



# EU Integration in Practice: Reporting on the European Union

ABC of EU Affairs Journalist | EU Crises in the Media | Case studies | Creating an EU Public | Presentations

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# Disclaimer

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- ❖ This presentation is the author's view, excepting official EU information or media coverages exemplified, and does necessarily not represent the European Union's or the University of Florida's positions;
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# ABC of EU Affairs Journalism

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# Modern Journalism. What does a journalist do?

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# Modern Journalism. What does a journalist do?

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- ❖ Presents (defines) himself/ herself and the media represented;
- ❖ Pays attention to details (including his/ her own);
- ❖ Asks more questions and gives less answers;
- ❖ Calibrates the approach;
- ❖ Practices Smart Journalism: Hard & Soft Skills;



# Modern Journalism. What does a journalist do?

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- ❖ Has a good and wide-spread network (own database);
- ❖ Is powered by “source-information”. And also reads (even books);
- ❖ Ensures 360 degree communication: newsroom, domestic&foreign policy;
- ❖ Cooperates with other journalists;
- ❖ Adapts: Knows who is the interlocutor (leader, top official, **communicator** etc.);



# Journalist vs. Communicator: Knowing our “frenemy”

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- ❖ “Failed journalists end up with EU communicator job”  
(Anonymous)



# Journalist vs. Communicator: Knowing our “frenemy”

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Communication and Journalism:  
How do we differentiate?





# Communicator and Journalist: How do we differentiate?

## COMMUNICATOR

- Represents the interest of his/ her organisation, client, business, institution;
- Creates content (press releases, newsletters, social media posts) that is tailored in promoting, making good PR, advertising his/ her stakeholder;
- They want to be credible and persuasive, but they tend to prioritise their key objectives and to not be impartial;
- They cultivate relationships with journalists, influencers, other peers and experts to amplify their outreach;
- Ethics: they need to be honest and transparent, but face a huge dilemma when it comes to persuasive tactics;

## JOURNALIST

- Watchdog that keeps decision makers accountable, citizens informed and the public opinion connected to news matters;
- Creates news articles, feature articles, op-eds, interviews, investigative reports, content focused on accuracy, fairness, impartiality (objectivity vs. subjectivity);
- By seeking to present information fairly, journalists strive to be independent, objective and to avoid conflict of interests;
- Wide range of sources (official, unofficial, documents eyewitness);
- Ethics in reporting: accountability, fairness, integrity, accuracy (relationship with editorial mission?);



# Types of journalism pieces. How to approach them?

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## News articles

- Title;
- Lead paragraph (answering the W-s);
- Details and body paragraph (including quotes);
- Concluding paragraph;
- Additional information (contextualise, background);

Key phrase: **connect the dots**



# Types of journalism pieces. How to approach them?

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## Feature articles - in-depth analysis (a.k.a. for you “EU Blog”)

- Title;
- Introduction (explain the stakes);
- Analysis of main events that impact the topic (it can include quotes);
- Explain the broader context (it can include quotes);
- Potential outcomes and scenarios;
- Conclusions;

Key phrase: **tailor it to the scope**



# Types of journalism pieces. How to approach them?

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## Opinion pieces (Op-ed\*)

- Title;
- Background and context;
- Your take on the topic;
- Challenge and reshuffle the topic: counterarguments, opposite viewpoints;
- Potential outcomes and scenarios;
- Call to action and solutions;
- Conclusions;

Key phrases: flexibility in writing and style / subjective assumption

\*Different from editorials, which express and reflect a publication set of views and values



# Types of journalism pieces. How to approach them?

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## Investigative reports

- Title;
- Executive summary;
- Introduction;
- Objectives and methodology;
- Findings and analysis;
- Recommendation and Conclusions

Key phrases: flexibility in writing and style / objective and impartial stance



# Types of journalism pieces. How to approach them?

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## Interviews (Basically is Q&A and... “The End”)

- Title;
- Introduction;
- Opening questions;
- Main questions;
- Follow-up questions;
- Closing questions and conclusion;

Key phrases: **tailored approach based on the interviewee**



# Tips and tricks to write a news or feature article. A few steps

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- Know your audience;
- Strong headline;
- Stick to the inverted pyramid;
- Clear and concise language;
- Verify facts (accuracy);
- Incorporate quotes;
- Be impartial (objective);
- Avoid bias views, personal emotions;
- Engage with your audience by the way you are delivering the journalism piece;
- Stay constantly updated;





# Understanding the EU... as a journalist

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# Understanding the EU... as a journalist

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- ❖ What is European Union?
  - An international organisation?
  - A way to a federal state: The United States of Europe?
  - A unique economic and political union?



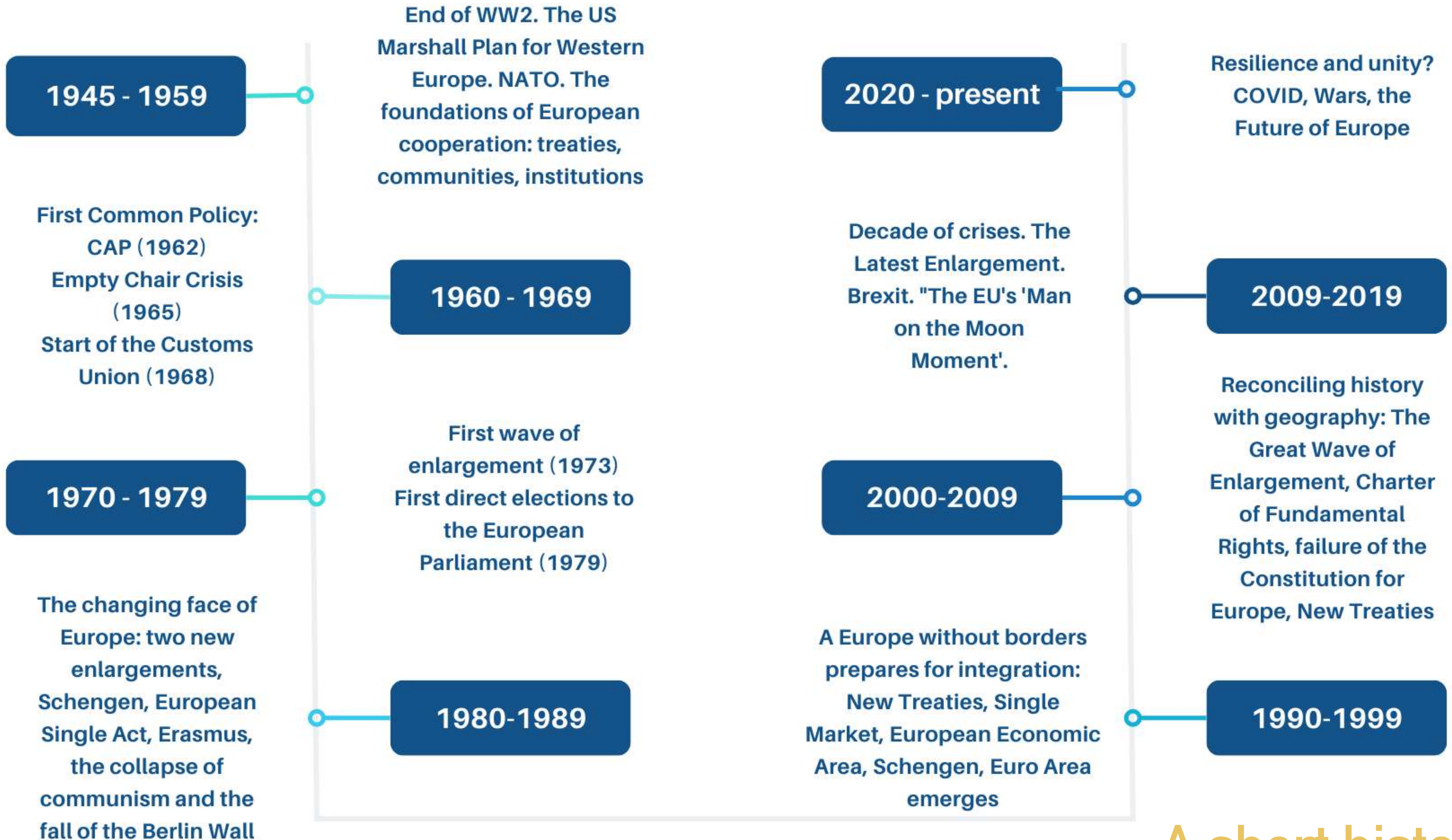
# Understanding the EU... as a journalist

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❖ But what the European Union really is in terms of perception?

An idea, a common future, the strongest Union between people, peace, prosperity, economic growth, unity in diversity, the Franco-German reconciliation, a bureaucracy, a normative power, a giant regulator.





A short history (1)



# A short history (2)

**1950**

The Schuman Declaration. 9 May 1950 becomes Europe Day. The moment is preceded by the creation of the Council of Europe (1949), NATO (1949) and of the Western European Union (1948-1954-2011).

**1951**

Treaty of Paris. Establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community. It enters into force in 1952 and expires in 2002.

**1957**

Treaties of Rome. Establishment of the European Economic Community and EURATOM. Enters into force in 1958.

**1958**

The European Parliament emerges under the the name of Parliamentary Assembly.

**1965**

The Merger Treaty of Brussels. One Commission, one Council of Ministers.

**1974**

The European Council is informally established, followed by the first meetings (three in 1975, ending with the first conclusions adopted).



# A short history (3)

1979

The first direct elections to the European Parliament are held. Previously, MEPs were delegated by national parliaments. Pan-European political groups also appear.

1986

European Single Act. Treaties of Rome are amended by extending qualified majority voting, creating the Single Market and European Political Cooperation (future CFSP). The 'European Parliament' is officially established.

1992

The Maastricht Treaty or the EU's birth certificate. Three pillars: Communities, CFSP and JHA. Co-decision, Economic and Monetary Union, European Citizenship, Single Market.

1997

Treaty of Amsterdam. Extension of the rights of the European Parliament, inclusion of the Schengen Agreement and acquis (1985) in the EU acquis, preparation for enlargement, emergence of the CFSP HR.

2001

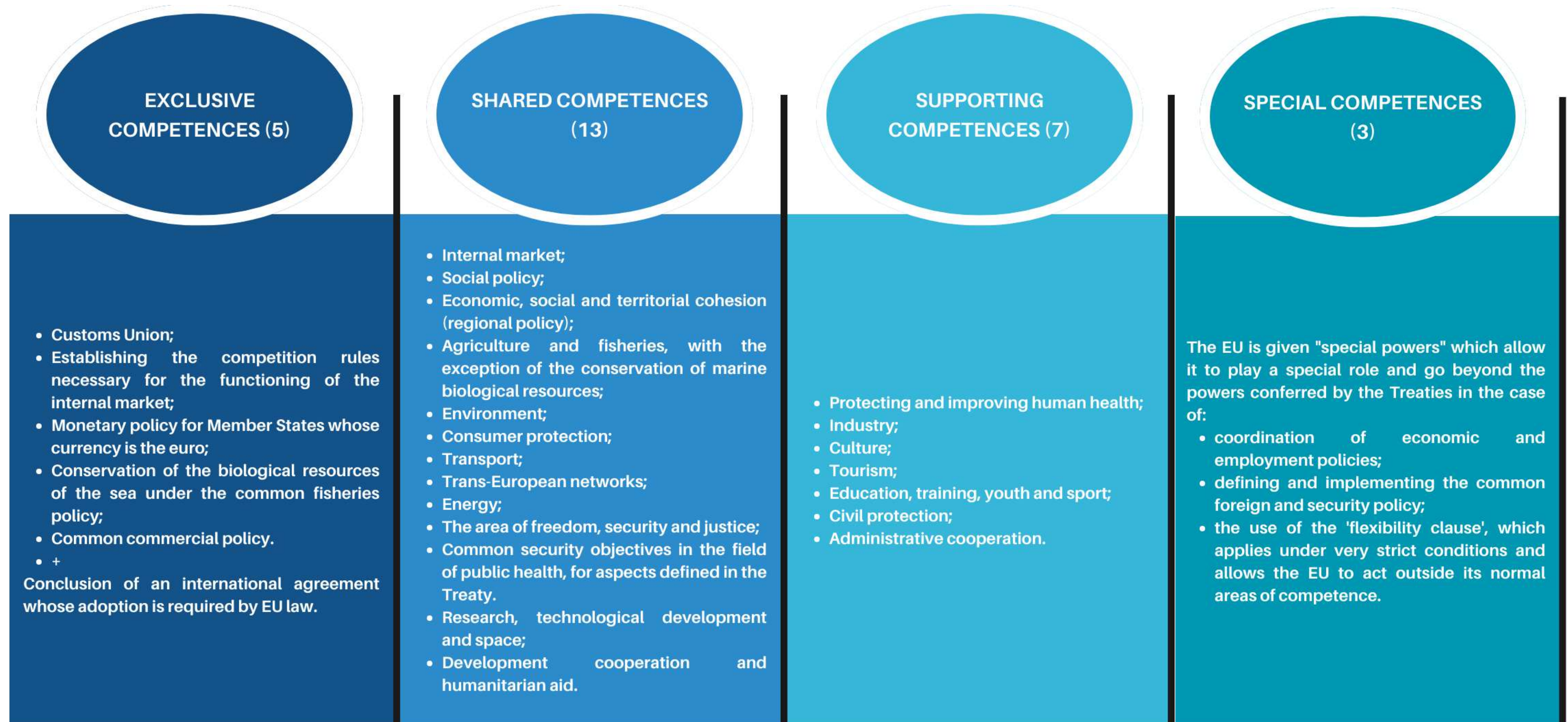
Treaty of Nice. Institutional reform, extension of QMV in the Council, definition of qualified majority, increased EP rights, number of Commissioners and MEPs.

2007

Treaty of Lisbon. The EU acquires legal personality. Co-decision becomes ordinary legislative procedure. European Council (permanent President) and HR for CFSP institutionalised. QMV redefined.



# EU Powers: Debunking “Brussels Decides”





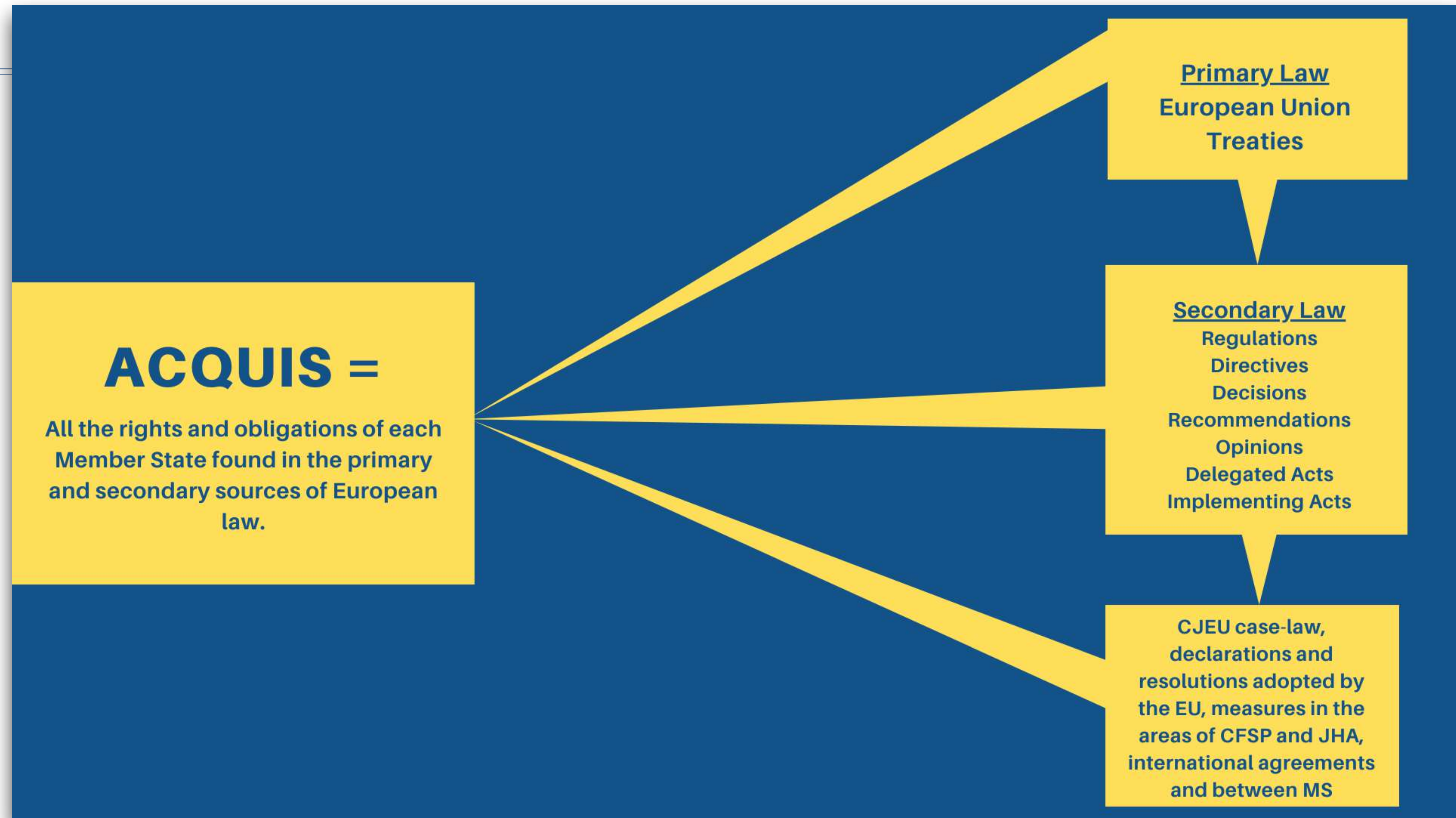
# Competences (EU Powers)

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- ❖ **Exclusive (only EU can legislate)**: Member States can legislate only if EU says so in order to apply European legislation;
- ❖ **Shared (EU and MS can legislate)**: Member States can legislate in cases where the EU does not or has decided not to. Policies such as research, technological and space development, development cooperation and humanitarian aid, EU powers cannot interfere with national powers;
- ❖ **Support (MS legislate, EU helps)**: the EU can only support, coordinate or complement the action of member countries. It has no power to pass laws and may not interfere with member countries' ability to do so. In these areas, the EU has what the treaties call supporting competences;
- ❖ **"Special"**: Limited involvement by the Commission or Parliament in deciding CFSP. This policy is defined by EUCO and the Council. Under CFSP, the EU is represented by EUCO President and HR of CFSP;
- ❖ EU Competences based on 3 principles: **conferral, proportionality and subsidiarity**;
- ❖ **Conferral**: EU powers are defined by the treaty. Those not mentioned have national sovereignty footprint;
- ❖ **Proportionality** means that EU action cannot exceed the treaty;
- ❖ **Subsidiarity** applies in non-exclusive EU powers and the EU can act **only if** the objective cannot be accomplished at local or national level (decision taken at the closest level to citizens needs);



Code name: “EU Acquis”. A glossary with a fancy name





# Types of EU Legislation

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- ❖ **EU Treaties**: Projects to be proposed by the Parliament, the Commission or a Member States. With a simple majority, EUCO decides to convene a Treaty Convention. Changes must be approved in unanimity at an inter-governmental conference of the member states. Changes enter into force after all Member States ratify the new treaty, according to their constitutional norms.
- ❖ **Regulations**: mandatory legislative documents that have to be applied by the Member States exactly how they were adopted by the Parliament and the Council, by the Council or by the Commission.
- ❖ **Directives**: mandatory legislation, but Member States can decide how they transpose and apply them into national legislation. They can be adopted by the Parliament and the Council, by the Council or by the Commission;
- ❖ **Decisions**: mandatory legislation for those whom they are addressed. Adoption as above;
- ❖ **Recommendations**: non-mandatory judicial acts. Adopted by the Commission or the Council;
- ❖ **Opinions**: non-binding. Can be adopted by the Commission (membership application, opinion asked by member states) or by the Council (budgetary plans, excessive deficit correction);
- ❖ **Delegated or implementing acts** (“comitology”): Binding acts adopted by the Commission, with the authorisation of the EP and the Council to update an EU law or to define implementation criteria;
- ❖ Non-legislative papers: “**Communications**” of the Commission, “**Non-legislative reports**” and “**Resolutions**” of the Parliament.



# Main EU institutions



EUROPEAN COMMISSION	EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT	COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION	EUROPEAN COUNCIL	EUROPEAN UNION COURT OF JUSTICE	EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK	EUROPEAN AUDITORS COURT
<i>The EU's executive institution. It is the guardian of the Treaties. Represents the interests of the EU (supranational).</i>	<i>Legislative institution. The only directly elected transnational institution. The "Chamber of Citizens".</i>	<i>Legislative institution. Represents the interests of the Member States. "Chamber of States".</i>	<i>Sets the political and strategic direction of the EU. Represents the interests of the Member States.</i>	<i>EU judicial authority. Ensures uniform application and interpretation of EU law.</i>	<i>The institution responsible for monetary policy in the euro area.</i>	<i>Institution considered the guardian of the European Union's finances.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legislative initiator;</li> <li>Implements EU policies;</li> <li>Manages the EU budget;</li> <li>Represents the EU internationally;</li> <li>It is made up of 27 commissioners, one from each member state;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approves or rejects, together with the EU Council, legislation proposed by the European Commission, including the EU budget;</li> <li>Democratically supervises all EU institutions</li> <li>Represents citizens;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiates and adopts, in most cases together with the EP, European legislation, including the EU budget;</li> <li>Decides CFSP, concludes int. agreements</li> <li>Meets in 10 working formats at ministerial level;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets the EU's political agenda and resolves complex or sensitive issues;</li> <li>Meets at least 4 times a year;</li> <li>It is composed of the 27 Heads of State or Government + EUCO President, EC President &amp; CFSP HR;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Checks the legality of acts of the EU institutions;</li> <li>Ensures that MS comply with their obligations under the EU Treaties and interprets EU law at the request of national courts;</li> <li>Composed by 27 judges;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manages the Euro;</li> <li>Formulates and implements monetary policy;</li> <li>It is governed by an Executive Board composed of a President, a Vice-President and four other members appointed by the European Council;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Its main role is to examine and verify the legality of EU revenue and expenditure;</li> <li>It ensures that EU funds are managed according to the rules.</li> <li>It is made up of 27 members, one from each EU country;</li> </ul>
HQ in Brussels	Official HQ in Strasbourg and Brussels. Secretariat in Luxembourg	HQ in Brussels. HQ for 3 meetings/ year in Luxembourg	HQ in Brussels, but it can meet in each Member State	HQ in Luxembourg	HQ in Frankfurt	HQ in Luxembourg



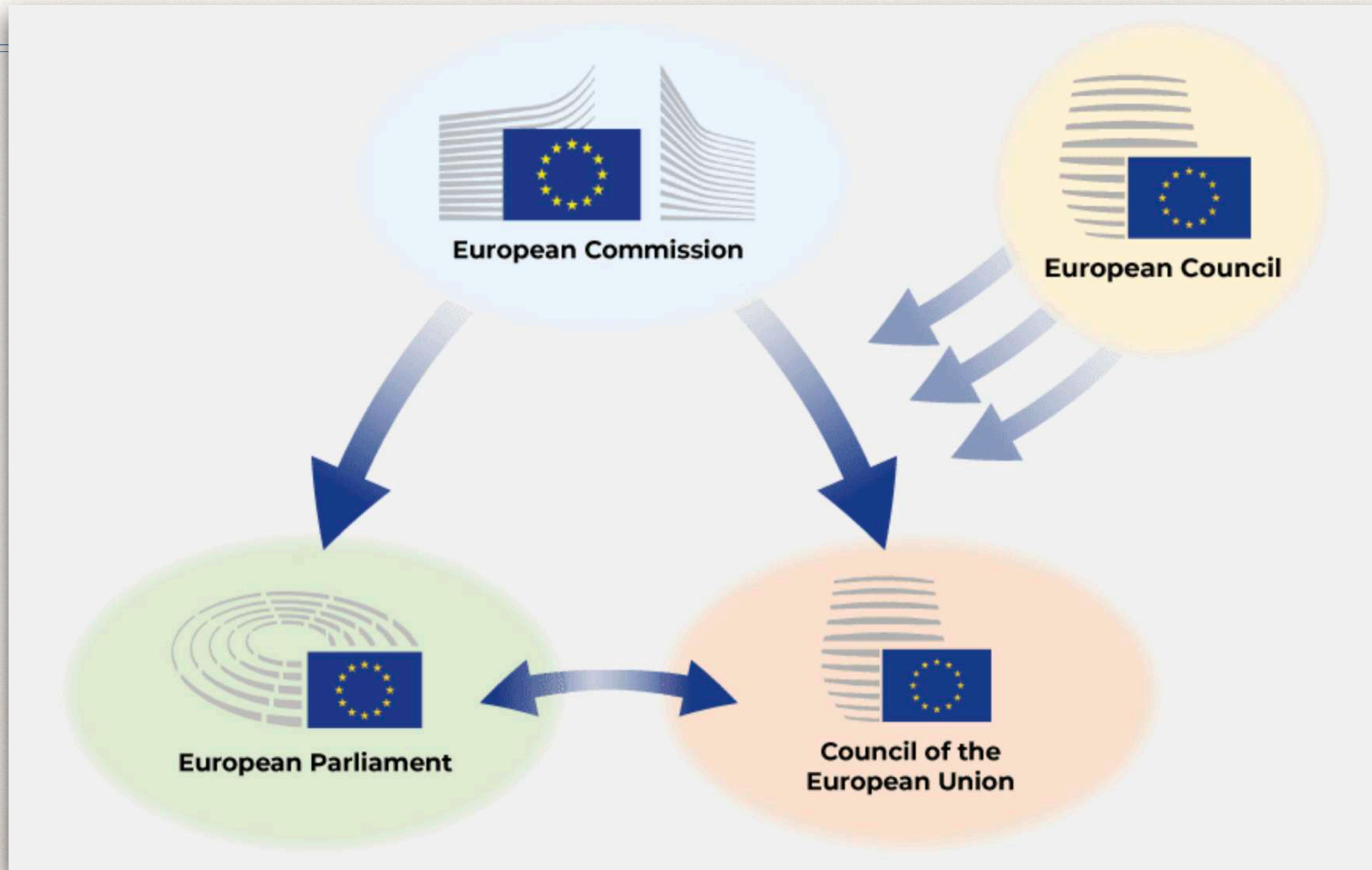
# Other institutions

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- ❖ **European Investment Bank** - 1958, common ownership by all Member States, lead by a President elected by the Council (ECOFIN), finances key projects;
- ❖ **General Court (Court of First Instance)** - 1989, allows citizens and member states to take EU institutions on court;
- ❖ **European Committee of the Regions** - 1994, local and regional authorities gathering, consultative role in education, environment and transport policies;
- ❖ **European Economic and Social Committee** - 1957, represents employers, employees and civil society; consultative role in economic and social policies;
- ❖ **Ombudsman (Citizens Attorney)** - 1995, inquiries citizens' intimations in relation to EU institutions;
- ❖ **European External Action Service** - 2010, coordinates EU diplomatic action;
- ❖ **Others (including agencies): Europol, Eurojust, European Prosecutor Office etc.;**

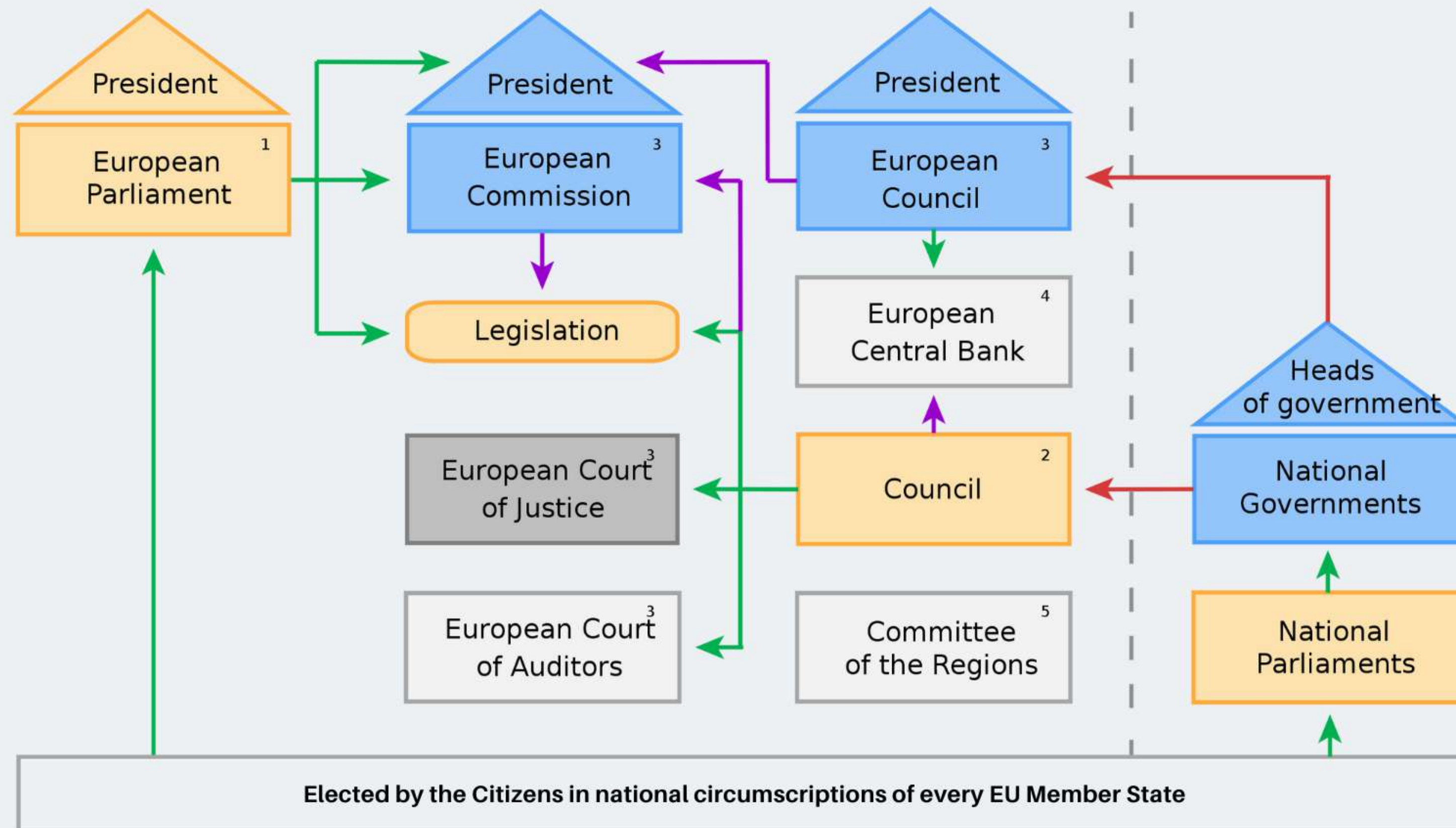


# Institutional architecture. Simplified version





# Institutional architecture. More complex

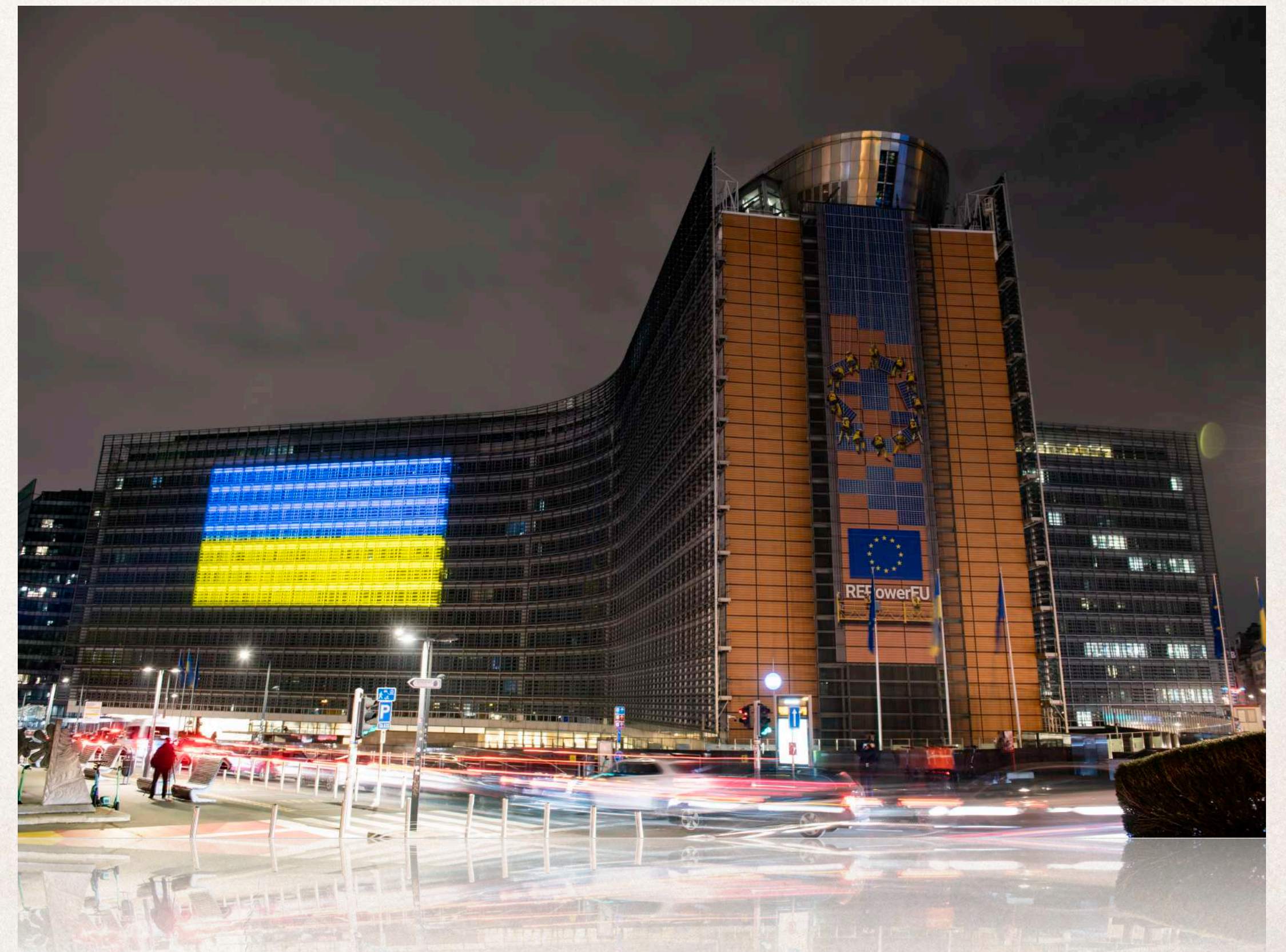


- 1: European elections take place every 5 years
- 2: State chamber. Convenes in varying composition depending on the policy area: Each member state is represented by the respective minister.
- 3: Each member state is represented by one member
- 4: Composed of representatives of the national central banks.
- 5: Consists of representatives of subnational legislative bodies.



# Functioning structure of EU main institutions

## European Commission





# European Commission. Some outlines

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- Headed by a President elected for a 5 years term in the European Parliament, after being nominated by EU Council and taking into account the EP elections;
- Composed by political leadership (College of the Commissioners), bureaucratic apparatus (DGs, SG și agencies) and European Commission Representations in each member state;
- Each country has the right to nominate a commissioner that will be tasked in managing a portfolio during the 5 years mandate;
- The Commissioners have to pass a public hearing in the EP Committees and after receiving an opinion from the JURI Committee;



# European Commission

## 2019-2024

### Commissioners and groups of Commissioners



**Ursula VON DER LEYEN**  
President





**Frans TIMMERMANS**  
Executive Vice-President  
*European Green Deal*



**Margrethe VESTAGER**  
Executive Vice-President  
*A Europe Fit for the Digital Age*



**Valdis DOMBROVSKIS**  
Executive Vice-President  
*An Economy that Works for People*



**Josep BORRELL FONTELLES**  
High Representative | Vice-President  
*A Stronger Europe in the World*



**Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ**  
Vice-President  
*Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight*



**Věra JOUROVÁ**  
Vice-President  
*Values and Transparency*



**Dubravka ŠUICA**  
Vice-President  
*Democracy and Demography*



**Margaritis SCHINAS**  
Vice-President  
*Promoting Our European Way of Life*



**Johannes HAHN**  
Commissioner  
*Budget and Administration*



**Mariya GABRIEL**  
Commissioner  
*Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth*



**Nicolas SCHMIT**  
Commissioner  
*Jobs and Social Rights*



**Paolo GENTILONI**  
Commissioner  
*Economy*



**Janusz WOJCIECHOWSKI**  
Commissioner  
*Agriculture*



**Thierry BRETON**  
Commissioner  
*Internal Market*



**Elisa FERREIRA**  
Commissioner  
*Cohesion and Reforms*



**Stella KYRIAKIDES**  
Commissioner  
*Health and Food Safety*



**Didier REYNDERS**  
Commissioner  
*Justice*



**Helena DALLI**  
Commissioner  
*Equality*



**Ylva JOHANSSON**  
Commissioner  
*Home Affairs*



**Janez LENARČIČ**  
Commissioner  
*Crisis Management*



**Adina VĂLEAN**  
Commissioner  
*Transport*



**Olivér VÁRHELYI**  
Commissioner  
*Neighbourhood and Enlargement*



**Jutta URPILAINEN**  
Commissioner  
*International Partnerships*



**Kadri SIMSON**  
Commissioner  
*Energy*



**Virginijus SINKEVIČIUS**  
Commissioner  
*Environment, Oceans and Fisheries*



**Mairead MCGUINNESS**  
Commissioner  
*Financial Services, Financial Stability and Capital Markets Union*

#### Groups of Commissioners

-  European Green Deal

 Promoting Our European Way of Life

 A Europe Fit for the Digital Age
-  An Economy that Works for People

 A New Push For European Democracy

 A Stronger Europe in the World



# European Commission

## 2014-2019



**JEAN-CLAUDE JUNCKER**  
PRESIDENT



**FRANS TIMMERMANS**  
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT  
*Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations,  
Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights*



**FEDERICA MOGHERINI**  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
HIGH REPRESENTATIVE  
*of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*



**KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA**  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
*Budget and Human Resources*



**ANDRUS ANSIP**  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
*Digital Single Market*



**MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ**  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
*Energy Union*



**VALDIS DOMBROVSKIS**  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
*Euro and Social Dialogue, Financial Stability,  
Financial Services and Capital Markets Union*



**JYRKI KATAINEN**  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
*Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness*



**GÜNTHER OETTINGER**  
*Digital Economy and Society*



**JOHANNES HAHN**  
*European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations*



**CECILIA MALMSTRÖM**  
*Trade*



**NEVEN MIMICA**  
*International Cooperation and Development*



**MIGUEL ARIAS CAÑETE**  
*Climate Action and Energy*



**KARMENU VELLA**  
*Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries*



**VYTENIS ANDRIUKAITIS**  
*Health and Food Safety*



**DIMITRIS AVRAMOPOULOS**  
*Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship*



**MARIANNE THYSSEN**  
*Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility*



**PIERRE MOSCOVICI**  
*Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs*



**CHRISTOS STYLIANIDES**  
*Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management*



**PHIL HOGAN**  
*Agriculture and Rural Development*



**VIOLETA BULC**  
*Transport*



**ELŻBIETA BIEŃKOWSKA**  
*Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs*



**VĚRA JOUROVÁ**  
*Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality*



**TIBOR NAVRACSICS**  
*Education, Culture, Youth and Sport*



**CORINA CREȚU**  
*Regional Policy*



**MARGRETHE VESTAGER**  
*Competition*



**CARLOS MOEDAS**  
*Research, Science and Innovation*



**JULIAN KING**  
*Security Union*



# Functioning structure of EU main institutions

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## European Parliament





# European Parliament. Some outlines



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- Composed by 705 members (720 after 2024 EU Elections) elected in national circumscriptions for a 5 years term (a unique institution worldwide). A country can have maximum 96 MEPs and minimum 6, depending on their population;
- Headed by a President with a 2,5 years term;
- MEPs work in political groups, committees (20 + 4 subcommittees) and plenary sessions. Committees prepare legislation, the plenary adopts it.
- For political coordination, the EP works also at the level of Conference of Presidents and Conference of Committee Presidents.
- The EP does not work under “power vs. opposition”, but through tailored coalitions that form majorities;
- Meets in Brussels (for Committees works and mini-plenaries) and in Strasbourg (for plenary sessions - 12 times a year);



- ❖ **Blue**: week: political groups;
- ❖ **Pink** week: committees;
- ❖ **Red** week: plenary sessions;
- ❖ **Green (turquoise)** week: national circumscriptions;
- ❖ **Special blue**: EU Elections Day

2024



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	Комисии / Comisiones / Výbory / Udvalg / Ausschüsse / Komiteed / Επιτροπές / Committees / Commissions / Coisti / Odbori / Commissioni / Komitejas / Komisijos / Bizottságok / Kumitai / Commissies / Komisje / Comissões / Comisi / Výbory / Odbori / Valiok
	Группы / Grupos / Skupiny / Grupper / Fraktionen / Fraktsioonid / Ομάδες / Groups / Groupes / Grupal / Klubovi zastupnika / Gruppi / Politiskās grupas / Grupės / Képviselőcsoportok / Gruppi / Fracties / Grupy / Grupos / Grupuni / Skupiny / Skupine / Ryhmi
	Внешни парламентарни дейности / Actividades parlamentarias exteriores / Vnější parlamentní činnost / Ekstern parlamentarisk virksomhed / Externe parlamentariske aktiviteter / Väljaspok parlamenti töökohta toimuv tegevus / Εξωτερικές κοινοβουλευτικές / External parliamentary activities / Activités parlementaires extérieures / Gniomhaíochtaí parlaiminteacha seachtacha / Vanjiske parlamentarar aktivisti / Attività parlamentari esterne / Parlamenta ārējie pasākumi / Išorinė Parlamentei veiklos / Aktivitajiet parlamentari esteri / Externe parlamentaire activiteiten / Zewnętrzne działania parlamentarne / Atividades parlamentares externas / Activități parlamentare exteroare / Vonkarišie parlamentné činnosti / Zunanje dejavnosti / Toiminta parlamentin ulkopuolella / Extern parlamentarisk arbete
	Избори / Elecciones / Volby / Valg / Wahlen / Valimised / Εκλογές / Elections / Élections / Toghchain / Izbori / Elezioni / Vēlēšanas / Rinkimai / Választások / Elezjonijiet / Verkiezingen / Wybory / Eleições / Alegeiri / Vol'by / Volitve / Vaalit / Val



# Seats distribution in the EP

 EPP - 177

 S&D - 139

 Renew Europe - 102

 Greens - 72

 ECR - 68

 ID - 59

 The Left - 37

Unaffiliated - 49

☒ EPP

☒ S&D

☒ Renew

☒ Greens/EFA

☒ ECR

☒ ID

☒ The Left

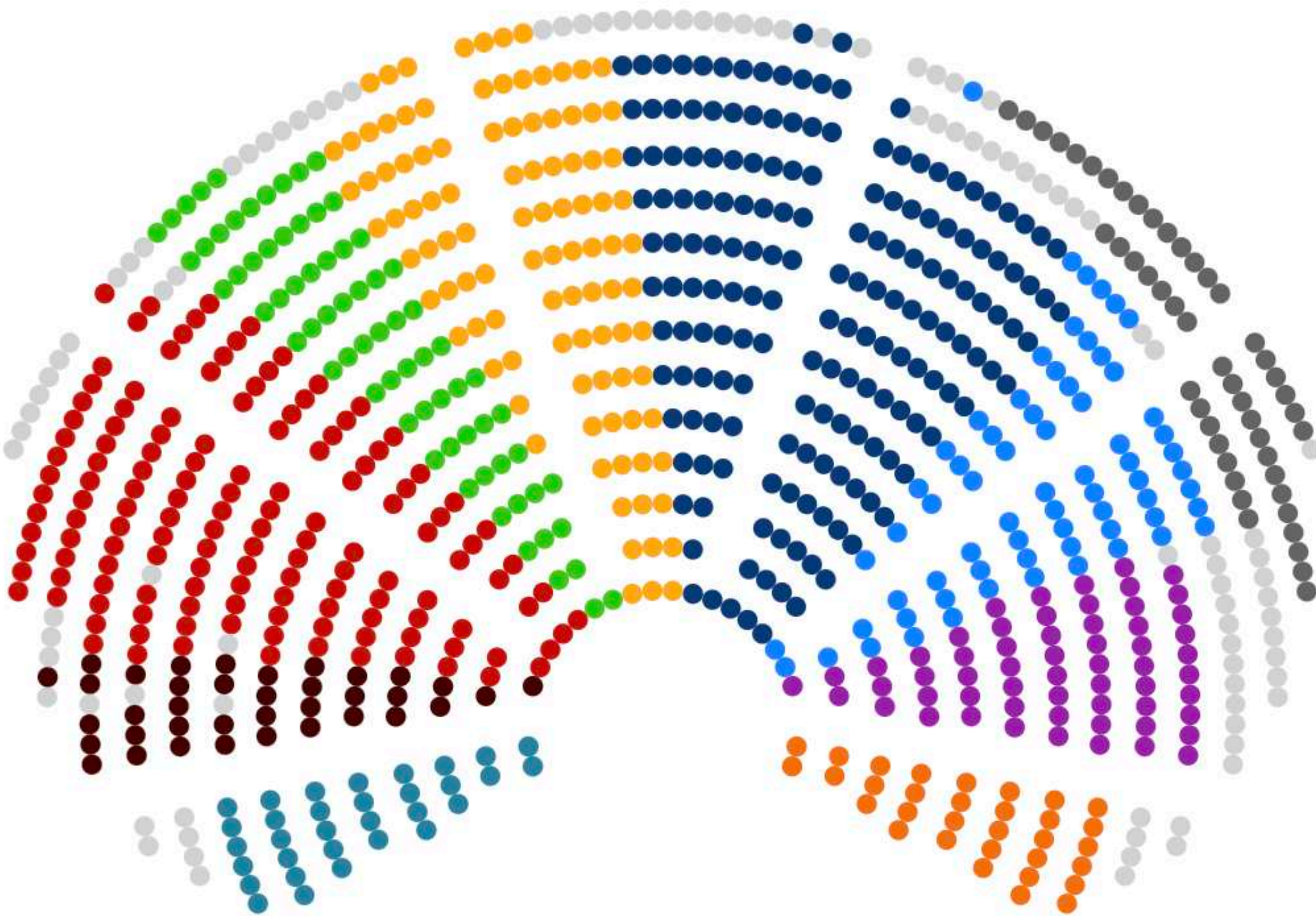
☒ NI

☒ Council of the European Union

☒ European Commission

☒ All seats

























Strasbourg  
25.02.2024





# EP Committees and Subcommittees

## Parliamentary committees

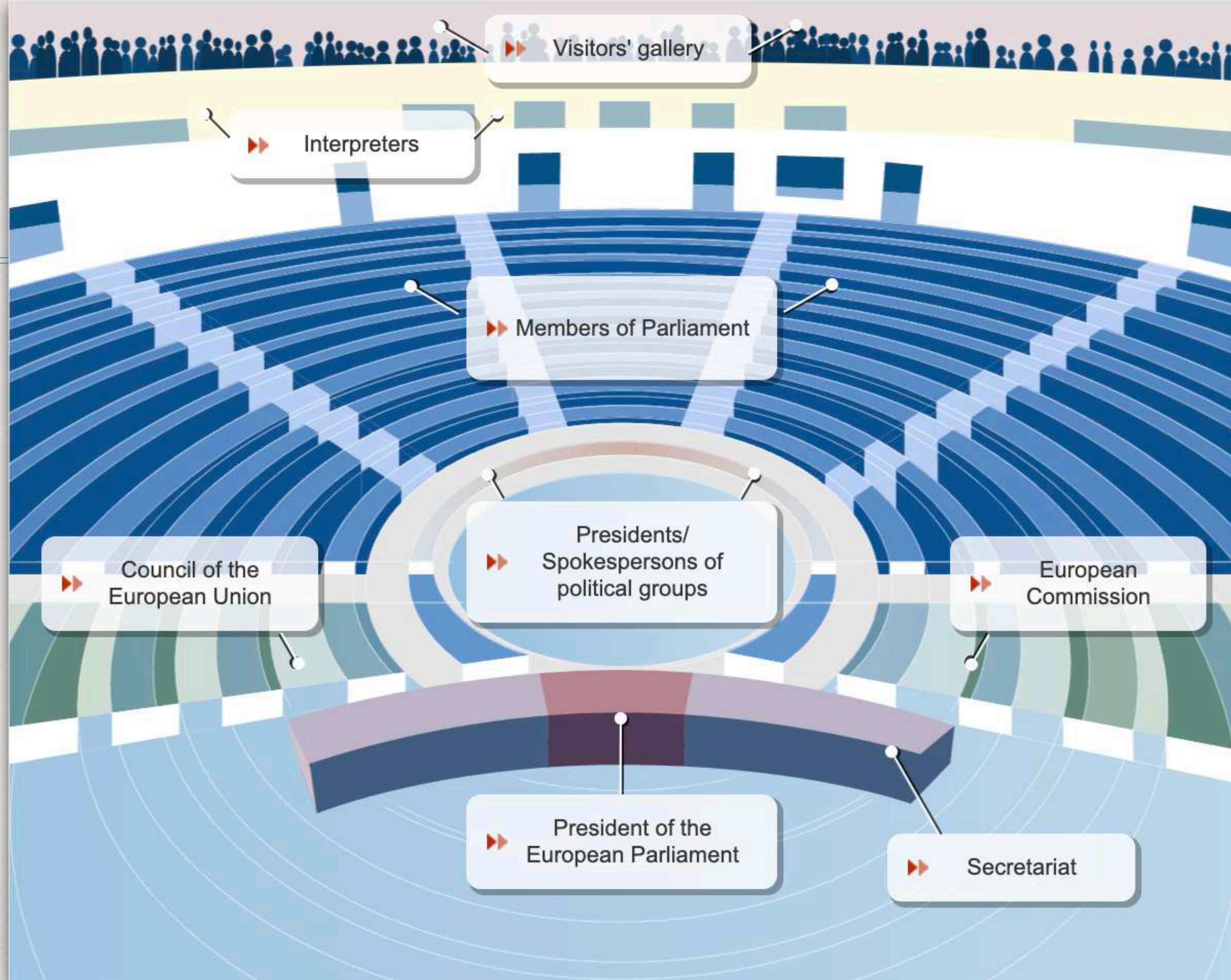
Committees and sub-committees	Number of MEPs	Name of chair		
Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)	88	Pascal CANFIN	Renew Europe	
Subcommittee on Public Health (SANT)	30	Bartosz ARŁUKOWICZ	EPP	
Foreign Affairs (AFET)	79	David McALLISTER	EPP	
Human Rights (DROI)	30	Udo BULLMANN	S&D	
Security and Defence (SEDE)	30	Nathalie LOISEAU	Renew Europe	
Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)	78	Cristian-Silviu BUȘOI	EPP	
Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE)	69	Juan Fernando LÓPEZ AGUILAR	S&D	
Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON)	61	Irene TINAGLI	S&D	
Tax Matters (FISC)	30	Paul TANG	S&D	
Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)	55	Dragoș PÎSLARU	Renew Europe	
Transport and Tourism (TRAN)	49	Karima DELLI	Greens/EFA	
Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI)	48	Norbert LINS	EPP	
Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)	45	Anna CAVAZZINI	Greens/EFA	
International Trade (INTA)	43	Bernd LANGE	S&D	
Regional Development (REGI)	43	Younous OMARJEE	The Left	
Budgets (BUDG)	41	Johan VAN OVERTVELDT	ECR	
Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM)	37	Robert BIEDROŃ	S&D	
Petitions (PETI)	35	Dolors MONTSERRAT	EPP	
Culture and Education (CULT)	31	Sabine VERHEYEN	EPP	
Budgetary Control (CONT)	30	Monika HOHLMEIER	EPP	
Constitutional Affairs (AFCO)	28	Salvatore DE MEO	EPP	
Fisheries (PECH)	28	Pierre KARLESKIND	Renew Europe	
Development (DEVE)	26	Tomas TOBÉ	EPP	
Legal Affairs (JURI)	25	Adrián VÁZQUEZ LÁZARA	Renew Europe	

Data source: EPRS.

EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service



# Plenary sitting



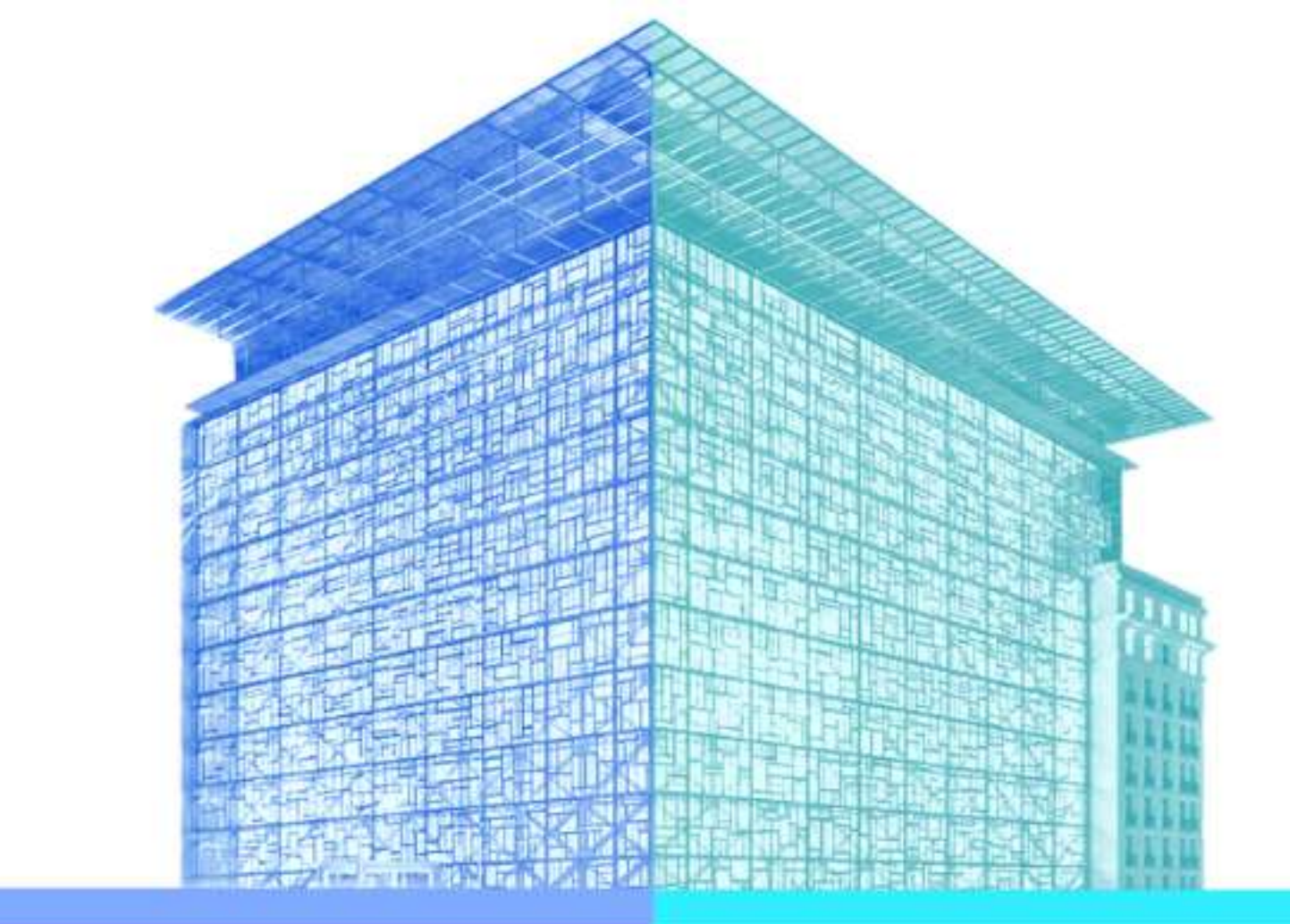


# Functioning structure of EU main institutions

Spot the differences:  
European Council (EU CO) and Council of the European Union (EU  
Council/ The Council)







## EUROPEAN COUNCIL (EUCO)

- Composed of Heads of State or Government of EU countries and the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission;

## EU COUNCIL / THE COUNCIL

- Composed of representatives of each Member State at ministerial level and grouped by sectoral ministries (working formats);



- The EU's highest political entity;
- Defines the overall strategic and political direction of the EU;
- Sets the CFSP
- Does NOT adopt legislation. but can ask the Commission to propose legislation;
- Planned activity in the form of a 5-year Strategic Agenda + complex crisis management;
- Nominates and appoints Commission President, Commission as a whole and other key positions such as HR and ECB President;

- Negotiates and adopts EU legislation, in most cases together with the European Parliament;;
- Adopts the EU budget together with the EP;
- Coordinates Member States' fiscal and economic policies,
- Develops the CFSP;
- Concludes international agreements on behalf of the EU;
- Elects and appoints the Presidents of the Eurogroup and the EIB;

- It is led by a president elected by EU leaders for a two-and-a-half-year term, renewable once;
- Its role is to set the agenda, prepare and chair meetings of the European Council, drive its work and forge consensus;

- The only EU institution that is NOT led by an individual but by a Member State, with the exception of the FAC, led by the HR;
- No elections: each member state takes its turn according to a pre-established order, the Council Presidency's term is six months. Each of the 27 MS holds the Presidency once every 13.5 years;



	EUCO	EU COUNCIL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Custom: it decides by consensus (negotiation and compromise);</li> <li>• What it adopts: conclusions;</li> <li>• Voting procedure: simple majority, qualified majority and unanimity;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple majority;</li> <li>• Qualified majority;</li> <li>• Unanimity;</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 regular summits (spring - March, summer - June, autumn - October, winter - December) in Brussels</li> <li>• As often as needed in informal or extraordinary summits in Brussels or in EU countries;</li> <li>• They are also called 'European summits';</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70-80 meetings per year in Brussels, Luxembourg and Member States (informal);</li> <li>• Meets in 10 working formats;</li> </ul>



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

European Council and EU Council:  
Two EU institutions, with similar names, same seat, both being the voice of the EU Member States, but with different members and different tasks, served by a single General Secretariat of the Council;

Council of Europe:  
Pan-European organisation created in 1949, based in Strasbourg, to protect democracy, the rule of law and human rights;



# EUCO. Some outlines

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- Comprised by all 27 heads of state or government from the EU. Four states are represented by Presidents (Cyprus, France, Lithuania, Romania) and 23 at Prime Ministers level (including federal chancellors of Austria and Germany or presidents of Council of Ministers in Italy and Spain).
- It has a permanent President, elected for 2,5 years term, subjected to renewal.
- The linking structure in this institutional landscape is the General Secretariat of the Council (joint institution with the Council of the European Union);
- EUCO meets in summits (at least 4/ year) and the national leaders are joined by the President of the European Commission, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EP President and ECB President;
- Agenda and draft conclusions are prepared by Council's SG, President's team and Sherpas (EU Affairs advisors to national leaders);
- Role of EUCO is to define the strategic orientation and offer political guidelines for the EU, to manage crises, to nominate and appoint the EC President, the ECB President, the HR and to appoint the entire Commission.



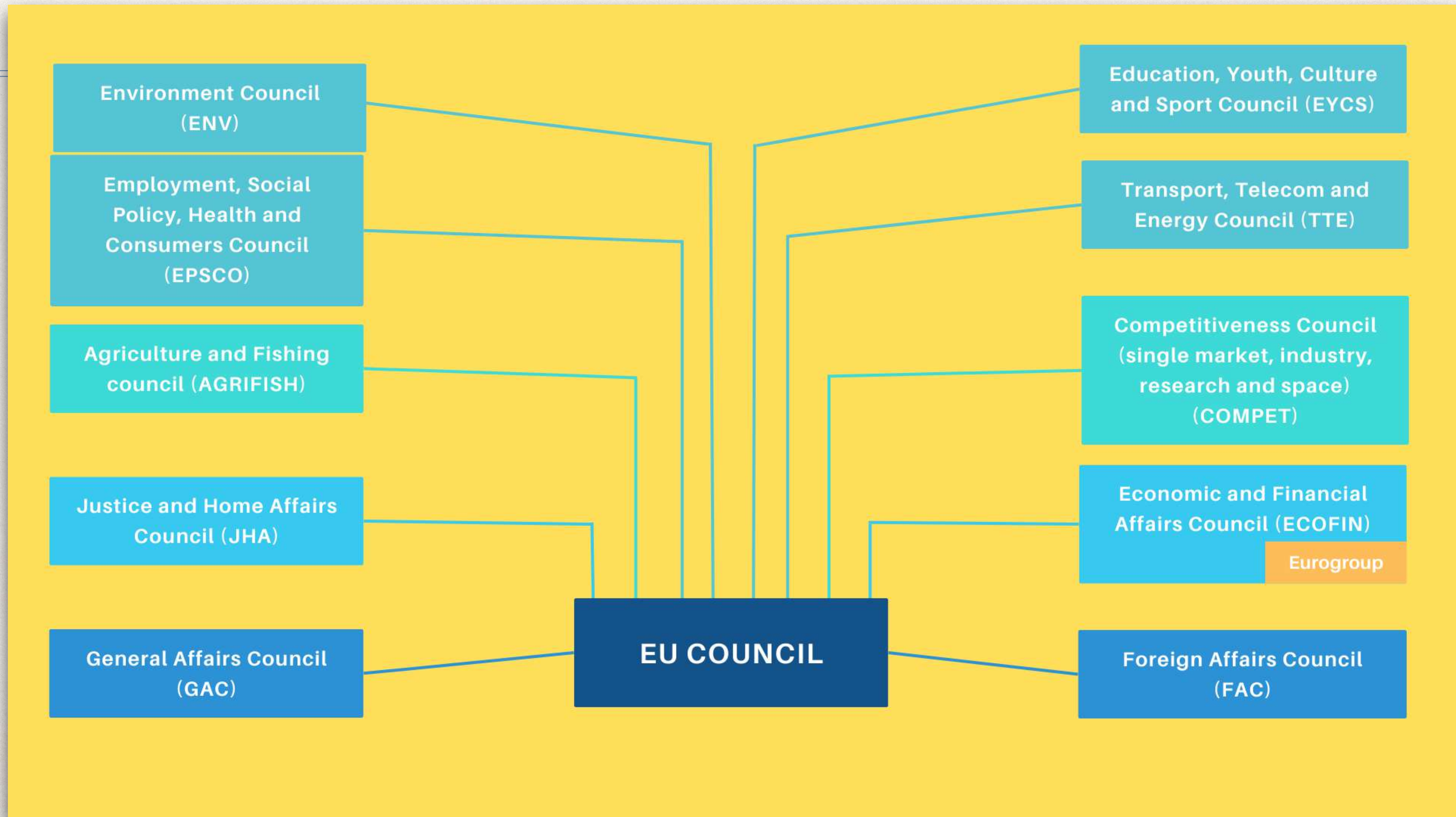
# The Council. Some outlines

---

- Composed by Member States' governments that gather in 10 working formats at ministerial level, similar to Government meetings, government meetings, but also sectoral meetings. In addition, the Eurogroup (the informal format of euro area finance ministers), led by a permanent president elected from among its members, operates within the EU Council;
- It is presided on a rotational basis by each Member State that holds the six-months Presidency of the Council. Each member state has this right every 1,5 years. The Council Presidencies coordinate together in a "Trio of Presidencies" (18 months).
- The role of the Council is to adopt legislation, mostly together with the Parliament, to adopt the budget together with the EP, to coordinate fiscal and economic policies of Member States, to develop CFSP and to conclude international agreements in EU's name;
- The Council's activity has three layers of meetings: working groups, COREPER and the Council of Ministers;

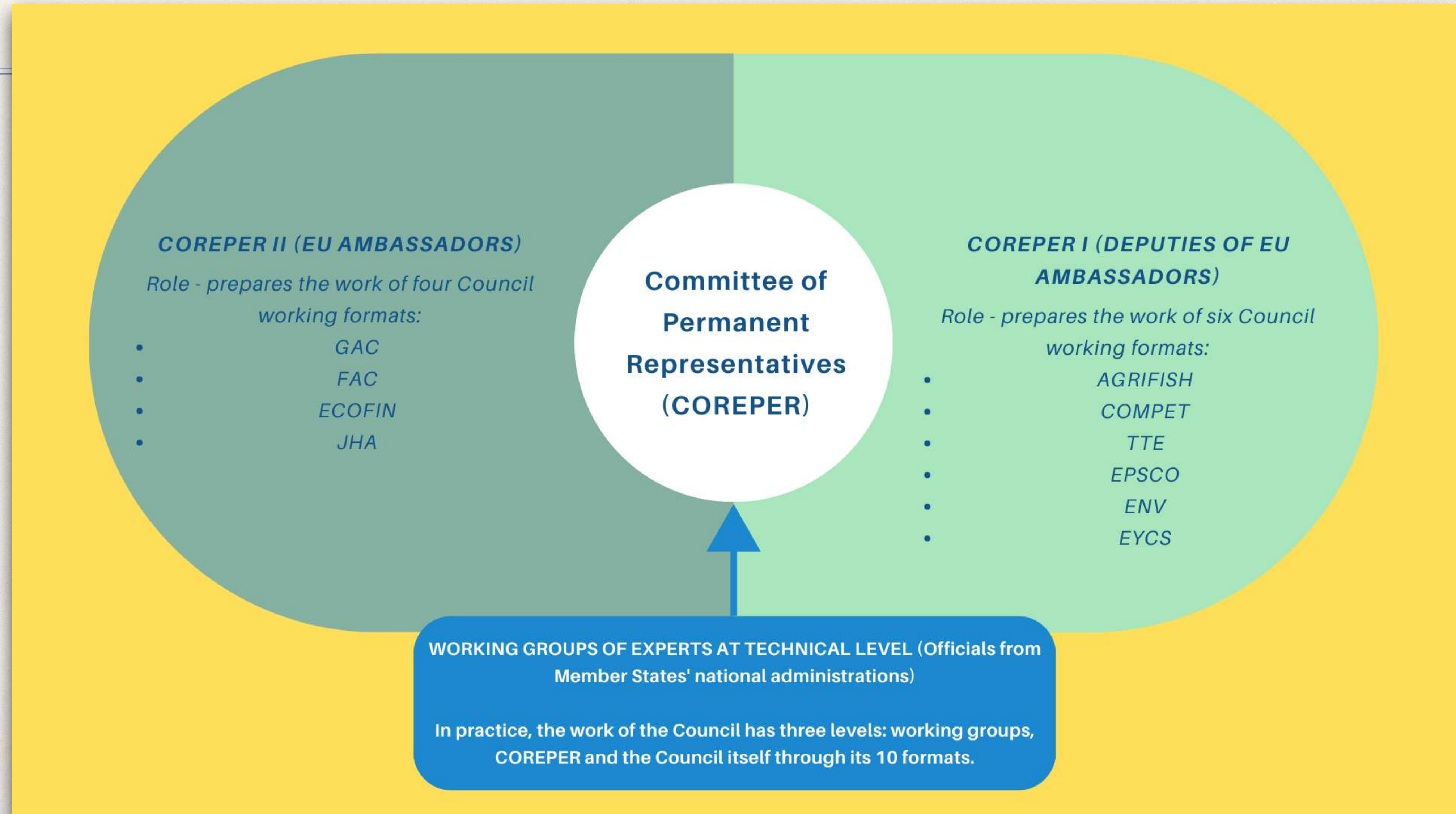


# 10 working formats of the EU Council



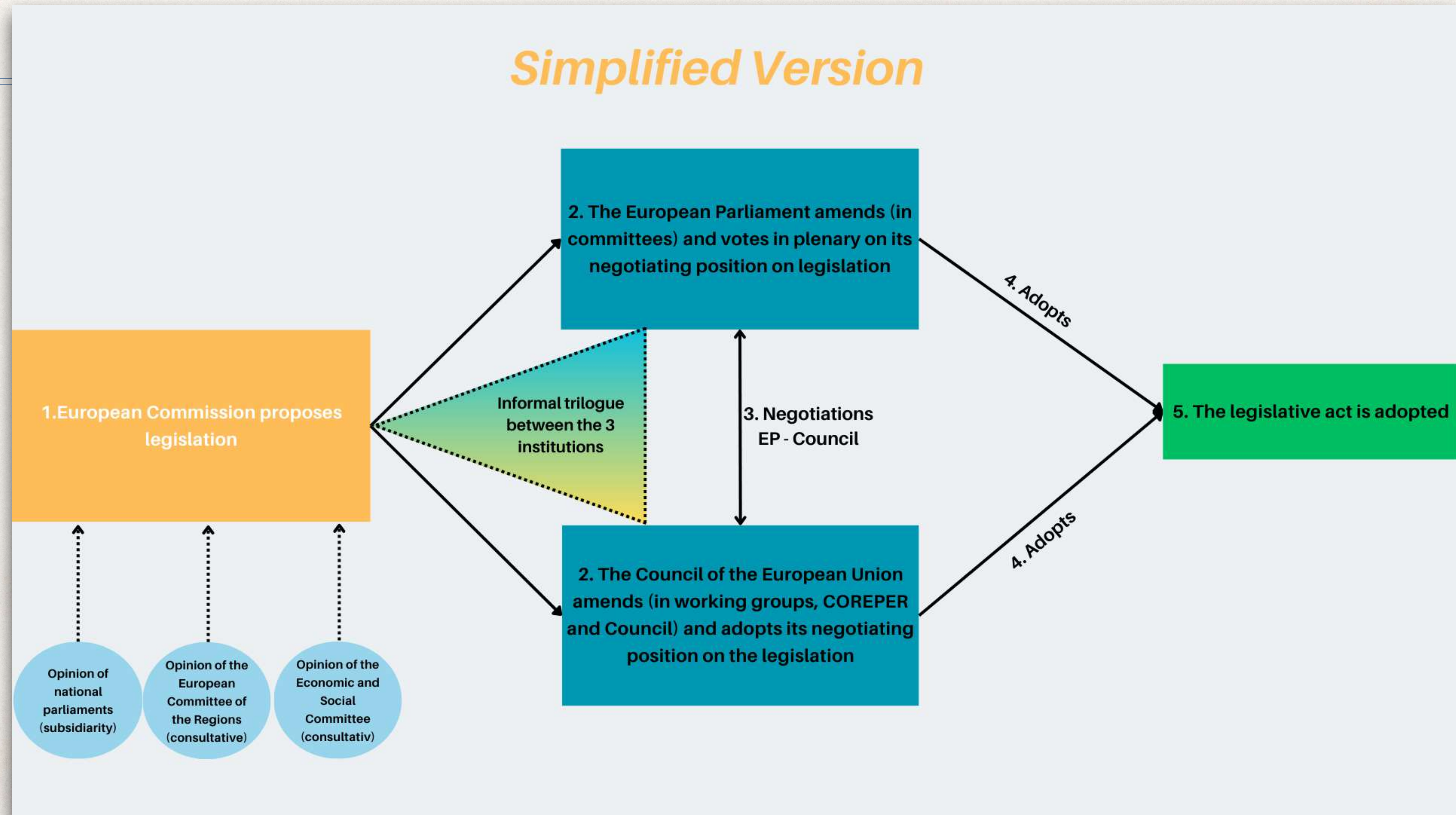


# Technical and diplomatic matrix: Working map



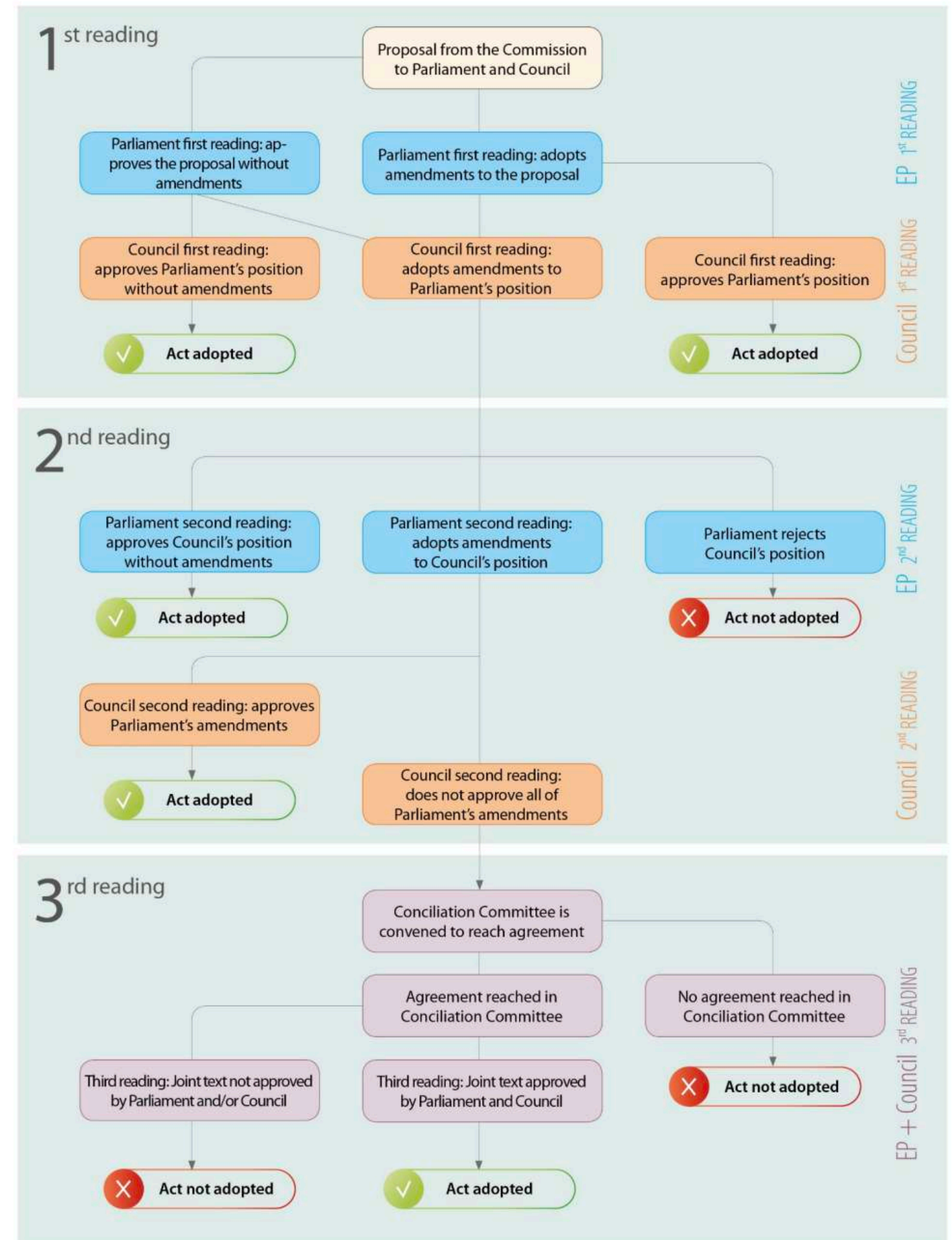


# Decision-making trajectory: Ordinary legislative procedure



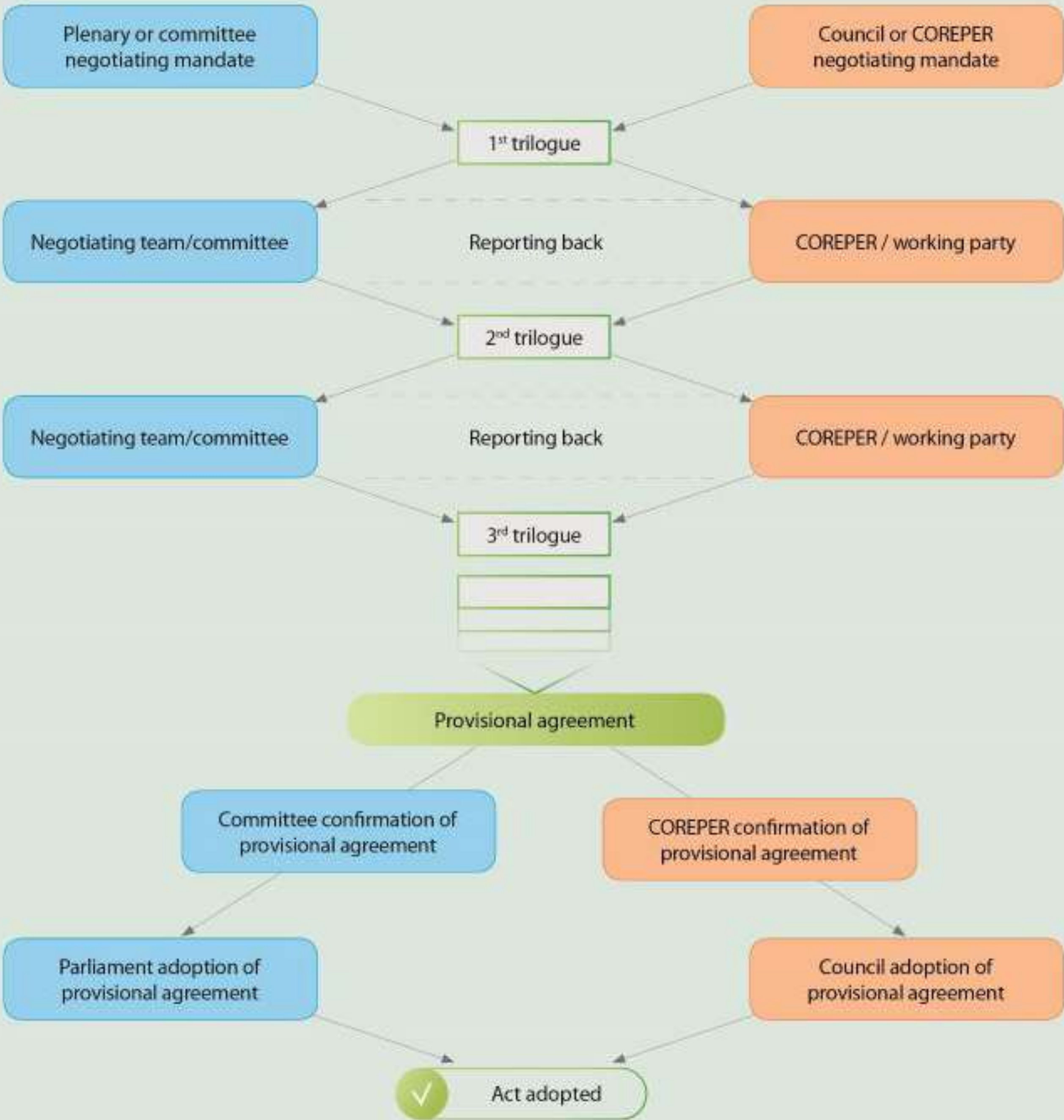


# A more complex graphic





# OLP (EP - Council negotiations)





# How do EU institutions **vote**?

## *European Commission*

- **Simple/absolute majority (50%+1)**
- **Oral procedure (debate)**
- **Written procedure**

## *European Parliament*

- **Simple/absolute majority (50%+1)**
- **Majority of votes cast**

## *EU Council*

- **Unanimity**
- **Qualified majority (QMV)**
- **Simple majority**

## *European Council*

- **Consensus (unanimity)**
- **Qualified majority (QMV)**
- **Simple majority**



# Voting Procedure - Commission

---

- ❖ The College of Commissioners adopt proposals through **absolute majority (14 out of 27)**;
- ❖ Two voting procedures: **oral and written procedure**;
- ❖ Oral procedure assumes a debate and an agreement at Commission's level;
- ❖ Written procedure can be applied in agreement with judicial department and all directions involved in planning and proposing legislation;
- ❖ **Before putting legislation forward**, the Commission presents the initiative in a **roadmap**, examines potential economic, social and environmental consequences and asks for contributions through public consultations;



# Voting Procedure - Parliament

---

- ❖ In principle, EP adopts legislation when a majority of its members (50%+1) vote in favor. Now, this means **353 votes in favor**, regardless of the total number of casted votes.

## Specifics:

- ❖ During the 1st reading, the EP votes, both in Committees and plenary, with a **majority of casted votes**;
- ❖ During the 2nd reading, they keep the rule, excepting cases where they have amendments or a different position than the Council's, situation in which the EP needs **a majority of its members (50%+1)**;
- ❖ At the Conciliatory Committee, where the EP and Council go after failing to reach an agreement, the EP delegation votes with **absolute majority** (14 out of 27);
- ❖ During the 3rd reading, EP decides with a **majority of casted votes**;



# Voting procedures - EU Council

---

The Council of Ministers adopt decisions by **simple majority, qualified majority (QMV) and unanimity**;

- ❖ Simple majority (14 out of 27 member states) - for procedural decisions;
- ❖ QMV (55% of member states - 15, representing at least 65% of EU population) - for 80% of cases, related to legislation adopted with the Parliament;
- ❖ Unanimity - sensible dossiers such as CFSP, European citizenship, EU membership, finances, taxation, specific measures on justice and home affairs and on social protection;

## Specifics:

- ❖ A minority-blocking must include a minimum number of Member States that represent more than 35% of EU populations + one Member State. Otherwise, QMV is considered to be met;
- ❖ “Super-QMV” (not an official definition). If the Council does not decide at the proposal of the Commission or HR, the QMV is equal with at least 72% of the Council members that gather minimum 65% of EU population.
- ❖ A majority of 4/5 when voting on article 7 for rule of law breaches;



# Voting Procedures - European Council

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- ❖ The European Council usually decides by **consensus** (i.e. no member opposes adoption). The same decision-making process is used by the European Council to adopt conclusions;
- ❖ However, in certain specific cases provided for in the EU treaties (such as the adoption of legal acts), the European Council decides by vote;
- ❖ At the initiative of the President, a vote may be taken on a specific agenda item. Voting may also take place at the initiative of any other member, provided that a majority of members agree;
- ❖ There are three ways of voting: **unanimity, qualified majority, simple majority**;
- ❖ Unanimity is required, for example, when the European Council takes a decision on the number of members of the European Commission. **When the European Council acts unanimously, abstentions do not prevent adoption of a decision**;
- ❖ The European Council decides by qualified majority when, for example, it establishes the list of Council formations or when it proposes to the European Parliament a candidate for President of the Commission;
- ❖ The European Council acts by simple majority to adopt procedural decisions under its Rules of Procedure;





THANK YOU!

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February 26th - March 1, University of Florida, Gainesville, US  
Instructor: Robert Lupițu (journalist, Editor-in-Chief [CaleaEuropeana.ro](http://CaleaEuropeana.ro), Romania)