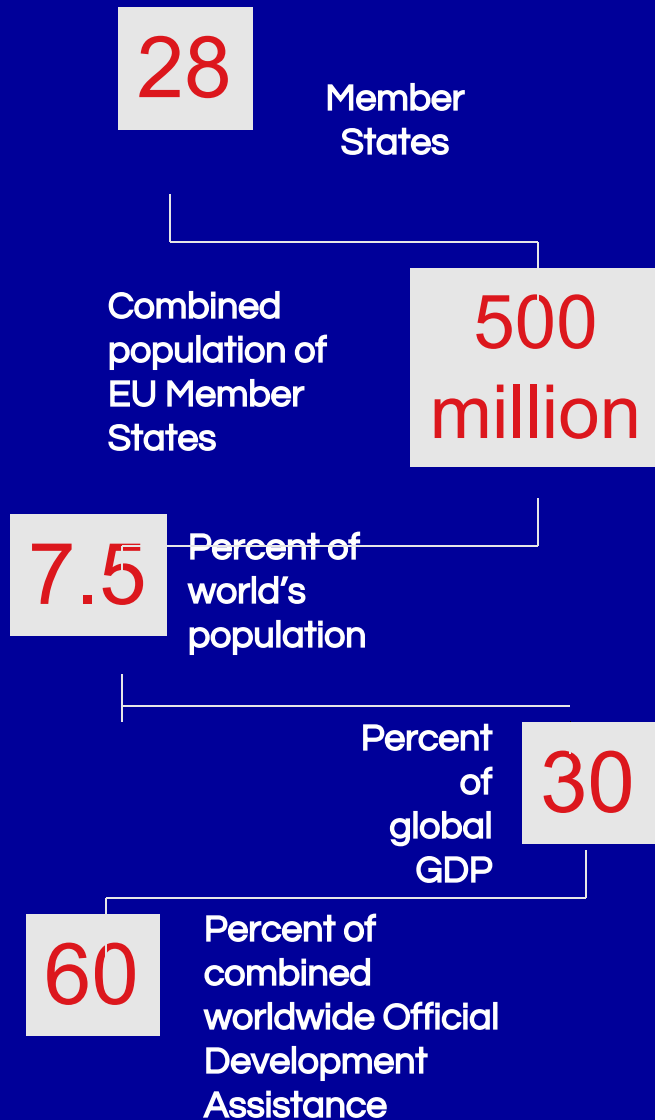


# The European Union



# What is The European Union?



- Shared values: liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law.
- The world's largest economic body.
- The world's most successful model for regional integration and for advancing peace and democracy.
- A unique institution as Member States voluntarily cede national sovereignty in many areas to carry out common policies and governance.
- It is not a super-state which replaces existing states. Nor is it simply an organization for international cooperation.



# Part 1: A Brief History

*“Peace, Prosperity, and  
Partnership”*

# Supranationalism

- Supranational Organizations: organizations in which nations are **not totally sovereign** actors
- Reflects trend of **integration**
  - Process that encourages states to **pool their sovereignty** in order to gain political, economic, and social clout



# Why Form a European Union?

- Began after **WWII** in an effort to repair nations' economies in a war-torn Europe
- Initial goals were almost completely **economic** in intent



# Evolution of Integration

- 1949 Council of Europe formed, but had little power
- 1950 a supranational authority was formed to coordinate **coal and steel** industries

# Evolution of Integration

- 1957 the EEC (Eur Economic Community) – established by **Treaty of Rome**
  - Informally named the “**Common Market**”
  - Eliminated all **tariffs** between European nations and creation of new ones

# Evolution of Integration

- 1965 the EC (European Community) was established
- Expanded the organization's functions beyond economics to include a unified approach to peaceful use of **atomic energy**



# Finally, the EU!

- 1991 the **Maastricht Treaty** created the modern organization and gave it authority in new areas
- Important goal was to coordinate economic policies, particularly through **common currency**, the Euro

# Finally, the EU!

- The Treaty Established Three Pillars (spheres of authority)

1. Trade and economic cooperation
2. Law enforcement and human rights
3. Foreign policy and European security



# Finally, the EU!

- **Basis of the EU:** *The European Union is based on the **rule of law and democracy**. It is neither a new State replacing existing ones nor is it comparable to other international organizations. Its Member States delegate sovereignty to common institutions representing the interests of the Union as a whole on questions of joint interest. All decisions and procedures are derived from the basic treaties ratified by the Member States*



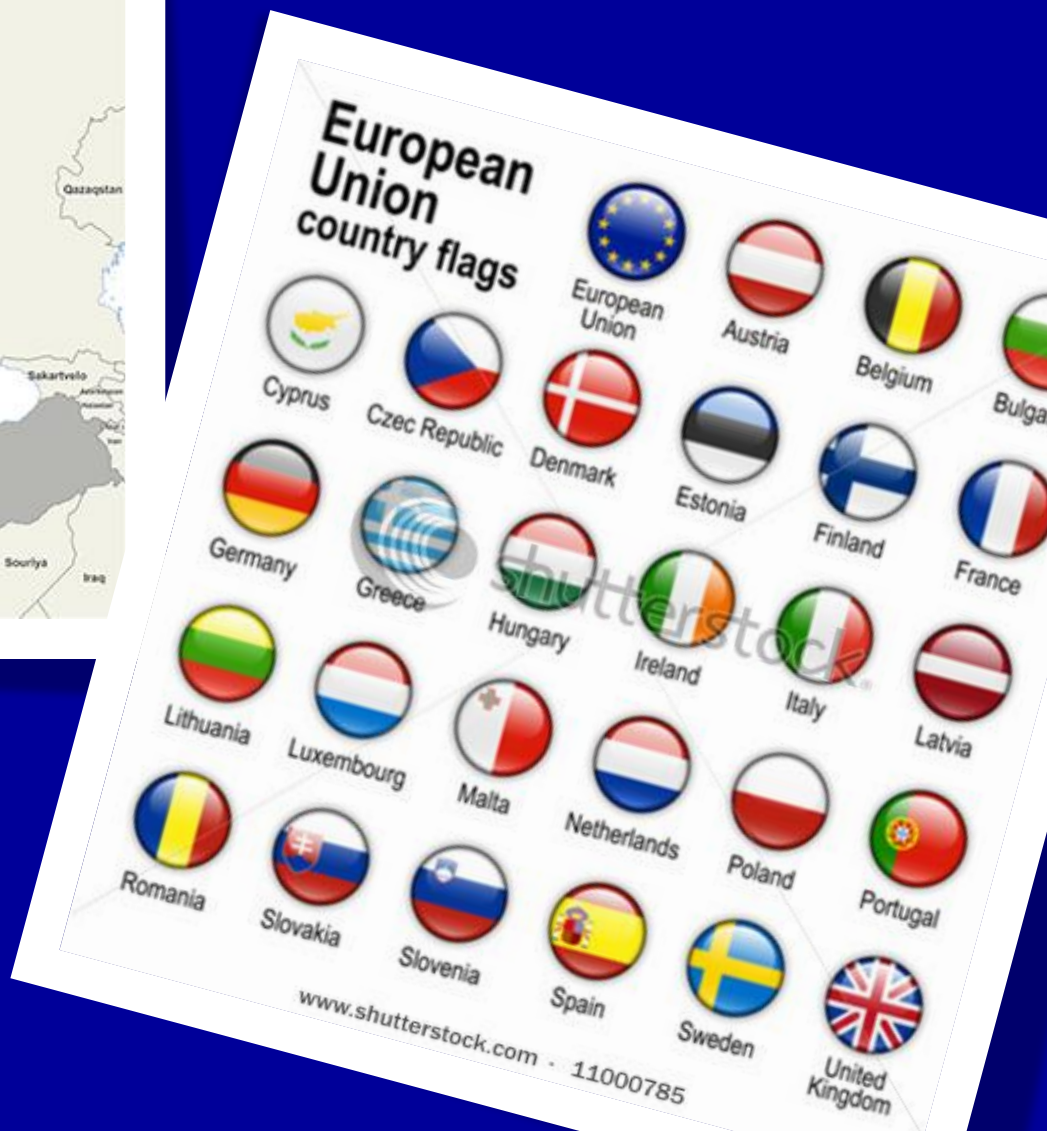
# Part 2: Membership

# Current Membership

- **Ongoing expansion** is a major characteristic of the European Union – currently **28 members**
- Began with 6 members in 1957: **France**, Germany, Italy, **Belgium**, the Netherlands and Luxembourg
- Early 1970s: **Denmark, GB** and **Ireland**
- 1981: Greece
- 1986: Portugal and Spain
- 1995: Austria, Finland and Sweden
- **2004**: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia
- 2007: **Bulgaria** and **Romania**
- 2013: **Croatia**

# Under Consideration for Membership

- Macedonia, Turkey\*, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania (Iceland dropped its bid in March 2015)
- **Turkey is controversial** (low gdp, history of authoritarian govts, location in mostly Asia, Muslim population)



# Requirements for Membership

- A **stable and functioning democratic regime**
- A **market-oriented economy**
- Willingness to accept all **EU laws and regulations**





# Part 3: Institutions

# 5 Main Institutions

## (1-3 = Iron Triangle)

### 1. European Commission

- Seeks to uphold **interests of the Union** as a whole

### 2. Council of Ministers

- Represents the **individual member states**

### 3. European Parliament

- Represents **EU's citizens** and is directly **elected** by them

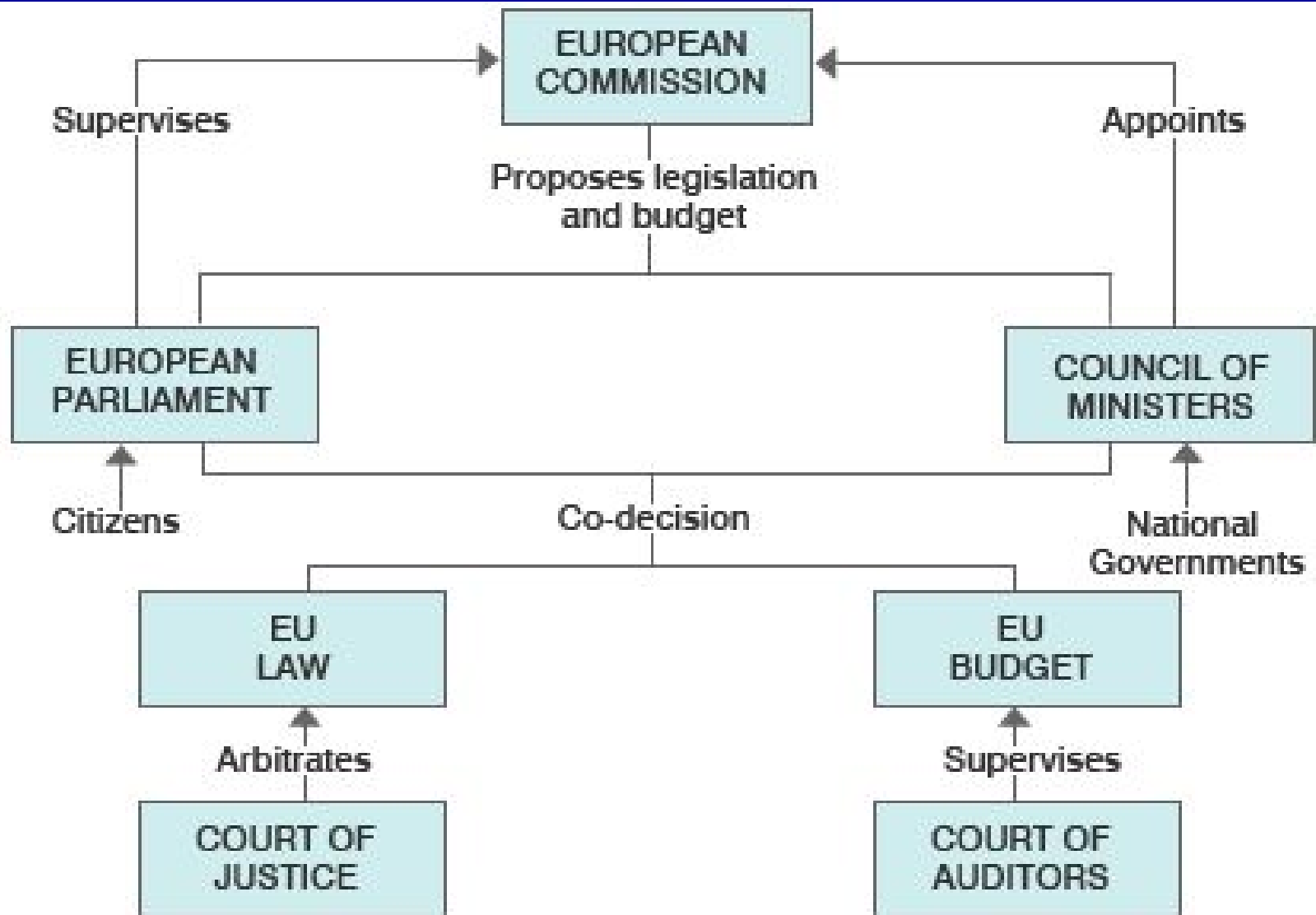
# 5 Main Institutions

## 4. Court of Justice

- Upholds the rule of European law

## 5. Court of Auditors

- Checks the financing of the Union's activities



# Institutions – The Commission

- 28 members, **one appointed by each state's govt** (approved by EP)
- Bureaucracy of several thousand European civil servants
- Each commissioner takes responsibility for a particular area of policy
- Main responsibility is to **initiate and implement** new programs
- Forms a permanent executive that supervises work of EU (like a cabinet)

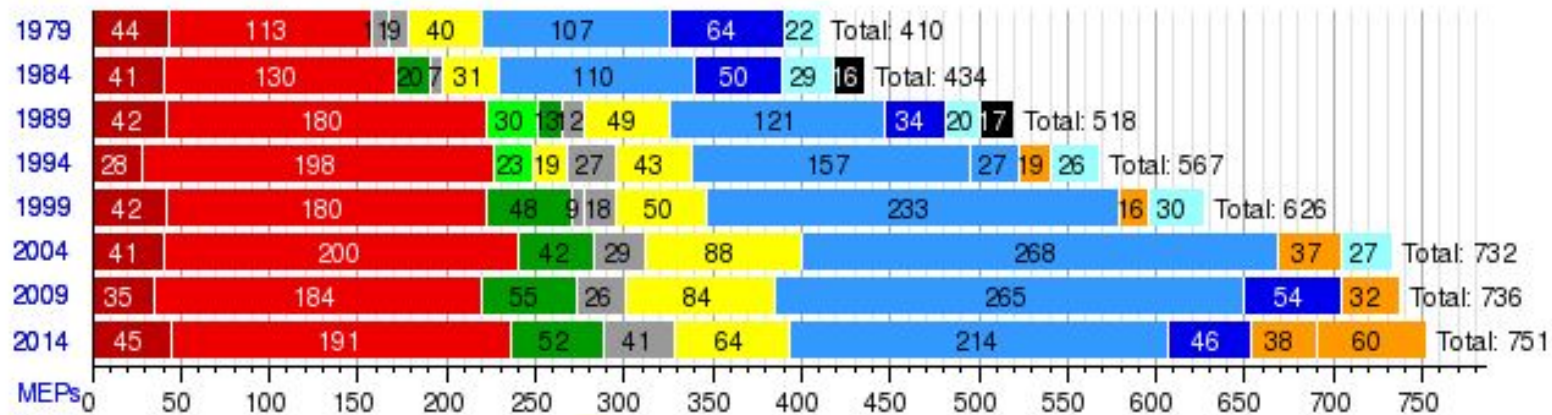
# Institutions – The Council of Ministers

- Composed of **head of each member country** (PM/Pres, etc) and Pres of EU Commission
- Meet regularly at council's Brussels headquarters
- Certain ministers may meet more often about **policy issues** that directly affect them (ex. Agriculture)
- The Commission may initiate legislation, but its proposals don't become law until they have been passed by **Council**
- Each country is assigned a number of votes **in proportion to its share of the population**

# Institutions – The European Parliament (EP)

- Historically has not had a lot of legislative power
- **751** members directly elected once every **5 years**
- May propose **amendments** to legislation
- May **reject** proposals from the Council outright  
BUT Council may override by **unanimous vote**
- Gained more power with Lisbon Treaty (2007)





- MEPs
- Left-wing
- Socialists, Social-Democrats
- Christian-Democrats, Conservatives
- Eurosceptical conservatives
- Liberals & Centrists
- National Conservatives
- Regionalists, Greens
- Greens
- Heterogeneous
- Non-Inscrits
- Eurosceptics
- Far-Right Nationalists



# Institutions – The European Court of Justice (ECJ)

- Supreme court of EU
- Has power of **judicial review**
- Meets in Luxembourg
- Interprets European law and its decisions **may limit national sovereignty**
  - Cassis di Dijon case
- **28** judges, each nominated by different member state
- Cases are decided by **simple majority**





# Part 4: Key Policies

A Quick Intro...

# Key Policies – Single Market

- Creating and maintaining a **single internal market**
- Removal of **tariffs/barriers**
- Most professional licenses (doctors, hairdressers) all members states



# Key Policies – Monetary Policy

- Union of monetary policy
- Control of money supply
- Power to set basic **interest rates/fiscal policy** is being passed from national banks/govts to European Monetary Union and its **central bank**
- **Common currency** – Euro (exceptions: UK and Sweden)



# Key Policies – Agriculture

- Common Agricultural Policy
- Almost **half** of EU's budget goes to this policy
- Goal is to **modernize inefficient farms** so they can compete
  - Farm subsidies
  - Rural development projects

# Key Policies – Defense

- Common Defense
- Crisis management – crises defined as **humanitarian, rescue and peacemaking** tasks
- Goal is to be able to deploy up to **60,000 troops** within 60 days that could be sustained for at least **one year**
- Commitment and deployment up to each member state

# Key Policies – Justice/Home Affairs

- **Treaty of Amsterdam** – aim was to establish **free movement** of EU citizens and non-EU nationals throughout Union
- **Schengen Agreement- 1995**
- Involved setting policy regarding visas, asylum and immigration
- **Terrorism** – EU and US officials have held a series of policy dialogues on **border and transportation security**



# Part 5: Current Issues



# Current Issues

- Enlargement – rapid growth has brought “**enlargement fatigue,**” a loss of enthusiasm for further growth
- **Democratic Deficit:** many people fear that the power shift from national to supranational institutions will result in loss of **direct control of political decisions** by the people (Euroskeptics)
  - Lack of **accountability** to average citizen

# Current Issues

- Constitution – some member states **failed to ratify**
  - 2007 **Lisbon Treaty replaced Constitutional Treaty** and made important changes to EU
- **Cleavages** – between big states/smaller states;  
between industrialized and agricultural states;  
between wealthy and poor
- Sovereign Debt Crisis
- UK's approved referendum for exit

# Current Issues

- Refugee Crisis
- Currently debating new system of mandatory quotas for sharing refugees
  - Plan proposed by European Commission
  - Strongly supported by Germany; Strongly opposed by Hungary
  - Agreed “in principle” to share 160,000 refugees across at least 22 countries (but not binding)





# Current Issues

- Refugee Crisis
- Proposed outsourcing processing to countries mainly in Africa where “reception centres” or refugee camps would be built
  - Once the system was functioning, EU members would be “in a position to find asylum applications of these persons inadmissible on safe third country grounds”
  - See any problems with this????

# Additional Videos to Watch

- [The European Union Explain \(CGPGrey\)](#)
- [The European Commission](#)
- [How the EU Works](#)