



Bu proje Avrupa Birliđi ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti tarafından finanse edilmektedir

European Union Training Course

Inside the EU

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Didim





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EU Treaties

The European Union is based on the rule of law. This means that every action taken by the EU is founded on treaties that have been approved voluntarily and democratically by all EU countries. The treaties are negotiated and agreed by all the EU Member States and then ratified by their parliaments or by referendum. The treaties lay down the objectives of the European Union, the rules for EU institutions, how decisions are made and the relationship between the EU and its Member States. They have been amended each time new Member States have joined. From time to time, they have also been amended to reform the European Union's institutions and to give it new areas of responsibility.

The last amending treaty — the Lisbon Treaty — was signed in Lisbon on 13 December 2007, and came into force on 1 December 2009. Earlier treaties are now incorporated into the current consolidated version, which comprises the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance (TSCG) in the Economic and Monetary Union is an intergovernmental treaty which was signed by all EU Member States except the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom in 2012 and entered into force on 1 January 2013. It is not an EU treaty but an intergovernmental treaty, and the intention is to bring it into EU law. It obliges the countries to have firm rules to guarantee balanced public budgets and it strengthens the governance of the euro area.





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EU policy areas

The treaties list the policy areas in which the EU can take decisions. In some policy areas, the EU has exclusive competence, which means that decisions are taken at EU level by the Member States meeting in the Council and the European Parliament. These policy areas **cover trade, customs, competition rules, monetary policy for the euro area, and the conservation of fish.**

In other policy areas, the decision-making competences are shared between the Union and the Member States. This means that if legislation is passed at EU level, then these laws have priority. However, if no legislation is adopted at EU level, then the individual Member States may legislate at national level. **Shared competence applies in many policy areas, such as the internal market, agriculture, the environment, consumer protection and transport.**

In all other policy areas the decisions remain with the Member States.

Thus, if a policy area is not cited in a treaty, the Commission cannot propose a law in that area. However, in some fields, such as **the space sector, education, culture and tourism**, the Union can support Member States' efforts. And in others, such as **overseas aid and scientific research**, the EU can carry out **parallel activities, such as humanitarian aid programmes.**

All EU Member States are part of the economic and monetary union (EMU), meaning that they coordinate their economic policymaking and treat economic decisions as a matter of common concern. Within the EMU, no institution alone is responsible for overall economic policy. These responsibilities are divided between the Member States and the EU institutions. **Monetary policy — which deals with price stability and interest rates — is managed independently by the European Central Bank (ECB) in the euro area, i.e. in those Member States which use the euro as their currency. With Lithuania joining in January 2015, the euro area has 19 countries.**

Fiscal policy — which concerns decisions about taxation, spending and borrowing — is the responsibility of the 28 Member State governments. So are the policies about **labour and welfare**. However, as fiscal decisions taken by one euro area Member State can have an impact throughout the euro area, these decisions must conform to rules set at EU level. Therefore, the coordination of sound public finances and structural policies is necessary for the EMU to function effectively and to ensure stability and growth.

Relations with countries outside of the EU are under the responsibility of the **High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**, who is appointed by the European Council, but also holds the post of European Commission Vice-President.





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EU Decisions

Decision-making at EU level involves various European institutions, in particular:

- **the European Parliament, which represents the EU's citizens and is directly elected by them;**
- **the European Council, which consists of the Heads of State or Government of the EU Member States;**
- **the Council, which represents the governments of the EU Member States;**
- **the European Commission, which represents the interests of the EU as a whole.**

The European Council defines the general political direction and priorities of the EU, but it does not exercise legislative functions. Generally, it is the European Commission that proposes new laws and it is the European Parliament and Council that adopt them. The Member States and the Commission then implement them.





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EU Legislation

- **Regulations** are laws applicable and binding in all Member States directly. They do not need to be passed into national law by the Member States although national laws may need to be changed to avoid conflicting with the regulation.
- **Directives** are laws that bind the Member States, or a group of Member States, to achieve a particular objective. Usually, directives must be transposed into national law to become effective. Significantly, a directive specifies the result to be achieved: it is up to the Member States individually to decide how this is done.
- **Decisions** can be addressed to Member States, groups of people, or even individuals. It is binding in its entirety. Decisions are used, for example, to rule on proposed mergers between companies.
- **Recommendations** and **opinions** have no binding force.





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Parliament

Role: Directly elected legislative arm of the EU

Members: 751 Members of the European Parliament

Location: Strasbourg, Brussels and Luxembourg

www.europarl.eu

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are directly elected by EU citizens to represent their interests. Elections are held every 5 years and all EU citizens over 18 years old (16 in Austria) — some 380 million — are entitled to vote. The Parliament has 751 MEPs from all 28 Member States. The official seat of the European Parliament is in Strasbourg (France), although the institution has three places of work: Strasbourg, Brussels (Belgium) and Luxembourg. The main meetings of the whole Parliament, known as ‘plenary sessions’, take place in Strasbourg 12 times per year. Additional plenary sessions are held in Brussels. Committee meetings are also held in Brussels.

The seats in the European Parliament are allocated among the Member States on the basis of their share of the EU population. Most MEPs are associated with a national political party in their home country. In the European Parliament the national parties group into EU-wide political groupings and most MEPs belong to one of these.





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The Parliament has three main roles:

1. It shares with the Council the power to legislate — to pass laws. The fact that it is a directly elected body helps guarantee the democratic legitimacy of European law.
2. It exercises democratic supervision over all EU institutions, and in particular the Commission. It has the power to approve or reject the nomination of the President of the Commission and Commissioners, and the right to censure the Commission as a whole.
3. It shares authority with the Council over the EU budget and can therefore influence EU spending. At the end of the budget procedure, it adopts or rejects the budget in its entirety.



European Council



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Role: Defines political direction and priorities

Members: Heads of State or Government from each Member State, the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission

Location: Brussels

www.european-council.europa.eu

The European Council brings together the EU's top political leaders, i.e. Prime Ministers and Presidents along with its President and the President of the Commission. They meet at least four times a year to give the EU as a whole general political direction and priorities. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy also takes part in the work of the European Council.





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Council

Role: Deciding on policies and adopting legislation

Members: One minister from each Member State

Location: Brussels and Luxembourg

www.consilium.europa.eu

Its work is carried out in Council meetings that are attended by one minister from each of the EU's national governments. The purpose of these gatherings is to: discuss, agree, amend and, finally, adopt legislation; coordinate the Member States' policies; or define the EU's foreign policy. Which ministers attend which Council meeting depends on the subjects on the agenda — this is known as the 'configuration' of the Council. If, for example, the Council is to discuss environmental issues, the meeting will be attended by the environment minister from each EU Member State and is known as the Environment Council. The same is true for the Economic and Financial Affairs Council and the Competitiveness Council, and so on.





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There are 10 different Council configurations:

Chaired by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy: **1. Foreign Affairs**

Chaired by the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council:

2. General Affairs

3. Economic and Financial Affairs

4. Justice and Home Affairs

5. Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs

6. Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)

7. Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

8. Agriculture and Fisheries

9. Environment

10. Education, Youth, Culture and Sport





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The Council has five key responsibilities:

1. to pass European laws — in most fields, it legislates jointly with the European Parliament;
2. to coordinate the Member States' policies, for example, in the economic field;
3. to develop the EU's common foreign and security policy, based on guidelines set by the European Council;
4. to conclude international agreements between the EU and one or more states or international organisations;
5. 5. to adopt the EU's budget, jointly with the European Parliament.





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The Commission

Role: Executive arm of the EU that proposes laws, polices agreements and promotes the Union

Members: A college of Commissioners, one from each Member State

Location: Brussels

<http://ec.europa.eu>

The European Commission has four main roles: 1. to propose legislation to the Parliament and the Council; 2. to manage and implement EU policies and the budget; 3. to enforce European law (jointly with the Court of Justice); 4. to represent the Union around the world.





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The European

Central Bank

Role: To manage the euro and euro area monetary policy

Members: Euro area national central banks

Location: Frankfurt am Main, Germany

www.ecb.int

The ECB was set up in 1998, when the euro was introduced, to manage monetary policy in the euro area. The primary objective of the ECB is to maintain price stability. This is defined as a consumer price inflation rate of less than, but close to, 2 % per annum. The ECB also acts to support employment and sustainable economic growth in the Union.

To carry out its lending operations, the ECB holds and manages the official foreign reserves of the euro area members. Other tasks include conducting foreign exchange operations, promoting efficient payment systems in support of the single market, approving the production of euro banknotes by the euro area members and collating relevant statistical data from the national central banks. The President of the ECB represents it at relevant high-level EU and international meetings





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The Court of Justice

The European Court of Auditors

The European Economic and Social Committee

The Committee of regions

The European Ombudsman

The European Data Protection Supervisor

The European Investment Bank

The EU Agencies





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How the European Union works - Your guide to the EU institutions

This publication is a guide on how the European Union (EU) works. ‘How the EU works’ means how decisions are taken at EU level and who takes those decisions. At the heart of this decision-making process are the EU institutions — such as the Parliament, the Council and the European Commission — which you may have heard of, and there are others. To show how the EU works, this publication first explains how EU legislation is made. It then gives further insight into each of the EU institutions, as well as the agencies and bodies supporting them. This publication is a part of a series that explains what the EU does in different policy areas, why the EU is involved and what the results are.

Note: besides the 24 EU official languages, [this publication is also available in Welsh](#).

Corporate author(s): [European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication](#)

Themes: [Activities of the institutions and bodies](#)

Target audience: [General public](#)

<http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/how-the-european-union-works-pbNA0414810/>





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Budget

The 2015 EU

(in million euro) – as a comparison: Italy has a 2015 budget of over 847 000.

Headings

- 1. Smart and inclusive growth
 - 1a. Competitiveness for growth and jobs
 - 1b. Economic, social and territorial cohesion
- 2. Sustainable growth
- 3. Security and citizenship
- 4. Global Europe
- 5. Administration
- Special instruments

Commitments

Payments

66 782	66 923
17 552	15 798
49 230	51 125
58 809	55 999
2 147	1 860
8 408	7 422
8 660	8 659
515	352
145 322	141 214

Total





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The EU's sources of income include contributions from member countries, import duties on products from outside the EU and fines imposed when businesses fail to comply with EU rules. The EU countries agree on the size of the budget and how it is to be financed several years in advance.

The EU budget supports growth and job creation. Under the **cohesion policy**, it funds investment to help bridge economic gaps between EU countries and regions. It also helps develop rural areas in Europe.

The 3 main sources of revenue are:

- a small percentage of **gross national income** (usually around 0.7%) contributed by all EU countries - the largest source of budget revenue. The underlying principles are solidarity and ability to pay – though the amount may be adjusted to avoid over-burdening particular countries.
- a small percentage of each EU country's standardised **value-added tax** revenue, usually around 0.3%.
- a large share of **import duties** on non-EU products (the country that collects the duty retains a small percentage).

The EU also receives income tax from EU staff, contributions by non-EU countries to certain EU programmes and fines on companies that breach EU rules and regulation.





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Thank you very much for your attention !

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