

**EU 27**  
19<sup>th</sup> December 2011



**Geography :**

Area : 4 326 243 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population :** (source : Eurostat)

- Population UE 27 : 502, 489 million inhabitants (forecast 1.1.2011)
- Crude natural change rare : 1,1 ‰ (2010)
- Crude net migration rate : 1,7‰ (2010)
- Total population growth : 2,7 ‰ (2010)
- Birth rate: 10,7 ‰ (2010)
- Mortality rate: 9,7 ‰ (2010)
- Life expectancy : Men 76,4 years, women 82,4 years (2008)

**Economy :** (source : Eurostat)

- GDP : 11 983,728 billion € (2010) ; 12 199,792 billion € (forecast 2011)
- GDP per inhabitant (PPS) : 24 500 € (2010)
- GDP growth : 1,8 % (2010) ; 0,71% (forecast 2011) compared to USA : 3% (2010) et 2,7% (forecast.2011) ; Japan : 4,0% (2010) et 1,6% (forecast2011)
- Unemployment : 9,4% (June 2011) compared to USA : 9,2% (June 2011)
- Inflation : 2,1% (2010) compared to USA : -0,4% (2009) and Japan : -1,4% (2009)
- Public deficit : 6,4% GDP (2010)
- General Government Debt : 80,0% GDP (2010)
- Public expenditures : 50,3% GDP (2010)
- Public revenues: 44,0% GDP (2010)
- Exports : 126,0 billion € (January 2011)  
(data corrected from seasonal variations)
- Importation hors UE27 : 139,9 billion € (January 2011)  
(data corrected from seasonal variations)
- Trade balance EU27 : -14,8 billion € (January 2011)  
(data corrected from seasonal variations)
- Current Account Balance : - 131, 800 billion (-1,1% GDP) (2009)
- Stock of foreign direct investment from the entire world : 8305,945 billion € (2008)

**Migration** (Source : Eurostat)

- Total foreign citizens : 32, 493 million (2010) including 20,157 million third countries nationals
- Share of foreign citizens in total population : 6,5% (2010)
- Share of foreign-born population in total population : 9,4%
- Asylum-seekers : 257 800 (2010)
- Accepted asylum application : 55 095 (2010)

### **Member of the Euro zone: 17 Member States of the European Union (EU):**

- Austria
- Belgium
- Cyprus
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Ireland
- Italy
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Portugal
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain

### **Member States outside of the Euro zone:**

At the moment Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Sweden, and United-Kingdom are members of the EU, but not of the Euro zone. Denmark, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovakia take part in the European Exchange rate Mechanism II (ERM II), which means that the Danish crown, the Cypriot pound, the Latvian lats, the Lithuanian litas and the Maltese pound are linked to the Euro. In the future, other countries should integrate the ERM II.

### **Political Systems in the Member States :**

#### Parliamentary Republics :

- Bulgaria
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia

#### Parliamentary and Federal Republic :

- Austria
- Germany

#### Parliamentary Monarchies :

- Belgium
- Denmark
- Luxembourg
- Netherlands
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom

**Institutions political situation :** (sources : [www.consilium.europa.eu](http://www.consilium.europa.eu) et [www.europarl.europa.eu](http://www.europarl.europa.eu))

The legislative branch of the European Union is made up of two organs : the council of Ministers or the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament.

→ The Council of the European Union

The Council is composed of ministers from the EU members states, who meet together in nine configurations, according to the subjects being addressed :

- General Affairs and External Relations (CAGRE)
- Economic and Financial Affairs (Ecofin)
- Cooperation in the fields of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)
- Employment, Social policy, Health and Consumers Affairs
- Competitiveness
- Transports, telecommunications and Energy
- Agriculture and Fisheries
- Environment
- Education, Youth and Culture

The presidency of the European Union Council changes every six months according to a predefined order :

- January – June 2010 : Spain
- July – December 2010 : Belgium
- January – June 2011 : Hungary
- July – December 2011 : Poland
- January – June 2012 : Denmark
- July – December 2012 : Cyprus
- January – June 2013 : Ireland
- July – December 2013 : Lithuania
- January – June 2014 : Greece
- July – December 2014 : Italy
- January – June 2015 : Latvia
- July – December 2015 : Luxembourg
- January – June 2016 : Netherlands
- July – December 2016 : Slovakia
- January – June 2017 : Malta
- July – December 2017 : United Kingdom
- January – June 2018 : Estonia
- July – December 2018 : Bulgaria
- January – June 2019 : Austria
- July – December 2019 : Romania
- January – June 2020 : Finland

The number of votes accorded to each Member State is set by the Treaties, which also outline the cases in which a simple majority, a qualified majority, or unanimity are required.

Since January 1st :

- A majority of the Member States give their approval (in certain cases a 2/3 majority) ;
- A minimum of 255 votes in favour of the proposition, which is 73,9% of the total.

Every State can, in addition, ask to verify that the favourable votes represent at least 62% of the total population in the Union. If these criteria are not respected, the decision will not be adopted.

Distribution of votes by State :

Germany, France, Italy, United Kingdom	29
Spain, Poland	27
Romania	14
Netherlands	13
Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Portugal	12
Austria, Bulgaria, Sweden	10

Denmark, Ireland, Lithuania, Slovakia, Finland	7
Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Slovenia	4
Malta	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>345</b>

The Lisbon treaty, entered into force in December 2009, provides that from 2014, decisions will be taken according to the double majority rule calculated according to two criteria :

- State : 55% of EU States (ie at 27, 15 Member States)
- Population : 65% of the EU's population

A blocking minority has to include at least 4 Member States.

→ The European Parliament

The European Parliament has its headquarters in Strasbourg, while its committees as well as certain plenary sessions are held in Brussels ; its Secretariat resides in Luxembourg. Until December 1st, 2011, it gathered 736 members of parliament representing each of 27 member states of the Union, such as the treaty of Nice planned it.

However, the new Lisbon Treaty entered into force 1 December 2009, allowing 751 seats in Parliament ; this novelty will apply during the next elections to the European Parliament in 2014. The new Treaty gives 18 additional seats to 12 Member States, while Germany loses 3 seats due to the new thresholds. Given that the 3 German members of parliament elected in the last elections continue their mandate until the end of this legislation the arrival of the 18 additional members temporarily increases the total number of seats to 754. This is why the total number of deputies is not 751, as provided by the Lisbon treaty, but 754. Thus, a transition period (Nice Treaty + Lisbon Treaty) is intended to last from 2012 to 2014. Subsequently the number of deputies per country until the next legislature:

<b>Member States</b>	<b>Number of Seats</b>
Germany	99
France	74
United Kingdom	73
Italy	73
Spain	54
Poland	51
Romania	33
Netherlands	25
Belgium	22
Czech Republic	22
Greece	22
Hungary	22
Portugal	22
Sweden	20
Austria	19
Bulgaria	18
Denmark	13
Finland	13
Slovakia	13
Ireland	12
Lithuania	12
Latvia	9
Slovenia	8
Cyprus	6
Estonia	6
Luxembourg	6
Malta	6

Women in the European Parliament : 258/753.

For more informations on the European Parliament and its elections, see the websites :

- <http://www.elections-europeennes.org/>
- <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/fr/headlines/>