



G8



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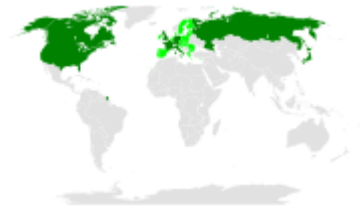
The **G8** (reformatted as **G7** from 2014 due to [Russia's suspension](#))^{[2][3][4][5]} was an inter-governmental political forum from 1997 until 2014, with the participation of the major industrialized countries in the world, that viewed themselves as [democracies](#).^[6]

The forum originated with a [1975 summit](#) hosted by [France](#) that brought together representatives of six governments: [France](#), [Germany](#), [Italy](#), [Japan](#), the [United Kingdom](#), and the [United States](#), thus leading to the name **Group of Six** or **G6**. The summit came to be known as the **Group of Seven**, or **G7**, in 1976 with the addition of [Canada](#). [Russia](#) was added to the political forum from 1997, which the following year became known as the G8. In March 2014 Russia was suspended following the [annexation of Crimea](#), whereupon the group's name reverted to the G7.^{[7][8][9]} Certain representatives of G7 countries stated that they would be interested in Russia's return to the group.^{[10][11][12][13][14][15]} However in 2017 Russia announced that it would permanently leave the political forum G8.^[16] The [European Union](#) was represented at the G8 since the 1980s as a "nonenumerated" participant, but originally could not host or chair summits.^[17] The [40th summit](#) was the first time the European Union was able to host and chair a summit. Collectively, in 2012 the G8 nations comprised 50.1 percent of 2012 global nominal GDP and 40.9 percent of global GDP (PPP).

"G7" can refer to the member states in aggregate or to the annual [summit meeting](#) of the G7 [heads of government](#). G7 ministers also meet throughout the year, such as the [G7 finance ministers](#) (who meet four times a year), G7 foreign ministers, or G7 environment ministers.

Each calendar year, the responsibility of hosting the G8 was rotated through the member states in the following order: France, United States, United Kingdom, Russia (suspended), Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada. The holder of the [presidency](#) sets the agenda, hosts the summit for that year, and determines which ministerial meetings will take place.

Group of Eight




 [Canada](#)

 [France](#)

 [Germany](#)

 [Italy](#)

 [Japan](#)

 [Russia](#) (excluded)^[1]

 [United Kingdom](#)

 [United States](#)

 [European Union](#)

In 2005, the UK government initiated the practice of inviting five leading emerging markets — Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa — to participate in the G8 meetings that came to be known as G8+5; but this practice was short-lived.^[6] With the G-20 major economies growing in stature since the 2008 Washington summit, world leaders from the group announced at their Pittsburgh summit in September 2009 that the group would replace the G8 as the main economic council of wealthy nations.^{[18][19]} Nevertheless, the G7 retains its relevance as a "steering group for the West",^[6] with special significance appointed to Japan.^[20]

History

Following 1994's G7 summit in Naples, Russian officials held separate meetings with leaders of the G7 after the group's summits. This informal arrangement was dubbed the Political 8 (P8)—or, colloquially, the G7+1. At the invitation of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and U.S. President Bill Clinton,^[21] President Boris Yeltsin was invited first as a guest observer, later as a full participant. It was seen as a way to encourage Yeltsin with his capitalist reforms. Russia formally joined the group in 1998, resulting in the Group of Eight, or G8.

Food

A major focus of the G8 since 2009 has been the global supply of food.^[22] At the 2009 L'Aquila summit, the G8's members promised to contribute \$20 billion to the issue over three years.^[23] Since then, only 22% of the promised funds have been delivered.^[24]

At the 2012 summit, President Barack Obama asked G8 leaders to adopt the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition initiative to "help the rural poor produce more food and sell it in thriving local and regional markets as well as on the global market."^{[25][26]}

Russia's participation suspension (2014)

On 24 March 2014, the non-Russian G8 members cancelled the planned G8 summit that was to be held in June that year in the Russian city of Sochi, and suspended Russia's membership of the group, due to Russia's annexation of Crimea; nevertheless, they stopped short of outright permanent expulsion.^[27] Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov downplayed the importance of the decision by the U.S. and its allies, and pointed up that major international decisions were taken by the G20 countries.^{[28][7]}

Later on, the Italian Foreign Affairs minister Federica Mogherini and other Italian authorities,^{[10][11]} along with the EastWest Institute board member Wolfgang Ischinger,^[12] suggested that Russia may restore its membership in the group. In April 2015, the German foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said that Russia would be welcomed to return to G8 provided the Minsk Protocol was implemented.^[13] In 2016, he added that "none of the major international conflicts can be solved without Russia", and the G7 countries will consider Russia's return to the group in 2017. The same year, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe called for Russia's return to G8, stating that Russia's involvement is "crucial to tackling multiple crises in the Middle East".^[14] In January 2017, the Italian foreign minister Angelino Alfano said that Italy hopes for "resuming the G8 format with Russia and ending the atmosphere of the Cold War".^[15] On 13 January 2017, Russia announced that it would permanently leave the G8 grouping.^[29]

Structure and activities

By design, the G8 deliberately lacked an administrative structure like those for international organizations, such as the United Nations or the World Bank. The group does not have a permanent secretariat, or offices for its members.

The presidency of the group rotates annually among member countries, with each new term beginning on 1 January of the year. The rotation order is: France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia (suspended), Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada.^[30] The country holding the presidency is responsible for planning and hosting a series of ministerial-level meetings, leading up to a mid-year summit attended by the heads of government. The president of the European Commission participates as an equal in all summit events.^[31]

The ministerial meetings bring together ministers responsible for various portfolios to discuss issues of mutual or global concern. The range of topics include health, law enforcement, labor, economic and social development, energy, environment, foreign affairs, justice and interior, terrorism, and trade. There are also a separate set of meetings known as the G8+5, created during the 2005 Gleneagles, Scotland summit, that is attended by finance and energy ministers from all eight member countries in addition to the five "outreach countries" which are also known as the Group of Five—Brazil, People's Republic of China, India, Mexico, and South Africa.^[32]

In June 2005, justice ministers and interior ministers from the G8 countries agreed to launch an international database on pedophiles.^[33] The G8 officials also agreed to pool data on terrorism, subject to restrictions by privacy and security laws in individual countries.^[34]

Global energy

At the Heiligendamm Summit in 2007, the G8 acknowledged a proposal from the EU for a worldwide initiative on efficient energy use. They agreed to explore, along with the International Energy Agency, the most effective means to promote energy efficiency internationally. A year later, on 8 June 2008, the G8 along with China, India, South Korea and the European Community established the International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation, at the Energy Ministerial meeting hosted by Japan holding 2008 G8 Presidency, in Aomori.^[35]

G8 Finance Ministers, whilst in preparation for the 34th Summit of the G8 Heads of State and Government in Toyako, Hokkaido, met on the 13 and 14 June 2008, in Osaka, Japan. They agreed to the "G8 Action Plan for Climate Change to Enhance the Engagement of Private and Public Financial Institutions." In closing, Ministers supported the launch of new



Leaders of the G8 on 18 June 2013, in Lough Erne, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom



G8 leaders confer during the 2009 summit in L'Aquila (Abruzzo, Italy).

Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) by the World Bank, which will help existing efforts until a new framework under the UNFCCC is implemented after 2012. The UNFCCC is not on track to meeting any of its stated goals.^[36]

Annual summit

The first G8 summit was held in 1997 after Russia formally joined the G7 group, and the last one was held in 2013. The 2014 summit was scheduled to be held in Russia. However, due to the Crimean crisis, the other seven countries decided to hold a separate meeting without Russia as a G7 summit in Brussels, Belgium.

Member facts

- 7 of the 7 top-ranked advanced economies with the largest GDP and with the highest national wealth (United States, Japan, Germany, UK, France, Italy, Canada) last century also known as G7 ^[37]
- 7 of the 15 top-ranked countries with the highest net wealth per capita (United States, France, Japan, United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, Germany)
- 8 of 12 top-ranked leading export countries.^[38]
- 6 of 10 top-ranked countries with the largest gold reserves (United States, Germany, Italy, France, Russia, Japan).
- 8 of 12 top-ranked economies (by nominal GDP), according to latest (2016 data) International Monetary Fund's statistics.
- 5 countries with a nominal GDP per capita above US\$40,000 (United States, Canada, Germany, France, United Kingdom).
- 5 countries with a sovereign wealth fund, administered by either a national or a state/provincial government (Russia, United States, France, Canada, Italy).^[39]
- 8 of 30 top-ranked nations with large amounts of foreign-exchange reserves in their central banks.
- 4 out of 9 countries having nuclear weapons (France, Russia, UK, United States).^{[40][41]} plus 2 countries that have nuclear weapon sharing programs (Germany, Italy).^{[42][43]}
- 7 of the 9 largest nuclear energy producers (United States, France, Japan, Russia, Germany, Canada, UK), although Germany announced in 2011 that it will close all of its nuclear power plants by 2022.^[44] Following the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, Japan shut down all of its nuclear reactors.^[45] However, Japan restarted several nuclear reactors, with the refueling of other reactors underway.
- 8 of the 10 top donors to the UN budget for the 2016 annual fiscal year.
- 4 countries with a HDI index for 2013 of 0.9 and higher (United States, Germany, Japan, Canada).
- 2 countries with the highest credit rating from Standard & Poor's, Fitch, and Moody's at the same time (Canada and Germany).^[46]
- 2 countries that retain the death penalty in law and practice (Japan and the United States; Russia retains the death penalty, but the regulations of the Council of Europe prohibit it from carrying out any executions).
- 2 countries consist of islands and have left-hand traffic (Japan and the United Kingdom; in the US Virgin Islands, they have left-hand traffic to remain compatible with the British Virgin Islands, but the rest of the United States has right-hand traffic).



The G8 leaders at the 36th summit in Huntsville, Ontario. Left to right: Cameron, Van Rompuy (European Council), Harper, Medvedev, Kan, Berlusconi, Obama, Barroso (European Commission), Merkel, Sarkozy.

- In the G8 states, 6 languages have official status: English in 2 countries (Canada and the United Kingdom); French in 2 countries (Canada and France); and German, Italian, Japanese, and Russian in 1 country each (Germany, Italy, Japan, and Russia). The United States has no official language at the federal level.^[47]

Criticism

Some criticism centres on the assertion that members of G8 do not do enough to help global problems, due to strict patent policy and other issues related to globalization. In *Unraveling Global Apartheid*, political analyst Titus Alexander described the G7, as it was in 1996, as the 'cabinet' of global minority rule, with a coordinating role in world affairs.^[48]

The Heritage Foundation has criticized the G8 for advocating food security without making room for economic freedom.^[49]

Relevance

The G8's relevance has been subject to debate from 2008 onward.^[50] It represented the major industrialized countries but critics argued that the G8 no longer represented the world's most powerful economies, as China has surpassed every economy but the United States.^[51]

Vladimir Putin did not attend the 2012 G8 summit at Camp David, causing *Foreign Policy* (FP) magazine to remark that the summit has generally outlived its usefulness as a viable international gathering of foreign leaders.^[52] Two years later, Russia was suspended from the G8, then chose to leave permanently in January 2017.

The G20 major economies leaders' summit has had an increased level of international prestige and influence.^[53] However, British Prime Minister David Cameron said of the G8 in 2012:^[54]

Some people ask, does the G8 still matter, when we have a Group of 20? My answer is, yes. The G8 is a group of like-minded countries that share a belief in free enterprise as the best route to growth. As eight countries making up about half the world's gross domestic product, the standards we set, the commitments we make, and the steps we take can help solve vital global issues, fire up economies and drive prosperity all over the world.

Youth 8 Summit

The Y8 Summit or simply Y8, formerly known as the G8 Youth Summit^[55] is the youth counterpart to the G8 summit.^[56] The first summit to use the name Y8 took place in May 2012 in Puebla, Mexico, alongside the Youth G8 that took place in Washington, D.C. the same year.

The Y8 Summit brings together young leaders from G8 nations and the European Union to facilitate discussions of international affairs, promote cross-cultural understanding, and build global friendships. The conference closely follows the formal negotiation procedures of the G8 Summit.^[57] The Y8 Summit represents the



20 July 2001, 27th G8 summit in Genoa, Italy: Protesters burn a police vehicle

innovative voice of young adults between the age of 18 and 35. The delegates jointly come up with a consensus-based^[58] written statement in the end, the Final Communiqué.^[59] This document is subsequently presented to G8 leaders in order to inspire positive change.

The Y8 Summit is organised annually by a global network of youth-led organisations called The IDEA (The International Diplomatic Engagement Association).^[60] The organisations undertake the selection processes for their respective national delegations, while the hosting country is responsible for organising the summit. Now, several youth associations are supporting and getting involved in the project. For instance, every year, the Young European Leadership association is recruiting and sending EU Delegates.

The goal of the Y8 Summit is to bring together young people from around the world to allow the voices and opinions of young generations to be heard and to encourage them to take part in global decision-making processes.^{[61][62]}

	Summit	Year	Host country	Location held
1st	International Student Model G8	2006	 Russia	<u>Saint Petersburg</u>
2nd	Model G8 Youth Summit	2007	 Germany	<u>Berlin</u>
3rd	Model G8 Youth Summit	2008	 Japan	<u>Yokohama</u>
4th	G8 Youth Summit	2009	 Italy	<u>Milano</u>
5th	G8 Youth Summit	2010	 Canada	<u>Muskoka & Toronto</u>
6th	G8 Youth Summit	2011	 France	<u>Paris</u>
**	Y8 Summit	2012	 Mexico	<u>Puebla</u>
7th	G8 Youth Summit	2012	 USA	<u>Washington D.C.</u>
8th	Y8 summit	2013	 UK	<u>London</u>
9th	Y8 summit	2014	 Russia	<u>Moscow*</u>

- The Y8 Summit 2014 in Moscow was suspended due to the suspension of Russia from the G8.

See also

- D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation
- Developing 8 Countries
- Forum for the Future (Bahrain 2005)
- G3 Free Trade Agreement
- G4 (EU)
- G-20 major economies
- Great Powers
- Group of Two
- Group of Eleven
- Group of 15
- Group of 24

- [Group of 30](#)
- [Junior 8](#)
- [List of countries by GDP \(nominal\)](#)
- [List of countries by military expenditures](#)
- [List of country groupings](#)
- [List of G8 leaders](#)
- [List of G8 summit resorts](#)
- [List of longest serving G8 leaders](#)
- [List of multilateral free-trade agreements](#)
- [North–South divide](#)
- [World Social Forum](#)

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External links

- G8 Information Centre (<http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/>), G8 Research Group, University of Toronto
- "Special Report: G8" (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/g8>), *Guardian Unlimited*
- "Profile: G8" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/3777557.stm), *BBC News*
- "We are deeply concerned. Again" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20061227153709/http://www.newsstatesman.com/200507040005>), *New Statesman*, 4 July 2005, —G8 development concerns since 1977
- G8 Information Centre Finance Ministers Meetings (<http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/finance/>)
- "G8: Cooking the books won't feed anyone" (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressrelease/2011-05-18/g8-cooking-books-won%E2%80%99t-feed-anyone>), Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en>)
- "Dear G8 Leaders, don't lie about your aid" (<http://blogs.oxfam.org/en/blog/11-05-20-dear-g8-leaders-dont-lie-about-your-aid>), Oxfam International Blogs (<http://blogs.oxfam.org/>)
- "Wait, the G-8 still exists?" (http://bosco.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/05/24/wait_the_g_8_still_exists), Foreign Policy Magazine
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- <https://www.un.org/french/pubs/chronique/2006/numero1/0106p54.htm> "The Group of Eight, ECOSOC and the Constitutional Paradox"
- No. of G8 Summit Protestors (1998-2015) (<http://katapult-magazin.de/en/artikel/article-katapult/fulltext/missing-the-point/>) Katapult-Magazin

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