COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
The Council of the European Union (‘Council’) is one of the EU's main
decision-making bodies. Its meetings are attended by ministers from the 28 EU
countries, and it is the institution where these countries adopt laws and
coordinate policies. The Council's headquarters are in Brussels, but some of its
meetings are held in Luxembourg. Sessions of the Council (except for Foreign
Affairs Council) are convened by the rotating presidency, which sets the
agenda.

The Council meets in 10 configurations, bringing together the relevant ministers
from EU countries: General Affairs; Foreign Affairs; Economic and Financial
Affairs; Justice and Internal Affairs; Employment, Social Policy, Health and
Consumer Affairs; Competitiveness; Transport, Telecommunications and
Energy; Agriculture and Fisheries; Environment; Education, Youth and Culture.

The ‘General Affairs’ Council coordinates the work of the different Council
formations, with the Commission’s help.

Decisions are prepared by the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the
EU countries (Coreper), assisted by working groups of national government
officials.

The Council, with the European Parliament, acts in a legislative and budgetary
capacity. It is also the lead institution for decision-making on the common
foreign and security policy (CFSP), and on the coordination of economic
policies (intergovernmental approach), as well as being the holder of executive
power, which it generally delegates to the Commission.

In most cases, the Council's decisions, based on proposals from the
Commission, are taken jointly with the European Parliament under the ordinary
legislative procedure. Depending on the subject, the Council takes decisions by
simple majority, qualified majority or unanimity, although qualified majority is
more widely used (agriculture, single market, environment, transport,
employment, health, etc.).

SEE ALSO
- Committees and working parties
- Coreper
- European Council
- President of the European Council
- European Parliament
- Presidency of the Council of the European Union
- Qualified majority
- Unanimity
- Weighting of votes in the Council
- Council of the European Union website
- Summary on the Rules of Procedure of the Council of the European Union