European Parliament Goals and Objectives

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Introduction

Following the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), the ECSC Common Assembly was expanded to cover all three communities. With 142 Members, the new assembly met for the first time in Strasbourg on 19 March 1958 as the 'European Parliamentary Assembly', changing its name to the 'European Parliament' on 30 March 1962 (Bux, 2020).

The **European Parliament (EP)** is the legislative branch of the European Union and one of its seven institutions. Together with the Council of the European Union, it adopts European legislation, normally on a proposal from the European Commission. The Parliament is composed of 705 members (MEPs). The Parliament represents the second-largest democratic electorate in the world (after the Parliament of India) and the largest trans-national democratic electorate in the world (EU, 2020).
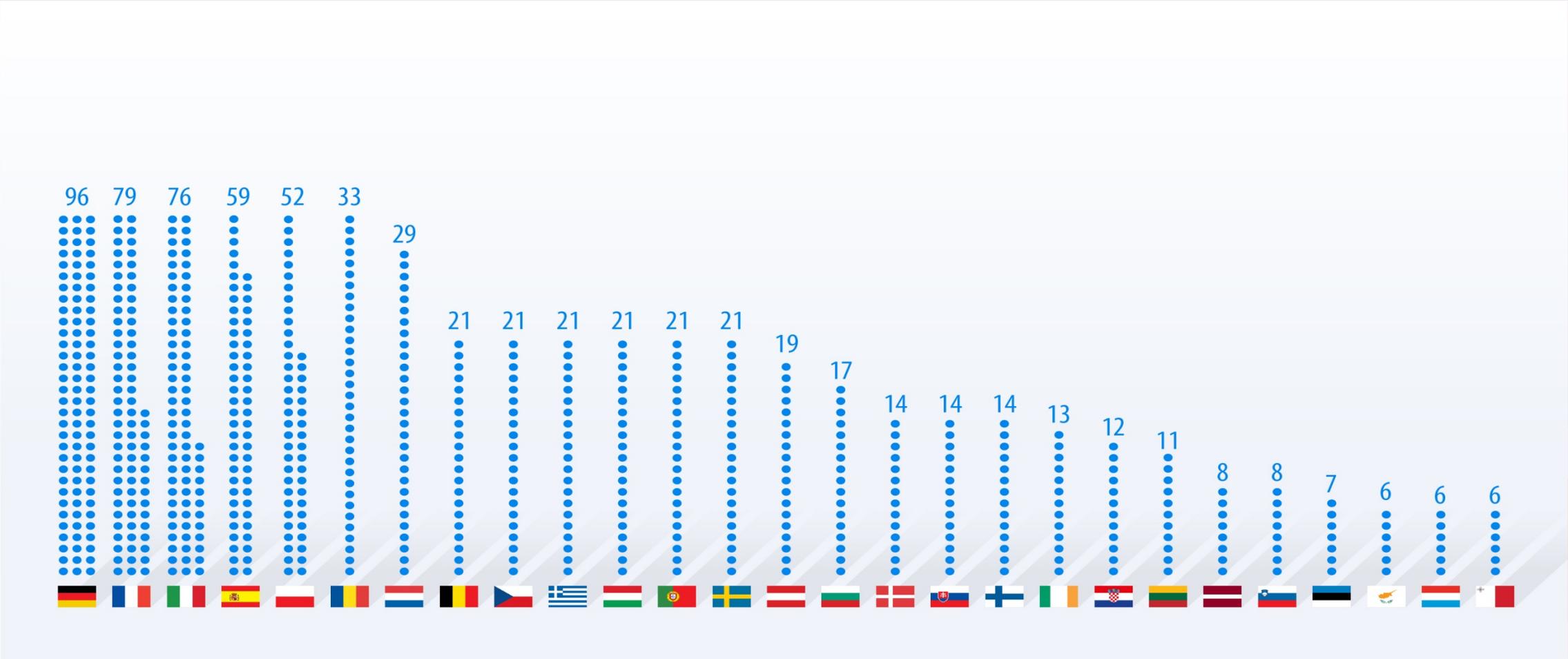
The President and MEPs

- The Parliament elects its own president, along with 14 vice-presidents for a term of 2.5 years. The president represents the Parliament to other EU institutions. The current <u>President of the European Parliament is David Sassoli</u>.

- The number of MEPs for each member state is loosely based on the population of the member state. No country can have fewer than 6 MEPs or more than 96 MEPs. Ireland has 13 MEPs.

- MEPs join groups or can sit as independent MEPs. For a group to be recognized, it must have at least 25 MEPs representing at least one quarter of EU member states (EU, 2020).

National apportionment of MEP seats (total 705)

The distribution of Parliament seats has changed as a result of Brexit (EU, 2020)

What does the European Parliament do?

- The European Parliament has 3 roles:

- It debates **legislation**. It can pass or reject laws, and it can also make amendments (but not in all cases). Laws must also be passed by the Council of the EU in order to become law. If the law is about EU budgets, the Parliament can only advise on it – it does not have the power to reject the law. You can read more about how EU laws are made.

- It **supervises** EU institutions and budgets. The president of the EU Commission must be approved by Parliament, and the Commission must answer written or oral questions during Question Time.

- It establishes an EU **budget** (along with the Council of the EU).

Unlike most national parliaments, the European Parliament cannot initiate legislation. The European Commission is the only EU institution with the power to initiate (or start) new laws. The Parliament can ask the Commission to initiate laws (Citizens Information, 2020).

Goals and objectives of European Parliament

As the European Parliament is the part of European Union, it seeks to ensure that values and objectives of EU are realised in the EU legislation (The EU Brief, 2020).

The goals of the European Union are:

- promote peace, its values and the well-being of its citizens

- offer freedom, security and justice without internal borders

- sustainable development based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive market economy with full employment and social progress, and environmental protection

Goals cont.

- combat social exclusion and discrimination

- promote scientific and technological progress

- enhance economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among EU countries

- respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity

- establish an economic and monetary union whose currency is the euro (The EU Brief, 2020).

Objectives of European Parliament

The European Union's main objective is to promote peace, follow the EU's values and improve the wellbeing of nations. The European Parliament and other institutions see to it that these objectives are achieved.

The main objectives are:

- **A common European area without borders**

The objective is to create a free and safe Europe with no internal borders. The citizens living in the area enjoy the rights granted by the European Union.

- **Internal market**

The objective is to ensure smooth and efficient trade within Europe. Competition between companies is free and fair.

Objectives cont.

- **Stable and sustainable development**

The objective is to ensure Europe's sustainable and steady development. It means balanced economic growth and stable prices. The European Union seeks to create a competitive market economy which takes into account people's wellbeing and social needs.

- **Scientific and technological development**

The European Union supports the advancement of science and technology and invests in education. Another objective is to achieve a skilled workforce and a high standard of technological production.

Objectives cont.

- **Prevention of social exclusion**

The European Union works hard to prevent social exclusion. It seeks to prevent people from drifting outside the labour market and society. Efforts are made to eliminate poverty. The Union works for equality. Minority rights are protected. Social security is improved. Men and women must be treated equally. Children's rights must be protected, and children given a happy childhood. Old people must be looked after and respected.

- **Solidarity**

Solidarity between countries and people is promoted in the field of the economy, social equality and regions. The member states must be loyal to one another. It means that states must take responsibility for and be understanding of one another.

Objectives cont.
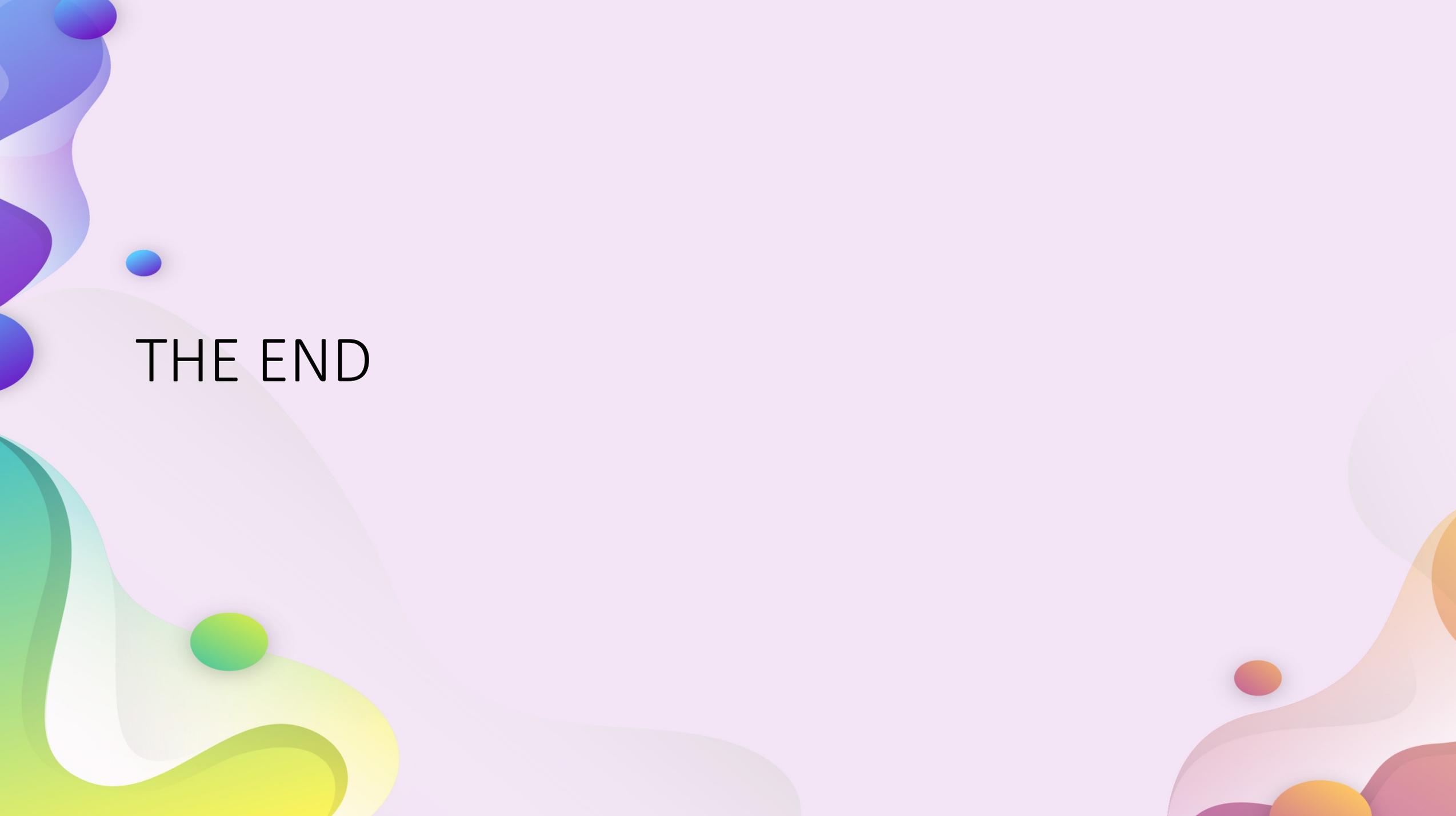
- **Respect for languages and cultures**

The European Union respects the languages and cultures of the individual countries. National cultures and the common European culture are cherished and developed.

- **Common foreign and security policy**

The European Union seeks to promote peace not only in Europe but also elsewhere in the world. It seeks to ensure that peace is maintained in Europe and that people have security. With the common foreign policy, the European Union wants to make sure that the resources of the planet are used sensibly, and that the environment is not destroyed. The European Union also wishes to respect other countries and nations. It works for free and fair trade and tries to eliminate poverty. Human rights are important all over the world. The European Union follows the Charter of the United Nations and underlines the importance of common international rules (The EU in brief, 2020).

References

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