



# How the EU works with the WTO

## The EU in WTO institutions

---

- The WTO's highest decision making body is the [Ministerial Conference](#), which meets at least every two years. The [EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström](#) represents the EU in this forum. The 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference will be held in Nairobi, Kenya, December 2015
- The Commission represents the EU in the [General Council of the WTO](#), which acts on behalf of the Ministerial Conference and meets on a regular basis in different configurations, e.g. the [Dispute Settlement Body](#) and the Trade Policy Review Body.
- The Commission also represents the EU in subsidiary WTO bodies such as the [Council for Trade in Goods](#) or the [Committee for Trade and the Environment](#).

## Who represents the EU in WTO negotiations

---

- Both the European Union (EU) and the 28 EU Member States are members of the WTO
- The Commission negotiates on behalf of the European Union authorised by the Council
  - During negotiations, the Commission works in close coordination with the EU Member States by consulting with the Trade Policy Committee, which is a working group of the Council in charge of discussing the full range of trade policy issues.
  - The Commission seeks to reconcile EU Member States' concerns and priorities with WTO partners' requests
- The Commission regularly informs the European Parliament of key WTO issues, by reporting to the International Trade Committee ([INTA](#))
- The Commission initiates and handles WTO complaints with the Council support and may propose retaliatory measures to the Council
- When an agreement is negotiated at the WTO, the Commission needs the formal authorisation of the Council and European Parliament to sign the agreement on behalf of the EU.

The Commission also consults with other interested group (see [Civil Society](#)) in the formulation of policy.