







# What are the differences between organizations like the EU, EC, EMU, NATO, and the UN?

## Understanding the Key Differences Among EU, EC, EMU, NATO, and the UN

EU (European Union) – The EU is an organization composed of 15 (soon to be 25) Western European Countries working together to promote political, economic, and social cooperation of its member nations. The current EU members include Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. EU headquarters in Europe are currently located in Brussels, Belgium but rumor has it they may possibly be transferred to Berlin in the near future. The addition of possible future members like Eastern states (ie Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, etc.) and even Turkey have been hotly debated issues. Ideally, the EU has agreed to sign up 10 new members by the end of 2002, but due to the massive financial implications of absorbing additional members the process a source of massive debate. Certain factors involved like the necessary agricultural and farm aid for the poorer recipients like Poland could easily strain or worse yet, even overwhelm the EU's current budget. Also with the rise of complicated anti-immigration issues and the resultant fallout stirred up by xenophobic leaders like France's Jean Marie Le Pen, Austria's Jorg Haider, Italy's Umberto Bossi, the Netherlands' late Pim Fortuyn, and the Danish People's Party the matter of EU expansion has been further antagonized. The bottom line is simple: who knows if the ship has sailed or not for other future countries desiring entry? At present the EU headquarters are located in Brussels. If you're in Brussels you can [Tour the European Parliament](#) building.

The principle EU committees are

1. The European Commission – Purpose: to uphold the larger interests of the Union as a whole. It is composed of 20 members each elected for 5 year terms. Two members each are selected from France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK and one from all other member states. To access their website visit: [www.europa.eu.int/comm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm).  
Their mailing address is:  
Rue de la Loi 200  
B-1049 Brussels  
Telephone: (322) 299 1111
2. The European Parliament - Purpose: to uphold the essential democratic principle of the people with its representatives elected by those peoples. It is composed of 626 members currently each elected for 5 years. Of the 626 current members: 99 are from Germany; 87 are from France, Italy, and the UK; 64 are from Spain; 31 from the Netherlands; 25 are from Portugal, Belgium, and Greece; 22 are from Sweden; 21 from Austria; 16 from Denmark and Finland; 15 from Ireland; and 6 from Luxembourg. Meetings are held in both Brussels and Strasbourg. [www.europarl.eu.int](http://www.europarl.eu.int)  
Correspondence mail should be addressed to:  
General Secretariat of the European Parliament  
L-2929 Luxembourg  
Telephone: (352) 43001
3. The European Council – Purpose: to uphold the interests of each national government represented within the Council. Members are composed of the Heads of State or Government of the Member States plus the President of the EC, supported by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and a Member of the EC. Meetings take place twice a year in Brussels or in the country who is the current President. To access their website visit: [www.ue.eu.int/en/summ.htm](http://www.ue.eu.int/en/summ.htm) Their mailing address is:  
Rue de la Loi 175  
B-1048 Brussels  
Telephone: (322) 285 6111 or Fax: (322) 285 7397 or 7381

