

European Commission

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The European Commission is one of the most original features of European integration. Initially, each of the European Communities had its own institution:

- the High Authority, created by the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), signed in Paris on 18 April 1951 (expired on 23 July 2002),
- the Commission, created by the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC), signed in Rome on 25 March 1957, and
- the Commission, created by the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom), signed in Rome on 25 March 1957.

However, these three institutions merged under the Treaty establishing a Single Council and a Single Commission of the European Communities, dated 8 April 1965 (the Merger Treaty), which came into force on 1 July 1967. From that date, the Single Commission would exercise the powers and responsibilities conferred upon the ECSC High Authority, the EEC Commission and the Euratom Commission.

The Commission has the task of representing the interests of the European Communities independently of those of the Member States. It has many powers and responsibilities: it is the driving force and the guardian of the treaties; it has the right to propose legislation; it is the executive body, and it represents the Communities and negotiates agreements in the field of external relations.

The Treaty on European Union (TEU) of 7 February 1992 extended its role beyond the strict Community context. Since 1 November 1993, when the Treaty entered into force, the Commission has been called upon to act under the common foreign and security Policy (CFSP) and to cooperate in the fields of justice and home affairs (JHA).

The Treaty of Amsterdam of 2 October 1997 retained most of the provisions concerning the Commission and introduced some changes aimed at reinforcing and increasing the institution's efficiency.

The Treaty of Nice of 26 February 2001 strengthened the powers of the President and modified the procedure for appointing the President and the members of the Commission.