



EUFEST

Celebrating the EU through
Teaching and Learning

Module 2

EU Institutions and Decision-Making Process



MODULE 2

EU Institutions and Decision-Making Process

Understanding the EU Institutions and Decision-Making Process



In this module you will explore:

The main EU institutions and their roles

How the European Union makes decisions

The Ordinary Legislative Procedure

Other key EU bodies and their functions

How citizens participate in EU decision-making

Teaching EU institutions through interactive simulations and classroom activities

Introduction

Which EU institution is directly elected by citizens and how often?

Who proposes new EU laws before they are adopted by Parliament and Council?

What is the main difference between the European Council and the Council of the EU?

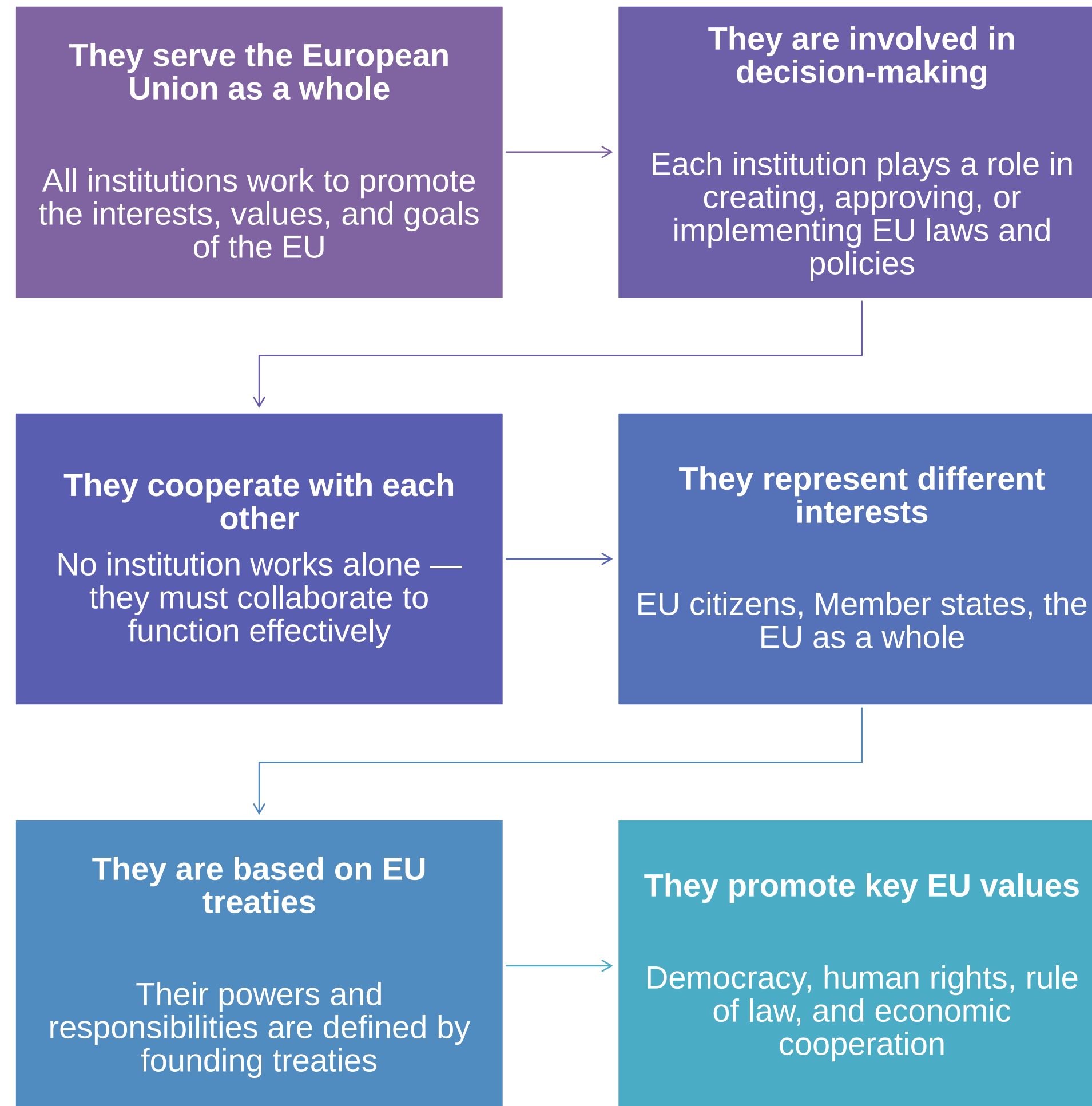
Can you give one example of how EU institutions affect citizens' everyday life?

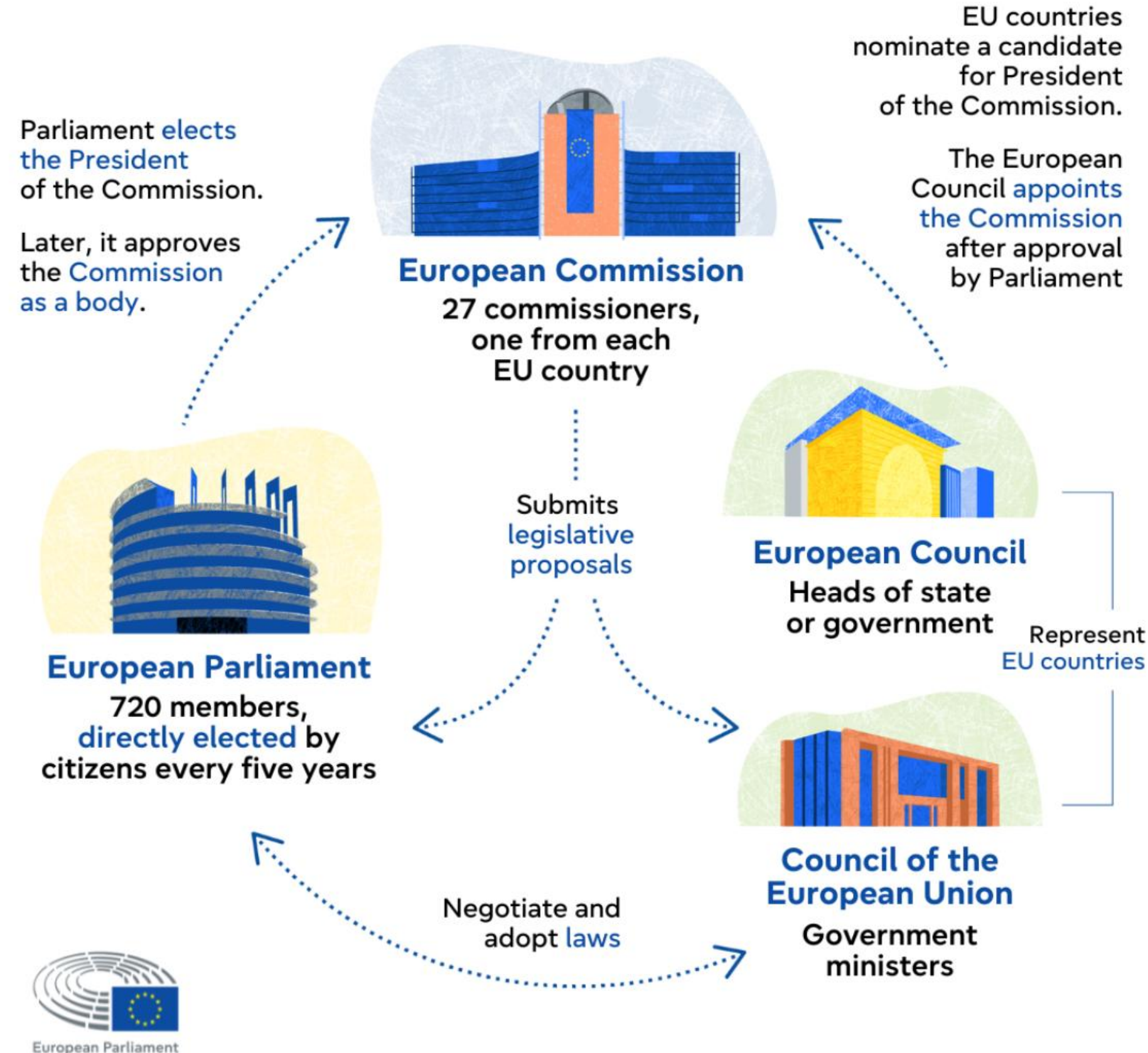
Activity

Quiz

Identify the Institution

WHAT EU INSTITUTIONS HAVE IN COMMON





Main EU Institutions – Key Decision-Makers

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



European Parliament logo

1

Overview

720 directly elected MEPs
President: Roberta Metsola
Strasbourg, Brussels,
Luxembourg
Elections every 5 years (last:
June 2024)

2

Main Roles

Passes EU laws
Oversees institutions &
elects the Commission
Decides on the EU budget

3

Citizen Engagement

Submit petitions
Contact MEPs or EP offices



Roberta Metsola,

https://commission.europa.eu/roberta-metsola_en

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Main Role

Proposes and enforces EU laws
Implements policies & manages the budget
Represents the EU internationally

Structure & Work

27 Commissioners, president Ursula von der Leyen
Decisions mainly by consensus, president sets priorities
Weekly meetings to adopt proposals for Parliament & Council



Ursula von der Leyen

https://commission.europa.eu/about/organisation/president_en



European Commission logo

COUNCIL OF THE EU

Main Role

- Adopts EU laws with Parliament
- Coordinates EU policies
- Develops foreign & security policy based on European Council guidance

Structure & Work

- Ministers from each EU country (depending on policy area)
- Chair rotates every 6 months – 2026: Cyprus + Ireland



Council of the European Union logo



[Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU.](#)

EUROPEAN COUNCIL

Main Role

- Sets overall EU political direction & priorities

Composition & Work

- Heads of state or government + European Council & Commission Presidents
- Meets ~ 4 times a year

Functions

- Nominates high-level EU roles
- Guides EU foreign & security policy

President & Location:

- António Costa
- Brussels



António Costa

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/pt/european-council/president/>



European Council logo

OTHER INSTITUTIONS



[Court of Justice of the European Union \(Curia\).](#)

Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU)

- Interprets and enforces EU law
- Reviews EU acts and ensures institutions respect rights
- Luxembourg

OTHER INSTITUTIONS

European Court of Auditors (ECA)

Checks that EU funds are correctly collected
and spent

President: Tony Murphy

Members: 1 from each EU country

Location: Luxembourg



European Court of Auditors (ECA)



Eurotower

Copyright 2023 The Associated Press. All rights reserved



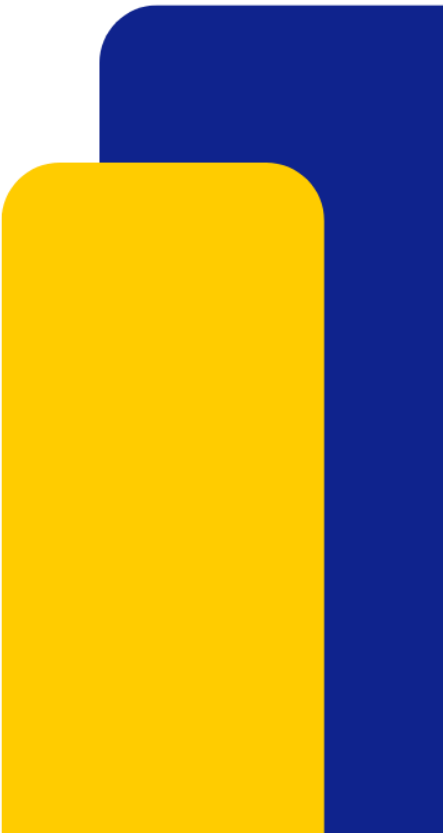
OTHER INSTITUTIONS

European Central Bank (ECB)

- Manages the euro and oversees the EU economic and monetary policy
- Maintain price stability (control inflation)
- Support economic growth and employment
- President: Christine Lagarde
- Frankfurt

Activity

Myth or Truth



LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES IN EU

Three key institutions:

European Commission

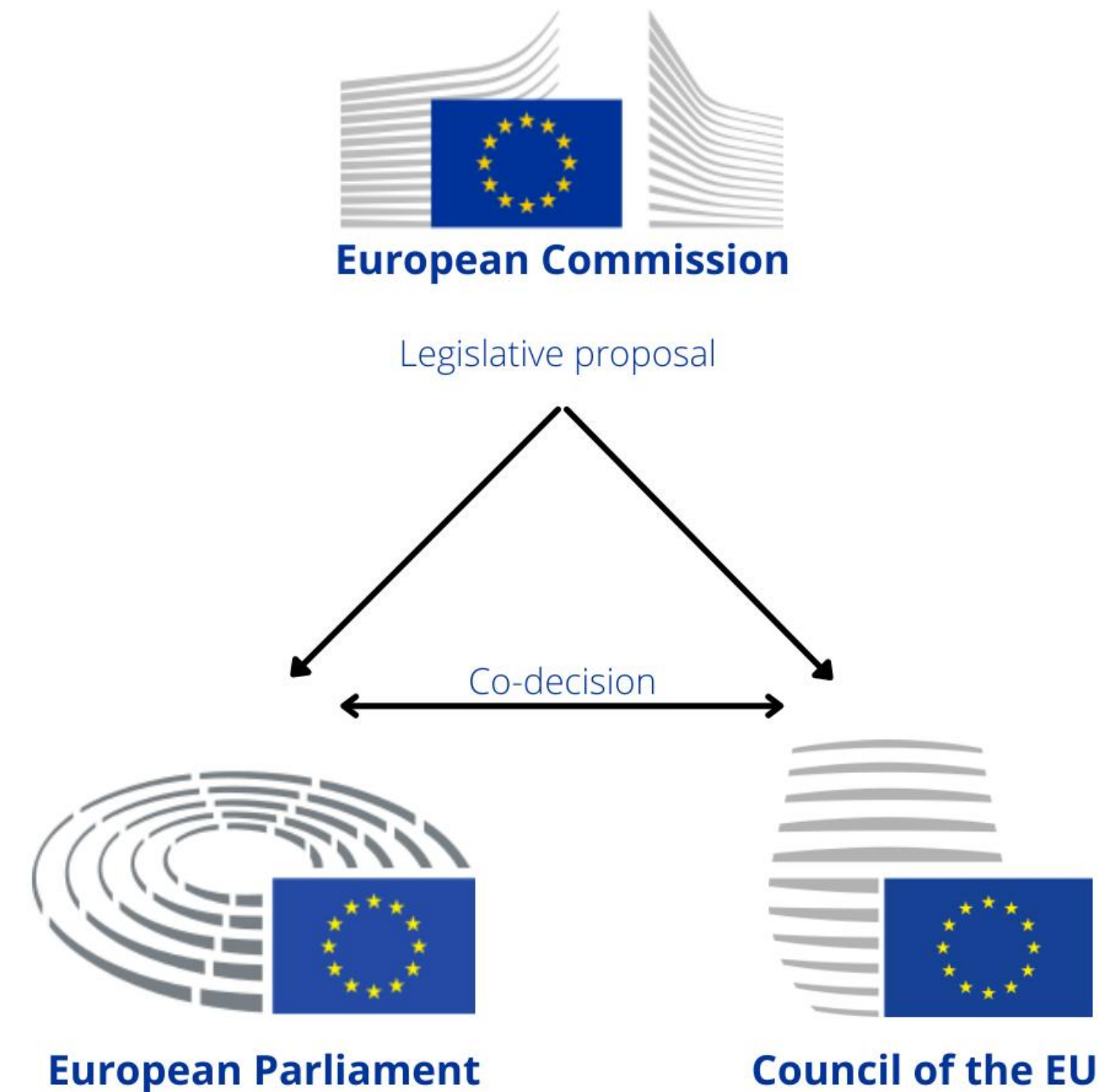
proposes legislation

European Parliament

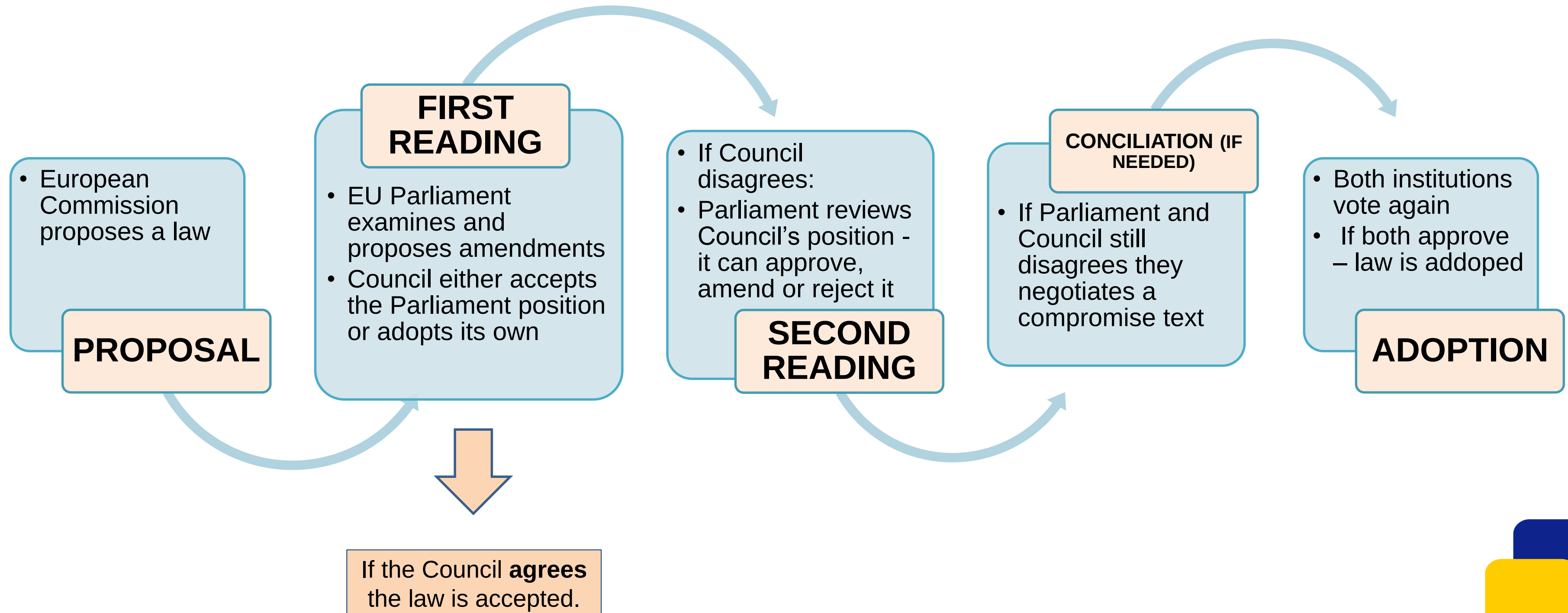
represents EU citizens

Council of the European Union

represents member states



ORDINARY LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE



ORDINARY LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE

Easy way to remember



EU Parliament & Council of the EU have **equal power**

Used in most EU policy areas

Internal market

Environment

Consumer protection

Migration policy

Digital regulation

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

Specific policy areas

European Commission → proposes the law

Council of the EU or EU Parliament → makes the final decision

One institution decides (has more power) → The other institution gives an opinion

Ordinary → Parliament + Council decide together = **shared power**
Special → One decides, the other reacts = **one institution dominates**

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

Eu Commission proposes a law ➡

- Parliament approve or reject proposal (cannot amend)
- Council adopts the law
- Used for: new EU member states, major international agreements, serious violations of EU values, some budget decisions

CONSENT PROCEDURE



- EU Parliament gives an opinion and can consult
- Council makes the final decision
- Used for: taxation, justice and home affairs matters

CONSULTATION PROCEDURE



FEATURE	ORDINARY LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE	SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES
MAIN INSTITUTIONS	EU Parliament + Council of the EU	Either Parliament or Council is stronger
POWER BALANCE	Equal power (co-decision)	Unequal power
ROLE OF PARLIAMENT	Full law-making power	Limited (consultation or approval)
ROLE OF COUNCIL	Full law-making power	Often dominant, decision-maker
NUMBER OF READINGS	Up to 3 (can be long)	Usually simpler and faster
USE	Most EU laws	Specific policy areas
AMENDMENTS	Parliament can amend	Often not allowed

Activity

EU Institutions - Categorisation

EU citizens can
participate and
influence
decision-making

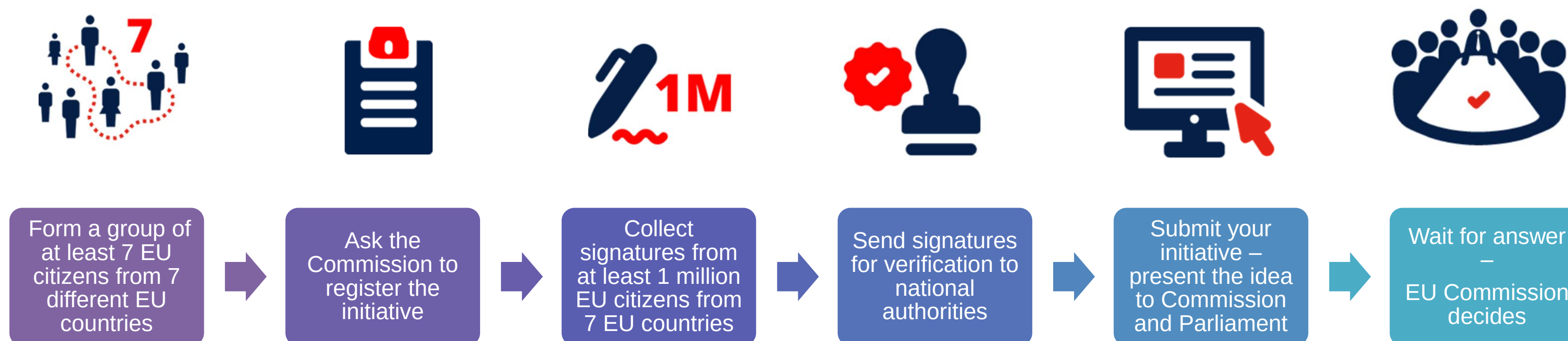


The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI)



Short video: The European Citizens' Initiative (1:09)

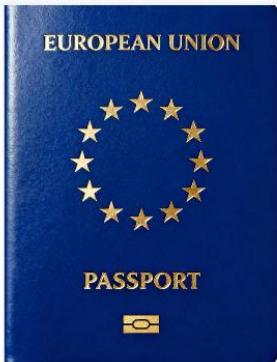
The European Citizens' Initiative in 6 steps



Initiatives you can support now

Sign or start a European citizens’ initiative

All the initiatives you can sign



COLLECTION ONGOING

EU Stars On My Passport (STAR-PASS)

15,288 signatures

Sign this initiative



COLLECTION ONGOING

EU initiative to protect stray dogs, stray cats and animals in shelters in the EU/non-EU countries

4,941 signatures

Sign this initiative



COLLECTION ONGOING

No more double standards on human rights

5,060 signatures

Sign this initiative



COLLECTION ONGOING

Ethics, transparency and integrity for European political parties

2,860 signatures

Sign this initiative



COLLECTION ONGOING

Stop Funding Russia's War: Phase Out Harmful and Useless Russian Imports into the EU

15,454 signatures

Sign this initiative



COLLECTION ONGOING

Food is a Human Right for All! Guaranteeing healthy, just and sustainable food systems

83,078 signatures

Sign this initiative



COLLECTION ONGOING

Save your right, save your flight!

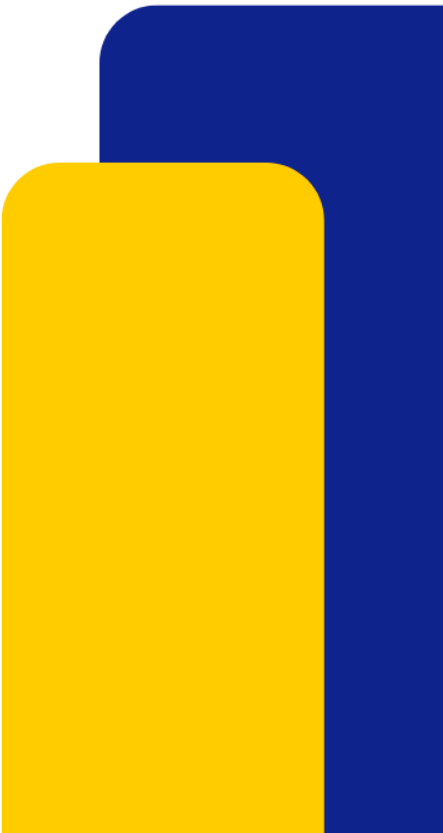
6,535 signatures

⚠ Last call to sign

Sign this initiative

Activity

Role-Play Simulation



References



European Union. (n.d.). How EU decisions are made. https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/law/how-eu-decisions-are-made_en

European Union. (n.d.). Institutions and bodies. https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies_en

European Union. (n.d.). The European Citizens' Initiative. <https://citizens-initiative.europa.eu>

European Parliament. (n.d.). Fact Sheets on the European Union. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/home>

European Parliament. (n.d.). The Ordinary Legislative Procedure. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/6/the-ordinary-legislative-procedure>

European Commission. (n.d.). The European Commission. https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission_en

European Commission. (n.d.). Better Regulation: Why and how we regulate. https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/better-regulation_en

Council of the European Union. (n.d.). How EU laws are adopted. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/decision-making/>

EUR-Lex. (n.d.). Summaries of EU Legislation. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/browse/summaries.html> EUR-Lex. (n.d.). Treaties. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/collection/eu-law/treaties.html>

References



European Parliament. (2023). How the European Parliament works [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4sJ2gYPsrAI>

European Parliament. (2023). The EU democratic process in under 1 minute [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOeEjiNbeTI>

European Parliament. (n.d.). How the European Parliament works. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20180322STO00309/how-the-european-parliament-works-video>

European Parliament. (n.d.). The EU democratic process in under one minute. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20180322STO00306/the-eu-democratic-process-in-under-one-minute-video>

European Parliament. (n.d.). Explainer videos. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/topic/explainers-videos>

European Parliament. (n.d.). Short videos explaining how the European Parliament works. EU Learning Corner. https://learning-corner.learning.europa.eu/learning-materials/short-videos-explaining-how-european-parliament-works_en



THANK YOU



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

