
Decision- and law-making in European integration
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Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË
Tel. +32 (0)2 281 56 50
Fax +32 (0)2 281 49 77
public.info@consilium.europa.eu
www.consilium.europa.eu/infopublic


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Cover page: Jerónimos Monastery in Lisbon, Portugal, on 13 December 2007, the day the Lisbon Treaty was signed there
THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND
THE COUNCIL OF THE EU THROUGH TIME

Decision- and law-making in European integration
'The Council of Ministers has a role which involves coordination and mediation. It stands at the interface between two sovereignties: one supranational, the other national. It must uphold the interests of the Community in the same way as the interests of the individual States and strike a balance which does justice to each.'

Address given by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer at the first session of the Special Council of the European Coal and Steel Community (Luxembourg, 8 September 1952)
Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (first row in the middle) and ministers ascending the staircase of the Hôtel de Ville in Luxembourg to attend the inaugural meeting of the Special Council (8 September 1952)
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‘Every country should emerge victorious from negotiations. (…) As President of the European Council I will listen carefully to everyone and I will make sure that our deliberations turn into results for everyone. There has been much debate about the profile of the future president, but only one profile is possible and it is one of dialogue, unity and action.’

Acceptance speech by Herman Van Rompuy (left) following his nomination as first permanent President of the European Council (19 November 2009).
The EU is awarded the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize for having ‘contributed for over six decades to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe’, Oslo, Norway (10 December 2012). From left to right, the Presidents of the European Council, Commission and Parliament, Herman Van Rompuy, José Manuel Barroso and Martin Schulz, accepted the award on behalf of all EU citizens.
INTRODUCTION

This booklet traces the origins and history of both the European Council and the Council of the EU through the EU treaties, from the very first beginnings in Paris to the Treaty of Lisbon. It does so from both legal and political perspectives. It is aimed at anyone interested in the history of European integration and in particular academics, researchers and media professionals.

The European Council and the Council of the EU, also referred to as the Council (of Ministers) or — informally — the EU Council, are two key players in the EU’s decision-making process. They are not to be confused with the Strasbourg-based human rights and cultural organisation, the Council of Europe. The work and decisions of the European Council and the Council of the EU affect the lives of all European citizens and reach far beyond Europe’s borders.

The European Council, made up of heads of state or government and chaired by a full-time President, sets the political orientation and the priorities of the EU’s work. Its origins lie in the summit meetings of heads of state or government, the first of which was held in February 1961 in Paris. The European Council was created in December 1974 and formalised as an EU institution by the Lisbon Treaty. Throughout this long history the European Council has played a decisive role in European integration. Its history reflects that of the EU as a whole: its policies and ambitions, its crises and progress.

The Council of the EU, made up of representatives of the member states and in most cases chaired by a representative of the member state that holds the six-month rotating presidency, examines, negotiates and adopts EU legislation and coordinates policies. In most cases it co-decides with the European Parliament. While decision-making processes are sometimes complex in a Union of 28 member states, they have become ever more transparent and open to the public.

Politically and administratively, a close organic relationship exists between the Council and the European Council. However, the European Council is not simply an extension of the Council, nor the Council at a higher level. Each has its own distinct role in the EU’s institutional architecture.

If after reading this brochure you wish to explore the history of the European Council and the Council of the EU further or if you would like to consult related documents, you can do so on our website and through our archives.

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1. THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

1.1. THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL IN THE TREATIES

1.1.1. The first steps in EU summitry

Although the forum bringing them together did not become a formal EU institution until 2009, heads of state or government were instrumental to the birth and subsequent development of European integration.

Heads of the six member states of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) met on 19 and 20 February 1957 in Paris, at the invitation of the President of the French Council of Ministers, Guy Mollet, to resolve the outstanding problems of the draft treaties of Rome.

After the Treaties of Rome entered into force (1958), the idea of meeting at the top level was put forward again by President Charles de Gaulle. He went on to host the first summit meeting of the heads of state or government of the six member states of the European Communities in February 1961, in Paris.

The purpose of this first summit meeting was 'to seek the methods by which closer political cooperation could be organised'\(^2\). At a summit it was possible to step outside

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2 Summit press release.
and above the Community framework and address big issues not dealt with by the Paris and Rome Treaties, such as certain aspects of relations with third states.

At the July 1961 Bonn summit, the Six explored the idea of deeper political cooperation and declared that: ‘the heads of state or government (…) have decided (…) to hold at regular intervals meetings whose aim will be to compare their views, to concert their policies and to reach common positions in order to further the political union of Europe’.\(^3\)

Despite this ambition, progress towards political union suffered several setbacks, notably the failure of the ‘Fouchet Plans’\(^4\) of 1961 and 1962, the disagreements of 1963 and 1967 on the first enlargement and the empty chair crisis of 1965 and 1966, when France chose not to participate in the meetings of the Council or of Council bodies.

In this difficult political climate, heads of state or government did not meet again until May 1967, when the Rome summit provided the occasion for the formal celebration of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the EEC and Euratom Treaties.

New momentum was injected and the Community relaunched at The Hague summit in December 1969, at which the Commission participated for the first time. Decisions taken at that summit opened the way to, among other things: the adoption of a decision that gave the Community its own financial resources, the launch of foreign policy cooperation (European political cooperation initiated by the first ‘Davignon report’), and the accession of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom. Together, these steps constituted a ‘completion, deepening, and enlargement’ of the Community. The three new members were invited to take part in the summit held in Paris in October 1972, ahead of their official accession in January 1973.

The Copenhagen summit of December 1973 made provision for summits to be held whenever necessary. One year later the Paris summit of December 1974, hosted by President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, created and defined the role of the European Council.

The European Council was tasked to address the ‘need for an overall approach to the internal problems involved in achieving European unity and the external problems facing Europe’.\(^5\) This explicitly political role marked a departure from and an addition to the largely technical and economic nature of European construction since 1957.

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\(^{3}\) Summit press release.  
\(^{4}\) Christian Fouchet was the chairman of the committee set up by the February 1961 Paris summit to investigate problems concerning European cooperation and instructed by the heads of state or government at the July 1961 Bonn summit ‘to submit to them proposals on the means which will as soon as possible enable a statutory character to be given to the union of their peoples’ (official statement, Bonn, 18 July 1961).  
\(^{5}\) Press release of the Paris summit.
Accompanied by foreign ministers, the heads of state or government would thereafter meet ‘three times a year and whenever necessary’.

The European Council met for the first time in March 1975 in Dublin. Henceforth it was to be politically central to the development of the European project despite lacking any legal basis in the treaties until more than a decade later.

The European Council soon became a focus for the resolution of apparently intractable crises, a crucible for hard-won solutions, and the essential political motor for further progress towards integration.

In the 1980s it was the European Council that allowed Europe to overcome blockages in relation to its budget and agriculture. The Fontainebleau European Council of June 1984 was a decisive moment. It not only succeeded in resolving these issues, through the adoption of a package of measures, but also set out a path for further integration, tasking an ad hoc committee to ‘make suggestions for the improvement of the operation of European cooperation in both the Community field and that of political (…) cooperation’.

A year later, in June 1985, the Committee’s report was debated at the Milan European Council. That meeting decided by a majority to convene an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to revise the treaties, with a focus on the creation of a Single Market,

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6 Press release of the Paris summit.
7 The ‘Dooge Committee’, sometimes referred to as Spaak II, alluding to the committee set up by the Messina conference of 1955.
8 Fontainebleau European Council, June 1984, Presidency conclusions.
the functioning of the Community institutions, freedom of movement, and common foreign and security policy.

Although distinct from the European Council, the composition and nature of the IGC were sufficiently similar for its work to be considered as a continuation of the desire of heads of state or government to be the essential forum in which the nature and path of European integration was to be decided.

1.1.2. The Single European Act
The results of the IGC’s work were the focus of discussions at the Luxembourg European Council of December 1985. Political agreement in Luxembourg opened the way for the adoption of the Single European Act. The Act, which entered into force on 1 July 1987, combined in a single document some changes to the Community treaties and a text on cooperation in the area of foreign policy.

Catching up with the political reality, the Single European Act gave the European Council a legal treaty basis for the first time, enshrining its existence and defining its composition: ‘The European Council shall bring together the heads of state or government of the member states and the President of the Commission of the European Communities. They shall be assisted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and by a member of the Commission. The European Council shall meet at least twice a year’.

The Single European Act did not define the powers of the European Council, nor did it formally confirm its institutional status. Neither of these factors however slowed its subsequent contribution to the most important developments in the construction of Europe. Thus the decisive moves towards the creation of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) were played out in a number of European Councils, such as that of Hanover in June 1988.

1.1.3. The Maastricht Treaty
The Strasbourg European Council of December 1989 set the launch of an IGC on EMU for December 1990. The Dublin special meeting of the European Council in April 1990 launched the preparations for an IGC on political union. Both IGCs began in the margins of the Rome European Council in December 1990. The Maastricht European Council in December 1991 achieved an agreement on the new treaty, named Treaty on European Union (TEU) or Treaty of Maastricht, which would cover both these fields in the same text.

The Maastricht Treaty entered into force on 1 November 1993. It created the European Union, based on an enlarged Community pillar, covering among other things the creation of EMU, and two new pillars: Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and cooperation in the fields of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA).

In addition, the treaty addressed the European Council’s role. It formalised the practice whereby the European Council was presided over by the head of state or government of the country holding the Presidency of the Council. Furthermore, in keeping with the European Parliament’s evolving role, the treaty provided that the European Council
submit a report to the Parliament following each of its meetings and an annual written report on the progress made by the EU.

Finally, the Maastricht Treaty began to clarify the powers of the European Council: ‘The European Council shall provide the Union with the necessary impetus for its development and shall define the general political guidelines thereof’. This clarification was both broad and succinct, encapsulating the role played since 1975: setting a path for the development of the Union itself and establishing the strategic policy framework within which the Union’s institutions should work. The subsequent definition by the European Council of broad economic policy guidelines was to be a further expression of this role.

1.1.4. The Treaties of Amsterdam and Nice

The Turin European Council of March 1996 mandated the IGC to revise the Maastricht Treaty. Negotiations were given a new thrust by the special meeting of the European Council in Dublin of October of the same year. The outstanding issues were addressed at the Amsterdam European Council of June 1997, enabling the Treaty of Amsterdam to be signed on 2 October 1997 and to enter into force on 1 May 1999.

The Treaty of Amsterdam defined the European Council’s powers in relation to the CFSP: ‘The European Council shall define the principles of and general guidelines for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, including for matters with defence implications. (It) shall decide on common strategies to be implemented by the Union in areas where the member states have important interests in common’. The important role of the European Council in this policy area was propelled by events in the former Yugoslavia and reflected in its meetings at Pörtschach (informal meeting of heads of state or government, October 1998), Cologne (June 1999) and Helsinki (December 1999). The Treaty of Amsterdam introduced the position of High Representative for the CFSP to represent the EU on the world stage, and it was decided that the Secretary-General of the Council of the EU would also be the High Representative. The then Council Secretary-General Jürgen Trumpf thus became the first High Representative for the CFSP, but he would only serve for a few months. The Cologne European Council of June 1999 appointed Javier Solana as Secretary-General of the Council and High Representative. He took up both posts in October that year, after standing down as NATO Secretary-General.

After the Amsterdam Treaty entered into force, the Tampere European Council in October 1999 was devoted to the establishment of an ‘area of freedom, security and justice in the EU’. It decided to implement a ‘common EU asylum and migration policy’ and opened the way for significant progress in the area of police and judicial cooperation, an ambition given greater urgency by the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

In March 2000, the special meeting of the European Council of Lisbon put in place a strategy for improving the competitiveness of the European economy. With that objective, it provided among other things for the introduction of a new open method of coordination at all levels, ‘coupled with a stronger guiding and coordination role for the European Council, to ensure more coherent strategic direction and effective monitoring of progress’. It was decided that every spring there would be a European Council meeting to follow up this subject.
From 1999, the European Council began a process of reform, with a view in particular to the enlargement of the EU. Thus, after debates on these subjects at the European Councils of Helsinki (December 1999), Gothenburg (June 2001) and Barcelona (March 2002), the Seville European Council of June 2002 gave ‘its agreement to a series of specific measures applicable, without amendment of the treaties, to the organisation and functioning of the European Council (…) and of the Council’

These measures concerned the preparation, conduct of and follow-up to the work of the European Council and its conclusions.

Declaration No 22 annexed to the Final Act of the Nice Treaty of 26 February 2001 provides that: ‘As from 2002, one European Council meeting per Presidency will be held in Brussels. When the Union comprises 18 members, all European Council meetings will be held in Brussels’. The treaty was concluded after four days of negotiations at the Nice European Council in December 2000. The difficult birth of the Nice Treaty prompted a review of working methods and a search for a process wider than a diplomatic conclave of heads of state or government.

The Laeken declaration adopted by the European Council in December 2001 called for a Convention on the future of Europe to be convened. The draft constitutional treaty submitted by the Convention to the European Council in July 2003 then formed the basis for the work of the IGC called in October 2003, and the draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe was signed on 29 October 2004.

However, the negative referendum outcomes in France and the Netherlands meant that the treaty did not achieve ratification in 2005. In response to this setback heads of state or government adopted a declaration, at the June 2005 European Council during the Luxembourg Presidency, inaugurating a one-year reflection period. Responding to the June 2006 European Council under the Austrian Presidency, the Berlin Declaration adopted by the heads of state or government on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome expressed the ‘aim of placing the EU on a renewed common basis before the European Parliament elections in 2009’. The June 2007 European Council under the German Presidency agreed on the mandate of an IGC to be called in order to amend the existing treaties. The treaty that emerged from this process was signed in Lisbon on 13 December 2007.

1.1.5. The Lisbon Treaty
This new reform treaty replaced the draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. It entered into force on 1 December 2009, introducing amendments both to the Treaty establishing the European Community (Treaty of Rome) and the Treaty on European Union (Treaty of Maastricht). The Treaty establishing the European Community was renamed the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) on that occasion.

9 Seville European Council, June 2002, Presidency conclusions.
10 The Thessaloniki European Council of June 2003 was the last held outside Brussels. All subsequent meetings will be identified by date and presidency, rather than location — until the Lisbon Treaty, which provided for a permanent President.
11 The Nice European Council meeting remains the longest ever, to date.
The Lisbon Treaty’s aim was to improve the efficiency of the EU’s institutions and to make them more democratic. Prominent changes included a consolidated legal personality for the EU and the creation of a stable Presidency for the European Council, including a President elected by its members for two and a half years, renewable once. In addition, the treaty created a High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (appointed for a five-year term and who would in this post also preside meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council and be Vice-President of the European Commission), and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The powers of the European Parliament were further extended. For the Council, a new rule of double majority was introduced, applicable as from 1 November 2014 (see Annex IV), and its use extended to an increasing number of areas compared to the previous rule. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights became legally binding, and the member states were for the first time given a legal framework for withdrawal from the EU (Article 50 of the TEU). The European Council is furthermore authorised to act — by a simple majority vote — on the decision to create an IGC to amend the treaties.

The Treaty of Lisbon was never intended to be read as a free-standing text, so consolidated versions of the treaties as revised by the Treaty of Lisbon were published in the Official Journal of the EU in 2010 and 2012.

The Lisbon Treaty officially gave the European Council the status of an EU institution. This confirmed its existing separation from the Council of the EU and means that it is subject to all the provisions applicable to the EU’s institutions. For example, in the rare
cases when it adopts binding legal acts, it has to comply with the legal basis provided by the treaty, and its acts can be the subject of actions before the Court of Justice. As the culmination of the process of abandoning the informal status of summits, the European Council as a new institution adopted its own rules of procedure on the day the Lisbon Treaty entered into force.

Within the EU’s institutional architecture the European Council occupies a special position as a strategic and political institution. It defines the Union’s future direction, its priorities and its political and economic strategies. The European Council, however, does ‘not exercise legislative functions’, leaving the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission to exercise their respective roles in the legislative process.

Since the Lisbon Treaty entered into force, the European Council has been involved in all the major decisions the EU has taken to address international and internal challenges in the economic, financial and monetary fields, in asylum and immigration, enlargement, development cooperation and international relations. Since the very beginning, its policy decisions and leadership have helped advance European integration, which has proven crucial in times of crises.

1.2. THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

The strategic role assigned to the European Council by the Maastricht Treaty and confirmed by the Lisbon Treaty required that its work be prepared and guided by a more stable and permanent chairmanship than could be offered by the rotating presidency of the Council. Thus, in one of its most important innovations, the Lisbon Treaty created the post of a fixed-term and full-time President of the European Council.

The tasks of the President of the European Council are to chair and drive forward its work, to ensure the preparation and continuity of its work, and to facilitate cohesion and consensus. The President is required to present a report to the European Parliament after each European Council meeting. He also represents the EU externally, along with the High Representative and/or the President of the European Commission, depending on the occasion. The European Council and its President are assisted by the General Secretariat of the Council, but the President also has his own private office.

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14 Article 15(6) of the TEU.
15 See also 1.2.3, on bilateral and multilateral meetings.
At an informal meeting on 19 November 2009, the 27 heads of state or government appointed the then Belgian Prime Minister Herman Van Rompuy as the first holder of this post.\(^{16}\)

The European Council meeting of 10 and 11 December 2009 was the last one chaired by the president or prime minister of the member state holding the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU, namely the then Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, under transitional arrangements.\(^{17}\)

The first meeting chaired by Herman Van Rompuy was an informal meeting of heads of state or government in the Solvay Library in Brussels on 11 February 2010, during which the future direction of the economic policies of the EU was discussed, and his first formal European Council came one month later, on 25 and 26 March. He was re-elected for a second term at the European Council of 1 and 2 March 2012. On 1 December 2014, Donald Tusk — the then Polish Prime Minister — took over from Herman Van Rompuy as European Council President.\(^{18}\)

1.2.1. Post-Lisbon European Council meetings

The European Council’s Rules of Procedure, adopted on 1 December 2009, provide that the Council should meet twice every six months, in principle in Brussels. Except where the treaties provide otherwise, its decisions are taken by consensus. Several operational decisions, such as the election of the European Council President, the nomination of the European Commission and the designation of the High Representative, can, since Lisbon, be taken by qualified majority vote (QMV).

The European Council sets the EU’s policy agenda by adopting conclusions at each European Council meeting. These conclusions address specific issues of concern to the EU and outline particular actions to take or goals to reach. European Council conclusions can also set deadlines for reaching agreement on particular policy issues or for the presentation of reports.

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\(^{16}\) Catherine Ashton (UK), was appointed during the same meeting as High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission. (She was High Representative before she was Vice-President.)

\(^{17}\) Of the states that acceded to the Union in 2004 and 2007, only the heads of state or government of Slovenia and of the Czech Republic held the Presidency of the European Council as representatives of their member states.

\(^{18}\) At the same time, the former Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federica Mogherini, was appointed High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission.

\(^{19}\) European Council conclusions.

of legislative proposals. In this way, the European Council can influence and guide the EU’s policy agenda. At its meeting in Brussels of 27 June 2014, the European Council adopted a ‘strategic agenda’ of priority areas for longer-term EU action and focus. The strategic agenda, which will guide the EU’s work over a period of five years, will be used to plan the work of the European Council and also acts as a basis for the work programmes of other EU institutions.

As well as setting the EU’s political priorities through the strategic agenda and through its conclusions, the European Council has a formal role to play in the EU’s annual European semester process, which is the EU’s yearly cycle of economic and fiscal policy coordination.

Under Article 68 of the TFEU, the European Council is also responsible for defining strategic guidelines for the area of freedom, security and justice. This was put into practice for the first time with the adoption of guidelines in June 2014. They were developed in line with the strategic agenda priorities and cover issues such as border control, migration and asylum policy, and police and judicial cooperation.

1.2.2. Euro Summits

Euro area leaders met in the Euro Summit format for the first time on 12 October 2008 in Paris, where they agreed on concerted action in response to the economic crisis. Further summits in this format were held in Brussels in March and May 2010, as well as
March, July, October and December 2011. In 2012, euro area issues were mainly dealt with at European Council level.

In the margins of the European Council meeting of 1 and 2 March 2012, 25 European leaders signed the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG). Among other things, the TSCG, which entered into force on 1 January 2013, formalised the Euro Summit and the position of its President. The organisation of the Euro Summit and the role of its President are set out in Article 12 of the TSCG\textsuperscript{20}. The first Euro Summit since the entry into force of the TSCG was held on 14 March 2013, when specific rules for the organisation of proceedings for these meetings were also adopted.

The Euro Summit brings together — at least twice a year — the heads of state or government of the euro area member states, the Euro Summit President and the President of the European Commission. The current Euro Summit President is Donald Tusk, who also presides the European Council. Although coordination of the euro area member states’ economic and fiscal policy mainly takes place in the Eurogroup\textsuperscript{21}, the euro area’s 19 heads of state or government, meeting in the Euro Summit format, can provide further policy guidance in areas beyond the scope of finance ministers, due to their wide-ranging mandate. This helps with the coordination of all relevant policy areas needed for the smooth functioning of the EMU. Where appropriate, and at least once a year, leaders of non-euro area member states that have ratified the TSCG also take part in the Euro Summit meetings, which are prepared by the Eurogroup. As euro area issues are politically and economically important for all member states, they are also discussed regularly in European Council meetings.

1.2.3. Bilateral and multilateral meetings

Since the Lisbon Treaty, the European Council President also represents the EU externally when such representation is required at the level of heads of state or government\textsuperscript{22}. On issues related to the EU’s CFSP, he does so alongside the High Representative, and at international summits, usually alongside the President of the European Commission.

International meetings where the President represents the EU include bilateral and multilateral summits organised by the EU and international summits.

Bilateral summits are organised between the EU and its strategic partners. They are held on a regular basis, usually once a year, with countries such as Brazil, China, Japan, Russia, South Africa and the United States. The summits take place alternately in Brussels and in the country concerned.

\textsuperscript{20} The TSCG is available on www.consilium.europa.eu/en/european-council/euro-summit.

\textsuperscript{21} The Eurogroup is an informal body in which the finance ministers of the euro area member states discuss matters relating to their shared responsibilities regarding the euro.

\textsuperscript{22} Article 15 of the TEU.
Multilateral summits at EU level include the Eastern Partnership, EU-Africa, EU-ASEM (Asia-Europe meeting) and EU-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States). Traditionally, when it was the EU’s turn to host such summits, they were hosted by the member state holding the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU. Since 2014, however, they have as a rule been hosted and presided by the President of the European Council in Brussels. The participants are the heads of state or government of all EU member states, plus the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, as well as the relevant heads of state or government from the participating countries.

At other international summits, the EU either is a member or is invited to take part as a key international player, as in the cases of the G7, G8, G20 and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). UN resolution A/65/276 adopted in May 2011, invited the EU to participate in the general debate of the General Assembly and established the right for EU representatives to present the positions of the EU and its member states at the UN. The then European Council President Herman Van Rompuy addressed this gathering of world leaders, in New York on 22 September 2011. Prior to the adoption of this resolution, EU positions were expressed at the UNGA by representatives of the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU.
2. THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

2.1. THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE TREATIES

2.1.1. The first treaties
The first Council meeting was held on 8 September 1952 at the Hôtel de Ville in Luxembourg. It was the second institution to begin work, under the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Signed in 1951 in Paris, this treaty created an institutional framework comprising a High Authority, a Special Council, an Assembly and a Court. The Council’s main role was to exercise control over the High Authority’s activities by issuing opinions.

The foreign ministers and the economic affairs ministers of the six founding member states (Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands) were present and the meeting was chaired by the German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, on the basis of an innovative system providing for each member state to chair the Council on a three-month rotation. Germany was the first country to hold the Presidency.

During that inaugural meeting, the Council adopted rules of procedure and established a secretariat, appointing Christian Calmes, a diplomat from Luxembourg, as Secretary-General of the Council. The ministers also agreed on the statute of the members of the High Authority and of the Court. Jean Monnet, the President of the High Authority, outlined what his institution had accomplished to date, and presented its work programme for the following months. The Council also discussed future relations of the newly established Community with non-member countries, in particular the United Kingdom and the United States, and with other international organisations.

Throughout the Council’s inaugural meeting, the idea was emphasised that the Coal and Steel Community constituted a single step on a broader path to further European integration, and this was taken as a point of reference in the speeches of both presidents. Indeed, on 10 September 1952, the foreign affairs ministers held a conference in the margins of the Council, where they adopted a resolution calling for the Assembly to prepare a draft treaty on the creation of a European Political Community, which would have a broader membership and be more supranational in nature.

The planned European Political Community never came to fruition. As soon as it was concluded, the Assembly’s draft treaty gave rise to passionate public debates and lengthy diplomatic discussions. When, on 30 August 1954, the French National Assembly failed to ratify the Treaty establishing the European Defence Community, which the European Political Community was supposed to oversee, both plans were gradually abandoned. Instead, the six chose to proceed along the path of progressive economic integration.
On 26 June 1956, in Brussels, an IGC on the common market and Euratom established a committee to launch negotiations for what came to be known as the Treaties of Rome — the founding treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC), which entered into force on 1 January 1958. The committee was chaired by Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and attended by delegations from the six members of the ECSC.

With institutional structures similar to that of the ECSC, the new communities also comprised four institutions: a Commission, a Council and, shared jointly with the ECSC, an Assembly and a Court. However, the balance of power between the two executives (the Council and the Commission) had shifted markedly, with the Council acquiring a role similar to the one that it still holds today: a key decision-making body.

The two new Councils held a joint inaugural meeting at the Palais des Académies in Brussels on 25 January 1958. The meeting was chaired by Victor Larock, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs. The presidents of the three executives, Walter Hallstein (first President of the European Commission), Paul Finet (President of the ECSC High Authority) and Enrico Medi (Vice-President of the Euratom Commission), were also present.

There were numerous procedural issues to be dealt with as the Councils decided on their respective rules of procedure, on the Community’s initial expenditure and on the statute of the members of the two Commissions. The ministers also agreed to set up a Committee of Permanent Representatives (Coreper), an Economic and Social
Committee and the Assembly. By contrast with the triple institutional setting of the Communities, the Councils endorsed a recommendation that the ‘same body of officials is to make up the Secretariat of the three Councils’23. This meant that the existing secretariat of the ECSC Special Council would also assist the two new institutions.

As had happened at the inaugural meeting of the Special Council, the idea that these two new Communities were just one of many steps towards the creation of a more integrated political and social Europe was prominent in the addresses of the main speakers. In the words of the Councils’ president, Victor Larock:

‘The social objectives are rather swamped in the Economic Community Treaty as a whole, (…) but if we want people in our countries and throughout Europe to be won over to the ideas that guide us, these are the objectives that need to be at the forefront of our minds. What would be the point in focusing on promoting production, trade and the free movement of capital if economic progress were not used for man’s benefit?’ (Opening address of Victor Larock, Belgian Foreign Minister and President-in-Office of the Councils, at the inaugural meeting of the EEC and EAEC Councils, held in Brussels on 25 January 1958 (Annex I, CEE EUR/CM/20 f/58)24.)

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Italian poster publicising the signing of the Treaties of Rome
2.1.2. The ‘empty chair’ crisis and the Luxembourg compromise

The need to coordinate the activities of the three Communities emerged as soon as
they were created in 1958, and by 1960 the merging of the executives was already
being discussed by all the institutions. Coreper held its first substantive discussion on
the issue in November 1960\(^25\). The negotiations were not without difficulty, however.
The political context of the 1960s was not favourable to compromises, as the first crisis
of the integration process shows, notably France’s absence from Council meetings in
what came to be known as the ‘empty chair’ crisis.

Money and power were the concerns at the heart of the empty chair crisis. Under the
treaties, two crucial Community issues had to be agreed upon in 1965: the financing
of the common agricultural policy (CAP) and the increased use of qualified majority
voting (QMV) in the Council.

The regulations on the financing of the CAP were due to expire in July 1965. A year
before, the Council of the EEC had asked the Commission to put forward a proposal on
the financing of the CAP for the period 1965–1970. The then President of the European
Commission, Walter Hallstein, took the opportunity to propose an overall revision of the
EEC’s financial structures and the responsibilities of the Parliamentary Assembly and of
the Commission itself. The Commission’s proposal provided for the establishment of
a system of own resources for the Community that would no longer rely on member
states’ national contributions. Hallstein also argued for extending the Assembly’s
budgetary powers and assigning greater responsibilities to the Commission.

In parallel to those discussions, the EEC institutions were also preparing for the third
stage of the transitional period for the establishment of the common market. Due to
begin on 1 January 1965, the third stage in the creation of the internal market envis-
agéd increased use of QMV in the Council.

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\(^{25}\) Summary record of the restricted meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee, held in
Brussels on 10 November 1960 (CM2 1960 RP/CRS/2, p. 4).
A Community equipped with its own resources, a stronger Commission and the generalised use of qualified majority was at odds with President Charles de Gaulle’s views regarding the future of European integration. On 30 June 1965, the EEC Council met to discuss the Commission’s proposals on the financing of the CAP and the crisis came to a peak. France, represented by Agriculture Minister Edgar Pisani and Finance Minister Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, loudly voiced its disagreement with the Commission and the other five member states. The next day, on 1 July 1965, the French Government recalled to Paris its permanent representative in Brussels and announced its intention not to attend future meetings of the Council or take part in the work of Coreper and other Council committees and working parties.

The empty chair policy lasted approximately six months, when it was finally brought to an end by a special meeting of the Council, held in Luxembourg and lasting four days (17–18 and 28–29 January 1966). On 29 January 1966, the Council issued a statement that the six member states had reached agreement on future relations between the Commission and the Council and on the application of QMV. This agreement became known as the Luxembourg compromise or Luxembourg reconciliation. Under the compromise, later referred to as an ‘agreement to disagree’, when decisions to be adopted by qualified majority were perceived by a member state to affect vital national interests, the Council would ‘endeavour, within a reasonable time, to reach solutions which can be adopted by all members of the Council while respecting their mutual interests and those of the Community’. Though France considered that ‘where very important interests are at stake the discussion must be continued until unanimous agreement is reached’, there was a divergence of views on what should be done in the event of a failure to reach complete agreement, according to the minutes of the meeting.

The Luxembourg compromise is often seen as having had a negative impact on the process of European integration, as it gave individual member states the opportunity to put specific proposals on hold and thus limit the Commission’s influence. However, that reputation neglects the crucial contribution it made: while it may have slowed down the process of integration in relation to existing expectations, the compromise allowed that process to continue — and continue it did. Since then, the founding treaties have been modified five times. Each modification has extended the Communities’ areas of competence and made procedures more open and transparent. In parallel, membership has also changed, and the six founding members have been joined by 22 other European States over the course of seven enlargements.

### 2.1.3. The Merger Treaty

The Luxembourg compromise paved the way for resolving the issue of coordinating the activities of the Communities and their Institutions. What became known as the merger of the executives took place ten years after the three Communities were founded. The Merger Treaty, also known as the Brussels Treaty after the city in which it was signed, entered into force on 1 July 1967. It established a single Council — the Council of the European Communities — to replace the Council of the ECSC and the Councils of the EEC and of the EAEC. Similarly, it created a single Commission — the Commission of the European Communities — to replace the High Authority of the

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26 Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Council of the EEC, held in Luxembourg on 17–18 and 28–29 January 1966 (CM2 C/12/66).
ECSC and the Commissions of the EEC and EAEC. The three Communities already shared the Assembly and the Court.

Despite the merger of the executives, there was no merger of the treaties. Each Community retained its legal independence and the Council continued to act differently according to the powers attributed to the institutions by the respective founding treaties.

2.1.4. The Maastricht Treaty

It was in November 1993, with the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty, that the Council was given its current name — the Council of the European Union. The Maastricht Treaty was of pivotal importance for the process of European integration, adding a more political dimension to the economic cooperation already in place. The treaty is best known for establishing the European Union and its three-pillar structure: the European Community (first pillar), the common foreign and security policy (CFSP, second pillar), and justice and home affairs (JHA, third pillar). Maastricht also paved the way for the creation of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the single currency, the euro.

The compromise reached by the European Council in Maastricht masterfully intertwined pre-existing policy structures under the single umbrella of the Union. The first pillar grouped together the three existing Communities and gave a wider policy scope to the process of economic integration, the second pillar further developed European political cooperation, first mentioned in the treaties by the Single European Act, and the third pillar built upon the experience gained under the Schengen Agreement and its implementing Convention.

Maastricht’s pillar structure limited the powers of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice to influence the new policy areas contained under the second and third pillars, the intergovernmental nature of which gave the Council a natural authority. However, under the first pillar — the European Community — the Council for the first time experienced the concept of ‘codeciding’ with the European Parliament. This codecision procedure, renamed the ordinary legislative procedure by the Treaty of Lisbon in December 2009, has proven so crucial for the balance of power between the European institutions that it has now become the standard procedure under the treaties for legislative acts and is applicable to most policy areas of the Union.

2.1.5. The Lisbon Treaty

The two major changes for the Council introduced by the Lisbon Treaty were a new voting system for qualified majority and the principle of its Presidency rotating on the basis of trio groups, working together over 18-month periods to accomplish a common agenda.

The idea behind the trio groups was to increase consistency over time while still leaving room for diverse national interests, leadership styles and policy priorities. The so-called ESBEHU group (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) was the first such trio of Presidencies to work together after the Lisbon Treaty entered into force, between 1 January 2010 and 30 June 2011.
Belgium was part of the first trio of Presidencies — a system introduced by the Lisbon Treaty — and chaired Council meetings between 1 July and 31 December 2010.

The Treaties of Amsterdam and Nice had already greatly increased the scope of QMV. After Lisbon, QMV became the standard voting procedure in almost every policy area but taxation and foreign policy, replacing unanimity. The earlier amending treaties had established a system of vote-weighting whereby the number of votes for each member state was based on its relative size. Under that system, a decision was adopted only if a certain vote threshold was reached by a majority of member states. The Lisbon Treaty simplified the voting system, establishing a dual majority system by which a qualified majority is achieved if it covers at least 55% of member states (16 out of 28) representing at least 65% of the population, when acting on a proposal from the Commission. Although the new system has been in use since 1 November 2014, a transitional period, during which the previous voting weights can be applied when a member state formally requests it, runs until 31 March 2017.

Since the Treaty of Lisbon, Council deliberations on legislation, including debates and voting, have been broadcast, and the treaty also formalised the Eurogroup, whose role is set out in Protocol No 14. The first such informal meeting of finance ministers of the euro area member states took place on 4 June 1998 at Senningen Castle in

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27 QMV originally had its legal basis in Article 148 of the Treaties of Rome and the first system applied between 1958 and 1972 (Annex IV).

28 In order to win over Poland during negotiations, this transitional measure was included after the so-called Ioannina compromise was invoked, enabling a group of states holding combined votes close to the minority blockage level to request re-examination of a decision adopted by QMV in the Council.

The Lisbon Treaty provided for the election of a Eurogroup President\(^{30}\), a position first held by the then Prime Minister of Luxembourg, Jean-Claude Juncker, and from 21 January 2013 by Dutch Finance Minister, Jeroen Dijsselbloem. He was re-elected for a second mandate of two and a half years on 13 July 2015.

Though the Council is a single legal entity, it meets in different ‘configurations’, depending on the subject being discussed. Following Lisbon, the number of Council configurations increased from nine to ten because the General Affairs/External Relations configuration was split into two. The rotating Presidency organises and chairs all Council meetings, except for the Foreign Affairs Council, which is chaired by the High Representative.

The Treaty of Lisbon is generally seen as having reduced the visibility — if not the importance — of the rotating Council Presidency, mainly because the European Council has become an institution in its own right, with its own President, so the rotating Council Presidency no longer chairs European Council meetings\(^{31}\). Whereas the European Council focuses on strategic orientation, as well as acute situations or even crisis management, the Council Presidency is responsible for driving forward the Council’s work on EU legislation, ensuring the continuity of the EU agenda, orderly legislative processes and cooperation among member states.

### 2.2. PREPARING THE COUNCIL’S WORK

#### 2.2.1. Coreper

The founding Treaty establishing the ECSC in 1952 did not contain any provisions setting out the preparatory structure of the Special Council. However, the complexity of the decision-making process of this new institution and the need to discuss and coordinate the positions of six member states in advance of formal meetings led to the setting-up of a Coordination Committee (Cocor) in February 1953, some seven months after the creation of the Community. Cocor was not a permanent body, and representatives from the member states came to Luxembourg from the capitals to attend its meetings, the national representatives changing according to the issues on the agenda.

Despite its ever-changing composition, the committee proved to be extremely successful in coordinating and preparing Council meetings — so much so that by 1958 the Treaties establishing the EEC and the EAEC enshrined the possibility for the Councils’ rules of procedure to ‘provide for the establishment of a committee composed of representatives of member states’\(^{32}\), whose tasks and competences were to be determined by the relevant Councils. Less than a month after the entry into force of the EEC and EAEC Treaties, on 25 January 1958, at their inaugural meeting, the Councils

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\(^{30}\) The election procedure of the Eurogroup President is set out in Protocol No 14 to the Lisbon Treaty.

\(^{31}\) The fixed chair model is already applied in three bodies: the European Council, the Foreign Affairs Council and the Eurogroup.

\(^{32}\) Article 151 of the EEC Treaty and 121 of the EAEC Treaty.
decided to set up a Committee of Permanent Representatives of the Governments of the member states (Coreper).33

The permanent representatives, who established themselves permanently in Brussels, are, in effect, their countries’ ambassadors to the EU and express the position of their governments. They are assisted by a team of national experts seconded from their home ministries, to what have since become known as the permanent representations. Coreper was charged with preparing the work of the EEC and EAEC Councils and with carrying out other tasks assigned to it by them.

On 1 July 1967, with the Merger Treaty, the existence of Coreper was enshrined in primary law for the first time. Article 4 of the Merger Treaty refers to Coreper and to its role as a committee of permanent representatives responsible for preparing the work of the now single Council. The Maastricht Treaty of 1993 incorporated the substance of Article 4 into the founding Treaty on European Union, and the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1999 gave Coreper the capacity to take procedural decisions. Both of these roles were retained by the Lisbon Treaty.

Coreper worked as a single body until it was split into two parts in 1962 on account of its intensive work schedule: Coreper I, comprising the deputy permanent representatives and dealing with questions of a more technical nature, and Coreper II, composed of the permanent representatives themselves, who prepare the work on political and economic questions of a horizontal nature.

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33 Minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Councils of the EEC and the EAEC, held in Brussels on 25 January 1958 (CM2 20/1958, p. 10). The abbreviation Coreper derives from the French name ‘Comité des représentants permanents.’
The rather broad definition of Coreper’s role in the treaties does not do justice to the crucial importance it has gained over the years in ensuring the smooth functioning of the Council. Though it is not an EU decision-making body, and any agreement it reaches can be called into question by the Council, which alone has the power to make decisions, Coreper has played a vital role since its creation in managing complex and difficult negotiations. Intensive, long hours working together have given Coreper’s members essential experience in helping the Union’s member states to reach compromises.

2.2.2. Committees and working parties
Committees and working parties are set up by the Council or Coreper to coordinate the Council’s activities in different areas. Composed of national experts specialising in a specific field or policy, such groups are the starting point for negotiations on any given matter or proposal. They advance negotiations by reaching agreement whenever possible and by identifying contentious issues to be addressed by Coreper.

The first such committee to be created was the Commercial Affairs Committee. Established at the inaugural meeting of the ECSC Special Council on 10 September 195234, it was given the task of addressing questions relating to transitional commercial provisions. The Commercial Affairs Committee held its inaugural meeting in Luxembourg on 29 November 1952.

Other high-level committees have also been set up over the years: the Special Committee on Agriculture, the Economic and Financial Committee, the Article 113 Committee (subsequently the Article 133 and today the Trade Policy Committee) and the Political and Security Committee are among the best-known examples. Some horizontal committees closely associated with the workings of Coreper, such as the Antici and Mertens Groups (who prepare the Coreper II and I meetings, respectively) and the Friends of the Presidency Group, have also been established. As the range of the

34 Minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Special Council of the ECSC, held in Luxembourg from 8 to 10 September 1952 (CM1 1/1952, p. 8).
Communities’ competences has increased, this has been reflected in the setting up of more and more specialised groups. Today there are more than 150 highly specialised working parties and committees.

### 2.2.3. The General Secretariat

As was the case for Coreper, the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) found no mention in the Communities’ founding treaties. As mentioned above, the secretariat was established during the inaugural meeting of the ECSC Special Council on 9 and 10 September 1952. The inaugural meeting of the EEC and EAEC Councils, in January 1958, did not set up new secretariats for these institutions but instead confirmed that all three existing Councils would be assisted by the same body of officials. Christian Calmes was appointed Secretary-General in 1952, and his stewardship was extended in 1958. The GSC has since had a further seven secretaries-general. As from 1 July 2015, the post is occupied by Jeppe Tranholm-Mikkelsen (see Annex V).

In July 1967, with the Merger Treaty, the General Secretariat of the Council became the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Communities. However, it was not until the Maastricht Treaty in November 1993 that the GSC appeared in the treaties: Article 151 of the TEU acknowledged its existence and accorded to it the role of assisting the Council.

The secretariat initially consisted of fewer than a dozen officials. In a letter to Konrad Adenauer dated 17 November 1952, Christian Calmes described in detail the composition of the secretariat:

‘Its staff of ten currently breaks down as follows: the secretary (L), an administrator (B), a supervisor (also acts as accountant), an archivist (also acts as translator), two secretaries, a typist (also acts as telephonist), a clerical assistant (also deals with duplication), a driver (also acts as messenger) and a caretaker (also provides clerical back-up)’.

This small administrative body was mainly concerned with the logistical requirements of organising the Special Council’s meetings. The General Secretariat’s role has developed greatly since then. Today, in addition to its traditional secretarial tasks, such as the daily preparation of documents, translations and minute-taking, the GSC has also gradually developed additional policy roles: it provides continuity to the work of the Council under the system of rotating presidencies, which, every six months, bring a new dynamic to the process of negotiations and establish different priorities for the work programme of the Council, and it advises the Presidency on reaching compromises on the basis of its knowledge of policies, procedures and institutional matters.

The increasingly central role of the GSC was endorsed by the Helsinki European Council of December 1999, as the Union was preparing for enlargement, and subsequently recognised by Article 23 of the Council’s rules of procedure. This article stipulates...
that the secretariat be ‘closely and continually involved in organising, coordinating and ensuring the coherence of the Council’s work’ and assist the Presidency in seeking solutions.\textsuperscript{38}

The Secretary-General’s role is to assist the Council and to manage the GSC. He is responsible for the carrying out of the services provided by the GSC to the Presidencies of the Council and its preparatory bodies and to the President of the European Council, of which he is also the Secretary-General. He is also responsible for the administrative management of the GSC in terms of human and financial resources. He is appointed by the Council, by qualified majority.

3. ANNEXES

I THE EU TREATIES — THE MAIN REFORMS

The treaties are the foundation of the EU. They are negotiated by representatives of the governments of the member states and agreed by common accord. They are signed by all member states and ratified in accordance with the constitutional requirements of each member state. They enter into force only when that process has been concluded and each step has been completed.


First founding treaty
Common market for the strategic products of the time: coal and steel

Treaty establishing the European Defence Community — EDC Treaty 40, signed on 27 May 1952 in Paris, France, did not enter into force 41.

Treaty establishing the European Economic Community — EEC Treaty 42,
Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community, — EAEC Treaty or Euratom Treaty 43,
Convention on certain institutions common to the European Communities: Assembly, Court of Justice, Economic and Social Committee,
signed on 25 March 1957 in Rome, Italy, entered into force on 1 January 1958:

Two founding treaties — Rome Treaties
Gradual establishment of a general common market (EEC)
European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom)

39 The original versions of the treaty and the national instruments of ratification, as well as the successive instruments of accession, were deposited in the archives of the Government of the French Republic.
40 Idem.
41 The draft EDC Treaty was linked to the draft Treaty on the statute of a European Political Community (EPC), adopted by the ECSC ad hoc assembly on 10 March 1953 (submitted to the foreign affairs ministers of the ECSC on 9 March 1953). The draft EPC Treaty was rendered void by the rejection of the EDC.
42 Unlike the other protocols annexed to the EEC Treaty from the outset, the Protocol on the Statute of the Court of Justice of the European Economic Community was signed in Brussels on 17 April 1957.
43 The Protocol on the statute of the Court of Justice of the European Atomic Energy Community, annexed to the Euratom Treaty, was signed in Brussels on 17 April 1957.
Convention on the Netherlands Antilles,
signed on 13 November 1962 in Brussels, Belgium,
entered into force on 1 October 1964.

Treaty establishing a Single Council and a Single Commission of the European Communities — Merger Treaty 44,
signed on 8 April 1965 in Brussels, Belgium,
entered into force on 1 July 1967.

Treaty amending certain budgetary provisions of the treaties (‘own resources’),
signed on 22 April 1970 in Luxembourg, Luxembourg,
entered into force on 1 January 1971.

Treaty amending certain financial provisions of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community and of the Treaty establishing a single Council and a single Commission of the European Communities 45 (‘Treaty amending certain financial provisions’),
signed on 22 July 1975 in Brussels, Belgium,
entered into force on 1 June 1977.

Treaty amending certain provisions of the protocol on the Statute of the European Investment Bank 46: empowering the Board of Governors to alter the definition of the unit of account and the method of converting sums into national currencies,
signed on 10 July 1975 in Brussels, Belgium,
entered into force on 1 October 1977.

Treaty on Greenland 47,
signed on 13 March 1984 in Brussels, Belgium,
entered into force on 1 January 1985.

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44 The Decision of the representatives of the governments of the member states on the provisional location of certain institutions and departments of the Communities (OJ 152, 13.7.1967) was signed and entered into force on the same dates as those of the signing and entry into force of the Merger Treaty.

45 The Decision of the Representatives of the governments of the member states of 5 April 1977 on the provisional location of the Court of Auditors (OJ L 104, 28.4.1977) was signed on 5 April 1977 and entered into force on 1 June 1977.

46 The Protocol on the Statute of the European Investment Bank was annexed to the EEC Treaty.

47 Greenland formally withdrew from the EEC on 1 February 1985.
**Single European Act**\(^{48}\), signed on 17 February 1986 (BE, DE, ES, FR, IE, LU, NL, PT, UK) in Luxembourg, Luxembourg, and on 25 February 1986 (DK, EL, IT) in The Hague, The Netherlands, entered into force on 1 July 1987:

- Qualified majority voting
- Beginning of legislative cooperation between the Council and the European Parliament
- Towards a large internal market
- Foreign policy cooperation
- First mention of the European Council

**Treaty on European Union — TEU or Treaty of Maastricht**\(^{49}\), signed on 7 February 1992 in Maastricht, The Netherlands, entered into force on 1 November 1993:

- Birth of the European Union
- Economic and Monetary Union
- Move towards the euro
- Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)
- Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)


**Treaty of Amsterdam**, signed on 2 October 1997 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, entered into force on 1 May 1999:

- Area of freedom, security and justice
- Integration of the Schengen acquis
- Equality between men and women
- Sustainable development
- High Representative for the CFSP
- Crisis management capacity

**Treaty of Nice**, signed on 26 February 2001 in Nice, France, entered into force on 1 February 2003:

- Reform of the institutions for the future Union of 27

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\(^{48}\) Amended the ECSC Treaty, the EEC Treaty and the Euratom Treaty.

\(^{49}\) Established the Treaty on the European Union; amended the EEC Treaty with a view to establishing the European Community; amended the ECSC Treaty and the Euratom Treaty.
**Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe,**
signed on 29 October 2004 in Rome, Italy,
did not enter into force.

**Treaty of Lisbon,**
signed on 13 December 2007 in Lisbon, Portugal,
entered into force on 1 December 2009:

- The European Council becomes an institution
- Law-making parity between the Council and the European Parliament
- Involvement of national parliaments
- Legal personality of the EU
- Charter of Fundamental Rights

**Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union — TSCG Treaty**, 50
signed on 2 March 2012 in Brussels, Belgium,
entered into force on 1 January 2013.

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50 The 19 euro area member states plus Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Sweden have already signed the treaty, whereas the Czech Republic has also started procedures to sign.
II THE ENLARGEMENT PROCESS

The original ECSC Treaty was never meant to be an exclusive club for the six founding member states. Article 98 stated that ‘any European state may request to accede to the present treaty’. Despite the signing of new treaties and numerous revisions, the invitation for other European states to join the process of integration has always remained open. Article 49 of the TEU now states that ‘any European state which respects the values referred to in Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union’.


*Treaty of Accession of Greece*[^52], signed on 28 May 1979 in Athens, Greece, entered into force on 1 January 1981.

*Treaty of Accession of Spain and Portugal*[^53], signed on 12 June 1985 in Madrid, Spain, and in Lisbon, Portugal, entered into force on 1 January 1986.

*Treaty of Accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden*, signed on 24 June 1994 in Corfu, Greece[^54], entered into force on 1 January 1995.

*Treaty of Accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia*, signed on 16 April 2003 in Athens, Greece, entered into force on 1 May 2004.

[^51]: Regarding accession to the ECSC, see the Decision of the Council of the European Communities of 22 January 1972 concerning the accession of the Kingdom of Denmark, Ireland, the Kingdom of Norway, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the European Coal and Steel Community, OJ L 73, 27.3.1972 (Documents concerning the accession to the European Communities of those four countries). Due to the negative referendum result in Norway on 25 September 1972 on the Accession Treaty, the Accession Treaty and other documents relating to accession to the European Communities were subject to the Council Decision of the European Communities of 1 January 1973 adjusting the instruments concerning the accession of new member states to the European Communities, OJ L 2, 1.1.1973.

[^52]: For accession to the ECSC, see the Decision of the Council of the European Communities of 24 May 1979 on the accession of the Hellenic Republic to the European Coal and Steel Community, OJ L 291, 19.11.1979.

[^53]: Regarding accession to the ECSC, see the Decision of the Council of the European Communities of 11 June 1985 on the accession of the Kingdom of Spain and the Portuguese Republic to the European Coal and Steel Community, OJ L 302, 15.11.1985.

[^54]: Norway withdrew from the accession process following a negative referendum result on 28 November 1994. Due to this non-ratification, the Accession Treaty and other documents relating to accession were subject to Decision 95/1/EC, Euratom, ECSC of the Council of the European Union adjusting the instruments concerning the accession of new member states to the European Union, OJ L 1, 1.1.1995.


**From 6 to 28 members:**

- 1952
  - BE
  - DE
  - FR
  - IT
  - LU
  - NL

- 1973
  - DK
  - IE
  - UK

- 1981
  - EL

- 1986
  - ES
  - PT

- 1995
  - AT
  - FI
  - SE
  - CZ
  - EE
  - CY
  - LV
  - LT

- 2004
  - HU
  - MT
  - PL
  - SI
  - SK

- 2007
  - BG
  - RO

- 2013
  - HR
III CHRONOLOGY OF SUMMIT MEETINGS, EUROPEAN COUNCILS AND EURO SUMMITS

Intergovernmental conference of heads of state or government to finalise the Treaties of Rome
18 and 19 February 1957, Paris (Matignon), chaired by Guy Mollet

Summit meetings of heads of state or government before the European Council’s creation in December 1974
10 and 11 February 1961, Paris (Quai d’Orsay), chaired by Charles de Gaulle
18 July 1961, Bonn (Godesberger Redoute), chaired by Konrad Adenauer
29 and 30 May 1967, Rome (Capitol), chaired by Aldo Moro
1 and 2 December 1969, The Hague (Ridderzaal), chaired by Piet de Jong
19 and 20 October 1972, Paris (International Conference Centre), chaired by Barend Biesheuvel
14 and 15 December 1973, Copenhagen (Bella Center), chaired by Anker Jørgensen
19 September 1974, Paris (Palais de l’Elysée), chaired by Valéry Giscard d’Estaing (informal dinner)
9 and 10 December 1974, Paris (Quai d’Orsay), chaired by Valéry Giscard d’Estaing

Working session at the Summit conference of 9-10 December 1974 in Paris, France
European Council meetings and informal meetings of heads of state or government since the creation of the European Council

10 and 11 March 1975, Dublin (Dublin Castle), chaired by Liam Cosgrave
16 and 17 July 1975, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Aldo Moro
1 and 2 December 1975, Rome (Palazzo Barberini), chaired by Aldo Moro
1 and 2 April 1976, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Gaston Thorn
12 and 13 July 1976, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Joop den Uyl
29 and 30 November 1976, The Hague (Ridderzaal), chaired by Joop den Uyl
25 and 26 March 1977, Rome (Palazzo Barberini), chaired by James Callaghan
29 and 30 June 1977, London (Lancaster House), chaired by James Callaghan
5 and 6 December 1977, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Leo Tindemans
7 and 8 April 1978, Copenhagen (Christiansborg), chaired by Anker Jørgensen
6 and 7 July 1978, Bremen (Rathaus), chaired by Helmut Schmidt
4 and 5 December 1978, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Helmut Schmidt
12 and 13 March 1979, Paris (International Conference Centre), chaired by Valéry Giscard d’Estaing
21 and 22 June 1979, Strasbourg (Hôtel de Ville), chaired by Valéry Giscard d’Estaing
29 and 30 November 1979, Dublin (Dublin Castle), chaired by Jack Lynch
27 and 28 April 1980, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Francesco Cossiga
12 and 13 June 1980, Venice (Fondazione Cini), chaired by Francesco Cossiga
1 and 2 December 1980, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Pierre Werner
23 and 24 March 1981, Maastricht (Stadhuis), chaired by Dries van Agt
29 and 30 June 1981, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Dries van Agt
26 and 27 November 1981, London (Lancaster House), chaired by Margaret Thatcher
29 and 30 March 1982, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Wilfried Martens
28 and 29 June 1982, Brussels (Palais d’Egmont), chaired by Wilfried Martens
3 and 4 December 1982, Copenhagen (Eigtveds Pakhus), chaired by Poul Schlüter
21 and 22 March 1983, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Helmut Kohl
17 to 19 June 1983, Stuttgart (Neues Schloss), chaired by Helmut Kohl
4 to 6 December 1983, Athens (Zappeion), chaired by Andreas Papandreou
19 and 20 March 1984, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by François Mitterrand
25 and 26 June 1984, Fontainebleau (Château de Fontainebleau), chaired by François Mitterrand
3 and 4 December 1984, Dublin (Dublin Castle), chaired by Garret Fitzgerald
29 and 30 March 1985, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Bettino Craxi
28 and 29 June 1985, Milan (Castello Sforzesco), chaired by Bettino Craxi
2 and 3 December 1985, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Jacques Santer
26 and 27 June 1986, The Hague (Conference Centre of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), chaired by Ruud Lubbers
5 and 6 December 1986, London (Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre), chaired by Margaret Thatcher

The dates indicated are those officially recorded for each meeting. In certain cases proceedings have occasionally continued beyond the dates indicated when necessary for the heads of state or government to reach agreement. Meetings are recorded with the designation used at the time as referred to in the conclusions or in the letter convening the meeting.
29 and 30 June 1987, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Wilfried Martens
4 and 5 December 1987, Copenhagen (Eigtveds Pakhus), chaired by Poul Schlüter
11 and 12 February 1988, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Helmut Kohl
27 and 28 June 1988, Hanover (Hannover Messe), chaired by Helmut Kohl
2 and 3 December 1988, Rhodes (Palati tou Megalou Magistrou), chaired by Andreas Papandreou
26 and 27 June 1989, Madrid (Palacio de Congresos de Madrid), chaired by Felipe González
18 November 1989, Paris (Palais de l'Élysée), chaired by François Mitterrand (informal meeting of the members of the European Council)
8 and 9 December 1989, Strasbourg (Palais de la Musique et des Congrès), chaired by François Mitterrand
28 April 1990, Dublin (Dublin Castle), chaired by Charles Haughey (special meeting of the European Council)
25 and 26 June 1990, Dublin (Dublin Castle), chaired by Charles Haughey
27 and 28 October 1990, Rome (Palazzo Madama), chaired by Giulio Andreotti
14 and 15 December 1990, Rome (Palazzo Montecitorio), chaired by Giulio Andreotti
8 April 1991, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Jacques Santer (informal meeting of the European Council)
28 and 29 June 1991, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Jacques Santer
9 and 10 December 1991, Maastricht (Provinciehuis), chaired by Ruud Lubbers
26 and 27 June 1992, Lisbon (Centro Cultural de Belém), chaired by Aníbal Cavaco Silva
16 October 1992, Birmingham (Birmingham ICC), chaired by John Major (special meeting of heads of state or government)
11 and 12 December 1992, Edinburgh (Holyrood House), chaired by John Major
21 and 22 June 1993, Copenhagen (Bella Center), chaired by Poul Nyrop Rasmussen
29 October 1993, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Jean-Luc Dehaene (extraordinary meeting of the European Council)
10 and 11 December 1993, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Jean-Luc Dehaene
24 and 25 June 1994, Corfu (Palaia Anaktora), chaired by Andreas Papandreou
15 July 1994, Brussels (Charlemagne Building), chaired by Helmut Kohl (extraordinary meeting of the European Council)
9 and 10 December 1994, Essen (Messe Essen), chaired by Helmut Kohl
26 and 27 June 1995, Cannes (Palais des festivals), chaired by Jacques Chirac
22 and 23 September 1995, Mallorca (Hotel Formentor), chaired by Felipe González (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
15 and 16 December 1995, Madrid (Palacio de Congresos de Madrid), chaired by Felipe González
29 March 1996, Turin (Lingotto), chaired by Lamberto Dini
21 and 22 June 1996, Florence (Fortezza da Basso/Exhibition Centre), chaired by Romano Prodi
5 October 1996, Dublin (Dublin Castle), chaired by John Bruton (special meeting of the European Council)
13 and 14 December 1996, Dublin (Dublin Castle), chaired by John Bruton
23 May 1997, Noordwijk (Grand Hotel Huis ter Duin), chaired by Wim Kok (informal meeting of the European Council)
16 and 17 June 1997, Amsterdam (Nederlandsche Bank), chaired by Wim Kok
20 and 21 November 1997, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Jean-Claude Juncker (extraordinary meeting of the European Council)
12 and 13 December 1997, Luxembourg (Kirchberg Conference Centre), chaired by Jean-Claude Juncker
2 and 3 May 1998, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Tony Blair (meeting of the Council at the level of heads of state or government)
15 and 16 June 1998, Cardiff (City Hall), chaired by Tony Blair
24 and 25 October 1998, Pörtschach (Parkhotel Pörtschach), chaired by Viktor Klima (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
11 and 12 December 1998, Vienna (Hofburg), chaired by Viktor Klima
26 February 1999, Bonn (Gästehaus der Bundesregierung auf dem Petersberg), chaired by Gerhard Schröder (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
24 and 25 March 1999, Berlin (Hotel Intercontinental), chaired by Gerhard Schröder
14 April 1999, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Gerhard Schröder (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
1 and 2 June 1999, Cologne (Der Gürzenich), chaired by Gerhard Schröder
15 and 16 October 1999, Tampere (Museokeskus Vapriikki), chaired by Paavo Lipponen
10 and 11 December 1999, Helsinki (Helsinki Fair Centre), chaired by Paavo Lipponen
23 and 24 March 2000, Lisbon (Feira Internacional de Lisboa), chaired by António Guterres (special meeting of the European Council)
15 and 16 March 2002, Barcelona (Palau de Congressos de Catalunya), chaired by José María Aznar
21 and 22 June 2002, Seville (Palacio de Exposiciones y Congresos), chaired by José María Aznar
24 and 25 October 2002, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Anders Fogh Rasmussen
12 and 13 December 2002, Copenhagen (Bella Center), chaired by Anders Fogh Rasmussen
17 February 2003, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Costas Simitis (extraordinary meeting of the European Council)
20 and 21 March 2003, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Costas Simitis
16 April 2003, Athens (Zappeion), chaired by Costas Simitis (informal meeting of the European Council)
19 and 20 June 2003, Thessaloniki (Porto Carras), chaired by Costas Simitis
4 October 2003, Rome (Palazzo dei Congressi), chaired by Silvio Berlusconi (informal meeting of the European Council)

56 This was a meeting of the Council at the level of heads of state or government to take decisions on the member states to enter stage three of economic and monetary union. It also agreed on the appointment of Wim Duisenberg as the first President of the European Central Bank.
16 and 17 October 2003\textsuperscript{57}, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Silvio Berlusconi
12 and 13 December 2003, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Silvio Berlusconi
25 and 26 March 2004, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Bertie Ahern
17 and 18 June 2004, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Bertie Ahern
29 June 2004, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Bertie Ahern (meeting of the Council at the level of heads of state or government)\textsuperscript{58}
4 and 5 November 2004, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Jan Peter Balkenende
16 and 17 December 2004, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Jan Peter Balkenende
22 and 23 March 2005, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Jean-Claude Juncker
16 and 17 June 2005, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Jean-Claude Juncker
27 October 2005, Hampton Court (Hampton Court Palace), chaired by Tony Blair (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
15 and 16 December 2005, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Tony Blair
22 and 23 March 2006, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Wolfgang Schüssel
15 and 16 June 2006, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Wolfgang Schüssel
20 October 2006, Lahti (Sibeliustalo), chaired by Matti Vanhanen (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
14 and 15 December 2006, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Matti Vanhanen
8 and 9 March 2007, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Angela Merkel
21 and 22 June 2007, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Angela Merkel
17 September 2007, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Angela Merkel (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
14 November 2007, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Angela Merkel
23 and 24 March 2008, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Jan Živeková
19 and 20 June 2008, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Jan Živeková
1 September 2008, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Nicolas Sarkozy (extraordinary meeting of the European Council)
15 and 16 October 2008, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Nicolas Sarkozy
7 November 2008, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Nicolas Sarkozy (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
11 and 12 December 2008, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Nicolas Sarkozy
1 March 2009, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Mirek Topolánek (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
19 and 20 March 2009, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Mirek Topolánek
18 and 19 June 2009, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Jan Fischer
17 September 2009, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Fredrik Reinfeldt (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
29 and 30 October 2009, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Fredrik Reinfeldt
19 November 2009, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Fredrik Reinfeldt (informal meeting of heads of state or government)

\textsuperscript{57} Since October 2003, all formal European Council meetings have taken place in Brussels.
\textsuperscript{58} This meeting of the Council at the level of heads of state or government was convened to nominate José Manuel Barroso as Commission president-designate, and to renew the appointments of Javier Solana as Secretary-General of the Council/High Representative for the CFSP and Pierre de Boissieu as deputy Secretary-General of the Council.
10 and 11 December 2009, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Fredrik Reinfeldt
11 February 2010, Brussels (Bibliothèque Solvay), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
25 and 26 March 2010, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
17 June 2010, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
16 September 2010, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
28 and 29 October 2010, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
16 and 17 December 2010, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
4 February 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
11 March 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (special meeting of the European Council)
24 and 25 March 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
23 and 24 June 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
23 October 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
26 October 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (informal meeting of the members of the European Council)
9 December 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
30 January 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (informal meeting of the members of the European Council)
1 and 2 March 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
23 May 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (informal meeting of the members of the European Council)
28 and 29 June 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
18 and 19 October 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
22 and 23 November 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (special meeting of the European Council)
13 and 14 December 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
7 and 8 February 2013, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
14 and 15 March 2013, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
22 May 2013, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
27 and 28 June 2013, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
24 and 25 October 2013, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
19 and 20 December 2013, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
6 March 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
20 and 21 March 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
27 May 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (informal meeting of heads of state or government)

59 This was the last European Council meeting chaired by the president or prime minister of the member state holding the rotating Council presidency. The European Council formally became an EU institution on 1 December 2009 upon the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which also created the position of full-time president of the European Council. The December 2009 European Council was chaired by the Prime Minister of Sweden, Fredrik Reinfeldt, under transitional arrangements.
26 June 2014, Ypres (Lakenhalle); 27 June 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
16 July 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (special meeting of the European Council)
30 August 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy (special meeting of the European Council)
23 and 24 October 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
18 December 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk
12 February 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
19 and 20 March 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk
23 April 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk (special meeting of the European Council)
25 and 26 June 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk
23 September 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
15 October 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk
12 November 2015, Valletta (Mediterranean Conference Centre), chaired by Donald Tusk (informal meeting of heads of state or government)
29 November 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk (meeting of heads of state or government of the EU and Turkey)
17 and 18 December 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk

**Euro Summits**
12 October 2008, Paris (Palais de l’Élysée), chaired by Nicolas Sarkozy
25 March 2010, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
7 May 2010, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
11 March 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
21 July 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
23 and 26 October 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
9 December 2011, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
30 January 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
2 March 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
29 June 2012, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
14 March 2013, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
24 October 2014, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Herman Van Rompuy
22 June 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk
7 July 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk
12 July 2015, Brussels (Justus Lipsius Building), chaired by Donald Tusk

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This was a single Euro Summit meeting that took place in two phases on the dates indicated.
### IV EVOLUTION OF THE VOTING SYSTEM AT THE COUNCIL OF THE EU

Legal basis: Treaty of Rome, Article 148  
Qualified majority applicable between 1958 and 1972

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualified majority:  
12 votes on a proposal by the Commission  
12 votes cast by at least 4 members,  
in other cases

Legal basis: Treaty of Accession of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom, Article 14  
Qualified majority applicable between 1973 and 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualified majority:  
41 votes on a proposal by the Commission  
41 votes cast by at least 6 members,  
in other cases
Legal basis: Treaty of Accession of Greece, Article 14
Qualified majority applicable between 1981 and 1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualified majority:
45 votes on a proposal by the Commission
45 votes cast by at least 6 members,
in other cases

Legal basis: Treaty of Accession of Spain and Portugal, Article 14
Qualified majority applicable between 1986 and 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>UK</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>76</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Qualified majority:
54 votes on a proposal by the Commission
54 votes cast by at least 8 members,
in other cases
Legal basis: Treaty of Accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden, Article 15
Qualified majority applicable between 1995 and April 2004

<table>
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<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualified majority:
64 votes on a proposal by the Commission
64 votes cast by at least 11 members,
in other cases
Legal basis: Treaty of Accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, Article 26
Qualified majority applicable between May 2004 and October 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>Ireland</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>Malta</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>124</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Qualified majority:
88 votes on a proposal by the Commission
88 votes cast by at least 11 members, in other cases
**Qualified majority**:

Qualified majority: 222 votes cast by a majority of members, on a proposal by the Commission, if requested by a member; verification that member states voting in favour represent at least 62% of the total population.

- **Legal basis**: Treaty of Accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, Article 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Population (x 1 000)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Population (x 1 000)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>82 500.8</td>
<td>17.88</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8 206.5</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>62 370.8</td>
<td>13.51</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5 411.4</td>
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</table>

**Total** 321 461 324.0 100 %

**Threshold 62 %** 232 286 020.9 62 %

---

Qualified majority: 255 votes cast by a majority of members, on a proposal by the Commission, 225 votes cast by at least two-thirds of the members, in other cases requested by a member, verification that member states voting in favour represent at least 62% of the total population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Population (x 1,000)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Population (x 1,000)</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td><strong>255</strong></td>
<td><strong>312,281.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>62%</strong></td>
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Legal basis: Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania, Article 22

Qualified majority applicable between 2007 and November 2009

Qualified majorities applicable between December 2009 and June 2013

Qualified majority: 260 votes cast by a majority of members, on a proposal by the Commission if requested by a member; verification that member states voting in favour represent at least 62% of the population of the Union.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Population (x 1 000)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Member state</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Population (x 1 000)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Malta</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>260</strong></td>
<td><strong>315 008.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>62 %</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Legal basis: Treaty of Lisbon, Article 16
Qualified majority applicable from 1 November 2014

Qualified majority or ‘double majority’:
55 % of member states, comprising at least 16 members out of 28, when acting on a proposal from the Commission and/or the High Representative
72 % of member states, comprising at least 21 members out of 28, in other cases member states voting in favour represent at least 65 % of the population of the Union

Qualified majority is the most widely used voting method in the Council. It is used when the Council takes decisions by the ordinary legislative procedure, also known as codecision. The blocking minority must include at least four Council members representing more than 35 % of the EU population. About 80 % of all EU legislation is adopted with this procedure. The other voting methods are simple majority (15 member states voting in favour) and unanimous vote (all votes are in favour).

Until 31 March 2017, member states can still request that the previous rule — for which Article 20 of the Treaty of Accession of Croatia is the legal basis — be used for qualified majority voting. Under that rule, each member state representative has a certain number of votes, as set out in the EU treaties. The weighting of votes broadly reflects the size of population of each member state.
Christian Calmes, LU
Secretary-General from 9 September 1952 to 14 June 1973

Nicolas Hommel, LU
Secretary-General from 1 July 1973 to 7 October 1980

Niels Ersbøll, DK
Secretary-General from 8 October 1980 to 31 August 1994
Jürgen Trumpf, DE
Secretary-General from 1 September 1994 to 17 October 1999
2 197 people worked at the GSC in September 1994

Javier Solana, ES
Secretary-General and High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy from 18 October 1999 to 30 November 2009
2 522 people worked at the GSC in November 1999

Pierre de Boissieu, FR
Secretary-General from 1 December 2009 to 25 June 2011
3 237 people worked at the GSC in December 2009

64 Prior to being Secretary-General, Pierre de Boissieu was Deputy Secretary-General from 18 October 1999 to 30 November 2009.
Uwe Corsepius, DE
Secretary-General
from 26 June 2011
to 30 June 2015

3 068 people
worked at the
GSC in
June 2011

Jeppe
Tranholm-Mikkelsen, DK
Secretary-General
from 1 July 2015

3 020 people
worked at the
GSC in
July 2015
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  by contacting the Europe Direct service (http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm) or calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (*)

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The European Council and the Council of the EU are two key players in the EU’s decision-making process. Each has its own distinct role in the EU’s institutional architecture, even though politically and administratively a close organic relationship exists between both institutions. Both bring together representatives of the member states. This booklet traces their origins and evolution through the EU treaties. It explores how they both played a decisive role in European integration and how their history reflects that of the EU as a whole: its policies and ambitions, its crises and progress.