



Country	Year
France	19
Germany	20
Italy	21
Spain	22
UK	23
Belgium	24
Denmark	25
Greece	26
Ireland	27
Luxembourg	28
Netherlands	29
Austria	30
Portugal	31
Finland	32
Sweden	33

Image from: [EU Budget 2004. in Collins Dictionary of Business](#)

Summary Article: **European Commission**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Executive body that proposes legislation on which the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament decide, and implements the decisions made in the European Union (EU). The European Commission is the biggest of the European institutions, and must work in close partnership with the governments of the member states and with the other European institutions.

The aim of the Commission is to ensure the close union of EU member states, and to defend the interests of Europe's citizens. As well as having responsibility for policy and legislative proposals, the European Commission ensures that legislation passed by the EU is applied correctly; if it is not, the Commission can take action against the public or private sector. The Commission also manages policies and negotiates international trade and cooperation agreements. The president of the Commission is Jean-Claude Juncker, from 2014.

One of the principle tasks of the Commission is to secure the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons throughout the EU. The Commission must also ensure that the benefits of integration through the EU are balanced between countries and regions, between business and consumers, and between different categories of citizens.

The Commission consists of 36 directorates general and specialised services. Each is headed by a director general who reports to a Commissioner. The president of the Commission is chosen by EU Heads of State or Government; their choice must be approved by the European Parliament. There are 20 Commissioners who have generally sat in national parliaments or the European Parliament, or have held high positions in their home countries, before coming to Brussels. These Commissioners are nominated by their own governments in agreement with the chosen president. Two Commissioners come from each of the 'big' member states (Germany, Spain, France, Italy, and the UK) and one from each of the 'small' ones (Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland, and Sweden. The Commissioners are appointed for a five-year term, and the Commission is answerable to the European Parliament. The supporting administration is made up of directorates general and specialized departments divided mainly between Brussels and Luxembourg. The Commission meets once a week to adopt proposals, finalise policy papers and take other decisions, which are then ratified by the European Council and Parliament whose members are ministers or elected representatives known as Members of the European Parliament (MEP). The Commission attends all sessions of the European Parliament, which has the power to dismiss the Commission by a vote of censure or no confidence.

The president of the Commission participates alongside the heads of state or government of the member states at meeting of the European Council which occurs twice a year. The president is also a representative of the EU as a whole at the annual economic summits of the Group of Eight (G8), made up of leading industrial nations.

The Commission appointed in January 1995, under Jacques Santer's presidency, resigned en masse in March 1999 amid allegations of lax management, fraud, and nepotism that had led to threats of

dismissal by the European Parliament. Romano Prodi from Italy succeeded Santer and was president 1999–2004, but with enhanced powers. A new commission took office on 23 January 2000, and launched wide-ranging reforms in the institution with a view to modernizing its working methods and procedures.

With substantial enlargement of the EU from 2004, the provisions of the Treaty of Nice (2000) allowed for one commissioner per country up to a maximum of 27.

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