

## Institutional Actors Worksheet

*(worksheet to be completed in class in small groups, one group per institution; group discussion of answers following 20 minutes of group prep time; answers shared on the chalk board)*

### **EU Commission (Commission)**

*Component parts:*

*Primary functions:*

*Governmental powers:*

*Supporting institutions:*

### **Council of Ministers (Council)**

*Component parts:*

*Primary functions:*

*Governmental powers:*

*Supporting institutions:*

**European Parliament (EP)**

*Component parts:*

*Primary functions:*

*Governmental powers:*

*Supporting institutions:*

**European Court of Justice (ECJ)**

*Component parts:*

*Primary functions:*

*Governmental powers:*

*Supporting institutions:*

## Institutional Actors Worksheet

### EU Commission (Commission)

#### *Component parts:*

College of Commissioners = headed by Commission president, elected for 5 year terms - political arm; Commission services = permanent bureaucracy, organized by Directorate Generals - administrative arm  
One Commissioner nominated per MS, Commission must be approved by EP  
Each Commissioner has a cabinet - group of trusted advisors

#### *Primary functions:*

Main supranational institution of the EU  
Policy-initiation, Policy formulation, Policy implementation monitoring  
Acts on principle of collective responsibility

#### *Governmental powers:* executive, legislative, supervisory

Executive = administration of EU budget, day-to-day management of EU competition policy, representation of EU in international arena (ex: WTO)  
Legislative = policy-initiation, policy formulation, agenda-setting power through right to propose all new legislation, quasi-legislative powers in fields of competition, external trade, agriculture and fisheries  
Supervisory powers = guardians of the Treaties - ensure proper implementation of EU law

#### *Supporting institutions:*

10 regulatory agencies - including ECB, European Environmental Agency, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

### Council of Ministers (Council)

#### *Component parts:*

23 Specialized councils - agriculture, environment, transportation, etc  
General Affairs Council (GAC) - national foreign ministers  
ECOFIN - economics and finance ministers  
President of EU and of Council (6 month rotating presidency)

#### *Primary functions:*

Main decision-making body in EU  
Three voting procedures: simple majority (used for procedural issues), unanimity (used for sensitive issues), QMV (used for the majority of issues pertaining to Pillar I)

#### *Governmental powers:* legislative, supervisory, delegation

Legislative = Main decision-making body, in conjunction with EP; exclusive legislative powers in Pillars II and III  
Delegation = certain responsibilities and tasks to Commission  
Supervisory = oversees work of other EU institutions

#### *Supporting institutions:*

COREPER = responsible for preparing Council meetings, approx. 150 different COREPER working groups, COREPER I = Deputies (most legislation analyzed by this group), COREPER II =

Ambassadors (look at controversial issues), A points - legislation already agreed to, B-points - legislation needs further discussion

Council Secretariat = administrative, record-keeping arm of Council

Comitology = representatives of national governments who work in committees and oversee Commission adoption and implementation of policy measures (five different types of committees)

## **European Parliament (EP)**

### *Component parts:*

785 MEPs, number per MS determined by population

EP Committees = advise MEPs how to vote on issues (Commissioners must regularly report to EP Committees)

### *Primary functions:*

One week per month voting in plenary session in Strasbourg; most power under co-decision procedure (equal to Council) - 75% of legislation under co-decision

Four main decision-making procedures: assent, consultation, cooperation, co-decision

### *Governmental powers:* legislative, budgetary, supervisory

Legislative = power depends on which of 22 legislative procedures are used

Budgetary = power to approve/reject entire budget, final jurisdiction over non-compulsory expenditures (40% of budget)

Supervisory = oversight of Commission and Council activities, important role in appointing president of Commission, final approval of entire College of Commissioners, ability to censor Commission (2/3 majority)

### *Supporting institutions:*

EP party system = over 100 parties organized into 7 official parties groups (main parties: EPP, PES, ALDE) - MEPs vote based on party not national affiliation

## **European Court of Justice (ECJ)**

### *Component parts:*

European Court of Justice (ECJ) - 27 judges elected for 6 year renewable terms from each MS, president selected by peers for 3 year renewable terms, 8 Advocates General - defend public interest

### *Primary functions:*

Decision-making is collegiate, only opinions of Advocate Generals published

#### Jurisdiction:

Article 226 - disputes between EU and Member States (aka infringement cases)

Article 227 - disputes between Member States

Article 230 & 232 - disputes between EU institutions

Article 234 - preliminary rulings on issues of EU law affecting national rulings (ca. 90% accepted)

*Governmental powers:* judicial

Main powers derived from Van Gend en Loos case (new legal order, direct effect), and Costa v ENEL (supremacy)

*Supporting institutions:*

Court of First Instance (CFI) - 27 judges only

Hears only cases brought by private parties against EU institutions, decisions can be appealed back to ECJ