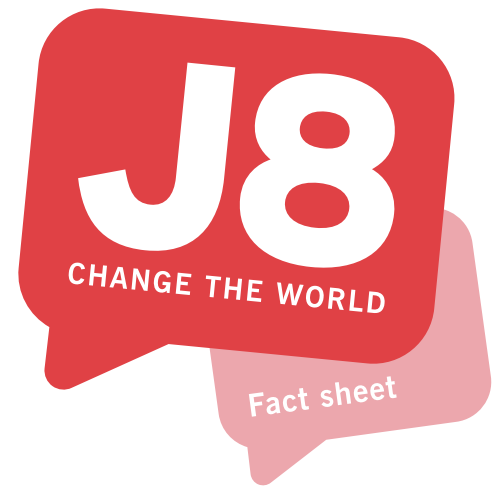


Group of eight (G8)



History

- 1974** The Library group is established in the White House Library in Washington to discuss economic issues. The finance ministers of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan attend.
- 1975** President Giscard d'Estaing of France convenes a meeting in France with the members of the Library group to establish an informal forum to discuss international economic issues. In addition to France, the meeting is attended by the government leaders of the UK, the USA, Germany, Italy and Japan.
- 1976** Canada joins the group, and it becomes known as the Group of Seven (G7). The meetings are designed to be an informal way for members to discuss economic issues that affect their countries.

In the early **1980s** the annual meetings of these countries develop a loose pattern, with each country taking it in turn to host the meetings. The new leaders of these countries, such as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (UK) and President Ronald Reagan (USA) begin to discuss other issues that are affecting their economic policies.

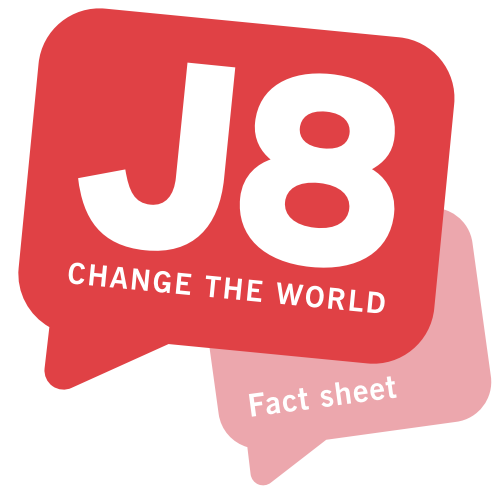
- 1985** The finance ministers of each of the seven countries begin to meet separately from the main Summit and arrange joint policies.
- 1986** At the Tokyo Summit the G7 agrees a united policy on global terrorism.
- 1991** At the London (UK) Summit the Soviet Union begins to attend the G7 meetings as a result of the end of the Cold War.
- 1998** Russia formally becomes part of the G7 at the Birmingham (UK) Summit, making it the G8. On the 15-16th December in Berlin, a group of developing nations come together under the banner of the G20 (Group of 20) to represent their interests on a global platform. The G20 was set up on the recommendation of the G7 finance ministers (www.g20.org/aboutg20.htm).

The facts

- The personal representatives of the Government leaders at each G8 Summit are called 'sherpas' – after the porters in the Himalayas who help others climb high mountains.
- The G8 sherpas meet throughout the year to organise and prepare for each Summit.
- 2,000 delegates attended the G8 Summit in 2001, and the USA alone took 600 delegates to that Summit.
- 6,000 journalists attended the Summit, from all over the world.
- The G8 is an informal 'club' for discussion and co-operation it cannot make laws or enforce its decisions.
- Between them, the 8 countries of the G8 account for almost half of the world's economic output.
- Information from each G8 (and G7) Summit is kept by the University of Toronto and can be found at:
www.g7.utoronto.ca
www.g8.utoronto.ca



Group of eight (G8)



Issue words

intergovernmental discussion; developing and developed countries; observer status; sherpas; annual Presidency; finance; Summit

G8 Summit locations since 1975

- 2006 St Petersburg, Russia
- 2005 Gleneagles, Scotland, United Kingdom
- 2004 Sea Island, Georgia, United States
- 2003 Evian-les-Bains, France
- 2002 Kananaskis, Canada
- 2001 Genoa, Italy
- 2000 Okinawa, Japan
- 1999 Köln, Germany
- 1998 Birmingham, England, United Kingdom
- 1997 Denver, Colorado, United States
- 1996 Lyon, France
- 1995 Halifax, Canada
- 1994 Naples, Italy
- 1993 Tokyo, Japan
- 1992 Munich, Germany
- 1991 London, England, United Kingdom
- 1990 Houston, Texas, United States
- 1989 Paris, France
- 1988 Toronto, Canada
- 1987 Venice, Italy
- 1986 Tokyo, Japan
- 1985 Bonn, West Germany
- 1984 London, England, United Kingdom
- 1983 Williamsburg, Virginia, United States
- 1982 Versailles, France
- 1981 Ottawa, Canada
- 1980 Venice, Italy
- 1979 Tokyo, Japan
- 1978 Bonn, West Germany
- 1977 London, England, United Kingdom
- 1976 San Juan, Puerto Rico (hosted by the United States)
- 1975 Rambouillet, France