

LIMITS TO EU POWERS

Two concepts officially limit the the European Union's powers. They involve EU countries beyond their role in the EU institutions.



PROPORTIONALITY

"EU laws and actions can't go beyond what is necessary to achieve their goals"

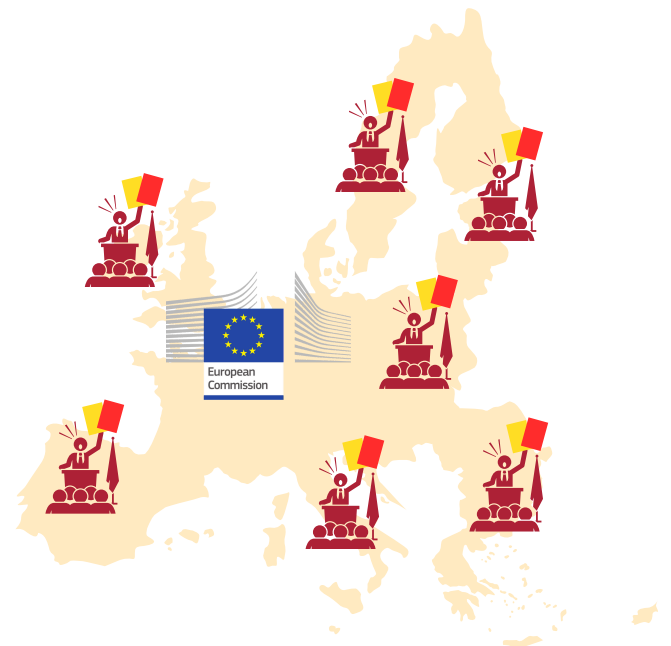
In other words, it is a legal concept used to guarantee that EU actions are not excessive.



SUBSIDIARITY

When both the EU and its Member States make laws – so **outside of the EU "exclusive competences"** – the question is always **"who can do the best job?"**

So this concept checks that policies are decided and implemented at the right political level: in other words, **the EU should only intervene when action at the EU level is more effective than at the national level.**



These two principles are more than just "legal technicalities"!

They are **how all political levels of EU countries have a say in EU lawmaking**, not just their national ministers (Council of the EU) and heads of states (European Council) because:

PROPORTIONALITY

National Courts can ask the "EU judges" to check the proportionality of EU laws once passed.

SUBSIDIARITY

National Parliaments have 8 weeks when an EU law is proposed to examine it, and ask the EU to modify it or even give it up.