



**Otázka:** The European Union

**Jazyk:** Angličtina

**Přidal(a):** Michalakubova

The European Union is economical and political alliance, its members are 27 states located mainly in Europe. Its headquarters is in Brussels.

## HISTORY

After World War 2, Europe has tended towards unity, after being devastated by radical nationalism.

Modern European Union was originated from European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which was established in 1951 by the Treaty of Paris. ECSC's aim was to control coal and steel industry of its members. These members were France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. In 1973 the UK, Denmark and Ireland joined the European Community.

ECSC was preceded by forming of Benelux in 1944 by signing London Customs Convention. States of Benelux are Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg (all were members of ECSC).

Some of the original creators and supporters of the ECSC since 1951 were Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman and Paul Henri Spaak

In 1957 The European Economic Community and The European Atomic Energy Community



were established by the members of the ESCS.

In 1979 in June the first direct democratic elections were held to the European Parliament, the legislative body of the European Community.

In 1991 negotiations took place in Netherlands, from these negotiations came Maastricht Treaty, which established modern European Union (EU), this treaty was ratified and entered into force on 1st November 1993.

After ratification by member states the treaty on European Union goes into effect.

In 2004 Czech Republic joined the EU along with other new countries, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. After this act, EU had 25 members.

In 2007 Romania and Bulgaria joined the Union. With these two the total number of included states raised to 27.

Now Croatia, Turkey and, Ukraine are trying to join the Union.

### **STRUCTURE**

The EU is a political as well as an economical organisation.

The major bodies of the EU are the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Court of Justice and the Court of Auditors. In addition there are many smaller bodies, such as the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

Most important of these are European Commission, Council of the European Union and European Parliament.

Current President of the European Commission is Portuguese politician José Manuel Barroso. And President of European Council is Herman Van Rompuy.



## European parliament

The European Parliament is made of 736 members who are directly elected by the citizens of the EU for a period of five years. The Parliament has a little real power apart from overseeing the work of Council and the Commission. It may make corrections or suggest changes to laws before they are passed by the Council, and has the power to reject the Community Budget

What does it do?

passing European laws

parliament exercises democratic supervision over the other EU institutions

the power of the purse (rozpočtová pravomoc)

## The Budget

The budget proposal (návrh) is made by European Commission, then they pass it on (předat dál) for approval (schválení) to Council of the European Union. Also European Parliament has the right to manipulate the budget.

The budget of EU can never be in deficit.

Financial sources of budget are taken partially from GDP of member states, customs duties and part of VAT.

On the other hand biggest expenses are agriculture and structural funds.



### **SYMBOLS**

Flag of EU consists of 12 yellow stars formed in a circle on blue background. 12 stars, because there were 12 original members, and their circle formation represents unity.

European anthem is derived from Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, which is widely known as Ode for Joy. The anthem is played without words

Day of Europe is on 9<sup>th</sup> of May, because on that day in 1950 Schuman stated (ustavit) ideals, which EU comes from.

For EU is typical single united currency, Euro. Not all of member states are using it.

### **TREATIES**

#### **Schengen Agreement**

Schengen Agreement was signed on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1985 near a small village Schengen in Luxembourg. Signing established Schengen Area which lets free crossing the borders and free trade for its members.

Schengen Area involves majority of members of EU and some states which aren't members of EU. (F.e. Iceland, Switzerland, Norway aren't in Schengen Area.)

Czech Republic became member in 2004.

#### **Treaty of Lisbon**

It's an international treaty which was signed by the EU member states. Its aim is reforming institutions of EU and ensuring effective working in future.

During signing Treaty of Lisbon Czech Republic made lots of problems but in the end president



Václav Klaus signed it on 3th November 2009 and Treaty of Lisbon was ratified.

### **Maastricht Treaty**

It was entered into force on 1st November 1993. It created the European Union and led to the creation of the euro. Maastricht Treaty also created new political and economic structure involves f.e. collective foreign and security policy.

### **THE BEST PART**

#### **Czech Republic and EU**

We can seek advantages from Schengen Area and draw money from Union's funds. We have a share in decisions and we have right of veto.

On the other hand we are limited by its rules.

#### **Me and EU**

I can travel without a passport control, I can pay by Euro in some countries, so I don't have to exchange money specially for each country. When I will adult I will be able to carry business in Schengen Area more easily. Now I don't observe any disadvantages.