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THE FOUNDATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The process that led to the foundation of what is known today as the “European Union” - a regional supranational organization - was not easy and smooth. The journey towards the European Union (EU) started thanks to visionary leaders, the Founding Fathers of the EU¹. They were a diverse group of people with the same ideals: a peaceful, united and prosperous Europe. Their energy and motivation inspired the European project and paved the way to a climate of peace and prosperity.

¹ Konrad Adenauer, Joseph Bech, Johan Beyen, Winston Churchill, Alcide De Gasperi, Walter Hallstein, Sicco Mansholt, Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Paul-Henri Spaak, Altiero Spinelli



THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS - TIMELINE

1945 - 1959 - The beginnings of cooperation

The European Union was founded after the Second World War with the aim of stopping any frequent and bloody conflicts in Europe. The European integration process began on 9 May 1950², when Robert Schuman - a qualified lawyer and French foreign minister between 1948 and 1952 - laid the ground for the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community. The Community was conceived to share coal and steel resources - especially between France and Germany - and it progressively united the European countries economically and politically. The six founding countries of the European Coal and Steel Community are **Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands**. On the basis of the European Coal and Steel Community, 5 years later, in 1957, the Treaty of Rome created the European Economic Community (EEC), or 'Common Market'.

1960 - 1969 - Economic growth

During the '60s, the level of economic integration dramatically raised between EU countries. They stopped charging custom duties when they trade with each other. They created a joint control over food production through a 'common agricultural policy' approved on 30 July 1962. Among EU countries, farmers were paid the same price for their production. On 20 July 1963, the EU signed its first big international agreement, helping 18 former colonies in Africa. On this basis, by 2005 other special partnership were signed with 78 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) regions. This is one of the reasons why, today, the EU is the world's biggest provider of development assistance to poorer countries.

1970 - 1979 - A growing Community

On 1 January 1973, the first enlargement of the EU took place: **Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom**³ joined the European Union, raising the number of Member States to nine. During the '70s, Europe faced both economic and political challenges. The Arab-Israeli war of October 1973 resulted in an energy crisis also for the European region. Both in Portugal and Spain political tensions arose after the overthrow of the Salazar regime in Portugal in 1974 and the death of General Franco of Spain in 1975. Consequently, the EU regional policy transferred huge sums of money to create jobs and infrastructure in poorer areas. Laws to protect the environment were adopted. In 1979 the first universal suffrage elections of the European Parliament were held. All European citizens could elect for the first time their members directly.

1980 - 1989 - Europe changes face

The '80s were characterized by remarkable historical changes, which went in parallel with the evolution of the European project. The major political upheaval took place on 9 November 1989, when the Berlin Wall was pulled down and the border between East and West Germany opened for the first time in 28 years. This led to the reunification of Germany in October 1990. In 1981, **Greece** became a Member State of the EU, followed by **Spain** and **Portugal** five years later. In 1986, the Single European Act was signed. It provided the basis for a huge six-year programme with the aim of sorting out problems related to the free flow of trade across EU borders. The programme was the first step for the creation of the 'Single Market'⁴.

1990 - 1999 - A Europe without frontiers

In the '90 the European integration process was catalyzed. In 1993, the Single Market was completed. It was (and is) characterized by 'four freedoms': **freedom of movement of goods, services, people and money**. Furthermore, two treaties entered into force: the 'Maastricht' Treaty on the European Union in 1993 and the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999. EU countries started to cooperate in the fields of security and defence. In 1995, the EU gained three new member States: **Austria, Finland and Sweden**. Finally, the 'Schengen' agreements were signed⁵. They are of utmost importance because they have allowed people to travel without having their passports checked at the borders. Millions of young people started studying in other countries with EU support.

2 Known today as "Europe Day", an annual celebration of peace and unity in Europe

3 The United Kingdom decided to withdraw from the European Union after a popular referendum which took place on 23 June 2016

4 The Single Market refers to the EU as one territory without any internal borders or other regulatory obstacles to the free movement of goods and services. The Single Market stimulates competition and trade, improves efficiency, raises quality, and helps cut prices. The European Single Market is one of the EU's greatest achievements.

5 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3AI33020>

2000 - 2009 - Further expansion and political integration

In 2000, the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights** was proclaimed⁶. It brings together in a single document the fundamental rights protected in the EU. On 1 January 2002, the euro became the new currency for many Europeans. Euro notes and coins become the legal currency in 12 EU countries⁷. Following 11 September 2001, EU Member States begin to work much more closely together to fight crime and terrorism. In 2004, 8 new countries joined the EU⁸, followed by Bulgaria and Romania in 2007. On 29 October 2004, 25 EU countries sign a Treaty establishing a 'European constitution' to streamline democratic decision-making process. However, voters in France and the Netherlands rejected the constitution in June 2005 and the treaty did not enter into force. The institutional framework of the EU was discussed later on in Portugal, where 27 EU countries signed the Treaty of Lisbon, amending the previous treaties. The Lisbon Treaty is designed to make the EU more democratic, efficient and transparent, and thereby able to tackle global challenges such as climate change, security and sustainable development. The Treaty of Lisbon was ratified by all EU countries before entering into force on 1 December 2009. With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the Charter of Fundamental Rights became legally binding on the EU.

2010 - Today - A challenging decade

Following the latest global economic downturn, the EU started helping several countries to counter their financial difficulties. The 'Banking Union' was established to ensure safer and more reliable banks⁹. Climate change is still one of the main concern of the Union which trying to reduce harmful emissions. A new security policy was established in the wake of the annexation of Crimea by Russia. Religious extremism and has increased both in the Middle East, leading to unrest and wars which result in many people fleeing their homes and seeking refuge in Europe¹⁰. The EU is faced with the refugee crisis and with the fear of being itself the target of several terrorist attacks. Croatia becomes the 28th member of the EU in 2013.

MEMBERSHIP

Austria	Belgium
Bulgaria	Croatia
Cyprus	Czech Republic
Denmark	Estonia
Finland	France
Germany	Greece
Hungary	Ireland
Italy	Latvia
Lithuania	Luxembourg
Malta	Netherlands
Poland	Portugal
Romania	Slovakia
Slovenia	Spain
Sweden	United Kingdom ¹¹

6 http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/charter/index_en.htm

7 Today the euro is the common currency in 19 out of 28 EU countries and used by some 338.6 million people every day

8 Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia

9 http://ec.europa.eu/finance/general-policy/banking-union/index_en.htm

10 The EU adopted the European Agenda on Migration in May 2016

11 http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/index_en.htm

11 The United Kingdom decided to withdraw from the European Union after a popular referendum which took place on 23 June 2016

THE STRUCTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union (EU) has a unique institutional set-up: directly elected Members of the European Parliament represent European citizens in the European Parliament; the European Council brings together national and EU-level leaders; the European Commission promotes the top priorities of the EU as a whole. There EU's structure is composed of **seven institutions** and **two consultative bodies/committees**.

THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The institutions of the EU are: the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, the Court of Justice, the European Central Bank and the Court of Auditors.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT - OVERVIEW¹²

Role: directly-elected EU body with legislative, supervisory, and budgetary responsibilities

Members: 751 MEPs

Established in: 1952 as Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community, 1962 as European Parliament, first direct elections in 1979

Location: Strasbourg (France), Brussels (Belgium), Luxembourg

The European Parliament is the EU's law-making body. It is directly elected by EU voters every 5 years. For more details on the European Parliament, see the next chapter.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL - OVERVIEW¹³

Role: it defines the general political direction and priorities of the European Union

Members: Heads of State or Government of EU countries, European Commission President, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Established in: 1974 (informal forum), 1992 (formal status), 2009 (official EU institution)

¹² <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/>

¹³ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/it/european-council/>

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

The European Council brings together EU leaders to set the EU's political agenda. It represents the highest level of political cooperation between EU Member States. It takes the form of summit meetings between EU leaders, chaired by a permanent president. It is convened and chaired by its President, who is elected by the European Council itself for a once-renewable two-and-a-half-year term. It usually meets 4 times a year but the President can convene additional meetings to address urgent issues.

It generally decides issues by consensus but by unanimity or qualified majority in some cases. Only the heads of state/government can vote.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL - FUNCTIONS:

- It decides on the EU's overall direction and political priorities;
- It deals with complex or sensitive issues that cannot be resolved at lower levels of intergovernmental cooperation;
- It sets the EU's common foreign & security policy;
- It can ask the European Commission to make a proposal to address it.

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION - OVERVIEW¹⁴

Role: the voice of EU Member Governments, adopting EU laws and coordinating EU policies

Members: Government Ministers from each EU country, according to the policy area to be discussed

Established in: 1958 (as Council of the European Economic Community)

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

In the Council, Government Ministers from each EU country meet to discuss, amend and adopt laws, and coordinate policies. The ministers have the authority to commit their Governments to the actions agreed on in the meetings. Together with the European Parliament, the Council is the main decision-making body of the EU. There are no fixed members of the EU Council. Instead, the Council meets in 10 different configurations¹⁵, each corresponding to the policy area being discussed. Depending on the configuration, each country sends their minister responsible for that policy area.

Not to be confused with:

1. European Council - quarterly summits, where EU leaders meet to set the broad direction of EU policy making
2. Council of Europe - not an EU body at all.

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION - FUNCTIONS

- It negotiates and adopts EU laws, along with the European Parliament, based on proposals from the European Commission;
- It coordinates EU countries' policies;
- It develops the EU's foreign & security policy on the basis of the European Council guidelines;
- It concludes agreements between the EU and other countries or international organisations;
- Adopts the annual EU budget together with the European Parliament.

¹⁴ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/it/european-council/>

¹⁵ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/configurations/>

EUROZONE COUNTRIES

Eurozone countries coordinate the economic policy through the Eurogroup, which consists of the economy and finance ministers of the countries who adopted Euro. It meets the day before Economic & Financial Affairs Council meetings. Agreements reached in Eurogroup gatherings are formally decided upon in the Council the next day, with only ministers of Eurozone countries voting on those issues.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION - OVERVIEW¹⁶

Role: promotion of the general interest of the EU by proposing and enforcing legislation as well as by implementing policies and the EU budget

Members: a team or 'College' of Commissioners, 1 from each EU country

Established in: 1958

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

The European Commission is the EU's politically independent executive arm. It is alone responsible for drawing up proposals for new European legislation, and it implements the decisions of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU. Political leadership is provided by a team of 28 Commissioners (one from each EU country) – led by the Commission President, who decides who is responsible for which policy area. The day-to-day running of Commission business is performed by its staff (lawyers, economists, etc.), organised into departments known as Directorates-General (DGs), each responsible for a specific policy area. The Presidential candidate selects potential Vice-Presidents and Commissioners based on suggestions from the EU countries. The list of nominees has to be approved by national leaders in the European Council. Each nominee appears before the European Parliament to explain their vision and answer questions. Parliament then votes on whether to accept the nominees as a team. Finally, they are appointed by the European Council, by a qualified majority.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION - FUNCTIONS

- It proposes new laws;
- It manages EU policies & allocates EU funding;
- It sets EU spending priorities, together with the Council and Parliament;
- It draws up annual budgets for approval by the Parliament and Council;
- It supervises how the money is spent along with the Court of Auditors;
- It enforces EU law;
- It ensures that EU law is properly applied in all the member countries together with the Court of Justice;
- It represents the EU internationally;
- It speaks on behalf of all EU countries in international bodies, in particular in areas of trade policy and humanitarian aid;
- It negotiates international agreements for the EU.

COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION - OVERVIEW¹⁷

Role: Ensuring EU law is interpreted and applied the same in every EU country; ensuring countries and EU institutions abide by EU law

Members: 1 judge from each EU country, plus 11 Advocates General

General Court¹⁸: 1 judge from each EU country

Civil Service Tribunal¹⁹: 7 judges

¹⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm

¹⁷ http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/j_6/

¹⁸ The General Court rules on actions for annulment brought by individuals, companies and, in some cases, EU governments. In practice, this means that this court deals mainly with competition law, State aid, trade, agriculture, trademarks

¹⁹ The Civil Service Tribunal rules on disputes between the EU and its staff

Established in: 1952

Location: Luxembourg

The Court of Justice interprets EU law to make sure it is applied in the same way in all EU countries, and settles legal disputes between national governments and EU institutions.

It can also, in certain circumstances, be used by individuals, companies or organisations to take action against an EU institution, if they feel it has somehow infringed their rights.

COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION - FUNCTIONS

- It gives rulings on cases brought before it. The most common types of case are: interpreting the law (preliminary rulings), i.e. If a national court is in doubt about the interpretation or validity of an EU law, it can ask the Court for clarification. The same mechanism can be used to determine whether a national law or practice is compatible with EU law;
- It enforces the law (infringement proceedings) - this type of case is taken against a national government for failing to comply with EU law. It can be started by the European Commission or another EU country. If the country is found to be at fault, it must put things right at once, or risk a second case being brought, which may result in a fine;
- It annuls EU legal acts (actions for annulment) - if an EU act is believed to violate EU treaties or fundamental rights;
- It ensures the EU takes action (actions for failure to act) - the Parliament, Council and Commission must make certain decisions under certain circumstances;
- It sanctions EU institutions (actions for damages) - any person or company who has had their interests harmed as a result of the action or inaction of the EU or its staff can take action against them through the Court;

EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK (ECB) - OVERVIEW²⁰

Role: to manage the euro, keep prices stable and conduct EU economic and monetary policy

Members: ECB President and Vice-President and Governors of National Central Banks from all EU countries

Established in: 1998

Location: Frankfurt (Germany)

The European Central Bank (ECB) manages the euro and frames and implements EU economic and monetary policy. Its main aim is to keep prices stable, thereby supporting economic growth and job creation. It leads cooperation between central banks in the Eurozone. This is referred to as the Eurosystem. The ECB works with the national central banks of all EU countries. Together they form the European System of Central Banks.

EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK (ECB) - FUNCTIONS

- It sets the interest rates at which it lends to commercial banks in the Eurozone, thus controlling money supply and inflation;
- It manages the Eurozone's foreign currency reserves and the buying or selling of currencies to balance exchange rates;
- It ensures that financial markets and institutions are well supervised by national authorities;
- It ensures the safety and soundness of the European banking system;
- It authorises production of euro banknotes by Eurozone countries;
- It monitors price trends and assesses risks to price stability.

20 <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/home/html/index.en.html>

EUROPEAN COURT OF AUDITORS (ECA) - OVERVIEW²¹

Role: to check EU funds are collected and used correctly, and help improve EU financial management

Members: 1 from each EU country

Established in: 1977

Location: Luxembourg

As the EU's independent external auditor, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) looks after the interests of EU taxpayers. It does not have legal powers, but works to improve the European Commission's management of the EU budget and reports on EU finances. The Court's audit work focuses mainly on the European Commission – the main body responsible for implementing the EU budget. However, it also works closely with national authorities, because the Commission manages most EU funds (around 80%) jointly with them.

European Court of Auditors (ECA) - Functions

- It audits EU revenue & expenditure, to check EU funds are correctly raised and spent;
- It checks any person or organisation handling EU funds – including spot checks in EU institutions (especially the Commission), EU countries and countries receiving EU aid;
- It writes up findings and recommendations in audit reports, for the European Commission and national governments;
- It reports suspected fraud, corruption or other illegal activity to the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF);
- It produces an annual report for the European Parliament and Council of the EU, which the Parliament examines before deciding whether to approve the Commission's handling of the EU budget;
- It gives its expert opinion to EU policymakers on how EU finances could be better managed.

THE CONSULTATIVE BODIES/COMMITTEES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE (EESC) - OVERVIEW²²

Role: advisory role to represent workers and employers' organisations and other interest groups

Members: 350 from all EU countries

Established in: 1957

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) - Functions

- It issues opinions on EU issues to the European Commission, the Council of the EU and the European Parliament;
- It gives the interest groups a formal say on EU legislative proposals;
- It ensures that EU policy and law are geared to economic and social conditions, by seeking a consensus that serves the common good;
- It promotes a participatory EU by giving workers and employers' organisations and other interest groups a voice and securing dialogue with them;
- It promotes the values of European integration, and advance the cause of participatory democracy and civil society organisations.

²¹ <http://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/ecadefault.aspx>

²² <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/>

THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - OVERVIEW²³

Role: advisory role to represent Europe's regional and local authorities

Members: 350 from all EU countries

Established in: 1994

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - FUNCTIONS

- It gives regions and cities a formal say in EU law-making ensuring that the position and needs of regional and local authorities are respected;
- It must be consulted by the European Commission, the Council of the EU and the European Parliament when drawing up legislation on matters concerning local and regional government such as health, education, employment, social policy, economic and social cohesion, transport, energy and climate change;
- Once the CoR receives a legislative proposal, it prepares and adopts an opinion and circulates it to the relevant EU institutions;
- It also issues opinions on its own initiative

THE DIPLOMATIC ARM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION: THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE (EEAS)

The European External Action Service (EEAS) is the EU's diplomatic service. It aims to make EU foreign policy more coherent and effective, thus increasing Europe's global influence.

THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE (EEAS) - OVERVIEW²⁴

Role: management of the EU's diplomatic relations with other countries outside the bloc and conducts EU Foreign and Security Policy

Established in: 2011

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

THE EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE (EEAS) - FUNCTIONS

- It supports the EU High Representative in conducting EU Foreign and Security Policy;
- It manages diplomatic relations & strategic partnerships with non-EU countries;
- It works with the national diplomatic services of EU countries, the UN and other leading powers;

DECENTRALISED EU AGENCIES

Decentralised EU Agencies play an important role in the European Union (EU). They help make Europe more competitive and a better place to live and work, thus serving the interests of EU residents as a whole.

Decentralised EU Agencies have been set up by the EU to perform technical and scientific tasks that help the EU institutions implement policies and take decisions. They are spread across the EU. They work on issues and problems affecting the everyday lives of the 500 million people living in the EU with specialised knowledge in areas as diverse as: food; medicines; chemicals; education; quality of working life and environment; justice; transport safety; security; fundamental rights; knowledge; the public and industry.

²³ <http://cor.europa.eu/Pages/welcome.html>

²⁴ <http://www.eeas.europa.eu/>

DECENTRALISED EU AGENCIES - LIST

1. Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER)

<http://www.acer.europa.eu/en/Pages/default.aspx>

2. Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC)

<http://berec.europa.eu/>

3. Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)

<http://www.cpvo.europa.eu/main/en/home>

4. European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)

<https://osha.europa.eu/it>

5. European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX)

<http://frontex.europa.eu/>

6. European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (eu-LISA)

<http://www.eulisa.europa.eu/Pages/default.aspx>

7. European Asylum Support Office (EASO)

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/>

8. European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)

<https://www.easa.europa.eu/>

9. European Banking Authority (EBA)

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

10. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

<http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/Pages/home.aspx>

11. European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/it>

12. European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

<http://echa.europa.eu/it/home>

13. European Environment Agency (EEA)

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

14. European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)

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

15. European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/>

16. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)

<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/it>

17. European GNSS Agency (GSA)

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

18. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

<http://eige.europa.eu/>

19. European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA)

<https://eiopa.europa.eu/>

20. European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

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

21. European Medicines Agency (EMA)

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

22. European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)

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

23. European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA)

<https://www.enisa.europa.eu/>

24. European Police College (CEPOL)

<https://www.cepola.europa.eu/it>

25. European Police Office (EUROPOL)

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/>

26. European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO)

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/criminal/judicial-cooperation/public-prosecutor/index_en.htm

27. European Railway Agency (ERA)

<http://www.era.europa.eu/Pages/Home.aspx>

28. European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)

<https://www.esma.europa.eu/>

29. European Training Foundation (ETF)

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

30. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

<http://fra.europa.eu/it>

31. European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)

<https://euipo.europa.eu/ohimportal/it/>

32. Single Resolution Board (SRB)

<https://srb.europa.eu/>

33. The European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit (EUROJUST)

<http://www.eurojust.europa.eu/Pages/home.aspx>

34. Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CdT)

<http://cdt.europa.eu/IT/Pages/Homepage.aspx>

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament (EP) is the only directly elected body of the European Union (EU) institutions. This means that it is directly elected by Europe's citizens.

STRUCTURE

THE PRESIDENT

The President is elected for a renewable term of two and a half years. The President represents the European Parliament vis-à-vis the outside world and in its relations with the other EU institutions.

The main tasks of the President are the following:

- He/she oversees the work of the Parliament the debates in plenary session;
- He/she ensures that Parliament's Rules of Procedure are respected;
- He/She sets out Parliament's point of view and concerns as regards the items on the European agenda and other subjects;
- Once European Union's budget has been adopted by Parliament, he/she signs it, thus rendering it operational.

MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, MEPS

The EP is composed of 751 Members – called Members of the European Parliament, MEPs – who are elected by direct universal suffrage in the 28 Member States of the EU. Their mandate lasts for five years.

In the EP, seats are allocated on the basis of population of each Member State. According to this rule, seats are allocated as follows:

Austria 18 seats	→	18 MEPs
Belgium 21 seats	→	21 MEPs
Bulgaria 17 seats	→	17 MEPs
Croatia 11 seats	→	11 MEPs
Cyprus 6 seats	→	6 MEPs
Czech Republic 21 seats	→	21 MEPs
Denmark 13 seats	→	13 MEPs
Estonia 6 seats	→	6 MEPs
Finland 13 seats	→	13 MEPs
France 74 seats	→	74 MEPs
Germany 96 seats	→	96 MEPs
Greece 21 seats	→	21 MEPs
Hungary 21 seats	→	21 MEPs
Ireland 11 seats	→	11 MEPs

Italy 73 seats	→	73 MEPs
Latvia 8 seats	→	8 MEPs
Lithuania 10 seats	→	10 MEPs
Luxembourg 6 seats	→	6 MEPs
Malta 6 seats	→	6 MEPs
Netherlands 26 seats	→	26 MEPs
Poland 50 seats	→	50 MEPs
Portugal 21 seats	→	21 MEPs
Romania 32 seats	→	32 MEPs
Slovakia 13 seats	→	13 MEPs
Slovenia 8 seats	→	8 MEPs
Spain 54 seats	→	54 MEPs
Sweden 20 seats	→	20 MEPs
United Kingdom 73 seats	→	73 MEPs ²⁵

It is important to note that MEPs, are grouped by political affinity, not nationality. Hence, MEPs sit in political groups. To form a political group 25 Members are needed at least one-quarter of the Member States must be represented within the group. Members may belong only to one political group. There are MEPs who do not belong to any political group. They are known as “non-attached Members”.

Currently, there are **8 political** groups in the European Parliament:

1. Group of the European People’s Party (Christian Democrats)²⁶
2. Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament²⁷
3. European Conservatives and Reformists Group²⁸
4. Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe²⁹
5. Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left³⁰
6. Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance³¹
7. Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group³²
8. Europe of Nations and Freedom³³

Each political group care of its own internal organization by appointing a chair (or two co-chairs in the case of some groups), a bureau and a secretariat.

The position adopted by the political group is reached by discussion within the group. No Member can be forced to vote in a particular way.

COMMITTEES

The preparatory work for the European Parliament’s plenary sessions is carried out by the Members. They are divided up among a number of specialised standing committees. A committee is composed of between 25 and 71 MEPs, and has a chair, a bureau and a secretariat. The committees have the following functions:

- draw up, amend and adopt legislative proposals and own-initiative reports;
- consider Commission and Council proposals;
- where necessary, draw up reports to be presented to the plenary assembly.

²⁵ The United Kingdom decided to leave the EU after a popular referendum which took place on 23 June 2016
²⁶ <http://www.eppgroup.eu/>
²⁷ http://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/?request_locale=EN
²⁸ <http://ecrgroup.eu/>
²⁹ <http://www.alde.eu/>
³⁰ <http://www.guengl.eu/>
³¹ <http://www.greens-efa.eu/>
³² <http://www.efddgroup.eu/>
³³ <http://www.enfgroup-ep.eu/>

The parliamentary committees meet once or twice a month in Brussels. Their debates are held in public.

Currently, there are **22 standing committees**:

1. Foreign Affairs (AFET)
2. Human Rights (DROI)
3. Security and Defence (SEDE)
4. Development (DEVE)
5. International Trade (INTA)
6. Budgets (BUDG)
7. Budgetary Control (CONT)
8. Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON)
9. Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)
10. Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)
11. Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)
12. Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)
13. Transport and Tourism (TRAN)
14. Regional Development (REGI)
15. Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI)
16. Fisheries (PECH)
17. Culture and Education (CULT)
18. Legal Affairs (JURI)
19. Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE)
20. Constitutional Affairs (AFCO)
21. Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM)
22. Petitions (PETI)

PLENARY SITTINGS/SESSIONS

The highest point of the European Parliament's political activity are plenary sittings/sessions. They represent the culmination of the legislative work carried out by standing committees and political groups. The plenary sitting is also the forum in which MEPs – in other words the representatives of Europe's citizens - take part in the EU's decision-making process and express their standpoint vis-à-vis the Commission and Council of the European Union. Plenary debates are conducted in the 24 official languages of the EU. MEPs, officials, interpreters and translators follow very precise procedures in order to ensure the best possible conduct of the sitting.

FUNCTIONS

The European Parliament (EP) is a co-legislator since it shares with the Council of the European Union the power to adopt and amend legislative proposals and to decide on the EU budget. It also supervises the work of the Commission and other EU bodies and cooperates with national parliaments of EU countries to get their input.

More specifically, the EP has: legislative, budgetary and supervisory powers.

EP - LEGISLATIVE POWERS

As anticipated, within the framework of the so-called "ordinary legislative procedure" the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union are entitled to adopt and amend legal binding document on a wide range of topics, such as economic governance, immigration, energy, transport, the environment and consumer protection).

Ahead of the simulation, it is of utmost importance to notice that the EP has also has a power of political initiative. Acting by a majority of its Members, it can ask the Commission to present legislative proposals for laws on a certain topic, to be later submitted to the Council. The procedure used by the EP in this case is called "non-legislative Resolution procedure" since 1.the Commission

may agree or refuse to submit the proposal requested and 2.the request is written on a particular kind of document called “non-legislative Resolution”

EP - LEGISLATIVE BUDGETARY POWERS

After the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (2009), the European Parliament shares the power to decide on the entire annual budget of the EU with the Council of the European Union and it has the final say. Once the EU budget is adopted, the European Commission is responsible for its implementation along with other institutions in charge of their own administrative budgets. Being a directly-elected body representing EU taxpayers, the European Parliament exercises democratic supervision to make sure that the Commission and the other institutions deal properly with European funds. It has also the power to make recommendations to the Commission on the execution of the budget.

EP - LEGISLATIVE SUPERVISORY POWERS

The European Parliament has a wide range of supervisory and control powers in order to: oversight over other institutions; monitor the proper use of the EU budget; ensure the correct implementation of EU law. In particular, the President of the European Council has to present a report to the President of the EP on the outcome of each meeting. MEPs can table written and oral questions to the Council of the European Union and they can ask it to initiate new policies. The European Parliament has the right to approve and dismiss the European Commission. The EP can ask the European Court of Justice to take action against the Commission or Council if they have acted in a way that is contrary to the spirit of EU law. Parliament must be consulted before the President, Vice-President and Executive Board of the European Central Bank (ECB) are appointed by the European Council. Parliament must be consulted also before the appointment of the members of the Court of Auditors by the Council. The EP elects the Ombudsman who investigates complaints about maladministration within the EU institutional framework. Finally the EP can set up a committee of inquiry to look into violations of EU laws by Member States.

THE MODEL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE ROLE OF MEP DELEGATES

The Model European Parliament (MEP) is a simulation of the activities of the European Parliament. The aim of the MEP is to educate young people at high school level about European integration and cooperation, and to develop their understanding of common issues as well as provide them with knowledge about EU institutions. The programme develops political awareness and an understanding for Europe's cultural diversity.

The MEP is a training ground for future leaders and politicians as well as for talented students who share an interest in European issues. It is also a cultural and social event, which gives the participants the opportunity to experience the diversity of the countries around Europe. They take part in various social events, such as teambuilding, discussion forums, dances, sightseeing along with living with a family in the host country.

Delegates will act as Members of the European Parliament. They will be grouped by political affiliation and will work within the framework of one of the standing committees of the European Parliament. Each member of the committee presents the view of the government of his/her country on the specific topics in his/her committee. This does not mean that these views will be expressed in the Recommendation, which is the document delegates have to write during the simulation. It is just to present the actual position of each EU country.

Before the simulation delegates have to write a position paper in order to express the view of their country and political group about the topic under discussion. The position paper must be max 1 page long.

The only language allowed during the simulation is English.

Decorum is required during the simulation. If a delegate behaves badly he/she will be excluded from the Model European Parliament.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Given the structure and the functioning of the European Parliament, students will participate in the simulation sitting in political groups, so they can act as real Members of the European Parliament, MEPs. During the simulation, students will work in the various committees of the EP and they will discuss a topic related to the specific activities of the committee they are part of. Each committee will be composed of at least 25 students acting as MEPs. The purpose of the debate within each committee is to write a Recommendation³⁴. This non-legislative Resolution presented to the EP during the plenary session. If approved, it will be later submitted to the Commission for consideration.

ROLL CALL

The President of the committee verifies attendance through roll call. The roll call takes place at the beginning of every committee session. During the roll call MEPs are mentioned by name and political group. MEPs shall establish their presence in the committee by raising their hands and declaring "Present". If a MEP declares as "Present", he/she cannot abstain during voting procedures.

QUORUM

Committee activities and debate shall start when at least one quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of the MEPs are present. It is up to the President to verify and announce that quorum is met. If quorum is not met thirty (30) minutes after the scheduled start time of the committee session, the committee shall start its session with the number of delegates already present.

TOPIC

Once the roll call has been exhausted and the quorum verified, the President announces the topic that will be discussed by MEPs. After this announcement, the committee session is officially ready to start.

MAJORITY

Motions are debatable and they generally require a simple majority vote to pass. A simple majority vote implies that fifty percent plus one vote (50% + 1) of the Committee must vote in favour of any motion to pass. In case a qualified majority is required, two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the Committee must vote in favour for a motion to pass.

UNANIMITY

Unanimity is needed in order to reach decisions regarding intergovernmental matters, such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Each MEPs has one vote. Abstentions are permissible and do not count against unanimity.

³⁴ A "Recommendation" is not binding. A recommendation allows EU Institutions to make their views known and to suggest a line of action without imposing any legal obligation on those to whom it is addressed

DEBATE

During the simulation, MEPs express their own views and proposal about the topic during the debate within the committee. The debate could have the following format: 1. Moderated debate (or formal debate); 2. Unmoderated debate (or caucus).

MODERATED DEBATE (OR FORMAL DEBATE) is so-called because any MEPs wishing to speak shall request to be added to the speakers list. More specifically, MEPs shall raise their placard, be recognized by the President and request to be added to the speakers list using the following formula: "Honorable President, fellow MEPs I would be added to the speakers list". During the formal debate, MEPs shall also fix the speaking time using the following formula: "*Honorable President, I move to set the speaking in ... minutes*". The committee will vote on the motion, which requires a simple majority to pass. A MEP exceeding the allotted time for a speech may be called to order by the President. In addition, the President may call a MEP if his/her speech is not relevant to the subject matter being discussed.

UNMODERATED DEBATE (OR CAUCUS) is much more informal and usually MEPs resort to it when they would like to discuss frankly or when they start writing resolution. During the unmoderated debate, MEPs work in small groups but they can leave the conference room. Any MEPs can move a motion to ask for a caucus. He/She must suggest a length and justification for the caucus. The following formula shall be used: "*Honorable President, fellow MEPs I move to obtain a suspension of the meeting for the purpose of minutes caucus in order to...*". The committee will vote on the motion, which requires a simple majority to pass.

RECOGNITION

A MEP may only address the Committee if he/she has received permission from the President

INTERRUPTIONS

A Speaker may not be interrupted by another MEP, unless the delegate has risen to a Point of Personal Privilege.

OTHER MOTIONS

In addition to the motion to set the speaking time and to ask for a caucus, there are other motions, such as:

Motion for the Adjournment of the Meeting.

A MEP may move for the Adjournment of the meeting to suspend all committee activities until the next scheduled meeting time. A simple majority vote is required to pass this motion.

Motion to Close Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion.

A MEP may move to close debate in order to end Debate on the Topic Area under Discussion. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is required to pass the Motion to close debate. If this motion passes the committee will enter voting procedure on all Draft resolutions on the floor.

POINTS

Point of Personal Privilege

A MEP may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege if a matter impairs him/her from participating fully in committee activities. The President shall try to effectively address the source of impairment. This point may interrupt a Speaker only due to inability.

Point of Order

A MEP may rise to a Point of Order if a rule of procedure is not properly observed by a MEP or by the President's Board. The President will rule on the validity of the point. A MEP rising to a Point of Order may not comment on the topic of discussion.

Point of Parliamentary Inquiry

A MEP may rise to a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry requesting an explanation from the President on the Rules of Procedure. This point may not interrupt a Speaker.

Right of Reply

A MEP whose personal or national integrity has been impugned by another MEP's comments may rise to a Right of Reply. Disagreement with the content of a MEP's speech is not ground for a Right of Reply. The President will recognize the Right of Reply at his/her discretion as well as decide on how to resolve the motion. This point may not interrupt a speaker but should be addressed the moment he/she will has finished his/her speech. Should the President rule the Right of Reply out of order, his/her decision cannot be appealed. No delegate may call for a Right of Reply on a Right of Reply.

Recommendation

As anticipated, the final aim of the simulation is to write a Recommendation. It is a non binding document containing proposals in order to address the problem and/or the challenges represented by the topic discussed by the Committee. MEP write down Recommendation after hours of discussion and negotiation. All the Recommendation written by the various Committees involved in the simulation are voted during the plenary session. They require a simple majority vote in favour in order to be approved. Recommendation drafting format and adoption are regulated by strict rules of procedure.

Working Paper

A Working Paper is an informal document used by MEPs in order to work on building a draft Committee Recommendation. It contains the first proposals formulated by MEPs in order to address the topic under discussion. No specific rules are to be respected as for the general structure of the working paper (sentences, verbs employed etc.)

Draft Recommendation

A working paper can be distributed only when it becomes a so-called "Draft Recommendation" upon authorization of the President's Board. Unlike working papers, Draft Recommendation shall have a fixed format. In other words, proposals formulated to address the topic under discussion shall be expressed using specific sentences, which are characterized by a peculiar grammar structure.

Writing Recommendation - Rules

Recommendations consist of introductory clauses and operative clauses. Introductory clauses state the current situation, operative clauses the proposals of the committee.

Introductory clauses are numbered with letters.

Operative clauses are numbered with numbers.

Structure

The Committee..... submits the following resolution to the European Parliament:

1 what ARGUMENTS are used = (Introductory clauses)

letters: - considering that

A. B. C. etc - assuming that

- emphasizing that

- alarmed by

- aware of

- believing that

- noting

- etc.

2 actual QUESTIONS and PROPOSALS = (Operative clauses)

numbers: - asks

1. 2. 3. etc - requests

- urges

- draws the attention

- proposes

- considers necessary

- demands

- recommends

- etc.

Introductory clauses – introductory phrases

Affirming	Guided by
Alarmed by	Having adopted
Approving	Having considered
Aware of	Having considered further
Believing	Having devoted attention
Bearing in mind	Having examined
Confident	Having studied
Contemplating	Having heard
Convinced	Having received
Declaring	Keeping in mind
Deeply concerned	Noting with regret
Deeply conscious	Noting with satisfaction
Deeply convinced	Noting with deep concern
Deeply disturbed	Noting further
Deeply regretting	Noting with approval
Desiring	Observing
Emphasizing	Realizing
Expecting	Reaffirming
Expressing its appreciation	Recalling
Expressing its satisfaction	Recognizing
Fulfilling	Referring
Fully aware	Seeking
Fully alarmed	Taking into account
Fully believing	Taking into consideration
Further deploring	Taking note
Further recalling	Viewing with appreciation
	Welcoming

Operative clauses - operative phrases

Accepts	Further proclaims
Affirms	Further reminds
Approves	Further recommends
Authorizes	Further resolves
Calls	Further requests
Calls upon	Have resolved
Condemns	Notes
Congratulates	Proclaims
Confirms	Reaffirms
Considers	Recommends
Declares accordingly	Reminds
Deplores	Regrets
Draws the attention	Requests
Designates	Solemnly affirms
Emphasizes	Strongly condemns
Encourages	Supports
Endorses	Trusts
Expresses its appreciation	Takes note of
Expresses its hope	Transmits
Further invites	Urges

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs submits the following resolution to the European Parliament.

Resolution on the question of EU strategies to promote the integration of foreigners and to fight xenophobic attitudes.

- A. Realizing that it is hard for the immigrants to integrate if they live in a ghetto,
 - B. Fully aware of the lack of education of some of the immigrants,
 - C. Having examined that the unemployment rate among immigrants is high,
 - D. Realizing that some of the immigrants can't communicate with the population because of linguistic as well as cultural barriers,
 - E. Keeping in mind that ghettos are an expression of segregation and can cause prejudices and ignorance,
 - F. Recognizing that initiatives to improve living conditions in the ghettos have already been taken in some countries,
 - G. Observing that racism is a problem,
 - H. Aware of the fact that immigrants often have problems getting a job matching their home country education,
 - I. Alarmed by the fact that some EU countries will soon be affected by the burden of the elderly,
 - J. Recognizing that some countries are already dealing with financial problems,
 - K. Recognizing that programs as well as binding legislation concerning asylum seekers are already being initiated by the EU Commission,
 - L. Believing that asylum seekers who have been in a country for a period of time have established a social network and have started a new life,
1. Demands that immigrants who come to an EU country be required to take lessons paid for by the national governments to learn about the country's language, history and culture;
 2. Endorses that more information should be given to the immigrant families concerning the importance of education in the EU;
 3. Encourages to make the ghettos more tempting and attractive to the eg. Danish people;
 4. Draws attention to the benefits of a social network for an immigrant in order to find a job and be motivated to get an education;
 5. Encourages the government to improve the living conditions in the ghetto areas and inside the ghettos to make them more attractive to live in for the population;
 6. Approves that the labour force of the immigrants will be needed in the future and that they will be a contribution to our societies;
 7. Demands that asylum seekers who don't have an education get the right to get one;

8. Calls upon the national government to prioritize their budget to make room for these changes as soon as possible however before the year of 2015;
9. Requests that no asylum seeker who has been in a country for a period of time can be forced to return to the country he came from;
10. Recommends the member states to offer education so that immigrants will more easily find a job which matches their education from their home country.

Sponsors

The main writers of the draft Recommendation are recognized as Sponsors. Sponsors must be present for a draft Recommendations to be introduced to the floor and their names must appear on the resolution text.

Introduction of a Draft Committee Recommendation

MEP may move to introduce a Draft Resolution once it has been approved as such and assigned a number by the President’s Board.

Amendment

During the introduction and the debate on a draft Recommendation, a MEP may move to introduce an Amendment, which will add to, strike out from or modify a part of the draft Committee Recommendation. The Amendment has to be first approved by the President. Amendments correcting grammatical, spelling or formatting mistakes will be automatically adopted without vote from the Committee. On the other hand, Amendments substantially changing sentences shall be voted. A two-thirds majority vote in favour is required in order to consider the amendments as approved.

Amendment intended to change the content of a clause or intended to delete that clause shall be introduced in a written form, according to the following format:

Amendment to the Recommendation of the Committee on:
Proposed by:
Member/s of the political group/s
Concerning Clause Number or Letter:
Proposal to:
• delete the entire clause:
• substitute the clause by a new clause which reads as follows:
• add the following word(s):
Signature:



Voting

All the Committees approve Recommendations by simple majority. During the plenary session, a simple majority vote will be required, as well.

Method of voting

Each MEP of the Committee has one vote and must demonstrate his/her voting intentions by raising his/her placard at the President's request unless there is a Roll Call Vote. Delegates must vote in favour or against. They cannot abstain.

Roll Call Vote

This Motion is automatically accepted unless the President rules it out of order. The decision is not subject to appeal. The Roll Call starts from a MEP randomly selected by the President.

Passing

During Roll Call, a MEP may choose to pass. The President will place the MEP at the bottom of the voting list. A MEP who has passed once during a voting sequence may not pass again but must ascertain his vote.

Voting with Rights

A MEP may request a right of explanation after voting. Upon completion of voting, the MEP will be permitted to explain the reasons as to why he/she has chosen to vote a certain way. The President may limit the speaking time at his/her discretion.

Voting on Draft Committee Recommendations

Draft Committee Recommendations will be voted on, in the order that they were numbered by the President. Recommendations are approved by simple majority.

EU CAREERS

There are a number of ways to work within the challenging environment of the European Institutions.

Different categories of staff can work in the EU Institutions, such as **permanent officials, contract staff, temporary staff, interim staff, trainees, seconded national experts (SNEs), parliamentary assistants, permanent officials.**

The **permanent officials** form the EU Civil Service and are divided in different function groups – administrators (AD) assistants (AST) and assistants-secretaries (AST/SC).

Administrators are typically engaged in drafting policies and implementing EU law, analysing and advising. An administrator may find him/herself playing a key role in the EU's legislative and budgetary processes, coordinating the broad economic and other policies of the Member States, taking part in trade negotiations with non-EU countries, or representing the Institutions in international forums. Translators and interpreters are also recruited as administrators. We offer a very wide range of career opportunities for university graduates including administration, law, finance, economics, communication and science to name but a few.

Assistants are generally employed in an executive and technical role (administrative, financial, communication, research, policy development and implementation etc). They play an important role in the internal management of the Institutions, notably in budgetary and financial affairs, personnel work, computing, and document management and scientific laboratory work.

Assistants-Secretaries are generally employed in an office management and administrative support role. They can take on a broad range of tasks such as preparing files, organising and coordinating meetings, preparing files, as well as many others involved in supporting teams, managers, or other services within the EU Institutions.

More information can be found on Epso website

http://europa.eu/epso/discover/types_employment/index_en.htm

TRAINEESHIPS

Paid traineeships of 5 months can be carried out within the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Court of Justice, the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Ombudsman, the European Data Protection Supervisor.

Trainees can receive a monthly grant between €1,000 - €1,120 and reimbursement of travel expenses. Accident and health insurance can also be provided.

If selected, candidates get hands-on experience in the international and multicultural environment. This can be an important enrichment for your further career.

Basic requirements are openness to European matter, willingness to learn about the EU Institutions' working methods, intention to contribute to everyday work with a fresh point of view and, last but not least, proactive attitude.

More information about traineeship and guidelines to apply can be found using the following links

1. European Commission

http://ec.europa.eu/stages/home_en

2. European Parliament

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/20150201PVL00047/Traineeships>

3. Council of the European Union

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/general-secretariat/jobs/traineeships/>

4. European Court of Justice

http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2_10338/

5. Committee of the Regions

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/en/about/traineeships/pages/traineeships.aspx>

6. European economic and social Council

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.traineeships>

7. European Ombudsman

<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/trainee/en/default.htm>

8. European Data Protection Supervisor

<https://secure.edps.europa.eu/EDPSWEB/edps/lang/en/Home/EDPS/HR/pid/154>

Ordering

First of all, we must bear in mind...
There are a few points which should/must be borne in mind.
Firstly, ... Secondly, ... Thirdly, ...
First, ...Second, ..., Third, ...
In addition to that...
Additionally...
I might add that...
I'd like to add something here, if I may?
I'd just like to point out that...
Before we go any further, may I point out that...
If I could just say a word about...?
Furthermore...
Moreover...
As well as..., there is also...
Not only..., but also...

Giving an example

Let me give an example...
To give/name an example...
A case in point is...
To illustrate this point, let us...

Balancing

On the one hand..., but on the other hand...
Although..., we mustn't forget...
Whereas..., we have to remember...
Despite/In spite of..., I still think/believe...
Despite the fact that..., I...

Generalising

On the whole...
Generally speaking...
By and large...
All in all

Stating preferences

I'd rather..., than...
I (would) prefer to...
I tend to favour...as opposed to...
...has an advantage over... in that...
The main/principal advantage of... is that...

Agreeing

I (completely) agree.
I agree entirely with your point of view.
I'm of exactly the same opinion.
I think we are in agreement on that.
I'm fully in favour of...
This proposal has my full support.
I entirely approve of...
I think I can/could accept your position on that.
I see no objection to that.

Partial agreement

I would tend to agree with you on that, but seen from another angle...
I agree in principle/on the whole, but it could/should/must be said that...
By and large I accept your views, but if we look at it in another light...
Although I agree with most of what you have said,...
I agree to a certain extent/up to a point, but...
You have a point there, but...I see/take your point, honourable delegate, but have you considered...?

Disagreement

I'm afraid,/With all due respect, I completely/totally disagree with you.
Frankly,/To be quite frank,/ To put it bluntly,/ With respect, I don't agree at all.
I disagree entirely.
What you are saying is just not feasible.
Under no circumstances could I agree to that.
I can't help feeling that...
I'm not totally convinced by your argument.

Proposing

I (strongly) recommend/propose/suggest that...
My proposal/suggestion is/would be that...
I advise you (most strongly) to...
In my opinion/view, the only viable solution is...
I just wonder if we shouldn't think about...
Actually, to my mind/ in my opinion...

Misunderstandings

I'm afraid there seems to have been a slight misunderstanding.
Perhaps I should make that clearer by saying...
Perhaps I haven't made myself clear.
Basically, what I'm trying to say is...
With all due respect, that is not what I said/ that isn't quite what I meant.

Asking for more information

Could you/the honourable delegate from... (please) be a little more specific/precise?
I'm sorry, but could you/the honourable delegate from... (please) explain in a little more detail?
Could you give us some details about...?
Would you care to elaborate/expand on that?
I'm afraid I'm not quite clear what you mean by that.
I'm (terribly) sorry, I didn't quite follow what you were saying about...
Would I be correct in saying that...?
Correct me if I'm wrong, but...
If I understood the honourable delegate from... correctly, he/she was saying that...
Am I correct in assuming that...?
I'm sorry, but when you say..., do you mean that...?
So, basically, what the honourable delegate was saying is...

Making time

That's a highly/very interesting/complex question/topic and...
I'm afraid I'm not in a position to comment on that just yet, but we were actually talking about...
I think we can leave the problem of...aside for a moment, the real issue/problem is...
I don't think we have enough time to consider all aspects of this broad/complex problem.

Summarising

In short...
To sum up there seems to be...
If I could just sum up the discussion...
To summarise, I think we are in agreement on...
Briefly, the main points (that have been made) are...

Concluding

Let me conclude by saying...
I'd like to conclude by saying/stating that...
Allow me to conclude by highlighting (the fact) that...
In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that...
I would now like to conclude my comments by reassuring you that I/we are fully aware of the fact that...



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