("ECJ"));

- the General Court (previously the “Court of First Instance” (“CFI”)); and
- specialised courts, attached to the General Court, which can be set up with the agreement of Parliament.

These courts should not be confused with the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg or the International Court of Justice in the Hague, which are not European Union bodies. The Court of Justice and the General Court share the same location in Luxembourg.

The European Civil Service Tribunal adjudicates in disputes between the EU and its civil service. It took up its functions in 2005.

## (A) The Court of Justice

### Structure

The Court of Justice consists of 27 Judges and eight Advocates-General appointed by agreement between the Member States for a renewable term of six years. The Court includes one judge from each Member State, so that all the EU’s national legal systems are represented. However, for the sake of efficiency, it sits as a “Grand Chamber” of just 13 judges, instead of always having to meet in a full court attended by all the judges. Each judge and Advocate-General has his or her own “*cabinet*” of assistants.

The administration of the Court of Justice is the responsibility of the President of the Court, a judge appointed by the other judges for a renewable term of three years. The President directs the work of the Court, presides at hearings of the full Court and at deliberations in the Deliberation Room and has the power to order interim measures in urgent cases. The President also assigns new cases and designates a Judge-Rapporteur for each case; this judge is responsible for the progress of the case through the Court.

The Court of Justice may sit as a full court in the particular cases prescribed by the

statute of the Court and where the Court considers that a case is of exceptional importance. It sits in a Grand Chamber when a Member State or EU institution that is a party to the proceedings so requests, and in particularly complex or important cases. Other cases are heard by Chambers made up of three or five judges. The Chambers may undertake certain preparatory inquiries or give rulings in certain instances.

The role of the Advocate-General is to produce an impartial and reasoned opinion citing relevant case law in each case brought before the Court of Justice. This opinion is often the basis on which the Court reaches its judgment but is not binding on the Court.

### Function

The cases heard by the Court of Justice consist of references from national courts for preliminary rulings on EU law, actions by, and against, Member States and appeals from the General Court on points of law.

### Procedure

Court procedure is governed jointly by the Treaties, the Statutes (the ECSC, EC and EURATOM Statutes) and by the Court of Justice’s own Rules of Procedure. The procedure consists of two parts: written and oral. The Court may also order a preparatory inquiry or other measures of inquiry.

## (B) The General Court

### Structure

The General Court has 27 judges, who are appointed by agreement between the governments of the Member States for a renewable term of six years. The President is elected by the other judges for a three-year period. There are no permanent Advocates-General but judges may be called upon to perform that role in a limited number of cases.

The Court sits in Chambers of three or five judges, or in some cases, as a single

judge. It may also sit as a Grand Chamber of 13 judges or as a full court when the legal complexity or importance of the case justifies it.

### Function

The General Court was set up to reduce the caseload of the Court of Justice and now deals with a wide variety of cases that are generally less politically sensitive. The Treaty of Nice significantly increased the responsibilities of this court. It is independent of the Court of Justice in its judicial functions but uses the same administrative departments in Luxembourg.

The General Court hears almost all actions brought by private parties against EU institutions. It also has jurisdiction to hear actions brought by the Member States against the Commission. It deals in particular with appeals on agriculture, state aid, competition and anti-dumping cases. It also deals with cases arising from the EU Trademark Registry.

### Procedure

The General Court is governed by the Treaties, the Decisions that established it, part of the Court of Justice Statutes, and its Rules of Procedure. Its procedure is broadly similar to that of the Court of Justice.

## Other European Union Bodies

### The Economic and Social Committee

Commonly known as ECOSOC (although its official acronym is the “EESC”), the Economic and Social Committee is a non-political, advisory body composed of representatives of various economic and social interest groups throughout the Member States. It is a body that gives the EU’s economic and social partners (i.e. its employers, representatives of small businesses and consumers, to name a few) the chance to issue their formal opinion on EU policies and draft legislation.

The opinion of the ECOSOC is valued and carries some weight with the Commission, particularly on more technical issues and subjects where it is recognised that the Committee Members have experience. It is based in Brussels.

### **The Committee of the Regions**

The Committee of the Regions (“COR”) was set up by the Maastricht Treaty with the intention of introducing a greater measure of devolved power and increasing visible subsidiarity. It is a political assembly which provides local and regional authorities with representation in Brussels.

The Treaty of Lisbon enhances the COR’s role; the Commission has to consult with local and regional authorities as early as possible, including in the pre-legislative phase.

### **The Court of Auditors**

The European Court of Auditors is responsible for overseeing the finances of the EU and the bodies set up by it, with the exception of the European Investment Bank. It sits in Luxembourg.

### **The European Investment Bank**

The European Investment Bank (“EIB”) was set up in order to provide finance (by way of loans) to projects which it considers will further the development of the European Union. It is based in Luxembourg.

### **The European Central Bank**

The European Central Bank (“ECB”), based in Frankfurt, was established in June 1998 to replace the European Monetary Institute. The legal basis for the ECB is the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the European Central Bank. The Lisbon Treaty made the ECB an official institution of the EU with a distinct legal personality.

The ECB is in charge of the EU’s single currency, the euro, and has the exclusive right to authorise the issue of banknotes within the Member States participating in monetary union. The ECB independently manages European monetary policy and decides on the level of interest rates. It is also empowered to make regulations,

take decisions and deliver recommendations and opinions.

The ECB, together with the national central banks of the EU’s Member States, make up the European System of Central Banks. The primary objective of the European System of Central Banks is to maintain price stability so that the European economy will not be damaged by inflation. Its tasks are to conduct foreign exchange operations, to hold and manage the official foreign reserves of the Member States, to define and implement the monetary policy of the EU and to promote the smooth operation of payment systems. Every three months the ECB reports on the activities of the European System of Central Banks. At the time of printing 17 Member States were included in the euro zone: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain.

# Legislation

## Types of Legislation

EU legislation consists of primary legislation, that is, the treaties signed directly by and between the Member States, and secondary legislation, which must fall within the competence of one of the treaties. The treaties (notably the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Treaty of Rome), the Single European Act, the Treaty on the European Union (Maastricht Treaty), the Amsterdam Treaty, the Nice Treaty, and the Lisbon Treaty) override national legislation. Secondary legislation consists mainly of regulations, directives and decisions. Secondary legislation can be challenged on the grounds that it is *ultra vires*, e.g. that it exceeds the scope of the relevant treaty. It can also be challenged if the correct procedure as laid down in the treaty is not followed. Secondary legislation must follow the principle of “subsidiarity”, i.e. measures must only be taken at EU level where their objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved at Member State level.

If there is a conflict between a treaty provision, or legislation made under the authority of a treaty, such as regulations and directives, and national legislation, the former takes priority. This principle of the supremacy of EU law applies to both legislation and judge-made law. In practice, the principle can impose significant constraints on the laws that can be enacted by a national legislature.

### Regulations

A regulation of the Council, or a joint Council and Parliament regulation, has direct and general application in the Member States. If there is any conflict with national laws then the EU regulation will prevail. The Commission also has the right to issue Commission regulations on subjects that fall under its administrative functions. These are limited to certain specific sectors, such as the administration of the common agricultural policy, competition and state aid rules, international trade issues, such

as anti-dumping cases, and in the financial services sector as implementing measures under comitology.

### Directives

Directives, unlike regulations, are not directly applicable in the Member States. Instead, they are binding as to the result to be achieved, but leave to the Member States’ authorities the choice of form and method. A deadline is set for implementation of a directive’s provisions into national legislation (if appropriate legislation is not already in place). This deadline of the EU directive is usually eighteen months from publication in the Official Journal of the EU. Member States thus have some discretion as to the method and timing of implementation and, to the extent permitted by the wording of the directive, as to the substance. Traditionally, directives were the preferred means by which harmonisation of legislation throughout the EU and regulation of trade and industry was brought about but in certain areas there has been an increase in the use of regulations. It is the Commission’s role to ensure that Member States implement directives correctly and on time and it regularly brings proceedings in the Court of Justice against Member States for failure to implement EU directives.

If a directive has not been fully implemented in a Member State, or not implemented within the prescribed time limit, it may have “direct effect”. This means that it can be enforced against state bodies and certain other bodies linked to the state in the national courts of the Member States, (i) if it is precise as to the rights granted, (ii) unconditional, (iii) and the date for implementation has passed. If there is conflict between the implementing legislation and the EU directive, the national legislation is subordinate to the EU legislation, both in word and in spirit.

### Decisions

Decisions are issued by the Council and the Commission. They address specific

issues and may be addressed to Member States, companies or individuals. They are binding upon those to whom they are addressed. They are normally used for the administrative implementation of EU law. Examples include large mergers which fall under the Merger Control Regulation.

### Recommendations and Opinions

These are not binding, but are useful indications of current policy and future legislation.

## The Legislative Procedure

The legislative procedure of the EU is complex, with each of the main institutions involved to differing degrees and at different stages depending on the procedure being followed. Generally speaking, directives, regulations and decisions are proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council and the Parliament; ECOSOC and COR play a consultative role by issuing opinions where required by the treaties.

Ideas for Commission legislative proposals derive from many sources and those which are to be pursued are included in the Commission’s annual legislative work programme (normally published towards the end of each calendar year). One Commission DG will normally take the lead in formulating the details of a particular proposal.

The Commission officials in this DG will consult formally or informally with interested parties, particularly “Expert Groups” of industrialists, scientists and national civil servants, Member States, other DGs and the Commissioners’ cabinets. When the lead DG is satisfied with the proposal it will pass it on to other DGs with an interest in the proposal for formal consultations. The proposal will then go to the Commissioners via their cabinets, for adoption as Commission policy.

Non-controversial proposals may be approved by the members of the Commissioners' cabinets, subject to endorsement by the Commission. Controversial proposals are discussed by the Commissioners themselves. The Commission is a collegiate body and, as such, takes decisions collectively. Decisions taken by way of majority voting (i.e. 14 out of 27 votes) are thereafter the decisions of the Commission as a whole.

The Lisbon Treaty strengthened the role of national parliaments in the legislative process; they were given powers to have direct input into European legislation and to challenge legislation they consider unnecessary. The Commission must send all proposals for legislation to national parliaments so that they can decide whether they conform with the principle of subsidiarity (i.e. whether they are being addressed at the appropriate level – European, national or local). One third of national parliaments can send a proposal back to the Commission for review (a "yellow card"). If a simple majority of national parliaments continues to object to a proposal, the Commission must refer the reasoned objection to the Council and the European Parliament (an "orange card"). The time allowed for national parliaments to scrutinise draft laws was increased from six to eight weeks by the Lisbon Treaty.

National parliaments must be notified of proposals for amendment of the EU Treaties and of applications for accession to the EU. National MPs have a right to participate in any IGC convened to examine Treaty amendments.

Once the Commission has adopted a proposal it is allocated a "COM" document number and passed to the Council and Parliament for further consideration. The exact procedure from this point depends on the legal base of the proposal. The main procedures used are set out below (*Types of Legislative Procedures*).

Whichever procedure is followed, the Council is almost always involved. The majorities required in the Council to adopt different types of legislation will vary. The Treaties require either unanimity (increasingly rare but still used, for example, for taxation matters) or a qualified majority. The Council may also take certain decisions by simple majority.

The unanimity requirement, when applicable, means that one Member State may block a proposal even if all the other Member States are in favour. To avoid this situation (particularly in an enlarged Union), the Amsterdam Treaty extended qualified majority voting ("QMV") to several areas where unanimity was previously required and many of the new provisions it introduced are also subject to QMV. These include measures concerning employment, social exclusion, sex equality, public health and customs co-operation.

The Treaty of Nice allowed QMV in ten further areas where unanimity was previously required. They included freedom of movement for citizens, judicial co-operation in civil matters, the conclusion of international economic financial and technical cooperation with third countries and the Rules of Procedure of the EU Courts. The Lisbon Treaty extended QMV further to other areas including certain aspects of intellectual property, energy policy, the negotiation and conclusion of agreements with one or more third countries or international organisations, and measures concerning judicial co-operation in civil matters having a cross-border dimension.

With QMV, each Member State is awarded a "weighting" roughly commensurate with its population. The Treaty of Nice changed the weighting of votes from 1 January 2005.

Country	Votes
France, Germany, Italy and the UK	29
Poland and Spain	27
Romania	14
The Netherlands	13
Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary and Portugal	12
Austria, Bulgaria and Sweden	10
Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania and Slovakia	7
Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Luxembourg and Slovenia	4
Malta	3

A qualified majority is obtained if a decision receives a specified number of votes (255 votes out of a total of 345 at the time of writing) and is approved by a majority of Member States. In addition, a Member State may ask for confirmation that the qualified majority represents at least 62% of the total population of the EU. If this is found not to be the case, the decision will not be adopted.

The Council will reach decisions under the new form of QMV, called "double qualified majority voting" from 2014 (*The Council*). Under the new voting system, a measure will be approved when it is supported by 55% of the Member States (15 out of 27), provided they represent 65% of the total EU population. A proposal will be capable of being blocked by at least four Member States, representing more than 35% of the population of the EU (a "blocking minority").

Between 1 November 2014 and 31 March 2017, a member of the Council may request that a piece of legislation be adopted using the Nice Treaty system of weighted voting rights.

A declaration to the Treaty of Lisbon imposes an obligation on the Council to discuss an issue where Member States

representing at least three quarters of either the population or the number of Member States necessary to constitute a blocking minority indicate their opposition to a proposal. After 1 April 2017, this percentage will drop to 55%. Member States may, therefore, be able to delay the passing of legislation while seeking to rally further support in order to reach the blocking minority threshold.

All voting in the Parliament is by simple majority (i.e. a majority of MEPs voting).

## Types of Legislative Procedures

There are five main legislative procedures; the area of competence covered and the provisions of the relevant treaty dictate which must be followed. The main features of these procedures are outlined below. The most commonly used is the ordinary legislative procedure.

### (a) Ordinary Legislative Procedure

The ordinary legislative procedure (formerly the co-decision procedure), introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, is now the most common method of passing EU law. It gives the Parliament the right to amend or reject draft texts and requires the Parliament and the Council to seek agreement on a common text. The procedure was simplified by the Amsterdam Treaty and its sphere of application extended to new provisions of the treaty as well as to areas which previously came under the assent, consultation or co-operation procedures (see below). The Lisbon Treaty further extended the application of the procedure.

The Commission submits a proposal to the European Parliament and the Council. It must also be forwarded to national parliaments. The Parliament gives its opinion and forwards it to the Council, with or without amendments. After receiving the Opinion, the Council either adopts the proposal by a qualified

majority if it approves all of the Parliament's amendments (or if Parliament has not proposed any amendments) or it adopts a common position based on the Parliament's amendments.

Where the Council has adopted a common position, this position is communicated to the Parliament for a Second Reading. Within three months the Parliament may either: (i) take a decision; (ii) approve the common position; or (iii) amend the common position. The Parliament may also indicate its intention to reject the common position, by an absolute majority of its members. If the Parliament has not proposed any amendment, the Council will adopt the proposal definitively. Otherwise the Council has three months to approve all of the Parliament's amendments and adopt the proposal definitively.

If within three months the Council has not approved all of the Parliament's amendments, a Conciliation Committee is convened within the next six weeks. A Conciliation Committee is composed of members of the Council, an equal number of MEPs and a Commission representative. Its task is to reach agreement on a joint text on the basis of the Council's common position and the Parliament's amendments.

If the Committee reaches agreement within six weeks, the joint text may be adopted by the Parliament by a simple majority and, by a qualified majority of the Council. If the Committee does not reach agreement, the proposal falls (i.e. it is abandoned). Similarly, if the joint text is not approved by either the Council or Parliament, it again falls.

The ordinary legislative procedure is used in the majority of policy areas, including: free movement for workers, freedom of establishment, freedom to provide services, the internal market, education,

culture, transport policy, health, consumer protection, research, the environment, legal immigration, criminal judicial co-operation, police co-operation, and some aspects of trade and agriculture policy (but not to the Common Foreign and Security Policy).

In some areas there has been an increase in the number of agreements in a single reading under the ordinary legislative procedure. This is particularly the case with legislation that has strong political backing or when the institutions perceive the need for speedy action in response to events, e.g. the measures introduced in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. In practice, when agreement in first reading is sought, the Parliament and Council examine the Commission proposal simultaneously and then convene a committee (similar to the conciliation committee) to try and reach agreement through a series of *trialogue* meetings involving the Commission, Parliament and Council.

### (b) The Special Legislative Procedures (i) Co-operation Procedure

This procedure was introduced by the Single European Act and gave the Parliament a stronger role than in the consultation procedure (see below). However, since the introduction of the Amsterdam Treaty it has only been used for matters relating to economic and monetary union. In other areas it has been replaced by the ordinary legislative procedure.

### (c) Consultation Procedure

The Commission issues a draft proposal. The Parliament gives an opinion on the proposal which is not binding. Although the opinion is not binding, the Council cannot take a decision until it has received the Parliament's opinion, in accordance with the case law of the Court of Justice. The Council may then adopt the proposal (by a qualified majority or unanimous vote), whether or not the Parliament's opinion is in favour.

This procedure was the earliest process within the EU but has become less and less important since the co-operation and ordinary legislative procedures came into being.

**(d) Consent Procedure**

The Single European Act introduced the assent procedure, which is now known as the consent procedure. The scope of the procedure was extended by the Maastricht Treaty, but subsequently reduced by the Treaty of Amsterdam. Under this procedure the Council acts by

unanimous decision, but must secure the assent of the Parliament. The Parliament's assent is also required for important international agreements concluded between the EU and a non-member country or group of countries, such as the accession of new Member States and association agreements with third countries. The scope of the procedure also applies to the organisation of the Structural and Cohesion Funds. The Parliament's assent requires an absolute majority of the total number of MEPs.

**(e) Adoption by Council**

In certain areas the Council, having received a proposal from the Commission, is entitled to adopt legislation without involving the Parliament, for example, in relation to trade law and economic policy. The Council will generally, by convention, inform the Parliament and allow it to comment. It is not bound by such comments.

# Glossary of terms

Adoption by Council	Part of the legislative procedure
Advocate-General	Member of the European Court of Justice
Bureau	Regulatory body governing the activities of Parliament
Cabinet	Private office of the Commissioner
CFI	See Court of First Instance
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
Charter of Fundamental Rights	Signed by the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission in December 2000 and made legally binding by the Lisbon Treaty on the European institutions and Member States when they are implementing EU law, the Charter is a codified catalogue of the civil, political, economic and social rights of European citizens and all persons resident in the EU
Chef de Cabinet	Chief of Staff
CJEU	Official acronym of the Court of Justice of the European Union
Commissioner	Member of the European Commission
Common Position	Draft of legislative proposal agreed by Council
Conciliation Committee	Committee involved in co-decision procedure whose task is to find a text which is acceptable to both the Council and the European Parliament
Consultation Procedure	A legislative procedure
Co-decision Procedure	Now called the "Ordinary Legislative Procedure"
Co-operation Procedure	A legislative procedure
COM	Each Commission legislative proposal is allocated a "COM" document number
Comitology	Procedure to be followed by the Commission for the adoption of certain implementing measures. It involves specialist committees
Constitutional Treaty	A text agreed in June and signed in October 2004 which never came into force because it failed to be ratified by all the Member States (rejected by France and the Netherlands in referenda in 2005)
COR	Committee of the Regions
COREPER	Committee of the Permanent Representatives of the Member States
Court of Auditors	Official EU institution overseeing the finances of the EU
Court of First Instance	The lower EU court now known as the General Court
Court of Justice of the European Union	The highest judicial authority in the EU. See also CJEU, European Court of Justice and ECJ
Decision	Form of communication addressed to individual Member States, companies or persons with binding effect
Directive	Type of legislation made under the authority of a Treaty
Directorate-General (DG)	Department of the Commission looking after a particular policy area (similar to a national ministry)



EC	European Community (formerly the European Economic Community and now the European Union)
EC Treaty	See the Treaty of Rome
ECB	European Central Bank
ECJ	Unofficial but frequently used acronym for the Court of Justice of the European Union (see p. 9)
ECOSOC/ESC	Economic and Social Committee
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community (now re-named the European Union)
EEC Treaty	Re-named the EC Treaty - see the Treaty of Rome
EIB	European Investment Bank
EU	European Union
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
European Central Bank	Responsible for the Euro and monetary policy
European Commission	Commission of the European Communities
European Council	High level meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the 27 Member States
European Court of Justice	Unofficial name of the Court of Justice of the European Union (the official acronym is CJEU but it is more commonly known as the ECJ)
European Monetary Institute	Replaced by the European Central Bank
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
Maastricht Treaty	Formally known as the Treaty on European Union – established the European Union in 1993
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
OJ	Acronym used for the Official Journal of the European Union
Ordinary Legislative Procedure	Legislative procedure
Parliament	European Parliament
Qualified Majority	Voting procedure of the Council
Regulations	Type of legislation made under the authority of an EU treaty
SEA	Single European Act, entered into force 1 July 1987 providing adaptations to further the objective of achieving a single market
Summit	European Council Meeting

Treaties	Primary EU legislation
Treaty of Amsterdam	Signed in October 1997 and came into force on 1 May 1999 making substantive changes to the Maastricht Treaty and the EC Treaty, as well as renumbering all the Articles of these treaties
Treaty of Lisbon	Signed in December 2007 and came into force on 1 December 2009, strengthening the role of the European Parliament and creating the role of President of the European Council and High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy
Treaty of Nice	Signed in December 2000 and came into force on 1 February 2003, introducing institutional changes to pave the way for enlargement
Treaty of Rome	Came into force on 1 January 1958, formerly the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, which then became known as the European Community or EC Treaty, and is now referred to as the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) (see p. 3)
Treaty on European Union	See Maastricht Treaty
Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union	See Treaty of Rome

# Annex A

## Directorates-General and Services of the European Commission

### Departments (DGs)

- Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI)
- Budget (BUDG)
- Climate Action (CLIMA)
- Communication (COMM)
- Competition (COMP)
- Economic and Financial Affairs (ECFIN)
- Education and Culture (EAC)
- Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL)
- Energy (ENER)
- Enlargement (ELARG)
- Enterprise and Industry (ENTR)
- Environment (ENV)
- EuropeAid Development & Cooperation (DEVCO)
- Eurostat (ESTAT)
- Foreign Policy Instruments Service (EEAS)
- Health and Consumers (SANCO)
- Home Affairs (HOME)
- Humanitarian Aid (ECHO)
- Human Resources and Security (HR)
- Informatics (DIGIT)
- Information Society and Media (INFSO)
- Internal Market and Services (MARKT)
- Interpretation (SCIC)

- Joint Research Centre (JRC)
- Justice (JUST)
- Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MARE)
- Mobility and Transport (MOVE)
- Regional Policy (REGIO)
- Research and Innovation (RTD)
- Secretariat General (SG)
- Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD)
- Trade (TRADE)
- Translation (DGT)

### Services

- Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA)
- Central Library
- European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)
- European Commission Data Protection Officer
- Historical archives
- Infrastructures and Logistics - Brussels (OIB)
- Infrastructures and Logistics - Luxembourg (OIL)
- Internal Audit Service (IAS)
- Legal Service (SJ)
- Office For Administration And Payment Of Individual Entitlements (PMO)
- Publications Office (OP)

# Annex B

## Commissioners and their Portfolios

<b>José Manuel Barroso</b>	<i>Portugal</i>	President
<b>Catherine Ashton</b>	<i>UK</i>	Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (Vice-President)
<b>Viviane Reding</b>	<i>Luxembourg</i>	Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship (Vice-President)
<b>Joaquín Almunia</b>	<i>Spain</i>	Competition (Vice-President)
<b>Siim Kallas</b>	<i>Estonia</i>	Transport (Vice-President)
<b>Neelie Kroes</b>	<i>The Netherlands</i>	Digital Agenda (Vice-President)
<b>Antonio Tajani</b>	<i>Italy</i>	Industry and Entrepreneurship (Vice-President)
<b>Maroš Šefčovič</b>	<i>Slovakia</i>	Inter-institutional Relations and Administration (Vice-President)
<b>Janez Potočnik</b>	<i>Slovenia</i>	Environment
<b>Olli Rehn</b>	<i>Finland</i>	Economic and Monetary Affairs
<b>Andris Piebalgs</b>	<i>Latvia</i>	Development
<b>Michel Barnier</b>	<i>France</i>	Internal Market and Services
<b>Androulla Vassiliou</b>	<i>Cyprus</i>	Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth
<b>Algirdas Semeta</b>	<i>Lithuania</i>	Taxation and Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud
<b>Karel De Gucht</b>	<i>Belgium</i>	Trade
<b>John Dalli</b>	<i>Malta</i>	Health and Consumer Policy
<b>Máire Geoghegan-Quinn</b>	<i>Ireland</i>	Research, Innovation and Science
<b>Janusz Lewandowski</b>	<i>Poland</i>	Financial Programming and Budget
<b>Maria Damanaki</b>	<i>Greece</i>	Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
<b>Kristalina Georgieva</b>	<i>Bulgaria</i>	International co-operation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response
<b>Günther Oettinger</b>	<i>Germany</i>	Energy
<b>Johannes Hahn</b>	<i>Austria</i>	Regional Policy
<b>Connie Hedegaard</b>	<i>Denmark</i>	Climate Action
<b>Štefan Füle</b>	<i>Czech Republic</i>	Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy
<b>László Andor</b>	<i>Hungary</i>	Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
<b>Cecilia Malmström</b>	<i>Sweden</i>	Home Affairs
<b>Dacian Cioloș</b>	<i>Romania</i>	Agriculture and Rural Development

# Annex C

## European Parliament Committees

### Standing Committees

#### Agriculture and Rural Development

Responsible for co-operation of the common agricultural and forestry policy, rural development, veterinary legislation, agri-foodstuffs industry and the Community Office for Plant Varieties.

#### Budgetary Control

Responsible for accounts and expenditure of the EU, control of financial activities of the European Investment Bank and relations with the Court of Auditors.

#### Budgets

Responsible for exercise of the European Parliament's budgetary powers.

#### Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

Responsible for matters relating to citizens' rights, human rights and fundamental freedoms in the EU, discrimination, personal data and the free movement of such data, matters relating to the maintenance and development of an area of freedom, security and justice.

#### Constitutional Affairs

Responsible for matters relating to the development of European integration, the institutional consequences of enlargement, the implementation of the EU Treaty, general relations with the other institutions of the EU, the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament and the drawing up of a draft uniform electoral procedure.

#### Culture and Education

Responsible for youth policy and the development of a sports and leisure policy; information and media policy; audiovisual policy and the cultural and educational aspects of the information society; the EU's education policy and cultural aspects.

#### Development

Responsible for the promotion, implementation and monitoring of the development and co-operation policy of the EU.

#### Economic and Monetary Affairs

Responsible for monetary policy, medium and long-term economic and monetary planning, tax provisions, rules on competition and State or public aid, progressive establishment of the Economic and Monetary Union and relations with the ECB.

#### Employment and Social Affairs

Responsible for living and working conditions, employment policy, pensions, salary and equal pay, vocational training, free movement of workers, migrant workers and information and consultation of workers.

#### Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Responsible for EU environmental policy and protection at regional and international level, food safety issues (labelling and veterinary legislation) and public health (programmes on health education, pharmaceutical products, medical research, cosmetic products and civil protection).

#### Fisheries

Responsible for the operation and development of the common fisheries policy and its management; the conservation of fishery resources; the common organisation of the market in fishery products; structural policy in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, including the financial instruments for fisheries guidance; and international fisheries agreements.

#### Foreign Affairs

Responsible for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and

the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). It is responsible for the strengthening of political relations with third countries. It also deals with the opening, monitoring and concluding of negotiations concerning the accession of countries to the EU.

#### Human Rights

A sub-committee of the Foreign Affairs Committee, it assists in issues concerning human rights, the protection of minorities and the promotion of democratic values in third countries.

#### Security and Defence

A sub-committee of the Foreign Affairs Committee, it assists in security and defence related matters.

#### Industry, Research and Energy

Responsible for the Union's industrial policy and the application of new technologies, including measures relating to SMEs; research policy; space policy; the activities of the Joint Research Centre and the Central Office for Nuclear Measurements. It is also responsible for measures relating to energy policy in general, the security of energy supply and energy efficiency including the establishment and development of trans-European networks.

#### Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Responsible for the free movement of goods, including the harmonisation of technical standards; the right of establishment; the freedom to provide services except in the financial and postal sectors; measures aiming at the identification and removal of potential obstacles to the functioning of the internal market and the promotion and protection of the economic interests of consumers, except for public health and food safety issues.

**International Trade**

Responsible for matters relating to the establishment and implementation of the EU's common commercial policy and its external economic relations, in particular financial economic and trade relations with third countries, relations with international organisations and relations with the WTO.

**Legal Affairs**

Responsible for legal issues, e.g. civil and commercial law, company law, intellectual property law, procedural law, environmental liability and sanctions against environmental crime; ethical questions related to new technologies; the interpretation and application of EU law and of international law in so far as the EU is affected; and the organisation and statute of the Court of Justice.

**Petitions**

Responsible for examination of petitions and relations with the Ombudsman.

**Regional Development**

Responsible for regional and cohesion policy, in particular the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and other instruments

of the Union's regional policy; assessing the impact of other Union policies on economic and social cohesion; co-ordination of the Union's structural instruments; the outmost regions and islands as well as trans-frontier and interregional co-operation; and relations with the Committee of the Regions, inter-regional co-operation organisations and local and regional authorities.

**Transport and Tourism**

Responsible for the development of a common policy for rail, road, inland waterway, maritime and air transport, in particular the common rules applicable to transport within the EU, the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the area of transport infrastructure, the provision of transport services and relations in the field of transport with third countries; transport safety and relations with international transport bodies and organisations. It is also responsible for postal services and tourism.

**Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

Responsible for the definition and evolution of women's rights in the EU and the policy on equal opportunities.

**Special Committees****Financial, Economic and Social Crisis**

Established in October 2009 to analyse and evaluate the extent of the financial, economic and social crisis, its impact on the Union and its Member States, and the state of world governance. The Committee is expected to propose appropriate measures for the long-term reconstruction of sound, stable financial markets able to support sustainable growth, social cohesion and employment at all levels, and to provide an assessment of the effect of those measures and the cost of inaction. The Committee also analyses and evaluates the current implementation of European Union legislation.

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C H A N C E

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