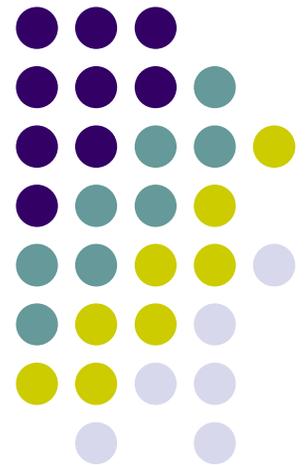
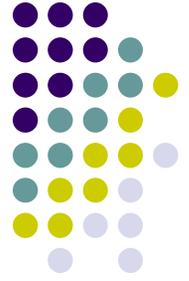


THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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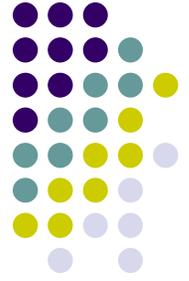




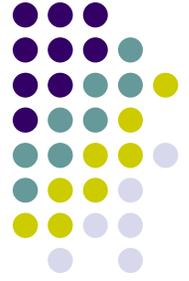
The role of the Council

- Principal decision-making institution of the EU
- The most powerful of the two legislative chambers, the other being European Parliament
- The primary role of the Council is to act as a one of the chambers of the Union's legislative branch
- It also holds jointly with the Parliament the budgetary power
- It formally holds the executive power of the EU which it confers upon the European Commission
- In a great majority of cases, the Council takes decisions on a proposal from the European Commission and in association with the European Parliament

The structure of the Council



- Is composed of 27 national ministers
- Exact membership depends on the topic (e.g agriculture, etc.)
- Does not have a single president (rotated every six months, known as "Presidency")
- At the moment Czech Presidency
- Another powerful position is the Secretary General (Javier Solana), who is also the representative of the EU's foreign policy



Separation of councils

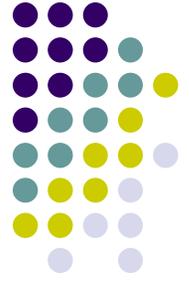
- Legally, the Council is a single entity, but it is in practice divided into several different councils. Each council deals with a different functional area
- Currently, there are nine configurations

Configurations I



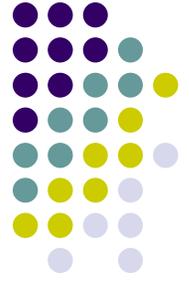
- **General Affairs and External Relations (GAERC):** The most important formation, composed of ministers of foreign affairs. It also coordinates preparation for and follow-up to meetings of the European Council.
- **Economic and Financial Affairs** – economic and finance ministers, budgetary and eurozone matters
- **Agriculture and Fisheries** - meets once a month, ministers for agriculture and fisheries
- **Justice and Home Affairs Council** - Justice ministers and Interior Ministers of the Member States. Includes civil protection.
- **Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO):** is composed of employment, social protection, consumer protection, health and equal opportunities ministers.

Configurations II



- **Competitiveness:** Created in June 2002 through the merging of three previous configurations (Internal Market, Industry and Research). Depending on the items on the agenda, composed of ministers responsible for areas such as European affairs, industry, tourism and scientific research.
- **Transport, Telecommunications and Energy:** the formation meets approximately once every two months. Created in June 2002, through the merging of three policies under one configuration
- **Environment:** Composed of environment ministers, who meet about four times a year.
- **Education, Youth and Culture (EYC):** Composed of education, culture, youth and communications ministers, who meet around three or four times a year. Includes audiovisual issues.

The Council of the European Union and Sport



- The EU plays a minor and mostly indirect policy role in sport.

BUT

- Some topics can be discussed at the formation meeting (meeting of 27 national ministers for Education, Youth, Culture).

References

- Council of european union (web) - <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>
- Wiki

