
Wednesday, 24 January 2018
16:00 – 17:30 CET

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EU Institutions and Decision-Making
Institutions of the European Union
What is Europe?
European Union (EU) or European Onion?

Court of Justice of the EU

European Central Bank

European Court of Auditors

European Commission

European Parliament

European Council of Ministers

European Council
Inside the Union
The EU in figures

- 33,000 Officials in European Commission
- 15,000 - 30,000 lobbyists
- 751 MEPs
- 3,000 Interest groups
- 240,000 Legislative acts in « acquis communautaire » since EU creation
- 353 Members of CoR/ EESC
- 28 Commissioners
- 1,500 Expert committees
The card holders

- European Council
  - Provides impetus and direction
  - summit of the Heads of state or government, the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission.
  - gives the necessary political impetus for the development of the Union and sets its general objectives and priorities
  - does not legislate
  - based in Brussels

- Council of the European Union
  - Legislature
  - acts together with the Parliament as a legislature
  - shares with the Parliament the budgetary power
  - ensures coordination of the broad economic and social policy and sets out guidelines for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)
  - concludes international agreements
  - based in Brussels

- European Parliament
  - Legislature
  - acts together with the Council as a legislature
  - shares with the Council the budgetary power and decides in the last instance on the budget
  - exerts the democratic control over the institutions including the European Commission and approves the Commission members
  - based in and plenary sessions in Strasbourg, primarily meets in Brussels

- European Commission
  - Executive
  - is the executive
  - submits proposals for new legislation to the Parliament and Council
  - implements policies
  - administers the budget
  - ensures compliance with European law ("guardian of the treaties")
  - negotiates international agreements
  - based in Brussels

- Court of Justice of the European Union
  - Judiciary
  - ensures the uniform application and interpretation of European law
  - has the power to decide legal disputes between member states, the institutions, businesses and individuals
  - based in Luxembourg

- European Central Bank
  - Central bank
  - forms together with the national central banks the European System of Central Banks and thereby determines the monetary policy of the eurozone
  - ensures price stability in the eurozone by controlling the money supply
  - based in Frankfurt

- European Court of Auditors
  - Financial auditor
  - checks the proper implementation of the budget
  - based in Luxembourg
European Commission
President of the European Commission

- Name: Jean-Claude Juncker
- Nationality: Luxembourg
- Political group: EPP (centre-right)
- Quote:

“The Commission which I lead has pursued a clear policy: we need less interference from Brussels when it comes to the things that Member States can deal with better on their own. That is why we no longer regulate oil cans or showerheads, but concentrate instead on what we can do better together rather than alone - such as tackling the refugee crisis or securing our external borders. Only in that way can we make people feel that Europe makes a tangible difference.”
The role of the European Commission

- Executive body of the European Union
- Submits proposals for new legislation to European Parliament and EU Council of Ministers
- Implements policies
- Administers the budget
- Ensures compliance with European law, as “guardian of the treaties”
- Negotiates International Agreements
- Has exclusive competence over certains policies, e.g. Competition
European Commission’s *modus operandi*

- **10 POLITICAL PRIORITIES**
  - A sharper focus

- **BIG on BIG** things,
  - SMALL on SMALL things

- A **NEW STRUCTURE**, breaking silos: project teams **WORKING TOGETHER**

- **MORE TRANSPARENCY**
  - Trade negotiations and meetings of Commissioners, Cabinets, DGs

**DELIVERING WHERE THE EU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**
Commission legislating less

NEW INITIATIVES IN THE WORK PROGRAMME 2010-2015

* Low number of initiatives due to European elections in May.
European Parliament
President of the European Parliament

- Name: Antonio Tajani
- Nationality: Italy
- Political group: EPP (centre-right)
- Quote:

“We need a more democratic Europe. We cannot close ourselves off in the ivory tower in Brussels.”
The European Parliament in figures

- 22 Committees
- 24 Languages
- 8 Political Groups
- 3 places of work
- 14 Vice-presidents
- 12 Plenary Sessions
- 37% Female MEPs
- 751 MEPs
European Parliament’s composition

- Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats): 215
- Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament: 190
- European Conservatives and Reformists Group: 74
- Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe: 65
- Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance: 50
- Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left: 51
- Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group: 44
- Europe of Nations and Freedom Group: 37
- Non-attached Members: 18
- Total: 744
Non-legislative initiatives

- Written questions to the European Commission
- Written declarations (now stopped)
- Plenary debates with adopted motion for resolution (oral questions)
- Own-initiative reports by European Parliament Committees
European Council of Ministers
President of the Council of Ministers

- Name: Boyko Borissov
- Nationality: Bulgaria
- Political group: EPP (centre-right)
- Quote:

  “We are aware that there is a lot of work ahead of us. That is why, our efforts will be mainly concentrated in three directions: consensus, competitiveness, and cohesion.”
How it works

- Rotating 6-month Presidency
  - 2017 Malta - Estonia
  - 2018 Bulgaria - Austria

- Council Secretariat

- Importance of Brussels contacts!
  - Linking working level and top level decision makers

- Ministers of the Member States

- Permanent Representatives Committee (COREPER)

- Importance of national contacts

- Council Working Groups
The European Council of Ministers

10 Council of Ministers:
- General Affairs
- Foreign Affairs
- Agriculture and Fisheries
- Economic and Financial Affairs (including budget)
- Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)
- Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs
- Environment
- Education, Youth and Culture
- Justice and Home Affairs (including civil protection)
- Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

158 Working Groups (permanent and ad-hoc WGs)
Council Secretariat
Decision-making in the EU

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Decision-making in the EU

European Commission
Executive Body
- Initiates legislation & Reviews implementation

Council of the European Union
Legislator

European Parliament
Legislator

Legislation
EU decision-making: a maze
Influencing the legislative process

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The importance of getting in early
Influencing both European Parliament and Council
Next steps for the European Union

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Opportunities

- More “unity” on core and topical policies, e.g. migration, Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and Brexit.

- “Pioneer countries” or the EU of two speeds: allowing Member States to progress at different speeds on certain policies: e.g. energy.

- Reforming institutions to regain public acceptance, e.g. single seat European Parliament.
Challenges

- European Union’s Member States under pressure with separatist movements, e.g. Catalonia, Corsica, Lombardy.

- Growing sentiment of euro-scepticism.

- Brexit.
Questions or Suggestions? Contact Us!

Do you have questions or feedback on today’s webinar? Would you like to provide suggestions on topics for future webinars? We want to hear from you! Feel free to contact us at eppc@ieee.org.

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