Guide to European policies

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The European Neighborhood Policy seeks to deepen the EU’s relations with its southern and eastern neighbors while encouraging them to pursue governance and economic reforms. These are the EU’s most deeply integrated external policies. Given events in North Africa, the Middle East, and some of the former Soviet states, EU policymakers have been rethinking how such external policy tools might be used to better effect. The United States, the EU, and NATO. The 1992 Treaty on European Union outlines the broad set of principles that guide the EU’s external policies and actions. Under the treaty, the EU aims to: (a) safeguard its values, fundamental interests, security, independence, and integrity. The European Union (EU) is a unique partnership in which member states have pooled sovereignty in certain policy areas and harmonized laws on a wide range of economic, social, and political issues. The EU is the latest stage in a process of European integration begun after World War II, initially by six Western European countries, to promote peace, security, and economic development. The European Council acts as a strategic guide and driving force for EU policy. It is composed of the Heads of State or Government of the EU’s 28 member states, the European Council President (currently Donald Tusk), and the President of the European Commission; it meets several times a year in what are often termed EU summits. The European Council plays a central political role in setting the pace, shape and political direction of the development of EU policy. The Treaty of Lisbon granted the European Council status as a formal EU institution and created the permanent role of President. The European Securities Committee (ESC) deals with securities policy issues. The ESC also acts as a regulatory committee in the context of work on conferring implementing powers on the Commission for future legislative proposals. The European Banking Committee (EBC) deals with policy issues relating to banking activities; it superseded the Banking Advisory Committee.