

## Chronology: The European Union in 2013

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### At a Glance

Presidencies of the EU Council: Ireland (1 January–30 June) and Lithuania (1 July–31 December).

#### January

- 1 The Treaty on Stability, Co-ordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, commonly known as the ‘Fiscal Compact Treaty’, enters into force.
- 1 The Commission launches the ‘European Year of Citizens’.
- 8 The European Investment Bank announces that the Member States have unanimously approved a €10 billion capital increase.
- 9 The Commission adopts the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan.
- 11 The European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) is officially opened. The organization is tasked with assisting Member States in cross-border enforcement activities.
- 20 Austrians vote against ending conscription and introducing a professional army in a non-binding referendum.
- 21 Dutch Finance Minister, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, is appointed President of the Eurogroup.
- 22 The eurozone finance ministers agree upon the principle of introducing a financial transaction tax.
- 23 British Prime Minister, David Cameron, outlines his plans for a referendum on Britain’s EU membership.
- 24 EU–Brazil summit.
- 25–26 Miloš Zeman is elected President of the Czech Republic, becoming the country’s first directly elected President.
- 26–27 EU–CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) summit.

#### February

- 3 The Progressive Citizens’ Party gains the most votes in the Liechtenstein general election and Adrian Hasler is designated Prime Minister.
- 5 The Commission proposes legislation to enhance co-operation on anti-money-laundering activities.
- 7–8 In the European Council, leaders reach agreement on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2014–2020. Further discussions concern trade policy and external relations, particularly concerning southern Mediterranean partners and Mali.

- 14 The Commission tables a proposal on the implementation of a financial transaction tax.
- 15–16 G20 Finance Ministers meet in Moscow.
- 18 Serzh Sargsyan is re-elected President of Armenia.
- 20 The Bulgarian government resigns amid popular protests over austerity measures and high electricity prices.
- 24 Nicos Anastasiades is elected President of Cyprus in a second-round run-off election.
- 24–25 The centre-left alliance Italy Common Good, led by the Democratic Party, obtains a majority of seats in the Italian Chamber of Deputies. Enrico Letta, the Democratic Party's deputy secretary, is designated Prime Minister.
- 25 EU–Ukraine summit.
- 26 The Council reaches informal agreement on reform to the EU's fisheries policy concerning the protection of endangered stocks and the termination of the practice of discarding unwanted fish.
- 27 The Slovenian government, led by Janez Janša, is ousted in a vote of no-confidence.
- 28 The Council reaches agreement on the Youth Guarantee Scheme – a measure to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 are offered employment or further training within four months of exiting school or becoming unemployed.
- March
- 4 The Commission launches the 'Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs' initiative aimed at training an increased number of information and communication technology professionals.
- 9 Parliamentary elections in Malta see the Labour Party winning a majority of the seats and Joseph Muscat designated as Prime Minister, thereby ending a 15-year period of rule by the Nationalist Party.
- 10–11 Falkland Islanders vote in favour of remaining an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom in a referendum. Turnout is 92 per cent, with 99.8 per cent voting in favour.
- 11 The end of the phasing-out period for the policy banning the marketing of cosmetic products that were tested on animals.
- 14–15 The European Council meeting is primarily concerned with economic and social policy as well as measures to deepen integration of the economic and monetary union.
- 20 Adoption of the 2013 European Neighbourhood Policy Package.
- 25 A €10 billion EU–IMF bail-out for Cyprus is announced.
- 25 The Commission launches a green paper on the long-term financing of the European economy.
- 27 The Commission launches a green paper on the 2030 energy and climate framework.
- April
- 14 Croatia holds a special EP election to elect the country's first 12 MEPs.

- 15 The EU Anti-Trafficking Directive enters into force.
- 19 Serbia and Kosovo sign an agreement on normalizing relations in Brussels.
- 25–26 The Commission holds executive talks with the African Union.
- 27 Parliamentary elections in Iceland see victories for the Independent Party and the Progressive Party, who form a centre-right coalition government with Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson as Prime Minister.
- May
- 2 The European Central Bank (ECB) decreases the interest rate on the main refinancing operations of the eurozone and the marginal lending facility to 0.50 per cent and 1.0 per cent, respectively.
- 12 Parliamentary elections in Bulgaria see the Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (GERB) remain the largest party, but fail to command a majority. The Socialist Party subsequently forms a minority government with Plamen Oresharski as Prime Minister.
- 15 Inauguration of the Emergency Response Centre, which provides the Commission with a central platform for disaster response.
- 21 The European Parliament (EP) adopts offshore oil and gas drilling safety standards.
- 22 In the European Council, the main debate focuses on the EU's energy policy as well as measures to counter the problems posed by tax fraud and tax evasion.
- 28 The EU lifts the arms embargo against Syrian rebels.
- 30 The 'Two-Pack' reform package enters into force in all eurozone Member States. The policies are aimed at strengthening monitoring budgetary cycles and improving economic governance.
- June
- 3 EU–Russia summit.
- 5 The Commission convergence report for Latvia indicates that the country fulfills the conditions for adopting the euro.
- 5 Edward Snowden first leaks information about mass surveillance activity of citizens by intelligence agencies including the National Security Agency (NSA).
- 9 The Swiss vote in favour of amendments to the country's asylum law in a referendum, but vote against a proposal to directly elect the members of the Federal Council.
- 17 Czech Prime Minister Petr Nečas resigns amid a corruption scandal.
- 17 G8 summit in Lough Erne, United Kingdom. As part of the meeting, the EU and the US launch negotiations on the transatlantic trade and investment partnership (TTIP).
- 23 The Socialist Party wins a majority of the seats in the Albanian parliamentary elections and Edi Rama is designated Prime Minister.

- 27–28 In the European Council, leaders agree to new comprehensive measures to tackle youth unemployment and discuss financial stability. The Council further opens accession negotiations with Serbia and confirms that Latvia has met the convergence criteria needed to join the euro.
- 28 The Commission proposes legislation aimed at reducing carbon dioxide emissions in maritime transport.
- 28 The ECB suspends Cypriot bonds as collateral.
- July
- 1 Croatia becomes the European Union's 28<sup>th</sup> Member State. Neven Mimica becomes the Commissioner for Consumer Protection.
- 1 Portuguese Finance Minister Vítor Gaspar resigns.
- 3 Egypt's military removes the country's first democratically elected President, Mohamed Morsi, from office and suspends the constitution.
- 3 The EP elects Emily O'Reilly as the European Ombudsman. She takes up the post on 1 October.
- 4 The EP launches an inquiry into the systematic electronic surveillance of EU citizens following the revelations of widespread spying by international intelligence agencies including the NSA.
- 5 The ECB reactivates the eligibility of Cypriot bonds as collateral.
- 9 The Economic and Financial Affairs Council gives final approval for Latvia's adoption of the euro.
- 11 Luxembourg Prime Minister, Jean-Claude Juncker, submits his resignation following a wiretapping scandal.
- 18 EU–South Africa summit.
- 21 Crown Prince Philippe is sworn in as the new Belgian king after his father, Albert II, abdicates.
- August
- 1 NSA leaker Edward Snowden is granted asylum by Russia.
- 13 Czech Prime Minister Jiří Rusnok announces his resignation after his caretaker government loses a vote of confidence but remains in power until a new government is formed.
- September
- 5–6 G20 summit in Saint Petersburg.
- 11 Commission President José Manuel Barroso delivers his annual State of the Union address.
- 16 New Deal for Somalia conference held in Brussels.
- 22 Parliamentary elections in Germany see incumbent Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union win nearly 50 per cent of the seats, while her coalition partner, the Free Democrats, fail to cross the electoral threshold. The CDU/CSU enters into a grand coalition with the Social Democrats with Merkel continuing as Chancellor.
- 22 The Swiss vote against the abolition of compulsory military service in a referendum.
- 23 Start of 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly in New York.

- 29 Parliamentary elections in Austria see the Social Democratic Party win the most seats and form a grand coalition with the People's Party, with Werner Faymann continuing as Chancellor.
- October
- 4 In two simultaneous constitutional referendums, the Irish reject abolishing the upper house of the Oireachtas and voted in favour of establishing a Court of Appeals.
- 9 Ilham Aliyev is re-elected President of Azerbaijan.
- 15 The first pillar of Europe's banking union – the single supervisory mechanism (SSM) – is established.
- 16 The Commission publishes the annual enlargement package and progress reports, including the recommendation to grant candidate status to Albania.
- 20 Parliamentary elections in Luxembourg see Jean-Claude Juncker's Christian Social People's Party retain the largest share despite losing three seats. Following government formation talks, Xavier Bettel of the Democratic Party is designated Prime Minister after forming a coalition with the Socialist Workers' Party and the Greens.
- 22 The Council adopts the European Border Council Surveillance System (EUROSUR) aimed at reinforcing the EU's external borders and co-ordinating actions between Member States.
- 24–25 In the European Council, discussion centres on the digital economy, innovation and services, as well as increased economic policy co-ordination and completion of economic and monetary union.
- 25–26 Early legislative elections in the Czech Republic see the Social Democratic Party winning the most seats. They form a coalition government with the Christian Democrats and the recently formed ANO. Subsequently, Social Democrat Bohuslav Sobotka becomes Prime Minister.
- 27 Giorgi Margvelashvili is elected President of Georgia.
- November
- 7 The ECB further decreases the interest rate on the main refinancing operations of the eurozone and the marginal lending facility to 0.25 per cent and 0.75 per cent, respectively.
- 8 EU–Republic of Korea summit.
- 13 The Commission publishes the 2013 Annual Growth Survey.
- 19 EU–Japan summit in Tokyo.
- 20 The EP awards the 2013 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Malala Yousafzai.
- 21 The Ukrainian government announces plans to suspend signing association agreement with the EU amid fears of Russian trade sanctions.
- 21 EU–China summit in Beijing.
- 24 Mass protests erupt in Kyiv against the Ukrainian government's delay in signing an association agreement with the EU.
- 28–29 Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius. Moldova and Georgia sign association agreements.

## December

- 1 Croats vote in a referendum in favour of a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman.
- 2 The Council adopts the 2014–2020 budget (the MFF) following prolonged negotiations.
- 15 Ireland becomes the first country to exit its bail-out package.
- 15 The EU suspends trade agreement talks with Ukraine.
- 16 Danièle Nouy is appointed chair of the supervisory board of the ECB's SSM.
- 18 Switzerland signs co-operation agreement to participate in the Galileo programme.
- 19–20 In the European Council, discussion centres on the common security and defence policy. Other topics of discussion include economic policy, banking union and migration policy. As part of the discussion on external relations, leaders assess the political situation in Ukraine and call for restraint and democratic solutions to the political crisis.