Glossary of summaries

ENHANCED COOPERATION
Enhanced cooperation is a procedure where a minimum of 9 EU countries are allowed to establish advanced integration or cooperation in an area within EU structures but without the other EU countries being involved. This allows them to move at different speeds and towards different goals than those outside the enhanced cooperation areas. The procedure is designed to overcome paralysis, where a proposal is blocked by an individual country or a small group of countries who do not wish to be part of the initiative. It does not, however, allow for an extension of powers outside those permitted by the EU Treaties.

Authorisation to proceed with the enhanced cooperation is granted by the Council, on a proposal from the Commission and after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament.

As of February 2013, this procedure was being used in the fields of divorce law, and patents, and is approved for the field of a financial transaction tax.

SEE ALSO
- Deepening and widening
- Europe ‘à la carte’
- Multi-speed’ Europe
- ‘Variable-geometry’ Europe