

## The European League for Economic Cooperation (ELEC)

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**Last updated:** 08/07/2016

## The European League for Economic Cooperation (ELEC)

The European League for Economic Cooperation (ELEC) was a European study and pressure group with liberal roots, created in autumn 1946 on the initiative of the former Belgian Prime Minister, Paul van Zeeland, and the Pole, Joseph Retinger. Their aim was to create a transnational group – initially called the Independent League for European Cooperation (ILEC) – comprising European economic and political officials who wanted to defend the economic interests of the continent through the establishment of a European common market.

The League rapidly became a movement of European industrialists and financiers, although without becoming an employers' group. It also gradually opened up to trade union involvement. On numerous occasions, it served as a bridge between European economic circles, political circles, and high-level administration. As it was not a mass movement, the ELEC preferred to seek expert advice for the issues of interest to it and to defend them directly before the European decision-makers. After its formation, the ELEC developed many projects concerning in particular monetary integration, organisation of transport, harmonisation of social security systems and the establishment of a European energy policy.