

## Evolution of qualified majority voting in the Council

**Caption:** Table showing the development of qualified majority voting in the Council of the European Union since the entry into force, on 1 January 1958, of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community.

**Source:** CVCE.

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**URL:** [http://www.cvce.eu/obj/evolution\\_of\\_qualified\\_majority\\_voting\\_in\\_the\\_council-en-091ecbcb-7f7d-4772-ac95-9c51b041a7ff.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/evolution_of_qualified_majority_voting_in_the_council-en-091ecbcb-7f7d-4772-ac95-9c51b041a7ff.html)

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## Evolution of the vote by qualified majority within the Council

	01.01.1958	01.01.1973	01.01.1981	01.01.1986	01.01.1995	01.05.2004	01.11.2004	01.01.2007 (f)
Belgium	2	5	5	5	5	5	12	12
Netherlands	2	5	5	5	5	5	13	13
Luxembourg	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	4
France	4	10	10	10	10	10	29	29
Germany	4	10	10	10	10	10	29	29
Italy	4	10	10	10	10	10	29	29
United Kingdom		10	10	10	10	10	29	29
Denmark		3	3	3	3	3	7	7
Ireland		3	3	3	3	3	7	7
Greece			5	5	5	5	12	12
Spain				8	8	8	27	27
Portugal				5	5	5	12	12
Sweden					4	4	10	10
Finland					3	3	7	7
Austria					4	4	10	10
Poland						8	27	27
Romania							(14) (a)	14
Hungary						5	12	12
Czech Republic						5	12	12
Bulgaria							(10) (a)	10
Lithuania						3	7	7
Slovakia						3	7	7
Cyprus						2	4	4
Estonia						3	4	4
Latvia						3	4	4
Slovenia						3	4	4
Malta						2	3	3
Total	17	58	63	76	87	124	321	345
Number of Member States	6	9	10	12	15	25	25	27

Qualified majority	12	41	45	54	62 (b)	88	232	255
Qualified majority (as a % of the vote)	70.5	70.6	71.4		71.0	70.9	72.2	73.9
Blocking minority	6	18	19	23	26 (b)	37	90	91
Blocking minority (as a % of the vote)	33.3	31.0	30.1	30.2	29.8	29.8	28.0	26.4
Minimum number of States for a majority	3	5	5	6	8 or 10 (c)	13 or 17 (d)	13 or 17 (d)	14 ou 18 (e)
Minimum number of States for a blocking minority	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4

(a) The Treaty of Nice provides for the number of votes available to the 27 countries with which the Union had already opened accession negotiations, including both Romania and Bulgaria.

(b) According to the Ioannina compromise, if the members of the Council representing a total of 23 to 26 votes state their intention to oppose a decision taken by the Council by qualified majority, the Council will do all in its power to arrive within a reasonable period of time at a satisfactory solution that can be adopted by a minimum of 65 % of the votes. (c) 8 if acts are to be adopted on a proposal from the Commission, 10 in other cases.

(d) Acts are adopted which gain at least 232 votes in favour, cast by a majority of the members if acts are to be adopted on a proposal from the Commission, and of at least two-thirds of the members in other cases.

In addition, a Member State may ask for verification that the Member States constituting the qualified majority represent at least 62 % of the total population of the EU. Should this not be the case, the decision will not be adopted.

(e) Acts are adopted which gain at least 255 votes in favour, cast by a majority of the members if acts are to be adopted on a proposal from the Commission, and of at least two-thirds of the members in other cases.

In addition, a Member State may ask for verification that the Member States constituting the qualified majority represent at least 62 % of the total population of the EU. Should this not be the case, the decision will not be adopted.

(f) The Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, established, from 1 November 2014, the principle of dual majority (of the population and of the number of Member States). The qualified majority shall be defined as equal to at least 55 % of the Council members (72 % when the proposal does not come from the Commission or the High Representative), including at least 15 of them and representing the Member States that include at least 65 % of the population of the UE. As regards the blocking minority, it must include at least 4 Council members. The Protocol on transitional provisions provides that, until 31 March 2017, a Member State may require that the qualified majority vote take place according to the rules of the system of weighted votes (rules that are identical to those appearing in this column in the Treaty of Nice).

In addition, Declaration No. 7, attached to the Final Act of the Treaty of Lisbon, provides for the reactivation of the 'Ioannina compromise' from 1 November 2014: if the Council members, representing at least 75 % of the population or at least 75 % of the number of Member States necessary to constitute a blocking minority (from 1 April 2017, respectively 55 % and 55 %), indicate their opposition to the adoption of an act by means of a qualified majority, voting is postponed in order that the Council may discuss the issue with a view to reaching, within a reasonable time, a satisfactory solution that addresses the concerns raised.