

*Voice of the People*

**Manuscript**  
**The Treaties**  
**TVSYD, Denmark**

Participants:

No names of questioners

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Music: Song of Joy from Council of Europe's CD "The European Anthem" 15sec

Duration: 6:15

# Translation

## EU and the treaties

### TVSYD, Denmark

0:11

When ordinary people see pictures of the EU, it is often pictures of smiling politicians who shake hands and sign documents. Often, new treaties are signed, but what are the individual treaties about, and what do they mean to us, the EU-citizens.

sync:

0:26

The treaties spell out what the EU does, e.g. on environment, consumer protection, animal protection, sports, industry, all these issues are described here. And of course who is to deal with it: The institutions in Europe, i.e. the Parliament, the Commission, the Council of Ministers and the European Court of Justice, just to mention some.

speak:

0:56

Over time, the EU member states have agreed on a number of treaties, legally binding agreements between two or more countries. However, fundamentally the EU is based on three treaties.

Graphics:

1'08

The EEC-treaty also called Rome-treaty, as it was signed in Rome by the six original member states in 1957. It laid out that a European common union was to be established and to replace the Coal and Steel Community established in 1952.

1'26

Then there is the Euratom Treaty covering the European Atomic Energy Community which was also signed in 1957.

1'34

And finally, the EU-treaty, also known as the Maastricht-Treaty which was signed in the town of Maastricht in 1992, and deals with the intergovernmental EU-cooperation. I.e. the rules the states are committed to respect.

1:47

Furthermore, there are a number of other treaties which are not fundamental treaties, but which amend or supplement the rules of the EEC- or EU-treaties.

1'59

For example the Fusion Treaty of 1967 which deals with the institutions of the three communities.

2'04

And the Accession Treaty, which deals with the 10 new countries' membership of the EU.

sync

2'09

I would be interested in knowing, why they can't agree on the EU-constitution. It would be especially useful to know, if democracies in the EU are strengthened by it.

2'28

The most recent treaty ratified by the EU is called the Constitution Treaty. And as a novelty words like "democratic life", "dignity" and "civil rights" are mentioned in this treaty which has also been called the constitution of the EU.

The Constitution Treaty is a round-up of all the EU treaties and is a huge work of several hundred pages.

It covers in detail how the EU is to deal with a number of very different issues.

2'56

The European Constitution has to pass three stages. First came the European Convention presided by Giscard d'Estaing. They sat for 16 months. So it obviously took a lot of debate and compromise. Then there was the Intergovernmental Conference, as the European treaties stipulate that all member states must sign a new treaty. And now comes the third stage, the ratification. This is either done by the national parliaments or by referendum as is the case in 10 countries.

3:34

Today, on October 2, our child was born.

3:40

It has been difficult for the politicians to agree on the wording. I.e. religion was one of the issues they couldn't agree on including in the treaty. However, the change in rules of voting remains the most controversial issue. In future, decisions will only be implemented if 13 of the 25 member states vote in favour. At the same time, these 13 countries must represent at least 50.1 per cent of the total EU-population.

4:08

Secondly, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights will be included in the Constitution. So the entire catalogue of rights and freedoms enjoyed by the people of Europe now becomes binding. And as a EU-citizen you can now bring a complaint before the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg. That is historical, revolutionary.

4:35

My question is about the future constitution of the EU. Will there be joint missions abroad in case of international crisis? I'd really like to know that.

4:48

Specific agreements are only entered into by some of the member states. I.e. the EU member states decided to set up elite battle groups that are to respond quickly to international crisis. However, Denmark has chosen not to participate, whereas Norway, which isn't even a member of the EU, has agreed to contribute troops to the new elite battle groups which are to be ready for deployment in 2005.

5:12

I believe Europe must pursue a policy of human rights worldwide. And then it may become necessary to intervene with police or military forces. And in the province of Bunya in Congo, the EU intervened last year, preventing the drafting of child-soldiers and unnecessary bloodshed between two peoples.

And of course we hope, it won't happen often, however, if Europe has to intervene in our vicinity of parts of the world where we have responsibilities, we must have the opportunity to bring peace even with force. Sometimes you have to force people to their happiness.