

UNIVERSITY OF MONTENEGRO
INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

THE FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCES

**ENGLISH COURSE – ENGLISH
FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES IV**

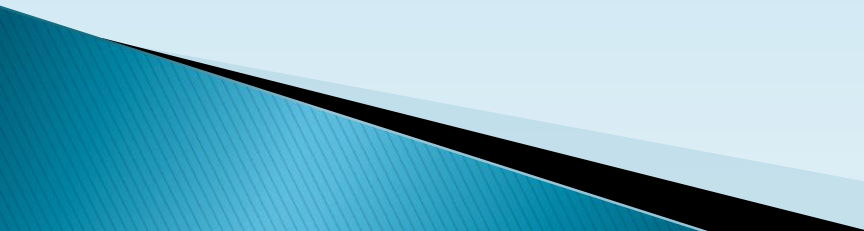
Podgorica, 25.02.2016.

UNIT 2

- READING AND SPEAKING: The European Union Institutions (I)
- VOCABULARY: Matching, collocations, word formation
- GRAMMAR: Passive Voice
- WRITING: Diplomatic notes (II)

THE EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS (I)

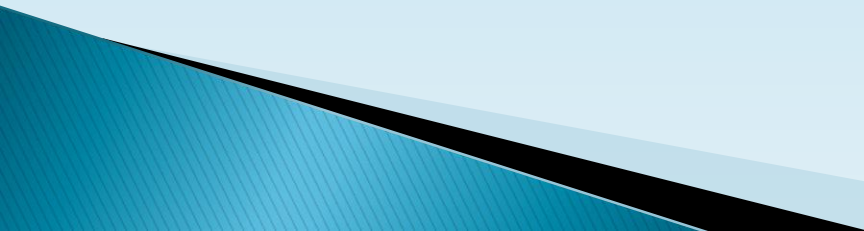
Decision-making at European Union level involves various European Institutions, in particular the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. The Court of Justice upholds the rule of European law and the Court of Auditors checks the financing of the Union's activities.



The European Parliament's origins go back to the 1950s. Since 1979, members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have been directly elected by the citizens they represent.

Parliamentary elections are held every five years and every EU citizen who is registered as a voter is entitled to vote. Thus, the Parliament expresses the democratic will of the Union's citizens and it represents their interests in discussions with the other EU institutions.

The European Parliament works in France, Belgium and Luxembourg. The monthly plenary sessions, which all MEPs attend, are held in Strasbourg (France), the Parliament's seat. Parliamentary committee meetings and any additional plenary sessions are held in Brussels, while Luxembourg is home to the administrative offices (the "General Secretariat").



The Parliament has three main roles:

1. It shares with the Council the *power to legislate*. The fact that it is a directly elected body helps guarantee the democratic legitimacy of European law.

2. It exercises *democratic supervision* over all EU institutions, and in particular the Commission. It has the power to approve or reject the nomination of Commissioners and it has the right to censure the Commission as a whole.

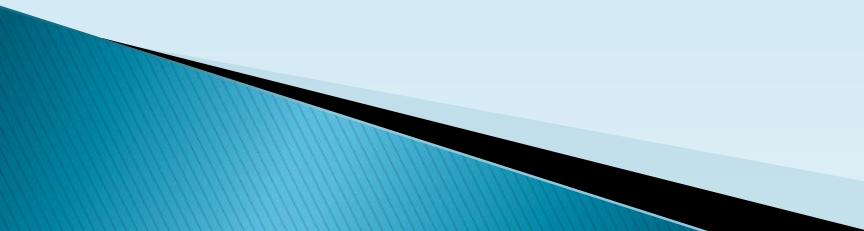
3. It shares with the Council *authority over the EU budget* and can therefore influence EU spending. At the end of the procedure, it adopts or rejects the budget in its entirety.

Parliament's work is divided into two main stages:

- Preparing for the plenary session. This is done by the MEPs in the various parliamentary committees that specialise in particular areas of EU activity. The issues for debate are also discussed by the political groups.
- The plenary session itself. At these sessions, Parliament examines proposed legislation and votes on amendments before coming to a decision on the text as a whole.

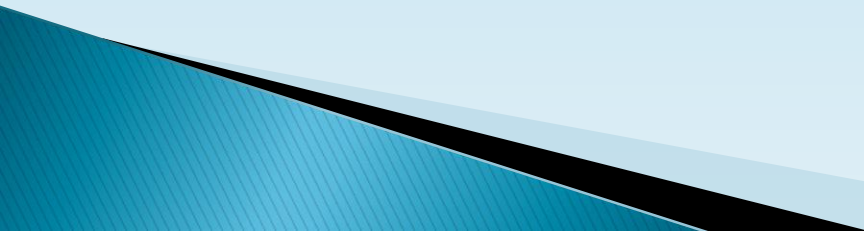
Other items on the agenda may include Council or Commission “communications” or questions about what is going on in the European Union or the wider world.

The Council of the European Union, formerly known as the Council of Ministers, is the EU's main decision-making body. It represents the member states and its meetings are attended by one minister from each of the EU's national governments. Which ministers attend which meetings depends on what subjects are on the agenda. If, for example, the Council is to discuss environmental issues, the meeting will be attended by the Environment Minister from each EU country and it will be known as the "Environment Council".



Altogether, there are nine different Council configurations: General Affairs and External Relations; Economic and Financial Affairs; Justice and Home Affairs; Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs; Competitiveness (internal market, industry and research); Transport, Telecommunications and Energy; Agriculture and Fisheries; Environment; and Education, Youth and Culture.

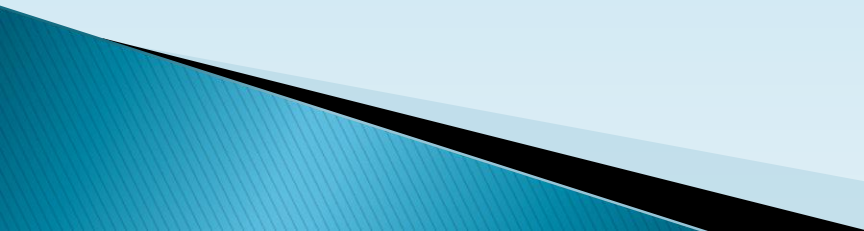
Each Minister in the Council is empowered to commit his or her government. In other words, the minister's signature is the signature of the whole government. Moreover, each minister in the Council is accountable to his or her national parliament and to the citizens that parliament represents. This ensures the democratic legitimacy of the Council's decisions.



The Council has six key responsibilities:

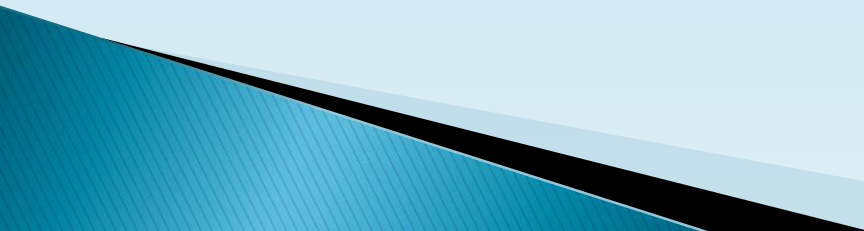
- to pass European laws.
- to coordinate the broad economic policies of the member states.
- to conclude international agreements between the EU and one or more states or international organizations.
- to approve the EU's budget, jointly with the European Parliament.
- to develop the EU's common foreign and security policy.
- to coordinate cooperation between the national courts and police forces in criminal matters.

In Brussels, each EU member has a permanent team ('representation') that represents it and defends its national interest at EU level. The head of each representation is, in effect, his or her country's ambassador to the EU. These ambassadors (known as 'permanent representatives') meet weekly within the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper). The role of this committee is to prepare the work of the Council, with the exception of agricultural issues.



The Presidency of the Council rotates every six months. In other words, each EU country in turn takes charge of the Council agenda and chairs all the meetings for a six-month period, promoting legislative and political decisions and brokering compromises between the member states.

Find the following information in the text below

1. Three crucial roles of the European Parliament.
 2. The year when the first direct elections for the European Parliament were held.
 3. The two stages of the Parliament's work.
 4. The places where meetings are held and administration offices are located.
 5. The EU main decision body.
 6. The number and names of different Council's configurations.
 7. The key Council's responsibilities.
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Discuss the following questions

1. What are the problems in the functioning of the EU?
2. Are all 27 EU members equal?
3. Is the idea of transferring a part of a country's sovereignty to the EU acceptable for you? If so, what are the benefits? What are the constraints?
4. What are the chances of the countries of the Balkan region to become EU members?

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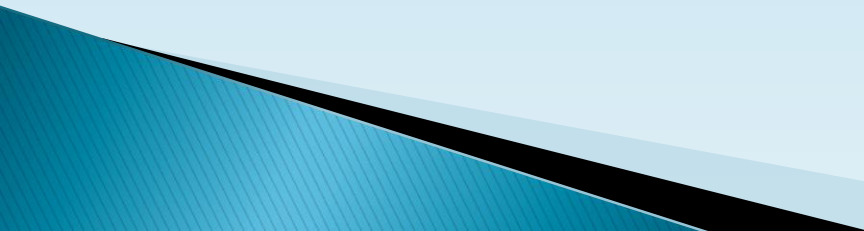
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Three ‘councils’: which is which?

It's easy to get confused about which European body is which — especially when very different bodies have very similar names, such as these three ‘councils’.

The European Council

This means the Heads of State or Government of all the EU countries, plus the President of the European Commission. It depends on the political system of each country whether their participant is the president and/or the prime minister. The European Council meets, in principle, four times a year to agree overall EU policy and to review progress. It is the highest level policymaking body in the European Union, which is why its meetings are often called ‘summits’.



The Council of the European Union

Formerly known as the Council of Ministers, this institution consists of government ministers from all the EU countries. The Council meets regularly to take detailed decisions and to pass EU laws. A fuller description of its work is given later in this booklet.

The Council of Europe

This is not an EU institution at all. It is an intergovernmental organisation which aims (amongst other things) to protect human rights, to promote Europe's cultural diversity and to combat social problems such as racial prejudice and intolerance. It was set up in 1949 and one of its early achievements was to draw up the European Convention on Human Rights. To enable citizens to exercise their rights under that convention, it set up the European Court of Human Rights. The Council of Europe now has 46 member countries, including all 27 European Union countries, and its headquarters is the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg (France)

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A Read the following text and fill the blanks with an appropriate word choosing from the alternatives given below.

The rules and procedures for EU decision-making are in the Treaties. Every for new European law must be on a specific Treaty article, to as the 'legal basis'. This which legislative procedure must be followed. The three main procedures are 'co-decision', 'consultation' and '.....'.

- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|
| a) set down | b) laid down | c) put forth | d) stipulated down |
| a) proposition | b) suggestive | c) proposal | d) subject matter |
| a) a | b) the | c) – | d) an |
| a) found | b) centered | c) based | d) filed |
| a) referred | b) suggested | c) called | d) subjected |
| b) determines | b) decides | c) calls for | d) accounts |
| a) acceptance | b) consention | c) approval | d) assent |

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B. FILL IN THE TEXT WITH APPROPRIATE WORDS:

How the EU takes decisions

Decision-making at European Union level
various EU institutions, in :

the European Parliament (EP/Parliament),
the Council of the European Union, and
the European Commission.

In general, it is European Commission that
..... new legislation, but it is the Council and
Parliament that the laws. In some cases, the
Council can alone. Other institutions also
have to play.

The main forms of EU law are directives and regulations. Directives establish a aim for all member states, but leave it to national to decide on the form and method of it. Normally, member states are given one-to-two years to a directive. Regulations are directly throughout the EU as soon as they come into without further by the member state.

B. FILL IN THE TEXT WITH APPROPRIATE WORDS:

How the EU takes decisions

Decision-making at European Union level INVOLVES various EU institutions, in PARTICULAR :

the European Parliament (EP/Parliament),
the Council of the European Union, and
the European Commission.

In general, it is THE European Commission that PROPOSES new legislation, but it is the Council and Parliament that PASS the laws. In some cases, the Council can ACT alone. Other institutions also have ROLES to play.

The main forms of EU law are directives and regulations. Directives establish a COMMON aim for all member states, but leave it to national AUTHORITIES to decide on the form and method of ACHIEVING it. Normally, member states are given one-to-two years to IMPLEMENT a directive. Regulations are directly APPLICABLE throughout the EU as soon as they come into FORCE without further ACTION by the member state.



That's all Folks!

**THANK YOU FOR COMING!
SEE YOU NEXT WEEK!**

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