FOR EPSO
AD & AST COMPETITIONS

EU Knowledge

Updated 2026 Edition

From Treaty law to current policy priorities

From theory to exam application

From MCQs to strategic understanding

Pattakou Eva

E-Book: EU KNOWLEDGE

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Preface

In recent years, the EPSO (European Personnel Selection Office) recruitment system has undergone a profound transformation. Since May 2023—and even more decisively throughout 2024—the European Union has implemented a restructured selection model aimed at making competitions faster, more streamlined, and more candidate-oriented. The overall duration of selection procedures is now intended not to exceed six months, marking a significant shift in institutional recruitment culture.

One of the most consequential changes has been the abolition of the traditional Assessment Centre as the final centralised evaluation stage. The assessment of general competencies—such as analytical thinking, communication skills, prioritisation, resilience, and teamwork—has largely shifted to the EU institutions themselves, following candidates' inclusion on the Reserve List. EPSO now focuses primarily on knowledge-based and professional evaluation, while the institutions assume responsibility for the final recruitment stage.

Within this new framework, a deep and structured understanding of the European Union is no longer merely advantageous—it is essential. Modern EPSO competitions do not test isolated factual knowledge. They assess a candidate's ability to understand institutional architecture, interpret policy developments, connect legal bases with strategic objectives, and analyse the Union as an evolving constitutional system.

This volume has been designed precisely with that objective in mind. It is not simply a compilation of multiple-choice questions. It is a comprehensive analytical guide to the European Union's institutional, legal, economic and strategic framework, tailored specifically to the demands of contemporary EPSO competitions—particularly at AD & AST level.

The book provides structured coverage of:

- The constitutional foundations and institutional balance of the Union
- The distribution of competences and legislative procedures
- Economic and Monetary Union and the EU's economic constitution
- The Green Deal and climate governance architecture
- Digital transformation and strategic autonomy

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- Competitiveness, industrial policy and the internal market
- Migration, asylum and the principle of solidarity
- Rule of law mechanisms and Article 7 TEU
- The EU's geopolitical positioning and strategic independence
- The Social Dimension of the Union in 2025

Each chapter goes beyond descriptive presentation. It analyses Treaty logic, policy interconnections, governance instruments, and long-term strategic direction. The objective is to train candidates to think institutionally, answer analytically, and identify conceptual traps often embedded in apparently simple questions.

Special emphasis is placed on methodology. Success in EPSO competitions depends not only on knowledge, but on structured reasoning, precision under time pressure, and strategic answer selection. This book aims to cultivate exactly those capacities.

Furthermore, the evolving recruitment framework—where final interviews are conducted directly by the EU institutions—requires a level of institutional maturity that extends beyond test performance. For this reason, this work serves not only as preparation for competition success, but also as intellectual preparation for a career within the European Union civil service.

The European Union is a complex, multi-level system of governance. Understanding it is not merely an academic exercise; it is a professional competence. This book aspires to function as a structured roadmap—from application to Reserve List, and from Reserve List to a successful career within the institutions of the European Union.

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Chapter 1: The Historical Evolution of the Council of the European Union and the European Council

1.1 Introduction

European integration represents one of the most significant political, institutional, and historical developments in post-war Europe. Emerging from the devastation of the Second World War, the integration process was driven by a collective determination to prevent renewed conflict, ensure lasting peace, and promote economic recovery and political stability across the European continent. Rather than relying solely on traditional intergovernmental cooperation, European states opted for an unprecedented model of shared sovereignty, gradually constructing a complex system of common institutions and decision-making mechanisms.

At the core of the European Union (EU) lie its Member States and their governments. While the EU has developed a supranational dimension, national governments continue to play a central role in shaping European policies and determining the strategic direction of the Union. This role is primarily exercised through two key institutions: the **Council of the European Union** and the **European Council**. Together, these bodies constitute what is often described as the "house of the Member States," as they provide the main forums in which national interests are articulated, negotiated, and reconciled at the European level.

The Council of the European Union, frequently referred to as the "Council of Ministers," is the institution in which ministers from the governments of the Member States meet to negotiate, amend, and adopt European legislation. Its composition varies depending on the policy area under discussion, ensuring that decisions are taken by those ministers who are politically responsible at national level for the relevant subject matter. Through its legislative and coordinating functions, the Council of the European Union serves as a crucial link between national administrations and the EU's supranational institutions, particularly the European Commission and the European Parliament.

The European Council, by contrast, brings together the heads of state or government of the Member States, along with its President and the President of the European

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Commission. Unlike the Council of the European Union, it does not exercise legislative powers. Instead, it defines the overall political direction, strategic priorities, and long-term objectives of the European Union. Its meetings, commonly known as European summits, play a decisive role in addressing major political challenges, resolving institutional deadlocks, and guiding the evolution of European integration during times of crisis and transformation.

Despite their distinct functions, the two councils are often confused due to their similar names and their close institutional and administrative relationship. This confusion is further compounded by the fact that both institutions represent the interests of the Member States and operate at the highest levels of political authority within the EU framework. Nevertheless, understanding the differences between them is essential for grasping how power is distributed and exercised within the European Union.

This chapter examines the historical development of the Council of the European Union and the European Council from their origins in the early 1950s to the present day. It traces their evolution within the broader context of European integration, highlighting key treaties, political crises, and institutional reforms that have shaped their roles and functions. By adopting both a legal and political perspective, the chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these two institutions emerged, how they adapted to successive enlargements and policy challenges, and how they continue to influence the governance of the European Union in the contemporary era.

Multiple Choice Questions

MCQ 1

Which historical objective most strongly motivated the creation of the first European communities in the early 1950s?

A. Establishing a federal European constitution

B. Preventing future conflicts through economic interdependence

C. Creating a unified European army

D. Replacing national governments with supranational institutions

✅ **Correct answer: B**

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🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because the European Coal and Steel Community was designed to bind key war industries together, making war between Member States materially impossible.

• **A is wrong**: federal integration was not an immediate objective in the 1950s.

• **C is wrong**: attempts at military integration (e.g. European Defence Community) failed.

• **D is wrong**: national governments retained sovereignty and control.

MCQ 2

Which institutional body is primarily responsible for setting the *general political direction and priorities* of the European Union?

A. European Commission

B. Council of the European Union

C. European Parliament

D. European Council

✅ **Correct answer: D**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **D is correct** because the European Council defines the EU's strategic direction without engaging in legislative activity.

• **A is wrong**: the Commission proposes legislation and implements policies.

• **B is wrong**: the Council of the EU legislates and coordinates policies.

• **C is wrong**: the Parliament acts as a co-legislator but does not set overall strategy.

MCQ 3

What was the primary institutional significance of the 1965–1966 "empty chair" crisis?

A. It strengthened supranational decision-making

B. It abolished qualified majority voting

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C. It reinforced the role of national vetoes in Council decision-making

D. It led to the immediate creation of the European Council

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the Luxembourg Compromise effectively allowed Member States to block decisions affecting vital national interests.

• **A is wrong**: supranationalism was weakened, not strengthened.

• **B is wrong**: qualified majority voting formally remained in the treaties.

• **D is wrong**: the European Council was created later, in 1974.

MCQ 4

Which treaty formally gave the Council of the European Union its current name and expanded its legislative role?

A. Treaty of Rome

B. Single European Act

C. Maastricht Treaty

D. Lisbon Treaty

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the Maastricht Treaty (1993) established the European Union and renamed the institution.

• **A is wrong**: the Treaty of Rome created the EEC but not the EU.

• **B is wrong**: it enhanced the single market but did not rename the Council.

• **D is wrong**: Lisbon reformed voting and procedures but did not change the name.

MCQ 5

What distinguishes the Council of the European Union from the European Council most clearly?

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A. One represents citizens, the other governments

B. One has legislative power, the other does not

C. One meets annually, the other monthly

D. One is supranational, the other intergovernmental

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because the Council of the EU acts as a co-legislator, while the European Council does not adopt EU laws.

• **A is wrong**: both represent governments, not citizens.

• **C is wrong**: meeting frequency is not the defining distinction.

• **D is wrong**: both institutions are primarily intergovernmental.

MCQ 6

Why was the European Council created as a regular institution in 1974?

A. To replace the European Commission

B. To resolve technical legislative disputes

C. To provide political leadership at the highest level

D. To supervise national parliaments

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the European Council was designed to address major political and strategic issues beyond the scope of ministerial councils.

• **A is wrong**: the Commission retained its role.

• **B is wrong**: technical legislative work is handled by the Council of the EU.

• **D is wrong**: the EU has no authority to supervise national parliaments.

MCQ 7

What was the main institutional impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the European Council?

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A. It introduced qualified majority voting

B. It created a permanent President of the European Council

C. It transformed it into a legislative body

D. It merged it with the Council of the EU

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because the Lisbon Treaty established a full-time President to ensure continuity and coherence.

• **A is wrong**: QMV mainly concerns the Council of the EU.

• **C is wrong**: the European Council remains non-legislative.

• **D is wrong**: the two institutions remain distinct.

MCQ 8

Why are the Council of the European Union and the European Council often described as the "house of the Member States"?

A. Because they are located in the same building

B. Because they are composed exclusively of national representatives

C. Because they are subordinate to national governments

D. Because they exclude supranational institutions

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because both councils are composed of ministers or heads of state/government representing national interests.

• **A is wrong**: location is irrelevant to institutional identity.

• **C is wrong**: they act within the EU legal order, not under national control.

• **D is wrong**: they work closely with supranational bodies.

MCQ 9

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What best explains the gradual expansion of qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council of the European Union?

A. The need to weaken national sovereignty
B. The desire to accelerate decision-making in an enlarging Union
C. Pressure from the European Parliament
D. The failure of unanimity in the European Council

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because successive enlargements made unanimity increasingly inefficient, necessitating more flexible voting rules.
• **A is wrong**: the aim was efficiency, not the erosion of sovereignty.
• **C is wrong**: QMV expansion resulted primarily from treaty reforms agreed by Member States.
• **D is wrong**: unanimity in the European Council was not the driving factor.

MCQ 10

Which statement best captures the complementary relationship between the Council of the European Union and the European Council?

A. Both institutions perform identical legislative functions
B. One sets strategic priorities while the other translates them into legislation
C. One represents supranational interests while the other represents national interests
D. One replaces the other during times of crisis

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because the European Council defines political direction, while the Council of the EU implements it through law-making.
• **A is wrong**: their functions are clearly differentiated.
• **C is wrong**: both primarily represent Member States.
• **D is wrong**: they operate simultaneously, even during crises.

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1.2 The Emergence of European Institutions (1950–1958)

The emergence of European institutions in the period 1950–1958 must be understood against the background of the profound political, economic, and social devastation left by the Second World War. Europe faced not only the task of physical reconstruction but also the challenge of preventing the recurrence of nationalist rivalries that had twice plunged the continent into war within the first half of the twentieth century. In this context, cooperation was no longer seen merely as a diplomatic option but as a structural necessity for peace, stability, and long-term prosperity.

The initial breakthrough came with the Treaty of Paris (1951), which established the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The ECSC was innovative both in its objectives and in its institutional design. By pooling coal and steel production under a common authority, the six founding states—Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands—sought to integrate sectors that were essential to both economic growth and military capacity. This integration was intended to create mutual dependence among former rivals, thereby reducing the likelihood of unilateral action and armed conflict. The ECSC thus represented a functionalist approach to integration, whereby cooperation in specific economic sectors would generate broader political integration over time.

A key institutional component of the ECSC was the Special Council of Ministers, which brought together representatives of the national governments. While the High Authority of the ECSC embodied a supranational element with independent decision-making powers, the Special Council of Ministers ensured that Member States retained direct influence over key policy decisions. Its role was to coordinate national economic policies, approve major initiatives of the High Authority, and strike a balance between supranational ambition and national sovereignty. In this sense, the Council functioned as an early forum for intergovernmental negotiation and compromise and is widely regarded as the direct institutional ancestor of the present-day Council of the European Union.

The success and limitations of the ECSC soon encouraged the founding states to pursue broader forms of integration. This led to the negotiation and signing of the Treaties of Rome in 1957, which marked a decisive expansion of the European project. The Treaties created two new communities: the European Economic Community (EEC) and

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the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). Unlike the sector-specific focus of the ECSC, the EEC aimed at establishing a comprehensive common market, progressively eliminating trade barriers and coordinating economic policies across Member States. Euratom, in turn, sought to promote the peaceful development and regulation of nuclear energy, reflecting both technological optimism and concerns over energy security.

Institutionally, the Treaties of Rome reinforced the centrality of councils within the European governance system. Each new community was equipped with its own Council of Ministers, responsible for decision-making and policy coordination. These councils provided a structured setting in which national interests could be expressed, negotiated, and reconciled at the European level. Importantly, the Treaties also introduced qualified majority voting in certain policy areas, alongside unanimity. This innovation signaled a gradual shift away from purely intergovernmental decision-making and reflected an early recognition that effective integration required mechanisms capable of overcoming national vetoes in an expanding policy framework.

Taken together, the developments between 1950 and 1958 laid the constitutional and political foundations of European integration. During this formative phase, the balance between supranational authority and intergovernmental control was carefully calibrated, with councils playing a pivotal role in mediating between national sovereignty and collective European objectives. The institutional structures established during this period not only enabled deeper economic cooperation but also set in motion a dynamic process of integration that would evolve, expand, and adapt in the decades that followed, eventually culminating in the European Union as it exists today.

Multiple Choice Questions

MCQ 1

What was the primary political motivation behind European cooperation after World War II?

A. The rapid creation of a European federation

B. The containment of the Soviet Union

C. The prevention of renewed conflict through structural cooperation

D. The establishment of a common European identity

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✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because post-war integration aimed to eliminate the structural causes of conflict, especially between former rivals.

• **A is wrong**: federal integration was not an immediate goal.

• **B is wrong**: Cold War concerns were secondary in the early institutional design.

• **D is wrong**: identity-building was not a primary objective at this stage.

MCQ 2

Why were coal and steel chosen as the first sectors for European integration?

A. They were the most profitable industries

B. They were essential for both economic reconstruction and military power

C. They required minimal political coordination

D. They were already regulated internationally

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because coal and steel were central to industrial production and armaments.

• **A is wrong**: profitability was not the main criterion.

• **C is wrong**: these sectors required significant coordination.

• **D is wrong**: no comprehensive international regulation existed.

MCQ 3

What made the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) institutionally innovative?

A. Its exclusive reliance on intergovernmental cooperation

B. Its establishment of a fully federal authority

C. Its combination of supranational and intergovernmental elements

D. Its exclusion of national governments from decision-making

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✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the ECSC balanced the High Authority with the Special Council of Ministers.

• **A is wrong**: supranational elements were central.

• **B is wrong**: sovereignty was not fully transferred.

• **D is wrong**: governments retained strong influence.

MCQ 4

What was the main function of the Special Council of Ministers under the ECSC?

A. Drafting European legislation independently

B. Representing private industrial interests

C. Coordinating national policies and overseeing the High Authority

D. Adjudicating legal disputes between Member States

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the Council ensured political oversight and coordination.

• **A is wrong**: legislative initiative lay with the High Authority.

• **B is wrong**: it represented governments, not industry.

• **D is wrong**: judicial functions belonged to the Court.

MCQ 5

Why is the Special Council of Ministers considered the precursor of today's Council of the European Union?

A. It exercised judicial authority

B. It represented citizens directly

C. It brought together national government representatives for decision-making

D. It operated independently of treaties

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✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because it institutionalised ministerial-level intergovernmental coordination.

• **A is wrong**: no judicial role existed.

• **B is wrong**: citizens were not directly represented.

• **D is wrong**: it was firmly treaty-based.

MCQ 6

What key limitation of the ECSC encouraged broader European integration?

A. Its lack of any supranational authority

B. Its narrow sectoral focus

C. Its exclusion of economic policy

D. Its resistance from national governments

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because integration was limited to coal and steel.

• **A is wrong**: supranational authority existed.

• **C is wrong**: economic policy was partially covered.

• **D is wrong**: governments supported expansion.

MCQ 7

What was the principal objective of the European Economic Community (EEC)?

A. Military integration

B. Political unification

C. The establishment of a common market

D. Monetary union

✅ **Correct answer: C**

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🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the EEC focused on free movement and market integration.

• **A is wrong**: defence integration failed earlier.

• **B is wrong**: political union was indirect.

• **D is wrong**: monetary union came decades later.

MCQ 8

What institutional development introduced by the Treaties of Rome signaled a shift away from strict unanimity?

A. Creation of the European Parliament

B. Introduction of qualified majority voting

C. Abolition of national vetoes

D. Establishment of a European constitution

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because QMV allowed decisions without unanimous consent.

• **A is wrong**: Parliament already existed in limited form.

• **C is wrong**: vetoes remained in key areas.

• **D is wrong**: no constitution was adopted.

MCQ 9

How did the councils established by the Treaties of Rome differ from the ECSC Council?

A. They excluded supranational institutions

B. They operated without treaty constraints

C. They covered a broader range of policy areas

D. They had no role in economic coordination

✅ **Correct answer: C**

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🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the EEC and Euratom expanded policy scope beyond specific sectors.

• **A is wrong**: supranational bodies remained central.

• **B is wrong**: they were treaty-based.

• **D is wrong**: coordination was strengthened.

MCQ 10

What is the broader historical significance of the period 1950–1958 for European integration?

A. It marked the end of national sovereignty

B. It established the permanent institutional balance between states and supranational bodies

C. It completed the process of political union

D. It eliminated intergovernmental decision-making

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because this period laid the foundations for the enduring EU institutional architecture.

• **A is wrong**: sovereignty was retained.

• **C is wrong**: political union remained incomplete.

• **D is wrong**: intergovernmentalism remained central.

1.3 The Council of the European Union: Role and Evolution

The **Council of the European Union** occupies a central position within the institutional architecture of the European Union as one of its two principal legislative authorities. It is the forum in which ministers from the governments of the Member States participate directly in the formulation, negotiation, and adoption of European Union legislation. The Council's composition varies according to the policy area under discussion—such as economic affairs, agriculture, foreign affairs, or justice—ensuring that decisions are

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taken by ministers who possess both political responsibility and technical expertise at national level. Through this structure, the Council functions as a crucial bridge between national governments and the supranational dimension of the European Union.

From the 1960s onwards, the evolution of the Council of the European Union closely mirrored the broader trajectory of European integration. As the scope of common European policies expanded, so too did the Council's responsibilities and influence. However, this evolution was neither linear nor uncontested. One of the most significant challenges in the Council's early history was the **"empty chair" crisis of 1965–1966**, which exposed deep tensions between supranational ambitions and the desire of Member States to safeguard national sovereignty. France's decision to withdraw its representatives from Council meetings in protest against proposed extensions of qualified majority voting brought the institution to a standstill and underscored the political sensitivity of collective decision-making.

The resolution of this crisis through the **Luxembourg Compromise** had long-lasting consequences for the Council's functioning. Although the treaties formally allowed for qualified majority voting, the compromise established a political practice whereby decisions would be postponed if a Member State claimed that its vital national interests were at stake. As a result, unanimity became the dominant decision-making method in practice for several years, reinforcing the intergovernmental character of the Council and slowing the pace of integration. At the same time, the crisis demonstrated that the Council was not merely a technical legislative body but a central arena for high-stakes political negotiation among governments.

Despite this temporary retreat from supranationalism, the subsequent decades witnessed a gradual but decisive strengthening of the Council's legislative role. Successive treaty reforms—most notably the Single European Act (1986)—expanded the use of qualified majority voting in order to improve efficiency and prevent institutional paralysis in an increasingly complex and enlarging Community. These reforms reflected a growing recognition among Member States that unanimity was incompatible with effective governance in a Union that was assuming broader competences and incorporating new members.

A major turning point in the institutional evolution of the Council came with the **Maastricht Treaty in 1993**, which formally established the European Union and gave

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the Council its current name: the Council of the European Union. Beyond this symbolic change, the treaty significantly enhanced the Council's legislative authority by introducing the **co-decision procedure**, which placed the Council and the **European Parliament** on an increasingly equal footing as co-legislators. This development transformed the Council from a body primarily coordinating national positions into a full legislative actor within a bicameral-style system at the European level.

In the post-Maastricht era, the Council's role continued to expand and adapt in response to new policy challenges, further enlargements, and evolving expectations of democratic legitimacy and transparency. Today, the Council of the European Union stands as a core institution through which Member States collectively exercise legislative power, balancing national interests with the pursuit of common European objectives. Its historical evolution highlights the persistent tension—and ongoing negotiation—between intergovernmental control and supranational integration that lies at the heart of the European Union's governance system.

Multiple Choice Questions

MCQ 1

What is the primary institutional role of the Council of the European Union?

A. To propose EU legislation
B. To interpret EU law
C. To act as a legislative body representing Member State governments
D. To supervise national parliaments

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the Council is composed of national ministers and exercises legislative power.
• **A is wrong**: legislative initiative belongs mainly to the European Commission.
• **B is wrong**: interpretation of EU law is the role of the Court of Justice.
• **D is wrong**: national parliaments remain autonomous.

MCQ 2

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Why does the composition of the Council of the European Union vary between meetings?

A. To reflect political party representation
B. To ensure geographical balance
C. To match ministers' portfolios with the policy area discussed
D. To rotate power among Member States

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because different Council configurations correspond to different policy areas.
• **A is wrong**: party affiliation is irrelevant.
• **B is wrong**: geographical balance is not the purpose.
• **D is wrong**: rotation applies to the presidency, not membership.

MCQ 3

What did the "empty chair" crisis (1965–1966) primarily reveal about the Council?

A. Its technical inefficiency
B. The dominance of supranational institutions
C. The political sensitivity of majority voting
D. The weakness of national governments

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the crisis arose from opposition to qualified majority voting.
• **A is wrong**: the issue was political, not technical.
• **B is wrong**: supranationalism was resisted, not dominant.
• **D is wrong**: governments asserted, not lost, power.

MCQ 4

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What was the main effect of the Luxembourg Compromise following the "empty chair" crisis?

A. It formally abolished qualified majority voting

B. It strengthened the Commission's authority

C. It allowed Member States to block decisions affecting vital national interests

D. It transferred power to the European Parliament

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the compromise created a de facto veto.

• **A is wrong**: QMV remained in the treaties.

• **B is wrong**: the Commission's role was constrained.

• **D is wrong**: Parliament gained no power at that stage.

MCQ 5

Why did unanimity dominate Council decision-making in the years following the crisis?

A. Because it was legally required in all areas

B. Because Member States distrusted supranational decision-making

C. Because the European Parliament demanded it

D. Because qualified majority voting was technically impossible

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** as governments sought to protect sovereignty.

• **A is wrong**: unanimity was not always legally required.

• **C is wrong**: Parliament had limited influence at the time.

• **D is wrong**: QMV was technically feasible.

MCQ 6

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What institutional problem did the expansion of qualified majority voting aim to address?

A. Democratic deficit
B. Judicial overload
C. Decision-making paralysis in an expanding Union
D. Unequal representation of small states

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because unanimity became inefficient as policies and members increased.
• **A is wrong**: democracy was addressed later through Parliament.
• **B is wrong**: courts were not the issue.
• **D is wrong**: QMV includes safeguards for small states.

MCQ 7

What was the significance of the Maastricht Treaty for the Council of the European Union?

A. It abolished intergovernmental cooperation
B. It renamed the institution and enhanced its legislative role
C. It removed the Council from the legislative process
D. It transferred its powers to the European Council

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because Maastricht created the EU and strengthened the Council as co-legislator.
• **A is wrong**: intergovernmentalism remained central.
• **C is wrong**: the Council's role expanded.
• **D is wrong**: the European Council has no legislative power.

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MCQ 8

What did the introduction of the co-decision procedure imply for the Council?

A. Loss of legislative authority

B. Subordination to the European Commission

C. Legislative equality with the European Parliament

D. Replacement of national ministers

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because co-decision placed Council and Parliament on equal footing.

• **A is wrong**: authority was shared, not lost.

• **B is wrong**: Commission remains initiator, not superior.

• **D is wrong**: ministers remained central actors.

MCQ 9

How did the evolution of the Council reflect broader trends in European integration?

A. A move from supranationalism to isolationism

B. A shift from economic to purely symbolic cooperation

C. A gradual balancing of national sovereignty and collective decision-making

D. A rejection of treaty-based governance

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the Council mediates between national and EU interests.

• **A is wrong**: integration deepened over time.

• **B is wrong**: cooperation became more substantive.

• **D is wrong**: treaties remained foundational.

MCQ 10

Why is the Council considered a core pillar of EU governance today?

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A. Because it represents EU citizens directly

B. Because it controls the EU budget independently

C. Because it combines national legitimacy with legislative authority

D. Because it replaces national governments

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because ministers legislate with democratic legitimacy from their states.

• **A is wrong**: citizens are represented by the Parliament.

• **B is wrong**: budgetary power is shared.

• **D is wrong**: national governments remain sovereign.

1.4 The Fouchet Plan of 1961–1962

The Fouchet Plan of 1961–1962 represents one of the earliest and most revealing attempts to transform European integration from an essentially economic project into a structured political union. Although ultimately unsuccessful, the initiative played a decisive role in clarifying the constitutional direction of the European Communities and in shaping the later emergence of high-level political coordination among Member States.

In the early 1960s, the European Communities were still relatively young but institutionally innovative. The supranational framework created by the Treaty of Paris and further consolidated by the Treaties of Rome had established a system in which independent institutions—most notably the Commission—exercised significant authority beyond traditional intergovernmental diplomacy. Integration, however, remained primarily economic in scope. Political cooperation, particularly in foreign and defence policy, had not yet been institutionalised within the Community framework.

It was in this context that French President Charles de Gaulle advanced a vision of Europe grounded in cooperation among sovereign states rather than in supranational authority. De Gaulle believed that European integration should reflect the primacy of national governments and that political union should be built through intergovernmental coordination rather than institutional delegation. To operationalise

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this vision, he tasked the French diplomat Christian Fouchet with drafting a proposal for a "Union of States."

The Fouchet Plan proposed the creation of a new political structure alongside the existing Communities. It envisaged regular meetings of heads of state or government, coordination of foreign and defence policies, and decision-making based strictly on unanimity. The proposed Union would operate through intergovernmental procedures and would not strengthen the supranational institutions established by the treaties. In practice, this model would have shifted the centre of gravity of European integration away from the Commission and toward the governments of the Member States.

The proposal encountered strong resistance, particularly from the Benelux countries. Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg feared that the plan would undermine the supranational character of the Communities and weaken the institutional balance achieved through the existing treaties. Smaller Member States were especially concerned that a purely intergovernmental political union might increase the influence of larger states and marginalise the Commission as an independent guardian of the common interest. These disagreements ultimately led to the collapse of negotiations in 1962.

Although the Fouchet Plan failed, its historical significance is considerable. First, its rejection effectively confirmed the commitment of the Member States to a supranational model of integration. Rather than dismantling or bypassing the Community method, governments chose to preserve and gradually strengthen it. Second, the plan introduced the idea of regular meetings at the highest political level—an idea that would later materialise in the establishment of the European Council in 1974. While the European Council would not adopt legislation, it would provide precisely the kind of strategic political coordination that de Gaulle had considered necessary, but within a framework compatible with the existing institutional order.

Finally, the Fouchet episode exposed a structural tension that continues to define the European Union: the dynamic balance between intergovernmental cooperation and supranational governance. The debate of 1961–1962 demonstrated that political integration could not advance solely through diplomatic consensus among governments, nor could it rely exclusively on technocratic supranationalism. Instead, European integration would evolve through a hybrid model, combining majority-based

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decision-making in legislative matters with high-level political coordination among national leaders.

In retrospect, the Fouchet Plan can be understood not as a failed detour, but as a formative constitutional moment. It clarified the limits of purely intergovernmental political union, reinforced the resilience of the Community method, and indirectly prepared the ground for the later institutionalisation of summit diplomacy. As such, it occupies an important place in the historical evolution of the Council system and in the broader development of the European Union's institutional architecture.

Multiple Choice Questions

MCQ 1

What was the primary institutional objective of the Fouchet Plan (1961–1962)?

A. To strengthen the European Commission

B. To establish a federal European constitution

C. To create a political union based on intergovernmental cooperation

D. To introduce qualified majority voting in foreign policy

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the Fouchet Plan proposed a Union of States operating through unanimity and intergovernmental coordination.

• A is wrong: the plan would have weakened, not strengthened, the Commission.

• B is wrong: it was not federal or supranational.

• D is wrong: it insisted on unanimity, not majority voting.

MCQ 2

Which concern most strongly motivated the opposition of the Benelux countries to the Fouchet Plan?

A. It excluded foreign policy cooperation

B. It threatened the supranational character of the Communities

C. It expanded the powers of the European Parliament

D. It transferred sovereignty to NATO

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✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because smaller Member States feared erosion of the supranational institutional balance.

• A is wrong: the plan explicitly included foreign policy coordination.

• C is wrong: Parliament was not strengthened.

• D is wrong: NATO was unrelated to the proposal.

MCQ 3

How did the Fouchet Plan differ from the framework established by the Treaties of Rome?

A. It introduced majority voting instead of unanimity

B. It prioritised supranational authority

C. It emphasised intergovernmental decision-making

D. It abolished ministerial councils

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the plan centred on cooperation between governments.

• A is wrong: it reinforced unanimity.

• B is wrong: supranationalism was limited under the plan.

• D is wrong: councils were not abolished.

MCQ 4

Why is the Fouchet Plan considered historically significant despite its failure?

A. It directly created the European Council

B. It confirmed the resilience of the supranational model

C. It introduced Economic and Monetary Union

D. It abolished the veto system

✅ **Correct answer: B**

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🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because its rejection reaffirmed commitment to the Community method.

• A is wrong: the European Council was created later in 1974.

• C is wrong: EMU came decades later.

• D is wrong: unanimity persisted.

MCQ 5

The Fouchet Plan proposed that decisions within the new political union be taken by:

A. Qualified majority voting

B. Double majority voting

C. Simple majority

D. Unanimity

✅ **Correct answer: D**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **D is correct** because the plan was strictly intergovernmental.

• A and B are wrong: these reflect later Council reforms.

• C is wrong: simple majority has never been the standard.

MCQ 6

Which political leader was primarily associated with the initiative behind the Fouchet Plan?

A. Jean Monnet

B. Charles de Gaulle

C. Robert Schuman

D. Paul-Henri Spaak

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because de Gaulle supported a Europe of sovereign states.

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• A is wrong: Monnet promoted supranational integration.

• C is wrong: Schuman's initiative preceded the Fouchet Plan.

• D is wrong: Spaak focused on economic integration.

MCQ 7

What structural tension did the Fouchet Plan reveal within European integration?

A. Parliament versus Court of Justice

B. Enlargement versus deepening

C. Intergovernmentalism versus supranationalism

D. North versus South economic disparities

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the plan embodied the intergovernmental vision.

• A is wrong: institutional judicial-parliamentary conflict was not central.

• B is wrong: enlargement was not the issue.

• D is wrong: regional disparities were not the focus.

MCQ 8

In institutional terms, the Fouchet Plan would most likely have:

A. Strengthened the Commission's right of initiative

B. Shifted political authority toward national governments

C. Expanded the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice

D. Introduced direct elections to the European Parliament

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because the plan concentrated authority at government level.

• A is wrong: Commission authority would diminish.

• C is wrong: judicial powers were unaffected.

• D is wrong: direct elections occurred in 1979.

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MCQ 9

How did the rejection of the Fouchet Plan indirectly influence later EU development?

A. It abolished political summit diplomacy

B. It prevented the creation of the European Parliament

C. It paved the way for a later institutionalised summit forum

D. It eliminated intergovernmental cooperation permanently

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because summit diplomacy later evolved into the European Council.

• A is wrong: summits expanded, not disappeared.

• B is wrong: Parliament evolved independently.

• D is wrong: intergovernmentalism remained central.

MCQ 10

Why is the Fouchet Plan often described as a “constitutional moment” in EU history?

A. Because it formally amended the treaties

B. Because it replaced supranational institutions

C. Because it clarified the limits of purely intergovernmental political union

D. Because it introduced the double majority voting system

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the plan’s failure defined the boundaries of integration and preserved the Community method.

• A is wrong: no treaty amendment resulted.

• B is wrong: supranational institutions survived intact.

• D is wrong: double majority came under Lisbon.

MCQ 11

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Which statement most accurately captures the institutional logic of the Fouchet Plan?

A. It sought to complement the supranational Communities with intergovernmental political coordination
B. It aimed to replace supranational integration with a state-centred political union
C. It intended to strengthen foreign policy cooperation within the existing treaty framework
D. It proposed majority voting in external relations to increase efficiency

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because the plan would have shifted the centre of gravity toward governments and away from supranational institutions.
• A is the trap: "complement" sounds moderate, but the plan risked undermining the Community method.
• C is wrong because it did not operate strictly within the existing supranational framework.
• D is wrong: the plan insisted on unanimity.

MCQ 12

Why did smaller Member States perceive the Fouchet Plan as potentially destabilising?

A. It reduced the legislative authority of the Council of Ministers
B. It weakened the institutional role of the European Commission
C. It abolished treaty-based cooperation
D. It transferred defence competences to NATO

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because the Commission served as a protector of smaller-state interests within the supranational framework.
• A is the trap: the plan did not directly reduce the Council's authority; it shifted

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political focus elsewhere.

• C is wrong: treaty cooperation would continue formally.

• D is irrelevant.

MCQ 13

In constitutional terms, the rejection of the Fouchet Plan primarily reinforced:

A. The principle of supranational institutional balance

B. The dominance of unanimity in Council voting

C. The authority of the European Parliament

D. The federal transformation of the Communities

✅ **Correct answer: A**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **A is correct** because the rejection preserved the Community method and supranational institutions.

• B is the trap: unanimity already dominated practice, but that was not the core constitutional issue here.

• C is wrong: Parliament's powers were still limited.

• D is wrong: no federal leap occurred.

MCQ 14

Which development can be most plausibly linked, indirectly, to the Fouchet debate?

A. The later creation of the European Council as a forum for political guidance

B. The abolition of veto practices in legislative decision-making

C. The introduction of the double majority voting system

D. The merger of the Community executives in 1967

✅ **Correct answer: A**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **A is correct** because the idea of high-level political coordination survived and later

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became institutionalised.

• D is the trap: although historically close in time, the Merger Treaty addressed administrative unification, not the Fouchet logic.

• B and C concern later reforms unrelated to Fouchet.

MCQ 15

What structural risk did critics associate with the Fouchet Plan?

A. Excessive judicial activism by the Court of Justice
B. Concentration of political influence in larger Member States
C. Elimination of foreign policy coordination
D. Over-expansion of Commission competences

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because intergovernmental unanimity without supranational safeguards could favour powerful states.

• D is the trap: critics feared the opposite — reduction of Commission influence.

• A and C were not central issues.

MCQ 16

From a theoretical perspective, the Fouchet Plan is most closely aligned with:

A. Neofunctionalism
B. Federal constitutionalism
C. Intergovernmentalism
D. Judicial integration theory

✅ **Correct answer: C**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **C is correct** because the plan privileged state sovereignty and unanimous cooperation.

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• A is the trap: neofunctionalism favours supranational spillover.

• B and D do not reflect the plan's philosophy.

MCQ 17

If implemented, the Fouchet Plan would most likely have:

A. Strengthened the coherence of the Commission's policy agenda

B. Created a dual structure separating economic and political integration

C. Accelerated majority-based integration

D. Reduced the role of national governments

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because it envisaged a parallel political structure outside the supranational Communities.

• A is the trap: Commission coherence would likely weaken.

• C is wrong: unanimity was central.

• D is the opposite of the proposal's intent.

MCQ 18

Why is the Fouchet Plan not considered a treaty reform episode?

A. Because it lacked unanimous support

B. Because it was never formally incorporated into Community law

C. Because it amended only secondary legislation

D. Because it concerned defence rather than economic policy

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** since the plan never resulted in treaty modification.

• A is the trap: lack of unanimity explains failure, but the key issue is absence of legal incorporation.

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• C is incorrect: it concerned primary political structure.

• D is misleading.

MCQ 19

In hindsight, the Fouchet Plan clarified that political integration in Europe would:

A. Depend exclusively on intergovernmental diplomacy

B. Require a hybrid model combining supranational and intergovernmental elements

C. Be driven primarily by judicial decisions

D. Eliminate the need for majority voting

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because later integration adopted a hybrid constitutional structure.

• A is the trap: pure intergovernmentalism was rejected.

• C and D are unrelated.

MCQ 20

Which statement best explains why the Fouchet Plan failed?

A. It was incompatible with Cold War geopolitics

B. It threatened the institutional equilibrium of the Communities

C. It expanded supranational competences too rapidly

D. It lacked economic content

✅ **Correct answer: B**

🔍 **Analytical solution**

• **B is correct** because Member States feared disruption of the carefully balanced supranational framework.

• A is partially plausible but not decisive.

• C is the reverse of reality.

• D is incomplete — economic scope was not the central issue.

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Chapter 4: EU Agencies

4.1 Introduction

EU agencies are specialised bodies established by secondary EU legislation in order to support the functioning of the Union in specific policy areas. They are created by regulations adopted under the Treaties and are designed to provide technical expertise, facilitate coordination between Member States, implement Union programmes, and assist the EU institutions in the practical execution of policy objectives. Although they form part of the broader EU administrative architecture, they are not listed among the institutions of the Union under Article 13 TEU. Consequently, they do not possess the same constitutional status as the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, the Court of Justice, the European Central Bank, or the Court of Auditors.

Despite not being institutions in the formal constitutional sense, EU agencies operate fully within the EU legal order. They are established by binding legislative acts and are subject to judicial review by the Court of Justice of the European Union. Most agencies possess their own legal personality, which allows them to enter into contracts, manage budgets, recruit staff, and act independently within the limits of their mandate. However, their powers are strictly defined by their founding regulations, and they do not exercise general legislative authority. Their role is functional and sector-specific rather than political or constitutional.

The creation of agencies reflects the need for specialised expertise and administrative capacity in an increasingly complex Union. As EU policies have expanded into highly technical areas—such as financial supervision, aviation safety, chemicals regulation, border management, cybersecurity, public health, and energy coordination—the Union has relied on decentralised bodies to ensure uniform application of EU law and to support cooperation among national authorities. In many cases, agencies serve as coordination platforms, bringing together representatives of Member States, experts, and Commission officials in structured governance frameworks.

EU agencies are generally classified into four broad categories. First, decentralised agencies—often referred to as simply as "EU agencies"—are the largest group. They are established to address specific policy needs and are located across different Member

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States. They operate independently within their defined mandates but often work closely with the Commission and national authorities.

Second, executive agencies are distinct administrative bodies created by the Commission to manage specific EU programmes, such as research funding or education initiatives. Unlike decentralised agencies, executive agencies act under the direct supervision of the Commission and do not possess broad regulatory or coordination functions.

Third, EURATOM agencies operate within the framework of the European Atomic Energy Community and focus on nuclear-related matters, such as fuel supply coordination and safeguards. They derive their legal basis from the Euratom Treaty rather than the Treaty on European Union or the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Fourth, certain agencies operate within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). These bodies support defence cooperation, strategic analysis, or satellite services and reflect the intergovernmental dimension of EU external action.

Taken together, EU agencies represent an essential component of the Union's administrative and regulatory system. They enhance policy implementation, promote consistency across Member States, and contribute technical expertise to decision-making processes, while remaining embedded within the constitutional structure and legal constraints of the EU Treaties.

4.2 Types of EU Agencies

EU agencies are not a homogeneous constitutional category but a functionally differentiated group of bodies created to perform specialised tasks within the EU legal order. Their classification reflects differences in legal basis, autonomy, governance structure, and regulatory intensity. The main types are decentralised agencies, executive agencies, supervisory agencies, joint undertakings, CFSP agencies, and EURATOM agencies.

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4.2.1 Decentralised Agencies

4.2.1.1 Justice, Home Affairs & Security

Within the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ), several key decentralised EU agencies play a central operational and coordination role in strengthening judicial cooperation, law enforcement, border management and asylum policy across the Union.

Eurojust, headquartered in The Hague, is the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation. Its primary mission is to enhance coordination and cooperation between national judicial authorities in combating serious cross-border crime. Eurojust supports prosecutors and investigating magistrates in cases involving terrorism, organised crime, cybercrime, trafficking in human beings, and other complex transnational offences. It facilitates joint investigation teams (JITs), resolves conflicts of jurisdiction between Member States, supports extradition and European Arrest Warrant procedures, and provides strategic legal coordination. While it does not replace national authorities, it acts as a central hub ensuring that judicial responses to cross-border crime are coherent, efficient and legally coordinated within the EU framework.

Europol, also based in The Hague, is the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation. Unlike Eurojust, which operates at judicial level, Europol functions primarily at the police and intelligence level. It supports Member States in preventing and combating serious international crime and terrorism by collecting, analysing and disseminating criminal intelligence. Europol operates secure information systems and produces threat assessments and strategic reports that guide operational priorities. Although it does not possess autonomous executive powers such as arrest authority, it plays a critical role in intelligence coordination, operational support and cross-border information exchange among national law enforcement bodies.

CEPOL (the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training), headquartered in Budapest, focuses on professional training and capacity-building for law enforcement officials across the Union. Its mission is to strengthen cross-border cooperation by promoting a common law enforcement culture based on mutual trust and shared standards. CEPOL provides training programmes, exchange schemes, online courses and specialised seminars in areas such as counter-terrorism, cybercrime, organised crime, and financial investigations. By harmonising knowledge and

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professional standards, CEPOL contributes indirectly to more effective operational cooperation between police authorities in different Member States.

eu-LISA, headquartered in Tallinn (with additional operational sites in Strasbourg and Sankt Johann im Pongau), is the European Union Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. Its role is technical and infrastructural. It manages critical EU-wide information systems such as the Schengen Information System (SIS), the Visa Information System (VIS), and Eurodac (the fingerprint database for asylum applicants). These systems enable border control, migration management, visa processing and law enforcement cooperation. By ensuring interoperability, security and operational continuity of these databases, eu-LISA underpins the digital backbone of the Schengen area and EU migration governance.

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), headquartered in Valletta (Malta), supports Member States in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). It provides operational and technical assistance to countries facing disproportionate asylum pressures, supports training of asylum officials, develops country-of-origin information reports, and promotes convergence in asylum decision-making standards. In situations of crisis or large-scale arrivals, EUAA may deploy expert teams to assist national administrations. Its function is supportive rather than substitutive; responsibility for asylum decisions remains with Member States.

Frontex, headquartered in Warsaw, is the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. It coordinates operational cooperation at the EU's external borders and supports Member States in managing border control, return operations and surveillance. Over time, Frontex has evolved from a coordination body into an agency with expanded operational capabilities, including a standing corps of border guards and increased equipment resources. It assists Member States facing migratory pressure, conducts risk analyses, supports search and rescue coordination, and contributes to return operations of irregular migrants in compliance with EU law and fundamental rights standards.

Together, these agencies form the operational core of the EU's internal security and migration governance architecture. While they do not replace national authorities, they enhance coordination, technical capacity and cross-border cooperation. Their existence reflects the progressive institutionalisation of shared sovereignty in areas traditionally

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associated with core state powers, such as policing, border control and asylum management, while remaining embedded within the legal framework of the EU Treaties.

4.2.1.2 Financial & Economic Regulation

Within the framework of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the internal market, several key decentralised EU agencies contribute to financial stability, regulatory convergence and labour mobility. These bodies do not replace national supervisory authorities but ensure coordination, harmonisation and consistent application of EU law across Member States.

The European Banking Authority (EBA), headquartered in Paris, plays a central role in the supervision and regulation of the EU banking sector. It was established in the aftermath of the global financial crisis to strengthen financial oversight and prevent systemic risk within the Union. The EBA develops technical standards and guidelines to ensure uniform prudential regulation across Member States. It conducts stress tests on EU banks, monitors risks to financial stability, and facilitates cooperation among national supervisory authorities. Although direct supervision of significant banks within the euro area is conducted by the European Central Bank under the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM), the EBA ensures regulatory convergence across both euro and non-euro Member States, preserving the integrity of the internal market in financial services.

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), also based in Paris, is responsible for enhancing investor protection and promoting stable and orderly financial markets. ESMA supervises specific entities directly at EU level, such as credit rating agencies and trade repositories, and plays a coordination role among national securities regulators. It develops regulatory technical standards, issues guidelines, and ensures consistent implementation of EU financial legislation such as MiFID, EMIR and other capital market rules. ESMA contributes significantly to the Capital Markets Union by fostering transparency, market integrity and cross-border investment within the Union.

The European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA), headquartered in Frankfurt, focuses on the regulation and supervision of the insurance and pensions sectors. It aims to ensure policyholder protection, financial stability and supervisory

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convergence across Member States. EIOPA develops technical standards under frameworks such as Solvency II, conducts stress tests of insurance undertakings, and promotes sound risk management practices. Its work contributes to the stability of long-term savings and pension systems, which are critical for financial resilience and economic sustainability within the EU.

Together, EBA, ESMA and EIOPA form the European System of Financial Supervision (ESFS). They coordinate with national authorities and, in the euro area, with the European Central Bank, to ensure the coherence of financial governance. This supervisory architecture reflects the post-crisis shift toward deeper financial integration and stronger centralised oversight mechanisms within the Union.

The European Labour Authority (ELA), headquartered in Bratislava, operates in a different but equally strategic domain: cross-border labour mobility and social coordination. Established to facilitate fair labour mobility within the internal market, ELA supports Member States in implementing EU rules on free movement of workers and social security coordination. It coordinates joint inspections, mediates disputes between national authorities, and combats undeclared work and social dumping. By promoting compliance with EU labour mobility rules, ELA strengthens the functioning of the internal market and reinforces social fairness within cross-border employment relations.

Collectively, these agencies illustrate the functional logic of EU governance: decentralised bodies with specialised expertise supporting regulatory harmonisation, supervisory convergence and coordinated enforcement. They contribute to financial stability, labour mobility and economic integration while operating within the broader constitutional and legal framework of the Treaties.

4.2.1.3 The Eurosystem and Monetary Governance

Within the constitutional architecture of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), the Eurosystem occupies a central position as the core monetary authority of the euro area. Unlike the decentralised regulatory agencies examined above, the Eurosystem is not an agency but a constitutionally anchored component of the Union's institutional framework. It operates on the basis of the Treaties and the Statute of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) and of the European Central Bank (ECB), forming the operational backbone of euro area monetary governance.

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A fundamental conceptual distinction must be drawn between the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) and the Eurosystem.

The ESCB comprises:

- The European Central Bank (ECB), and
- The national central banks (NCBs) of **all EU Member States**, including those that have not adopted the euro.

However, because not all Member States participate in the euro area, the ESCB in its full composition does not function as a unified operational monetary authority.

The Eurosystem, by contrast, consists of:

- The European Central Bank, and
- The national central banks of the Member States whose currency is the euro.

The Eurosystem is therefore the **effective monetary authority of the euro area**, responsible for implementing monetary policy and ensuring price stability within participating Member States. In constitutional terms, the Eurosystem represents differentiated integration within the broader EMU framework: while the ESCB reflects the Union-wide institutional structure, the Eurosystem embodies the operational core of euro area governance.

The primary legal foundation of the Eurosystem is found in **Article 127 TFEU**, complemented by Articles 128–133 TFEU and the Statute of the ESCB and the ECB (Protocol No. 4 annexed to the Treaties).

Article 127(1) TFEU establishes that the primary objective of the ESCB — and, in practice, the Eurosystem — is to maintain price stability. Without prejudice to this objective, the system shall support the general economic policies in the Union, in accordance with the principle of an open market economy with free competition.

Article 127(2) TFEU enumerates the basic tasks of the ESCB, which are operationally carried out by the Eurosystem in the euro area. These tasks define the constitutional mandate of euro area monetary governance.

1. **Defining and Implementing Monetary Policy of the Euro Area**

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The central function of the Eurosystem is to define and implement the monetary policy of the euro area. This includes determining key interest rates, managing liquidity conditions, conducting open market operations, and using monetary instruments to ensure price stability.

Monetary policy is an area of exclusive competence for the Member States whose currency is the euro (Article 3(1)(c) TFEU). The Eurosystem therefore exercises sovereign monetary authority at supranational level, replacing national monetary policy within participating states. This represents one of the most advanced forms of integration within the EU legal order.

2. **Holding and Managing Foreign Currency Reserves**

The Eurosystem holds and manages the official foreign exchange reserves of the euro area. These reserves are transferred in part by national central banks to the ECB and are used to conduct foreign exchange operations where necessary.

The management of reserves contributes to financial stability and reinforces the international credibility of the euro. It also enables coordinated intervention in foreign exchange markets, should such action be required to support monetary policy objectives.

3. **Conducting Foreign Exchange Operations**

In accordance with Article 127(2) TFEU and Article 219 TFEU, the Eurosystem may conduct foreign exchange operations consistent with the exchange-rate policy defined by the Council.

While the Union does not operate a fixed exchange-rate regime, the capacity to intervene in foreign exchange markets constitutes an important instrument of monetary sovereignty. It strengthens the Union's strategic autonomy in global financial markets and enhances the euro's international role.

4. **Promoting the Smooth Operation of Payment Systems**

The Eurosystem ensures the efficient and secure functioning of payment systems within the euro area. This includes operating and overseeing large-value payment infrastructures such as TARGET services.

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Stable and reliable payment systems are indispensable for financial stability, economic transactions, and cross-border integration within the internal market. By safeguarding systemic liquidity and settlement mechanisms, the Eurosystem reduces systemic risk and supports the proper functioning of the financial system.

5. **Authorising the Issuance of Euro Banknotes**

Under Article 128 TFEU, the ECB has the exclusive right to authorise the issuance of euro banknotes within the Union. National central banks may issue banknotes, but only with the approval of the ECB.

Euro coins are issued by Member States, subject to ECB approval of the volume.

This centralised authorisation power reflects the constitutional unity of the euro as a single currency. Control over currency issuance symbolises monetary sovereignty and underlines the supranational character of euro area governance.

The Eurosystem exemplifies the deepest level of integration achieved within the European Union. Monetary policy for the euro area is not coordinated between states; it is fully centralised at supranational level. The independence of the ECB and national central banks, guaranteed by Article 130 TFEU, further reinforces the constitutional autonomy of monetary governance from political interference.

In structural terms, the Eurosystem forms the monetary pillar of EMU, complementing:

- The supervisory pillar (SSM and ESFS),
- The fiscal coordination framework (Stability and Growth Pact),
- And the broader internal market architecture.

Through its mandate to maintain price stability, manage reserves, conduct foreign exchange operations, secure payment systems and authorise currency issuance, the Eurosystem operates as the constitutional guardian of euro area monetary stability. It represents not merely a technical mechanism but a foundational component of the Union's economic constitution.

4.2.1.4 Health & Consumer Protection

Within the field of public health, consumer protection and environmental safety, several specialised EU agencies play a central scientific and regulatory support role. These

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agencies do not replace national authorities but provide independent expertise, risk assessment and coordination at Union level, thereby strengthening harmonised decision-making within the internal market.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA), headquartered in Amsterdam, is responsible for the scientific evaluation, supervision and safety monitoring of medicines in the European Union. It operates the centralised marketing authorisation procedure, under which pharmaceutical companies can obtain a single authorisation valid across all Member States. EMA assesses the quality, safety and efficacy of medicinal products through expert scientific committees. It also monitors pharmacovigilance, ensuring that adverse effects are detected and managed after medicines enter the market. During public health crises, such as pandemics, EMA plays a crucial coordinating role in accelerating vaccine and treatment approvals while maintaining rigorous safety standards. Its work ensures a high level of human and veterinary health protection and facilitates the free movement of medicinal products within the internal market.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), based in Stockholm, supports EU preparedness and response to communicable diseases. It conducts epidemiological surveillance, risk assessments and early warning analysis. Through data collection and scientific guidance, ECDC assists Member States in preventing and controlling outbreaks. Although health policy remains primarily a national competence under Article 168 TFEU, ECDC enhances coordination and information-sharing, strengthening collective resilience. Its importance became particularly visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, where it contributed to coordinated monitoring, modelling and response strategies at EU level.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), headquartered in Parma, provides independent scientific advice on food safety risks. EFSA conducts risk assessments relating to food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, plant protection and nutrition. It does not adopt binding legislation; rather, it supports the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council in developing science-based regulatory measures. By ensuring that food safety decisions are grounded in independent expertise, EFSA contributes to consumer protection and maintains trust in the internal market for agricultural and food products.

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The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), located in Helsinki, is responsible for implementing EU chemicals legislation, most notably the REACH Regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals). ECHA manages chemical registrations, evaluates risks, and proposes restrictions or authorisations for substances of concern. It aims to ensure a high level of protection for human health and the environment while supporting innovation and competitiveness in the chemicals sector. Through harmonised chemical regulation, ECHA prevents fragmentation within the internal market and reinforces environmental standards across the Union.

Together, EMA, ECDC, EFSA and ECHA illustrate the EU's model of "science-based governance." They provide technical expertise and risk assessment at Union level, enabling consistent regulatory standards across Member States. By combining public health protection, consumer safety and environmental regulation with internal market integration, these agencies contribute to both social protection and economic stability within the European Union.

The Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), based on Articles 121 and 126 TFEU, constitutes the fiscal coordination pillar of EMU. It contains two main components: the preventive arm and the corrective arm. The preventive arm aims to ensure sound budgetary positions through surveillance of Member States' medium-term objectives within the European Semester. The corrective arm operates through the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP), activated when a Member State exceeds the reference values of 3% of GDP for the deficit or 60% of GDP for public debt. Together, these two arms ensure fiscal discipline and macroeconomic stability within the euro area.

4.2.1.5 Environment & Climate

Within the field of environmental protection, maritime governance and fisheries management, several specialised EU agencies provide scientific expertise, operational coordination and compliance support to Member States. These agencies strengthen the implementation of Union policies while preserving national competences.

The European Environment Agency (EEA), headquartered in Copenhagen, provides independent environmental information and data at EU level. Its primary function is monitoring, analysis and reporting on the state of the environment in Europe. The EEA collects harmonised environmental data from Member States, assesses trends relating

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to climate change, biodiversity, pollution and resource use, and publishes authoritative reports that inform EU legislation and policy development. Although it does not adopt binding measures, it plays a crucial role in evidence-based policymaking, supporting the European Commission, the European Parliament and national governments. In the context of the European Green Deal and climate neutrality objectives, the EEA strengthens transparency, accountability and policy coherence.

The European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), based in Vigo, supports the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Its core task is to coordinate operational cooperation between Member States in fisheries inspection and control activities. EFCA organises joint deployment plans, facilitates information exchange and enhances compliance with EU conservation rules. By promoting uniform enforcement of fishing quotas, sustainability measures and anti-illegal fishing controls, EFCA contributes to marine resource sustainability and fair competition within the fisheries sector. It does not replace national inspection authorities but enhances coordination and effectiveness at Union level.

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), located in Lisbon, enhances maritime safety, marine pollution prevention and response capabilities. EMSA provides technical assistance to the European Commission and Member States in implementing EU maritime legislation. It supports vessel monitoring, maritime accident investigation, oil spill response and digital maritime systems such as SafeSeaNet. EMSA also contributes to environmental protection by assisting in the enforcement of rules aimed at reducing ship-generated pollution. Through these functions, it reinforces both transport safety and environmental sustainability within the internal market.

Together, the EEA, EFCA and EMSA demonstrate how EU agencies combine scientific monitoring, regulatory coordination and operational support to ensure uniform application of EU environmental and maritime policies. They illustrate the Union's model of decentralised governance, where specialised expertise strengthens implementation while maintaining Member State responsibility.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC) constitutes the environmental pillar of the European Union's Integrated Maritime Policy. Adopted on the legal basis of Article 192 TFEU (environmental competence), the Directive establishes a comprehensive framework for the protection of the marine environment

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across EU marine waters. Its central objective is the achievement or maintenance of "Good Environmental Status" (GES), a legally defined condition in which marine ecosystems are ecologically diverse, clean, healthy and productive, and in which the use of the marine environment is sustainable. Unlike sector-specific fisheries or maritime safety legislation, the Directive adopts an ecosystem-based approach, integrating biodiversity protection, pollution control, sustainable resource use and climate-related pressures within a single governance framework.

The Directive required Member States to achieve Good Environmental Status (GES) by 2020. This deadline was legally binding and structured around a cyclical implementation process. Member States were obliged to conduct an initial assessment of their marine waters, define national GES criteria based on eleven qualitative descriptors (including biodiversity, non-indigenous species, commercial fish stocks, eutrophication, sea-floor integrity, marine litter and underwater noise), establish environmental targets and monitoring programmes, and adopt programmes of measures designed to reach GES by the 2020 deadline. The 2020 target therefore represented a milestone within a structured environmental planning cycle rather than a purely political aspiration.

From a constitutional perspective, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive operationalises Article 191 TFEU, which commits the Union to preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment and promoting prudent and rational utilisation of natural resources. It also reflects key environmental law principles enshrined in Article 191(2) TFEU, including the precautionary principle, preventive action and the polluter pays principle. The Directive further illustrates the EU's model of shared environmental governance: while objectives are set at Union level, implementation remains largely within Member State competence, subject to Commission oversight and periodic reporting obligations. In this sense, it mirrors other framework directives such as the Water Framework Directive.

The relationship between the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and EU agencies such as EFCA and EMSA is complementary rather than hierarchical. EFCA contributes to sustainable fish stock management under the Common Fisheries Policy, which directly affects Descriptor 3 (commercial fish and shellfish populations) of GES. EMSA supports pollution prevention and maritime safety, which are relevant to descriptors

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concerning contaminants, marine litter and environmental integrity. However, neither agency defines the GES target; they operate within the broader regulatory ecosystem shaped by Directive 2008/56/EC.

In analytical terms, the key insight is that the 2020 deadline for achieving Good Environmental Status forms part of the EU's long-term transition toward integrated ocean governance. Although full GES was not uniformly achieved by 2020, the Directive established a legally binding trajectory and a recurring review cycle that continues to shape EU marine environmental policy. For exam purposes, the decisive factual element is that the Marine Strategy Framework Directive required EU marine waters to achieve Good Environmental Status by the year 2020.

4.2.1.6 Transport

Within the transport sector, the European Union has established specialised agencies to ensure high safety standards, technical harmonisation and regulatory consistency across the internal market. These agencies play a central role in strengthening cross-border mobility while safeguarding safety and interoperability.

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), headquartered in Cologne, is responsible for aviation safety across the European Union. Its mandate includes drafting technical aviation standards, certifying aircraft and aviation products, approving aviation organisations, and overseeing safety compliance. EASA ensures uniform safety requirements for civil aviation, including aircraft design, pilot licensing, air operations and air traffic management. It also cooperates with international organisations such as ICAO and third-country authorities to promote global aviation safety standards. By centralising certification and safety oversight functions at EU level, EASA enhances consistency, reduces duplication and supports the proper functioning of the internal aviation market.

The European Union Agency for Railways (ERA), based in Valenciennes, contributes to the development of a Single European Railway Area. Its core objectives are improving rail safety and ensuring technical interoperability across national rail systems. ERA develops common safety methods and technical specifications for interoperability (TSIs), which enable trains to operate seamlessly across Member States. It also issues vehicle authorisations and safety certificates under the Fourth

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Railway Package, thereby reducing administrative fragmentation and facilitating cross-border rail services. Through harmonisation of technical standards and safety rules, ERA strengthens rail competitiveness, market integration and sustainable transport development.

Together, EASA and ERA reflect the EU's approach to transport governance: centralised technical expertise combined with uniform regulatory frameworks to ensure safety, interoperability and efficient functioning of the internal market.

4.2.1.7 Energy & Industry

Within the fields of energy governance and industrial innovation, the European Union has established specialised agencies that strengthen regulatory coordination and technological competitiveness across the Single Market.

The Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER), headquartered in Ljubljana, plays a central role in the integration of the EU internal energy market. ACER supports cooperation among national energy regulatory authorities and ensures consistent application of EU energy legislation. Its mandate includes monitoring wholesale energy markets to prevent market abuse (REMIT framework), facilitating cross-border energy infrastructure planning, and contributing to the development of network codes that harmonise electricity and gas market rules across Member States. ACER enhances transparency, competition and security of supply within the Energy Union framework. By coordinating national regulators, it reduces fragmentation in electricity and gas markets and strengthens cross-border energy flows, thereby contributing to energy security and price stability.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), based in Budapest, operates as a key instrument for strengthening Europe's innovation ecosystems. Unlike purely regulatory agencies, the EIT focuses on integrating education, research and business through Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). These partnerships bring together universities, research centres, start-ups and established companies to accelerate the commercialisation of innovation in strategic sectors such as climate, digital technologies, health, energy and raw materials. The EIT's objective is to close the gap between scientific excellence and market deployment, reinforcing the EU's scale-up capacity and technological sovereignty. By fostering entrepreneurial skills,

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cross-border cooperation and investment in emerging sectors, the EIT supports industrial competitiveness and long-term economic resilience.

Together, ACER and the EIT illustrate two complementary dimensions of EU governance: regulatory coordination to ensure integrated and secure markets, and innovation facilitation to enhance industrial transformation and strategic autonomy.

4.2.1.8 Fundamental Rights & Social Policy

Within the field of fundamental rights, employment, social policy and vocational training, the European Union has established specialised decentralised agencies that provide expertise, research and policy coordination. These bodies do not exercise legislative powers, but they support EU institutions and Member States through monitoring, analysis and technical assistance.

The **EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)**, headquartered in Vienna, serves as the Union's principal body for fundamental rights monitoring. Its mandate is to provide independent, evidence-based advice to EU institutions and Member States on issues related to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. FRA conducts comparative legal and sociological research on topics such as discrimination, migration, data protection, access to justice, and the rule of law. It does not adjudicate individual complaints or replace national courts; rather, it supplies data, reports and expert opinions that inform legislative and policy decisions. In constitutional terms, FRA strengthens the horizontal integration of fundamental rights considerations across all EU policy areas.

The **European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)**, based in Dublin, focuses on research and analysis in the field of social and employment policy. Established to support better social, employment and work-related policies, Eurofound collects comparative data on working conditions, industrial relations, quality of life and labour market developments. Its surveys and studies provide evidence to inform EU-level initiatives such as labour mobility, social dialogue and employment strategies. Eurofound contributes to the social dimension of the Union by supporting policies aimed at improving living standards and working conditions across Member States.

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The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)**, located in Thessaloniki, specialises in vocational education and training (VET) policy. CEDEFOP supports the development of skills, qualifications frameworks and lifelong learning systems within the Union. It provides research, forecasts on future skill needs, and comparative analysis of national training systems. Through its work, CEDEFOP strengthens human capital formation and labour market adaptability, contributing to competitiveness and social cohesion in line with Articles 165–166 TFEU.

The **European Training Foundation (ETF)**, headquartered in Turin, operates with an external dimension. Unlike CEDEFOP, which focuses primarily on Member States, the ETF supports vocational education, training reform and skills development in EU partner countries, particularly in the neighbourhood and enlargement regions. By promoting alignment with EU standards and fostering institutional capacity-building, the ETF contributes to external cooperation, enlargement policy and socio-economic development beyond the Union's borders.

Collectively, these agencies illustrate the EU's commitment to embedding fundamental rights, social protection, skills development and external educational cooperation within its broader constitutional and strategic framework. They reinforce the Union's social model by combining evidence-based policymaking, rights protection and long-term human capital development.

4.2.1.9 Cyber & Digital

The **EU Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA)**, headquartered in Athens, is the Union's specialised agency responsible for strengthening cybersecurity across the European Union. Originally established in 2004 and significantly reinforced by the **EU Cybersecurity Act (2019)**, ENISA has evolved into a central pillar of the EU's digital security architecture.

ENISA's mandate operates at multiple levels:

First, it supports **coordination among Member States** in preventing, detecting and responding to cyber threats. It facilitates cooperation between national cybersecurity authorities and Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs), particularly through the CSIRTs Network established under the NIS Directive and strengthened by NIS2.

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Second, ENISA plays a key role in **cyber crisis preparedness and resilience**. It organises large-scale cyber exercises (such as Cyber Europe simulations), develops risk assessments, and assists in strengthening national cyber capabilities.

Third, ENISA contributes to **EU cybersecurity certification schemes**. Under the Cybersecurity Act, it helps develop European cybersecurity certification frameworks for ICT products, services and processes. This reduces fragmentation, increases trust in digital systems, and strengthens the integrity of the Digital Single Market.

Fourth, ENISA supports the implementation of major digital legislation, including the NIS2 Directive, the Cyber Resilience Act and other regulatory instruments aimed at enhancing digital infrastructure security.

Strategically, ENISA operates at the intersection of:

- Digital Single Market integration
- Economic security
- Critical infrastructure protection
- Strategic autonomy

Cybersecurity is no longer treated as a purely technical issue but as a component of economic resilience and geopolitical stability. Control over digital infrastructure, data protection standards and cyber defence capacity directly affects industrial competitiveness, defence readiness and public trust.

In constitutional terms, ENISA is not an EU institution under Article 13 TEU, but a decentralised agency with legal personality, supporting the Union's digital governance framework.

In EPSO analytical logic, ENISA should be understood as the operational backbone of EU cybersecurity coordination — a key instrument ensuring that digital transformation proceeds within a secure, resilient and strategically autonomous framework.

4.2.2 Executive Agencies of the European Union

Executive agencies are specialised administrative bodies created by the European Commission to manage specific EU funding programmes. They operate under Commission supervision and are established by Commission decision pursuant to the

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Financial Regulation. Unlike decentralised agencies, they do not exercise regulatory authority or policy discretion. Their role is strictly operational: programme management, grant administration, procurement, and financial oversight.

As of the current EU administrative structure (2021–2027 Multiannual Financial Framework), there are **four executive agencies**.

The European Research Executive Agency manages a substantial portion of the EU's research and innovation funding. Its core responsibility is the implementation of research programmes, including large parts of Horizon Europe.

REA is responsible for:

- Managing research grants and contracts
- Launching calls for proposals
- Evaluating project applications
- Monitoring implementation and financial compliance
- Supporting scientific evaluation processes

REA does not define EU research policy; that responsibility remains with the Commission (DG Research & Innovation). Instead, it ensures the operational execution of research funding at scale.

Its creation reflects the technical complexity and high volume of EU research expenditure.

The European Education and Culture Executive Agency manages EU programmes in education, culture, audiovisual policy, sport, citizenship, and youth.

Its responsibilities include:

- Administration of Erasmus+
- Creative Europe programme management
- European Solidarity Corps implementation
- Education and culture-related grant schemes
- Support for European identity and citizenship initiatives

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EACEA handles operational implementation, including evaluation, contracting, payment management, and monitoring of funded projects.

Strategic orientation and legislative design remain within the competence of the Commission (primarily DG EAC).

The European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency manages programmes linked to climate policy, environmental protection, energy, and transport infrastructure.

Its operational tasks include management of:

- LIFE Programme (environment and climate action)
- Innovation Fund
- Connecting Europe Facility (transport and energy components)
- Clean energy and decarbonisation funding

CINEA supports the implementation of the European Green Deal by handling large-scale funding operations and infrastructure-related projects.

It operates administratively, not normatively; climate legislation is adopted by the Parliament and Council and implemented strategically by the Commission.

The European Health and Digital Executive Agency was created to manage programmes in health policy, digital transformation, cybersecurity, and industry.

Its responsibilities include:

- EU4Health programme management
- Digital Europe Programme implementation
- Health emergency preparedness funding
- Cybersecurity and AI-related funding schemes

HaDEA emerged partly in response to increased EU competences in health coordination and digital governance, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic.

It provides administrative support for health and digital policy implementation but does not exercise regulatory authority.

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All four executive agencies share key features:

- Established by Commission decision under financial rules
- Limited mandate tied to specific programmes
- No independent regulatory powers
- Operate under Commission supervision
- Politically accountable through the Commission
- Subject to EU budgetary control and judicial review

They are instruments of administrative delegation designed to enhance efficiency in programme management without altering institutional balance.

Executive agencies represent a managerial response to the expansion of EU expenditure. As EU funding programmes increased in scale and complexity, direct management by the Commission became administratively burdensome. Executive agencies allow operational tasks to be separated from policy-making, thereby:

- Increasing administrative efficiency
- Allowing specialisation in programme management
- Preserving political responsibility at Commission level
- Avoiding constitutional complications linked to discretionary delegation

They do not raise significant issues under the Meroni doctrine because they do not exercise autonomous discretion or adopt binding normative acts.

The four executive agencies — REA, EACEA, CINEA, and HaDEA — form a coherent administrative cluster within the EU governance system. They are operational arms of the Commission, not independent regulators. Their existence reflects the administrative maturation of the Union and its transition toward a structured, multi-level programme management system grounded in efficiency, accountability, and constitutional restraint.

4.2.3 Supervisory Agencies

Supervisory agencies represent one of the most constitutionally significant developments in the evolution of EU administrative governance. They operate primarily in highly integrated and regulated sectors — most notably financial services

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— where uniform application of EU law and coordinated oversight across Member States are essential for the proper functioning of the internal market.

Their legal basis is typically grounded in the internal market provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), in particular **Article 114 TFEU**, which allows the EU legislature to adopt measures for the approximation of laws necessary for the establishment and functioning of the internal market. It is on this basis that the European Supervisory Authorities in the financial sector were established.

Supervisory agencies are created by legislative acts adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure (Article 294 TFEU). Unlike executive agencies — which are created by Commission decision — supervisory agencies derive their powers directly from regulations adopted by the European Parliament and the Council.

The constitutional framework governing supervisory agencies is shaped by several Treaty provisions:

- **Article 114 TFEU** – Legal basis for harmonisation measures in the internal market, including the creation of regulatory authorities.
- **Article 291 TFEU** – Provides for uniform conditions for implementing legally binding Union acts.
- **Article 290 TFEU** – Delegated acts framework (relevant where agencies contribute to technical standards later adopted by the Commission).
- **Article 263 TFEU** – Judicial review of agency acts before the Court of Justice.
- **Article 298 TFEU** – Establishes the principle of an open, efficient and independent European administration.
- **Article 5 TEU** – Principle of conferral, limiting Union competences.
- **Article 13(2) TEU** – Principle of institutional balance.

Together, these provisions frame the legality and limits of supervisory agencies.

Supervisory agencies typically perform the following functions:

- Coordination of national supervisory authorities
- Promotion of regulatory convergence

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- Development of draft technical standards
- Issuance of guidelines and recommendations
- Conduct of peer reviews and risk assessments
- In limited cases, adoption of binding decisions addressed to national authorities or market actors

In financial supervision, agencies may intervene in emergency situations or resolve disputes between national regulators, where EU legislation explicitly permits. However, they do not exercise general legislative power. Essential policy choices remain with the EU legislature (Articles 289–294 TFEU). Supervisory agencies operate under strict constitutional limits derived from EU jurisprudence and Treaty principles.

Under the principle of conferral (Article 5 TEU), agencies may act only within the competences granted to the Union and strictly within their founding regulation. Under the principle of institutional balance (Article 13(2) TEU), delegation cannot alter the distribution of powers among the EU institutions.

Any binding authority granted to supervisory agencies must be:

- Clearly defined in the legislative act
- Based on objective criteria
- Limited in scope and subject matter
- Subject to judicial review under Article 263 TFEU

They cannot exercise unlimited political discretion or make autonomous policy determinations.

The Court of Justice has confirmed that delegation is permissible where powers are precisely delineated and structured by objective conditions, particularly in technically complex areas requiring expertise.

Supervisory agencies typically include:

- A **Board of Supervisors**, composed of representatives of national regulatory authorities
- A **Chair or Executive Director**, responsible for operational management

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- Mechanisms for structured interaction with the European Commission

This network-based governance model ensures that supervisory agencies function as coordinating hubs rather than replacements for national authorities.

Supervisory agencies illustrate a more advanced stage of internal market integration. As cross-border markets deepened — especially after the 2008 financial crisis — purely national supervision proved insufficient. The EU responded by establishing authorities capable of ensuring consistency and preventing regulatory fragmentation.

However, their powers are constitutionally framed to avoid violating:

- The principle of conferral (Article 5 TEU)
- The principle of institutional balance (Article 13 TEU)
- The limits on delegation established by EU case law

Supervisory agencies therefore operate at the intersection of technical expertise and constitutional restraint. They enhance regulatory coherence while remaining subordinate to the Treaties and subject to judicial control.

Supervisory agencies are legislative creations based primarily on Article 114 TFEU and operate within a tightly controlled constitutional framework defined by Articles 5 TEU, 13 TEU, 290–291 TFEU, 263 TFEU, and 298 TFEU. They coordinate national regulators and, in limited circumstances, exercise binding powers, but they do not possess autonomous political discretion. Their existence reflects deeper market integration while preserving institutional balance and judicial accountability within the EU constitutional order.

4.2.4 Joint Undertakings

Joint undertakings constitute a distinctive category within the EU's administrative and governance architecture. Unlike decentralised or supervisory agencies, they are not primarily regulatory or coordination bodies. Instead, they are specialised implementation structures designed to facilitate large-scale research, innovation, and technological development through public–private cooperation. Their creation reflects the Union's strategic objective of strengthening industrial competitiveness, technological autonomy, and long-term research capacity.

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The legal basis for joint undertakings is found in **Article 187 TFEU**, which provides that the Union may set up joint undertakings or any other structure necessary for the efficient execution of Union research, technological development, and demonstration programmes. Article 187 operates within the broader framework of **Articles 179–190 TFEU**, which define the Union's competence in research and technological development. The establishment of a joint undertaking requires a Council regulation, adopted following consultation with the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee.

From a legal perspective, joint undertakings possess legal personality. This allows them to conclude contracts, manage budgets, recruit staff, own property, and appear in legal proceedings. They enjoy administrative autonomy within the limits of their founding regulation. However, they are not autonomous constitutional actors. Their mandate, objectives, governance structure, financial arrangements, and duration are strictly defined by legislative act.

Unlike traditional EU agencies, joint undertakings are designed as **public–private partnership (PPP) structures**. They bring together:

- The European Commission (representing the Union),
- Participating Member States (in certain cases),
- Private sector entities (such as industry associations or companies),
- Research organisations and other stakeholders.

Their purpose is not regulatory oversight but programme implementation. They serve as platforms for pooling financial resources from both public and private actors in order to carry out strategic research and innovation initiatives. Their activities typically involve funding collaborative projects, managing research programmes, coordinating industrial and academic participation, and promoting technological advancement in strategic sectors such as digital technologies, clean energy, advanced manufacturing, bio-based industries, or health innovation.

Functionally, joint undertakings:

- Pool EU and private funding,
- Coordinate large-scale innovation initiatives,

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- Implement specific components of EU research frameworks,
- Facilitate structured collaboration between industry and public authorities,
- Support long-term technological investment strategies.

They do not exercise regulatory authority. They do not adopt binding rules applicable to Member States or private actors beyond contractual obligations arising from funded projects. Their role is operational and programmatic rather than supervisory or normative.

Governance structures typically reflect their hybrid character. They usually include:

- A Governing Board composed of representatives of the Commission and participating private members,
- In some cases, participating Member States,
- An Executive Director responsible for day-to-day management,
- Advisory or scientific committees.

The Commission plays a central role in ensuring compliance with EU financial rules and policy objectives. Financial contributions from private partners are often matched by EU funding, reinforcing shared ownership and strategic alignment.

Constitutionally, joint undertakings illustrate the flexibility of the EU legal order. Article 187 TFEU allows the Union to create specific implementation structures tailored to the needs of strategic research policy. This demonstrates that the Treaties permit innovative governance arrangements beyond the classic institutional model listed in Article 13 TEU. However, this flexibility is not unlimited. Joint undertakings remain subject to:

- The principle of conferral (Article 5 TEU),
- EU financial regulations,
- Audit by the European Court of Auditors,
- Judicial review by the Court of Justice,
- Oversight by the European Parliament through budgetary discharge procedures.

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They therefore operate within the constitutional framework of the Union, despite involving private actors in governance.

In structural terms, joint undertakings reflect the increasing interdependence between public policy and industrial strategy. They enable the Union to pursue strategic technological autonomy while leveraging private expertise and investment. They embody a cooperative governance model that combines supranational coordination with market participation, without transferring regulatory authority outside the institutional balance established by the Treaties.

In conclusion, joint undertakings are specialised public–private partnership entities established under Article 187 TFEU to implement EU research and innovation programmes. They possess legal personality and administrative autonomy, but their mandate is strictly programmatic and defined by legislation. They are not regulatory bodies; rather, they function as strategic implementation platforms that illustrate the adaptable and collaborative nature of EU governance within constitutional limits.

4.2.5 CFSP Agencies

Within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the European Union has established a number of specialised agencies that support its external action and security objectives. Unlike most decentralised agencies created under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), CFSP agencies are grounded in Title V of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and operate within the intergovernmental sphere of EU foreign and defence policy. They do not exercise legislative authority and are not institutions under Article 13 TEU. Instead, they provide strategic, technical and operational support to Member States and EU institutions in order to strengthen the Union's capacity to act coherently in matters of security and defence.

A central body in this field is the European Defence Agency (EDA), based in Brussels and established on the basis of Article 45 TEU. The EDA's core mission is to support Member States in developing defence capabilities and improving cooperation in the defence sector. It identifies capability gaps, promotes joint procurement initiatives, facilitates collaborative defence research and innovation projects, and contributes to strengthening the European defence technological and industrial base. The Agency also

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plays an important role in supporting Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and coordinating defence planning efforts. Its purpose is not to replace national armed forces or NATO structures, but to reduce fragmentation in European defence spending, enhance interoperability and encourage economies of scale. In strategic terms, the EDA contributes to strengthening European strategic autonomy by fostering more integrated and efficient defence capability development within an intergovernmental framework.

Complementing the operational dimension of defence cooperation, the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), located in Paris, provides strategic research and analytical support in the field of foreign and security policy. The EUISS does not implement policy or command operations. Instead, it produces independent studies, geopolitical assessments and long-term strategic analyses that inform the work of the European Council, the Council of the EU, the High Representative and the European External Action Service. Through its publications and policy briefings, it contributes to shaping the intellectual foundations of EU external action, including initiatives such as the EU Global Strategy and the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence. By strengthening foresight and strategic planning capacity, the EUISS enhances the coherence and credibility of the Union's geopolitical positioning.

A third key CFSP agency is the EU Satellite Centre (SatCen), based in Madrid. SatCen provides geospatial intelligence (GEOINT) and satellite imagery analysis in support of EU foreign and security policy objectives. Its services include monitoring conflict zones, supporting border management and maritime surveillance operations, verifying compliance with international commitments and assisting crisis response missions. SatCen supplies intelligence products to the Council, the High Representative and EU civilian and military missions. In an era where satellite-based observation is crucial for security governance, the Centre enhances the Union's situational awareness and reduces dependence on third-country intelligence providers. Its work contributes directly to operational readiness and informed decision-making in external action.

Taken together, these CFSP agencies illustrate the evolving institutionalisation of EU foreign and security policy. They operate within an intergovernmental decision-making framework, yet they are embedded in the Union's legal order and support collective European objectives. They do not centralise foreign policy authority or create a supranational defence structure. Instead, they provide the analytical capacity, capability

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coordination and intelligence support necessary for coherent and effective external action. In advanced constitutional terms, CFSP agencies represent the operational infrastructure of European strategic autonomy in the security domain. They strengthen the Union's ability to act collectively on the global stage while respecting Member State sovereignty and the limits of the Treaties.

4.2.6 EURATOM Agencies

In addition to decentralised and CFSP agencies, the EU agency landscape also includes EURATOM bodies and Executive Agencies, which belong to distinct legal and functional categories within the Union's administrative structure.

The EURATOM Supply Agency, based in Luxembourg, operates under the Euratom Treaty rather than the TEU or TFEU. Its legal basis lies in Articles 52–76 of the Euratom Treaty. The Agency's primary function is to ensure a regular and equitable supply of nuclear materials—such as uranium and nuclear fuel—within the European Union. It holds exclusive rights to conclude contracts for the supply of nuclear materials produced in or imported into the Union. Through this mechanism, it monitors supply security, prevents excessive dependence on a single external supplier, and contributes to transparency in nuclear fuel markets. The Agency does not regulate nuclear safety—that competence lies primarily with Member States and relevant EU legislation—but it plays a strategic coordination role in safeguarding energy security in the nuclear domain. In the broader context of strategic autonomy, the EURATOM Supply Agency contributes to resilience in the energy sector by reducing vulnerabilities related to critical fuel inputs.

Executive Agencies, by contrast, represent a different institutional category. They are established by the European Commission under Council Regulation (EC) No 58/2003 and are tasked with managing specific EU programmes on behalf of the Commission. Unlike decentralised agencies, they do not develop policy, adopt regulatory decisions, or exercise independent authority. Their role is strictly administrative and operational: they implement EU programmes, manage grants, oversee calls for proposals, and ensure the financial execution of projects within the framework defined by the Commission.

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Examples include the European Research Executive Agency (REA), which manages large parts of Horizon Europe and supports research projects; the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA), which implements programmes supporting innovation, entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprises; the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), which oversees funding instruments related to climate action, energy, transport and environmental policy; and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), which manages programmes such as Erasmus+, Creative Europe and other cultural and educational initiatives.

Executive Agencies are typically located in Brussels or Luxembourg and operate under the direct supervision of the European Commission. Their creation reflects the need for administrative efficiency and technical specialisation in managing increasingly complex EU funding instruments. By delegating programme implementation to specialised bodies, the Commission enhances efficiency while retaining political and regulatory control.

In constitutional terms, the distinction is crucial: decentralised agencies and CFSP agencies may contribute to policy development or coordination within specific sectors, whereas Executive Agencies are purely implementing bodies without policy-making authority. Together with Euratom structures, they illustrate the differentiated and multi-layered nature of the EU's administrative architecture, where legal basis, competences and degree of autonomy vary depending on policy domain and Treaty framework.

4.2.6.1 The Euratom Supply Agency (ESA)

The Euratom Supply Agency (ESA) occupies a distinctive position within the constitutional architecture of the European Union. Unlike decentralised EU agencies created under secondary legislation, the ESA is directly established by the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom Treaty). Its existence, competences, and operational logic are therefore rooted in primary law.

The Euratom Supply Agency is founded on Articles 52–76 of the Euratom Treaty. It forms part of the Euratom institutional framework and operates under the supervision of the European Commission, while enjoying a specific functional autonomy necessary to fulfil its mandate.

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The constitutional rationale for the Agency reflects the strategic sensitivity of nuclear materials. At the time of the Treaty's adoption (1957), nuclear energy was considered a crucial element of economic development, technological progress, and energy security. Ensuring equal access to nuclear resources among Member States was regarded as essential to avoid strategic imbalances and potential political dependency.

The ESA is therefore not a regulatory authority in the classic administrative sense. Rather, it is a market-management mechanism designed to guarantee security of supply, equal access, and non-discrimination in the procurement of nuclear materials within the Community.

The primary role of the Euratom Supply Agency is to ensure a regular and equitable supply of nuclear materials for peaceful purposes within the European Union.

This objective has two structural dimensions:

- **Security of supply** – safeguarding the availability of nuclear materials necessary for electricity production and research.
- **Equal access** – preventing discriminatory practices between users in different Member States.

The Agency exercises a legal monopoly over the conclusion of contracts relating to the supply of ores, source materials, and special fissile materials produced in or imported into the Community. In practice, contracts between producers and users must be concluded through the Agency, which formally signs or acknowledges them.

This mechanism does not aim to replace market forces entirely but to ensure that strategic resources remain subject to supranational oversight.

A key feature of the ESA system is the Agency's "right of option." For nuclear materials produced within the Community, the Agency has the exclusive right to conclude supply contracts. Producers are required to offer materials to the Agency, which then allocates them to users according to principles of non-discrimination.

For materials imported from third countries, supply contracts must also be submitted to the Agency for approval. This oversight ensures compliance with Euratom rules, safeguards obligations, and international commitments.

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In contemporary practice, the Agency's role is largely supervisory and coordinative rather than interventionist. The liberalisation of global uranium markets and the diversification of supply sources have reduced the need for active allocation. Nevertheless, the legal framework remains intact as a strategic safeguard.

Although Euratom remains legally distinct from the European Union, the ESA contributes to broader EU objectives such as energy security, resilience, and strategic autonomy.

The Agency monitors market developments, assesses supply risks, and provides annual reports on the nuclear fuel market within the EU. In periods of geopolitical instability or supply disruption, this monitoring function becomes particularly significant.

The ESA therefore operates at the intersection of:

- internal market logic,
- external trade relations,
- energy security considerations, and
- non-proliferation commitments.

Its existence reflects the hybrid nature of Euratom as both an economic and strategic framework.

The Euratom Supply Agency differs from decentralised EU agencies in several important respects:

- It is established directly by primary law (Euratom Treaty).
- It exercises specific market powers rather than regulatory or advisory functions.
- It operates under Commission supervision but retains distinct legal competences.
- It is sector-specific and limited to nuclear materials.

In constitutional terms, the ESA illustrates the sectoral origins of European integration. It represents one of the earliest examples of supranational market management in a strategically sensitive field. Despite the decline in political prominence of Euratom compared to the broader EU framework, the ESA remains operational and legally significant. Nuclear energy continues to form part of the energy mix in several Member States, and supply chains remain globally concentrated. Recent geopolitical

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developments and renewed debates on energy diversification have highlighted the continued relevance of mechanisms ensuring supply security and risk monitoring. The Euratom Supply Agency thus stands as a specialised but enduring component of the European integration project—one that reflects the early ambition to combine market integration with strategic resource governance.

4.3 Governance and Accountability of EU Agencies

The governance and accountability framework of EU agencies reflects a central constitutional objective: ensuring that administrative specialisation and delegated implementation do not undermine institutional balance, democratic legitimacy, or judicial control within the Union. Although agencies are not institutions under Article 13 TEU, they form part of the EU administrative system and are therefore embedded in a dense network of legal, political, financial, and judicial accountability mechanisms.

The governance structure of EU agencies varies according to category, but certain structural features are common, particularly for decentralised and supervisory agencies. Most agencies are governed by a **Management Board** (or Board of Supervisors in the case of supervisory authorities). These boards typically include representatives of Member States, the European Commission, and in some cases the European Parliament or stakeholder representatives. The composition reflects the dual nature of the EU as a Union of States and a Union of Citizens, ensuring both national participation and supranational oversight.

An **Executive Director** (or Executive Director and Chair in supervisory agencies) is responsible for day-to-day management. The Director is usually appointed by the Management Board, often upon proposal from the Commission. While the Director enjoys operational autonomy, their actions remain constrained by the agency's founding regulation, internal rules of procedure, and oversight mechanisms. Strategic priorities and work programmes must align with EU legislative objectives.

Executive agencies, by contrast, operate under a more hierarchical model. Their governance is directly linked to the Commission, which appoints their Director and retains full political responsibility. They do not have Member State-based management boards, reflecting their status as instruments of internal administrative delegation.

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Political accountability operates primarily through the European Parliament and the Council.

Under the EU budgetary framework (Articles 310–319 TFEU), agencies are financed through the general EU budget. The European Parliament exercises budgetary control and grants annual discharge following examination of financial management. This discharge procedure is a key instrument of democratic oversight.

Agencies may also be required to:

- Present annual activity reports to the Parliament and Council,
- Participate in hearings before parliamentary committees,
- Respond to written questions,
- Provide strategic programming documents (multiannual and annual work programmes).

The Commission also exercises supervisory authority, particularly in ensuring coherence with Union policy objectives and compliance with EU law.

Financial governance is subject to strict EU financial rules. Agencies must comply with:

- The EU Financial Regulation,
- Internal control standards,
- Anti-fraud mechanisms coordinated with OLAF,
- Audit procedures conducted by the European Court of Auditors.

The Court of Auditors reviews legality and regularity of expenditure, as well as sound financial management. Its reports may trigger corrective measures or institutional scrutiny.

Financial accountability ensures that administrative autonomy does not translate into budgetary independence from political control.

Judicial review constitutes a core constitutional safeguard.

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Under **Article 263 TFEU**, acts of agencies intended to produce legal effects may be challenged before the Court of Justice of the European Union. This ensures compliance with the principles of legality, proportionality, and procedural fairness.

Under **Article 268 and 340 TFEU**, agencies may incur non-contractual liability for damages caused in the performance of their duties.

The availability of judicial review is particularly important for supervisory agencies exercising binding powers. It guarantees that delegated authority remains subject to rule-of-law control.

Agencies are also subject to administrative oversight mechanisms.

The European Ombudsman may investigate complaints concerning maladministration (Article 228 TFEU). Transparency obligations under Regulation 1049/2001 (access to documents) also apply to most agencies. Additionally, internal ethics rules, conflict-of-interest policies, and codes of conduct aim to ensure integrity and impartiality.

Article 298 TFEU establishes that the EU shall rely on an open, efficient, and independent European administration. Agencies operate within this constitutional principle.

Governance and accountability mechanisms must also preserve the principle of institutional balance (Article 13 TEU). Agencies cannot replace political institutions or assume legislative functions. Their mandates are defined by legislative acts and cannot expand autonomously.

Their autonomy is functional rather than political. They may possess administrative independence in technical matters, but they remain subordinate to EU law and the Treaties.

The delegation of powers must respect:

- The principle of conferral (Article 5 TEU),
- The limits on delegation developed by the Court of Justice,
- The requirement that essential policy choices remain with the legislature.

Thus, accountability is not merely financial or procedural; it is constitutional.

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EU agencies operate within a multi-level governance structure. Many act as coordination nodes between national authorities and EU institutions. Their governance boards reflect this hybrid nature, combining national and supranational representation. This design ensures regulatory convergence while maintaining Member State involvement.

However, multi-level governance also creates complexity in accountability chains. Responsibility may be shared between the agency, national regulators, and the Commission. For this reason, transparency, reporting obligations, and judicial review mechanisms are particularly important.

The governance and accountability framework of EU agencies ensures that administrative specialisation does not erode democratic control or institutional equilibrium. Through management boards, Commission supervision, parliamentary budgetary control, financial auditing, judicial review, and transparency obligations, agencies remain embedded within the constitutional architecture of the Union.

They embody a model of delegated administration that enhances efficiency and technical expertise while preserving political responsibility, rule-of-law safeguards, and institutional balance. In this way, the EU administrative state develops not through unchecked delegation, but through structured and accountable governance mechanisms anchored in the Treaties.

4.4 Constitutional Limits on Delegation

The expansion of EU agencies and other delegated bodies raises a fundamental constitutional question: to what extent may the Union's institutions transfer powers to entities not explicitly listed in Article 13 TEU? The answer lies in a carefully constructed body of jurisprudence developed by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), beginning with the landmark **Meroni** judgment in 1958 and evolving through subsequent case law, most notably the **ESMA** judgment in 2014. Together with the Treaty principles of conferral and institutional balance, these rulings define the constitutional architecture governing delegation in the EU legal order.

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4.4.1 The Meroni Doctrine (1958)

The constitutional limits on delegation of powers within the European Union originate in the landmark judgment of the Court of Justice in Meroni v High Authority. Although decided under the framework of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the doctrine articulated in Meroni remains foundational for the interpretation of delegation under the current EU Treaties. It defines the structural boundaries within which institutions may confer powers upon agencies or other bodies.

The case concerned the delegation of powers by the High Authority of the ECSC (the institutional predecessor of the European Commission) to private-law bodies entrusted with administering financial equalisation mechanisms in the coal and steel market. The central legal question was whether an institution established by the Treaties could transfer its competences to external bodies and, if so, under what constitutional limits.

The Court recognised that administrative delegation may be necessary for effective governance. However, it drew a decisive distinction between two types of delegated powers. First, the delegation of clearly defined executive powers, subject to objective criteria and strict supervision, was considered permissible. Such delegation involves technical implementation within a framework already determined by the delegating institution. In this case, the delegate does not determine policy but merely applies predefined rules.

Second, the Court rejected the delegation of discretionary powers involving a wide margin of political or economic judgment. According to the Court, transferring such discretion would alter the institutional balance established by the Treaties. The Treaties allocate competences among institutions in a structured and deliberate manner. Under the current framework, this allocation is reflected in **Article 13(2) TEU**, which provides that each institution shall act within the limits of the powers conferred upon it by the Treaties and in conformity with the procedures, conditions, and objectives set out therein. If an institution could transfer essential discretionary authority to another body not foreseen in the Treaty structure, responsibility would shift away from the institution designated by the Treaties, thereby undermining accountability and constitutional equilibrium.

The Meroni doctrine is therefore closely linked to the principle of institutional balance enshrined in **Article 13 TEU**, as well as to the principle of conferral in **Article 5(2)**

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TEU, which provides that the Union shall act only within the limits of competences conferred upon it by the Member States in the Treaties. Delegation cannot expand competences nor redistribute them in a manner that circumvents Treaty design. The doctrine ensures that essential policy choices remain with the institutions entrusted with legislative and executive authority, notably the European Parliament and the Council under **Articles 289–294 TFEU** (legislative procedure) and the Commission under **Article 17 TEU** (executive function).

The Court's reasoning also implicitly safeguards democratic legitimacy. Legislative authority rests with institutions subject to democratic control. Executive responsibility rests with institutions accountable through political and judicial mechanisms. If discretionary authority capable of shaping policy were transferred to external bodies, those accountability mechanisms would weaken. Judicial review under **Article 263 TFEU** and potential liability under **Articles 268 and 340 TFEU** must remain meaningful; this presupposes that powers are clearly defined and that responsibility remains traceable to the institution designated by the Treaties.

The Meroni doctrine does not prohibit delegation as such. Rather, it establishes conditions for its constitutionality. Delegated powers must be precisely circumscribed, based on objective criteria, and subject to review. They must not involve the transfer of autonomous discretionary authority capable of redefining policy objectives. In modern Treaty terms, delegation must operate consistently with **Articles 290 and 291 TFEU**, which distinguish between delegated acts and implementing acts and confirm that essential elements of legislation cannot be delegated.

The enduring significance of Meroni lies in its structural function. As the Union developed a complex administrative system involving decentralised and supervisory agencies, the principles articulated in 1958 became the constitutional benchmark against which delegation is assessed. Agencies may exercise technical expertise, coordination, and even limited binding authority, but they cannot assume core political discretion. The Treaties define a constitutional equilibrium; delegation must function within, not beyond, that equilibrium.

In conclusion, the Meroni doctrine established the foundational rule that delegation within the EU legal order must not involve the transfer of essential discretionary power capable of shaping policy. Rooted in the principles of conferral (**Article 5 TEU**),

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institutional balance (**Article 13 TEU**), legislative authority (**Articles 289–294 TFEU**), executive responsibility (**Article 17 TEU**), and judicial review (**Article 263 TFEU**), the doctrine continues to define the constitutional boundaries of EU administrative governance.

4.4.2 The Principle of Institutional Balance

The Meroni doctrine is structurally anchored in the broader constitutional principle of institutional balance, expressly codified in Article 13(2) TEU. This provision states that each institution shall act within the limits of the powers conferred upon it by the Treaties and in conformity with the procedures, conditions, and objectives set out therein. It further requires institutions to practice mutual sincere cooperation. Institutional balance is therefore not merely a political principle; it is a constitutional rule governing the distribution and exercise of powers within the Union.

The principle reflects the carefully constructed allocation of competences established by the Treaties. Legislative authority is primarily exercised jointly by the European Parliament and the Council under Articles 289–294 TFEU (ordinary and special legislative procedures). Executive responsibility, as a general rule, belongs to the Commission under Article 17(1) TEU, which ensures the application of the Treaties and oversees the implementation of Union law. Judicial control is entrusted exclusively to the Court of Justice of the European Union under Article 19 TEU, with annulment proceedings governed by Article 263 TFEU and actions for damages by Articles 268 and 340 TFEU.

Institutional balance ensures that none of these functions can be displaced or reallocated outside the Treaty framework. Delegation of powers must therefore respect this constitutional architecture. While the Treaties allow for delegation in certain contexts—most notably under Article 290 TFEU (delegated acts) and Article 291 TFEU (implementing acts)—such delegation must remain within clearly defined boundaries. Essential elements of legislation may not be delegated, and implementing powers must operate under conditions laid down by the legislature.

The constitutional danger identified in Meroni is precisely the risk that delegation could alter the institutional equilibrium by transferring discretionary policy-making authority away from the institution designated by the Treaties. If, for example, broad regulatory discretion were delegated to an agency not listed in Article 13(1) TEU, that agency

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would effectively assume powers not contemplated in the constitutional design. Such a transfer would undermine democratic accountability, since agencies do not possess the same political legitimacy or direct Treaty-based authority as the Parliament, Council, or Commission.

The principle of institutional balance is closely linked to the principle of conferral under Article 5(1)–(2) TEU, which provides that the Union shall act only within the limits of competences conferred upon it by the Member States in the Treaties. Competences are not only limited in scope; they are also allocated institutionally. Conferral therefore operates both vertically (between the Union and Member States) and horizontally (between EU institutions). Delegation cannot be used to expand competences beyond what the Treaties permit, nor to redistribute them internally in a way that circumvents Treaty design.

Institutional balance also safeguards judicial review and legal accountability. Because powers must remain traceable to Treaty-designated institutions, actions adopted under delegated or implementing authority remain subject to review before the Court of Justice under Article 263 TFEU. This ensures that delegation does not create zones of unaccountable authority within the Union's administrative system.

In practical terms, agencies may implement legislation, coordinate national authorities, provide expertise, and in limited circumstances exercise clearly circumscribed binding powers. However, they may not replace the political institutions in defining policy objectives, determining essential elements of legislation, or exercising broad economic or political discretion. Any delegation must preserve the ultimate responsibility of the institution to which the Treaties assign the competence.

In conclusion, the principle of institutional balance enshrined in Article 13(2) TEU, read in conjunction with Article 5 TEU, forms the constitutional backbone of limits on delegation within the EU. It guarantees that legislative authority remains with the Parliament and Council, executive responsibility with the Commission (unless otherwise provided by the Treaties), and judicial control with the Court of Justice. Delegation is permissible only insofar as it operates within this structured equilibrium.

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4.4.3 Evolution Through the ESMA Judgment (2014)

The constitutional rigidity of the Meroni doctrine was significantly tested in the landmark case United Kingdom v Parliament and Council, commonly referred to as the ESMA judgment. The case concerned the legality of powers conferred upon the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) under Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 on short selling and certain aspects of credit default swaps.

The contested provision authorised ESMA, in exceptional circumstances, to impose temporary restrictions or prohibitions on short selling in financial markets where there was a threat to the orderly functioning and integrity of financial markets or to the stability of the financial system in the Union. The United Kingdom challenged the legality of this delegation on multiple grounds, arguing in particular that it violated the Meroni doctrine by granting ESMA excessive discretionary powers incompatible with the principle of institutional balance under Article 13(2) TEU and the principle of conferral under Article 5 TEU.

The core constitutional question was whether granting an EU agency the power to adopt binding intervention measures addressed directly to market actors constituted an impermissible transfer of discretionary authority. Under the traditional reading of Meroni, delegation of broad policy discretion would distort the institutional equilibrium and undermine democratic accountability.

The Court of Justice, however, upheld the legality of the delegation. Importantly, it did not abandon the Meroni doctrine. Instead, it refined and modernised it in light of the Union's evolved regulatory structure.

The Court reasoned as follows:

First, ESMA's powers were precisely defined in the legislative act adopted by the Parliament and the Council under Article 114 TFEU (internal market legal basis). The regulation established clear substantive criteria governing when ESMA could intervene. The essential policy choices—namely, the objective of safeguarding financial stability and ensuring uniform market integrity—had already been determined by the legislature.

Second, the exercise of ESMA's powers was subject to objective conditions and procedural safeguards. Intervention could occur only in clearly circumscribed emergency situations. ESMA was required to consult relevant national authorities and,

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where appropriate, the European Systemic Risk Board. The measures were temporary and subject to periodic review.

Third, the delegation did not confer unlimited political discretion. Rather, ESMA exercised technical and expert judgment within a predefined legal framework. The Court emphasised that the discretion involved was not comparable to autonomous policy-making authority; instead, it was structured and conditioned discretion necessary for effective market supervision.

Fourth, judicial review remained fully available under Article 263 TFEU. Any ESMA decision imposing restrictions could be challenged before the Court of Justice. This ensured that legality, proportionality, and compliance with the founding regulation could be assessed, thereby preserving accountability within the EU legal order.

The Court concluded that the delegation respected the principle of institutional balance under Article 13 TEU, since the legislature retained control over essential elements and the Commission remained embedded in the regulatory structure. The delegation was compatible with the Treaties because it did not alter the allocation of core competences established therein.

The ESMA judgment therefore represents a doctrinal evolution rather than a rupture. Whereas Meroni appeared to impose a rigid prohibition on discretionary delegation, ESMA clarified that a certain degree of discretion is permissible, provided that it is:

- Clearly defined by the legislative act
- Based on objective criteria
- Subject to procedural safeguards
- Limited in scope and duration
- Fully reviewable by the Court

In constitutional terms, the ESMA ruling reflects the maturation of the Union's administrative system. As financial markets became deeply integrated and highly technical, effective supervision required bodies capable of rapid and expert intervention. The Court acknowledged this functional necessity while reaffirming the structural constraints of the Treaties.

Thus, the ESMA judgment recalibrated the Meroni doctrine for a more complex Union. Delegation is no longer understood as categorically excluding discretion; instead, the

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decisive question is whether the discretion granted remains structured, controlled, and reviewable within the framework of Articles 5 TEU, 13 TEU, 114 TFEU, and 263 TFEU. The constitutional equilibrium is preserved not by prohibiting all discretion, but by ensuring that essential policy choices remain with the legislature and that delegated authority operates within legally predetermined boundaries.

4.4.4 Limits of Discretion in EU Delegation

Building on the jurisprudence in Meroni v High Authority and United Kingdom v Parliament and Council (ESMA), the constitutional architecture of the European Union establishes a structured framework governing delegation of powers. These cases do not prohibit delegation; rather, they define strict limits designed to preserve institutional balance, democratic legitimacy, and judicial accountability within the meaning of Articles 5 and 13 TEU.

From this jurisprudence, several constitutional limits on discretion can be distilled.

1. No Transfer of Essential Political Choices

The essential elements of legislation must remain with the Union legislature. Under Articles 289–294 TFEU, legislative authority is exercised by the European Parliament and the Council. Core policy decisions — including the definition of objectives, scope, and fundamental regulatory choices — cannot be transferred to agencies or other bodies.

This principle is reinforced by Article 290 TFEU, which explicitly provides that essential elements of an area shall be reserved for the legislative act and shall not be delegated. Agencies may implement or apply rules, but they may not determine the political direction of Union policy.

2. Clearly Defined Powers

Delegated competences must be precisely defined in the founding legislative act. The scope, purpose, conditions, and limits of the delegated authority must be explicitly described. Open-ended or indeterminate mandates risk violating the Meroni doctrine because they may allow autonomous policy-shaping discretion.

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This requirement ensures compliance with the principle of conferral under Article 5(2) TEU, which limits Union action to competences conferred by the Treaties and structured through legislation.

3. Objective Criteria Governing Exercise of Powers

The exercise of delegated authority must be guided by objective legal criteria set out in the legislative framework. Agencies must operate within predetermined standards that constrain their discretion.

In ESMA, the Court accepted intervention powers precisely because they were triggered by clearly defined emergency conditions and subject to measurable thresholds. Discretion is permissible only when structured by legally reviewable parameters.

4. Procedural Safeguards

Delegation must include procedural mechanisms that guarantee transparency, accountability, and oversight. These may include:

• Consultation requirements
• Reporting obligations
• Commission supervision
• Review clauses
• Time limitations on measures

Such safeguards ensure that agencies remain embedded within the Union's constitutional structure and operate in conformity with Article 13(2) TEU, which requires institutions to act within Treaty limits and respect institutional balance.

5. Judicial Review

Any act adopted under delegated authority must be subject to judicial review before the Court of Justice under Article 263 TFEU. The availability of annulment proceedings is constitutionally decisive.

Judicial review ensures legality, proportionality, and respect for fundamental rights, and preserves accountability within the Union legal order. Without reviewability, delegation would risk creating zones of autonomous authority incompatible with the rule of law principle embedded in Article 2 TEU.

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6. Respect for Institutional Balance

Delegation must not disturb the constitutional equilibrium among EU institutions. The principle of institutional balance, codified in Article 13(2) TEU, requires that each institution act within the limits of its conferred powers. Delegation cannot be used to circumvent this allocation of competences or to shift responsibility away from politically accountable bodies.

This principle operates horizontally between institutions (Parliament, Council, Commission, Court) and functionally between political decision-making and technical implementation. Agencies may assist, coordinate, or implement, but they may not replace political institutions or assume core discretionary authority.

These constitutional limits apply not only to supervisory agencies but to all forms of delegated authority within the EU system, including executive agencies, joint undertakings, and Commission delegated or implementing acts under Articles 290 and 291 TFEU.

Together, Meroni and ESMA establish a modern constitutional doctrine of controlled delegation: Delegation is permissible when it enhances administrative efficiency and technical expertise, but it must remain structured, circumscribed, reviewable, and subordinate to the institutional framework laid down in the Treaties. In this way, the Union reconciles functional necessity with constitutional discipline, ensuring that administrative evolution does not undermine democratic legitimacy or institutional balance.

4.4.5 Constitutional Significance of Limits on Delegation

The constitutional limits on delegation within the European Union reflect the Union's dual character: it is both a supranational legal order and a system grounded in democratic legitimacy and the rule of law. As EU competences have expanded into increasingly technical and complex fields — including financial supervision, digital regulation, public health, energy governance, and security coordination — the need for specialised administrative bodies has grown correspondingly. Delegation has therefore become functionally necessary. Yet functional necessity cannot override constitutional structure.

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The Meroni–ESMA framework provides the doctrinal architecture that reconciles administrative efficiency with constitutional discipline. Rooted in the principles of conferral (**Article 5 TEU**) and institutional balance (**Article 13(2) TEU**), and reinforced by judicial review under **Article 263 TFEU**, this framework ensures that the development of agencies and delegated authority remains embedded within the Treaty system.

Its constitutional significance may be understood through four structural functions.

First, it enables agencies to enhance implementation capacity. Modern regulatory governance requires expertise, rapid intervention, and technical coordination that cannot always be exercised effectively by political institutions alone. Within defined limits, agencies can provide this expertise and operational capacity without displacing the core constitutional actors.

Second, it preserves political accountability. Essential policy choices remain with the legislature — the European Parliament and the Council under **Articles 289–294 TFEU** — and executive responsibility remains with the Commission under **Article 17 TEU**, unless the Treaties provide otherwise. Agencies may implement and apply law, but they do not determine the Union's political direction. Accountability therefore remains traceable to the institutions designated by the Treaties.

Third, it safeguards the rule of law. Delegated acts adopted by agencies or institutions remain subject to judicial review before the Court of Justice under **Article 263 TFEU**, ensuring legality, proportionality, and respect for fundamental rights. The availability of review is constitutionally decisive: it guarantees that delegation does not create autonomous or unaccountable centres of power.

Fourth, it protects institutional balance. The horizontal allocation of powers among Parliament, Council, Commission, and Court — as structured in **Article 13 TEU** — cannot be altered indirectly through delegation. Agencies operate within, not above, this equilibrium. The Meroni–ESMA doctrine ensures that the expansion of administrative governance does not result in an unintended constitutional reallocation of competences.

In this sense, the constitutional limits on delegation are not obstacles to integration. Rather, they are safeguards. They allow the Union to evolve into a sophisticated

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regulatory system while preserving its foundational legal architecture. Delegation is accepted as a tool of modern governance, but it is constitutionally disciplined. The Union's capacity to act efficiently and its commitment to democratic legitimacy are therefore maintained in structural equilibrium.

The Meroni–ESMA framework thus embodies a broader constitutional insight: integration deepens not by bypassing constitutional limits, but by operating within them.

The doctrine originating in Meroni and refined in ESMA defines the constitutional boundaries of delegated authority in EU law. Agencies may exercise technical and operational powers, and in limited cases binding authority, but they cannot assume autonomous political discretion. Delegation must remain structured, reviewable, and compatible with the principle of institutional balance.

In this way, EU constitutional law reconciles the need for specialised governance with the preservation of democratic legitimacy and legal accountability within the Union's institutional framework.

4.5 Position of Agencies within the EU Institutional Framework

EU agencies occupy a distinct but carefully delimited position within the constitutional architecture of the European Union. They are not listed among the Union's institutions under **Article 13(1) TEU**, which enumerates the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Commission, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Central Bank, and the Court of Auditors. Nevertheless, agencies operate fully within the EU legal order and are bound by the Treaties, secondary legislation, and the general principles of EU law. Their constitutional position is therefore hybrid: they are not primary constitutional organs, yet they are embedded within and constrained by the Treaty framework.

EU agencies are created by secondary legislation, usually through a Regulation adopted by the European Parliament and the Council under the ordinary legislative procedure pursuant to **Articles 289–294 TFEU**. Their mandate, powers, governance structure, accountability mechanisms, and budgetary arrangements are exhaustively defined in their founding Regulation. This legislative foundation reflects the **principle of**

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conferral under Article 5(2) TEU, according to which the Union acts only within the limits of competences conferred upon it by the Member States in the Treaties. Agencies do not possess inherent competences; they may exercise only those powers explicitly granted to them by the EU legislature. Essential elements of legislation must remain with the legislature under **Article 290 TFEU**, and implementing powers must be exercised within the limits of **Article 291 TFEU**. Agencies therefore cannot define core policy choices nor expand their mandate autonomously.

Most decentralised agencies and joint undertakings possess separate legal personality. This enables them to conclude contracts, manage administrative budgets, recruit staff under the EU Staff Regulations, and participate in legal proceedings. However, legal personality does not confer constitutional independence. Under **Article 335 TFEU**, the Union is generally represented by the Commission in legal proceedings unless otherwise provided. Agencies may appear before the Court within the limits defined in their founding Regulation, but they do not enjoy primary constitutional standing equivalent to Treaty institutions. Their autonomy is administrative and functional rather than political or constitutional.

Agencies are fully subject to judicial review by the Court of Justice of the European Union. Their acts may be challenged under **Article 263 TFEU** (action for annulment), and they may incur non-contractual liability under **Articles 268 and 340 TFEU**. Judicial accountability is structurally reinforced by **Article 19 TEU**, which entrusts the Court of Justice with ensuring that the law is observed in the interpretation and application of the Treaties. This guarantees that delegation does not create autonomous centres of authority insulated from review.

The constitutional limits governing agencies are closely linked to the principle of institutional balance under **Article 13(2) TEU**, which requires each institution to act within the limits of the powers conferred upon it by the Treaties. The jurisprudence beginning with Meroni and refined in the ESMA judgment establishes that agencies cannot be delegated broad discretionary powers involving essential political choices. Delegation must be clearly defined, guided by objective criteria, subject to procedural safeguards, and fully reviewable by the Court. Agencies may exercise structured technical discretion, but essential legislative choices remain with the European Parliament and the Council, and executive responsibility remains primarily with the

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Commission under **Article 17 TEU**. Delegation therefore operates within, not beyond, the Treaty allocation of competences.

Most decentralised agencies operate with operational independence in technical matters but remain institutionally connected to the Commission, which is typically represented on their management boards and exercises supervisory oversight, particularly in relation to budgetary implementation. Executive agencies function directly under Commission authority and manage Union programmes without independent regulatory discretion. In such cases, the Commission retains full political responsibility under **Article 17 TEU**, ensuring that delegation does not dilute executive accountability.

Agencies also operate within the Union's budgetary framework. Under **Article 317 TFEU**, the Commission implements the budget, while under **Article 319 TFEU** the European Parliament grants discharge for budget implementation. The European Court of Auditors exercises audit control pursuant to **Article 287 TFEU**. Agencies manage appropriations but remain subject to EU financial rules and parliamentary scrutiny. This ensures democratic oversight and fiscal accountability.

Importantly, EU agencies do not replace Member State authorities. Their role is typically supportive, coordinative, or supervisory at European level. Primary enforcement and administrative competences generally remain national unless harmonised by EU legislation. Agencies often function within regulatory networks, facilitating cooperation and ensuring consistent application of Union law while respecting the division of competences under **Article 4 TEU**.

In constitutional terms, EU agencies represent administrative decentralisation within a supranational legal order. They do not constitute a "fourth branch" of government. Rather, they are specialised administrative bodies created by and subordinated to the legislative and executive institutions designated by the Treaties. Their existence reflects the Union's evolution into a complex regulatory system, yet their operation remains structurally conditioned by the principles of conferral (**Article 5 TEU**), institutional balance (**Article 13 TEU**), judicial protection (**Articles 19 TEU and 263 TFEU**), legislative authority (**Articles 289–294 TFEU**), executive responsibility (**Article 17 TEU**), and budgetary accountability (**Articles 317–319 TFEU**).

The constitutional limits on delegation are therefore not obstacles to integration. They are safeguards ensuring that the expansion of administrative governance enhances

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effectiveness and expertise without disturbing the legal and democratic architecture of the Union.

Multiple Choice Questions

MCQ 1

EU agencies are created primarily by:

A. The European Council through political conclusions

B. Treaty amendment procedures

C. Secondary legislation, usually a Regulation

D. Intergovernmental agreements outside EU law

✅ **Correct answer: C**

Explanation:

• A (Wrong): The European Council cannot create agencies by conclusions.

• B (Wrong): Agencies are not created through Treaty revision.

• C (Correct): Agencies are established by Regulations adopted by Parliament and Council.

• D (Wrong): Agencies operate within EU law, not outside it.

MCQ 2

EU agencies are institutions under Article 13 TEU.

A. True

B. False

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

EU agencies are **not institutions**. Article 13 TEU lists the main EU institutions; agencies are decentralised bodies created by secondary legislation.

MCQ 3

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What does “legal personality” allow EU agencies to do?

A. Amend the Treaties

B. Adopt primary legislation

C. Conclude contracts and appear before courts

D. Replace Member State administrations

✅ **Correct answer: C**

Explanation:

• Legal personality allows agencies to act in law (contracts, litigation, property).

• They cannot amend Treaties or legislate.

• They do not replace national authorities.

MCQ 4

Which principle limits the powers of EU agencies?

A. Subsidiarity only

B. Conferral

C. Proportionality only

D. Direct effect

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

The **principle of conferral** means agencies may exercise only the competences explicitly granted by their founding act.

MCQ 5

Under the Meroni doctrine, agencies may:

A. Exercise unlimited political discretion

B. Replace the Commission in policy-making

C. Exercise clearly defined executive powers subject to review

D. Amend EU Regulations

✅ **Correct answer: C**

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Explanation:

The CJEU established that delegation must be clearly defined and limited; agencies cannot exercise broad discretionary political powers.

MCQ 6

Acts of EU agencies may be reviewed by:

A. National constitutional courts only

B. The European Council

C. The Court of Justice of the European Union

D. The European Central Bank

✅ **Correct answer: C**

Explanation:

Agency acts can be challenged before the **CJEU under Article 263 TFEU**.

MCQ 7

Executive agencies differ from decentralised agencies because they:

A. Are listed in Article 13 TEU

B. Operate directly under Commission supervision

C. Have independent regulatory authority

D. Replace national regulators

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

Executive agencies manage EU programmes under direct Commission control and do not shape policy independently.

MCQ 8

EU agencies primarily serve to:

A. Centralise all national competences

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B. Provide technical expertise and coordination

C. Replace EU institutions

D. Amend EU law autonomously

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

Agencies enhance technical expertise and coordination but do not centralise sovereignty or replace institutions.

MCQ 9

Which statement is MOST accurate regarding agency accountability?

A. Agencies operate outside judicial review

B. Agencies are politically accountable only to Member States

C. Agencies are subject to judicial and budgetary oversight

D. Agencies are fully independent from EU institutions

✅ **Correct answer: C**

Explanation:

Agencies are accountable through judicial review, budgetary control, and supervision mechanisms.

MCQ 10

Which statement would MOST LIKELY be incorrect in an EPSO exam?

A. EU agencies have legal personality

B. EU agencies may be subject to CJEU review

C. EU agencies are autonomous constitutional institutions

D. EU agencies are created by Regulation

✅ **Correct answer: C**

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Explanation:

Agencies are not constitutional institutions; they are decentralised bodies within the EU legal order.

MCQ 11

Which EU agency is headquartered in Warsaw?

A. European Labour Authority

B. Frontex

C. European Banking Authority

D. CEPOL

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

• **B (Correct):** Frontex (European Border and Coast Guard Agency) is based in Warsaw.

• A (Wrong): ELA is in Bratislava.

• C (Wrong): EBA is in Paris.

• D (Wrong): CEPOL is in Budapest.

MCQ 12

Which EU agency is located in Budapest?

A. European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

B. Eurojust

C. European Environment Agency

D. ACER

✅ **Correct answer: A**

Explanation:

• **A (Correct):** EIT is headquartered in Budapest and supports innovation ecosystems.

• B (Wrong): Eurojust is in The Hague.

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• C (Wrong): EEA is in Copenhagen.

• D (Wrong): ACER is in Ljubljana.

MCQ 13

Which EU agency is located in Dublin?

A. European Training Foundation

B. Eurofound

C. ENISA

D. EFSA

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

• **B (Correct):** Eurofound (Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions) is in Dublin.

• A (Wrong): ETF is in Turin.

• C (Wrong): ENISA is in Athens.

• D (Wrong): EFSA is in Parma.

MCQ 14

Which EU agency is headquartered in Athens?

A. ENISA

B. Europol

C. ECHA

D. EASA

✅ **Correct answer: A**

Explanation:

• **A (Correct):** ENISA (EU Agency for Cybersecurity) is located in Athens.

• B (Wrong): Europol is in The Hague.

• C (Wrong): ECHA is in Helsinki.

• D (Wrong): EASA is in Cologne.

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MCQ 15

Which EU agency is based in Parma?

A. European Chemicals Agency

B. European Food Safety Authority

C. European Medicines Agency

D. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

- **B (Correct):** EFSA is headquartered in Parma and conducts food risk assessment.
- A (Wrong): ECHA is in Helsinki.
- C (Wrong): EMA is in Amsterdam.
- D (Wrong): ECDC is in Stockholm.

MCQ 16

Which EU agency is located in Stockholm?

A. European Environment Agency

B. European Medicines Agency

C. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

D. Eurojust

✅ **Correct answer: C**

Explanation:

- **C (Correct):** ECDC monitors communicable diseases and is based in Stockholm.
- A (Wrong): EEA is in Copenhagen.
- B (Wrong): EMA is in Amsterdam.
- D (Wrong): Eurojust is in The Hague.

MCQ 17

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Which EU agency is headquartered in Vigo?

A. European Maritime Safety Agency

B. European Fisheries Control Agency

C. European Aviation Safety Agency

D. ACER

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

- **B (Correct):** EFCA (Fisheries Control Agency) is located in Vigo (Spain).
- A (Wrong): EMSA is in Lisbon.
- C (Wrong): EASA is in Cologne.
- D (Wrong): ACER is in Ljubljana.

MCQ 18

Which EU agency is located in Lisbon?

A. European Maritime Safety Agency

B. European Aviation Safety Agency

C. European Chemicals Agency

D. European Environment Agency

✅ **Correct answer: A**

Explanation:

- **A (Correct):** EMSA (Maritime Safety Agency) is headquartered in Lisbon.
- B (Wrong): EASA is in Cologne.
- C (Wrong): ECHA is in Helsinki.
- D (Wrong): EEA is in Copenhagen.

MCQ 19

Which EU agency is headquartered in Valencia (Valenciennes)?

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A. European Union Agency for Railways

B. European Labour Authority

C. European Banking Authority

D. Eurofound

✅ **Correct answer: A**

Explanation:

• **A (Correct):** ERA (Railways Agency) is located in Valenciennes (France).

• B (Wrong): ELA is in Bratislava.

• C (Wrong): EBA is in Paris.

• D (Wrong): Eurofound is in Dublin.

MCQ 20

Which of the following EU bodies is located in Luxembourg?

A. European Central Bank

B. EURATOM Supply Agency

C. European Medicines Agency

D. Europol

✅ **Correct answer: B**

Explanation:

• **B (Correct):** The EURATOM Supply Agency is based in Luxembourg.

• A (Wrong): ECB is in Frankfurt and is not an agency.

• C (Wrong): EMA is in Amsterdam.

• D (Wrong): Europol is in The Hague.

MCQ 21

Which of the following functions falls within the constitutional mandate of the Eurosystem?

A) Drafting EU-wide prudential banking legislation

B) Managing and safeguarding the euro area's official foreign exchange reserves

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