

# Coordination of the European Union Affairs in Latvia

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Since the May 1, 2004, Latvia has become the full-fledged member state of the [European Union](#) and participates in the EU decision – making process at the [European Council](#) meetings and at the meetings of the [Council of the EU](#). Representatives of Latvia participate in the working groups of the Council of the EU as well as in COREPER (Committee of Permanent Representatives).

Coordination system of the EU issues in Latvia consists from several legal acts that ensure effective participation of Latvia in all stages of EU decision making process. The current EU coordination system is based on the principles established in 2003 – a year before Latvia's accession to the EU. Having regard experience acquired since that time, several principles - the involvement of social partners and nongovernmental organizations as well as the role of national Parliament - were strengthened through an update of respective legal acts in the beginning of 2009. The updated regulations of the Government came into force on March 1, 2009.

The central coordinating institution for the EU issues in Latvia is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The ministry coordinates development and implementation on the EU related issues and analyses Latvia's priorities in the EU. In cooperation with the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepares Prime Minister's participation in the meetings of the European Council and other EU meetings as well as prepares proposals for development of Latvia's EU related policy.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a coordinating role in preparation of Latvia's national position papers and it monitors the continuity of Latvia's position in different stages of decision making process as well as consentaneity of Latvia's position among different sectors. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepares and ensures Latvia's participation in COREPER meetings. It is also responsible for organising the circulation of EU documentation among Permanent Representation in the EU and Latvia's state institutions. [The Permanent Representation of the Republic of Latvia to the European Union](#) is Latvia's largest diplomatic mission abroad with more than 60 diplomats and employees.

Besides, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the preparation of national positions on the issues of its responsibility: external economic relations, common foreign and security issues, institutional issues, EU enlargement and the EU multiannual budget.

Every line ministry, in cooperation with other institutions, social partners and respective nongovernmental organizations, ensures preparation of national position papers on the EU issues falling under its sphere of competence and takes other necessary measures to defend national interests at all levels of the EU decision making process.

Every line ministry has its own internal EU coordination system, consisting from EU department or several EU divisions, and has created internal system for circulation of the EU documents. There are one or more EU coordinators in every line ministry who supervise EU issues. They are responsible for coordination of national position papers among involved institutions and for cooperation with the EU Coordination department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Cooperation of the state institutions on the EU issues is ensured by the Meeting of Senior Officials. Composed of high level officials it discusses Latvian priorities in the EU as well as other issues related to Latvia's participation in the EU decision making process.

[The Government](#) approves national priorities based on the programme of the each EU Presidency. The Government deliberates on the EU related issues and approves national position papers of Latvia for the Council of the EU and European Council meetings. In case of substantial issues, Government approves national positions before the launch of member states' discussions in the working groups of the Council of the EU.

Government designates the responsible person for representation of Latvia's position for every ministerial meeting of the Council of the EU.

Once a year, [Saeima](#) (The Parliament) holds debate on the foreign affairs and the EU issues. On the daily bases involvement of Saeima is carried out by its standing European Affairs Committee. The Committee is regularly informed on important EU related issues and developments in the Council of the EU. The Committee approves the national position papers of Latvia before the presentation of Latvia's position in the Council of the EU or European Council meetings. If the issue of concern is of particular interest of Latvia, Committee's approval is necessary also prior to discussions in the working groups of the Council of the EU.

Social partners and nongovernmental organisations are fully involved in the preparation of national positions. The institution, which is responsible for the respective issue, informs social partners and nongovernmental organisations about elaboration of national position and their involvement possibilities. Social partners and nongovernmental organisations are invited to the inter-institutional meetings set up for national position's formulation. The responsible institution ensures that social partners and nongovernmental organisations, which have taken part in national position's elaboration, are informed on the progress of respective issue and results Latvia has achieved. Similarly, also the Meeting of Senior Officials is open to attendance of representatives of social partners and nongovernmental organisations. They may propose discussions on the national positions.

<https://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/coordination-european-union-affairs-latvia>