

Who Do You Call When You Want to Call Europe?

An Introduction to the European External Action Service

What is the European External Action Service?

The European External Action Service, or EEAS, is the EU's official diplomatic service. It was launched on January 1, 2011, and is comparable to the U.S. Foreign Service. It is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.

What does the European External Action Service do?

The European External Action Service supports the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/European Commission Vice-President, Catherine Ashton. In the United States, the High Representative's counterpart is the Secretary of State.

The EEAS helps the High Representative ensure the consistency and coordination of the EU's external action, and oversees the EU's external policies, strategies, instruments, missions, and the 140 EU diplomatic delegations throughout the world. It prepares and implements common foreign and security policy proposals, and assists the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission with their external relations portfolios.

The EEAS is divided into both geographical (covering all regions and countries) and thematic directorates. It cooperates closely with the diplomatic services of the EU Member States, and includes staff from the Council Secretariat, the



European Commission, and Member State diplomatic services. Currently, the EEAS has more than 3,600 staff; 43 percent of staff members are located at its Brussels headquarters, while 57 percent work at EU Delegations worldwide.

The 2011 budget for the EEAS in 2011 was €464 million (approximately \$600 million). Around 40 percent of the budget is allocated to EEAS headquarters; the remaining 60 percent funds the EU Delegations around the world.

What is the High Representative's job?

The High Representative steers foreign and security policy; represents the EU internationally at the ministerial level on the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy; and enhances the consistency

and unity of the EU's external action. She also heads the European Defense Agency and chairs meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council.

The position of High Representative combines three formerly separate functions—High Representative of the Council for Common Foreign and Security Policy, President of the Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union, and European Commissioner for External Relations—into a single inter-institutional position.

The High Representative is appointed for a five-year term.

What does an EU Delegation do? EU Delegations are essential to the promotion of EU interests and values, and are at the front line in delivering EU external relations policy and action, from the common foreign and security policy, through trade and development cooperation, to scientific and technical relations.

EU Delegations represent the European Union to their host countries, and in several cases to international organizations, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. The delegations are staffed by EU diplomats and locally recruited employees and hold the status of diplomatic missions.

Each of the 140 EU Delegations around the world has a mandate that reflects the specific EU relationship with the individual country, whether it is an applicant for EU membership, a neighboring nation that benefits from the European Neighborhood Policy, an industrialized nation with which the EU has specific strategic and trade relations, or one of the many beneficiaries of development assistance.

EU Delegations work in close cooperation with the local diplomatic missions of the EU Member States.

Who is Catherine Ashton?



On December 1, 2009, Baroness Catherine Ashton became the EU's first-ever High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. She chairs the EU's Foreign Affairs Council, which deals with the EU's common foreign and security policy, foreign trade, and development cooperation. Drawing on her concurrent role as Vice-President of the European Commission, she ensures the consistency and coordination of the European Union's external action.

Prior to becoming the High Representative, Baroness Ashton was the European Commissioner for Trade. She has also served the Leader of the House of Lords and Lord President of the Council in her home country, the United Kingdom.

Diplomacy in Action: Key Accomplishments in the First Year of the EU External Action Service

The creation of the European External Action Service was an important milestone in strengthening the EU's institutional capacity to rise to international challenges.

The Arab Spring. The EEAS worked hand-in-hand with the European Commission, the executive arm of the EU, to coordinate an immediate response to the events of the Arab Spring. EU priorities in the region have been reviewed and now focus on governance, employment, and youth, and the EU has allocated a total of €4.5 billion (approximately \$5.85 billion) between 2011 and 2013 to support these efforts.

Crisis in Libya. During the Libyan crisis, the High Representative brought together the United Nations and regional organizations (including the EU, the Arab League, the African Union, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation), to coordinate the international community's views on the best way to respond to the Libyan crisis. The High Representative traveled to Libya several times, and an EU Delegation opened in Tripoli.

Middle East Peace Process. The Arab Spring has brought more urgency to the Middle East Peace Process. The voice of the EU in the Middle East Peace Process has grown stronger, and the Quartet Statement of September 2011 provides a framework for direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Iran. The High Representative continues to lead international efforts aimed at finding a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and convincing Iran that it must demonstrate its readiness to address all existing concerns on its nuclear program.

In January 2012, the EU strengthened sanctions against Iran, banning imports of Iranian crude oil and petroleum products, which are viewed as sources of financing for its nuclear program. Additional measures target Iran's financial and transport sectors.

At the same time, the European Union continues to pay close attention to the country's worrying human rights situation.

Horn of Africa. The EEAS leads the EUNAVFOR ATALANTA anti-piracy operation off the Somali coast, and the EU has helped train approximately 1,800 Somali soldiers to join the AU peace-keeping force in Somalia. The EU is the largest humanitarian donor to the Horn of Africa, providing more than €700 million (approximately \$910 million) in assistance since the beginning of 2011.



A Brief History of the European Union's Foreign Policy

In parallel with its growing economic and political power, the EU has created its own foreign and security policy which enables it to speak—and act—as one in world affairs.

The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), established in 1993 with the Maastricht Treaty, provides a formal structure that allows Member States to coordinate consistent policies and assert the EU's inherent political identity. It is designed to safeguard the values, interests, independence, and integrity of the Union; to strengthen the Union's security; to preserve peace and strengthen international security; to promote international cooperation; to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Because foreign and security policy is one area where essential authority remains with the governments of the EU Member States,

CFSP decision-making procedures are intergovernmental. Member States not willing to participate in a particular foreign policy or security action may opt out without holding back the rest of the Union through a process called "constructive abstention."

The EU's Common Security and Defense Policy, a major component of CFSP, empowers the EU to respond proactively to international crises through a broad mix of civilian and military crisis management and conflict prevention operations.

Through the Common Security and Defense Policy, the EU meets international security challenges by sharing civilian expertise in areas such as policing, the rule of law, and civilian administration, as well as through "boots on the ground" military operations that help secure and stabilize post-conflict areas and fragile states.

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2175 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
202.862.9500

www.eurunion.org
www.facebook.com/EUintheUS
www.twitter.com/EUintheUS
email: delegation-usa-info@eeas.europa.eu

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The EEAS in Your Backyard: the Delegation of the European Union to the United States

The EU maintains diplomatic relations with nearly all countries in the world. It has strategic partnerships with key international players, including the United States.

The EU is represented in the United States by the Washington, DC Delegation of the European Union, which works in close coordination with the diplomatic and consular missions of the 27 EU Member States.

The European Union Delegation to the United States is headed by Ambassador João Vale de Almeida of Portugal. Mr. Vale de Almeida is the first EU Ambassador to the United States since the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in 2009.

For more information: www.eurunion.org/euinsight