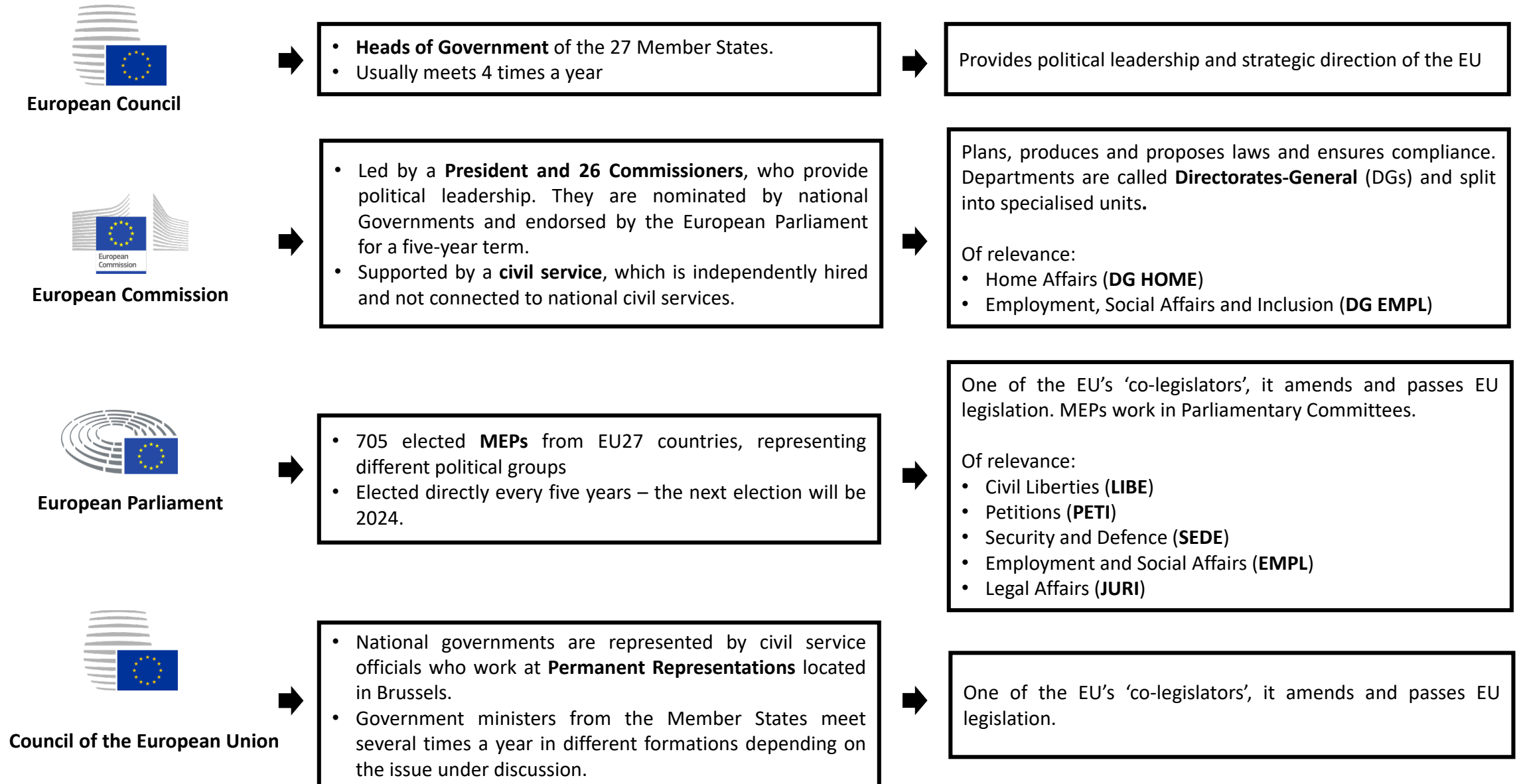


European engagement explainer: EU institutions overview



In more detail: European Commission



- Responsible for proposing EU legislation
- Executive body of the European Union

The political leadership

The Commission is led by a **President** and **26 Commissioners**, who provide political leadership. They are nominated by national Governments and endorsed by the European Parliament for a five year term.

Each Commissioner is supported by a '**cabinet**', a team of influential political advisors, and is responsible for a particular policy area.

The civil service

The Commission is supported by a **civil service**, which is independently hired and not connected to national civil services.

Departments are called **Directorates-General (DGs)**. Each DG is led by a Director-General, and is split into specialised units.

Of relevance:

- Home Affairs (**DG HOME**)
- Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (**DG EMPL**)

Key players:



Ursula von der Leyen
Commission President



Ylva Johansson
Commissioner, Home Affairs



Nicolas Schmit
Commissioner, Jobs & Social Rights

Key players:



Monique Pariat
Director-General, DG HOME



Joost Korte
Director-General, DG EMPL

In more detail: European Parliament



- **Represents European citizens in EU policy-making**
- 705 elected MEPs from EU27 countries
- Elected directly every five years
- Known as a 'co-legislator', it amends and passes EU legislation

The Committees

MEPs adopt and amend reports on legislation proposed by the Commission in Parliamentary Committees. MEPs who are responsible for reports are known as **Rapporteurs**, and are supported by MEPs from other groups, known as **Shadow Rapporteurs**. MEPs can also write reports on issues they are particularly interested in, known as '**own-initiative reports**'. These are not legally binding but useful for raising the profile of an issue.

There are 20 parliamentary committees. A committee consists of between 25 and 81 MEPs, and has a chair, a bureau and a secretariat. The political makeup of the committees reflects that of the plenary assembly.

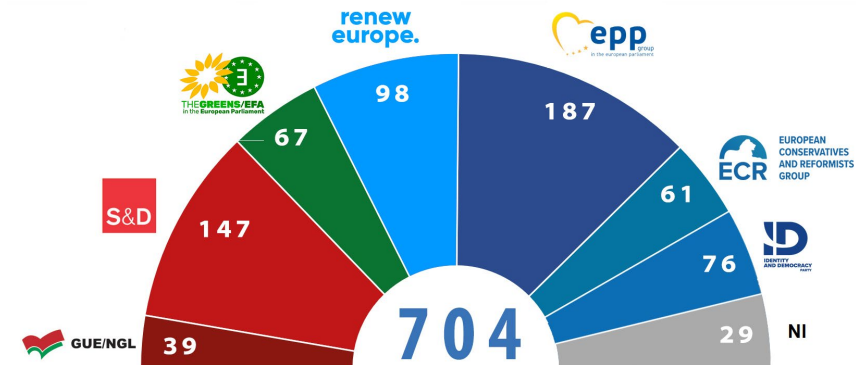
For EuroCOP, the most important Parliamentary Committees are:

- Civil Liberties (**LIBE**)
- Petitions (**PETI**)
- Security and Defence (**SEDE**)
- Employment and Social Affairs (**EMPL**)
- Legal Affairs (**JURI**)

The political groups

MEPs can be part of a **political group** or can sit as Independents. There are 7 political groups. Each group has its own **chair**, **spokespeople** and **secretariat**. MEPs who have roles within the groups (e.g. as spokesperson) are more influential.

- Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (**GUE/NFL**)
- Socialists and Democrats (**S&D**)
- **Greens/EFA**
- **Renew Europe** (formerly the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in Europe)
- European People's Party (**EPP**)
- European Conservatives and Reformists (**ECR**)
- Identity and Democracy (**ID**)



Source: [European Parliament](https://www.europarl.europa.eu)

In more detail: Council of the European Union



- **Represents national governments in EU policy-making**
- Known as a 'co-legislator', it amends and passes EU legislation

The officials

Each EU Member State is represented by a **Permanent Representation**, an outpost of its national civil service based in Brussels. It is headed by a **Permanent Representative**, who holds a similar function to that of an ambassador.

Officials, sometimes known as **attachés**, work with representatives of the other Member States to reach a single position on legislation proposed by the Commission. They reach these positions in **working groups**.

Relevant working parties include:

- **High-level working group on asylum and migration**
- **Working party on cooperation in criminal matters**
- **Committee on police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters**

The political dimension

Government ministers from the Member States meet several times a year in different formations depending on the issue under discussion.

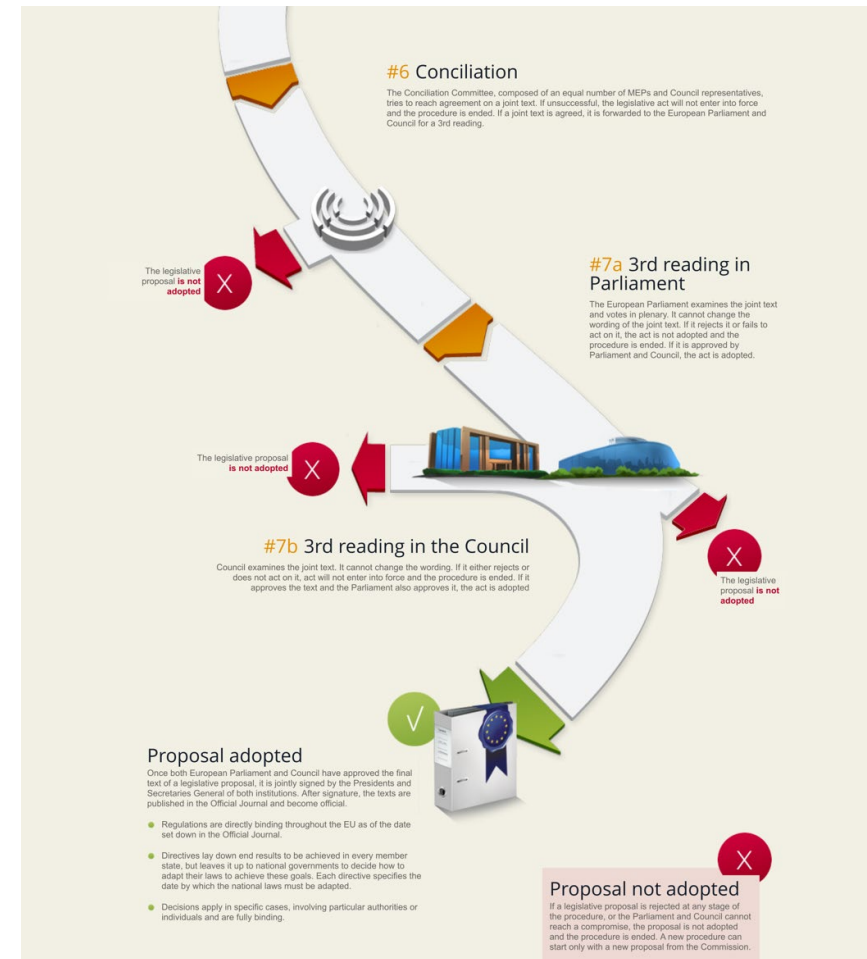
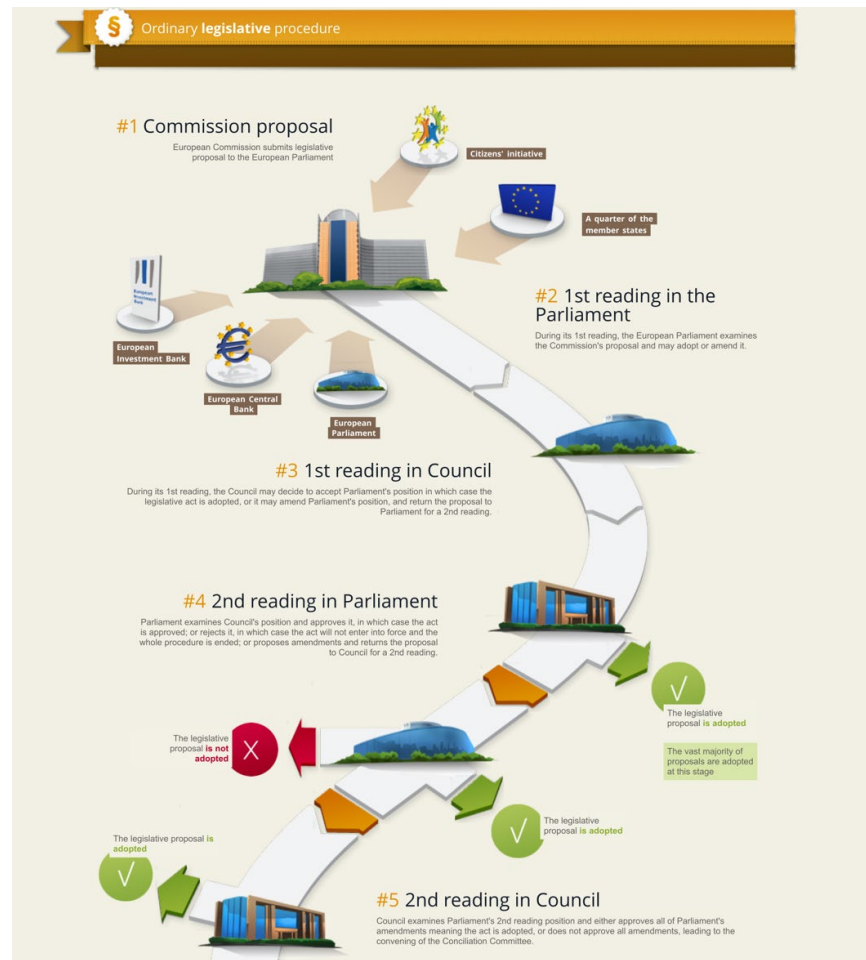
Their approval is required to endorse compromises reached by the officials who work in the Permanent Representations. They also adopt '**conclusions**' – statements that demonstrate political commitment to act and set out actions for the Commission to take forward.

Relevant Council formations:

- **Employment, social policy, health and consumer affairs (EPSCO):** improve living and working conditions, ensuring a high level of human health and consumer protection in the EU
- **Justice and home affairs (JHA):** cooperation and common policies on various cross-border issues, with the aim of building an EU-wide area of freedom, security and justice.
- **Education, youth, culture and sport (EYSC):** provide a framework for cooperation between member states on e.g. education and skills

European engagement explainer: EU Ordinary Legislative Procedure

- Below is a helpful diagram on the EU's **Ordinary Legislative Procedure (OLP)**. The OLP is the way in which the majority of European Union laws are adopted. It incorporates the three main institutions.
- It is crucial to note that before the end of each reading, the three institutions enter what are known as 'trilogues'. These are closed-door political meetings with representatives of each institution where negotiations take place on the details of any proposal so as to potentially avoid further readings.



European engagement explainer: EU consultative bodies and partners

The EU institutions consult various external organisations when developing legislation to ensure input from civil society.



- 326 members representing all EU Member States
- Members are nominated by national governments from organisations representing employers, workers and other sectors (e.g. agriculture)



Consultative body to the European Commission, meaning it can publish reports and give its opinion to the Commission, but nothing it produces is binding



- Represents 90 trade union organisations in 38 European countries
- 10 European trade union federations are also members



The European Commission consults ETUC when making social and economic policies.

European engagement explainer: EU agencies

EU agencies are distinct bodies from the EU institutions – separate legal entities set up to perform specific tasks under EU law.



- Management board: Each Member State has three representatives (government, employer and worker associations). The European Commission appoints its own members and the European Parliament appoints an independent expert



Acts as the European Union's information agency for occupational safety and health.



- Headed by a Director appointed by the EU Council
- Managed by one high-ranking representative from each Member State
- Each country has a liaison unit to act as a bridge with Europol



The EU's law enforcement agency, whose remit is to help make Europe safer by assisting law enforcement authorities in EU member countries.



- Management board: The board is made up of the heads of the border authorities of the 26 EU Member States that are Schengen acquis signatories, plus two members of the European Commission. UK and Ireland are also invited to participate.
- The agency is headed by an Executive Director appointed by the management board.



FRONTEX is primarily responsible for coordinating the EU's joint border control efforts.



- The CEPOL Management Board is constituted by representatives from all the EU Member States and the EU Commission.
- The agency is headed by an Executive Director who remains accountable to the management board.



The core function of CEPOL is to facilitate the collaboration and information sharing between law enforcement officials of the EU27 as well as a few limited third countries.

European engagement explainer: international organisations



- International human rights organisation – not an EU body
- Represents 47 member states
- Representatives are elected officials from member countries



- Cannot make binding laws, but has the power to enforce select international agreements reached by European countries
- Responsible for the European Code of Police Ethics



- Regional trade organisation and free trade area that operates in parallel with the EU
- Comprises four European states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland)



Not a policy-making body. EFTA countries hold close relationships with the EU.