

The European Union



EUROPE

EUROPEAN UNION

- EU Member States
- EU New Members 2004
- EU Candidates
- EFTA Member States

© Nations Online Project

Atlantic Ocean

Norwegian Sea

North Sea

Bay of Biscay

Mediterranean Sea

Hammerfest

Kiruna

Oulu

Sundsvall

Gavle

Stockholm

Goteborg

Poznan

Warsaw

Krakow

Budapest

Pecs

Vienna

Munich

Hannover

Berlin

Leipzig

Prague

Bratislava



AFRICA

RUSSIA

UKRAINE

ASIA

TURKEY

CYPRUS

Greenland Sea

Reykjavik

ICELAND

Faroe Islands (DENMARK)

NORGE NORWAY

SVERIGE SWEDEN

SUOMI FINLAND

DANMARK DENMARK

EIRE IRELAND

UNITED KINGDOM

NETHERLANDS

BELGIUM

FRANCE

Österreich Austria

Baltic Sea

Gulf of Bothnia

Poland

Czech Republic

Hungary

Romania

Bulgaria

Greece

Malta

Crete

St. Petersburg

Tampere

Helsinki

Tallinn

Riga

Vilnius

Minsk

Kaliningrad

Warsaw

Kiev

Supranationalism: a way of making decisions within multi-national political communities, whereby power is transferred to an authority by governments of the member states:

- Concert of Europe, early 19th century
- League of Nations, post World War I
- United Nations, post World War II

Devolution: the process of decentralizing the unitary state to share policymaking power with regional governments.

Integration: the process of encouraging states to pool their sovereignty in order to gain political, economic, and social strength, bind states together with *common policies* and *shared rules*.

HOW THE EU BEGAN

The **European Union** was created in the aftermath of World War II. The first steps were to foster economic cooperation: the idea being that countries who trade with one another become economically interdependent and so more likely to avoid conflict.

The European Union grew out of a desire for peace in a war-torn and divided continent after World War II. The **Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC)** came into being in 1948.

The organization was created to allocate and distribute **Marshall Plan** aid and to plan for and effect a **European Recovery Programme (ERP)** for the countries of Western Europe.

Five years after war ended, France and Germany came up with a plan to ensure their two countries would never go to war against each other again. The result was a deal signed by six nations, **Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg** and the **Netherlands** to pool their **coal** and **steel** resources in 1950, the **European Coal and Steel Community (ESCS)**.

Seven years later, in 1958, a treaty signed in Rome created the **European Economic Community (EEC)** - the foundations of today's European Union. The UK was one of three new members to join in the first wave of expansion in 1973. Today the EU has 28 member states with a total population of more than 500 million.

Key Events in the Evolution of the EU

YEAR	EVENT
1951	Creation of ECSC
1957	Treaty of Rome signed
1967	Creation of EC
1972	First expansion
1981	Admission of Greece
1985	Single European Act passed
1986	Portugal and Spain admitted
1991	Treaty of Maastricht signed
1995	Austria, Finland, and Sweden admitted
1997	Treaty of Amsterdam signed
1998	Twelve countries agree to join EMU
2001	Treaty of Nice signed
2002	Euro launched
2004	Ten new members added
2007	Bulgaria and Romania admitted

ECSC: European Coal and Steel Community, 1951

- Coal and steel: critical to modern economy, badly damaged in WW II
- Create a single market through elimination of tariffs and other trade barriers.
- established 4 core institutions:
 1. High Authority
 2. Special Council of Ministers
 3. Court of Justice
 4. Common Assembly
- Support for ECSC gradually spread to other sectors of economy: agriculture and transportation.

Treaty of Rome, 1957

Established 2 bodies:

- **European Economic Community**
- **European Atomic Energy Commission**
(Euratom)

Same institutional structure as ECSC

Single European Act (SEA), 1985

- Enhancement of internal market
- Cutback in unanimity principle
- EC remained primarily an economic union with little influence on social, environmental and political issues.

The Maastricht Treaty, 1991

- Gave EU authority to act in new areas like monetary policy, foreign affairs, national security, transportation, the environment, justice, education, consumer education, tourism.
- Formally recognized **three pillars** *and* European citizenship.
- Endorsed principle of **subsidiarity**.
- The EU should only act in areas in which policy goals cannot be achieved by national or subnational governments *and* are more likely to be reached at the supranational level.
- Committed EU to single currency and central bank.

SUBSIDIARITY

Principle that aims to ensure that decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen and that constant checks are made to verify that action at EU level is justified in light of the possibilities available at national, regional or local level.

It is the principle whereby the EU does not take action (except in the areas that fall within its exclusive competence), unless it is more effective than action taken at national, regional or local level.

THREE PILLARS

- I. Trade and economic issues
- II. Cooperation in justice and home affairs
- III. Desire to create a Common Foreign and Security Policy

HOW THE EU WORKS

The EU is a unique economic and political partnership between 28 European countries that together cover much of the continent.

EU member countries

The EU was not always as big as it is today. When European countries started to cooperate economically in 1951, only **Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg** and the **Netherlands** participated.

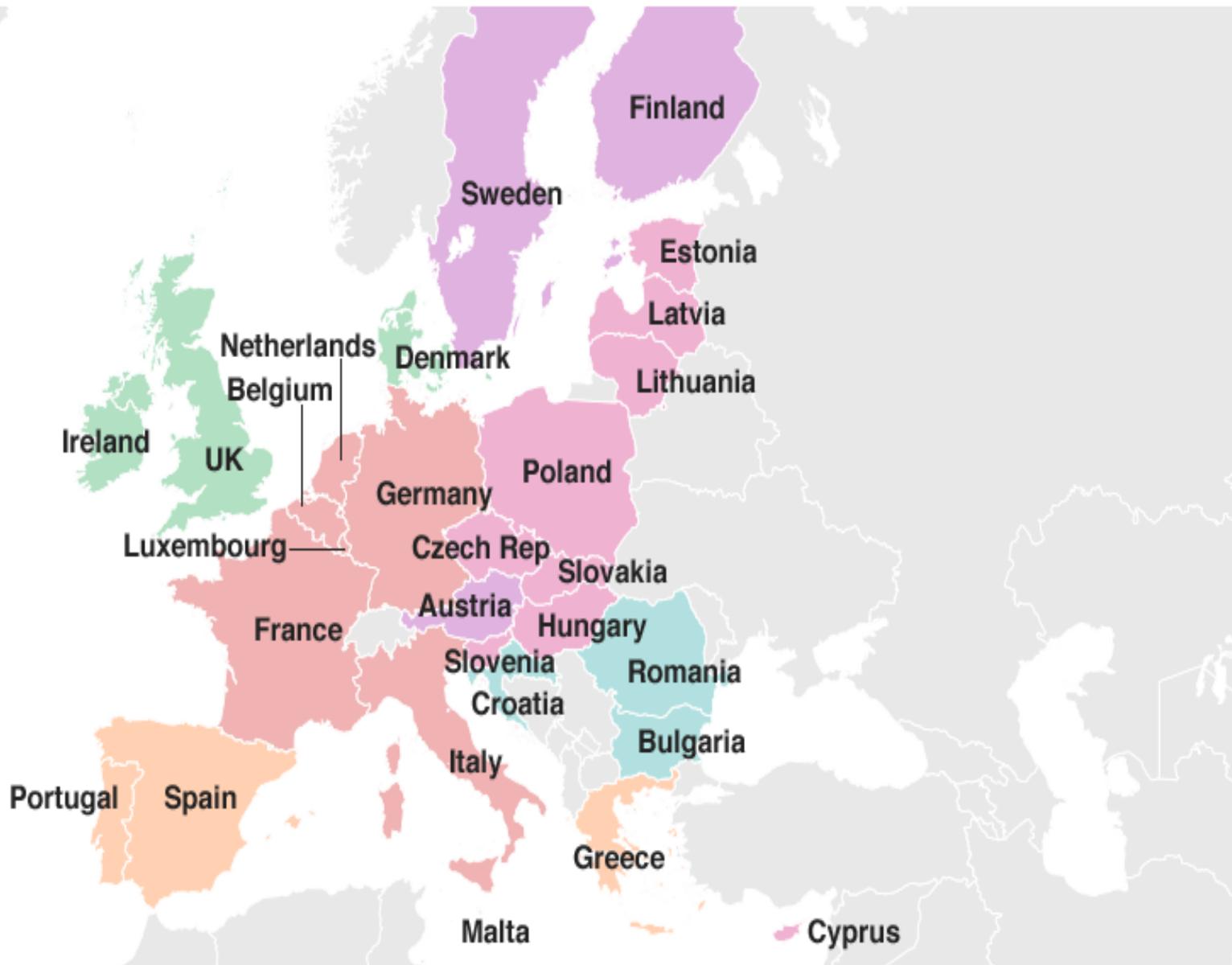
The union reached its current size of **28 member countries** with the accession of **Croatia** on 1 July 2013.

The European Union Countries



Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

1957 1973 1981-86 1995 2004 2007-13



Note: Current country borders have been used

The **European Economic Community (EEC)**

- established by the treaty of Rome, '57
- first official title of today's EU

The **Common Market**

- former/informal name for EEC

The **European Community (EC)**

- established in '65 when functions expanded beyond economics.

The **European Union (EU)**

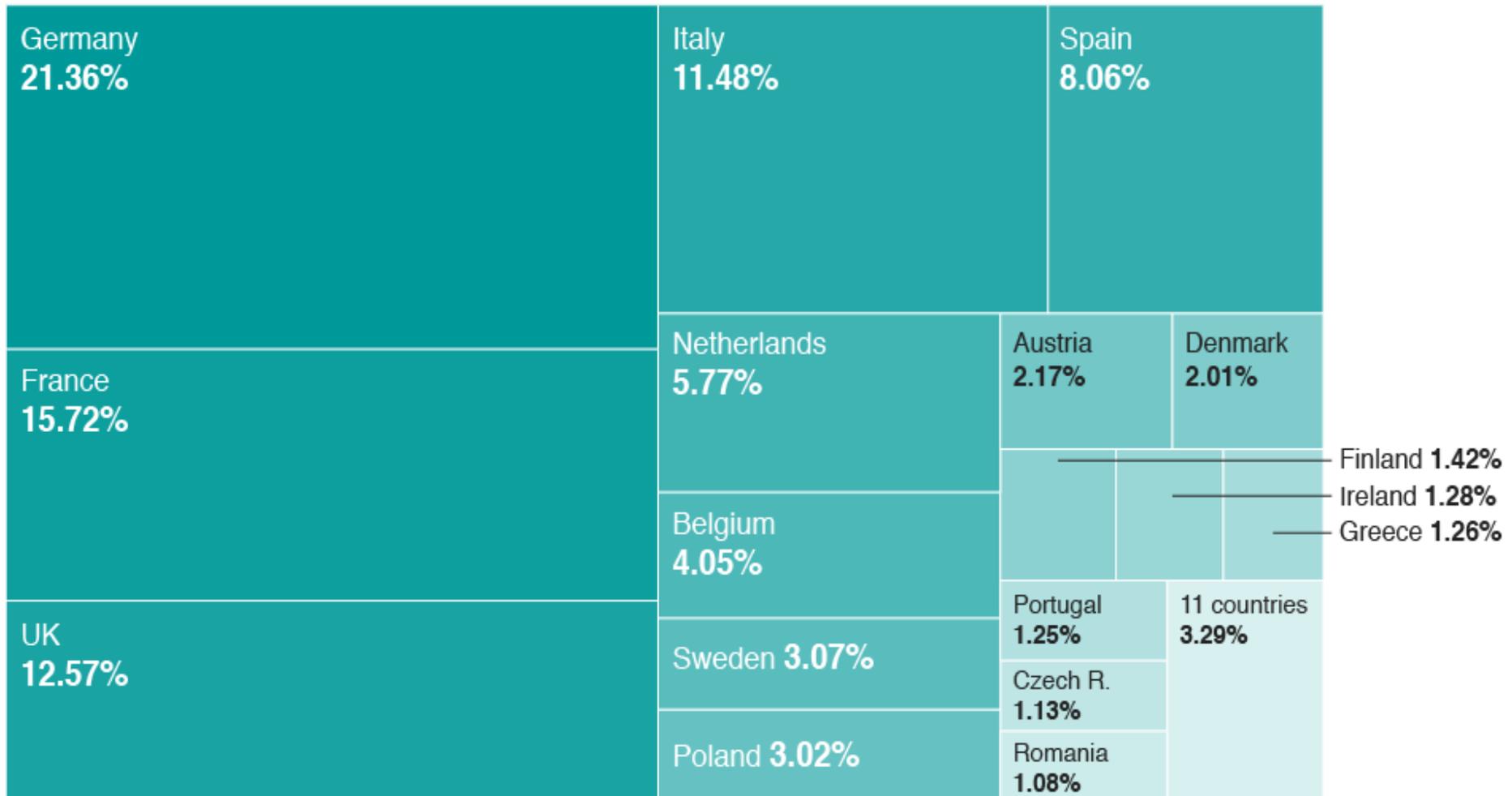
- all the institutions gathered under the EC's umbrella according to the *Maasricht Treaty on European Union*, '91

The European Economic Area

- The **European Economic Area** (EEA) unites the EU Member States and the three EEA EFTA (**European Free Trade Association**) States (**Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway**) into an Internal Market governed by the same basic rules.
- These rules aim to enable goods, services, capital, and persons to move freely about the EEA in an open and competitive environment, a concept referred to as the four freedoms.
- **Switzerland** is neither an EU or EEA member but is part of the single market - this means Swiss nationals have the same rights to live and work in the UK as other EEA nationals.

EU Budget 145 bn Euros 2015

Contributions by Country



From economic to political union

- What began as a purely economic union has evolved into an organization spanning policy areas, from development aid to environment. A name change from the EEC to the **European Union** (EU) in **1993** reflected this.
- The EU is based on the **rule of law**: everything that it does is founded on treaties, voluntarily and democratically agreed by all member countries. These binding agreements set out the EU's goals in its many areas of activity.

Mobility, growth, stability and a single currency

- The EU has delivered half a century of peace, stability and prosperity, helped raise living standards, and launched a single European currency, the **euro**.
- Thanks to the abolition of border controls between EU countries, people can travel freely throughout most of the continent. And it's become much easier to **live and work** abroad in Europe.

The **Single or “internal” Market** is the European Union's main **economic** engine, enabling most goods, services, money and people to move freely.

Another key objective is to develop this huge resource to ensure that Europeans can draw the maximum benefit from it.

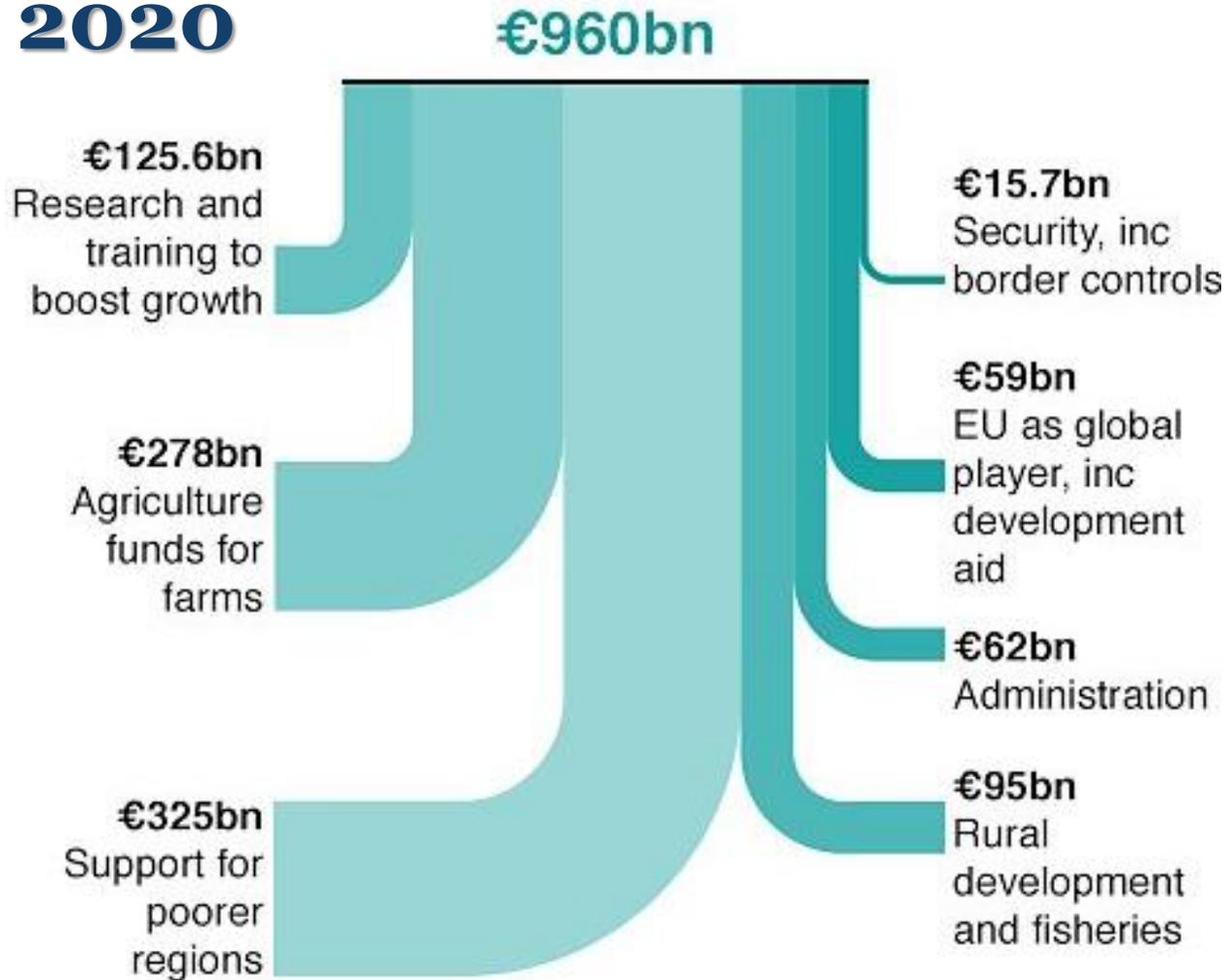


How does the EU spend its money?

The EEC started out as a trading bloc - with free movement of goods and services within the Common Market - now its interests include reducing regional inequalities, preserving the environment, promoting human rights and investing in education and research.

The EU is Britain's biggest trading partner. British citizens are free to work in any EU country and EU funding is spent on supporting farmers, boosting jobs in the UK, redeveloping rundown areas, and grants for university research. The EU has contributed to cheaper travel by challenging monopolies and boosting competition. It has reduced the cost of mobile data roaming and set water quality standards in Europe.

Plans for Spending the EU Budget until 2020



Source: European Commission

Human rights and equality

- One of the European Union's main goals is to promote human rights both internally and around the world. Human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights: these are the core values of the European Union.
- Since the 2009 signing of the **Treaty of Lisbon** , the EU's **Charter of Fundamental Rights** brings all these rights together in a single document. The EU's institutions are legally bound to uphold them, as are EU governments whenever they apply EU law

Transparent and democratic institutions

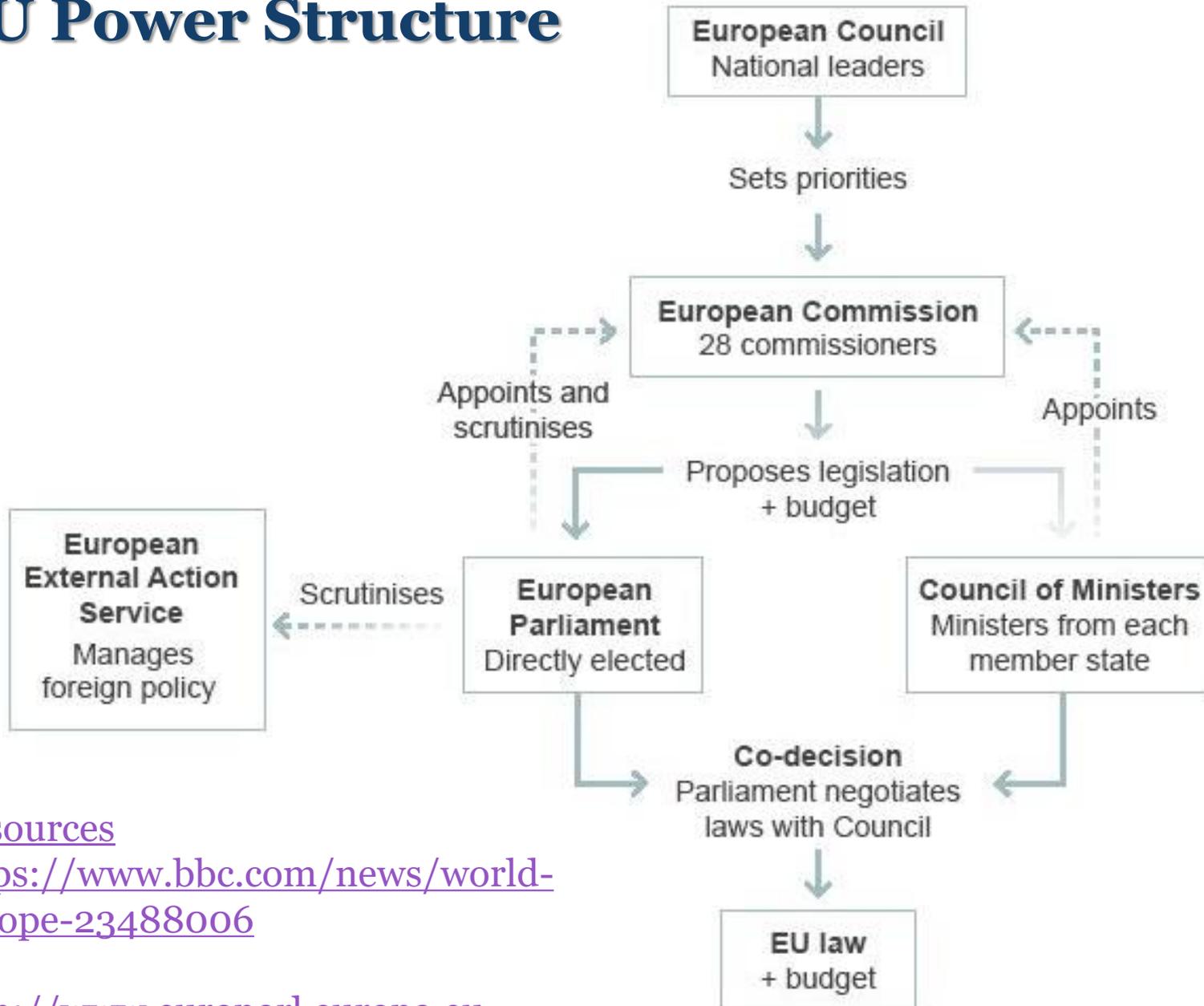
- As it continues to grow, the European Union remains focused on making its governing institutions more transparent and democratic.
- More powers are being given to the directly elected **European Parliament**, while national parliaments are being given a greater role, working alongside the European institutions.
- In turn, European citizens have an ever-increasing number of channels for taking part in the political process.



The EU's unique institutional set-up:

- The EU's broad priorities are set by the **European Council**, which brings together national and EU-level leaders.
- Directly elected **MEPs** represent European citizens in the European Parliament.
- The interests of the EU as a whole are promoted by the **European Commission**, whose members are appointed by national governments.
- Governments defend their own country's national interests in the **Council of the European Union**.

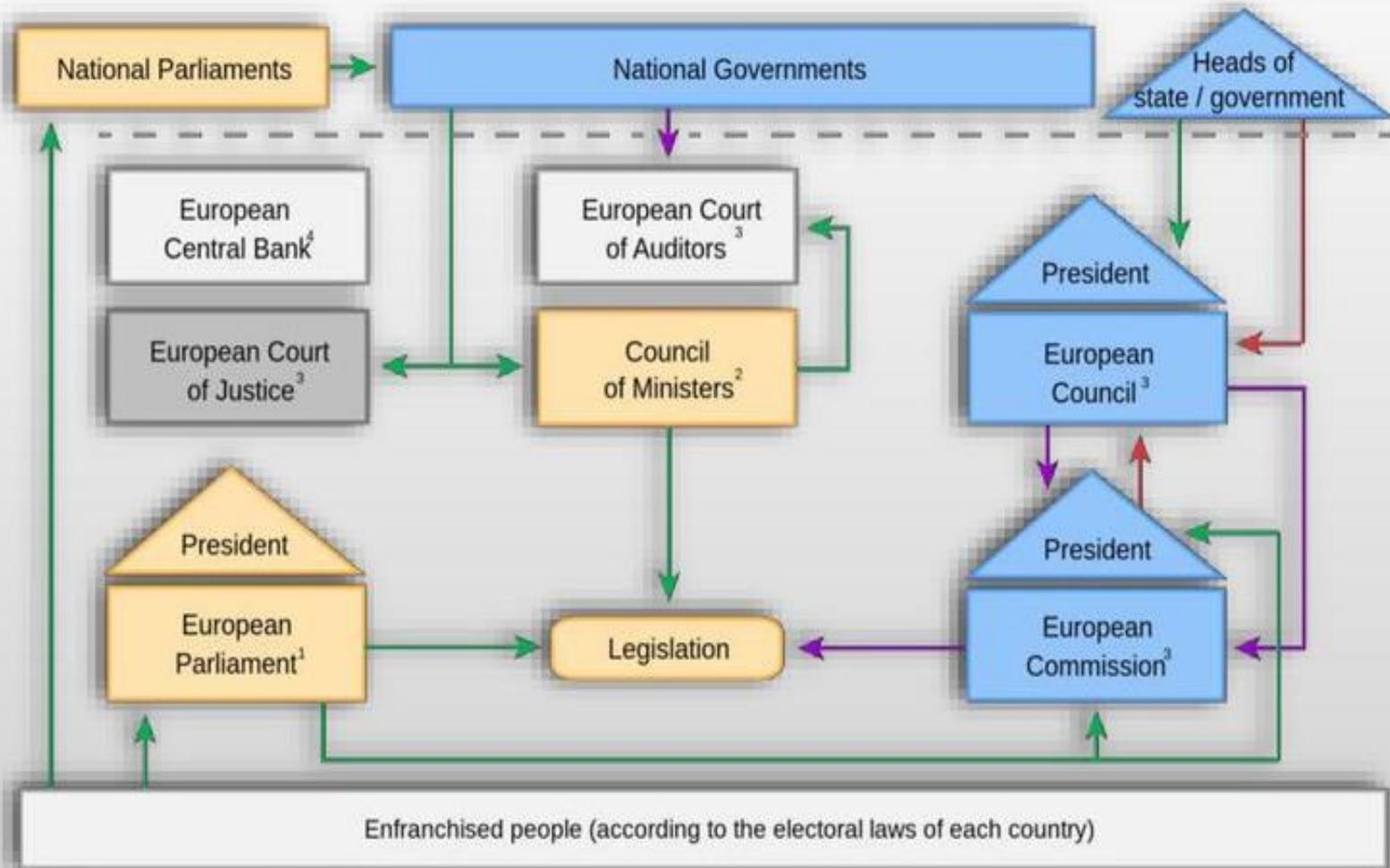
EU Power Structure



Resources

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-23488006>

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu>



- Legislative branch
- Executive branch
- Judicial branch
- elects / appoints / decides on
- membership
- proposes

- 1: Elections are every 5 years. The right to vote may be different depending on the country.
- 2: State chamber. Convenes in varying composition depending on the policy area. Each country is represented by one member per department.
- 3: Each country is represented by one member.
- 4: The European Central Bank is composed of representatives of the national central banks. Its Board is elected by the European Council on the proposal of the Council of Ministers.

The European Council

- European Council meetings are essentially summits where EU leaders meet to decide on broad political priorities and major initiatives. Typically, there are around 4 meetings a year, chaired by a permanent president.
- Its role is twofold:
 - Setting the EU's general political direction and priorities
 - Dealing with complex or sensitive issues that cannot be resolved at a lower level of intergovernmental cooperation.
- Though influential in setting the EU political agenda, it has **no powers to pass laws**.

Who exactly is involved?

- The European Council brings together **the heads of state or government** of every EU country, the Commission President and the European Council President, who chairs the meetings.
- The European Council decides by consensus, except if the Treaties provide otherwise. In some cases, it adopts decisions by unanimity or by qualified majority, depending on what the Treaty provides for.

European Parliament

Elected by EU voters every 5 years, members of the European Parliament (MEPs) represent the people. It is one of the EU's main law-making institutions, along with the Council of the European Union.

The Parliament has three main roles:

1. Debating and passing European laws, with the Council.
2. Scrutinizing other EU institutions to make sure they are working democratically.
3. Debating and adopting the EU's budget, with the Council.

In the remaining plenary sessions, Parliament in its current form (751 MEPs from 28 member states) will debate and vote on many crucial legislative proposals, including the EU's next long-term budget and the UK's “**Brexit**” withdrawal agreement.

MEPs' “**Future of Europe**” debates with EU leaders attracted public attention for the election campaigns of 2019.

Parliament's current president is **David Sassoli**, elected in July 2019.

Parliament to vote on UK withdrawal bill

The EU Commission negotiating team and the UK government are expected to conclude the Brexit negotiations in the autumn.

The European Parliament will need to approve the agreement by a simple majority of votes cast (Article 50 (2) of the Treaty). For this reason, it is kept closely informed of the proceedings, even though it has no formal role in the negotiations.

Britain's membership of the European Union is set to lapse as of 29 March 2019.

European Commission

The European Commission is one of the main institutions of the European Union.

It represents and upholds the interests of the EU as a whole. It drafts proposals for new European laws.

It manages the day-to-day business of implementing EU policies and spending EU funds.

Each of the 28 Commissioners are assigned responsibility for specific policy areas by the President for a 5-year term. Current president is **Jean-Claude Juncker.**

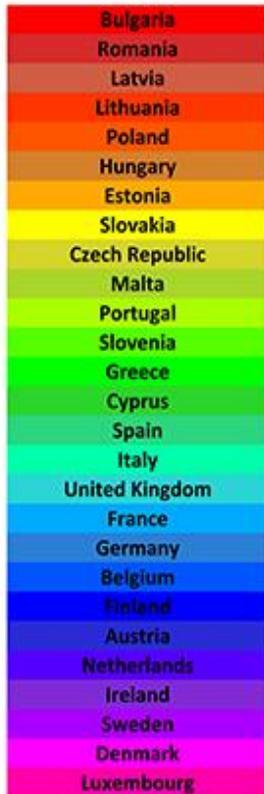
Purpose

The Commission represents and upholds the interests of the EU as a whole. It oversees and implements EU policies by:

- Proposing new laws to Parliament and the Council
- Managing the EU's budget and allocating funding
- Enforcing EU law (together with the Court of Justice)
- Representing the EU internationally by negotiating agreements between the EU and other countries.

Rags and Riches The Wealth Spectrum of the European Union

Countries in order
of their GDP per Capita Productivity
(from low to high)



Data sources: European Commission (2011), Eurostat (2012)
Map created by Benjamin D. Hennig, University of Sheffield, 2012

Law-making

There are 3 main institutions involved in EU legislation:

- The **European Parliament**, which represents the EU's citizens and is directly elected by them;
- The **Council of the European Union**, which represents the governments of the individual member countries. The Presidency of the Council is shared by the member states on a rotating basis.
- The **European Commission**, which represents the interests of the Union as a whole.

Together, these three institutions produce through the **Ordinary Legislative Procedure** (ex "**codecision**") the policies and laws that apply throughout the EU.

In principle, the **Commission** proposes new laws, and the **Parliament and Council** adopt them.

The **Commission** and the **member countries** then implement them.

The **Commission** ensures that the laws are properly applied and implemented.

Proposing new laws

The Commission has the **'right of initiative'** – it can propose new laws to protect the interests of the EU and its citizens.

When the Commission proposes a law, it tries to satisfy the widest possible range of interests.

The Commission's departments produce a draft of the proposed new law. If at least 14 of the 28 Commissioners agree with it, the draft is then sent to the Council and Parliament.

After debating and amending the draft, they decide whether to adopt it as a law.

Other EU institutions

Two other institutions play vital roles:

- the **Court of Justice** of the EU upholds the rule of European law.

- the **Court of Auditors** checks the financing of the EU's activities.

The powers and responsibilities of all of these institutions are laid down in the **Treaties**, which are the foundation of everything the EU does.

Geographic Divide

Despite their smaller economies, countries in Southern Europe often have higher levels of household wealth than those in the core of the euro zone, where ownership rates for homes and small businesses are lower.

A look at some selected countries:

	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD WEALTH IN THOUSANDS		HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES		SMALL-BUSINESS OWNERSHIP RATES
Cyprus	 €267		 77%		 20%
Spain	 183		 83		 14
Italy	 174		 69		 18
France	 116		 55		 9
Greece	 102		 72		 10
Austria	 76		 48		 9
Portugal	 75		 72		 8
Germany	 51		 44		 9

Notes: Dates vary by country in 2008-11; €1 = \$1.30; Household wealth defined as total assets minus liabilities such as outstanding mortgages, credit card debt and other loans. Source: ECB

The Wall Street Journal

Inter institutional bodies

The EU has a number of other institutions and inter institutional bodies that play specialized roles:

- The **European Central Bank** is responsible for European monetary policy.
- The **European External Action Service (EEAS)** assists the **High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**. It chairs the **Foreign Affairs Council** and conducts the common foreign and security policy, also ensuring the consistency and coordination of the EU's external action.

- The **European Economic and Social Committee** represents civil society, employers and employees
- The **Committee of the Regions** represents regional and local authorities
- The **European Investment Bank** finances EU investment projects and helps small businesses through the **European Investment Fund**.
- The **European Ombudsman** investigates complaints about maladministration by EU institutions and bodies

European Central Bank

The European Central Bank (ECB) based in **Frankfurt, Germany**, manages the euro and safeguards price stability in the EU.

The ECB is also responsible for framing and implementing the EU's economic and monetary policy.

The European Central Bank is one of the EU institutions. Its main purpose is to:

- keep **prices stable** (keep inflation under control), especially in countries that use the euro.
- keep the **financial system stable** by making sure financial markets and institutions are properly supervised.

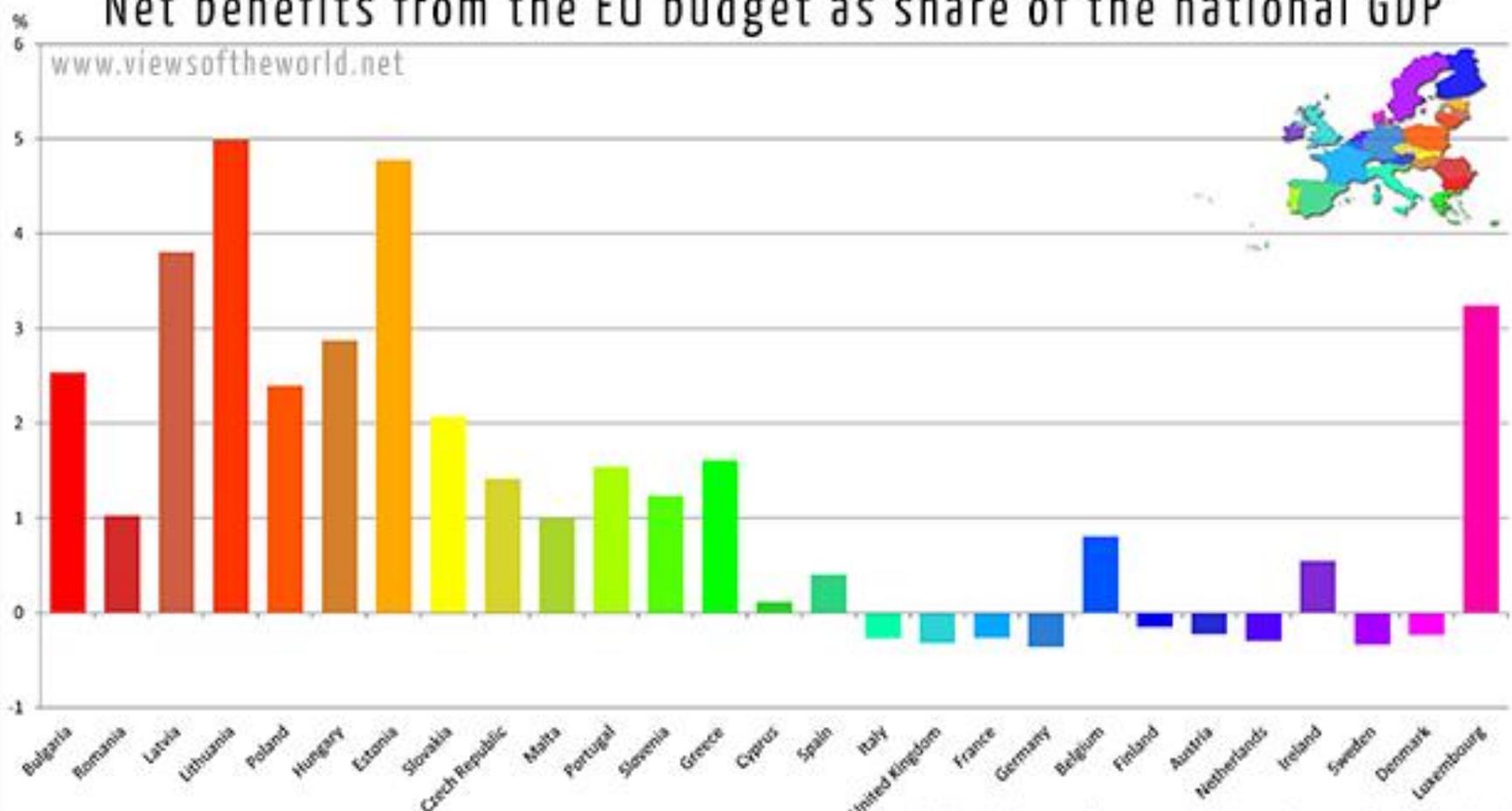


Money and the European Union

- The EU budget is funded from sources including a percentage of each member country's gross national income.
- It is spent on efforts as diverse as raising the standard of living in poorer regions and ensuring food safety. The euro is the common currency of most EU countries.
- The EU obtains revenue not only from contributions from member countries but also from import duties on products from outside the EU and a percentage of the value-added tax levied by each country.

Net benefits from the EU budget as share of the national GDP

www.viewsoftheworld.net



Data: EU Financial framework 2007-2013 - Source: European Commission (2012)

Court of Justice of the European Union

- The Court of Justice interprets EU law to make sure it is applied in the same way in all EU countries.
- It also settles legal disputes between EU governments and EU institutions.
- Individuals, companies or organizations can also bring cases before the Court if they feel their rights have been infringed by an EU institution.
- The Court of Justice has one judge per EU country.
- The Court is helped by nine ‘advocates-general’ whose job is to present opinions on the cases brought before the Court. They must do so publicly and impartially.

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- The **European Data Protection Supervisor** safeguards the privacy of people's personal data.
- The **Publications Office** publishes information about the EU.
- The **European Personnel Selection Office** recruits staff for the EU institutions and other bodies.
- The **European School of Administration** provides training in specific areas for members of EU staff.
- A host of specialized agencies and decentralized bodies handle a range of technical, scientific and management tasks.

The Economy

- The creation of the single market and the corresponding increase in trade and general economic activity transformed the EU into a major trading power.
- The EU is trying to sustain economic growth by investing in transport, energy and research, while also seeking to minimize the environmental impact of further economic development.

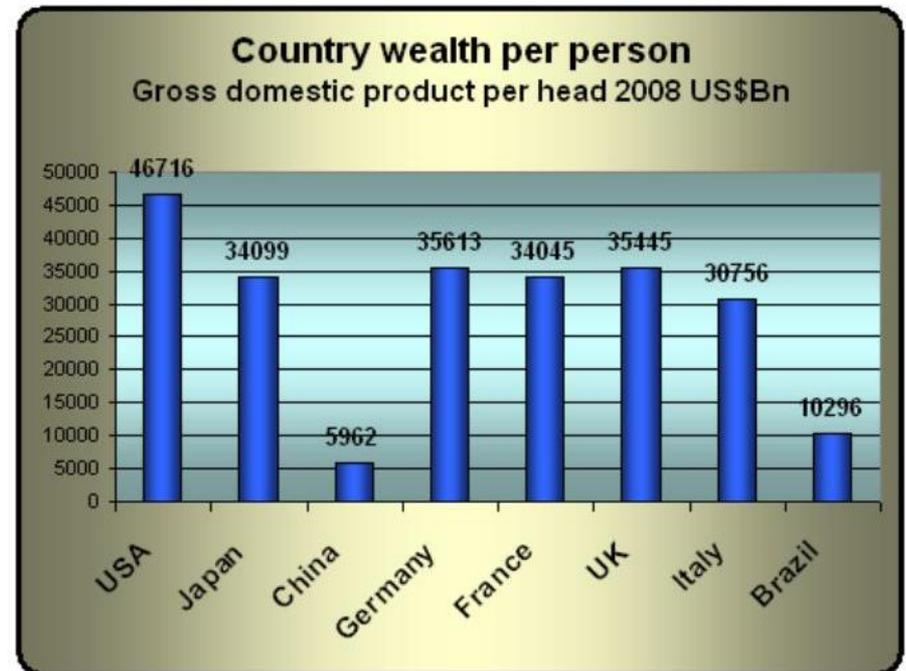
EU BLUE CARD

THE EUROPEAN UNION WELCOMES HIGHLY EDUCATED PROFESSIONALS

- **Created to Reduce Skills Shortage:** All highly educated can apply for a renewable, two-year visa.
- **Targeted at U.S. Students:** Foreign-born graduates of world-leading U.S. colleges and universities will be heavily recruited to "go Blue."
- **Easy and Fast Process:** Application process will take 1-3 months.



Figures on prosperity levels, attitudes, education spending and language learning reveal some of the similarities and contrasts between EU member countries.



European years

- 2014 saw the election of a **new European Parliament** and the inauguration of a **new European Commission**.
- Various projects linked with the 2013 European Year of Citizens continued into 2014. These included a particular focus on European Parliament elections and democratic participation.
- 2014 was a chance for citizens - especially the young - to take part in events and workshops focusing on how to exercise their rights in EU democratic processes.
- **A European Year is every year since 1983.**

 OFFICIAL
CANDIDATES

 POTENTIAL
CANDIDATES

 CURRENT
MEMBERS



BOSNIA
& HERZEGOVINA

SERBIA

MONTENEGRO

KOSOVO

ALBANIA

MACEDONIA

TURKEY

European Non-Member Countries

- There are several countries that are NOT EU members, including Turkey, Switzerland, Iceland, & Russia
 - **WHY?**
 - Turkey's culture (98% Muslim), stability, and location to the Middle East causes some EU members to not want Turkey to join
 - Switzerland has one of the world's highest standards of living and prefers its economy to not be regulated under the EU
 - The EU has strict limits on the fishing industry, and Iceland does not want the EU's control on its most important economic activity
 - Russia prefers to be an independent world leader over its resources and economy