

# EUROPEAN UNION: class activities



ProDemos



# **European Union: class activities**

## **INTRODUCTION PRODEMOS**

ProDemos – House for Democracy and the Rule of Law is an independent national organisation whose aim is to provide citizens with information about the democratic rule of law. ProDemos also encourages citizens to play an active part in the Dutch and European political and judicial system.

### **Development of teaching methods**

ProDemos – Huis voor democratie en rechtsstaat

### **Photography**

European Parliament, Wouter Jansen

### **Graphic design**

Puntspatie [bno], Amsterdam

ISBN 9789064735247

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>From problem to solution in the European Union</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>EU Quiz</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Personal ads</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Timeline. The history of the European Union</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Tough decisions</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>European Union opinion poll</b>	<b>32</b>

# Introduction

Not all students like discussing politics in class. They often find the subject difficult and do not feel like they have any influence. ProDemos wants to get students (and other people) energized about politics by using activating class activities and teaching methods. In this publication we present six ready-to-use class activities about the European Union. All the exercises in this collection contain a description of the learning objective, time the exercise takes, and the necessary materials, followed by an instruction for teachers.

Some of the exercises use materials that you can download from our website: [prodemos.nl/eumaterial](http://prodemos.nl/eumaterial).

You can find more information about ProDemos on [prodemos.nl/english](http://prodemos.nl/english).

**Note:**

At the moment of publishing this edition in august 2018, the Brexit process has started. The United Kingdom will leave the European Union on the 29th of March 2019. In this publication we assume the EU has 28 member states.

# From problem to solution in the European Union

Students think about how to get from problems to solutions in the European Union, and put the steps in the right order.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students are introduced to the most important EU organisations.

## MATERIALS

Set of 7 cards, available for download from [www.prodemos.nl/eumaterial](http://www.prodemos.nl/eumaterial).

## TIME

15 minutes

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Hand out the cards to seven students chosen at random.
2. Explain that each of the cards contains one of the steps necessary for solving a problem in the EU. Ask the students to give an example of a problem solved by the European Union. Some possible answers:
  - a. Mobile phone chargers: manufacturers once used to have their own connectors. Nowadays, almost all mobile phones use the same plug.
  - b. Air pollution: combating air pollution (e.g. from cars) is only worthwhile if as many countries as possible make an effort. This is why regulations apply to harmful car emissions throughout the EU.
3. This example is about the costs of making international calls from a mobile phone. The problem was that many providers were charging high rates for international calls. In the summer of 2017, legislation was passed prohibiting additional roaming costs for mobile calls and data in the EU. Also, there was no single market for mobile services in the EU: every country had its own regulations, resulting in different fees for the same services. How did the European Union resolve this problem?
4. Ask the students with the 'There is a problem' and the 'Problem solved!' cards to step forward, leaving some room between them.
5. Ask the other students with cards to stand up, and have them read out what the cards say. Next, tell them to find their spot between the two students already standing. The idea is for the rest of the class to think about whether the order of steps is correct.
6. Check whether the students are in the correct order. If so, ask one or two other students in the class to explain the order.
7. Explain that roaming fees were lowered in 2008. On 30 June 2015, the European Parliament and the Council reached a compromise. Since the 15 June 2017, the cost of international calls, texts and data within the EU have been the same as in one's home country.  
Note: The third and fourth cards are the same colour, because under the 'ordinary legislation procedure' these institutions (European Parliament and Council of the European Union, or 'Council of Ministers') must both approve the European Commission's proposal. The order in which they do so is not necessarily important.

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION IN THE EU

There is a problem in the European Union



### There is a problem in the European Union.

International mobile phone calls are very expensive, and so is using mobile data in other countries. Many people accidentally leave their data roaming on while on holiday, and are shocked by their phone bill when they get home.

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION IN THE EU

The European Commission has an idea for a solution



### The European Commissioner has an idea.

Roaming fees should be abolished, so that people pay no additional charges for using an international mobile network.

Civil servants will develop the commissioner's idea into a plan, which will be discussed in the European Parliament and Council of the European Union.

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION IN THE EU

The European Parliament can modify the plan if they want and can vote either for or against the plan



### The European Parliament can vote either for or against the plan.

#### If the Parliament wishes to modify the plan, it can propose amendments.

For example: The European Parliament is in favour of the plan, provided the European Commission does something to promote competition in the mobile market.

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION IN THE EU

The Council of the European Union discuss the plan and can vote either for or against the plan



### The ministers of Economic Affairs of the member states discuss the plan in the Council of the European Union.

They can either vote for or against the plan. If they wish to modify the plan, they can propose amendments.

For example the ministers believe that the regulation should be introduced gradually.

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION IN THE EU

The plan is approved!



### Does a majority in the European Parliament support the plan, and is there a qualified majority in the Council?

If so, the regulation will apply to all EU member states. The European Commissioner will now ensure that all telecom companies are familiar with the new legislation, and that EU citizens are aware that phone charges in the EU will drop.

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION IN THE EU

National governments make sure they ratify the plan



### National governments make sure the new rules will apply in their country.

After one year it will be clear whether the plan has worked.

FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION IN THE EU

The problem is solved!



### Are telecom companies keeping to the new (lower) rates for calls via international providers?

If so, the EU has done its job on solving this problem!



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### EUROPEAN COMMISSION

This group of 28 commissioners (one from each member state) thinks of solutions to problems in the European Union.

### EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

This group of 751 people is responsible for approving the solutions proposed by the European Commission, otherwise the solutions will not be implemented. The members of the European Parliament are elected by the citizens of the member states. The European Parliament can propose amendments, but may not submit its own solutions. Proposals are approved in the European Parliament if half of the total number of parliamentarians +1 are in favour.

### COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (COUNCIL OF MINISTERS)

This council has one member per member state, who is always a minister from that state's government. The minister sent to the Council by each country varies depending on the subject being discussed. In this case, each country sent its Minister of Economic Affairs. Just like in the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union must approve the proposed solution. Approval is granted in the Council of the European Union by a 'qualified majority'. Each member state has a certain number of votes it can use in the Council, depending on the member state's population:

29 votes: Germany, France, Italy and the United Kingdom

27 votes: Spain and Poland

14 votes: Romania

13 votes: The Netherlands

12 votes: Belgium, Greece, Portugal, Hungary and the Czech Republic

10 votes: Bulgaria, Sweden and Austria

7 votes: Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Croatia, Lithuania and Slovakia

4 votes: Cyprus, Luxembourg, Latvia, Slovenia and Estonia

3 votes: Malta

A qualified majority in the Council of Ministers is reached if a majority of the member states agrees (sometimes a two-thirds majority) AND at least 260 of the 352 votes are in favour of the proposal. A minimum of 260 votes ensures a majority of the total European population.

Note: A member state may demand that the qualified majority be set at 65% of the total EU population. If this is not reached, the proposal will not be adopted.

### ORDINARY LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE

Under the ordinary legislative procedure, a proposal by the European Commission must be approved by both the European Parliament AND the Council of the European Union. Policy-making in most areas follows the ordinary

legislative procedure. Both bodies may request amendments to the proposal.

### HOW A DECISION IS MADE

1. The European Commission prepares the draft proposal. It has the 'right of initiative', which means that the Commission may submit legislative proposals. The draft proposal is then presented to the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.
2. The proposal is presented. The various political groups in the European Parliament meet to discuss and establish their views on the proposal, after which it is debated in Parliament. The European Parliament may modify parts of the proposal, by submitting 'amendments' (changes to the proposal). Then a vote is taken. Some amendments are accepted, others are not. The amendments accepted in the Parliament are incorporated into the proposal, which is then sent to the Council.
3. If the Council agrees to the EP's amendments, it will be adopted with the amendments. If the Council disagrees, it will present its own version of the proposal, and either accept or reject the EP's amendments. The Council must adopt a 'joint position'. The new version of the proposal then goes back to the European Parliament.
4. The Parliament discusses the Council's modifications. If the EP approves the Council's changes, the proposal will be adopted and returned (including the changes) to the Commission. If the Commission does not agree, the proposal will not go ahead. The Commission can also propose new amendments.
5. The Commission states which amendments it does/does not find acceptable, and the proposal returns to the Council.
6. It is now the Council's turn again. If they agree, the proposal is adopted (minus the amendments that the Commission did not agree with). If the Council disagrees, a Conciliation Committee will be formed to negotiate among the various bodies. Under this decision-making process, all three bodies must ultimately reach agreement.

### SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE

There are various procedures referred to as 'special', all of which deviate to some extent from the ordinary procedure described above. For example: the European Parliament may not have the ability to amend a proposal, a unanimous decision may be required by the Council, or the European Parliament may be excluded from the process entirely. Special legislative procedures often apply in the following areas: security, foreign policy, institutional reforms (e.g. changes to treaties), tax policy, social policy (or parts thereof), some topics within political and judicial cooperation, and the conclusion of international agreements.

## REGULATION

---

An EU regulation is a decision that requires no further work by member states, and can be implemented immediately. All EU member states must implement regulations in the same way, and they are obligated to do so. The immediacy of regulations is what makes collaboration in the EU unique. If regulations go against national legislation, it is the national legislation that must

change. Note: Regulations are only one type of decision made by the European Union, which can also issue a *directive* or a *decision*. A *directive* establishes an objective to be achieved by EU member states, who are then free to incorporate it into their national legislation however they like. A *decision* affects a specific party to which it is directed – several years ago, for example, a decision was issued to chip manufacturer Intel, forcing it to pay a penalty for abusing a position of power.

# EU Quiz

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

---

Students test their knowledge of the European Union.

## MATERIALS

---

A computer and a big screen or beamer. Use the PowerPoint-presentation 'EU Quiz' available for download from [www.prodemos.nl/eumaterial](http://www.prodemos.nl/eumaterial).

## TIME

---

20–30 minutes.

## INSTRUCTIONS

---

1. Open the PowerPoint-presentation 'EU Quiz' and explain to students that they are going to test their knowledge of the European Union.
2. They play this quiz individually. Tell students that each slide has a statement that can either be true or false.
3. Ask students to stand up. When they think the statement is true, they raise their hand. If they think the statement is false, they don't raise their hand.
4. Students with the right answer continue on in the game. Students with the wrong answer are out of the game and will have to sit down.
5. The student that answers the most questions correctly will win the quiz.

STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
1 The member states take turns acting as President of the Council of the European Union for six months at a time.	✓	
2 European Parliament elections are held once every four years. EU citizens may vote on the European Parliament every five years.		✗
3 There is an EU Directive that determines how much tar and nicotine cigarettes may contain.	✓	
4 The Eurogroup is made up of all EU Ministers of Finance. The Eurogroup only contains Ministers of Finance from countries that use the Euro, who discuss economic policy together.		✗
5 Only democratic countries with effective human rights policy are admitted to the EU.	✓	
6 The European Parliament may submit legislative proposals (bills). The European Parliament may only approve, amend or reject legislative proposals.		✗
7 Rulings by the European Court of Justice override national judicial rulings.	✓	
8 The European Union originated from a partnership between the coal and steel industries.	✓	
9 The legal drinking age in the Netherlands was raised to 18 because of European agreements. Individual countries determine their own alcohol consumption policy.		✗
10 The European Union is negotiating with Montenegro regarding its admission to the EU.	✓	
11 The amount paid by a country to the EU can be higher than the amount it receives in support.	✓	
12 All EU citizens also pay European taxes. There is talk of a European tax, however it is not a reality (just yet).		✗
13 Europe Day is on the 9th of May.	✓	
14 English is the official language of the European Parliament. All European Parliamentarians have the right to express themselves in their own language.		✗
15 Over 33,000 government officials work at the European Commission in Brussels.	✓	

# Personal ads

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

In this activity, students learn about European Union and EU countries by writing a 'personal ad' for a particular country. The ads highlight the positives about the country in question, and the rest of the group must guess the country.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students discover which European countries are EU member states, and which use the Euro. They also learn about the prejudices, judgements and stereotypes that exist regarding certain countries, as well as the level of diversity present in Europe.

## MATERIALS

One country card per student, which can be copied, cut out and distributed from the following pages or downloaded from [www.prodemos.nl/eumaterial](http://www.prodemos.nl/eumaterial).

## TIME

20–30 minutes

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ask whether anybody knows what a 'personal ad' is, what they are for, where they can be found, etc. Read the example below of an ad for two non-European countries. Ask the students which two countries these are: 'Densely-populated country full of temples and floral wreaths, sacred cows and delicious curries, seeks large, powerful, predominantly Christian country with plenty of weapons. Preferably one that likes line-dancing and cowboy boots.' (Answer: India and the US).
2. The task is to write a personal ad for two European countries. The ad should be written so that the other students can guess both the country doing the seeking, and the country being sought. They can use their phones to look up information. Students must include a number of specific aspects in their ad.
3. Get the students to pair up, and give each pair a card with the name of the country they are looking for, and a card stating which country they actually are. Give each pair one well-known and one lesser-known country. Try to match the group ability when choosing countries.
4. Tell the students they must write an attractive description without making it too easy to guess, to state whether the country is a member of the EU, and whether it uses the Euro.
5. Note: The ad must not state the country's name, capital city or language. However, it may include: common customs and habits, dishes, traditional or typical clothing, prejudices/stereotypes, and other unique or striking features.
6. Afterwards, discuss what the students thought of the ads. Perhaps ask a question: Was the information presented about the country really accurate? How much do we really know about countries? The Netherlands is not just a country of windmills, tulips and clogs, even though that is what many foreigners think.

**THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE GAME:**

**ALBANIA**

**AUSTRIA**

**BELARUS**

**BELGIUM**

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

**BULGARIA**

**THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE GAME:**

**CROATIA**

**CYPRUS**

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

**DENMARK**

**FINLAND**

**FRANCE**

**THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE GAME:**

**GERMANY**

**GREECE**

**HUNGARY**

**ICELAND**

**IRELAND**

**ITALY**



**THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE GAME:**

**KOSOVO**

**LICHTENSTEIN**

**LUXEMBOURG**

**MACEDONIA**

**MALTA**

**MOLDAVIA**

**THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE GAME:**

**MONACO**

**MONTENEGRO**

**THE NETHERLANDS**

**NORWAY**

**POLAND**

**PORTUGAL**

**THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE GAME:**

**ROMANIA**

**SERBIA**

**SLOVAKIA**

**SLOVENIA**

**SPAIN**

**SWEDEN**

**THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE GAME:**

**SWITZERLAND**

**TURKEY**

**UKRAINE**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**VATICAN CITY**

## ANSWER SHEET FOR MANDATORY INFO

COUNTRY	GEOGRAPHICALLY IN EUROPE?	EU MEMBER?	EURO?
Albania	Yes	candidate	No
Austria	Yes	Yes (1995)	Yes (2002)
Belarus	Yes	No	No
Belgium	Yes	Yes (1957)	Yes (2002)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Yes	potentially	No
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes (2007)	No
Croatia	Yes	Yes (2013)	No
Cyprus	No	Yes (2004)	Yes (2008)
Czech Republic	Yes	Yes (2004)	No
Denmark	Yes	Yes (1973)	No
Finland	Yes	Yes (1995)	Yes (2002)
France	Yes	Yes (1957)	Yes (2002)
Germany	Yes	Yes (1957)	Yes (2002)
Greece	Yes	Yes (1981)	Yes (2002)
Hungary	Yes	Yes (2004)	No
Iceland	Yes	No	No
Ireland	Yes	Yes (1973)	Yes (2002)
Italy	Yes	Yes (1957)	Yes (2002)
Kosovo	Yes	potentially	No
Lichtenstein	Yes	No	No
Luxembourg	Yes	Yes (1957)	Yes (2002)
Macedonia	Yes	candidate	No
Malta	Yes	Yes (2004)	Yes (2008)
Moldavia	Yes	No	No
Monaco	Yes	No	Yes (2002)
Montenegro	Yes	candidate	de facto
The Netherlands	Yes	Yes (1957)	Yes (2002)
Norway	Yes	No	No
Poland	Yes	Yes (2004)	No
Portugal	Yes	Yes (1986)	Yes (2002)
Romania	Yes	Yes (2007)	No
Serbia	Yes	candidate	No
Slovakia	Yes	Yes (2004)	Yes (2009)
Slovenia	Yes	Yes (2004)	Yes (2007)
Spain	Yes	Yes (1986)	Yes (2002)
Sweden	Yes	Yes (1995)	No
Switzerland	Yes	No	No
Turkey	transcontinental	candidate (admission talks suspended)	No
Ukraine	Yes	interest	No
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes (1973, 'Brexit' negotiations underway)	No
Vatican City	Yes	No	Yes (2002)

# Timeline. The history of the European Union

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

---

Students place several key events in the history of the EU on a timeline.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

---

Students learn about several key events in the history of the EU.

## MATERIALS

---

Per pair: one worksheet with years and one with texts. These can be copied, cut out and distributed from the following pages or downloaded from [www.prodemos.nl/eumaterial](http://www.prodemos.nl/eumaterial).

## TIME

---

30 minutes.

## INSTRUCTIONS

---

1. Copy the activity sheets. Cut out the text/year cards.
2. Give each pair of students a set of year cards and a set of text cards.
3. Give the students 10–15 minutes to match the texts with the years, and put them in order.
4. Afterwards, discuss the activity as a group. For example: put a timeline on the board, and ask each pair to talk about one time period.

**1946**

CHURCHILL CALLS FOR  
'THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE'

**1951**

SIGNING OF THE ECSC

**1957**

TREATY OF ROME

**1973**

DENMARK, IRELAND AND THE UNITED  
KINGDOM BECOME MEMBERS OF THE  
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

**1986**

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL JOIN

**1989**

FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL

**1992**

EUROPEAN UNION FOUNDED

**1995**

AUSTRIA, FINLAND AND SWEDEN JOIN

**2004**

CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY, LATVIA,  
LITHUANIA, POLAND, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA,  
CYPRUS AND MALTA JOIN

**2007**

BULGARIA AND ROMANIA JOIN

**2012**

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

**2013**

CROATIA JOINS

This man was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during the Second World War. After World War II he called for more European collaboration, to avoid a major war in the future.

This treaty was signed under the leadership of Frenchman Robert Schuman. The idea was to prevent any single country from controlling the most important weapon resources, preventing future wars.

This treaty, signed several years after Schuman's treaty, founded the European Economic Community. It was signed by six countries.

These three countries had faith in the European Economic Community, and decided to join. Strangely enough, two of these three countries still do not use the Euro.

Until the 1970's, these countries were still under a dictatorship. When they had recovered sufficiently, they joined the European Economic Community.

This event caused a major upheaval in all countries under communist rule. Most ultimately became members of what now is the European Union.

This year saw the signing of the Maastricht treaty. Among other things, it stipulated a joint future currency in Europe. The European Community was also given a new name.

Three more countries joined the European Union in this year. One of these countries still does not use the Euro.

This was the year when many former Eastern Bloc countries joined the European Union.

In this year, two more former Eastern Bloc countries joined the European Union.

In this year, all 500 million Europeans were awarded a special prize that is normally only issued to one person (of sometimes a few). The committee awarded it to the Europeans because the EU had been investing in peace, democracy and human rights for over 60 years.

After the Balkan wars, this was the second former Yugoslavian country to join the European Union. The first was Slovenia in 2004.



# Tough decisions

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

In this activity, students work on current European dilemmas. You are free to choose your own dilemmas to present. Students work in groups. Each group is allocated an EU country whose perspective they must adopt when deciding on what position to take. The students weigh the arguments in favour and against, and present their position to the rest of the class. After the presentations, you and the students look at which position could potentially yield a consensus in the European Council.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students learn that difficult choices are necessary in the development of the European Union. They also discover that unanimity is difficult to attain in intergovernmental decision making.

## MATERIALS

A description of the five dilemmas for each group.

## TIME

30 minutes

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The European Council decides on the overall political policy, priorities and vision of the European Union – it does not make any laws. The European Council consists of a president, the member states' heads of government, the president of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The European Council meets four times per year. European Council decisions are generally taken by consensus, i.e. there is no voting. Sometimes the Council will take a decision 'by unanimous vote', in which case a vote is held, but all member states must agree. In such cases, any single member state can veto the decision from being taken. Less important issues can be decided on by a 'qualified majority vote'. Source: [www.europa-nu.nl](http://www.europa-nu.nl)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. First talk about a historical issue from the initial years of European cooperation.

### **Fear of a new war**

The Second World War has just ended. People are eager to rebuild Europe, and are exhausted from years of war and violence. How to stop a new war from breaking out? The most important thing was to avoid renewed tensions between France and Germany. Alsace-Lorraine is a region on the French-German border that is rich in coal and other natural resources used in the weapons industry. War had often been waged over this region in the past. Europe was harbouring fears of new conflict between Germany and France. So what should be done?

**The answer:** It was decided to establish the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Because France and Germany were both members, they would no longer be able to wage war against one another.

2. Divide the students into five or six groups. Assign each group an EU country whose perspective they must adopt when deciding on what position to take. Remind them that, while there are only five or six countries in this activity, the real European Council has 28.

### **Countries in the European Union:**

Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Germany; Estonia; Finland; France; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malta; The Netherlands; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Slovenia; Slovakia; Spain; Sweden; United Kingdom.

3. Explain the activity. Together the groups form the European Council, and each group represents a single country. In each round, you will ask the students to decide on a solution to a certain dilemma. After reading out the problem, the students (in their groups) must discuss the arguments for the various options, and write down how their country thinks the dilemma should be resolved. Next, each group must explain their choice to the rest of the class (and give arguments). Tell them in advance that you may choose any student from the group to give the explanation, so everybody must be prepared to act as spokesperson.
4. Explain the first dilemma, then give each group the worksheet containing the dilemma and questions. Set them to work, and check in on them to answer any questions.
5. Once the groups have worked on the dilemma, ask them to explain their choices and support them with

arguments. Explain to the students that these types of European decisions are often taken by unanimous vote, i.e. all 28 member states (here, only five or six) must agree. If any single country opposes the decision, nothing will change.

6. Let the various groups discuss their choices with one another. If all groups arrive at the same solution, you can pose your own counter-arguments to get the discussion going.
7. Let the groups vote on the dilemma. Each group has one vote. Continue with the next dilemma, starting from step 4.

## OVERVIEW OF DILEMMAS

### DILEMMA 1: UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

After the Second World War, the European Union was founded as a collaboration among independent states. Some countries believe that the collaboration is still not intensive enough. They think that if the European Union were more a kind of 'United States of Europe', it would be in a better position to compete with larger countries, such as the USA and China. Other countries want the European Union to remain a collaboration among independent countries. At the moment, there is no proposal to form the United States of Europe.

#### Should the EU contain as much supranational regulation as possible, or should the member states remain as independent as possible?

Current situation: The EU is currently structured to include both supranational and intergovernmental elements. Countries wish to retain their independence (sovereignty). The United States of Europe is currently not a concrete proposition.

### DILEMMA 2: EUROPEAN UNION EXPANSION

In its early days, the European Union was a European collaboration among six countries. It currently counts 28 member states.

#### Should the European Union continue to expand, or is 28 countries enough?

Current situation: Accession negotiations are currently underway with Turkey (see Dilemma 3), the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. See overview on page 19 for the exact candidate status. Iceland was once a candidate, but officially withdrew its application in 2015.

*Additional information: Copenhagen Criteria*  
To be eligible for accession, each country must first meet the Copenhagen Criteria. The EU has the right to decide if and when candidates meet these three criteria. Countries may only join the EU if all current member states agree.

*New member states must:*

1. have stable institutions that safeguard democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for minorities;
2. have a functioning market economy and be able to compete within the EU; and
3. accept the obligations of membership, adopt the EU community laws and regulations, and subscribe to the intentions of the EU.

### DILEMMA 3: TURKEY IN THE EU

Turkey expressed its interest in joining the EU in 1987, and the negotiations are still underway. It is uncertain whether Turkey will ever become a member. To be eligible for accession, each country must first satisfy the Copenhagen

Criteria, which were set in Copenhagen by the EU member states. For example, new members must adopt the laws of the EU, be a democratic country and respect human rights. In Turkey's case, there are also other arguments and considerations.

#### Should Turkey be allowed to join the EU or not?

Current situation: Turkey is officially still a candidate country. However, in July 2017 a large majority in the European Parliament called to cease Turkey's accession negotiations, as the country drifts further and further away from European democratic values. This was mainly prompted by a referendum held in Turkey on 16 April 2017 regarding a new constitution that grants current president Erdogan more power. And the negotiations on several topics had not even begun, as the EU is demanding that Turkey realise free movement of goods with Cyprus, and acknowledge the Republic of Cyprus. Both of these requirements remain unfulfilled.

*Additional information: Copenhagen Criteria*  
To be eligible for accession, each country must first meet the Copenhagen Criteria. The EU has the right to decide if and when candidates meet these three criteria. Countries may only join the EU if all current member states agree.

*New member states must:*

1. have stable institutions that safeguard democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for minorities;
2. have a functioning market economy and be able to compete within the EU; and
3. accept the obligations of membership, adopt the EU community laws and regulations, and subscribe to the intentions of the EU.

### DILEMMA 4: AN EUROPEAN ARMY?

Europe currently has no joint army. Many European countries are members of NATO, which guarantees support from other countries in the event of an attack. Canada and the United States are also NATO members. Some believe that, for its own safety, the European Union should be less dependent on the United States. They believe that the European Union needs its own army for an active foreign policy. Others are against the idea of a European army, as European countries do not always agree on foreign policy, and they say that NATO is more than enough.

#### Should the European Union have a joint army or not?

Current situation: Currently there is no permanent EU army. When they deem it necessary, individual countries provide troops for humanitarian operations, military recommendations and support, conflict prevention and crisis-management missions.

## DILEMMA 5: ONE OFFICIAL EU LANGUAGE?

---

The EU currently has 24 official languages, all of which are also official working languages. This means that all European laws are drawn up in these languages, that all Parliamentarians can use them during debates, and that all citizens can write to the EU in any language on the list. Translator and interpreter fees cost each EU citizen around 3 euros per year.

### Should the EU adopt English as its official working language, or should the 24 current languages remain?

Current situation: There are currently 24 working languages in the EU, with no plans to reduce the number. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states: 'Every person may write to the institutions of the Union in one of the languages of the Treaties and must have an answer in the same language.'

## DILEMMA 1: UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

You are the European Council, and must find an answer to the dilemma below. Because it is an important decision, the parliaments of all member states (i.e. the other students) must all agree with your solution.

The European Union began as a collaboration among independent countries. Some countries believe that this is not enough. To compete successfully with large countries such as the USA and China, the EU should form something like a (supranational) United States of Europe. Other countries want the European Union to remain an (intergovernmental) collaboration among independent nations.

Current situation: The EU is currently structured to include both supranational and intergovernmental elements. Countries wish to retain their independence (sovereignty). The United States of Europe is currently not a concrete proposition.

### **DILEMMA: SHOULD THE EU CONTAIN AS MUCH SUPRANATIONAL REGULATION AS POSSIBLE, OR SHOULD THE MEMBER STATES REMAIN AS INDEPENDENT AS POSSIBLE?**

---

Answer the following questions:

1. List as many arguments in favour of supranational collaboration in the EU as possible.
2. List as many arguments in favour of intergovernmental collaboration in the EU as possible.
3. What solution will you propose to the other member states? Write down your group's chosen solution, and the arguments supporting it.

## DILEMMA 2: EUROPEAN UNION EXPANSION

You are the European Council, and must find an answer to the dilemma below. Because it is an important decision, the parliaments of all member states (i.e. the other students) must all agree with your solution.

In its early days, the European Union was a European collaboration among six countries. It currently counts 28 member states. Some people believe that the European Union is big enough already, and that there is no room for more countries.

### Copenhagen Criteria

To be eligible for accession, each country must first meet the Copenhagen Criteria. The EU has the right to decide if and when candidates meet these three criteria. Countries may only join the EU if all current member states agree.

New member states must:

1. have stable institutions that safeguard democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for minorities;
2. have a functioning market economy and be able to compete within the EU; and
3. accept the obligations of membership, adopt the EU community laws and regulations, and subscribe to the intentions of the EU.

Current situation: Accession negotiations are currently underway with Turkey, the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. Iceland was once a candidate, but officially withdrew its application in 2015.

### DILEMMA: SHOULD THE EUROPEAN UNION CONTINUE TO EXPAND, OR IS 28 COUNTRIES ENOUGH?

Answer the following questions:

1. List as many arguments in favour of expanding the European Union as possible.
2. List as many arguments as possible for keeping the European Union at its current size.
3. What solution will you propose to the other member states? Write down your group's chosen solution, and the arguments supporting it.?

## DILEMMA 3: TURKEY IN THE EU?

You are the European Council, and must find an answer to the dilemma below. Because it is an important decision, the parliaments of all member states (i.e. the other students) must all agree with your solution.

Turkey expressed its interest in joining the EU in 1987, and the negotiations are still underway. It is uncertain whether Turkey will ever become a member. To be eligible for accession, each country must first meet the Copenhagen Criteria, which were set in Copenhagen by the EU member states. For example, new members must adopt the laws of the EU, be a democratic country and respect human rights. In Turkey's case, there are also other arguments and considerations.

### Copenhagen Criteria

To be eligible for accession, each country must first meet the Copenhagen Criteria. The EU has the right to decide if and when candidates meet these three criteria. Countries may only join the EU if all current member states agree.

New member states must:

1. have stable institutions that safeguard democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for minorities;
2. have a functioning market economy and be able to compete within the EU; and
3. accept the obligations of membership, adopt the EU community laws and regulations, and subscribe to the intentions of the EU.

Current situation: Turkey is officially still a candidate country. However, in July 2017 a large majority in the European Parliament called to cease Turkey's accession negotiations, as the country drifts further and further away from European democratic values. This was mainly prompted by a referendum held in Turkey on 16 April 2017 regarding a new constitution that grants current president Erdogan more power. And the negotiations on several topics had not even begun, as the EU is demanding that Turkey realise free movement of goods with Cyprus, and acknowledge the Republic of Cyprus. Both of these requirements remain unfulfilled.

## DILEMMA: SHOULD TURKEY BE ALLOWED TO JOIN THE EU OR NOT?

Answer the following questions:

1. List as many arguments as possible for allowing Turkey to join the EU.
2. List as many arguments as possible for why Turkey should not be allowed to join the EU.
3. What solution will you propose to the other member states? Write down your group's chosen solution, and the arguments supporting it.

## DILEMMA 4: AN EUROPEAN ARMY?

You are the European Council, and must find an answer to the dilemma below. Because it is an important decision, the parliaments of all member states (i.e. the other students) must all agree with your solution. Europe currently has no joint army. Many European countries are members of NATO, which guarantees support from other countries in the event of an attack. Canada and the United States are also NATO members.

Some believe that, for its own safety, the European Union should be less dependent on the United States. They believe that the European Union needs its own army for an active foreign policy. Others are against the idea of a European army, as European countries do not always agree on foreign policy, and they say that NATO is more than enough. Current situation: Currently there is no permanent EU army. Whenever necessary, individual countries provide troops for disarmament and humanitarian operations, military recommendations and support, conflict prevention and crisis-management missions.

### DILEMMA: SHOULD THE EUROPEAN UNION HAVE A JOINT ARMY OR NOT?

---

Answer the following questions:

1. List as many arguments as possible in favour of a joint EU army.
2. List as many arguments as possible against a joint EU army.
3. What solution will you propose to the other member states? Write down your group's chosen solution, and the arguments supporting it.



## DILEMMA 5: ONE OFFICIAL EU LANGUAGE?

You are the European Council, and must find an answer to the dilemma below. Because it is an important decision, the parliaments of all member states (i.e. the other students) must all agree with your solution.

The EU currently has 24 official languages, all of which are also official working languages. This means that all European laws are drawn up in these languages, that all Parliamentarians can use them during debates, and that all citizens can write to the EU in any language on the list. Translator and interpreter fees cost each EU citizen around 3 euros per year.

Current situation: There are currently 24 working languages in the EU, with no plans to reduce the number. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states: 'Every person may write to the institutions of the Union in one of the languages of the Treaties and must have an answer in the same language.'

### DILEMMA: SHOULD THE EU ADOPT ENGLISH AS ITS OFFICIAL WORKING LANGUAGE, OR SHOULD THE 24 CURRENT LANGUAGES REMAIN?

---

Answer the following questions:

1. List as many arguments as you can in favour of abolishing the 24 official languages and instating one official language instead.
2. List as many arguments as you can in favour of keeping the 24 official languages.
3. What solution will you propose to the other member states? Write down your group's chosen solution, and the arguments supporting it.

# European Union opinion poll

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Students are presented with ten statements and asked whether they agree or disagree. Their answers will reveal whether their attitude is more Eurosceptical or more pro-European. Tally the answers at the end of the activity, and discuss the results with the students.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students become aware of their opinions and attitudes regarding the European Union, and learn to explain why they feel a certain way.

## TIME

20–30 minutes

## MATERIALS

A worksheet with the ten statements for each student (copy on the next page).

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Hand out the statement sheets to the students. The students mark whether they agree or disagree with the statements. They must give their own opinions, and must therefore work alone. Given them 5 minutes of working time.
2. Once all students have completed the sheet, read out the statements one at a time. Tally up how many students have marked light grey/dark grey circles. Once all statements have been read out, ask the students what 'light grey' and 'dark grey' might stand for. Dark grey represents a pro-European stance, and light grey a more Eurosceptical attitude.
3. Discuss the opinion poll as a group. Does the class see the European Union as an important political institution that should have more influence? Or do they think the EU has too much power? Potentially discuss the pros and cons of an economic and political Union.

## EUROPEAN UNION OPINION POLL

State whether you agree or disagree with each of the ten statements below.

	Agree	Disagree
1. I feel like a European citizen.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I will be voting for the European Parliament in the next European elections.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I think it's strange that I am forced to vote for a national candidate in the European elections.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Countries are losing their national identity due to all the European Union regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The EU has too much power. Collaboration should be limited to economic matters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Open European borders bring more advantages than disadvantages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I think the European Union should have a European constitution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I think that EU collaboration should be intensified in order to compete with China and the United States.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I think that citizens have too little influence in the European Union.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. EU collaboration limits the severity of an economic crisis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>











ProDemos is the 'House for Democracy and the Rule of Law'. Our mission is to help explain the systems that govern democracy and the rule of law, and to show what citizens themselves can do to exert political influence – at municipal, water board, provincial, national and European level.

## ProDemos

House for Democracy and the Rule of Law

ProDemos  
Hofweg 1H  
NL-2511 AA The Hague

+31 (0)70 757 02 00  
info@prodemos.nl  
prodemos.nl/english



ISBN 978 90 6473 524 7



9 789064 735240