

EU Institutions

Running the EU

- Council of European Union
- European Council
- European Commission
- European Parliament
- European Court of Justice
- European Court of Auditors
- European Central Bank

Three Pillars Strong (outdated)

- First Pillar - Trade and Economic
 - Nations have ceded much sovereignty in these areas to the EU
- Second Pillar - Security and Defense
- Third Pillar - Home and Justice
 - Close co-operation, but retained sovereignty
 - Subsidiarity (devolution) - keeps decisions as local as possible - the EU only handles issues of trans-national importance



The Council of the European Union

- Represents the 28 nations of the Union - various national ministers, depending on topic under discussion.
 - Permanent Representatives keep things in order, about 2,000 staff
- Six-month rotating presidency – trio sets the agenda (Romania, Finland, Croatia through mid-2020)
- Each country is represented, votes weighted
- Passes laws in Co-decision with Parliament – consensus OR ‘qualified majority’ is required - 55% of member states (15), with 65% of population – since 2014
- No clear analog in the US system



European Council

- Summit meetings of the Heads of Government of each member
- Meets twice every six months by law, more often in practice
- Only formalized as an institution in 2009, as part of Lisbon.
- Current President is Donald Tusk, former PM of Poland, since 2014, in second term. 2.5 year terms, max two.
- Charles Michel, PM Belgium is President-elect, takes office December 1 2019.
- Not to be confused with the Presidency of the Council of the European Union!



European Commission

- One commissioner with a specific portfolio from each country, staff of ~22,000 - five year term – ends November 1, 2019
- President of the Commission proposed by the Council of the European Union, 'elected' by European Parliament. Currently Jean-Claude Juncker - former Luxembourg PM
- Ursula von der Leyen (Germany's Defense Minister) takes office November 1
- Proposes text of legislation and regulations
- Ensures that the *acquis communautaire* is carried out, takes legal action against violators
- Manages the Budget
- Represents the Union externally
- Similar to the US executive branch

Commissioners

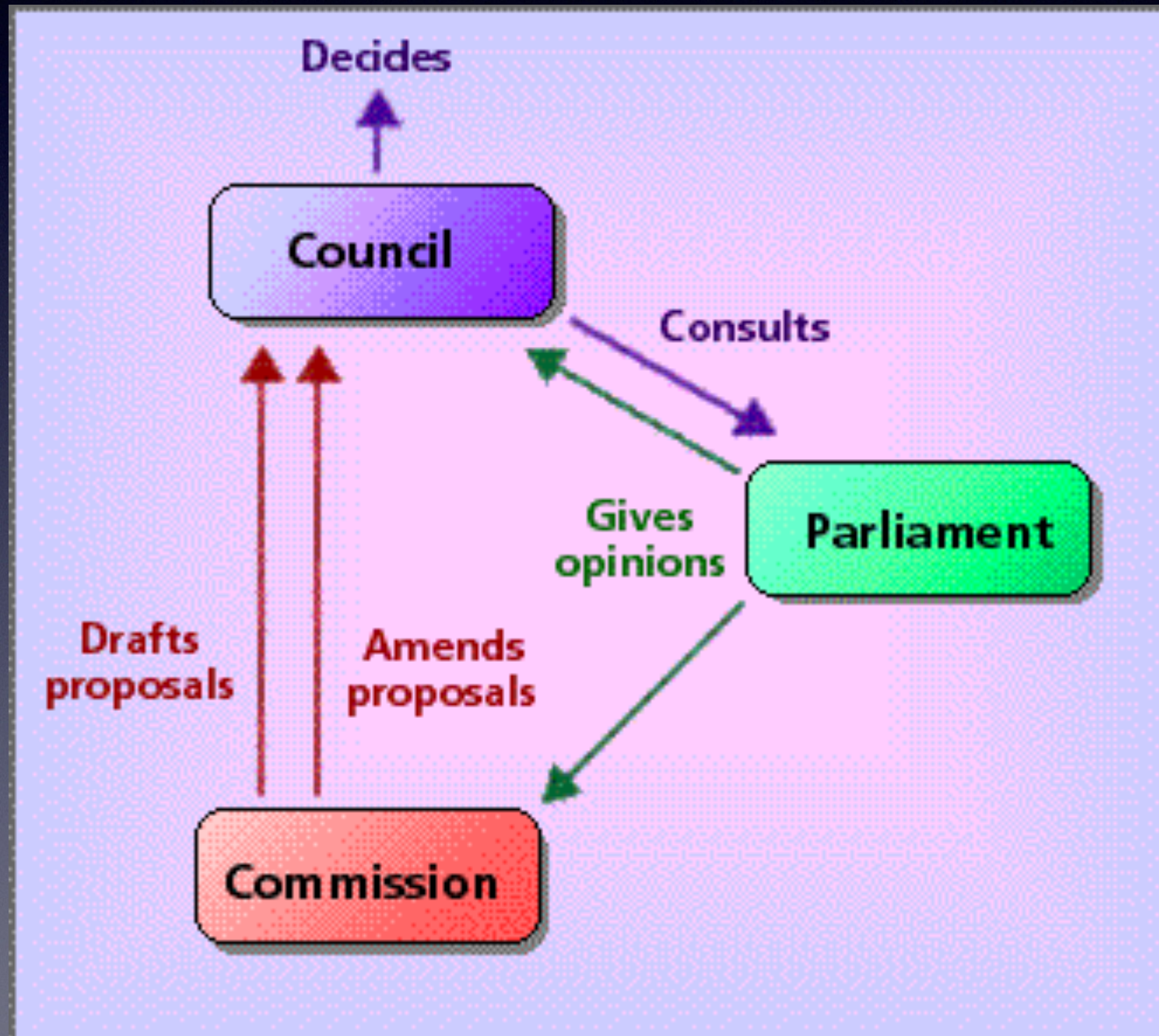
- Agriculture and Rural Development
- Climate Action
- Competition
- Development
- Digital Agenda
- Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs
- Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth
- Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
- Energy
- Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy
- Environment
- Budget and Human Resources
- Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union
- Health and Consumer Policy
- High Representative
- Home Affairs
- Industry and Entrepreneurship
- International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response
- Interinstitutional Relations and Administration
- Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality
- Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
- Regional Policy
- Research, Innovation and Science
- Taxation, Customs, Statistics, Audit and Anti-Fraud
- Trade
- Transport



European Parliament

- Represents the people of Europe - 751 locally elected MEP's – five year terms, elections were May 2019.
- The 'First Institution' of the EU – ceremonial precedence, mentioned first in Treaties
- David Sassoli (Italy, S&D) President, 2.5 year term, x2 max, since July 2019
- Passes laws in co-decision with the Council - 'conciliatory committees' work out differences in changes to the proposals of the Commission
- Oversight duties
- Similar to Congress, but with very different powers - can't propose legislation, no direct 'power of the purse'

Decision-making



Other Institutions

- Court of Auditors is responsible for sound oversight of finances - examines receipts and expenditures - Luxembourg
- European Central Bank manages monetary policy and the Euro - based in Frankfurt

European Court of Justice

- Interprets EU law, and overrides national courts
- One judge from each member state
- Responsible for ensuring consistency of application of EU laws, resolving conflicting requirements, etc
- Similar to US Supreme Courts



Questions?