EU DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

Have Your Say with the European Citizens' Initiative

European Citizens' Initiative

UNIT 1: A brief introduction to the EU
CLASS WORK

EU VALUES

There are six core values at the heart of the EU. The Lisbon Treaty explains them as follows:

> *'The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.'*

<div align="right">Article 2 of the Lisbon Treaty</div>

Look at the EU values listed below. In your group, try and rank these values by importance to you.

    a) Human dignity ….
    b) Freedom ….
    c) Democracy ….
    d) Equality ….
    e) Rule of law ….
    f) Human rights ….

Use the space below to make notes on why you put them in this order and try and define what each term means to you. Then, discuss your ideas with the rest of the class. You can use the explanations on p29 to help you.

THE SCHENGEN AREA

How many members of the Schengen area can you think of? Write them in the box below. Use the map to help you (Schengen Area countries in blue):

Members of the Schengen Area (January 2023)

Which countries are in green? Why?

THE FOUR FREEDOMS

Your teacher will assign you one of the four freedoms of the EU (goods, capital, services, people). For the freedom you are given, make notes under the following headings with your group and then share with the class:

1) What are the advantages for businesses?

2) What are the advantages for EU citizens?

3) How have you benefitted personally?

EU AREAS OF ACTION

The table below shows some EU areas of action:

Customs Union	Fisheries	Fundamental rights
Competition rules	Environment	Public health
Monetary policy	Consumer protection	Research and space
Trade	Transport	Trans-European networks
Marine plants and animals	Energy	Justice
	Employment and social affairs	Agriculture
	Single Market	Migration and home affairs
		Development cooperation and humanitarian aid

Which areas of action do the following fall under?

1. You get at least a two-year guarantee when you buy a new laptop.
2. If your flight is delayed for a long time or cancelled, you get compensation.
3. Your qualifications in one EU country are recognised in another.
4. The minimum amount of 20 days off each year for a full-time employee.
5. The maximum number of cod that fishermen are allowed to catch.
6. The amount of energy (gas/electric) that needs to come from renewable energy sources, like solar and wind energy.
7. The maximum amount of fine particles that are allowed to be in the air.

NOTES

LESSON REVIEW

IMPORTANT TREATIES

The European Union as we know it today is the result of a series of treaties its members agreed on. Using the factsheet on p26, or the internet, answer the following questions.

Ex. 1)   Put the following treaties (a-e) into the correct chronological order (1-5):
a) Maastricht Treaty
b) Treaty of Paris
c) Schengen Convention
d) Treaty of Rome
e) Lisbon Treaty

1: ____   2: ____   3: ____   4: ____   5: ____

Ex. 2)   Which of the treaties above (a-e) is being described below?
I.   This treaty was an attempt to ensure peace in Europe following the Second World War. .... [__]
II.   This treaty introduced the European Citizens' Initiative. .... [__]
III.   This treaty made it possible to move between EU countries with no border checks. .... [__]
IV.   This treaty created the European Economic Community. .... [__]
V.   This treaty created the concept of European Citizenship. .... [__]

EU VALUES

Ex. 3)   For each of the values listed below, go online, and find some EU actions related to promoting or protecting those values.
a) Human Dignity
b) Freedom
c) Democracy
d) Equality
e) Rule of Law
f) Human Rights

Be prepared to share your answers with your group at the beginning of the next unit.

European Citizens' Initiative

THE SCHENGEN AREA

The Schengen Area consists of European countries that have agreed to abolish border checks between them.

Ex. 4) Decide whether each of the following statements is true (T) or (F)

   a) All Schengen members are full members of the EU. …
   b) There are currently 27 Schengen members. …
   c) You don't need any form of ID when travelling in the Schengen Area. …
   d) If you are an EU citizen travelling from Greece to Estonia by road, you will need to go through border controls on the route. …
   e) You live in Spain and have a friend coming to visit from Ecuador. They get a visa and arrive safely in Spain. Together, you decide to fly to visit another friend in France for a few days. Your friend needs to apply for another visa. …

THE SINGLE MARKET AND CUSTOMS UNION

The EU aims to enable EU citizens to study, live, shop, work and retire in any EU country and enjoy products from all over the Union. To do this, it ensures free movement of goods, services, capital, and people in a single EU internal market. By removing technical, legal, and bureaucratic barriers, the EU also allows citizens to trade and do business freely.

Freedom of establishment allows EU citizens to open businesses in other EU countries.

Ex. 5) For each of the following statements, decide which freedom(s) are being exercised. Circle your answer(s).

   a) You decide to buy a holiday home in another EU country and stay there at regular intervals throughout the year.
   Goods/services/capital/people/establishment.
   b) You work as a translator based in your home country, and you work for and get paid by clients from all over the EU.
   Goods/services/capital/people/establishment.
   c) You want to expand your business by taking over a company in a neighbouring EU country and sending your products there for sale.
   Goods/services/capital/people/establishment.
   d) You are an olive oil producer, and you open web shop to sell your products directly from your farm.
   Goods/services/capital/people/establishment.
   e) You go to study in a university in another EU country. While you are there, you take a parttime job in a restaurant in the evening.
   Goods/services/capital/people/establishment.

AREAS OF EU ACTION

The European Union can only act in those areas where its member countries have authorised it to do so, via the EU treaties.

Ex. 6) The table on p30 shows some EU areas of action. Select three of these areas and go online and find one example of legal rules/acts the EU has adopted for each area. You can Google 'EU law on…'.

Ex. 7) The EU has three levels of competence, fill in the missing type of competence:

a) ...………… competence, where the Member States can legislate and adopt legally binding measures if the Union has not done so.

b) ...………… competence, where the EU adopts measures to support or complement Member States' policies.

c) ...………… competence, where the Union alone can legislate, and Member States only implement.

PREPARE FOR THE NEXT LESSON

In the next lesson, you will be looking at how democracy works in the European Union. Before the lesson, see if you can answer the following questions. Be prepared to discuss them with the other students.

a) Who represents you in the European Parliament (MEP)?
b) When will the next European elections be held?
c) How old do you have to be to vote in the European elections?
d) If you are living in another EU country, can you still vote in the European elections?
e) Who makes the laws in your country and how are they passed?

Links for further information (All sites are available in all official languages, just select yours).

The history of the European Union

Human rights in the European Union

The symbols of the European Union

The members of the European Union

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

For the next lesson, keep a note of things you come across in your daily life that have been influenced by EU legislation. Be prepared to discuss what you have found in the next lesson.

UNIT 2: Democracy in the European Union

CLASS WORK

THE DECISION-MAKING BODIES OF THE EU

Your teacher will explain the three main decision making bodies of the European Union. You can use the following information boxes to help you.

What does the European Commission do?

Proposes new laws
The European Commission is the sole EU institution that has the right to table laws for adoption by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU that:

- protect the interests of the EU and its citizens on issues that can't be dealt with effectively at national level
- get technical details right by consulting experts and the public

Manages EU policies and allocates EU funding
- sets EU spending priorities, together with the Council and Parliament
- draws up annual budgets for approval by the Parliament and Council
- supervises how the money is spent, under scrutiny by the Court of Auditors

Enforces EU law
- together with the Court of Justice, ensures that EU law is properly applied in all the member countries

Represents the EU internationally
- speaks on behalf of all EU countries in international bodies, in particular in areas of trade policy and humanitarian aid
- negotiates international agreements for the EU

Composition
Political leadership is provided by a team of 27 Commissioners (one from each EU country) – led by the Commission President, who decides who is responsible for which policy area. The President is nominated by the European Council (representing the Heads of State or government from each EU country) taking account of the results of the European Parliament elections. He/she is then approved by the European Parliament. The other members are nominated by their countries and go through an approval procedure involving the new President, the European Parliament, and the European Council.

The European Commission

What does the Council of the EU do?

- Negotiates and adopts EU laws
- The Council is an essential EU decision-maker.
- It negotiates and adopts legislative acts in most cases together with the European Parliament. It is made up of ministers from all EU countries.
- Coordinates Member States' policies

The Council is responsible for coordinating member states' policies in specific fields, such as:

- economic and fiscal policies
- education, culture, youth, and sport
- employment policy

Develops the EU's common foreign and security policy

The Council defines and implements EU foreign and security policy on the basis of guidelines set by the European Council. This also includes the EU's development and humanitarian aid, defence, and trade.

Concludes international agreements

The Council provides the mandate to the Commission to negotiate on behalf of the EU agreements between the EU and non-EU countries and international organisations. At the end of negotiations, the Council decides on the signature and conclusion of the agreement.

Adopts the EU budget

The Council adopts the EU budget together with the Parliament.

The budget period covers a calendar year. It is usually adopted in December and starts running on 1 January the following year.

The Council

What does the European Parliament do?

Legislates
- Passing EU laws, together with the Council of the EU, based on European Commission proposals
- Deciding on international agreements
- Deciding on enlargements
- Reviewing the Commission's work programme and asking it to propose legislation

Supervises
- Democratic scrutiny of all EU institutions
- Electing the Commission President and approving the Commission as a body. Possibility of voting a motion of censure, obliging the Commission to resign
- Granting discharge, i.e., approving the way EU budgets have been spent
- Examining citizens' petitions and setting up inquiries
- Discussing monetary policy with the European Central Bank
- Questioning Commission and Council
- Election observations

Prepares budget
- Adopting the EU budget, together with the Council
- Approving the EU's long-term budget, the 'Multiannual Financial Framework'

Composition
Elections are held every 5 years. The number of MEPs for each country is roughly proportionate to its population: no country can have fewer than 6 or more than 96 MEPs and the total number cannot exceed 705 (704 plus the President). MEPs are grouped by political affiliation, not by nationality.

The President represents the Parliament to other EU institutions and the outside world and gives the final go-ahead to the EU budget.

The Parliament of the European Union
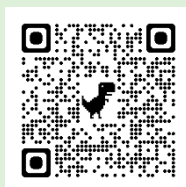
NOTES

LESSON REVIEW

THE MAIN DECISION-MAKING INSTITUTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

There are three main bodies that work together to decide on the laws and rules of the European Union. These are: the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of the European Union.

Ex. 1) Which of the following institutions is being described below? Write 'Cm' for the Commission, 'P' for the Parliament, and 'Cn' for the Council.

Remember, you can use the internet to find information.
a) These bodies have 27 members. .... (   )
b) The members of this body are voted for directly by EU citizens. .... (   )
c) This body proposes laws. .... (   )
d) This body is made up of one minister from each Member State. .... (   )
e) These two bodies must agree on a law for it to be passed. .... (   )
f) Each member of this body is responsible for a different area of policy. . (   )
g) This body is responsible for supervising other EU bodies. .... (   )
h) These two bodies approve the budget for the EU. .... (   )

In the European Union, our state and local governments are democratic. However, there are other ways of ruling a state. Use the internet or a dictionary to help you with the following exercise.

Ex. 2) Match the system of government on the left with its definition on the right.

a) Anarchy	1.	A form of government in which the hereditary ruler rules in their own right. There are no limits on their power.
b) Absolute monarchy	2.	A form of government characterised by an unelected leader or group of leaders that hold government power with few limitations. Often supported by the military.
c) Theocracy	3.	A society freely constituted without authorities or a governing body.
d) Oligarchy	4.	Government of a state by immediate divine guidance or by officials who are regarded as divinely guided.
e) Dictatorship	5.	A society that is ruled or controlled by people of great wealth or income.
f) Plutocracy	6.	A form of power structure in which power rests with a small number of people.

THE EU LAW-MAKING PROCESS

New laws in the EU are usually made following a standard procedure involving the three EU legislative bodies: the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of the EU.

Ex. 3) Read the following statements and decide if they are true (T) or false (F). If they are false, be prepared to explain why.
   a) All three institutions can initiate the legislative process. .... (   )
   b) For a law to pass, the Parliament and the Commission must agree. .... (   )
   c) Both the Parliament and the Council can amend proposals. .... (   )
   d) There is a consultation process before the proposal is made. .... (   )
   e) The EU can make laws on any matter it chooses to. .... (   )

THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE

The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) is a way for European citizens to influence EU policies. It is a form of participatory democracy.

Any European citizen who is old enough to vote in European elections can start or support an ECI. The age enabling people to vote in the European elections can differ: while it's 18 in most countries, it is 17 in Greece and 16 in Austria, Malta and Belgium (as of May 2023). EU countries can lower the support age for an ECI to 16; Estonia and Germany have done so. Check out the latest status regarding your country at: https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/how-it-works/implementation-national-level/data-requirements

PREPARE FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Be ready to discuss the following issues with your fellow students:

1) How much attention do you pay to the workings of the European Union? Do you follow them on social media/on the news?
2) Do you find the way decisions are made by the European Union are democratic?
3) Are there ways you think the European Union could be made more democratic?
4) Is there anything you feel would be a great idea for an initiative?

Go to https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative. Scroll down the page to see some of the newer initiatives or use the 'Find Initiative' tab to search. Find an initiative that you would be prepared to support. For the next lesson, be prepared to explain why you would support this initiative. What do you already know about the issue?

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Create a short survey for your schoolmates to find out how much they know about the way the European Union operates and what it is responsible for. Analyse and discuss the results in class.

UNIT 3: The ECI

CLASS WORK

RULES OF THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN'S INITIATIVE

The European Citizen's Initiative is a form of participatory democracy. It is a way for EU citizens to influence the shaping of laws and policies in the EU. All those who are old enough and eligible to vote in elections for the European Parliament can register an initiative (if it meets certain criteria). The steps are as follows:

1) Find another six people from another six EU countries, who are eligible to vote in European elections, to form a team with you.
2) Define your objectives and ask the European Commission to register the initiative.
3) After a positive decision, the initiative is published on the ECI website.
4) Collect at least 1 million signatures from at least 7 EU countries within 12 months (online or on paper).
5) Get the statements of support verified by national authorities.
6) Submit your initiative to the Commission.
7) Meeting with the Commission.
8) Public hearing at the European Parliament.
9) Response from the European Commission.
10) Follow-up by the Commission on proposed actions, if applicable.

European Citizens' Initiative

HOW WOULD YOU DEVELOP A CAMPAIGN? MAKE NOTES.

- What would you call the campaign?

- What would you do to find partners in 6 other EU countries?

- What might you need to spend money on?

- How would you raise funds for your campaign?

- How would you 'sell' your idea to get signatures?

- How would you attract media attention?

LESSON REVIEW

Ex. 1)   As part of the homework for Lesson 2, you were asked to decide on an initiative that you could vote for. Go back to this initiative and its dedicated website and make notes about the following:

1) What first attracted you to the initiative?
2) What methods did the organisers use to persuade you? Think about how they tried to support their argument. What expressions did they use? How did they use images and graphics? How do all the elements make you feel?
   Make some notes in the boxes below.

Text	*Pictures/Video*

Graphics	*Other*

PREPARE FOR THE NEXT LESSON

Ex. 2)   Go to https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/find-initiative_en?STATUS[0]=ANSWERED, where you will find initiatives that the Commission has answered. Have a look at some of them and check out their website if they have one. What do you think it was that made them successful? Be prepared to discuss them at the start of the next lesson.

European Citizens' Initiative

Ex. 3)   Think about the campaign you voted on during the last lesson. If you were to run the campaign, how would you try and make it successful? Think about action you could take both online and offline. Make some notes in the space below.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Create a suggestion box or conduct on online poll to find out what issues other students in your school are concerned about at European level. What did you find out?

UNIT 4: Develop and promote a European Citizens' Initiative

CLASS WORK

APPROACHES TO PERSUASION

Logic:
Does the idea make sense? Is there a direct connection between the action called for and, for example, improvements in society/the economy/daily life/health?

Feelings:
Is the issue something people are afraid of? How much better will they feel if the issue is resolved? How will they feel if it is not resolved/if they do nothing? Is the issue something people can empathise with? Is it something that inspires hope?

Ethics:
Is there a moral issue here? Is the issue morally wrong? Should we be resolving the issue simply because it is the right thing to do (although there may be a cost)?

Credibility:
Are there reliable sources that back up your suggestion (science, research, etc.)? Are there individuals/groups we admire or respect (and who have shown themselves to be knowledgeable) who have taken a similar position or are involved in action?

CLASS WORK: FINDING COMMON GROUND

Finding common ground and understanding the different perspectives of the various parties involved is key when making EU laws. This will also apply to the idea for law that citizens initiated using the ECI. If a European citizens' initiative is successful in collecting 1 million signatures, and the Commission decides to put forward a legal proposal, the co-legislators, the European Parliament, and the Council, will have to reach a compromise. Before proposing legislation, the Commission will have to consider the views of all the parties that will be affected; the Members of the Parliament will consider the effect on the people and businesses in their constituencies; and in the Council, the representatives of each EU country will look at the issue from an individual national level, as some countries may be more or differently affected than others. All these bodies will have to negotiate and compromise if the initiative is to become a law.

CLASS WORK: PERSONA

Your group will be assigned a 'persona', an imaginary person you might want to persuade. For your persona add some ideas to the table below.

Things I worry about:	Things that make me feel secure:

NOTES

LESSON REVIEW

Your homework for this lesson is to create a video to promote your chosen initiative. The rules are as follows:

- Working in a group of 3 or 4, make a video supporting the initiative you decided on during the lesson; the video should be no more than 3 minutes long.
- You can play characters in the video, (i.e., you can be someone of a different age group, with a different profession, etc.).
- If you wish, you can incorporate music and/or graphics into your video.
- You are responsible for getting permission to film in locations or include other people if needed.
- There should be a list of credits stating who has been responsible for which part of the project.

TIPS FOR MAKING A SUCCESSFUL VIDEO

To make a successful video, planning is everything. Before you think about filming, you should have done the following:

- **Research your initiative**. You will need to make sure that you have reliable facts and figures available.
- Select what you think are **the most important issues**. Remember you only have three minutes. You may not be able to say everything.
- Think about different groups of people who might have **a different view to you**. What arguments might they have against your initiative? **How might you counter those arguments**?

Once you have organised your ideas, it is time to write your script. This should include the text and instructions for the speakers, the camera operator, and any effects you may want to add to the video once you have finished filming. Think about the following.

- Your video should **address the viewer directly**; they should feel you are talking to them. So, make sure you use the right forms of language.
- Use the different approaches that you learned about in the lesson. Use them to help you decide how to express ideas. **Include language that speaks to logic, emotions, ethics, and credibility**, whichever helps you make your argument.
- Think about **who your audience might be**. You are going to share this with fellow students but think a little about how someone like your teacher should be spoken to.
- **Keep the language clear and straightforward**. As you are writing your script, read it out loud to see how easy it is to say. **Shorter sentences are better than longer ones**.
- When you think you have finished the script**, read the whole text out loud and time how long it takes**. If it is over three minutes, you will need to edit it. Bear in mind you may need to leave time for other elements you are going to include in the video.

You can now plan your video. It is a good idea to also draw a storyboard. A storyboard is a plan of the video from start to finish. It can be quite rough, but it should include all the

scenes and everything that you are going to include in the final version. You can find examples of storyboards online if you google them.
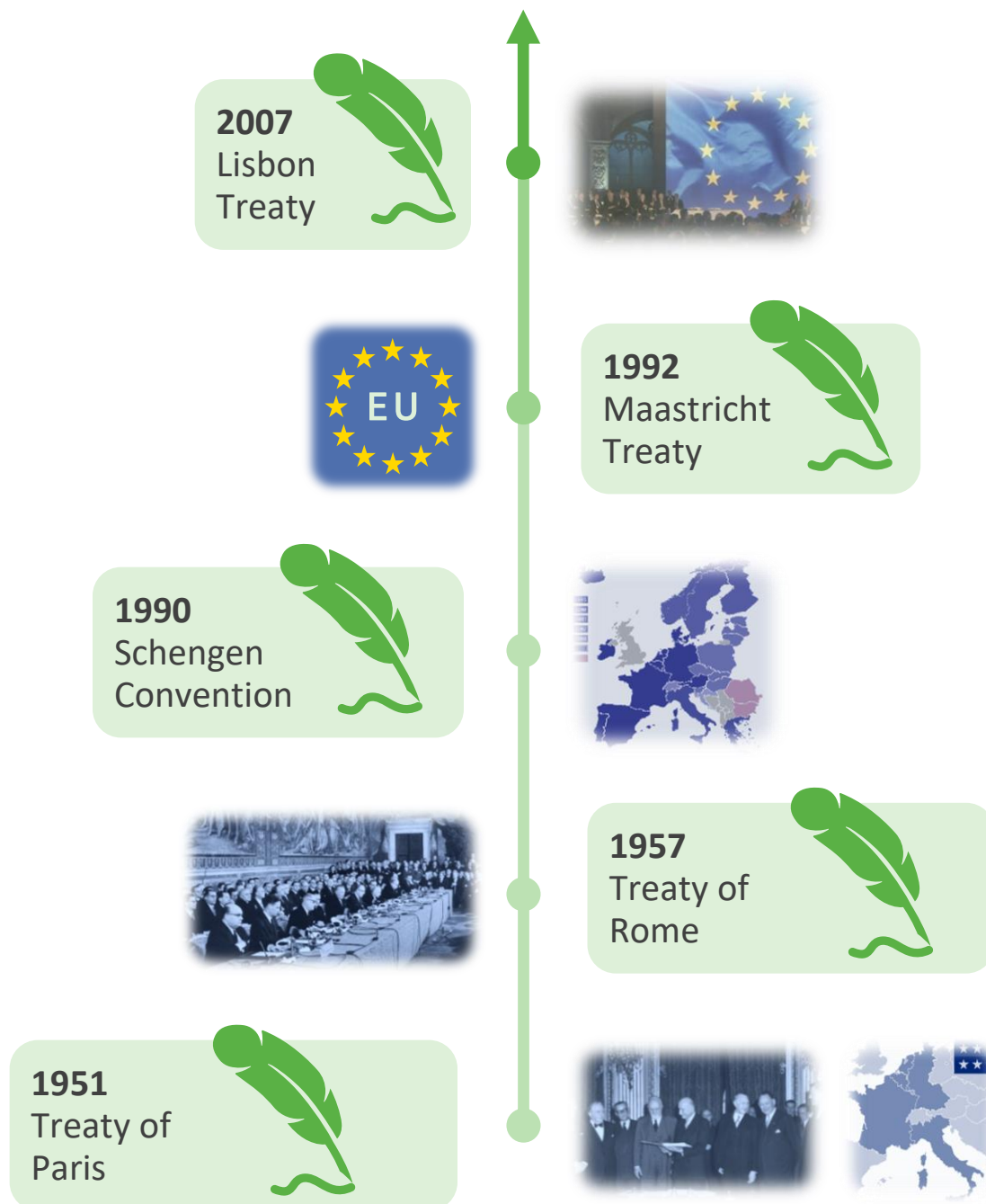
REMEMBER:

- **The video does not have to be complicated to be successful**. Don't plan to do things you are not sure that you can do technically.

- It is fine to use the camera on your phone. There may be video editing software with your device you can use to edit. If not, there is free video editing software available on the internet, e.g. OpenShot. Please note that you are responsible for checking anything you download for viruses etc., and you should avoid giving out your personal information. **If you are not sure about anything online, please seek advice from a teacher or another responsible adult**.

- Try to **avoid just having one person sit in front of the camera reciting the script**. This can be boring and difficult to film, as people make mistakes. Try and divide the script between members of the group, to **provide variety** and make it easier for everybody to learn what they have to say.

- If you are familiar with editing software, remember you can cut to images or graphics and use music or voiceover. Material you find online may be subject to copyright, so it's a good idea to **use royalty free material**.

- Think about issues like lighting and sound, especially if you are going to film outside, where noise can come from sources like the wind, a nearby road, etc.

- You are going to be filmed. **Think a little about what you are going to wear**, make sure it is something that represents how you want to appear to your audience. Make-up will not normally be necessary.

- Above all, your video should **flow and have energy**.

Congratulations

on finishing this module and learning more about democracy in the European Union. Democracy only works if everyone plays their part, and you have now learned one of the ways that will allow you to play an active role. The European Citizens' Initiative allows your voice to be heard, and you can make a positive change not just for you but for everyone in the European Union.

EUROPEAN UNION TREATIES FACTSHEET

Main EU Treaties

2007
Lisbon
Treaty

1992
Maastricht
Treaty

1990
Schengen
Convention

1957
Treaty of
Rome

1951
Treaty of
Paris

More information on Treaties

European Citizens' Initiative

The following treaties represent five important milestones in the history of the European Union. If you would like more information, please follow the links after each info box. Remember, you can change the language in all cases.

TREATY OF PARIS 1951

The European Union began life in the 1950s, after the end of World War II. The aim was to prevent another war on the European continent. The Treaty of Paris was the first step towards European integration. It set up the European Coal and Steel Community, which brought together six European countries (France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands) between which the trade of coal and steel could take place with no barriers. The main purpose of the European Coal and Steel Community was to integrate the economies of participating European nations to make conflict less likely and also make it obvious if one member was using steel to build up weapons in preparation for a possible war.

TREATY OF ROME 1957

This treaty set up the European Economic Community (EEC) which brought together 6 countries (Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands) to work towards integration and economic growth, through trade.

It created a common market based on the free movement of goods, people, services, and capital. It also created a customs union, removing tariffs internally and setting common tariffs for goods coming from outside.

Many of the EU institutions we know today were set up by this treaty:

- The Council of Ministers
- The Commission
- The Parliamentary Assembly (European Parliament)
- The Court of Justice
- The Economic and Social Committee

SCHENGEN CONVENTION 1990

The Schengen Convention established an area of free movement with no border controls between the signatories. It has since been incorporated into EU law and is now a declared aim of the European Union.

MAASTRICHT TREATY 1992

This is the treaty that established the European Union. Among many other things, it introduced the idea of the 'European Citizen', which allows citizens of any EU country to live and work in any other Member State. It also provided them with other rights and protections.

Another important part of the treaty was that it established the idea of a common currency and coordination of economic policies, leading to the creation of the euro and the European Central Bank.

The treaty centralised many responsibilities that had previously been the responsibility of national governments in order for there to be further harmonisation across the European Union. It also made some changes to the power structure within the EU institutions.

THE LISBON TREATY 2007

This treaty built on and amended the treaties in force at that time. It gave the European Union a legal personality, which meant it could now sign treaties or join organisations as a single body. It made the Charter of Fundamental Rights legally binding and gave it the same legal value as the treaties. It also clarified matters of EU competence.

Very importantly, the treaty ensured that there should be more democracy, by increasing the power of the European Parliament.

It also provided a mechanism for ordinary citizens to have a direct effect on EU policy and law. This was where the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) was introduced.

The Core Values of the European Union

HUMAN DIGNITY

The concept of human dignity is the belief that all people hold a special value that is tied solely to their humanity. It has nothing to do with their class, race, gender, religion, abilities, or any other factor other than them being human.

Human dignity justifies human rights. When people are divided and given a value based on characteristics like class, gender, religion, and so on, it creates unequal societies where discrimination runs rampant. People assigned a higher value get preferential treatment. Anyone who does not fit into the privileged category may be abandoned or oppressed.

FREEDOM

Freedom of movement gives citizens the right to move and reside freely within the Union. Individual freedoms such as respect for private life, freedom of thought, religion, assembly, expression, and information are protected by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

DEMOCRACY

The EU functions on representative and participatory democracy. Being a European citizen means enjoying political rights. Every adult EU citizen has the right to stand as a candidate and to vote in elections for the European Parliament. EU citizens have the right to stand as candidate and to vote in their country of residence, or in their country of origin. Citizens can also directly affect EU policy through tools like the European Citizens' Initiative.

EQUALITY

Equality is about equal rights for all citizens before the law. The principle of equality between women and men underpins all European policies and is the basis for European integration. It applies in all areas. The principle of equal pay for equal work became part of the Treaty of Rome in 1957.

RULE OF LAW

The EU is based on the rule of law. Everything the EU does is founded on treaties, voluntarily and democratically agreed by its EU countries. Law and justice are upheld by an independent judiciary. The EU countries gave final jurisdiction to the European Court of Justice which judgements have to be respected by all.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are protected by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. These cover the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, the right to the protection of your personal data, and the right to get access to justice.
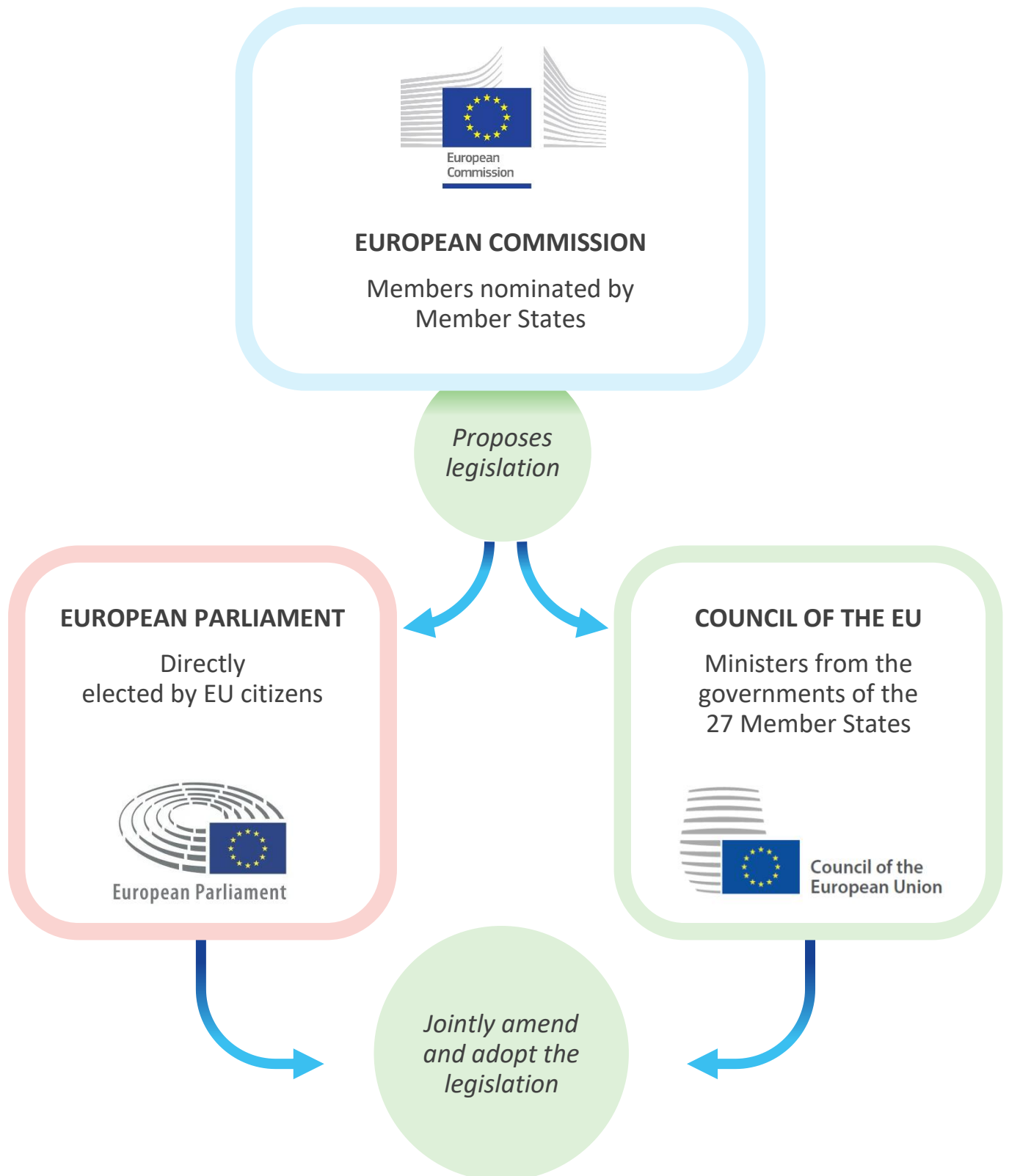
EU AREAS OF ACTION (a selection)

Exclusive Competence	Shared Competence	Supporting Competence
Customs Union	Single Market	Public health
Competition rules	Employment and social affairs	Industry
Monetary policy	Agriculture	Culture
Trade	Fisheries	Tourism
Marine plants and animals	Environment	Education and training, youth, and sport
	Consumer protection	Civil protection
	Transport	Administrative cooperation
	Trans-European networks	
	Energy	
	Justice	
	Fundamental rights	
	Migration and home affairs	
	Public health	
	Research and space	
	Development cooperation and humanitarian aid	

EU areas of action

THE EU LAW-MAKING PROCESS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Members nominated by
Member States

*Proposes
legislation*

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Directly
elected by EU citizens

COUNCIL OF THE EU

Ministers from the
governments of the
27 Member States

*Jointly amend
and adopt the
legislation*

European
Citizens'
Initiative