

6BG	Klasse 10	Teil B: Freie Rede: Stundenentwurf 2	Englisch
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### 3.2 Arbeitsblatt: Model summary

#### Europe in a nutshell

#### Founding the European Union

The European **Coal and Steel Community** was founded in 1951 by six countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy Luxembourg and the Netherlands. They wanted to prevent further wars in Europe by pooling their coal and steel production and thus controlling the raw materials of weapons.

Soon after they decided to increase their cooperation and set up the **European Economic Community** (EEC) in order to create a common market. This means that they could trade freely across borders without any obstacles like border checks and customs.

When the EEC changed its name to **European Union (EU)** the community had increased in member countries and many areas of cooperation, like e.g. environmental protection and infrastructure. The end of the Cold War ended the separation between the eastern and western parts of Europe and many more, amongst them former communist countries, have joined the European Union. Meanwhile there are 28 members.

#### What the European Union does today

The idea of the EU is to make life easier for us. Here are some examples:

- People are free to live, work and study in any of the EU member countries. They don't need passports when crossing national borders within the union.
- Many EU countries use one single currency, the euro.
- Poorer regions within the EU and neighbouring countries are provided with money and know-how to improve their infrastructure, schools, hospitals and social protection.
- Furthermore the EU works on environmental and consumer protection and improves many more things of our daily lives.

#### How the European Union makes decisions

Laws in the European Union are made by three cooperating institutions: The European Commission, The European Parliament and the Council. **The Court of Justice** makes sure that these laws respect "fundamental laws" and that the member countries stick to them.

**The European Commission** is made up of 28 Commissioners who work for the sake of the Union as a whole. They propose new EU laws. **The European Parliament** represents the people of the EU. Its members are elected every five years by all adult citizens of the EU. The parliament discusses new laws together with the **Council**, where government ministers of the member states meet regularly. The Council is the representation of the EU countries. If the Parliament and the Council find agreement on a new law it is passed.

The general political strategy of the EU is set in the **European Council** by the leaders of all member countries.