During the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000, European Union leaders launched a Lisbon Strategy aimed at making the EU the world’s most competitive economy by 2010.

This strategy, developed at subsequent meetings of the European Council, rests on three pillars:

- **An economic pillar** laying the groundwork for the transition to a competitive, dynamic, knowledge-based economy. There is a strong emphasis on adapting quickly to changes in the information society and to investing in research and development.

- **A social pillar** designed to modernize the European social model by investing in human resources and combating social exclusion. The Member States are expected to invest in education and training, and to conduct an active policy for employment, making it easier to move to a knowledge economy.

- **An environmental pillar**, added at the Göteborg European Council in June 2001, which urges a decoupling of economic growth from the use of natural resources.

**Further information**

- [European Commission - Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/)