

European Union Institutional Framework



According to Article 13 of the Treaty on European Union, the institutional framework is composed of **7 institutions**:

- the **European Parliament**;
- the **Council of the European Union** (simply called “the Council”);
- the **European Commission**;
- the **European Council**;
- the **Court of Justice** of the European Union;
- the **European Central Bank**;
- the **Court of Auditors**.



- The **European Parliament (EP)** is elected by the citizens of the European Union and represents the interest of the EU's citizens.
- The **Council of the European Union (Council)** is the EU's **decision-making body**. It represents the governments of the member countries.
- The **European Commission (EC)** is **independent** of national governments and has the right of legislative initiative. The Commission proposes new laws. Its main operational units are **Directorates-General (DGs)**.



3 main EU institutions are involved in legislation

- The **European Council** defines the EU's overall political direction and priorities. The members are the heads of state or government of the 28 EU member states, the president of the European Council and of the European Commission.
- The **Court of Justice (CURIA)** is the judicial authority of the European Union.
- **European Court of Auditors (ECA)** is the institution responsible for auditing of EU finances.



- Financial bodies:
 - **European Central Bank (ECB)** is the central bank for the Euro area. 19 EU countries have adopted the Euro.
 - **European Investment Bank (EIB)** is aimed to lend money for projects of European interest
 - **European Investment Fund (EIF)** was set up to help small businesses in their establishment and enhancement. Commercially based and managed!

Advisory functions

- The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission are assisted by an Economic and Social Committee and a Committee of the Regions performing advisory functions.
 - The **European Economic and Social Committee** (EESC) is an **advisory body** representing ‘organised civil society’.
 - The **Committee of the Regions** (CoR) is an **advisory body** composed of representatives of Europe’s regional and local authorities.

Advisory bodies

The EU's Unique Institutional Set-up

- the EU's broad priorities are set by the **European Council**, which brings together national and EU-level leaders
- directly elected MEPs represent European citizens in the **European Parliament**
- the interests of the EU as a whole are promoted by the **European Commission**, whose members are appointed by national governments
- governments defend their own country's national interests in the **Council of the European Union**.

EU's broad priorities – European citizens – EU as a whole - governments

A New Institutional Framework in 2009

- **Treaty of Lisbon** in 2009
 - The codecision procedure of the Parliament with the Council of the EU (**ordinary legislative procedure**) is extended to almost all areas of policy so that the legislative power of the **European Parliament** increases.
 - The **European Council** gains the status of an EU institution.
 - The new post of **High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**.
 - The number of MEPs is limited to 750, in addition to the President of the Parliament.
 - A move from unanimity to qualified majority voting in at least 45 policy areas in the Council.
 - **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)**
-

Distribution of Competences in Policy Areas between EU and Member States (Treaty of Lisbon)

- **Exclusive competence** of the European Union:
customs union, competition rules internal market, monetary policy,...
- **Shared competence:**
social policy, social and territorial cohesion,
agriculture and fisheries, environment, transport, energy,
research, development cooperation, humanitarian aid,
common foreign security and defence policies ...
- **Supporting competence:**
Education, vocational training,
youth, sport, industry, culture, tourism,
industry ...

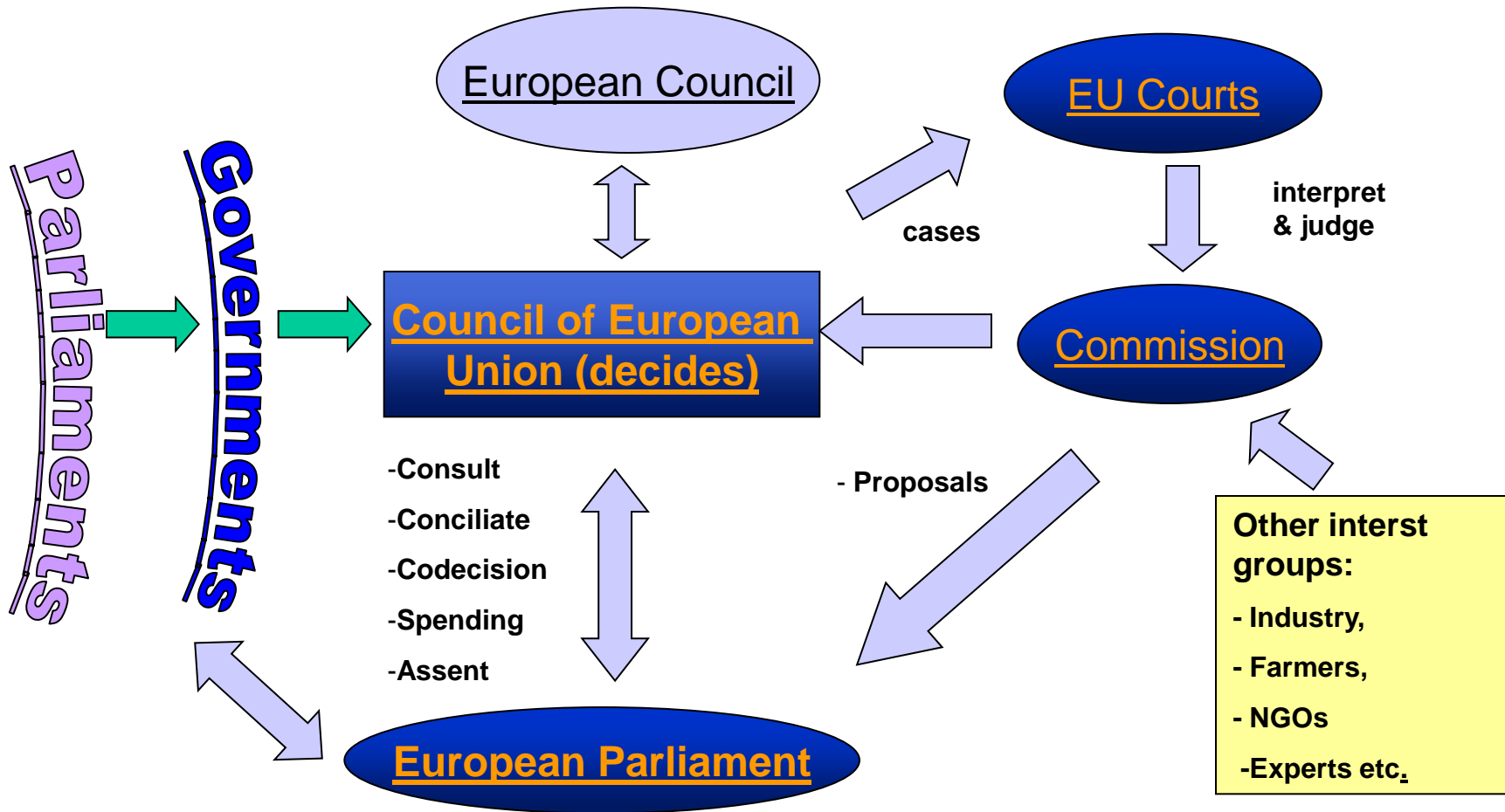


Ordinary Legislative Procedure

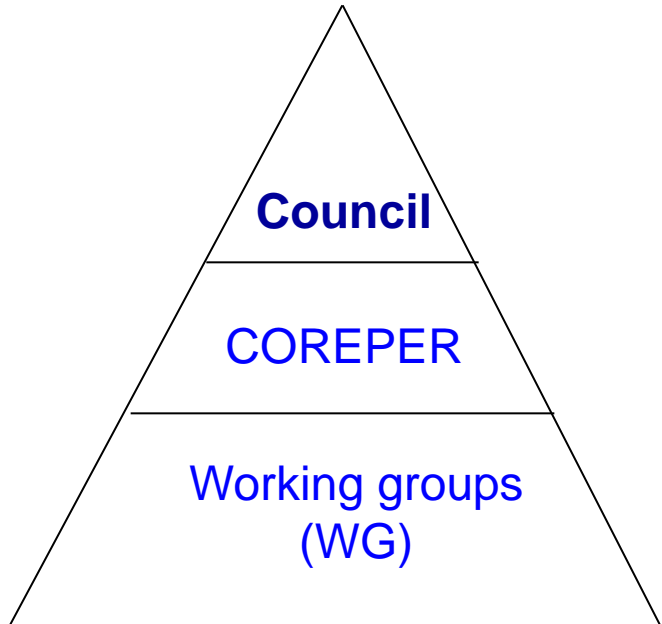
- Three institutions produce through the Ordinary Legislative Procedure (former "co-decision") the policies and laws that apply throughout the EU. In principle,
 - the **Commission** proposes new laws, and
 - the **Parliament** and **Council** adopt them.
 - The Commission and the member countries then implement them, and the Commission ensures that the laws are properly applied and implemented.

3 main EU institutions are involved in legislation

Institutional "anatomy"



On the Decision Making Background

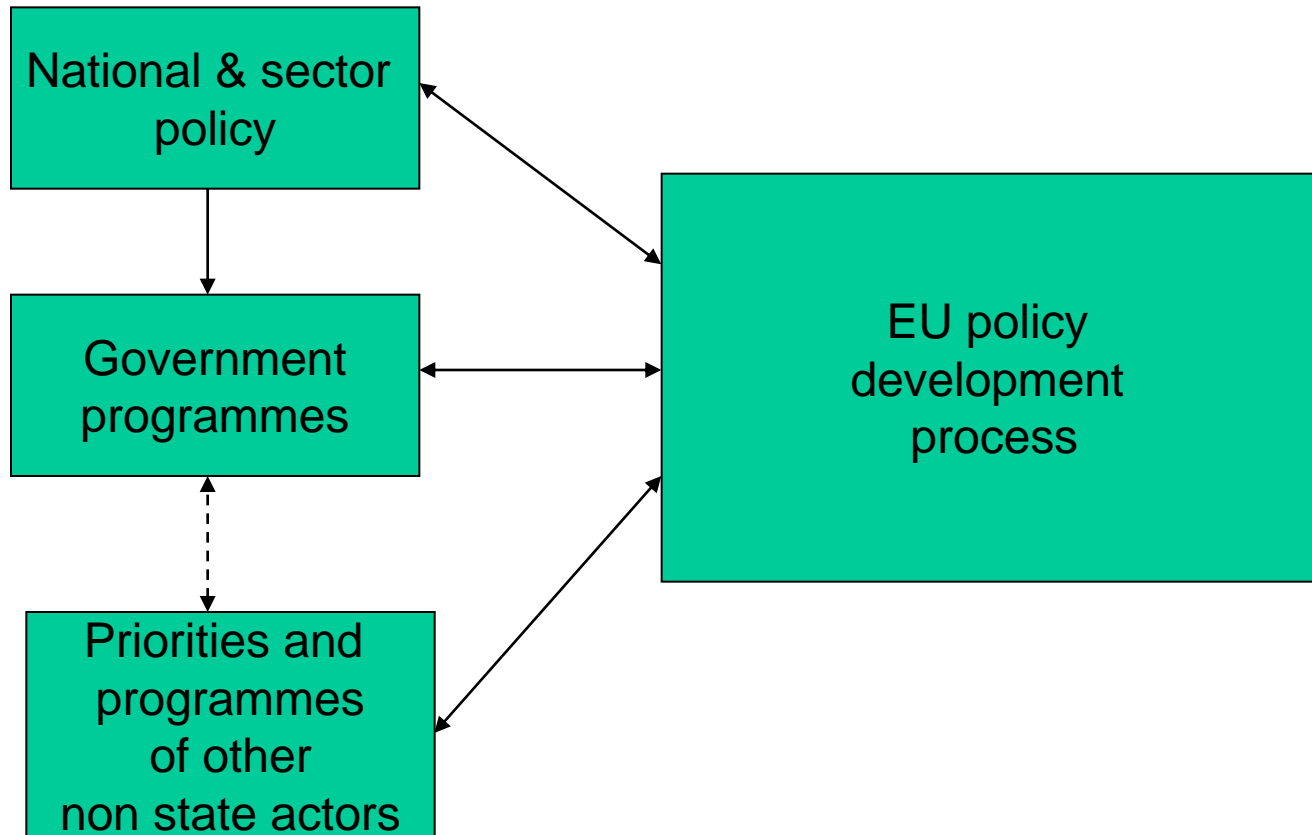


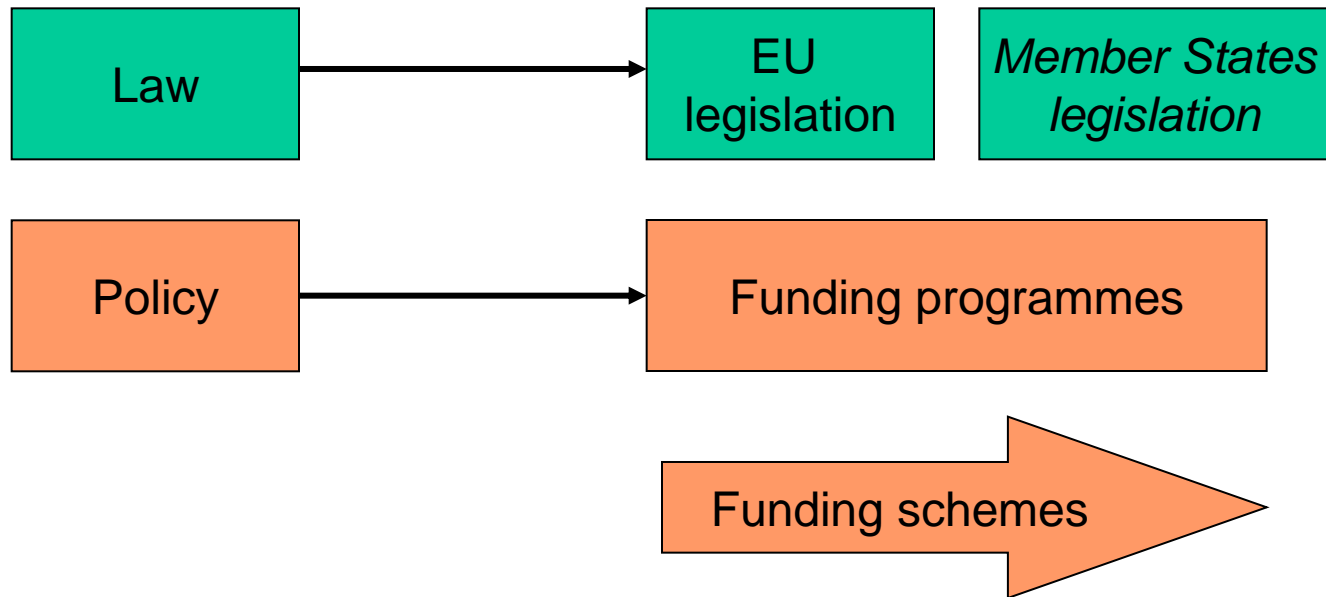
Coreper – Permanent Representatives Committee

- is responsible for preparing the work of the Council of the European Union.
- permanent national representatives – national teams (study the proposals, make position, contact government, ask for instructions, try to reach agreement for legislation/policy change etc.)

Working groups – on occasional basis - prepare technical details

Policy Development





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