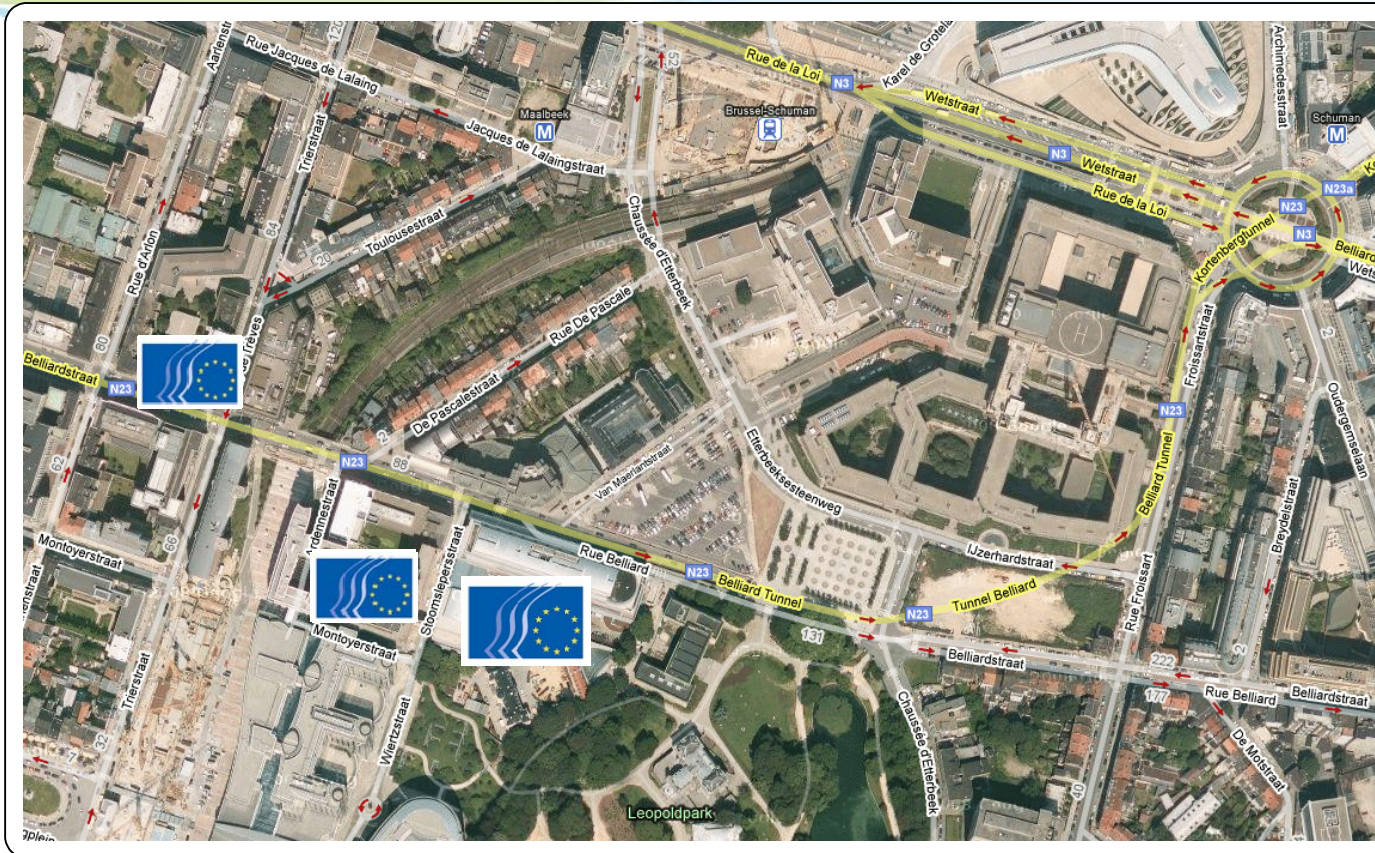


European Economic and Social Committee



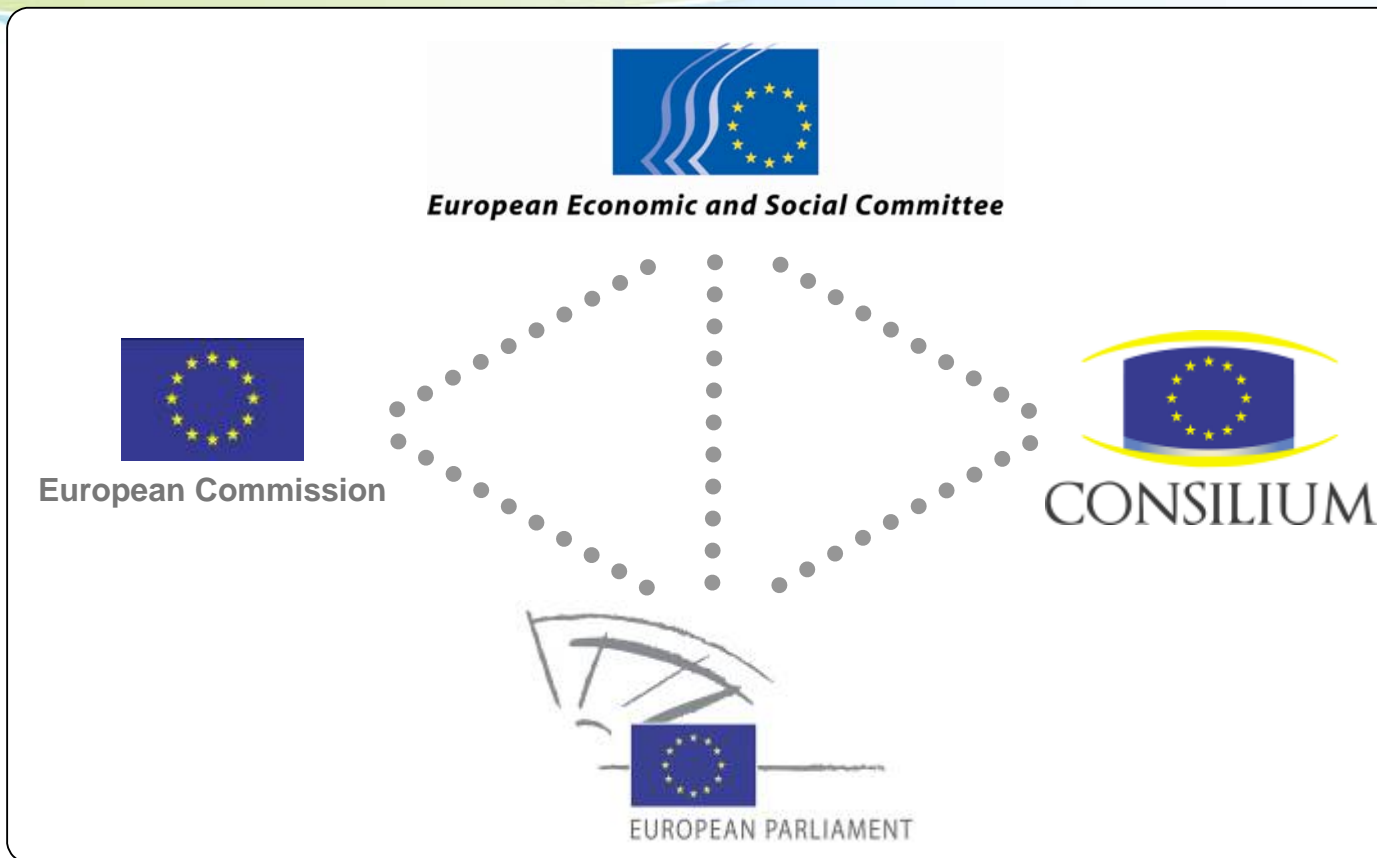
European Economic and Social Committee

Where is the EESC located?



European Economic and Social Committee

Institutional position of the EESC



Who sits on the EESC?

- **Treaty of Rome 1957**
 - Representatives of the various categories of **economic and social activity**
- **Treaty of Nice 2000**
 - Representatives of the various economic and social components of **organised civil society**



What is organised civil society?

- **Organisations** representing producers, farmers, carriers, workers, dealers, craftsmen, professional occupations, consumers and the general interest
- **Organised civil society's role is to act as an intermediary** between the public authorities and citizens



What is the structure of the EESC?

- It is an **assembly** of **344 members** from the **27 Member States** of the EU.
- Members are appointed for a renewable **four-year term**.
- They are appointed by the **Council of Ministers** on the basis of lists drawn up by national governments.



An assembly divided into three GROUPS

- **Group I – Employers**
 - Public and private sectors of industry, commerce, finance, etc. (large companies)
- **Group II – Employees**
 - National trade union confederations
- **Group III – Various Interests**
 - Farmers, consumers, the social economy, craftsmen and SMEs, social and environmental NGOs, the professions...



Decision-making bodies of the EESC

- **The presidency**
- **The bureau**
- **The plenary assembly**



The EESC's working bodies

- **Six sections...**

- Single Market, Production and Consumption
- Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and the Information Society
- Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment
- Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion
- Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship
- External Relations



The EESC's working bodies

- ...and **five more recent bodies**
 - The Consultative Commission on Industrial Change – **CCMI**
 - The Single Market Observatory – **SMO**
 - The Sustainable Development Observatory – **SDO**
 - The Labour Market Observatory – **LMO**
 - The Lisbon Strategy Observatory – **LSO**
- The members and the various working bodies are assisted by a **secretariat-general**.



The activities of the EESC

- The role of the Committee is to issue opinions
 - (approx. 150 per year)
- 1957 Treaty of Rome
 - The Committee may be consulted by the Council or the European Commission
- 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam
 - The Committee may be consulted by the Council, the European Commission or the European Parliament
- Mandatory or optional referrals



The activities of the EESC

- **In addition, the EESC**
 - has the right of initiative
 - may issue exploratory opinions
 - takes on the role of facilitator and promoter of civil dialogue



Working methods

- To issue opinions, the sections usually set up “**study groups**”, each with a **rapporteur**
- A continual quest for a “**dynamic compromise**”
- **Constructive debate** based on expertise
- **A vote** is taken in the **section**, and then in the **plenary session**



Pattern of work

- 9 plenary sessions per year
- Each of the 6 sections generally meets once a month
- Each study group meets between one and three times



The Committee, facilitator of civil dialogue

- Regular contact and cooperation with networks of national economic and social councils and with civil society organisations
 - at the level of the European Union
 - in Member States and other European countries
 - in Euromed partnership countries
 - in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states
 - in Mercosur states and other Latin American countries
 - in India, China, etc.



Challenges for the future...

- to optimise the Committee's role as a consultative body to the European Parliament, Council and European Commission by stepping up cooperation
- to improve the EESC's representativeness and credibility as the institutional representative of civil society
- to reinforce the EESC's presence in the debate on the future of Europe



The added value of the EESC

- a major **repository of expertise**
- the **search for consensus** (“dynamic compromise”)
- its role as a **channel of communication** between civil society organisations and the European Union’s institutions
- a real **impact** on the European Union’s **legislative process**



Its consultative role and its dialogue with civil society organisations...

...make the EESC one of the most active protagonists and promoters of...

... PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY.



European Economic and Social Committee

The president



Mario Sepi
Italy
Employees Group (II)

The vice-presidents



Irini Pari
Greece
Employers Group (I)



Seppo Kallio
Finland
Various Interests Group (III)



The Group presidents



Henri Malosse

France
Employers Group (I)



Georgios Dassis

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Staffan Nilsson

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