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