



Europe *At work*

AFTER THE GAME

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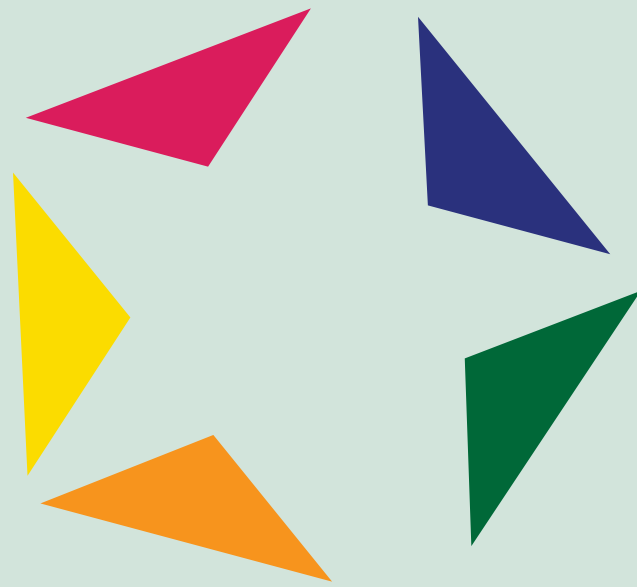
Realistic - unrealistic



Imagine an axis between 0 and 10, where 0 means completely unrealistic and 10 means completely realistic.

Discuss the following elements from the game Europe at Work, and place them on the axis depending on how well you think the game represents real-world EU:

- The number of EU countries
- That the EU can agree on legislation in a single day
- That the media helps ordinary people to have influence
- That it matters for governments to protect workers from their own country who work abroad
- The minority group NaturITes
- That unions are so influential on legislation in the EU

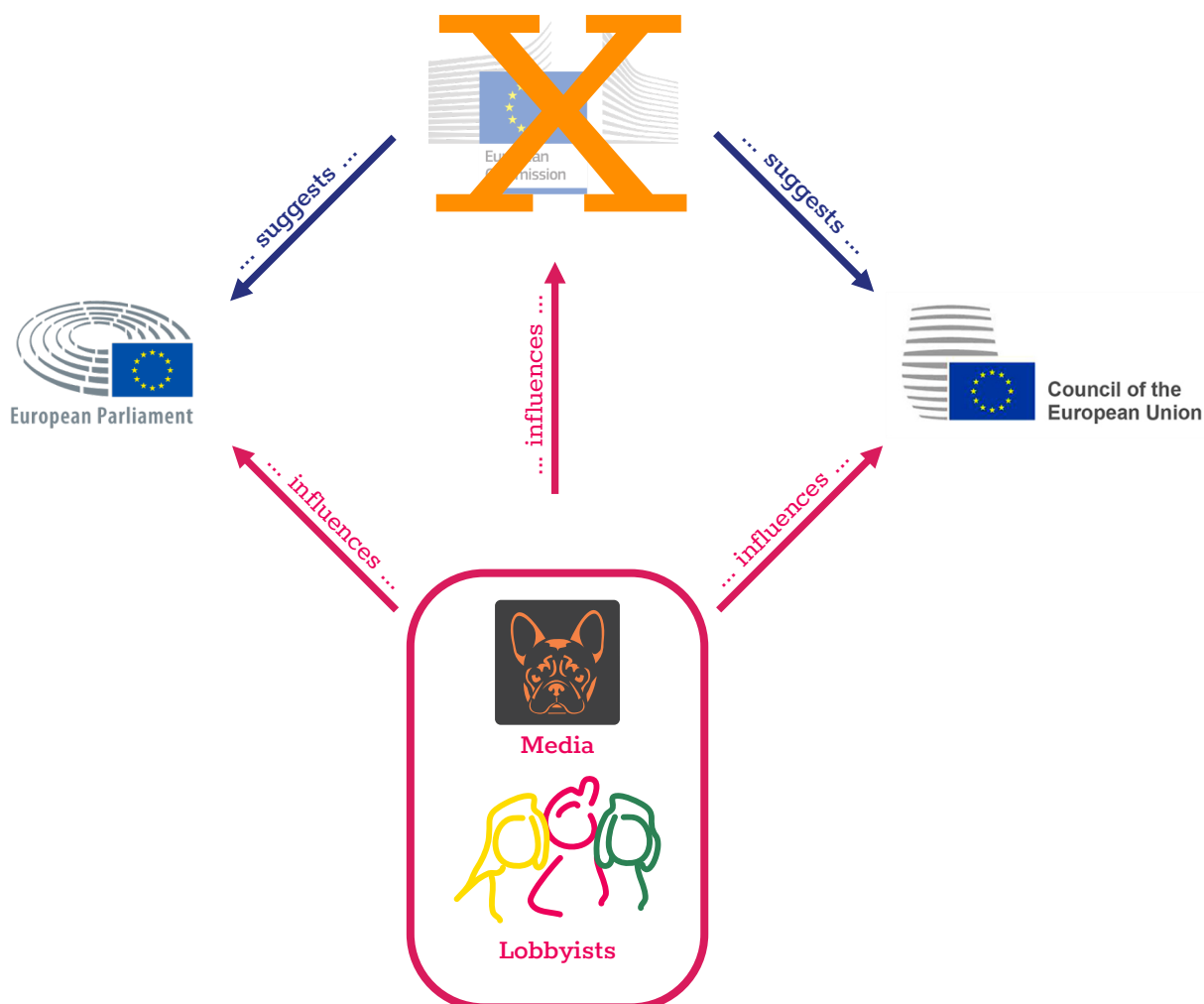


TAKE ONE OUT



1-5

Take one out – 1

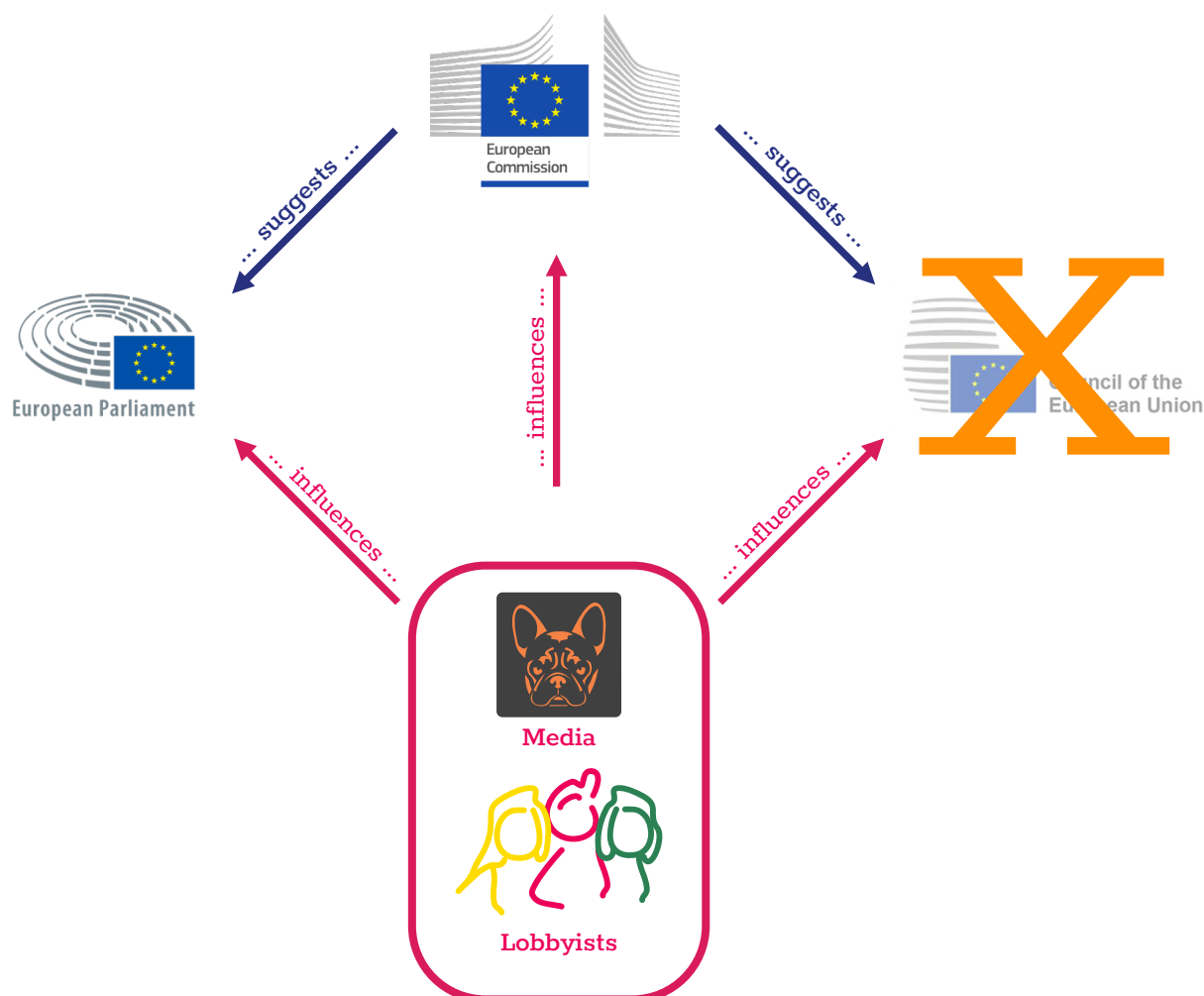


The legislation process of the EU would be much simpler if there were only two institutions instead of three. The question is whether we could do without the EU-Commission. Either by giving it fewer responsibilities or by giving its tasks to others.

The role of the Commission is to propose new legislation which is adopted by the ministers of the Member States and by the European Parliament.

You could simplify this process by removing the Commission and let the Member States propose legislation instead. **Find the best arguments for this simplification of the EU legislative process.**

Take one out – 2

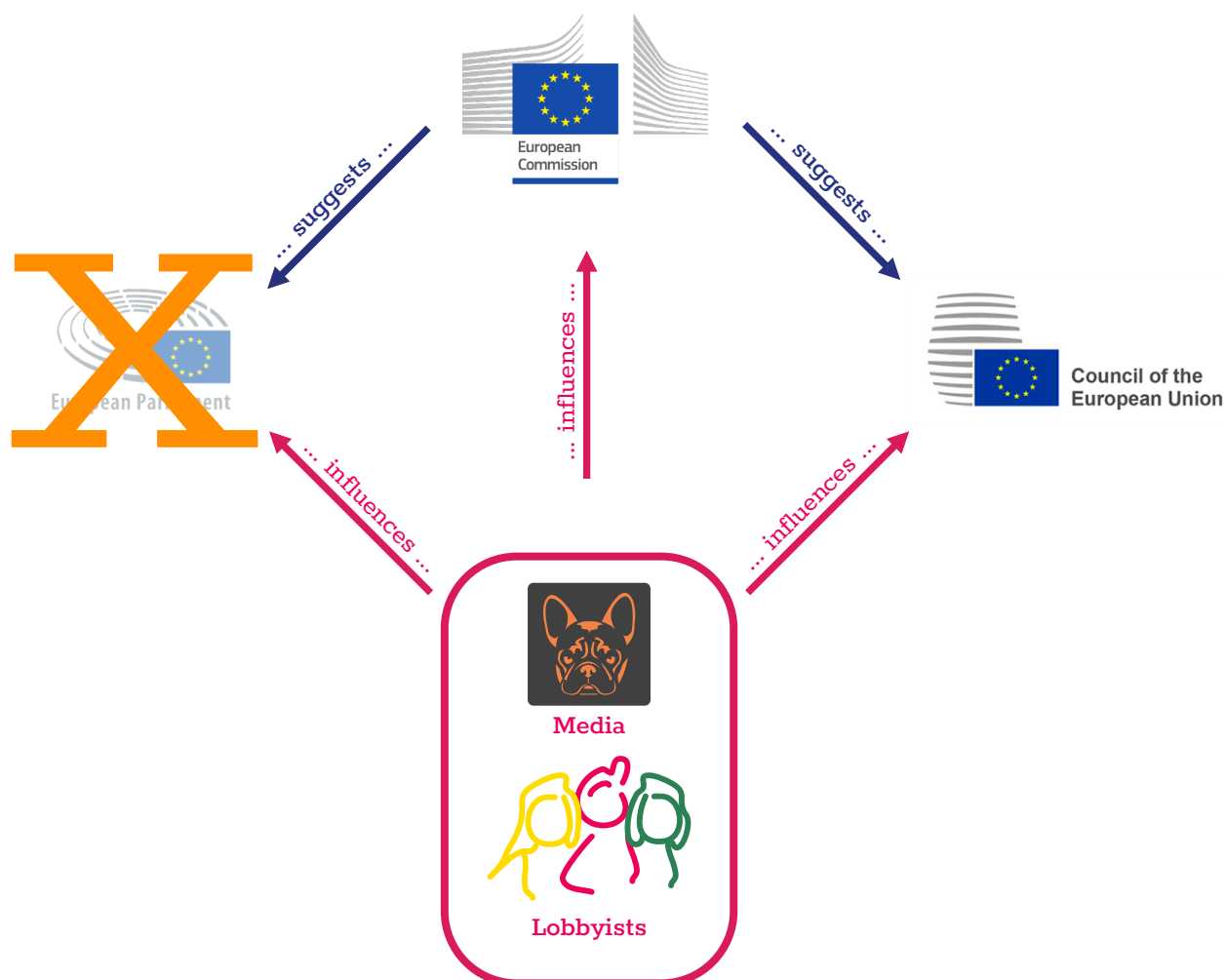


The legislative process of the EU would be much simpler if there were only two institutions instead of three. The question is whether we could do without the Council of Ministers. Either by giving it fewer responsibilities or by giving its tasks to others.

The Council of Ministers secures the support of EU legislation in the Member States. The ministers have to defend their support of a compromise to their parliament at home so they can't agree to anything. But maybe there is a way to ensure support in a simpler way.

For example, you could transfer the legislative power to the European Parliament. **Find the best arguments for this simplification of the EU legislative process.**

Take one out — 3

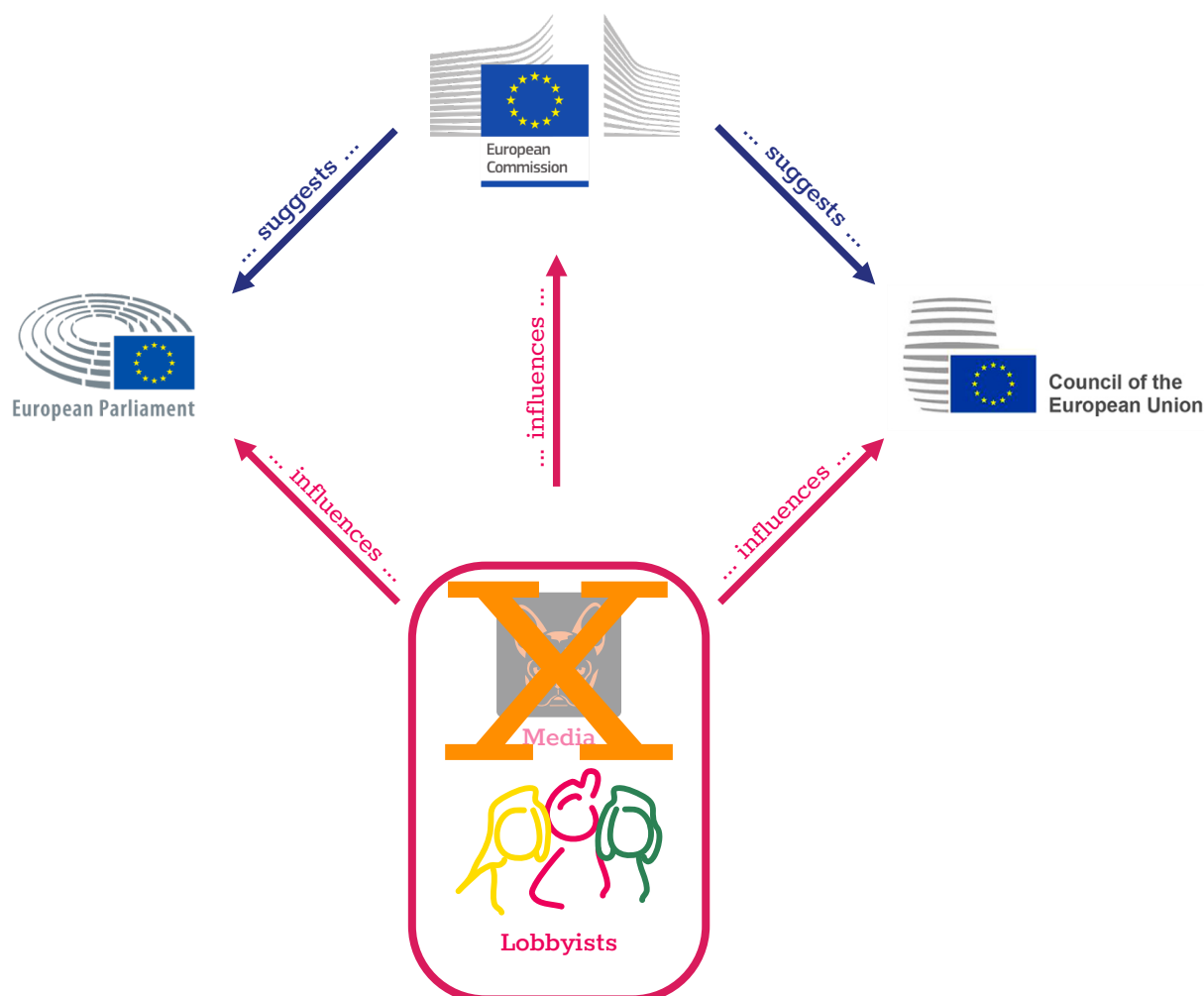


The legislative process of the EU would be much simpler if there were only two institutions instead of three. The question is whether we could do without the European Parliament. Either by giving it fewer responsibilities or by giving its tasks to others.

The European Parliament is elected by the citizens of EU's Member States. If they support very unpopular laws, they can lose their seat in the next election. It often makes the legislative process more complicated that elected politicians have so much power. It is also very unusual in international cooperation.

It would make the legislative work more simple, if the EU-Parliament was closed. **Find the best arguments for this simplification of the EU legislation process.**

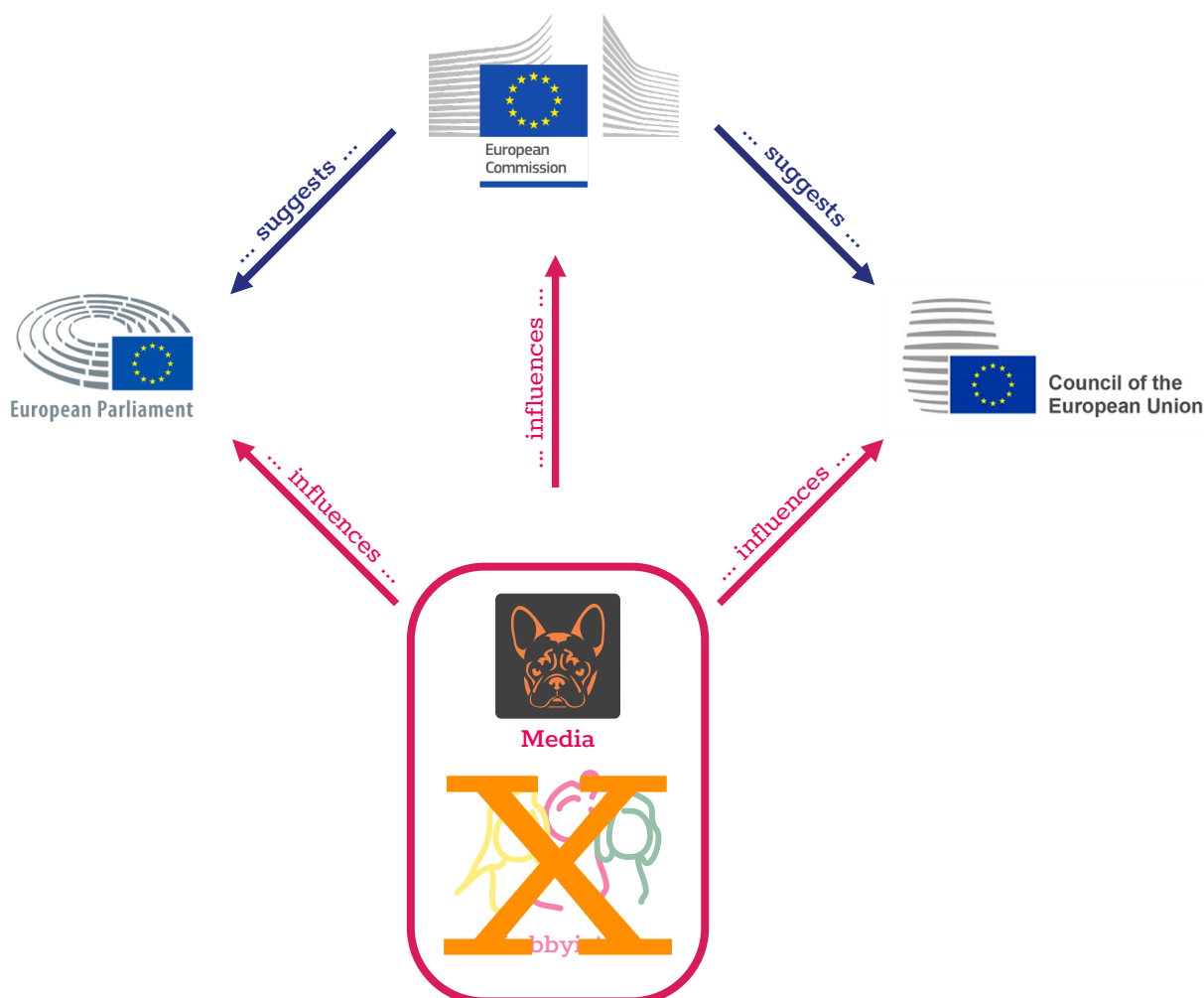
Take one out – 4



The media do not have a formal role in the EU legislative process, but they do still have an important role. They help citizens, organizations, and companies keep track of the goings-on in the EU, making it possible to hold legislators responsible and interfere with the process. This interference makes the legislative process much more complicated. Media coverage can also be unbalanced or misguided.

It would make the legislative work more simple, if the negotiations were confidential and the media were kept at a distance. **Find the best arguments for this simplification of the EU legislative process.**

Take one out – 5



Even though lobbyist organisations do not have a formal role in the EU legislative process, they still have an important role. They help regions, organisations and companies have a voice, letting the legislators know their wishes and concerns. This helps legislators avoid mistakes and criticism. On the other hand, it requires legislators to ensure that they don't rely on biased information and pressure from the wealthiest interest groups.

It would make the legislative work more simple, if lobbying was strictly limited. **Find the best arguments for this simplification of the EU legislative process.**

When the majority becomes qualified



Laws have to be passed by a qualified majority in the Council of Ministers. It is not enough to have an ordinary majority. Countries voting in favour of a law must represent two thirds of the EU population.

That makes it harder to pass a law. But this form of voting can also affect not only how negotiations take place but also the final results.

Think back to the game. Did the rule about qualified majority force you to act differently than if you were only required to find an ordinary majority?

Did you for example experience that:

- Countries with many citizens had more influence than countries with few?
- Big countries could not move ahead without small countries?
- Compromises required large majorities?
- Minorities were relatively small?
- It was necessary to listen to people with whom you didn't agree from the start?
- You were under pressure to negotiate because you were otherwise isolated?
- The decision-making process was troublesome?

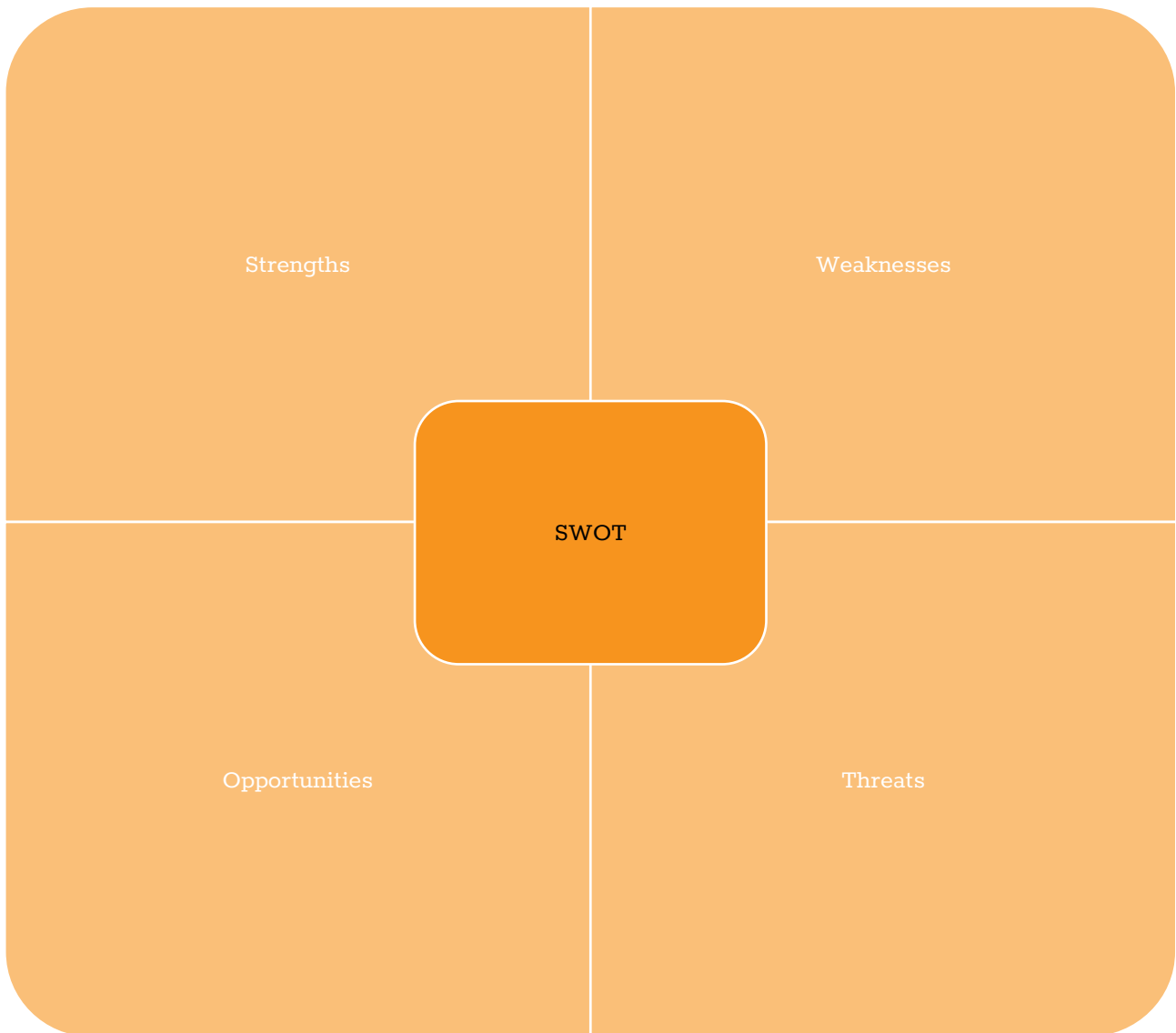
When are European laws best?

List the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats regarding rules about social dumping being settled in the EU as opposed to on the national level for tasks listed below. Use a new SWOT matrix for each task.

- Imagine that you represent a big national union organising workers in the building industry.
- Imagine that you represent a big national construction firm.
- Imagine that you represent a young, unemployed person from Spain.
- Imagine that you represent a young person who wants to work in Southern Europe for a year or so.
- Imagine that you represent the workers at a car factory in Germany.
- Imagine that you represent the owner of a vineyard in southern France.
- Imagine that you represent a long-distance truck driver from Lithuania.

When you have filled out the SWOT matrix, consider whether you would recommend that the legislation should be developed in the EU or moved to the national level in the future.

SWOT matrix



Rights and obligations in international cooperation

Typical international cooperation	Cooperation in the EU
<p>All countries must accept the negotiation results. A majority cannot force the others to do something against their country's will.</p> <p>Agreements with other countries must be accepted by the national parliament before it has consequences for the citizens. The Parliament can interpret the agreement in certain ways and perhaps delay the implementation.</p> <p>States themselves have the responsibility to live up to the agreements. They may be criticised and come under pressure but ultimately, they decide for themselves.</p>	<p>Here, laws about many subjects can be accepted through a vote, where a qualified majority can commit rules and obligations on all Member States.</p> <p>Laws apply when they are accepted in the EU, and they cannot be overruled or delayed by national politicians.</p> <p>Member states can be issued big fines by the EU Court if they do not comply with shared rules.</p>
<p>Advantages</p>	<p>Advantages</p>
<p>Disadvantages</p>	<p>Disadvantages</p>

Find examples of advantages and disadvantages by asking two questions: Do you know of cases where the EU has made a law obligating a member state to do something against its will? Do you know of examples of international problems that are hard to solve because all countries have a right to veto?

The minister and the union representative

Before the EU is to negotiate the rights of migrating workers, the Minister of European Affairs is going to meet with the employees of a big, local construction firm.

The government wants to open up further to workers from other EU countries. The employees fear that this will make it too easy for people from other countries to take over their jobs.

Write a 1-2 page brief on of the two following assignments:

- As union representative of the employees, you have to give a short speech welcoming the Minister of European Affairs. Your brief will form the basis of the speech, where you propose the strategy in the EU negotiations that will benefit your colleagues the most. You can mention various aspects – how will the rules affect your colleagues' life situation in general, their job opportunities in the short or long run, or their political sympathies. It is up to you what the main argument should be but remember: the Minister can only be convinced with solid, social science arguments. Finish by making a short recommendation to the government.
- As advisor for the Minister of European Affairs, you have to write a brief for the Minister to use in their speech to the employees. In the brief, you should provide the most important social science arguments for opening the borders for employees from other EU countries further. The speech may also present the government strategy to lessen the detrimental effects for employees in the company. The Minister is a former professor of social sciences and will only use solid arguments, even if they might seem a little dull. Finish by giving a short piece of advice to the employees on how to handle the current situation.