

Institutions

European Commission

They are made up of commissioners from each member state. They propose new laws and enforce current ones. They also draft the EU Budget and implement agreed policies.

European Parliament

Made up of Members of Parliament (MEPs) who are elected by the people living within the EU. They discuss proposals for new laws and propose changes. They also approve the Budget set by the European Commission.

Court of Ministers

They make decisions within the EU. They decide the laws that will be put in place. They try to develop the EU and set objectives for it. They also ensure cooperation between the member states.

Court of Auditors

They monitor the funding within the EU and ensure that any organisation getting funding is using the money for its intended purpose. They ensure that the budget is spent in the fairest way possible and carry out spot checks to ensure no countries or businesses are committing fraud.

Court of Justice

They are made up of judges from each member state. They ensure that the laws are being followed and make sure that all laws are interpreted equally amongst the member states.

Policies

Common Agricultural Policy

- Provide a single market for agricultural products.
- Gives farmers a standard of living.

- Maintains farmers income.
- Is a huge cost for the EU as they buy excess produce that is not sold.

Common Fisheries Policy

- Gives grants to fishermen.
- Gives fishermen a standard of living.
- Sets quotas on amount of fish that can be bought.
- Allows foreign fishermen from within the EU to fish in Irish waters and vice versa.

EU Social Policy

- Improves quality of life for all within the EU.
- Protects rights of people.
- May cause a decrease in business costs as they set a minimum wage.

Single European Market

- Removed trade barriers.
- Expansion opportunities.
- Transfer of skilled workers from one country to another.
- Increased competition for businesses.
- Businesses may need to change products to fit EU standards.

Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)

- Created the Euro
- All countries within the Eurozone must meet requirements for interest rates, inflation, spending and debt.
- Controlled by the European Central Bank.
- No currency exchange rates within Eurozone.
- Easy to compare prices as they're in the same currency.
- Government loses control over interest rates and debt.
- UK does not use Euro – we do not avail of such benefits when trading with the UK.

Benefits of EU Membership to Ireland

1. Access to foreign markets.
2. Foreign businesses are attracted to Ireland.
3. EU funding helps businesses and infrastructure.
4. EU policies protect our workers.
5. The Euro comes with many benefits.