

EU MYTHS AND SUCCESS STORIES



INTRODUCTION

What is an EU myth?

EU myth or euromyth usually refers to invented stories or distorted facts about the European Union (EU) and the activities of its institutions. The EU is accused of nonsensical EU legislation, bureaucracy and all difficulties and challenges arising from global trends.

Why should we talk about EU myths and check the real facts?

As European Union constantly faces different manifestations of Europhobia, unmasking EU myths becomes more and more important to keep the EU united. Web-based communication and social media take a significant part in today's Eurosceptic mobilization. Facts checking help not only to unmask the EU myths but as well to better understand the EU processes.

What is MEGA project?

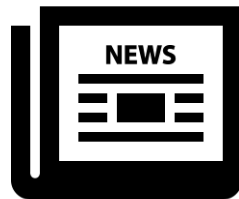
MEGA project stands for Make Europe Great Again and is a two-year project funded by the Erasmus+ Programme (project number 2019-3-DE04-KA205-018681) that aims at enhancing critical thinking and media literacy of young people by analysing and unmasking Europhobic myths. The project partnership is coordinated by the German Adult Education provider BUPNET GmbH based in Göttingen and consists of partners from Austria, Cyprus, France, Italy and Lithuania.

Compilation of the EU myths (fake news) and success stories consists of 145 of the most common EU myths along with the explanations with facts and useful links where correct information can be found and 60 success stories along with shortcomings of the EU. For easier reading myths are grouped into topics such as legislation, policy, religion, culture, migration, finances, functioning of the EU, health care, democracy, Brexit, and then into countries. Success stories of the EU are grouped into general achievements and country-specific stories. Most of the links to reliable sources are only available in national languages, therefore we recommend to use "Google Translate" or other tools to read them.

If you are interested to learn more about MEGA project or to contact us go to <https://mega.bupnet.eu/>

SPOTTING FAKE NEWS AND MISINFORMATION

How to decide whether the story should be trusted:



The Story Where did you find the story? Investigate the site, its contact info, read the "About us" section



The Author Who is the author of the story? Is there an author or it is anonymous? Does the author specialize in the field that the article is concerned with? To check this info about the author, go to LinkedIn or make a quick Google search.



Fact Check Does all the evidence match? Check the sources of the story, if there are no sources try to find as much information as you can and then decide if the story is accurate or not. Make sure there are at least two sources to verify a story. Be cautious if you see provocative headlines with excessive use of capital letters or emotional language.



Images Is there a video or are there pictures in the story? Check them using a reverse image search tool.

[Find a list of fact checking websites here.](#)

COMPILATION BY TOPIC

An overview of the chapters presented in the following. You can use the tabs on the left while scrolling to know which chapter you are currently reading.

	Legislation EU legislation is one of the most popular myths' objects in many European countries.	Policy Myths from various policy areas such as environment, health care, security or justice.	Culture Myths about the EU interfering & undermining its Member States' traditions and culture	Finances Popular myths like the Euro (€) being dysfunctional and to blame for the rising prices
	Quality of Life Myths which blame EU for worsening our well-being, like lowering food standards.	Democracy Myths about the EU not being a democratic union or even the dictatorship of Brussels.	Brexit Myths surrounding the hottest media news regarding the EU, e.g. the Pound being worthless after Brexit.	Health Care Stories about how EU is using Covid19 to push compulsory vaccination and other misleading information.
	Religion Myths from EU being anti-Christian to EU tolerating pedophile actions.	Functioning of the EU How Germany exploits the EU for its own interests & the French laws are dictated by the EU.	Environment Topic of environment seems innocent, but it is still surrounded by a lot of fake stories.	Migration The most common myths about migration like immigrants invading Europe.
	General Achievements General Achievements of the EU.	Country Specific Achievements Find more country-specific success stories, like ERASMUS+ experiences.		

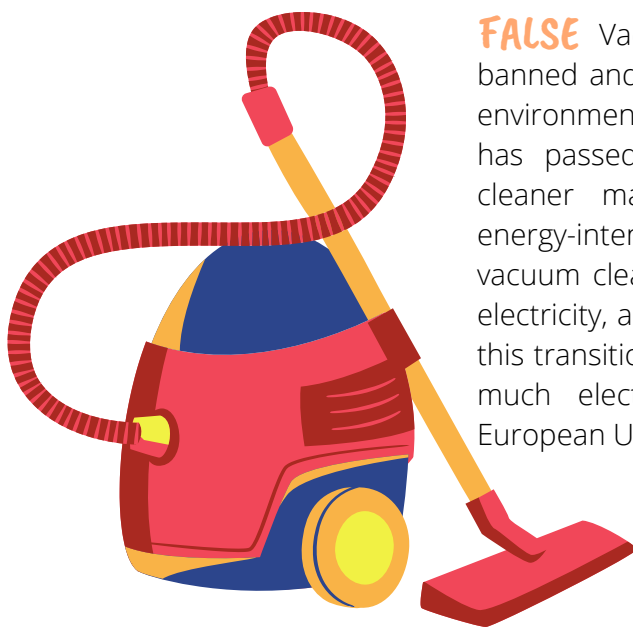
LEGISLATION

In this chapter you will find myths from banning memes and GIFs to "made in Italy" products. EU legislation is one of the most popular myths' objects in many European countries. If you want to grasp the real story you should first better understand how EU legislation works. In general, it is the European Commission that proposes new legislation, but it is the Council and Parliament that pass the laws (How the European Union works, 2005).

[Click to find more information about EU legislative procedure.](#)

LITHUANIA

The EU has banned vacuum cleaners



FALSE Vacuum cleaners have not been banned and new laws have been passed for environmental reasons. The European Union has passed a resolution requiring vacuum cleaner manufacturers to switch to less energy-intensive vacuum cleaners. Powerful vacuum cleaners consume significantly more electricity, are noisier and not economical. It is this transition that would save almost twice as much electricity in the countries of the European Union.

[Click reliable source](#)

The EU has restricted freedom of expression online

FALSE The myth of the EU's intention to restrict freedom of expression on the Internet has spread since the new copyright law. This law obliged social networks and platforms such as Youtube, Twitter, Facebook, and others to ensure that user-generated content does not violate copyright. Many have feared that these online platforms will have to install automatic filters which will block not only content that is illegal but also content that is allowed, because filters will not be able to distinguish between legal and illegal. Critics believe that this would violate freedom of expression online. On the other hand, the EU makes it clear that existing works can be used throughout Europe for citation, critique, review, caricature and parody purposes. Facebook, Google, and other platforms themselves can decide how to enforce copyright law while leaving the means of expression to the users.

[Check reliable source](#)

European Union banned children from inflating balloons

FALSE In 2011, the media reported that the European Union had banned children from inflating balloons. News portals reported that EU officials saw a deadly threat in the simplest toys such as inflatable balloons. In fact, the EU Toy Safety Directive aims to protect children's health and the requirements are to reduce the amount of harmful chemicals in toys as well as update instruction for the use. The EU has not banned children from inflating balloons but has demanded that latex balloons be accompanied by a warning that children under the age of 8 be supervised by their parents when inflating balloons. This warning is intended to protect children from suffocation or choking on such a toy.

[Check reliable source](#)

Legislation

National flags have been banned in the EU Parliament

FALSE News about banned national flags in the European Parliament has been seen on social networks and in the media. Representatives of Britain announced on their social networks that the national flag had been removed from their benches, called the gesture a ban on national symbols, and welcomed their withdrawal from the union. A Danish spokesman, meanwhile, said the speaker of the parliament "clearly hates nation-states."

In fact, the order that there should be no objects including the flags on the tables in the Chamber has been in place for a long time. The President of Parliament has merely recalled this procedure, and the flags of the Member States have been put on the sides of the Chamber and are therefore not prohibited.

According to Lithuanian MEPs, no objects, such as glass or water bottles are allowed on the tables, so that there is no disturbance during the meetings.

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The EU has banned children from writing letters to Santa Claus

FALSE The myth that children were banned from writing letters to Santa Claus has spread after one German city misinterpreted an EU law of Personal Protection. According to the media, after the promulgation of this law, the town of Roto was not allowed to hang letters from children addressed to Santa Claus containing their addresses and other personal information.

In reality, the General Data Protection Regulation is designed to guarantee people's rights to data protection and, at the same time, to reduce crime. In this case, the children's data may be used with parental permission. In the town, the solution was found by offering to submit letters to Santa Claus in a different form, in which parental consent is additionally recorded. According to the representatives of the European Commission, we do not yet know how to apply and interpret this law.

[Check reliable source](#)

Legislation

The flag of the European Union will become mandatory

FALSE The news portals featured false headlines about the European Union requiring member states to display the EU flag next to government buildings. In Lithuania, such message was met with hostility and called "propaganda of the EU symbols".

In reality, there is no such requirement in the European Union, and it is up to each country to decide in which cases the EU flag will be flown. In some countries, it is raised only on the occasion of Europe Day, i.e. 9 May. Lithuania legalized the use of the EU flag during the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU Council. It is also not specified which EU symbols should be used to inform the public about the EU funding, so there is no requirement to fly flags to all EU-supported institution buildings, other smaller symbols may be applied.

[Check reliable source](#)

EU banning tourist photos of the London Eye

FALSE The myth of EU banning tourist photos of the London Eye widely spread in 2015 when the EU Parliament received the suggestion to new rules of "Freedom of Panorama". The intention was to apply copyright protection to images of public buildings for commercial use. Some media portals announced that views such as the Eiffel Tower, the London Eye, or the Angel of the North, would no longer be free to depict.

In fact, the proposal was not adopted. The EU Copyright Directive states that the member states may limit copyright for the use of works located permanently in public places. There is an exception called "Freedom of Panorama" which allows citizens to take photographs of public spaces and use such photographs for personal and for commercial purposes, depending on how the copyright exception is defined in national law. So this EU law is optional in each EU member state

[Check reliable source](#)

Legislation

EU banned memes and GIFs

FALSE This myth spread widely on social media and media overall after the EU offered "fair use" rules of creators' rights to works on the internet.

Actually, they wanted to protect artists who often don't get paid for the use of their works when these appear on various internet platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, while at the same time these big tech companies are benefitting from it.

In reality, the EU allows the creation of parodies or caricatures which mean memes and GIFs are safe to use.

[Check reliable source](#)

Legislation

GERMANY

Legislation

EU bureaucrats prescribe the bending of cucumbers

FALSE (was true till 2009 – but for a reason)

The allegation that the Brussels officials, in their regulatory frenzy, had nothing better to do than to prescribe a maximum degree of bending for cucumbers. To this day, this example still causes a lot of laughter - although it is long outdated. It was the trade that made the proposal for regulation, and for very practical reasons. Straight cucumbers fit easily and space-savingly into cartons - much better than curved cucumbers. This made transport easier, so that cucumbers can be sold more cheaply. It is also easier to calculate how many cucumbers are in a box.

For this reason, in 1988 the EU adopted existing recommendations of the UN Economic Committee for Europe (ECE) in its own regulation, which was ridiculed like perhaps no other regulation from Brussels and which still provides material for critics and cabaret artists today. Curved cucumbers were of course allowed to be resold, but not in the best quality class.

However, the truth about the Cucumber Regulation also includes the fact that the EU Commission abolished it in 2009, not least because of the many negative headlines

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(video on the matter -
available in DE, EN, FR, IT,
PL, ES)

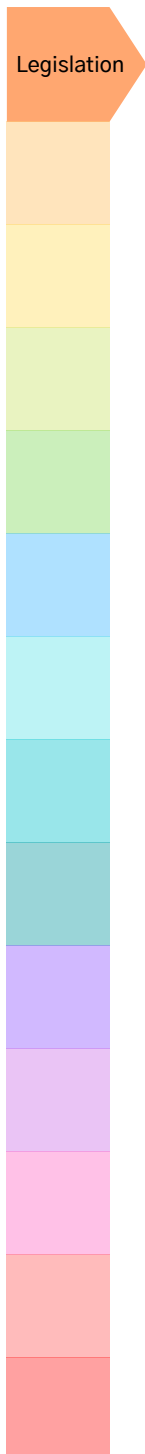
The label "Made in Germany" is in danger

FALSE On the contrary: With a new legislative package, the European Commission wants to better protect designations of origin such as "Made in Germany". Specifically: The Commission's proposals are therefore intended to ensure that a product "Made in Germany" has actually been produced in Germany.

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The EU has taken away the good old light bulb



FALSE What's the EU light bulb ban again? The idea came from Germany. The light bulb ban does not come from Brussels, as is often claimed. It came from the desk of Sigmar Gabriel, then Minister of the Environment, in 2007, and was the idea of the German government. The SPD man took it with him to Brussels, also because the government under Chancellor Merkel wanted to present itself as a literally shining example in climate protection. The EU summit of the heads of state and government nodded the ban, the parliament with national representatives of the people waved it through. The Commission was above all the executive body, no member state objected.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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EU wants to ban granny's potholder

FALSE Personal protective equipment (PPE) is regulated by the EU, and there are many requirements in the area of occupational and private health and safety. The regulations are only intended to ensure that oven gloves and oven mitts which are marketed commercially also demonstrably protect against burns. Privately crocheted potholders do not fall into this category - even if they are sold at markets. They are officially considered decorative items.

[Check reliable source](#)

Drivers have to retake their driving test every five years because of a new EU law

Legislation

FALSE This was the claim made in an article on the German Auto Zeitung website, dated 1 April 2019. Subsequently the alleged introduction of regular repeat driving tests have appeared online on several previous occasions in Germany. In 2019, similar announcements were circulated on 1 April.

What seemed to be a newspaper called the "Kölner Abendblatt" proclaimed, "Driving theory test every 5 years from now on". However, there is no newspaper with that name. Both the German Federal Ministry of Transport and the European Commission denied the existence of any new EU law requiring retests for drivers every five years

There is, however, a five-year rule for holders of Class C1, C1E, C or CE heavy goods vehicle driving licences. According to the TÜV Nord website, "These classes of driving licence are only ever valid for 5 years, renewable for a further 5 years on successful completion of a fitness test (health check and ophthalmologist's report)."

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EU directive gives general permission for the use of stray pets in animal testing

PARTLY TRUE On 4 May a Facebook user posted a photograph of a notice that had apparently been written by the "Tierschutzverein Strausberg, Rüdersdorf, und Umgebung e.V." [an animal protection society]. The notice is a warning to "all owners of free-roaming cats" and claims that a European Union directive adopted in 2010 but not yet made public permits the use of stray pets in animal testing. Indirectly it also claims that, as a consequence of this directive, there is now a trade in cat fur.

The notice claims that Directive 2010/63/EU allows stray pets to be used for laboratory animal testing. The directive was adopted on 22 September 2010 for "the protection of animals used for scientific purposes".

The EU directive only permits the use of stray or feral domestic animals for animal testing in exceptional circumstances. An EU regulation passed in 2007 prohibits the trade in cat and dog fur.

[Check reliable source](#)

CYPRUS

Legislation

"Cyprus must reduce the number of EU citizens coming to the island as migrants & voters must think national in the European Elections of 2014"

N/A ELAM, the Neo-Nazi party of Cyprus, is not only against "illegal immigration", as they call it, meaning Third-Countries Nationals arrivals. For the first time in the history of politics in Cyprus, a political party demanded that also the number of EU citizens who come to Cyprus to work or live must be controlled and reduced. This statement openly denounces the foundations of free movement of EU citizens within the internal borders of the Union. Also, in this way, ELAM deliberately expresses its repulse not only against the so called "Islamization" of Cyprus and the EU but also the "alienation" of Cyprus' culture and traditions caused by the arrivals of other EU citizens.

In the same video, which is part of the party's campaign towards the European Elections of 2014, ELAM urges voters to "vote national". This is obvious populism given that European Elections are a framework in which all Member States are invited to send their own representatives to the EU parliament and through that, to the EU Commission.

So, there is no real sense in inviting voters to "vote national" since this is actually happening. What really happens is that ELAM, believing in a Union of Christian Nations with absolute sovereignty on all matters and also believing that Brussels are acting like a directorate of life across the EU, they want to change EU in a way that nationalist could have more influence on the national political systems of the Member States.

[Check reliable source](#)

ITALY

Legislation

European Union wants to ban doner kebab

FALSE The confusion in this statement comes from the fact that the European Union has prepared a law against the use of phosphates as an additive in frame preparations sold in Europe. This proposal is not intended at any time to ban the sale of kebabs, but only to ensure the quality of the products sold and to ban those food additives that may be harmful to the health of consumers.

[Check reliable source](#)

The European Union has cancelled males by decree

FALSE The tweet posts a news title saying that the European Union has decided to cancel the men by decree. This is obviously a fake news, since what is being mentioned is a guide to the use of inclusive language.

The principle of gender equality and non-discrimination on gender grounds is firmly rooted in the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and it has been endorsed by the European Parliament on many occasions. The language used in Parliament should therefore reflect this.

To this end, the aim of these guidelines is to ensure that, as far as possible, non-sexist and gender-inclusive language is used also in the Parliament's documents and communications in all official languages.

The purpose of these guidelines is not to constrain authors in the European Parliament to follow a mandatory set of rules but rather to encourage the administrative services to give due consideration to the issue of gender sensitivity in language whenever writing, translating or interpreting.

[Check reliable source](#)

European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg restricts freedom of expression

Legislation

FALSE It's true that European Court sentences someone who accuses someone else of murder for exercising a right. But this is not restriction on the freedom of expression but to protect people's fundamental rights, because abortion is not murder but a right.

European Convention on Human Rights, specifies the Freedom of expression as a fundamental right of human been, but on the second section clarifies "the exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to (...) penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society (...) for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others (...)"

[Check reliable source](#)

New European law: from 1st January 2020 the coins in the shopping cart can no longer be taken back because they will be donated to immigrants.

FALSE The image is the result of a joke posted on the Facebook group Barzzelette.

The viralizers "put their hands in the pockets of citizens", talking about a European law that requires to allocate the coins in the cart to immigrants. This is the perfect formula, to unleash the wrath of those who do not catch the joke.

It starts out as a joke, but when it goes out of context, it starts to turn into fake news.

[Check reliable source](#)

The EU kills our "Made in Italy" products

Legislation

FALSE The anti-Europeans try to convince the population that the EU wants to kill the typical "made in Italy" products by favouring those that come from abroad such as Tunisian oil or rice from the Cambodia. The reality is a bit different.

The EU protects typical and traditional products coming from different territories within its borders, thanks to a specific system of identification and protection.

In addition, in the Italian case, there are products such as Parmigiano Reggiano, San Daniele ham or traditional balsamic vinegar of Modena, which enjoy, together with 167 other Italian registered products, the EU DOP protection mark. This means that that product must originate from a specific place and that its qualities or characteristics are linked to a particular geographical environment, including the stages of its production. EU quality marks enjoy protection that can be enforced throughout the EU and are also designed to combat counterfeiting.

The same protection rules apply within all EU countries.

For non-EU countries, the Commission is working to ensure that standards are included in international trade agreements to protect outstanding European products.

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EU wants to interdict crispy dark french fries

FALSE The European Union doesn't ban French fries, but just reduce consumers' exposure to a likely carcinogenic substance. The EU agreed that food manufacturers must reduce the level of the harmful substance acrylamide in our food. The European Food Safety Agency published a risk assessment in 2015, concluding that acrylamide potentially increases the risk of developing cancer in all age groups. Acrylamide is a carcinogenic substance that forms from naturally present free asparagine (amino acid) and sugars during high temperature processing, such as frying, roasting and baking, particularly in potato-based products, cereal-based products, coffee and coffee substitutes.

So following EFSA's opinion, the Commission started discussions with Member States' authorities to determine appropriate regulatory measures to reduce the presence of acrylamide in food.

[Check reliable source](#)

The European Union taxes the air conditioning

Legislation

FALSE This fake news that re-opens every summer, actually talks about a rule that is in force since 1 October 2014.

The EU does not impose any tax on Italian families' air conditioners.

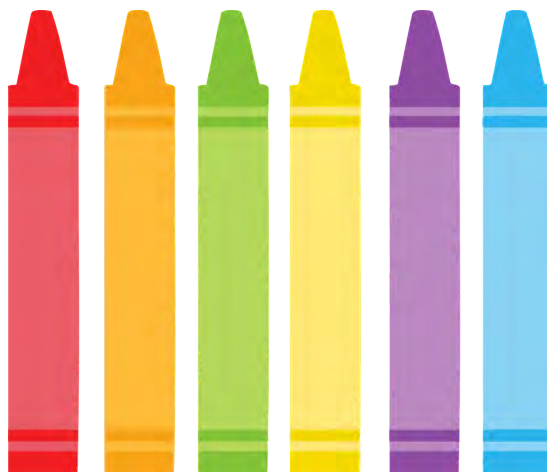
In any case, it is not a tax but the European standards (Article 15 of Directive 2010/31/EU) require that individual States establish the necessary measures to periodically assess whether air conditioners are efficient and adequate with respect to the need to cool the building in which they are installed, and to ensure periodic inspections of the most powerful air conditioners, i.e. over 12 kW or capable of cooling rooms of at least 160 square meters.

Nothing changes for air conditioners in most of our homes and small shops.

[Check reliable source](#)

EU bans crayons and coloring pencils

FALSE In 2017, The Sun newspaper, suggests that the EU will ban crayons and colouring pencils and as a consequence stopping children colouring. This is obviously a fake news, the EU introduced new measures reducing the limits for lead in toys, based on new and robust scientific evidence. Anyone with young children knows that they have tendency to chew toys – not least pencils and crayons.



The scientific evidence supports the view that there is no safe threshold and even tiny amounts of lead present in such toys can contribute to the risk of children suffering disorders ranging from kidney disease to learning difficulties. So the EU imposes some toy safety requirements, making toys safer for children, not “banning” crayons and colouring pencils.

[Check reliable source](#)

EU calling for Italians to produce mozzarella using powdered milk

Legislation

FALSE In 2015 many newspapers have published alarmist headlines that fear the arrival of "cheese without milk" and the imposition of the European Commission to produce in this way.

The European position speaks of the possibility of using dehydrated and reconstituted powdered milk for the production of dairy products such as cheese and yoghurt and not of an obligation. The problem is that Italian law No 138 of 1974 prohibits the use of these milk derivatives.

According to the European Commission, the Italian law violates the principle of free competition within the EU. For this reason, the authorities in Brussels have sent a letter of formal notice asking to remove the legislative measure that represents an obstacle to the free movement of goods.

Brussels does not impose anything, but calls for the removal of a ban that is in some ways unnecessary and overcome by the reality of the facts. Cheese and yoghurt may also contain powdered milk, but those who want to be able to continue to produce as they have done up to now will need proper labelling so that the consumer knows which milk contains the cheese in question.

[Check reliable source](#)

"EU declares war on drivers: UK motorists should pay congestion charge to drive in every town say Brussels climate change meddlers"

FALSE This news, as a lot of news pre-Brexit, spreads out incorrect information. First of all, the European Union has no power to force local authorities to implement congestion charges or bin collection fees. Both remain a matter for national and regional authorities. The European Union only has the powers delegated to it by Member States in the EU Treaties.

The claims motorists should pay for driving in towns and bin taxes stem from a "Handbook on the Europe 2020 strategy for cities and regions" published by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) in 2012. The newspapers fail to mention that the document is several years old. They also fail to point out that the CoR is a purely advisory body with no legislative powers, made up of elected local and regional representatives. The Express describes it as "the European Commission's Committee of the Regions", which it is not. It is a separate institution.

[Check reliable source](#)

European bureaucrats hate Italian cuisine and want to ban the wood-burning oven

Legislation

FALSE The fake news has been on the net since 2010, but Georgia Meloni, one of the most active policies in Italy, made the mistake of falling into this falsehood and using this old news to defend her ideas on TV.

Since March 2006, the wood-fired ovens have been adapted, following strict technical and construction requirements. Some time ago the news (which later turned out to be unfounded) of the European Commission's banning of wood-fired ovens was widely spread. The reasons would have been hygienic and sanitary.

It is a pity, however, that the Commission itself confirmed the groundlessness of the news spread in Italy by the press and other media, Internet first and foremost: the European legislation on hygiene regarding traditional pizza baking systems was contained in Council Directive 93/43/EEC of 14 June 1993 on the hygiene of foodstuffs (now replaced by the so-called "hygiene package": Regulations (EC) 852, 853, 854, 882/2004, and Directive 2002/99).

This Directive did not lay down any provisions concerning the prohibition of wood-burning ovens used in pizzerias. There is more: the directive did not mention ovens at all, it simply contained very general principles of food hygiene.

[Check reliable source](#)

Subcutaneous microchip: New European legislation, within two years each of us will have to make it

FALSE The tweet and linked article talks about a subcutaneous microchip imposed by a new European regulation, which is not explicitly mentioned: within two years everyone will have the subcutaneous microchip, a unique identification number that can be linked to information contained in an external database, with personal identification data, medical and health data, medical treatment, allergies, and contact information.

According to this fake news, Italy is the third country to accept the subcutaneous microchip.

Evidently it is an unreliable source, but what's more, this fake news has been on the internet in 2016, 2018 and again in 2020. In fact, there is no source for this subcutaneous chip imposition, but reality is that we are in 2020 and no subcutaneous microchips were imposed to anybody.

[Check reliable source](#)

The new suggestion of the EU: Hiding your savings at home becomes a crime

Legislation

FALSE The article including these tweets says that the European Union wants to punish people who keep their savings at home and this goes to hit in particular "homebanking" or e-commerce of Italian shepherds and farmers. The information is not true, no one has ever made it illegal to have savings at home, nor could they ever do so. It is a manipulated piece of information, pressed by an article in another newspaper where they talk about the risks of excessive use of cash and the black economy involve for the country. We already have limits on the use of cash for payments, not by EU legislation but at the national level. That do not affect the farmers and shepherds mentioned in the article, who do not need to mobilise large sums of money and will probably never feel this limit as a problem. Instead, these restrictions on the use of cash money are intended to combat money laundering and funding of illegal activities.

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The garden at home? Goodbye, you need a license

FALSE The tweet refers to a news report that "the European Union" has imposed a licence on our hobby farmers to manage small urban vegetable gardens, or within their properties.

This is not the case at all: the licence exists but it concerns the use of some particular products for professional use, known for their ability, when used incorrectly, to cause serious damage to the environment and health.

Therefore, the patent is for entrepreneurs, including family businesses, who must have a licence for the most dangerous products, becoming aware of their use and thus producing a better and healthier product for everyone.

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Copyright law could decree the end of YouTube in Europe

Legislation

FALSE According to this news, the revision of European copyright law will mean the end of YouTube as we know it.

But that is not the truth. YouTubers and users of online platforms will continue to do what they do today and be a source of creative content, while creators and authors will be much better protected against copyright infringement.

The goal is to get artists, performers and creators a fair return for the creativity and commitment they share online. In addition, ensuring that contracts between online platforms and creators must be transparent, as performers and creators often also transfer their rights and licences to online platforms.

The reform will not touch parody and satire. Freedom of expression and information is a fundamental value of the EU and it works daily to protect it for all.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

[Check reliable source 2](#)

The EU also wants to take away one of our favorite dishes: spaghetti with clams

FALSE This tweet uses the ban on the typical Italian dish "spaghetti con le vongole" to spread a fakenews about the European Union.

The European Union is accused of establishing rules that aim to penalize Italy regarding the minimum size allowed for clam fishing.

This is obviously not true. EU rules on the topic, based on shared scientific advice, aim to protect the species and its survival. Therefore, the EU does not ban spaghetti with clams, but makes it possible to eat it in the future too!

[Check reliable source](#)

AUSTRIA

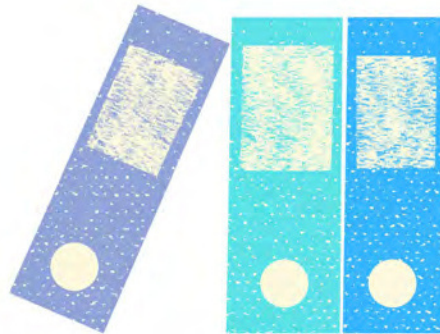
Legislation

Due to the new DSGVO there is more bureaucracy

FALSE Since the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) or short in German "DSGVO" came into effect, many people think that the new directives cause more bureaucracy than before. People have to get the consent from f. e. the people in the picture. However, data security is one of the ground rules in Europe.

With the GDPR a uniform rule is set for every member of the EU. Therefore, people have more influence on their personal data. The new rules apply to any company, independently whether the enterprise has their head office in or outside of the EU. If the company violates the GDPR, the consequences will be a fine of 4% of the worldwide annual sales.

[Check reliable source](#)



POLICY

In the chapter Policy you can find myths from various policy areas such as environment, health care, security, justice or migration. Though some myths in this chapter are obviously untrue, the other ones are difficult to distinguish from the rumours.

Talking about EU policy, the main goals of the EU are the integration and development of countries and it aims to promote the wellbeing, security and interests of the citizens. Eurosceptics, on the other hand, believe that countries of the EU may lose their sovereignty.

[Read more about the EU policy](#)

Policy

AUSTRIA

EU wants to implant EPS Chips into Babies

FALSE This tweet is about the EU wanting to get the EPS Chips implanted in Babies instead of a normal ID card. This myth has been spread due to the article "Finally: EU-Standard-Chip EPS replaces the ID card" from the website "Neue Weltpresse". Although this website is a satire website, it is not clear when reading the articles from "Neue Weltpresse" whether the articles are satire or real.

[Check reliable source](#)

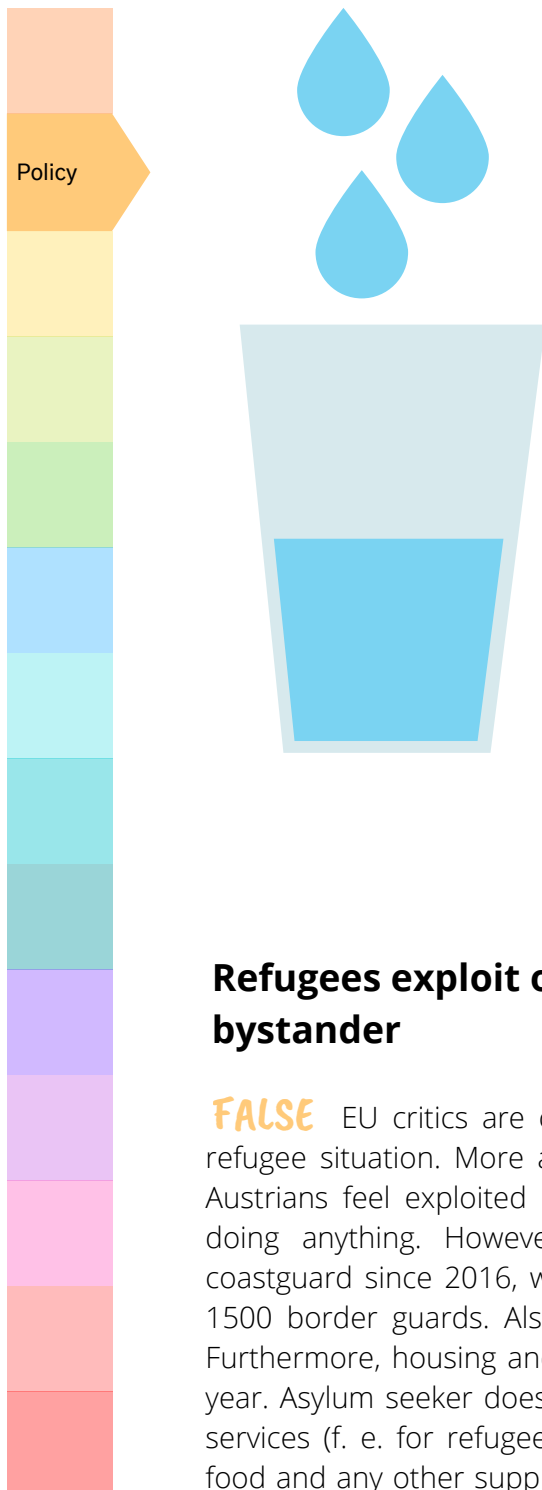
The Corona crisis should speed up the immigration of refugees in Europe

FALSE The author of this article criticizes Gerald Knaus, an expert of immigration and sociologist for demanding clearing the refugee camps on the Greek islands. This article is about the EU using the Corona crises to speed up the immigration of illegal immigrants in other EU countries. The purpose of Gerald Knaus demanding a clearing of refugee camps is to avoid an CoVid-19 outbreak in the camps, because there are no possibilities to washing hands and there is not enough space for isolation to keep the refugees from an infection.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

[Check reliable source 2](#)

Storm in a water glass over a new EU initiative



FALSE This article from the "Kronen Zeitung" is about the fear of a new guideline from the EU about free water in restaurants. Gastronomes have to serve a glass of water for free, even if the customer only orders water and nothing else. This leads to discrepancies. However, the EU never planned to set a new guideline for restaurants about drinking water. The EU wanted to enhance the access to clean water in general to reduce plastic bottles.

In 2018 about 2 million people in the EU do not have the possibility to drink clean tap water.

Therefore, many people buy water in plastic bottles, which is a huge problem for the environment. If the access to water is secured, many households could save about 600 million euro of buying water in plastic bottles. This guideline of the European citizens' initiative is called "right2water".

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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Refugees exploit our welfare system and the EU is the bystander

FALSE EU critics are complaining about the EU doing nothing against the refugee situation. More and more refugees are coming to Europe and many Austrians feel exploited by the refugees getting money and support without doing anything. However, the EU have had new European border and coastguard since 2016, which has access to quick mobilized buffer of at least 1500 border guards. Also, the Schengen border codex has been intensified. Furthermore, housing and supplies for a refugee costs about 10.000 Euro per year. Asylum seeker does not receive any financial social aids, except for basic services (f. e. for refugees living in a sheltered accommodation 5,50 Euro for food and any other supplies, 40 Euro pocket money per month), a basic health insurance coverage, maximum 15 Euro per year for clothes, maximum 200 Euro per year for school stuff and travel expenses to school.

[Check reliable source](#)

CYPRUS

Policy

“EU supports the Turkish Cypriot farmers without asking the official Cypriot government”

PARTLY TRUE The political party “Kinima Allileggiis” (“Solidarity Movement”) indirectly criticised the granting of Turkish Cypriot farmers by the EU Commission mentioning that they bypassed the only recognized government of the Republic of Cyprus (the one which controls the free territories of the southern part of the island) and offered the funds directly to the beneficiaries. This criticism is based on a widely shared negativity among the nationalist and conservative political powers and citizens which is based on the idea that Turkish Cypriots shall receive no support until the Cypriot Affair is resolved. Apart from the fact that those statements ignore the needs of the internationally isolated Turkish Cypriot community in the North of Cyprus as a result of the illegal occupation by the Turkish Army, they also don’t say the full truth about the right of the European Commission to directly intervene in matters of agricultural sustainable economy.

Cyprus as a Member State of the European Union has agreed upon this right of the European Commission. Also, given that the government of the Republic of Cyprus is not in the position to exercise its power in the northern occupied part, a way should be found to support the local farmers.

[Check reliable source](#)

“Turkish imperialism and our «friend», the EU.”

FALSE As explained under EU Myth No 6, the Cypriot Affair is not a one-side issue. Any kind of simplified analysis is proven incapable of offering a common ground for a mutually respected solution. The title of this article, “Turkish imperialism and our «friend», the EU”, is a variation of the No 6’s popular opinion that the EU is inactive against Turkish provocations.

Though, it’s a group of EU multinational companies who have signed agreements with the Republic of Cyprus for the gas extractions in the South of the Island. It’s Manuel Macron, the French President who continuously asked for Turkey to stop violating the maritime rights of Cypriots. And at an EU level, it was EU foreign policy spokesman Peter Stano who warned Turkey by stating: “Concrete steps towards creating an environment conducive to dialogue in good faith are needed. The intention by Turkey to launch further exploration and drilling activities in the wider region goes, regrettably, in the opposite direction.”

[Check reliable source](#)

“EU does nothing to resolve the Cyprus Affair”

FALSE Şener Levent is a renowned democratic Turkish Cypriot journalist whose opinions are appreciated by large parts both of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot community. In his article, he criticises the EU - as a hole - for not undertaking effective initiatives towards the resolution of the Cypriot Affair which exists since at least 1963.

This opinion is a simplification of EU’s existing inefficacy to dynamically intervene in the issue. There is a big distance between “doing nothing”, “not doing enough” and “not being able to do enough”. The Cyprus Affair is a complex problem in which all the competent international bodies are involved, including the EU.

One of the various examples which prove the inaccuracy of this position is the participation of the High Representative of European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the EU Commission, Federica Mogherini in the Geneva Discussions between the two communities in 2017.

[Check reliable source](#)

“The former German Minister of Economy, Wolfgang Schäuble, opened the door of Cyprus and the EU for the Russians”

Policy

FALSE As explained under EU Myth No 6, the Cypriot Affair is not a one-side issue. Any kind of simplified analysis is proven incapable of offering a common ground for a mutually respected solution. The title of this article, “Turkish imperialism and our «friend», the EU”, is a variation of the No 6’s popular opinion that the EU is inactive against Turkish provocations.

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Fortress Europe turns it's back on refugees

PARTLY TRUE In 2015, the EU faced a tremendous and unprecedented crisis due to the massive influx of refugees and migrants trying to reach the EU mainly from Turkey to Greece via sea. Greece put a gigantic effort to manage the hundreds of thousands of newcomers in a humanitarian way and addressed the request for help to the EU. Germany responded positively by receiving almost 1 million refugees. Other countries also showed solidarity to Greece. Cyprus who was also on the frontline of the influx managed it a very descent way, according to the international law. Though others did not and formed an anti-refugee front. This was for example the so-called “Vizegrad Group” formed by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. These countries agreed to close their borders to avoid any influx from Greece and the Balkans. They were strictly criticised but they did not change their policy until today.

[Check reliable source](#)

Skepticism regarding the EU Council's decision on the Turkey-Libya statement

Policy

FALSE "Allilegii Movement", remaining loyal to each permanent Euroscepticism, explicitly express "skepticism regarding the EU Council's decision on the Turkey-Libya statement".

Turkey and Libya, bypassing the International Law of the Sea, agreed upon the splitting of the Exclusive Economic Zone of Greece and Cyprus between them. This was perceived as a violation of the rights both of Cyprus and Greece. Despite the denouncement by "Allilegii Movement", the EU directly opposed international law to Turkey's and Libya's agreement. The President of the EU Commissions stated, for instance that: "We are on your side, Turkey's action in the Aegean is unacceptable, we will send a clear message to Turkey"

[Check reliable source](#)

"EU created the chaos in Libya and did not take part in the peace process"

FALSE "Allilegii Movement", through its press release accuses the EU of not taking peace action in Libya to stop the civil war while the Union is the main responsible for the domestic political chaos. Libya entered a chaotic situation after the uprising of people under the leadership of different local warlords. Since 2011, Libya is in an endless civil war. The main powers involved in the support of the opponents are the USA, Russia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Some EU Member States, like France and Italy, took the decision to intervene in the beginning of the crisis but the EU as a whole never did so. Also, in January 2020 a Summit on Libya was held in Berlin after an urgent call from Germany's leader, Angela Merkel. The EU was officially present through the President of the EU Council.

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“For 15 years, the Cypriot MEPs have done nothing to reveal the Cypriot Affair as problem of military occupation”

Policy

FALSE “The author of this article expresses himself in a very popular way nowadays: «they are all the same» or «they do nothing for us» or «they go there, they get the money and they don’t actually represent their country but only themselves». But is the specific accusation against all the Cypriot MEPs regarding the specific issue justifiable?

Apparently not. Here are some examples:

- “Democratic Party’s” (DIKO) MEP, Mr Mavrides addressed the following question to a Swedish MEP: “would you ever wish that part of your country is occupied by a candidate to access the EU like Turkey?” (22/12/2014)
- “AKEL’s” MEP, Mr Xatjigeorgiou openly accused Turkey for violating basic human rights (17/12/2014)
- “Democratic Alarm’s” (DYSI), Ms Theocharous demanded the creation of a fund for the preservation of the properties of Greek Cypriots in the occupied territories.

[Check reliable source](#)

"AKEL is Eurosceptic"

PARTLY TRUE The left party of Cyprus which has been a basic pillar of the political system for the last 70 years is often accused of Euroscepticism.

Policy

The accusations usually come from the part of the main party of the right-wing DHSI which is the 1st political force in the country. It is true that in the past, AKEL was against the accession of Cyprus to the EU for several ideological reasons. From the 1960s to 1995 the main position of the party was the following: "Any thoughts, made both inside and outside the Government, to distance Cyprus from the Non-Aligned Movement*, under the pretext of Cyprus' course of accession to the European Union, are extremely wrong and dangerous for the interests of Cyprus" (AKEL, 1995). Though in the upcoming years, AKEL shifted from hard to soft Euroscepticism. This was due to the prospects for the reunification of the island within the EU (something which happened in 2004). Also, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was the most powerful ally of the party abroad, AKEL should elaborate a new strategy. During the 18th Congress in 1995, AKEL members decided upon the following position: "Under the circumstances of the new global situation, with our main target the need to safeguard the security of the Republic of Cyprus, and all its people [...] AKEL has decided to change its current position on Cyprus-EU relations" (AKEL 1995)

* The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is a forum of 120 developing world states that were not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc of the post-WWII era. It was formed during the Cold War (the conflict between USA and the Soviet Union) and it was an attempt to avoid the engagement either with the USA or the Soviet Union.

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The European Union and Cyprus: The Awkward Partnership

Policy

PARTLY TRUE In this article, the reader can easily identify a very popular type of subtle and soft Eurosceptic opinion which is widely shared among the public in Cyprus: «Ironically enough, the EU became an important reason for Greek-Cypriots to reject the UN Plan: having safeguarded their accession as the Republic of Cyprus, the EU gave them no motive to contribute to a solution before accession.»

The author refers to the “Anan Plan” for the solution of the Cypriot Affair in which Greek Cypriots voted massively against (on the contrary the Turkish Cypriots accepted it). The author implies that the EU “utopia” disoriented Cypriots from accepting the Anan Plan. Turkish Cypriots were not enjoying the EU acquis according to the 1999 Helsinki Agreement.

But, what the author neglects to explain is that the Anan Plan was turned down by Greek Cypriots for a lot of other reasons. One of them was the maintenance of the Turkish military presence in the island and the establishment of dysfunctional state procedures. Accusing the feeling of Cypriots that EU was their safeguard leads to accusing the EU for creating this feeling. But, in the same time, the EU had worked firmly for the solution of the Cyprus Affair.

[Check reliable source](#)

"EU is becoming irrelevant in Cyprus"

FALSE This article is written by a prominent and permanent columnist of the for-Erdogan government "Hurriyet" journal (online). It continues a long tradition of Erdogan's neo-Ottomanist geopolitical doctrine in order to convince basically the Turkish Cypriots that they have nothing to gain from their accession to the EU. On the contrary, they have a lot to gain from their attachment to the so-called "Mother Land", meaning Turkey. Specifically he mentions that "turning a deaf ear and a blind eye to Turkish Cypriot calls for cooperation and accusing Turkey of acting in defense of its own as well as Turkish Cypriot rights in the eastern Mediterranean must have been criticised by the EU rather than act in support of the Greek Cypriot illegal and immoral demands on grounds of club solidarity. With such an attitude, the EU has risked becoming totally irrelevant in Cyprus peacemaking and lost its already dwarfed diplomatic capability in relations with Turkey."

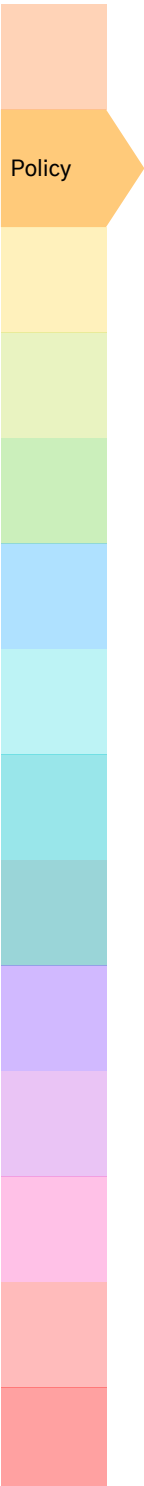
Despite this type of remarks and opinions, the majority of native Turkish Cypriot population is for a dynamic presence of the EU both in the North of Cyprus but also in the peacekeeping and solutions negotiations. And they actually seek this support from the EU. Some examples:

- In 2019, the first Turkish Cypriot MEP, Niyazi Kızılyürek was elected through the electoral list of a Greek Cypriot party, AKEL, thus symbolising the continuous interest of Turkish Cypriots for the EU procedures and dynamics.
- The Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce established and maintains a representation infrastructure in Brussels, seeking to contribute to the solution of the Cypriot Affair.
- The Turkish Cypriots accepted a package of \$38.9 million from the EU Commission aiming to encourage the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community.

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FRANCE

Policy

The EU doesn't have a common defence policy and is therefore subject to the US and NATO

PARTLY TRUE Despite the absence of a common European military and the failure of several attempts to create one in the past, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) enables the Union to undertake, drawing on both civilian and military assets, operations of peace-keeping and conflict prevention. Although NATO is undoubtedly a central actor in promoting security and stability in Europe, many examples show us that the EU can and does present an alternative: after the terroristic attacks of November 2015, for instance, president François Hollande did not rely on the intervention of NATO and its principle of "collective self-defence" (article 5 rules that an armed attack against one state party shall be considered as an attack against them all) but rather on the solidarity and support, by all means, of EU Member states as ruled in article 42 of the Treaty on the European Union.

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In the EU, health is subordinated to profit

FALSE The organisation and delivering of health services and medical care is a national responsibility of each Member state. EU health policy, in this sense, complements national policies, and ensures health protection in all EU policies by providing a general, harmonised, framework. The Union, in particular, encourages cooperation between Member states to improve complementarity in their health services in cross-border areas.

More precisely, EU actions in public health relate to the protection and improvement of the health of EU citizens and the support and the modernisation of health infrastructures. Strategic health issues are discussed jointly by representatives of national authorities and the European Commission.

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The EU is powerless before the big multinationals like Google, Apple, Facebook, and Amazon. It doesn't protect our privacy and sells our personal data.

Policy

FALSE The protection of personal data is a fundamental right recognised by the European Treaties. Although improvements are certainly needed in terms of fiscal regulation, the EU has taken several measures to safeguard our personal lives, copyrights, loyal competition etc. The most important document in this sense, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), was adopted in 2018. The GDPR aims at giving control to individuals over their personal data by granting specific rights such as the right to oblivion, the right to data portability, and the right to information on security breaches.

The Regulation, in addition, reinforces the role of the pertinent authorities -like the Commission nationale de l'informatique et des libertés (CNIL) in France- by strengthening their power of sanctioning in case of non-compliance. Moreover, the new copyright rules, which will enter into force in one year, aim at strengthening the position of artists, musicians, writers, journalists etc. in their negotiations with platforms that make high profits from the use of their content. At the same time, the regulation ensures that the freedom of expression of internet users is protected.

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GERMANY

Policy

The US promoted von der Leyen to weaken the EU

FALSE There's no use arguing that a person with Ursula von der Leyen's track record cannot possibly succeed in the highest post in the EU, therefore it's evident that some force has been strongly "promoting" her to this post. It is not difficult to identify this "mysterious force", since nor Europe, nor its ordinary citizens can gain anything from poor leadership. It's noteworthy that in the aftermath of yet another catastrophe associated with poor leadership – Brexit, Washington has lost its last means of directly influencing European politics through London. It's clear that the US has no interest in observing a strong union of states across the pond.

Conspiracy theory presented without evidence.

Information about how the EU citizens and institutions elect their leaders:

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Germany actually only suffers disadvantages from the EU

FALSE The negative headlines about the EU spread by some parties in Germany suggest that the majority of Germans would prefer to leave the EU today rather than tomorrow

However, a survey carried out in 2019 has shown that only supporters of the far-right party are more likely to see disadvantages, at around 40%, while for supporters of all other parties the advantages clearly outweigh the disadvantages.

[Check reliable source](#)

Brussels is a bureaucratic monster

FALSE At the regulars' tables, people like to rant about "the Eurocrats", who supposedly live in Brussels in a huff and puff. The myth of the bloated bureaucracy lives on. Civil servants who have nothing better to do than to think up new regulations to harass the citizens.

Compared to the civil service in Germany, the European administration looks modest. Around 55,000 people work in the European institutions, of which around 32,000 work for the EU Commission. That is approximately one EU official or employee for every 10,000 inhabitants. By way of comparison, the city of Cologne, for example, has a permanent staff of 18,300. With a population of about one million people, this results in a ratio of one civil servant or employee for every 55 inhabitants in Cologne. In Paris this ratio is 1:45.

And the much-criticised "regulation madness" is also a constant reproach. Better regulation and the constant "phasing out" of outdated regulations is the working maxim of the EU Commission. Since taking office in 2014, the Juncker Commission has withdrawn around 100 legislative proposals and launched far fewer initiatives than in the five years before; in addition, all existing legislation has been subjected to a thorough review.

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(illustrative video –
available in EN, DE, FR, IT,
PL, ES)

Policy

ITALY

Policy

Europe imposes masturbation course for 4-year-old kids

FALSE The origin of this fake news starts from the publication of "Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe", a framework for policy makers, educational and authorities and specialists

This document has been developed as a response to the need for sexuality education standards in the European countries to face the challenges regarding sexual health and sexuality.

No masturbation courses, but just sexual education for prevention from the World Health Organization in Europe.

[Check reliable source](#)

LITHUANIA

Policy

The EU is spreading propaganda in schools

FALSE Media announced that the EU is spreading propaganda in Lithuanian schools after the declaration was signed, on deepening students' and teachers' knowledge of the European Union in schools. Skeptical teachers were afraid of overburdening students with non-essential knowledge and over-teaching, as they said teaching about the EU was already included in the curriculum.

A study conducted by the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs revealed that both students and teachers lack knowledge about the EU. Not everyone knows how the EU works, about the opportunities for young people, the rights of the EU citizens. Information about the EU does not reach all schools in the same way, there is a gap between schools in different regions. The lack of such knowledge weakens young people's critical thinking and distances them from understanding and participating in the EU processes.

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The European Union is seeking the elimination of Baltic industry

FALSE In news portals and social media were announced that the EU is trying to reduce the industrial potential of Eastern Europe and worse it seeks to eliminate Baltic industry.

The critics in Lithuania say, it is very easy to implement the plans under the green energy program, all that is needed is the elimination of industry, as it is the main consumer of those resources that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The rumours were provoked by the European Green Deal which aims to make the EU's economy sustainable and make the EU climate neutral by 2050.

In fact, The European Commission encourages EU Member States to move towards a circular economy that maintains the value of products, materials and resources for as long as possible and reduces waste (Circular Economy Action Plan, 2020). This transition provides an opportunity to promote sustainable economic growth and reduce the impact on climate change.

[Check reliable source](#)

CULTURE

In the chapter Culture you will find common myths spreading in different EU countries about the EU interfering, undermining and not respecting its Member States' traditions and culture.

Different programs and initiatives prove that in the area of culture the EU seeks to protect cultural heritage of the EU countries while supporting their cultural diversity and uniqueness.

Culture

LITHUANIA

The EU interferes with countries' cultural identity and traditions

FALSE Not fans of the EU blame it for interfering in the cultural identity of other Member States and seeking to unify them by imposing "stupid EU directives which force the renunciation of national identity". The European Union's concern for the cultural diversity of its countries is demonstrated by the many initiatives and support programs. EU's Creative Europe program is one of the main instruments for supporting culture, as well as small businesses in the creative sector. An excellent example is an initiative launched since 1985 to designate a Capital of Culture in an ever-changing country, to highlight the diversity of European cultures, promoting tourism and improving the image of cities.

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CYPRUS

Culture

"EU does not respect the EU nations and their traditions"

FALSE Christos Christou, the president of the Neo-Nazi political party "ELAM" (National People's Movement), which according to its founders, it is a branch of the Greek Neo-Nazi Political Party Golden Dawn, expressed the opinion that EU does not respect the EU nations and their traditions. This statement was expressed on the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation TV station, during an interview he gave on the road to the European Elections of 2019.

This is a very popular opinion among far-right and Neo-Nazi groups within the EU. Being ultra-nationalists, they believe that the EU is a conspiracy for abolishing the power of the separate nations to define their own policies and destiny. Though, the EU was founded exactly on the mutual respect between co-operating nations which preserve their national power and cultural diversity. By the way, all main EU decisions are translated in all EU languages.

[Check reliable source](#)

"Europe tends to become an Islamic khalifate"

FALSE Once again, the Neo-Nazi party ELAM spreads Europhobia while doubting -without justifying- the constitutional, real and actual goals of the EU. In their announcement they mention that: "The vision of ELAM is a powerful Europe of the Nation, of the People and of Homelands, a Europe which will not resemble to an Islamic khalifate but will honour our Christian values.

This is one among the most obvious arbitrary statements of Europhobia which is unfortunately widely shared by a lot of prominent far-right movements in Europe. From Marie Lepen's "Front National" to Matteo Salvini's "Lega Nord". Europe is founded on the co-operation of nations towards peace and prosperity. Namely, the 1951 founding treaty of the EEC, the ancestor of the EU set as a goal for the States of Europe (pay attention to the phrase "States of Europe") to work together to build a common future as this alone will enable them to control their destiny. Additionally, EU undertakes serious measures against Islamism radicalization and terrorism.

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“EU negotiates Turkey’s accession while undermining Cyprus’ culture and traditions”

FALSE The author of this article, among other arguments, mentions that: “ It is not acceptable for the EU to negotiate over accession with an occupying power and it is not acceptable for the EU to not protect Cyprus’ sovereignty [...]. We want an EU which will respect and will not undermine our religious values in the name of subculture and multiculturalism.”

In this article which is hosted by a generally diversity-tolerant and democratic popular website, the author connects the negotiations of the EU with Turkey with the protection of Cypriot core “values” as he says. He equates an on-going process like the negotiations with a candidate country to the maintenance of Cypriot identity in the EU and the world. The tool which helps this equalization is of course once again the Turkish military presence and occupation of almost half of the island. In this symbolic example we can clearly see how some people who are given the floor to publicly express their opinions, tend to simplify and mix irrelevant issues (politics vs personal belief and faith). On one hand, EU tolerates and supports cultural diversity. On the other hand, the EU has explicitly engaged herself to not accept the northern part of Cyprus in the EU until a solution is found.

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‘Cypriots should not trust that much the EU acquis and the European culture’

N/A Cyprus Church has a very long tradition in intervening in the public political sphere. The non-separation from the state makes that easier for the clerical hierarchy to express, from time to time, extreme opinions on human rights, the EU and the peaceful co-existence with Turkish Cypriots and Muslims in general. In this interview, the Metropolitan Leader of Morphou encourages Cypriots to abandon their trust to the EU acquis and European culture since the EU “has mocked” Cypriots, as he mentions. As an example, he puts on the table Brexit trying to convince Cypriots that this was a wise choice. The truth is that Cypriots are generally tolerant towards the EU ideals, according to the last Eurobarometer. On the other hand, Brexit is an unprecedented situation which is most likely to damage UK’s social cohesion and prosperity, rather than boosting it. At least, Brexit puts UK in on a political situation which resembles to moving sand. While all EU analysis and institutions, ideologically covering all the space from left to right, express their worst fears about this decision, a priest with public power tries to doubt this estimation.

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FINANCES

Here you will find various myths surrounding finances in the EU countries. It contains popular myths as euro currency being dysfunctional and blame for the rising prices, EU officials being over-paid or EU being too expensive. When checking the facts we can see that actually prices are rising due to growing economies, euro brought more advantages like price stability, low interest rates, increased opportunities for investments or that EU budget is just 2% of the combined national budgets of all 28 EU countries.

Finances

AUSTRIA

No more EU! There is more benefit, if we leave

FALSE This myth is about being better off without the EU, because there are not many benefits. This tweet shows a complaint about Austria is only paying without getting anything in return. Also it says that Austria could have been as rich as Swiss, if Austria had not joined the EU. The EU has a close relationship with Swiss and Norway. Though they can only agree to any legal norm, but not take part in decision-making. If Swiss wants to trade with the EU, Swiss has to adapt their directives to the EU rules. Furthermore, the financial gap between Austria and Swiss has been shrinking during the last few years. Austria. Another benefit is that Austria is stronger with the EU on the worldwide market. For instance, China offers lower prices for the steel production than Austria, the EU can elevate an punitive tariff duty to help Austria.

[Check reliable source](#)

The EU is far too expensive

FALSE This year the EU has a total budget of 148 billion euros. That is a lot of money, but it is only a tiny fraction (2%) of the combined national budgets of all 28 EU countries.

[Check reliable source](#)

Due to the Euro many things have become more expensive

FALSE Since the EU introduced the currency Euro, many Austrian thinks that the Euro makes a living more expensive and less affordable than before with the old currency Schilling. This statement is wrong though.

Due to the European Single Market, prices are lower and there is a bigger range of goods and variety. Also flights, telephony and electronic devices are much cheaper than before. Furthermore, the European Single Market is increasing wealth and conduct to develop a sustainable economy. The European market is also obligated to guarantee a high level of protection in the sectors health, security, environment and consumerism. The Euro was also an important protective shield during the financial crises. Since the introduction of the Euro the inflation rate has been lower by 2% in average than the Schilling, to name a few of the benefits.

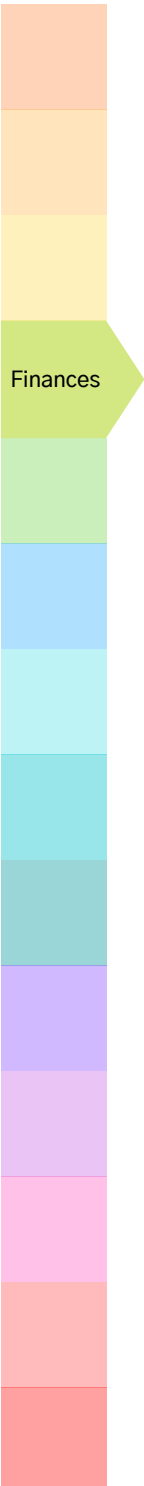
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The EU functionaries live it up at EU citizens' expenses

FALSE This tweet is about EU functionaries and institutions in Brussels live in the lap of luxury at the costs of EU citizens. The EU has a bad image due to its bureaucracy. Though, the figures prove the contrary. According to the state in 2017 about 50.000 people were employed in European institutions, of which 32.000 worked for the EU commission. 50.000 is not quite high in consideration of administrate about 510 million citizens.

The number of citizens divided for each EU functionary means about 10.000 inhabitants, who has to be administrated by only one EU functionary. Although, there are demands of minimizing the numbers of functionaries, more tasks have to be done due to the growth of the EU. Furthermore, only 6 % of the EU budget is used to pay the administrative body and 94 % are for the citizens, for example for sponsorships.

[Check reliable source](#)



CYPRUS

"Cyprus became the test animal of the Eurozone and was not treated like other EU countries"

PARTLY TRUE Upon the aforementioned 2013 "haircut" (cut of people's money by 10% for accounts over 100.000€), the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nikos Anastasiadis supported that Cyprus became the test animal of the Eurozone while his country was not treated in the same way other countries were.

The reality is that Cyprus suffered an unprecedented economical measure which influenced the country's progress and life for more than 3-4 years. The measures' impact is still visible in parts of the economy especially after the unexpected blast of the COVID-19 lockdown. Though lots of other countries also were forced to accept harsh economic measures by the troika back then.

Greece, Portugal, Spain and Ireland also signed sequential memorandums with the troika which heavily damaged the living standards of their people. Some of these countries, like Greece, have not yet healed from the hit. Indeed, the haircut were not put in force in other countries, but measures of equal weight were. So, the President's statement is not accurate.

[Check reliable source](#)

Finances

FRANCE

We all pay a lot of money to keep and maintain EU officials and to sustain the functioning of EU institutions

FALSE The EU Commission counts approximately 33.000 officials and agents who ensure the everyday functioning of an institution which manages policies and services for the whole population of the Union (approximately half a billion citizens). This means that the cost per citizen to sustain the functioning of the Commission is less than 0.03 euros per day.

[Check reliable source](#)

Remaining in the EU is too expensive

FALSE While it is true that countries like Germany and France significantly contribute to the EU budget, it is first of all important to keep in mind that each country contributes to the European budget according to its national wealth. A simplistic calculation, however, cannot reflect the benefits of the membership to the EU: the European budget, in fact, finances projects that no Member state could carry out alone, for example "Galileo" and the "Green deal Europe" among many others.

But, above all, the EU budget promotes economic and social integration and the functioning of the single market, which gives to each Member state a market of more than 500 million consumers, which generates 3.9 million jobs in France.

[Check reliable source](#)

Posted workers steal french jobs

FALSE Although the number of posted workers has indeed increased since 2004, they represent less than 2% of the French working population. In 2017, for instance, there were 516,000 posted workers in France, just like there were 405,000 French nationals working in another EU country.

The funding principles upon which posted work is established remain equal pay for equal work and equal pay in the same workplace, and any unfair working is considered and treated as a case of fraud.

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Finances

The EU economic ideology fosters the delocalisation of national production

FALSE The relocation of business processes -or offshoring- represents only a very limited part (4% generally, and less than 3% as it concerns France) of the renovations that have been taking place in the EU for the past 15 years. Nonetheless, knowing that each relocation could have serious social consequences, the EU has set up the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund to support workers (and not companies or institutions) who are facing difficulties due to trade liberalisation.

[Check reliable source](#)

Finances

Everything is more expensive now that we have the Euro, it would be better to have back our national currency

FALSE The Euro has brought significant economic advantages to all countries which now share the single currency: price stability, low interest rates, increased opportunities for investments and, of course, the elimination of exchange costs (or the price at which two currencies, like the french franc and the Italian lira, can be exchanged against each other). At the same time, the euro has simplified the lives of millions of European citizens, cross-border workers and frequent travellers.

The reintroduction of national currencies would mean an immediate increase in inflation or, in other words, an immediate and sustained increase of the general price level of goods and services. Before the euro, inflation in France reached very high levels, up to more than 10% in the 1980s. Since the euro, price increases have almost never exceeded 2% per year.

[Check reliable source](#)

The EU helps balkan non-european member states

PARTLY TRUE As part of the EU response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the European Commission is proposing a €1,85 trillion Recovery plan for European Member States, to kick-start the European recovery, protect lives, livelihoods and jobs.

In response to the crisis in the Western Balkans, the European Commission has announced up to €38 million in immediate support mostly implemented through United Nations agencies to tackle the health emergency, as well as the reallocation of €374 million to help the socio-economic recovery of the region. The EU will assist Albania, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo. These are either candidate countries or potential candidates that the European Commission supports in their preparation for EU accession.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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Finances

The Franco-German Recovery Fund is a trap

FALSE The European economic recovery plan is a Franco-German bilateral proposal to respond to the crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal has been re-evaluated by the European Commission and on the 27th of May presented to the European Parliament and the European Council. In order to enter into force it has to be unanimously approved by all 27 EU member states. In the new recovery plan the Commission is proposing a €750 billion recovery instrument called Generation EU and a reinforced long-term budget of the EU of €1100 billion. The money from Next Generation EU will be invested across three pillars, through €500 billion in grants and €250 billion in loans to Member States. The financing will be made possible by the Own Resources Decision, which will allow the Commission to exceptionally borrow up to €750 billion on behalf of the Union and re-direct the funds in pursuit of EU priorities to the specific and new financing needs. The funds will need to be repaid not before 2028 and not after 2058.

Also to facilitate the repayment and reduce the pressure on national budgets the Commission will propose additional new own resources.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

[Check reliable source 2](#)

GERMANY

Only Russia, Cuba and China helped Italy, EU didn't

FALSE Italy and Spain got hit the hardest with COVID-19. Italy has one of the oldest populations in the world, but they got no help from their rich neighbours, EU countries like Germany and the Netherlands, but from Russia, Cuba and China.

The outbreak has posed a serious challenge to leading European countries. Amid strong criticism of coronavirus response, some pro-Kremlin media outlets and pro-Russian actors took advantage of the situation and pursued their own political purposes. They promoted a narrative that while the European Union abandoned Italy, only Russia, China and other authoritarian countries gave the country a helping hand.

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[Check reliable source 4](#)

Eurozone enables larger states to exploit smaller ones

FALSE Older EU member states and eurozone members with large economies exploit smaller states and newer EU and eurozone members such as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia.

Recent economic statistics on the GDP growth of the newer eurozone members Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia show that their GDP is mostly larger than in the "older" member states. The growth is also confirmed by the World Bank.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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[Check reliable source 3](#)

Multinationals finance European political parties

TRUE Uber, Bayer and Disney, among others, finance the major European political parties with generous donations.

The omnipresence of lobbies within the European institutions is widely known. Less known is that big business and industry finance European parties directly.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

[Check reliable source 2](#)

The Germans pay for the rest of Europe

PARTLY TRUE Germany is the paymaster and must take over the debts of Greece and other EU states.

Looking at the absolute figures, no Member State transfers as much money to Brussels as Germany. In the 2014 financial year, it was around EUR 26 billion, or around one fifth of the total EU budget. Of this, around EUR 12 billion flowed back to Germany - as aid for structurally weak regions, for agriculture and for numerous training and employment programmes.

In terms of costs per inhabitant, Germany is only in fourth place among the net contributors - behind the Netherlands, Sweden and Great Britain.

It is also true that no other European economy benefits as much from the EU single market as the German economy. Almost two-thirds of German exports go to EU countries, and exports to the new member states in Central and Eastern Europe have developed much faster than exports to the rest of the world. Germany pays a lot of money into the EU, but benefits even more from it.

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Germany would be in a better position with the D-Mark

FALSE There are still many Germans who mourn the good old D-Mark. In their nostalgia they consider the euro a failure that costs Germany money. The opposite is true: the euro is a stable and secure currency, now the second most important currency in the world. In a rapidly changing international environment, Europe can only maintain its economic strength and social security network with a strong internal market and a globally important currency. The Euro promotes trade and employment and protects against currency fluctuations.

Consumers and companies benefit from the euro because they no longer have to pay exchange fees when travelling abroad in Europe.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

[Check reliable source 2](#)

ITALY

The euro is the most dysfunctional currency ever created

FALSE Even if there are different feedback on the euro and its benefits, the tweet posts a news title taking a strong position against the euro.

The euro was created because a single currency offers many advantages and benefits over the previous situation where each Member State had its own currency. Not only are fluctuation risks and exchange costs eliminated and the single market strengthened, but the euro also means closer co-operation among Member States for a stable currency and economy to the benefit of us all.

The benefits of the euro are diverse and are felt on different scales, from individuals and businesses to whole economies. They include:

- More choice and stable prices for consumers and citizens
- Greater security and more opportunities for businesses and markets
- Improved economic stability and growth
- More integrated financial markets
- A stronger presence for the EU in the global economy
- A tangible sign of a European identity

[Check reliable source](#)

Finances

LITHUANIA

Finances

The euro is to blame for rising prices

FALSE Lithuanian residents watching the constantly rising prices of food, services, and housing are pointing the finger at the euro and say that prices have risen "terribly" since the introduction of the euro. A great example is the cauliflower scandal that spread widely on social networks and the Internet, during which people started sharing photos of more expensive goods after the introduction of the euro.

Economic experts say that the euro itself is not to blame for the jump in prices, which are rising as the economy continues to grow. Goods and services are also becoming more expensive as Lithuanian prices will have to catch up with the EU average. After the introduction of the euro, there are more pros than cons, the euro has led to faster economic and income growth, cheaper government borrowing, cheaper interbank transfers, and payments.

And while basic necessities have risen in price, experts note that this has been consistent and slower compared to wage growth.

[Check reliable source](#)

EU officials are overpaid

PARTLY TRUE Rumours that EU officials are overpaid has been going on for a long time. It was especially encouraged by the Telegraph newspaper, which stated that 10,000 European Union officials are better paid than former UK Prime Minister David Cameron.

Even though salaries are relatively attractive to the staff coming from new member states, the same cannot be said for many other EU member state employees. The average EU civil servant yearly salary approximately ranges from €78,503 to €91,064.

As it is stated in the Brussels Times, thanks to the 2014 Staff Regulation Reform, the EU institutions will make administrative savings of a total of €4.3 billion in the period 2014-2020 and €1.5 billion per year in the long-term.

[Check reliable source](#)

QUALITY OF LIFE

In the chapter Quality of Life you will find myths which blame EU for worsening our well-being. Here you will read about EU lowering standards for food, EU threatening to sell out Austria's water reserves or letting us eat genetically modified organisms. Fact checking reveals opposite, the EU imposes very high standards when it comes to food safety policy, the EU does not regulate the use of domestic water resources and has established a precise legal framework to ensure that the development of GMOs, takes place under safe conditions.

Quality
of Life

AUSTRIA

Due to wage dumping many Austrians lose their jobs

FALSE This twitter user is complaining about Hungarians, Slovaks and Romanian stealing jobs in Austria by offering lower wages than Austrians. The fact is whether the employee is from Austria or any other EU countries, the wages are payed equally in consideration of the national salary, for example in Austria, it is the collective labour agreement. There is no wage difference between a non-austrian and an Austrian employee as long as the employee is working legally.

[Check reliable source](#)

The EU threatens to sell out Austria's water reserves

FALSE The EU does not regulate the use of domestic water resources. There are regulations only within the framework of the Water Framework Directive, which prescribes environmental goals for the water. Even under the EU Reform Treaty, Austria could veto water supply issues.

A protocol on services of general interest also emphasizes the "wide discretion of national, regional and local authorities on the issue". The fact is that the EU Commission carried out a survey a few years ago, which also discussed the question of a possible liberalization of the water market in the EU.

[Check reliable source](#)

GERMANY

Lazy Greeks, diligent Germans

FALSE While the Greeks are lazy bones, the Germans are industrious ants. They get up early, are always punctual and work harder than everyone else - that's the common cliché. How silly that the numbers speak a completely different language. A look at the working hours in Europe shows that the exact opposite is actually the case.

According to OECD data, an average of 1371 hours were worked in Germany in 2014. In Greece, by contrast, the average annual working time was 2042 hours. Incidentally, the hardworking Germans have the shortest annual working hours of all OECD countries.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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(illustrative video –
available in DE, EN, FR, IT,
PL, ES)

Quality
of Life

FRANCE

The EU lets us eat genetically modified organisms (GMOs)

FALSE The EU has established a precise legal framework to ensure that the development of biotechnology, and especially of GMOs, take place under safe conditions.

This framework aims at protecting both human and animal health as well as the environment by introducing a safety assessment which follows the highest possible standards before any GMO is placed on the market. If such standards are met, clear labelling and the traceability of GMOs is ensured in order to enable consumers as well as professionals (e.g. farmers, and food feed chain operators) to make an informed choice.

Details on the legal framework:
[Check resource](#)

Further information:
[Check resource](#)

The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) will cause a massive import wave of Canadian meat and ruin French farmers.

FALSE Although the initial concern caused by the possible impact of Canadian meat imports on French agriculture was somehow understandable before the provisional application of the CETA, they are now disproved by the facts. Canada's meat imports, in fact, have decreased in 2018 and represent less than one thousandth of French meat imports. French farmers, on the contrary, are now taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the CETA for quality European products.

[Check reliable source](#)

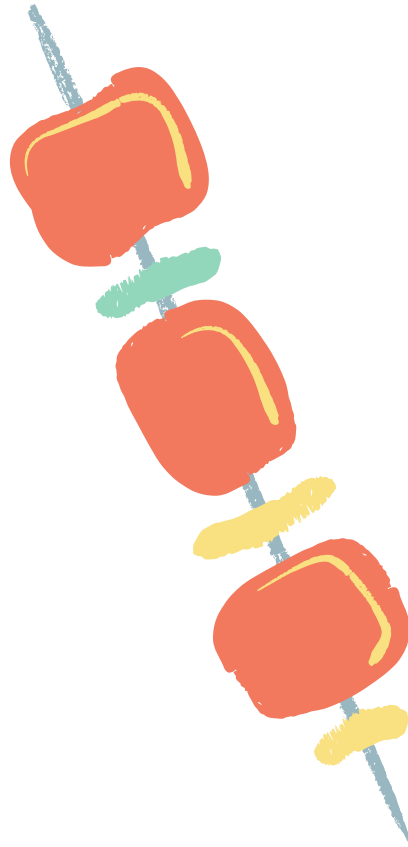
Quality
of Life

The EU has lowered the standards and makes us eat bad quality food

FALSE The EU imposes very high standards when it comes to food safety policy, animal health, hygiene and welfare. These standards include clear and precise labelling, compulsory controls at each stage of the production chain and traceability. Labelling must cover all essential information on the nutritional and energy value of products and on possible allergens, as well as indications on the manufacturer, seller, importer and storage conditions.

Moreover, if a product passes the quality check of the European Food Safety Authority, the marketing authorisation is then submitted to the Member states, which are responsible for another stage of compliance checking of that product before placing it on their national markets.

[Check reliable source](#)



Quality
of Life

DEMOCRACY

In the chapter Democracy you will find such popular myths as EU not being a democratic union or even the dictatorship of Brussels. You will read such rumours as all the decisions are taken in Brussels which often do not reflect wishes of the ordinary people, and that the Member States must implement them unconditionally. In fact, all the politicians elected in each country are involved in decision-making. All the member states have the right to vote and the members of the European Parliament are elected by direct public ballot.

AUSTRIA

Democracy

The EU is not a democracy

FALSE This person is describing the EU as a train which is rolling over everything. Brussel is ruling on their own without including other EU members. There are many more criticism about the EU not being democratic, although the EU is elected by the citizens of EU member countries which is every 5 years. The EU also cannot act until every member states has explicitly contractually given their okay. Furthermore, the EU have to carefully follow determined procedures to set new rules where every ambassador of an EU member state has to co-decide. This means the EU cannot roll over everything to push their rules.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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CYPRUS

"The national governments are just executors of Brussels' orders"

PARTLY TRUE

In the same interview, Christou expressed the opinion that Cyprus' government is nothing more than the executor of decidesfuncios' directives and orders. He also mentioned that the Cypriot parliament has also no power anymore.

This is an opinion that is shared both by far-right and far-left parties and groups within the EU. In normal circumstances (not during crisis periods) the Member States are responsible to achieve the goals that they have commonly agreed in the EU bodies by choosing their preferred "blend" of internal policies. So "Brussels" is not always a group of technocrats deciding without explaining their decisions. It can also be the Member States who come together, discuss and take mutually respected decisions

[Check reliable source](#)

"The traitors of Cyprus betray the country in the EU"

FALSE

The President of the openly Eurosceptic "Allilegii Movement", Ms Theocarous, accused the MEPs of AKEL party (the 2nd political part of Cyprus, former Communist Party of Cyprus until 1946) for "snitching" Cyprus to the EU. The reason was the interventions of AKEL's MEPs regarding the Cypriot Affair who denounced both the Turkish military occupation but also the faults and inefficacies of the management of the situation demonstrated by the Republic of Cyprus.

The press release of the party's President underestimates the fact that the MEPs are elected democratically to represent their political party and country in the EU parliament with the right to responsibly express their views. This type of criticism implies that EU is like the "Big Brother" of EU Member States where whoever is not satisfied with the national policies, can go there and "snitch". But the EU Parliament's function and background is completely the opposite. It's not a court but a body of discussions and decisions.

[Check reliable source](#)

Democracy

The Archbishop of the Church of Cyprus feels satisfied by the entering of ELAM in the House of Representatives (Cypriot Parliament)

FALSE The exact verbatim statement of the Archbishop Chrysostomos II was the following: «I didn't expect them to enter the Parliament but I can say that I am satisfied. There must be different voices heard. Sometimes, we need the extreme ones so that the others are more careful»

Given all the afore mentioned political statements of ELAM, the Archbishop who as an immense power in Cyprus is impossible that he did not understand the real impact of his statement. He clearly supported the victory of an extreme Europhobic and racist party which opposes every single liberal foundation on which EU has been built. Plus, the participation of Neo-Nazis who express the most severe denouncement of EU foundations offers no support to the further establishment of democracy. On the contrary it establishes fear which is the main component of dictatorships which destroyed peace in Europe, only 2 decades after the WWI. It is very interesting to have a look at the ancestor of the UN, the League of Nations' history and how the authoritarian regimes and ideas of the inter-war period (period between WWI and WWII) led to the League's collapse.

[Check reliable source](#)

Democracy

FRANCE

The EU is anti-democratic

FALSE The EU is often accused of not being democratic. This criticism is referred to the EU Commission as the only institution which is made by commissioners which are not elected but appointed. However, its democratic legitimacy is guaranteed by the process of appointment itself and by a permanent democratic control by the European Parliament.

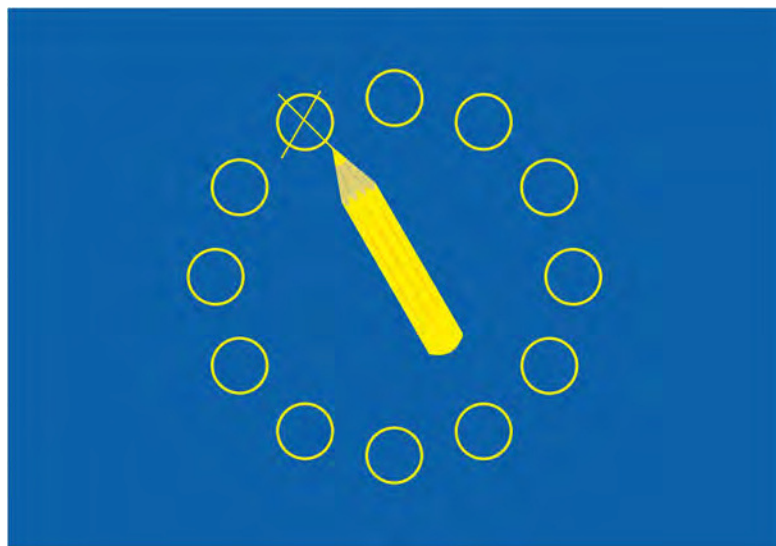
After the European elections, one of the first tasks of the new Parliament is to elect a new President of the European Commission. Member states, in the Council, nominate a candidate for the post, but in doing so they must take into account the results of the election.

The candidate then sets out his/her political agenda to the European Parliament which then votes on his/her appointment as head of the European Commission by an absolute majority (the half of the MEPs + 1). As it has happened in the past, the EU Parliament has the power to reject the European Council's proposal.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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Democracy



GERMANY

The EU is a NAZI brainchild

FALSE The EU is a nazi brainchild: it is a bureaucratic, centralised, dictatorial European federal super state that Hitler planned to realize after the Second World War.

The European Union was set up with the aim of ending the frequent and bloody wars between neighbours, which culminated in the Second World War. Today, it consists of 27 independent and sovereign member countries.

[Check reliable source](#)

Democracy

Jean-Claude Juncker decides who gets the posts in the EU system

FALSE On 1 May 2019, the Compact-Online website published an article under the headline, "Jean-Claude Juncker: "Whatever happens in the EU election, I decide who gets the posts." The text contains the claim that "However many seats the right-wing populists win, there is no way they will be given any senior posts within the EU apparatus", because Juncker knows how to prevent it. The article has been shared more than 3,3000 times on Facebook.

Juncker did indeed make both statements in his Rzeczpospolita interview – but not in this order. The statements were presented as though they had been made one after the other, with the second one building on the first. This is not the case, however. The article takes two sentences from an interview with Juncker, but reverses their order and alleges that he made comments that he did not in fact make.

[Check reliable source](#)

Freedom of expression in danger

FALSE An AFD member, Martin Sichert, of the Bundestag [German parliament] has claimed that, according to the European Court, “the protection of Islam” is “more important than freedom of expression in Europe”. It included the claim that freedom of expression was “in grave danger” and that the European Court of Human Rights had ruled in an appeal case that “the suspension of freedom of expression is necessary in a democratic society”. The contrary is the case – the trial court had reached its verdict after careful consideration and that it had taken account of Article 10, paragraph 2, of the European Convention on Human Rights. Nor is freedom of expression “in danger”, as claimed by Sichert – according to the Court judgment it simply reaches its limit at the point where it is not dealing with opinion but with malice or distortion of facts.

[Check reliable source](#)

Democracy



ITALY

EU wants to collapse government in Italy

FALSE The guy in the video is a troll, who is dedicated to spreading false news that many people make spin without making sure if these characters are real and reliable.

There is no Davide Guetti of the European Commission, but above all no conspiracy by the European Central Bank and the European Union to bring down the government in Italy.

This kind of videos are the best example that fake news are everywhere.

[Check reliable source](#)

It's possible to watch several videos of the same male, interpreting different characters and spreading fake messages [here](#).

Democracy

LITHUANIA

The EU is not a democratic union

FALSE Rumours have been spreading that the European Union is undemocratic, that the decisions are taken in Brussels often do not reflect the views and wishes of ordinary people, and that the Member States must implement them unconditionally. In fact, legislation proposed by the Commission is considered by the directly elected European Parliament and the elected governments in the EU Council, so the politicians elected in each country are involved in decision-making.

In promoting public involvement, the EU takes into account the petitions of general or personal interest that any citizen can submit. Moreover, the EU organizes a public debates involving members of the European Commission and decision-makers. During these events, everyone can ask and comment on issues of common interest to the European Union and its policies, there are not only lively debates but also democratic votings on new policies etc.

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After joining the EU, Lithuania lost the right to make free decisions

FALSE One of the most popular myths is about the dictatorship of Brussels or the European Commission, excessive interference in the policies of the Member States, and decisions taken to their detriment, which must be carried out unconditionally. It is said that there is no equality in the EU, and economically stronger and larger countries negotiate more favorable conditions than smaller ones like Lithuania. The forced reception of refugees or the sale of land to foreigners has become particularly sensitive topics. In Lithuania, it is said that the EU restricts the country's freedom to have its own opinions and attitudes.

In reality, every decision taken in Brussels is the result of negotiations between the EU Member States and between the Member States and the EU institutions. Many believe that the rules being developed in Brussels automatically come into force in all EU countries, in fact each country chooses the most appropriate measures to implement them. It is also noticeable that, in the case of unpopular decisions, politicians blame the EU and attribute popular ones to themselves.

[Check reliable source](#)

The EU becomes new USSR

FALSE Increasingly, the EU is compared to the Soviet Union. Critics of the EU call it an empire that forcibly imposes values, tolerates what is unacceptable, spreads propaganda, and seeks to create a new type of people called "Europeans". The UK's foreign secretary, Mr. Hunt, has officially said the EU is seeking to punish them for withdrawing and has compared it to the Soviet Union's attempts to prevent member states from separation.

In fact, the EU is not the new USSR. First of all, unlike the Soviet Union, the European Union does not restrict freedom of movement, values, and religion. EU citizens are free to travel the world, write petitions, and influence EU decisions. Meanwhile, the Soviet occupation manifested itself in the demolition of the independent state of Lithuania - Lithuanian holidays, Lithuanian symbols, political parties, and organizations other than the communists were banned, occurred mass deportations to Siberia and imprisonments without trials, etc. In any case, these two unions are far from each other and couldn't be compared.

[Check reliable source](#)

Democracy

BREXIT

Brexit became not just the hottest news in social media and media overall, but as well encouraged wave of dissatisfaction of the EU and talks that it is the end of European Union. In this chapter you will be introduced to such myths as UK will be better without the EU, Thatcher's fearful "prophecy" on European open borders as an example to follow or British Euro Coins are worthless after Brexit. To find out whether it is true or not check the myths below.

LITHUANIA

UK will be better without the EU

FALSE There are many myths surrounding Brexit - that there are economic benefits of leaving the EU, leaving the EU will allow parliament to reassert sovereignty and the most popular EU will collapse after Brexit.

Among supporters of Brexit there is much talk about "taking back control". In fact, most UK laws are set by the British Parliament and not the EU, what's more, the UK negotiated many EU laws and regulations. As for economic growth, according to most economists, EU membership has a strong positive effect on trade, and, as a result, the UK's trade would be worse off if it left the EU. A 2018 analysis by Stanford University and Nottingham University economists estimated that uncertainty around Brexit reduced investment by businesses by approximately 6 percentage points and caused an employment reduction by 1.5 percentage points.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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Brexit

CYPRUS

Thatcher's fearful "prophecy" on European open borders as an example to follow

PARTLY TRUE

In this article, the author recalls a "prophecy" -as he names it- by Margaret Thatcher, back in 1988, during the notorious «Bruges Speech». Thatcher had underlined that "Europe will be more powerful only if France if France, Spain is Spain and Britain is Britain. Each one with his own customs, traditions and identity. Any attempt to merge all these countries in a specific type of European identity will be simply crazy.". The authors hails this idea and finds it very accurate. Though, he does not explain the reasons and the philosophical background of Thatcher's statement. Thatcher who was keener on the idea of maintaining the glorious imperial past of the UK and switch from the EU to USA, was always hostile towards the common market shared between the Europeans.

And this has an explanation. Towards the end of 80s, the majority of EU governments were supporting a model of social justice. Mitterrand in France, Gonzalez in Spain, Palme in Sweden, Papandreou in Greece were against the extreme neo-liberalism (absolute freedom of markets) expressed by Margaret Thatcher and her USA co-walker President Ronald Reagan.

As a conclusion the statement of Thatcher should be examined in the time context of that era and not retroactively, as the author of the article attempts.

[Check reliable source](#)

Brexit

“EU ridicules herself by inviting the British to take part in the 2019 European Elections while they are leaving the EU.”

PARTLY TRUE

The author of the article in the English-speaking journal notes: «Only unelected apparatchiks in Brussels could come up with the oxymoronic justification that the democratic life of the EU required Britain to elect members of parliament as she waits to depart after her people voted to leave the EU. [...] The EU's [...] insistence that the British take part in a phoney election next Thursday just as Britain is about to leave is intellectually dishonest in the extreme.»

What the author neglects is that it was not the EU who decided Brexit but it was the British people through the notorious referendum. As a result, until the UK was officially out, something which has happened some months after the 2019 European Elections (the negotiations for the deal of the exit were still on at the time), the EU is obliged to give the right to British citizens who remained EU citizens until 1/2/2020 to vote their representatives. After all, it'd be them who would monitor the Brexit procedures.

[Check reliable source](#)

Brexit

AUSTRIA

British Euro Coins are worthless after Brexit

FALSE Due to the Brexit, there were many rumours and conspiracy theories. One of these theories is that the Euro Coins with the British coinage are worthless after Brexit happened. This User for example is blaming the EU for not preparing the Brexit good enough. However, the British Euro Coins are not worthless, because Great Britain did not have their own coinage in the first place and their currency is "pound".

[Check reliable source](#)

Brexit



HEALTH CARE

The Health care chapter consists of myths from disappointment in healthcare system and decisions of the EU, to COVID-19 crisis and insufficient EU efforts to solve it. Here you will find such stories as EU banning different kind of food products, using the Corona-Situation to push compulsory vaccination and other misleading information.

In fact, EU does not interfere in national legislation and decisions on the health sphere, at the same time it seeks to protect and improve the health of EU citizens. EU health policy serves to complement national policies, and to ensure health protection in all EU policies.

AUSTRIA

The EU prohibits crispy fries

FALSE The myth about the EU prohibiting crispy fries and bread has been spread, because the EU wanted to reduce the intake of the carcinogenic substance acrylamide. This substance is a result of frying potato and grain based products like fries, bread or a schnitzel for too long. In conclusion the EU never wanted to prohibit crispy fries. The EU simply wanted to reduce the intake of acrylamide, which causes a higher risk of getting cancer. Although it is not exactly given how much of the substance is acceptable, the EU constrains the amount of acrylamide to keep it as low as possible. Therefore, the EU recommends not to fry food for too long.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

[Check reliable source 2](#)

The EU wants to ban the salt sticks

FALSE The EU Commission never intended to regulate the salt content in bread and luggage as such by law. There is only one suggestion for nutritional profiles. According to this, manufacturers would have to comply with certain maximum levels of salt, sugar and fat content if they want to advertise their products as healthy.

After public criticism, Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso announced that the labeling requirement for salt in bread should be completely abolished.

[Check reliable source](#)

Health
Care

The EU uses the Corona-Situation to push compulsory vaccination

FALSE During the CoVid-19 pandemic many disinformation has been spread through the world. One of these information is about compulsory vaccination in the EU. Many people are against vaccination due to mistrust and conspiracy theories. This tweet is about the EU wanting to launch a compulsory vaccination as soon as possible, when scientists find a cure for the Corona Virus. Though, this information is not true. The EU is actively supporting vaccination, which can be misunderstood with the wants a mass compulsory vaccination.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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Health
Care

CYPRUS

The EU is absent from the fight against COVID-19 and the Cypriot Affair

PARTLY TRUE

"Allilegii Movement" in this press release generalises and denounces the EU for absence from the Cypriot front against COVID-19 and in parallel the Cyprus Affair. This is a subtle Eurosceptic position for the following reason: indeed, the EU was proven ineffective regarding the co-operation between EU Member States against the virus.

Each country, more or less, applied separate protocols, sometimes even one against the other. But this phenomenon has nothing to do with the Cyprus Affair which is a complex national problem, mainly maintained by the occupation of the northern part of the island by the Turkish Army. Linking two irrelevant issues can create confusions and not tackling existing problems within the EU which can and must be solved. By the way, specifically regarding the Cyprus Affair, it was shown above that the EU has undertaken an active role in the bi-communal discussions.

[Check reliable source](#)

Health
Care

ITALY

EU has banned public spending on social welfare for years, so there are no resources in hospitals for Covid-19

FALSE This tweet wants to link the issues of COVID and its effects on the health sector with the EU budget, showing the mistakes coming from the EU supporters.

Each EU year's budget sets out the amounts agreed in advance according to a plan known as the multiannual financial framework. This enables the EU to plan its funding programmes effectively for several years in advance. The current framework runs from 2021-2027.

This Financial Framework has a strong health dimension: health policies are funded both through dedicated funding, as well as across other key financial instruments.

Financing for health-related activities is available through the social fund as well as through research, digital market, regional and cohesion funds, and other support mechanisms increasing the impact of health policies.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

[Check reliable source 2](#)

Health
Care

"EU red tape" is denying cancer patients access to new treatments

FALSE A number of media articles in UK have claimed that "EU red tape" is denying cancer patients access to new treatments.

This is not the case, this is part of the strategies of brexitters to convince the population on their position.

Various EU initiatives, backed by billions of euros from the EU budget, encourage Europe's top scientists, businesses large and small and leading medical professionals to get new drugs to patients as rapidly and safely as possible.

And Europe-wide authorisation by the European Medicines Agency means more people get access to more medicines more quickly than they could if each country authorised them separately.

[Check reliable source](#)

Safety alert as EU blocks vital checks on doctors' qualifications: Concern over cards for medics due to come into force in 2018

FALSE An article in the Daily Mail suggested that the EU is or ever will be "blocking vital checks on doctors' qualifications" through the European Professional Card (EPC) system or in any other way.

But this information is not exact. Doctors are not covered by the EPC and no decision has been taken on whether or when the system might be extended to them – though doctors and dentists are covered by a rapid alert system whereby Member States share information on individuals subject to disciplinary action.

The National Health System, as any employer, could check the aptitude, performance or language ability of any doctor, dentist, nurse or other medical professional who applies for a position or who is already practising, whether British, EU or non-EU.

This was the case even before the recent revision of the European Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications.

Furthermore, if the UK authorities or an employer had serious concerns about the performance of any medical professional, they could of course prevent or suspend that person from practising, while matters are clarified.

This rule applies in all the Member States. Now, with the current situation after Brexit, UK is not anymore on this regulation, but this news was ones again a fake news to increase euroscepticism

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Health
Care

LITHUANIA

Coronavirus has killed the European dream

FALSE When the Covid-19 pandemic started, news on media stated that Coronavirus has killed the European dream. People have been talking that the European Union is not united enough, countries went into "lockdown" and closed its borders and this is the end of the EU on the whole.

In fact, the EU Commission does not interfere in national legislation and decisions on the health sphere so it is left for every member state to decide how to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic in their own country. On the other hand, border controls are temporary measures that countries took to slow down the spread of the disease. Not only the EU set up a fund for fighting the crisis but it also started a project called 'RescEU' which will manage the distribution of vital medical equipment and send it to the worst affected areas. Solidarity is shown by one country taking patients from another one or keeping borders open for supplies, having a forum to coordinate and share experiences. EU also funds vaccine research, new treatments, and diagnostics.

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Health
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RELIGION

Chapter Religion consists of myths from EU being anti-Christian to EU tolerating pedophile actions.

In reality, EU demonstrates respect to diversity of religions and freedom to choose and profess any religion as well it seeks to protect the rights to freedom of thoughts and conscience. There is a thin line between rights to freedom of opinion versus freedom of religion and it becomes source of such myths.

LITHUANIA

The EU is anti-Christian

FALSE Rumours have been swirling in the public area that the European Union is against Christianity. Lithuanian media published that the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) allowing the use of offensive Christian symbols in creation. The outrage was caused by the advertising of clothes with the personalities of Jesus and Mary and the advertising of the café on social networks with an anti-Christian inscription. According to Christians, such decisions have shown that freedom of expression in the EU has become more important than freedom of religion.

In fact, the ECHR ruling states that the Lithuanian authorities have failed to strike the right balance between the protection of the feelings of believers and the applicant's freedom of expression and that there is no obvious contempt for religious symbols in the advertisement.

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights proclaims the EU's respect for freedom and diversity of religion, as it respects human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the choice and practice of religion. The EU also leaves the Member States free to conduct their own religious affairs. The EU, for its part, has established open and regular dialogues between the governing European structures and the Churches.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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Religion

ITALY

European Court: if you are Christian, you may be discriminated against

PARTLY TRUE

It's possible that a Christian person may be discriminated in some situations.

But neither the European Court, nor even less the European Convention on Human Rights, declares in any of its decrees discrimination against Christians. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a fundamental right which is enshrined not only in the European Convention on Human Rights but also in a wide range of national, international and European texts.

Instead, Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights says:

"1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

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Health
Care

GERMANY

The European flag inspired by Christianity

FALSE On 20 June 2018, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, a French MP from the leftist party "La France insoumise", discovered a European flag in the chamber of the French National Assembly. He exclaimed, "Frankly, must we put up with that? This is the French Republic here, not the Virgin Mary". Since the incident, MPs have made repeated attacks on the symbol of the European Union. On 11 October 2018, Alexis Corbière spoke up against the flag, in the name of "laïcité", the French concept of secularism.

The European flag symbolises both the European Union and, more broadly, the identity and unity of Europe.

It features a circle of 12 gold stars on a blue background. They stand for the ideals of unity, solidarity and harmony among the peoples of Europe.

The number of stars has nothing to do with the number of member countries, though the circle is a symbol of unity.

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Health
Care



AUSTRIA

The EU declares having sex with children sacred

FALSE This rumour about the EU tolerating paedophile actions had been spread when in 2009, a Viennese claimed during her seminar “fundamentals of Islam” that the prophet Mohammed was a paedophile due to his marriage with a 6-year-old. She also stated that he kind of had a think for children. In 2011 she got convicted of vilifying religious doctrine and had to pay a fine of 480 euro and the replacement of process costs.

A request for renewal of the criminal proceedings was dismissed by the supreme court. Therefore, she took her case to the European court of human rights (aka EGMR) due to a violation of freedom of opinion. The EGMR decided the judgement as justified, because the Austrian courts had weighed her right to freedom of opinion against the right of others to protect their religious feelings to maintaining religious peace in Austria. The Austrian courts determined that she missed the point of giving historical information in a neutral way.

[Check reliable source](#)

Health
Care

FUNCTIONING OF THE EU

In this chapter you can find stories how Germany exploits the EU for its own interests, how most of the French laws are dictated by the EU, how "Brussels decides everything alone" or Shengen is a paradise for criminals and many more.

Myths about functioning of the EU arises from lack of knowledge how the European Union works. In short, it consists of seven major institutions and dozens of smaller bodies that make law, coordinate foreign affairs and trade, and manage a common budget. To find out more check the myths below.

AUSTRIA

Is the EU watching? Millions of migratory birds are cruelly killed in Malta

FALSE This article is about the EU tolerating million deaths of migratory birds in Malta by doing nothing. The tabloid newspaper "Kronen Zeitung" wrote in their article that the journey from the migratory birds are very dangerous, because many won't come back. The main reason for the shrinking numbers of migratory birds is the illegal hunt, especially from Italy to Malta and Egypt. In Malta, birds are caught and cooked. The FPÖ-Europe-mandatar Georg Mayer claimed that the EU is standing on the sidelines, even these birds are Europe-wide protected. However, the EU is not deedless watching bird slaughter. Due to the European Courts decided to definitely forbid bird trapping in Malta since 2018. Malta is obligated to take measures against the excessive bird slaughter, otherwise there will be consequences. Although illegal bird hunting still exist, this prohibition is the first step to the right direction.

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Functioning
of the EU

Schengen means freedom to travel for criminals

FALSE An article in the Daily Mail suggested that the EU is or ever will be “blocking vital checks on doctors’ qualifications” through the European Professional Card (EPC) system or in any other way.

But this information is not exact. Doctors are not covered by the EPC and no decision has been taken on whether or when the system might be extended to them – though doctors and dentists are covered by a rapid alert system whereby Member States share information on individuals subject to disciplinary action.

The National Health System, as any employer, could check the aptitude, performance or language ability of any doctor, dentist, nurse or other medical professional who applies for a position or who is already practising, whether British, EU or non-EU.

This was the case even before the recent revision of the European Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications.

Furthermore, if the UK authorities or an employer had serious concerns about the performance of any medical professional, they could of course prevent or suspend that person from practising, while matters are clarified.

This rule applies in all the Member States. Now, with the current situation after Brexit, UK is not anymore on this regulation, but this news was ones again a fake news to increase euroscepticism

[Check reliable source](#)

The EU is just watching foreign policy

FALSE New sanctions against Russia prove that the EU plays a role in the Ukraine crisis - just like in other trouble spots around the world. However, EU countries often find it difficult to speak with one voice in foreign policy.

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Functioning
of the EU

CYPRUS

"The sovereignty of Cyprus is abolished"

FALSE "Kinima Allilegiis" ("Solidarity Movement") political party has developed a range of Eurosceptic positions over the years. On 9.5.2020 they denounced the abolishment, as they said, of the sovereignty of Cyprus (meaning the power of the state to control its territories) because two new firefighting "Canadair" planes- cofounded by the EU- did not land on Larnaca's airport but on the British Sovereign Bases of Cyprus airport, so out of the EU territories. These bases are military grounds which belong to the UK according to the treaties of London-Zurich which declared the independence of Cyprus in 1959-1960. Also, by law, the EU acquis does apply within these territories. The Movement's position is not just inaccurate. It is justifiable. The fact that a Cypriot plane landed in a non-EU airport is not a reason per se for the sovereignty of a State to be cancelled. The Movement supports that the planes landed in the British Bases due to Turkish underground pression to the EU who finally withdrew. But, even if the situation is this, it has nothing to do with sovereignty but with a potential political conflict which is of course to be criticised and denounced but the link between the facts and the conclusion is a bit weak.

[Check reliable source](#)

"EU is a union of independent nations and not a federation"

FALSE 'ELAM, the Cypriot Neo-nazi party, stands firmly in its position that the EU is a union of independent nations and not a federation (Kleovoulou 2014). Moreover, they denounced the Memorandum with the EU on the "haircut", suggested exiting the agreement with the Troika, demanded that the Republic of Cyprus limits the number of work permits given to EU citizens, and opposed Turkish Cypriot participation in all EU fora and elections.

This is a summary with multiple variations of ELAM's main Europhobic approach. The most obvious false point of the above is that ELAM sees EU as they wished it to be and not as it currently is. EU is a semi-federal structure with on-going transformations and shared responsibilities between EU countries. The independence of EU Member States (there is an actual impact of the EU policies on EU Member States policies upon which EU Member States have agreed) is relativised but not their sovereignty (their right to dominantly control their territories). These are among the main stipulations of the Lisbon Treaty which is the current constitutional law of the EU.

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Functioning
of the EU

FRANCE

The EU has no political weight in international relations

PARTLY TRUE The role and responsibility of the EU in international relations or, more precisely, the engagement with external relations and foreign affairs, has been at the centre of continuous discussions and negotiations between Member states for many years. The Common Foreign and Security Policy has been modified and re-adjusted in many occasions until 2009, when the Treaty of Lisbon, in order to ensure greater coordination in EU foreign policy, created a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The High representative is in charge of the European External Action Service (EEAS). Although it is true that the EU has had difficult times in trying to speak with a single voice on several international issues, its role remains very important.

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The EU is controlled by lobbies

FALSE "Lobbies" are not only "big businesses"; the term refers in fact to all groups and organisations that represent a category and its interests, and which intervene along the legislative process to bring their instances before the institutions. The fields of interest of such groups, therefore, are not only economic and financial affairs (which is, however, important) but also climate actions, education, energy, food safety, transport, justice and fundamental rights, trade unions, agriculture, technology.

To ensure transparency, the EU has created a database (the Transparency register) that lists the organisations and explicitly highlights their interests and with what budgets they are trying to influence the law-making process. In this way, the register allows for public scrutiny, giving citizens and other interest groups the possibility to track the activities of lobbyists.

Transparency register:

[Check resource](#)

Who is lobbying in the EU:

[Check resource](#)

Further information:

[Check resource](#)

Functioning
of the EU

80% of French laws are dictated by the EU

FALSE In France, about 20% of the laws adopted have their origin in Brussels. The percentage of EU influence is different from sector to sector: as it concerns agriculture or fisheries, for example, this share can be as high as 40%, while in the housing sector it is less than 5%.

It is anyway very Important to understand that this 20% is not imposed by Brussels: the EU in fact can act exclusively within the perimeter of competences that Member states themselves have agreed to attribute to Union. The same reasoning applies to European legislative acts, which are not adopted behind closed doors by some Eurocrats, but by the representatives of the Member states (the Council of Ministers) and their citizens (the Parliament).

[Check reliable source](#)

Germany exploits the EU for its own interests and controls the European economies

FALSE Although it cannot be denied that it does have a great and significant political and economic influence within the EU, Germany has, like every other Member state, one Commissioner and one voice in the Council. It counts 96 MPs in the European Parliament, meaning 1 deputy every 1 million inhabitants. Germany is also the main contributor to the EU budget, to which it devolves more than 20 billion per year.

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Functioning
of the EU

Our economic policies are dictated by the EU

FALSE On March 26, 2010, the European Council, which is formed by the heads of states and governments of each Member state, agreed on the Commission's proposal to launch a new strategy for jobs and growth, Europe 2020, based on coordination of economic policies to boost Europe's potential for sustainable growth and competitiveness. To do so, the heads of states and governments agreed to set EU specific targets, which can be seen as shared objectives in the light of which Member States set their national targets. The European Commission, in this sense, monitors economic developments in detail. It monitors for potential problems, such as risky or unsustainable policies or declining competitiveness, through regular analysis of indicators and annual survey.

EU economic policies and EU commission competences:

[Check resource](#)

Broad guidelines for Member states' economic policies:

[Check resource](#)

The European Treaties are an obstacle to Member states and do not allow the EU to unite against China, Russia and the US

PARTLY TRUE

Indeed, as stated by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel in the article posted in this EU myth, the EU doesn't dispose of the same political power as its competitors. To balance this lack of political power, the EU has decided, for example, to focus its attention on humanitarian assistance and aid than in the development of military operations or major geopolitical ambitions. In addition, the heart of the rivalry with the US, Russia and China, is mainly economic and commercial, and in these fields the EU – thanks to its treaties- has much to say. More precisely, technological innovation, international trade, social justice, human rights, climate change and many other fundamental political aspects of such competition, all are addressed by EU legislation which enables each Member state to participate to a common European front.

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The European Commission tries to silence the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany

PARTLY TRUE

To step up and react to the Covid-19 pandemic, the EU has put into place several measures to support Member states and the EU economy as a whole.

On May 6th, however, the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany has classified the multi-billion dollar purchase of government bonds by the European Central Bank (ECB) as potentially unconstitutional.

The Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, has indeed made it clear that such a judgment could trigger infringement proceedings against Germany. While this would definitely represent a harsh escalation of the dispute, this issue should be analysed carefully.

First of all, it is very important to know that the European legal system is based on the so-called "Precedence Principle", which means that laws issued by European institutions are to be integrated into the legal systems of Member States, which are obliged to respect and comply with them. This principle is crucial because it ensures that each state follows the same rules and that that citizens are uniformly protected by a European law assured across all EU territories.

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Functioning
of the EU

The EU's official public opinion polls are not reliable

PARTLY TRUE

Since 1973, Eurobarometer, the EU's official polling agency, has carried out surveys on behalf of the European Commission. It is an instrument that measures the state of public opinion in the EU over time. But the response rates have decreased and this can cause a distortion of the results, particularly when measuring euroscepticism. Nevertheless, the Commission said that the respondents are not told in the beginning of their face-to-face interview that the survey is done for an EU institution in order to avoid such bias.

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Functioning
of the EU

GERMANY

Brussels decides ...

FALSE It is often said that "Brussels decides everything alone" - this gives the impression that the EU is a mysterious and distant club. Although the European decision-making process is occasionally lengthy, it is certainly not secret. The European Commission is proposing new laws. National ministers representing democratically elected governments in the Council of Ministers and the democratically elected European Parliament negotiate and adopt these laws together.

So for every European regulation or directive, German ministers and MPs have their thumbs up (or down). Officials and elected representatives who pass laws proposed by the Commission represent the interests of their respective voters. Sometimes it is difficult to find a European consensus, but they usually succeed.

[Check reliable source](#)

Only incompetent or worn-out old politicians work for the EU

FALSE (was true in the past, but customs have changed)

A particularly persistent prejudice against Brussels and its institutions is that it is mainly incompetent and worn out old politicians - alongside EU bureaucrats - who work there. A transfer to the EU capital would either be a reward for loyal service to the party and the country or a quarantine measure to ensure that the person concerned no longer causes harm at home. There is even a saying: "If you have a grandpa, send him to Europe!"

But the days when Brussels was a kind of retirement home or "elephant graveyard" for former ministers or prime ministers are long gone. The member states take the European level seriously. They no longer send only old politicians with illustrious names to the Commission or the EU Parliament. Today they send competent leaders.

The German personnel in particular are quite respectable here: Martin Selmayr, for example, the right hand of the former Commission President Juncker; or Klaus Regling, head of the European Stability Fund ESM.

[Check reliable source](#)

Functioning
of the EU

LITHUANIA

Joining the EU will lead to uncontrolled crime

FALSE The Lithuanian people feared that joining the European Union would increase crime. Easier travel between Schengen countries will give criminals the freedom to flee abroad and catching them in Europe will be a difficult mission. There was also talk about foreign criminals who will enter Lithuania more easily. In reality, EU crime statistics show that crime in the European Union is gradually declining. Robberies in EU countries from 2012 to 2017 decreased by 30.3 percent. After Lithuania became a member of the EU, opportunities opened up to search for criminals in Europe more efficiently using common databases. Belonging to Europol increased closer co-operation with other European law enforcement institutions, and EU funds for internal security contributed to the acquisition of more modern equipment and the implementation of new information systems in Lithuania.

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Functioning
of the EU

ENVIRONMENT

The EU has major focus on environmental issues, it seeks to protect natural habitats, keep air and water clean, ensure proper waste disposal, improve knowledge about toxic chemicals, and help businesses move towards a sustainable economy. Even though the topic of environment seems innocent, it is still surrounded by fake stories like EU forcing garden centres to throw away plants, EU solutions hampering technological innovations or EU lowering high German environmental standards.

GERMANY

The EU lowers our high German environmental standards

FALSE A common perception in Germany is that the EU lowers our high German environmental standards.

The fact is that EU standards in environmental protection are among the highest in the world. And they also protect countries such as Germany, which traditionally rely on strict environmental protection standards, from competitive disadvantages by ensuring an equally high level of environmental protection throughout the EU internal market.

Moreover, EU values are often jointly agreed minimum standards that all 27 must at least meet. Individual countries are free to set even stricter standards at national level. Brussels" does not hinder this."

Germany has traditionally been considered a pioneer in Europe when it comes to environmental protection. It is true that Germany benefits from a high level of environmental awareness among its citizens and is making considerable achievements in the field of eco-innovation. But the EU does not stand in the way of eco-innovations from Germany. In fact, Germany is also struggling to meet European environmental standards in some areas, such as air and water quality. In 2017 alone, four new proceedings were initiated against Germany for late or non-implementation of jointly agreed EU nature conservation requirements.

[Check reliable source](#)

Environ-
ment

LITHUANIA

EU solutions hamper technological innovations

FALSE "Apple" company has publicly stated that EU's requirements are holding back innovations. Such rumours started after the European Parliament called on the European Commission to ensure that technology companies sell universal chargers for mobile phones and other devices. In 2014 the EU encouraged mobile phone manufacturers to use one type of charger voluntarily to reduce electronic waste. Although the number of chargers has fallen from more than 30 to 3 during that time, the number of wastes remains high, so a proposal has been made to tighten up the measures.

It is estimated that the world generates around 50 million tonnes of electronic waste, on average more than 6 kg per person, which is particularly polluting nature. According to the EP resolution, a universal charger would not only help to protect the environment but also serve consumers. They would not have to buy a new charger for each device.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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The EU tells Lithuania to say goodbye to outdoor toilets

FALSE A few years ago, on media has appeared news that there would no longer be outdoor toilets in Lithuania, and the culprit of all this was the EU, which threatens Lithuania with millions in fines for non-compliance.

In fact, the EU is concerned about environmental pollution and is working to improve the quality of drinking water and wastewater management. An untidy sewage system pollutes the soil and becomes dangerous to health. Household waste enters groundwater and thus causes diseases and infections. The EU encourages Lithuania to implement directives under which 98% of urban wastewater would be treated centrally, which would in particular contribute to the protection of the environment. In 2018, Lithuania ranked 3rd among EU countries in terms of the number of people who do not have a "normal" flush toilet.

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Environment

EU regulations forcing garden centers to throw away plants

FALSE News about EU regulations forcing to throw away plants appeared on social media when due to COVID-19 pandemic countries announced lockdown. Garden centres were forced to stop their activities and experienced huge losses. The EU was blamed for new EU plant health rules being inflexible and hinder to sell plants online.

In reality, new regulations seek protection against plant pests, plant health helps agriculture and forestry sectors remain sustainable and competitive, as well as protecting domestic biodiversity and ecosystems. One of these regulations measures plant passport intended for simpler and more transparent documentation.

Many garden centers haven't obtained these passports and were selling plants to individuals, after the lockdown, it became impossible to sell online without plant passport, and retailers accused EU regulations for their loss.

[Check reliable source](#)



Environ-
ment

MIGRATION

The EU is frequently accused of refugees' crisis in Europe, as well migrants themselves are portrayed as thieves who live off welfare benefits and are burden to the Member States economies.

In this chapter you can find the most common myths about migration like immigrants invading Europe, EU letting migrants pass it's frontiers or migrants equal more crime.

GERMANY

More migrants – more crime and less safety in the EU

PARTLY FALSE Migrants are bringing crime and violence and they contribute substantially to Europe's decay. Security is directly related to the number of immigrants – the bigger numbers of migrants in Germany caused a general increase in the murders, rapes and terror attacks caused by them. No evidence exists on this dependency. On the contrary, the country with the biggest number of people reporting crime, violence or vandalism, according to original Eurostat data, is Bulgaria - a country which actually has one of the lowest numbers of migrants.

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In November 2015, a report that was released by the Federal Criminal Police (BKA) stated that "While the number of refugees is rising very dynamically, the development of crime does not increase to the same extent." Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière (CDU) noted that "refugees are on average as little or often delinquent as comparison groups of the local population.

[Check reliable source 3](#)

Migration

Citizens from Eastern European Countries exploit the German social system

FALSE The freedom of movement leads to immigration into the social systems. Since the EU enlargement to the East, there has been a legend that citizens from EU countries such as Poland, Bulgaria and Romania "take jobs away" from the Germans and "exploit the German social security system". The statistics do not prove this. Mobile workers in the EU actively contribute to the economic and social well-being of the country they live in.

[Check reliable source](#)

1.4 million asylum seekers are waiting for their tickets to Germany

MOSTLY FALSE The German far-right party AfD claims in a Facebook post that "1.4 million" asylum seekers are waiting for "their tickets to Germany" and that the government wants to impose a "duty of integration" on German citizens. This claim distorts and exaggerates what is actually planned. The post includes a reference to the European election and therefore forms part of the election campaign. It has been shared more than 4,100 times on Facebook. German citizens will not have a "duty of integration" "imposed" on them, and the claim that "1.4 million" people are waiting for "their tickets to Germany" is mere speculation – the programme depends on volunteers and is initially limited to 500 refugees.

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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Migration

ITALY

EU solutions hamper technological innovations

PARTLY TRUE The news to which this tweet refers incites hatred, accusing the taxes paid to the European Union of being used to promote intercultural projects and for migrants (as something negative)

It is true that this is a real project and that it is financed by the European Union. The project "MygranTour: a European network of migrant driven intercultural routes to understand cultural diversity", and it aims exactly to combat everything that is clearly promoted in the article: hate speech against migrants, exaltation of nationalism, hatred of multiculturalism, Europhobia, etc.

Furthermore, the picture on the article does not correspond to the news reported.

[Check reliable source](#)

Sweden invaded. Stop Eurabia!

FALSE The post includes a news report about the alleged failure of the Swedish integration model. The report was shared a few days later by Matteo Salvini, who had published it on Facebook with the slogan: "Sweden invaded. Stop Eurabia!" This is a double fake news:

Stop Eurabia! Eurabia is a term coined in the 70s that was resurfaced by Gisèle Littman. She wrote under the name of Bat Ye'or. In a series of books, she developed a grand conspiracy theory in which the EU, led by French elites, implemented a secret plan to sell out Europe to the Muslims in exchange for oil. Eurabia is a myth of contemporary Islamophobia: an invented plot to destroy European civilisation. This doctrine has changed the world.

Once an ideology confined to the kookier corners of the internet, the idea of Eurabia is now visible in the everyday politics of the US, Australia and most of Europe.

The spread of the belief that elites conspired to push Muslim immigration on their native populations is also the story of a conspiracy theory that was nourished in mainstream discourse after 9/11, and then took on a life of its own. It is a lesson in the danger of half-truths, which are not only more powerful than truths but often more powerful than lies.

Migration

Sweden invaded: The Swedish Embassy in Italy published a note on its website to protest against a news report full of false information about the alleged failure of the Swedish model on integration. "There are no "no go zones" in Sweden", i.e. areas where the police do not enter; "Swedish law is applied throughout the country and the law is the same for everyone. There are no areas where sharia law is applied". The note also referred to the central part of the service, where it was said that in Sweden there is "the highest number of rapes in Europe". The embassy specified that the quoted statistics "give a wrong picture of the situation

[Check reliable source 1](#)

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Migration

LITHUANIA

Emigration in Lithuania arose after joining the European Union

PARTLY TRUE Before Lithuania joined the EU many Lithuanians feared the "brain drain" and the nation's decline. When Lithuania joined the EU and the opportunity arose to go freely to work and study abroad, a large part of the population took advantage of it. On the other hand, emigration in Lithuania has been taking place since the declaration of independence, so becoming part of the EU itself was not the main reason for emigration. In any case, Lithuania is currently leading the EU in terms of emigration, and after joining the EU, there are higher numbers of emigrants. It is also important to note that the decline of the Lithuanian population is more than twice as large due to the natural change of people, i.e. the number of births and deaths than due to emigration.

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The EU pushes to accept refugees who are a burden to the Lithuanian economy

FALSE Rumours, that the EU is forcing the Member States to take in refugees, have been circulating for some time. Lithuania's commitment to relocate refugees from Italy and Greece has led to discussions about the arrival of low-skilled workers in Lithuania who do not want to work but will live on benefits and state funds.

In fact, the EU's decision to help countries in crisis has meant that the Member States have committed themselves to host an adequate number of foreigners in need of asylum. As a member of the EU, Lithuania showed solidarity and in 2015 undertook to receive 1 105 persons. For each foreigner who needs asylum, the state receives from 6 to 10 thousand. lump sums of EUR. This money goes to the state that organizes the integration of the refugees. According to economists, in the long run, migration in an aging Europe is viewed positively, as the majority of migrants, including refugees, are of working age, who will boost national economies.

[Check reliable source](#)

Migration

FRANCE

The EU lets migrants pass its frontiers

FALSE The control of EU external frontiers is primarily a responsibility of Member states. Member states, in fact, have always considered the protection of their borders as a priority of their national sovereignty and, in many occasions, they have shown their intention to keep it this way. To face the pressure of the immigration flows, however, the EU has significantly increased the surveillance of its borders: for example, it has established a greater budget for the operations of Frontex -the EU borders and coast guard agency, applied stricter measures to control and secure the Schengen area, and reached an agreement with Turkey to, although arguable, has significantly reduced the influx of people.

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Immigrants are invading Europe

FALSE In the past years the EU has seen a large number of migrants crossing its borders. But if in 2015 the crisis was putting a lot of pressure on both national and European institutions, the situation has much changed since then. More precisely, in 2015, the number of new comers was over 1 million while, already in 2017, it dropped approximately to 23.000. Eurostat, the European agency of statistics, shows that, in 2018, third countries nationals represented only the 4.4% of the total EU population.

Plus, it is important to keep in mind that the prerogative of issuing visas is exclusively in Member states' hands, while the EU only provides a general common framework.

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Migration

The absence of frontiers within the Schengen area allows terrorists to easily enter the EU. Member states should re-establish controls at their borders.

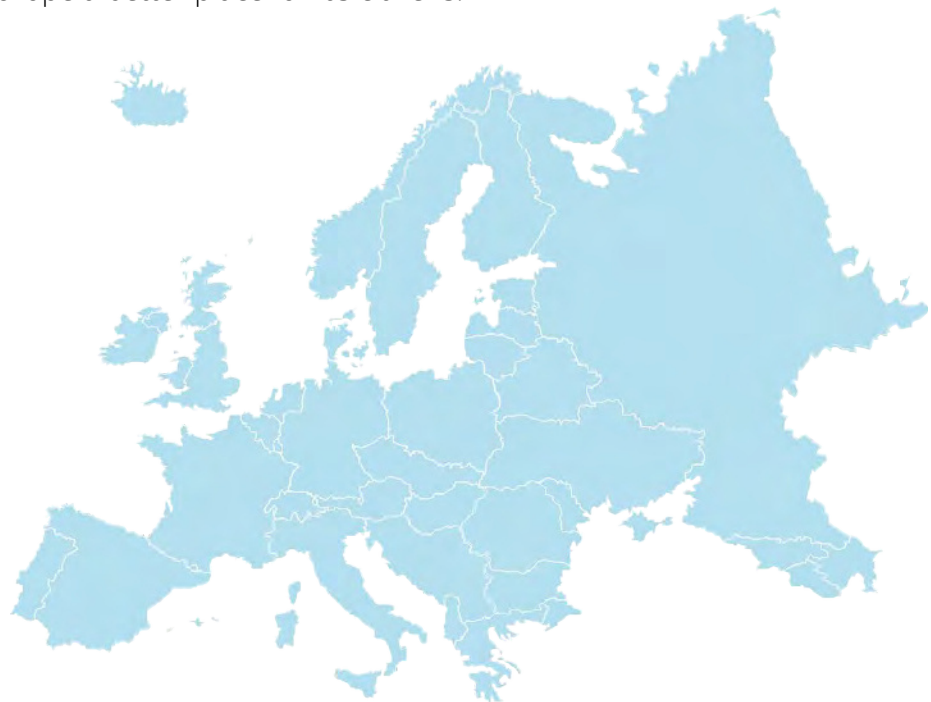
FALSE The founding principle of the Schengen area is the free movement of people across its internal borders. Such an opportunity for EU citizens, however, doesn't mean absence of strict surveillance: this is in fact ensured by several bodies like the Schengen Information System (SIS and SIS II) which is used by 31 countries in Europe and allows the sharing of information about individuals and entities for the purpose of internal security and border control. At the same time, terrorism and organised crime develop on a transnational level, so they exist beyond borders. For this reason, Europol -the EU agency for police cooperation and law enforcement- was specifically created to combat them through justice and police authorities cooperation between Member state.

[Check reliable source](#)

Migration

SUCCESS STORIES

Success stories reveal achievements related to the EU institutions. You will find stories which represent various programmes, initiatives and overall achievements created with a help of European Union as well as personal experiences of people who benefitted from the EU. It covers variety of topics such like advantages of Shengen, Erasmus +, EU's support of technological innovations, culture, building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe and in general making Europe a better place for it's citizens.



GENERAL ACHIEVEMENTS

AUSTRIA

Europe never experienced such a long period of peace

In Europe there has not been such a long period of peace since World War II. European citizens have the privilege to live in peace and freedom.

Europe has a long history including wars. Even in the 20th century over 55 million people died due to the second World War. The French foreign minister Robert Schuman formulated the European idea on May 9th, 1950. The European states should build a strong economic community due to peace and that war is no longer possible between the EU member states. The foundation of the European community for coal and steel in 1952 was the first step, followed by the roman treaties in 1957, which marked the beginning of the European peace project. In 2012, the EU has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for spreading peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights.

In retrospect, Europe has never been in peace for such a long time. Although Europe is surrounded by over 40 armed conflicts, which costs about 170.000 peoples' lives per year.

Sure, there are disagreements in the EU, but the problems are solved with words instead of war.

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General
Achievements

The EU enables students to go international

Due to the Erasmus-Program, many students are able to study abroad. The Erasmus-Program was founded on June 15th, 1987 by Sofia Corradi, an Italian educationalist.

Erasmus+ is the most successful educational program of the EU. About 5.500 Austrian students have the possibility to study in other universities or working in other European companies or organisations per year. Furthermore, this program is supporting international cooperation between universities and projects. Also Erasmus+ Adult Education supports international cooperation between adult education institutions. Furthermore, the goal of this program is to improve the quality of adult education in Europe.

The Erasmus+ program enables new opportunities for students, lecturers and young entrepreneurs.

About 4 million young people and adults in Europe have the possibility to study and learn in another country, graduate abroad or work in other EU states between 2014 till 2020. During the term of Erasmus+ the EU provides 14,7 billion Euro and about 1,68 billion Euro for cooperation with partner countries world-wide.

The EU founded this program to support international relationships of universities, institutions and companies between the member states. Especially students can profit of the Erasmus+ program to study abroad. Also the quality of cross-border projects can be improved.

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General
Achievements

The Council of Europe's Youth Centre: The Voice of the European Youth

The European Youth Centres (EYC) in Strasbourg and Budapest are permanent structures for the implementation of the Council of Europe's youth policy. They are international training and meeting centres with residential facilities, and host most of the youth sector's activities. The professional staff includes an advisory team giving educational and technical assistance in preparing, running and following up activities.

Mihai-Paul, representative of the International Young Catholic Students from the Youth Center of Budapest says the Council of Europe has shared information with young people and that this has changed young people's lives in a positive manner

Theodora, participant in the "ENTER!" Project notes that the Youth Center was a real place for developing friendship, sharing experiences and realities.

Ghofran, from the European Muslim Youth underlined that her engagement with Youth Centers really opened her eyes to Europe

Maria from the National Youth Council of Greece says that this is the only way that the voice of young people is heard in a really top level of decision-making.

Segio from UNITED for Intercultural Actions mentions that there no better way to involve young people as they are involved in the planning, in the execution, in decision making and also the evaluation process.

It is obvious that all the above young people felt not only convenient during their engagement in the procedures of the Youth Centers but also felt really comfortable with sharing on camera their experience. All their statements reveal a strong common point: the era when young people were not heard in Europe (and in the EU as all its Member States are also Members of the Council of Europe) is over.

[Watch the video](#)

General
Achievements

COPE for more transplantable organs

The project "Consortium for Organ Preservation in Europe" short COPE is funded by the EU to find new conservation techniques of organs for transplantations. A large number of specialised European transplant centres and several industrial partners are involved in this project.

Due to this project, patients on the transplantation list can hope for more available organs which are in good condition for transplantation. Due to this project some important milestones have been reached. All the requirements for setting up and managing ongoing clinical studies are made. Furthermore, ethical approvals have been obtained for most of the testing centres. In addition to the clinical trial protocols, online and offline databases and central biobank protocols have been established for all studies. The logistics for transport, organ removal, equipment and consumables have also been prepared. For example, the NMP system OrganOx metra was installed in outpatient clinics in the UK.

COPE is an innovative project to enhance the storage time of organs to provide more transplantable organs. More patients on the transplantation list can hope for better treatment results.

[Read More 1](#)

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Active mobility for a better lifestyle

The "Physical activity through sustainable transport approaches" project short PASTA encourages the European citizens to be more active. It has its focus on the systematic promotion of active mobility into everyday lives to improve health.

The PASTA project evaluated 138 different measures promoting active mobility in seven cities in Europe and analysed the health impacts of active transport. The research of active mobility shows that the health benefits outweighed risks, for example accidents and exposure to air pollution, due to more physical activity. Furthermore, this project contributes for better (urban) air quality.

The PASTA project promotes people to be more active in their daily life. The health benefits outweigh negative effects for a healthier lifestyle. Also, the air quality, especially in cities improves.

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General
Achievements

Changing clinical practice for rare cancers

The EUROSARC project has its focus on competing various options of how to treat different types of sarcoma. This kind of cancer is rare, about 6 out of 100 000 incidences are registered per year. A sarcoma is typically formed in bones or soft tissues.

Due to the EUROSARC project, a study has shown that the survival of a specific subtype of sarcoma has been increased by nearly 10%. During this study the patients were given a chemotherapy before they had surgery for large, aggressive sarcomas of the limb. In addition, the chemotherapy was not fully used.

Increasing the survival of a specific subtype of sarcoma by 10% has already been a big success for medical studies and the patients who suffers from sarcoma.

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Increasing the sheep population in Europe

The sheep products take an important part of the European industry, especially in Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Romania and the UK. Although Europe has a large number of sheep, the self-sufficiency is only 85%. Since the year 2000, the number of sheep farmers in the EU has decreased by 50%. Therefore, the EU is the second largest importer of sheep meat worldwide.

The main goal of the eurosheep project is to make sheep farming more attractive and increase the sheep reproduction by 0,1 lamp per ewe. Furthermore, per each 0,1 lamp is sold, the farmer gets 10€ more. To reach this goal, the project worked directly with farms, scientific teams and other stakeholders. 42 solutions, 88 tips and tricks and 22 info sheets were the results which came off during this project.

This project has already found many solutions to increase the sheep population in Europe.

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General
Achievements

Clean energy package for all Europeans

Europe's energy and climate policy is a difficult process, though Europe is making progress step by step to become the Energy Union. In the section service security, the EU set the goal to minimize the energy import of third countries and to use their own energy supply by producing renewable energy. The EU wants to reduce the CO₂ emission of 40% by 2030. On May 22nd, 2019, a new legislative package on energy and climate policy "the Clean Energy Package" was adopted by the Council of Ministers. The new climate policy "clean energy package" is a major step towards clean energy and a carbon-neutral economy.

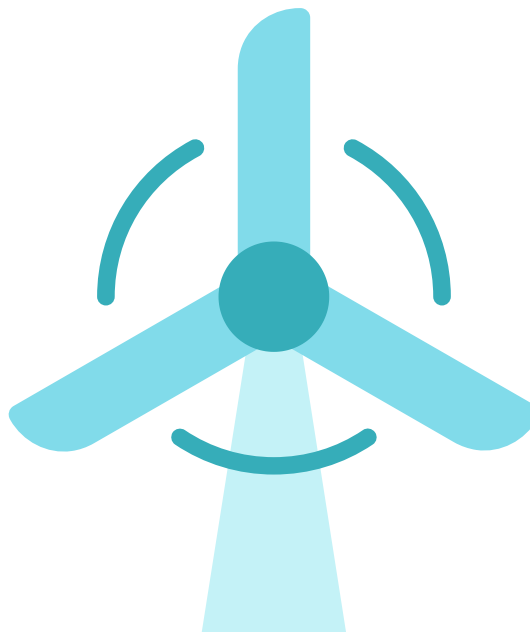
The Clean Energy Package covers energy performance in buildings, renewable energy, energy efficiency, governance regulation and electricity market design. With these new rules, the EU wants to become the Global Leader in the section renewables.

The Clean Energy Package is a big contribution in tackling global warming and the EU's long-term strategy of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050

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General
Achievements

Lend the plant a mechanical hand

The project flora robotica aims to keep the connection between nature and society. Unfortunately, plants cannot flourish very well in an urban area, especially the agriculture in cities are not able to survive. Therefore, robotics can be used.

The project flora robotica connects technology with nature and creates a new hybrid ecosystem, where robots help the plants grow in unnatural shapes, sizes and orientations that are required for an urban environment. Many methods have been developed, constructed and tested to grow different kind of plants, even those which can cover a whole wall. This technology has already been commercialised by the industrial partner Cybertronica. With this invention, user recognise the well-being of a plant and make necessary adjustments to improve photosynthesis.

The project flora robotica is definitely a good way to connect nature with the society in urban environments. Furthermore, the technology is an innovative invention to create a greener environment for the present and future generations.

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General
Achievements

CYPRUS

EU Youth Conference Kosice: Where the voice of young people invades future

The Slovak Ministry of Education, together with the Slovak Youth Council, the European Commission and the European Youth Forum is hosting the EU Youth Conference in Kosice from the 3rd to the 6th October bringing youth delegates and policy makers together. This EU Youth Conference is part of the 5th cycle of the Structured Dialogue – a unique participative process where young people contribute to EU youth policy. The three EU Youth Conferences of the cycle of the current trio Presidency (Dutch, Slovakian, Maltese) focus on the theme “Enabling all young people to engage in a diverse, connected and inclusive Europe. Ready for life, ready for society.” Over four days, youth delegates and policymakers are working to identify the main challenges faced by young people today to fully develop their potential and become engaged in society. They develop recommendations based on the input of 65,000 young people from around Europe. The joint recommendations were presented today to representatives from the European Commission, the European Parliament and the ministries responsible for youth of the EU Member States. These recommendations will be discussed in November in a High-Level Policy Debate by the Ministries from the 28 member states. They will then be addressed to the Council of the EU to be the basis of participative youth policies. The outcome of the conference in Kosice is a set of concrete proposals, including:

- The EU Institutions and the Member States should develop or further implement evidence-based policy and practice that aim to continually improve the skills of young people to critically evaluate and process information through both formal and non-formal education.
- Increase funding and institutional support in establishing Local Programmes and National Level Exchanges to enable all young people to have a direct connection with others from different backgrounds and realities, so as to strengthen intercultural competences, tackle discrimination, promote empathy and solidarity, and experience the benefits of diversity.
- The European Commission and Member States should allocate sufficient operational funding so that youth work and youth organisations are able to implement sustainable youth work that is accessible, relevant and meaningful for all young people.

General
Achievements

Allan Päll, Secretary General of the European Youth Forum stated: "In the context of rising hate crime and discrimination, it is now more crucial than ever to think about how to foster inclusion of young people through their development. Today, youth delegates have co-created with policy makers a set of concrete proposals. The onus is now on Member States, the European Commission and relevant stakeholders to make sure that these recommendations are put into practice. The Structured Dialogue can only be a success if it leads to policy change."

Matej Cíbik from Slovak Youth Council noted: "The last few days (and the months of consultations that preceded them) showed a great appetite young people have to participate on decision-making processes and share their perspective on various policy issues. The common narrative portraying youth as passive and disengaged is clearly false. However, young people need meaningful instruments to engage. That is why Structured dialogue is so important."

Vicky Reichling, Delegate of the Luxembourg Conference mentions that the Conference was very nice in the sense that "you don't have a clash between youth and ministers. They work together. And that's also the theme you have for the conference. Also, during the recommendations, you work together and you really try to work on the topic which is connected to inclusive Europe. Everyone was involved into discussions. Yeah, I truly liked this!"

Michal Denes, Slovakia's Delegate remarks that the most important thing in the Conference is community because when people together. Small villages keep people closer than larger cities

Arooj Naheed Khan, UK delegate mentions that what she keeps from the Conference is the opportunity she was given to form policy, to discuss on it. She was especially inspired by the discussions on racism and anti-Muslim hatred.

All these young people express the potential renewal of EU's ideals. EU was established on the values of common understanding, on equality and on human rights. The EU Youth Conference events remind both to the younger generations but also to the older ones that as long as Europeans exist, the EU values can be reborn. So, there no one-way for EU. Democracy, the right to be hard, youth's voice are the tools to take thing forward. And those tools and the most effective to combat Europhobia

[Watch the video](#)

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General
Achievements

European Voluntary Service: the experience of a Cypriot

EVS (European Voluntary Service) is an international volunteer program funded by the European Commission. It enables all young people legally resident in Europe, aged between 18 and 30 years, to carry out an international volunteer service in an organisation or in a public body in Europe, Africa, Asia or South America for a period ranging from 2 to 12 months.

It provides the reimbursement of travel expenses and complete coverage of the costs of food and accommodation for the international volunteer. Thanks to the intercultural dimension and its non-formal approach, European Voluntary Service is a unique opportunity to come into contact with cultures different from your own and to acquire new skills and abilities useful for your personal and professional growth. European Voluntary Service is based on the following principles:

1. increasing your own skills through the practical experience of volunteering abroad;
2. encouraging the learning of another language;
3. encouraging the learning of another language;
4. developing the ability to interact with persons of different language and culture;
5. spreading tolerance among young people of the European Union;
6. promoting active citizenship;
7. supporting the development of local communities.

Eleni Michail a former EVS volunteer is interviewed by a national TV network. During her interview she explains she was in Vienna, Austria, for 8 months. She was working in an afternoon school. With her words: "For me, it was a unique experience also given the fact that previously I had already finished my studies as primary education teacher. Upon arriving in Austria, I got to know a completely different educational system, culture, language etc.

EVS offers an amazing experience to young people. The door opens to lots of new experiences, to travel, to live alone, far away from their parents, in another country. To learn a new language [...]."

Eleni, as thousands of other young people like her admits the value of meeting other EU cultures, trying and achieving to integrate in an environment which is highly different from the one she got use to until she went abroad as an EVS volunteer. This exchange of experiences within a structured, safe and creative framework is a powerful and effective tool to fight Euroscepticism among young people. Just by seeing something different, there are lots of possibilities that you abandon your old interpretation schemes.

[Watch the video](#)

General
Achievements

From Limassol to Wolfsburg, Glasgow, Strasburg and Karditsa, it takes only an Erasmus

ERASMUS+

Teacher and students of A' Technical Highschool of Limassol

Loukas Papantoniou is the principal of the A' Technical Highschool of Limassol. In the interview he gave to a local website he expressed his enthusiasm about the learning and exchange opportunities that EU gave to 80 students of his school through the Erasmus+ programme.

This number reflects the total of participants only within 1 year (2019-2020) while the 26% of the school's students had the opportunity to visit an EU country. As the principal says, the students came back from their visits more mature, more cultivated, more open to other cultures, more experiences. "Without any exception, all of them describe this journey as a life-time experience", he mentions.

Some of the students had the opportunity to visit Volkswagen's factories in Wolfsburg, Germany where in 24 hours 3800 cars are produced and 95% of the work is been done by robots. Some other students visited the Technological University of Karditsa, Greece where they were acquainted with CAD-CAM systems, CNC machines and programmes of nanotechnology. Another group visited West Scotland College where they elaborated car mechanical diagnostics and they had the unique experience of visiting the factory of Jaguar and the "paradise" of science "Glasgow Science Centre" among other fascinating visits. Among the most prominent moments of the school was the participation of a student group to the Assembly of the European Youth Parliament in Strasburg where they took part in debates with other EU students on issues concerning the future and the youth of the EU.

They also grabbed the opportunity in order to arrange that their apprenticeship takes in place in France instead of Cyprus.

Throughout this illuminating example, we can clearly see how the EU can change the life of small communities, not in theory but in practice. If every year the 26% of the students have such an experience, then the outcome of a simple calculation can show that it's not only the lives of students who change individually but it's the school as a community, as a hole which experiences a change. Students did not only have the opportunity to pursue their interests, according to the curricula that they had chosen at school, but also to be present in some of the economic and technological centers of the EU which influence the daily life of millions of people across the continent and, ultimately, the globe. In this way, the students gained a big picture of what finally EU is -or should be- all about: exchanging, moving forward together, sharing the knowledge, contributing to a common future while maintaining crucial elements of our own culture and habits.

[Read More](#)

General
Achievements

FRANCE

Airbus Commercial Aircraft

Project financed by the EU through research programmes and European scientific programmes such as Copernicus and Galileo.

The Airbus production chain, which is the result of the merger of most European aircraft manufacturers, remains mainly European. Moreover, the research and scientific and technical development of the group, which focuses on innovation, is also European. A large number of sectors are therefore concerned (material manufacturers, engineers, mechanics etc.).

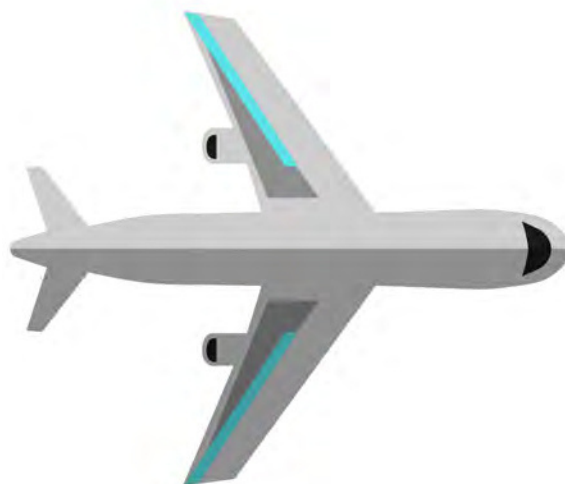
After the Second World War, European aircraft manufacturers wanted to compete with the USA in this field by focusing on innovation. Airbus becomes an intergovernmental manufacturer whose main engine is France and Germany. France has thus become the world's 2nd largest exporter in this sector, just behind the USA and ahead of Germany.

More than half of the world's airliners are now built by Airbus. By relying on innovation (new materials, technical innovations to consume less energy and at a lower cost, cutting-edge techniques) that set the standard worldwide.

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General
Achievements

Ariane

European Space Agency's European Space Programme financed by a part of the EU budget specifically dedicated to space innovation.

At the Franco-German base, the programme also collaborates with Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. 600 companies in these countries are involved and more than 30 000 jobs are created as a result (materials manufacturers, engineers, mechanics, space crew, etc.).

Ariane rockets are used to launch satellites into orbit. The idea is to compete and no longer be dependent on the USA and Russia in the conquest of space and to become the best in this cutting-edge industry. France is the initiator of this programme and is still the main investor in the programme and therefore the main beneficiary.

Transport, telecommunication, weather, climate, security, new energies etc. Thanks to the Ariane programme, advances have been made in a wide variety of fields, and these have a direct impact on the daily lives of all Europeans and even the world's population.

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Urban Sport Club

Mobile gym application that wants to establish itself throughout Europe and is supported by the European Access2Europe programme. They depend on the Franco-German Chamber of Commerce

A French branch is established in Paris with a French team composed of developers, marketing specialists, communication specialists etc. The application is made for people who travel regularly, "itinerants" and who want to continue playing sports

Application created in Germany, Urban Sport Club wants to establish itself in several European countries. The idea is to allow business travellers, tourists or others to find a gym and subscribe to it for a short period of time during their trip.

The establishment in France allowed the opening of a Paris office and the employment of about 15 people. The startup now wants to expand to other cities in France, which means employing more people and opening new offices.

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General
Achievements

ERASMUS+

Erasmus + is European mobility programme for young people.

4 million European students since 1987. Teachers, students, high school students, adults in vocational training including Pedro Vidal-Aragon.

Pedro is one of the first students to benefit from the Erasmus programme. A Spaniard who comes to France to finish his studies at Polytechnique. He stays in France for a year.

He learned French that he didn't know when he arrived, he stayed 5 years in France afterwards, and met and married his wife in France. 30 years later, he created a consultancy and technological expertise company for SMEs, for which he attributes part of the success to his Erasmus experience. His daughter is going to do an Erasmus in France, with the same programme.

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General
Achievements

GERMANY

Reducing plastics

Across the world, plastics make up 85% of marine litter. And plastics are even reaching people's lungs and dinner tables, with micro-plastics in the air, water and food having an unknown impact on their health. In Europe, more than 8 billion plastic bags were used every year. Even so-called degradable plastics do not disappear completely in the natural environment. They break down into microscopic particles, which can be harmful to ecosystems and health.

(<https://what-europe-does-for-me.eu/en/portal/2/L12>)

To reduce the use of lightweight plastic carrier bags that are seldom recycled, a 2015 EU law requires countries to take measures to reduce annual consumption per person.

To tackle the problem of marine litter, in May 2018 the European Commission proposed new EU legislation targeting the 10 most common single-use plastic products on beaches and in the sea. The aim is to ensure that by 2030 all plastic packaging is recyclable.

A scientific shows that a single-use plastics ban would decrease plastic marine pollution in the EU by 5.5% which equates to a 0.06% decrease globally. ... The plastics ban only leads to a small reduction of global plastic marine pollution and thus provides only a partial solution to the problem it intends to solve.

Paper published on 05.05.2020 in MDPI (<https://www.mdpi.com/>) Link to the paper: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/9/3746/pdf>

It is only a beginning - further measures - also globally - must follow in order to reduce the use of plastics sustainably.

Law to reduce plastics:

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Brochure on the strategy for reducing plastics:

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Rules on single-use plastics, 2018:

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General
Achievements

Healthcare and safety throughout the EU – All costs refunded after a ski accident in Italy

If you fall ill or have an accident during a visit to another EU country, as an EU citizen you have the right to receive the necessary public healthcare in any EU country under the same conditions as people in the host country. You need to ask your insurance for the European Health Insurance Card before you go abroad.

Our story: 36-year old Michael went skiing to Italy. While skiing he fell and injured his shoulder. He had to be taken off the slopes with the snowcat and then transported to the hospital, where he was x-rayed, treated and given medication and shoulder support. At home the treatment was continued. The costs for the treatment in Italy incl. transportation were reimbursed by his health insurance company in Germany.

Under the same conditions means e.g. for Italy that you have to pay yourself firstly and then get reimbursed. So you need to be able to pay before you get reimbursed.

You need to be prepared to pay yourself and then get the money reimbursed at home.

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General
Achievements

The European Solidarity Corps

The EU has launched an initiative for young people who are willing to make a meaningful contribution to society and help show solidarity with their community. Young Europeans (18-30 years) can participate in a wide range of solidarity activities, either by volunteering or by taking up an employment placement. This could prove to be a stepping stone into employment for many young people.

After completing a simple registration process, European Solidarity Corps participants could be selected and invited to join a wide range of projects, such as helping to prevent natural disasters or rebuild afterwards, assisting in centres for asylum seekers, or addressing different social issues in communities. Projects can last from two to twelve months and are usually located within the EU.

After participating in a project the young people receive a certificate that documents their participation and that can be used when applying for jobs or further learning.

According to the type of activity the young people receive funding.

The ESC programme has been very positive despite some minor issues difficult to foresee when it comes to recruitment processes, such as finding the right candidate for the right activity at the right time.

[Read More](#)

The existence of the European Solidarity Corps is not yet widely known. [Read more about it.](#)

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General
Achievements

EU promotes young entrepreneurs – The story of Jonas in Lissabon

To support entrepreneurial diversity and synergies in Europe, the European Commission promotes exchanges between European entrepreneurs. New entrepreneurs have the opportunity to acquire and exchange knowledge and business ideas during a one to six-month stay with an experienced entrepreneur.

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A new entrepreneur who wants to start or has just started a new business can benefit from on-the-job training in a small or medium-sized enterprise in another Participating Country. In turn, the host entrepreneur benefits from fresh ideas from a motivated new entrepreneur that may have specialised skills or knowledge in a new area.

In this case it is Jonas who went for four month to Lisbon.

After his 4-months stay in Lisbon, Jonas concluded that the programme was a success. The experience with one of the leading players in Lisbon's start-up scene, allowed him to gain an in-depth insight into the Portuguese start-up ecosystem. The connections he made there and at various events throughout Lisbon were and will be invaluable. Jonas is happy to have met so many inspiring and motivated people.

Furthermore, moving to Lisbon and exploring the idea of Conscious Capitalism or Capitalism 2.0 and advocating for it was life-changing. It has broadened his horizon and opened up many opportunities for Jonas.

[Read More](#)

There are many similar stories of young entrepreneurs who went abroad and got new inspiration and inspiring ideas. On the other hand, there are just as many stories of host entrepreneurs who also received new impulses from the young entrepreneurs.

Both the young entrepreneur and the host have to do some paperwork.

General
Achievements

Storytelling award on climate change

The Award was carried under in the framework of a Comenius Network project called GREEN (2014-2017)

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European students aged 14 to 19 years old were invited to take part in the award and tell their story about climate change. The winners were invited to take part in a 2-day school event and award ceremony. They had the opportunity to meet other students from the partner countries and to explore Stockholm. Their stories were published on the project website, on Facebook and in a dedicated newsletter.

Schools across Europe were invited to tell their story on how the battle against climate change was finally won in the beginning of the 21st century. How did people change their behaviour into a climate friendly and sustainable one? What new (or old) invention made fossil fuels obsolete? How did we decrease the consumption of resources to a sustainable level?

More than 55 European teams submitted their creative stories –not only did they explore in-depth the phenomenon of climate change but they also came up with creative ideas about how climate change could be won. At the end four teams were selected and invited to a 2-day school event and award ceremony in Stockholm. During the two days workshops were organized, lectures were given, an exhibition on different school projects was staged ... and of course a lot of time was spent with getting to know to each other, laughing, chatting, The teams went home - highly motivated to stay in touch, improve their English, continue to work on climate change and to act in a more climate friendly way.

The direct encounter is the most suitable instrument to make Europe tangible. Additional funds would be necessary to make the award sustainable.

General
Achievements

New horizons through individual mobility to Marseille

Erasmus+, Key Action 1 – Job Shadowing

Key Action 1 supports mobility in the education, training and youth sectors and aims to bring long lasting benefits to the participants and the organisations involved.

In our story a 52-years old woman who had been working in the adult education sector for 20 year went for 3,5 weeks to Marseille for a job shadowing.

Susanne., 52-years old, female, went for 3,5 weeks to the Marseille-based Eurocircle Association that is an organisation that has been working in the field of youth international mobility, non-formal education, intercultural dialogue, social and professional inclusion, citizenship and diversity for more than 25 years and is thus an expert in dealing with diverse groups of learners. With its experience with European and international programmes and activities there was a lot to learn from them in terms of relevant approaches on how to involve these target groups in various informal and non-formal learning activities.

After her return, S. wrote: "I am very grateful for this great opportunity to experience working and living for a while abroad. I think job shadowing is generally a very valuable opportunity for all people in the adult education sector that would want to make working experience abroad but that for job, family or any other reasons never get / take the chance to actually go abroad. Job shadowing offers a perfect and kind of "secure" frame for going abroad for a well defined period of time. It makes you get the feel for what it means to work and live in a new social, cultural and professional context.

It offers the great chance to meet new people and to actually live Europe. I strongly believe that these personal encounters with other European individuals make grow Europe together and make us feel that we belong to Europe and not only to our nations."

Individual mobility is a great tool for learning and discovering Europe in a secure frame. The funding is sufficiently high to cover the costs of a normal lifestyle.

Applications under this action cannot be made by individual students, staff or volunteers. People wishing to participate in an activity will need to contact one of the organisations receiving support from the Erasmus + programme.

General
Achievements

eTwinning – Integration through Education

eTwinning is the community for schools in Europe and is co-funded by the Erasmus programme - the European programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport.

The eTwinning action is an initiative of the European Commission that aims to encourage European schools to collaborate using Information and Communication Technologies by providing the necessary infrastructure.

By June 2020, more than 800,000 teachers and 205,000 schools have benefitted from the programme.

One example for an eTwinning project follows:

In the project, pupils at the Grammar School Karlsbad dealt with the topic "Integration through education" in an interdisciplinary way.

Together with the project partners in Romania, the 14-15 year olds developed a concept for refugee integration in schools and exchanged views on this using the eTwinning platform. The teaching ideas developed with their partner school in Romania, represented a practical contribution to integration and were tested and evaluated in the refugee class at the Karlovy Vary Grammar School.

The cooperation was awarded the National eTwinning Quality Label in 2017.

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Spotting fake news

'Fake news' and disinformation – information deliberately manipulated with the aim of fooling people – have become an increasingly visible global phenomenon. Social media and their personalisation tools have made it easier to spread fake news. They often use emotions to capture attention and generate clicks, for economic or ideological reasons. Even young, digital-savvy people find it difficult to identify manipulated news. Significantly, six in ten news items shared on social media were not even read first by the user who shared them.

The EU Parliament provided compass that helps to navigate the ocean of information, and find your way through waves of lies and disinformation.

There is a great deal of awareness of the importance of the phenomenon. The EU provides its citizens with easy-to-use tools to detect fake news.

European Parliament Think Tank

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General
Achievements

Natura 2000 – Nature protection in Südheide Nature Park

The EU provides financing opportunities in form of loans or equity investments for revenue-generating or cost-saving pilot projects promoting the preservation of natural capital, including climate change adaptation projects.

The Südheide Nature Park includes one of the most extensive forest areas in Lower Saxony and is home to plant and animal species some of which are endangered. It is part of the pan-European network of protected areas, Natura 2000, which is one of the largest such networks in the world, covering more than 20% of the area of the European Union.

Natura 2000 is one instrument to protect nature and preserve biodiversity and prevents landscapes from being destroyed by intensive agriculture or industrial use.

Designation of Natura 2000 areas has triggered resistance from land users due to increased regulations on land use and related value change.

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[Read more about funding instruments](#)

General
Achievements

ITALY

ESN: The first network of Erasmus students

Erasmus for University Students

In 1987 a plan to create an extensive mobility scheme for higher education was approved by the European Community (EC). One part of this was the Erasmus programme - for students in order to provide the opportunity to spend part of their studies abroad.

In 1989 the Erasmus Bureau invited 32 former Erasmus Students for an evaluation meeting in Gent, Belgium. This meeting was a starting point for Erasmus Student Network.

On 16th of October 1989, the first section using the name Erasmus Student Network, was founded in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Following that, ESN sections were founded in various European universities, and with financial support from the EC, in October, 1990 the meeting for the official founding of ESN International was organised in Copenhagen, Denmark with 49 participants from almost all member states of the EC. ESN International became a legal association. Desiree, Major from Utrecht, Netherlands was the first president in ESN history.

By 1994 ESN already had 60 sections in 14 countries and it was growing year by year.

20 years after the creation, ESN network consists of 280 sections in 32 European countries as well as in Azerbaijan.

In September 2005, ESN established an official seat in Brussels, where now the International Board, the Secretariat, and interns are working full time.

The evaluation meeting in Grent in 1989 had a clear goal: to detect the problems of the programme. The most obvious ones were the main tasks for the founders of ESN to work on. Behind all this stood the idea of "students helping students", which is still the most important motto of ESN volunteers, and this is the great strength of this organization.

New technology has tremendously improved collaboration between sections and frequent meetings strengthen the ties between ESN members as well as serve the possibility to exchange ideas and work together for a better future.

[Read More](#)

General
Achievements

LITHUANIA

Contest for Young Scientists

The European Union Young Scientists' Competition brings together young scientists from around the world and invites them to present their projects in science, mathematics, and other fields.

Modestas participated in the European Union Young Scientists' Competition and won visits to bio-enterprises in France and Belgium.

Modesta's path to the competition in Europe and international recognition began as a child, he participated in science competitions in Lithuania from the age of 7. And as he says, he never expected to ever go to Brussels to represent his country.

Preparing for this contest took both time and effort, but it paid off. Modesta's idea to make plastic not from oil, but from natural materials, which would then decompose, thus polluting nature less.

A project of bacteria producing not one but two polymers for self-decomposability of medical plastics such as syringes or patches has been under development for a year. And while the idea is good, it's still hard to talk about its actual implementation.

EU competitions encourage young people to take the initiative in dealing with global issues such as environmental pollution, and at the same time develop how to achieve goals, overcome difficulties and become more self-confident, which is especially important for young people of this age.

[Read More](#)



General
Achievements

Becoming world's first climate-neutral continent

Hack4Climate is a hackathon organised by the Representation of the European Commission in Lithuania and the Office of the European Parliament, a multi-day event in which people from different fields work together to create IT-related products and solutions that can be used to reduce climate change.

Margiris has been participating in the hackathon the second year in a row. The high school graduate participated in the hackathon 11 times with a team of classmates. This year, he and his team won first place and a € 1,000 prize.

During the hackathon Hack4Climate, participants teamed up and with the help of mentors developed innovative products and solutions that would contribute to the goals of the European Green Course - green Erasmus +, sustainable events, and agriculture.

Margiris' team came up with the idea to create an interactive map where you can find out how much damage you have done to nature when you travel the intended distance by determining the starting and ending location of Erasmus +. However, it was challenging for the team to understand the very purpose of the creative process and idea. It is also important to prepare for the presentation, to answer questions about what the target audience of this product is, what are the competitors.

Hack4Climate contributes to the European Commission's ambition to move to a green economy and become the world's first climate-neutral continent. Not only national politicians but also everyone should be involved in solving climate problems, so this hackathon is intended for both IT and business professionals, teachers but also students and pupils to share their creative ideas.

[Read More](#)

General
Achievements

Enriching trip

DiscoverEU is an EU initiative that provides 18-year-old EU youth with a free one-month Interrail Global Pass to travel around Europe and discover Europe's cultural heritage.

Elise Magne is a student of Sciences Po Toulouse and president of the Young Europeans who participated in the DiscoverEU initiative and became DiscoverEU ambassador.

Elise signed up with three friends and was selected to receive the Interrail pass. Their 2 weeks journey began in Toulouse through Geneva, Milan, Rijeka, Split, Zagreb, Ljubljana to Vienna.

Although some journeys on the train lasted for 15 hours, as Elise says, it is a great experience to travel by trains because you can discover countries in a new way and see remote places with breathtaking landscapes. Also, that kind of travel helped to save some money on accommodations.

Interrail trip was a great opportunity for her to try a different way of traveling where she had to deal with mishaps, visit some non-touristic places, and meet various people. She agrees with the EU decision to select 18 years old youth for the initiative, because it is like a springboard to adult life in terms of self-reliance and dealing with things.

EU initiative DiscoverEU offers a chance for youth, especially for those who have lower opportunities, to travel abroad, to discover Europe without borders with its traditions, inhabitants, and culture.

However, the main initiative idea that travel around Europe would be accessible to all 18 years old, is not fully fulfilled. It should be taken into account additional costs such as food and accommodations, train reservations or tourist attractions.

[Read More](#)

General
Achievements

Starting a business

The "Erasmus for young entrepreneurs EYE" financed by the European Commission is a cross-border exchange programme that gives new or aspiring entrepreneurs the chance to learn from experienced entrepreneurs running small businesses in other Participating Countries. The exchange of experience takes place during a stay with an experienced entrepreneur, which helps the new entrepreneur acquire the skills needed to run a small firm. The host benefits from fresh perspectives on his/her business and gets the opportunities to cooperate with foreign partners or learn about new markets.

Angela around a year ago found out about Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme and started growing ideas in her mind. It took some months of preparation and designing of her business plan. Then, she started looking for organisations, passing through a complex process and finally she got the "match" with a tiny organisation AddArt. Angela ended up in Thessaloniki, Greece.

When Angela decided to apply for this programme she was seeking to transform her ideas into actions, to gain business skills to develop her ideas into social transformation and into a way to sustain herself. She expected that during this programme the deep glimpse into other organisation practices and projects and the way it grew and consolidate would help her to organise ideas into possible projects. On the other hand, she realises that it is a lifelong process and you can't find all the answers in one place, this programme for young entrepreneurs is the first step toward this direction.

Angela believes that the EYE programme is the opportunity not only to gain and improve entrepreneurship skills, but as well to experience different socio-cultural aspects of other country with its landscapes which is enriching both personally and professionally. This programme allows to explore deeper into entrepreneurship and gain practical skills and knowledge in how to effectively run an organisation.

Programme Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a great way for persons who want to gain practical knowledge and crystalize their ideas when creating a business. It also seeks that both new entrepreneurs and hosting organisations benefit from exchange experiences, learn specific to country business aspects which could be adapted in other countries. On the other hand, before entering an exchange programme participants need to work on their business plans and carefully choose hosting organisations to make their experience most fruitful.

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General
Achievements

Life changing experience

Justina is a graduate of Kaunas University of Technologies. She finished public administration master studies and also has politics bachelor. After her studies she took part in the Erasmus + programme to gain some working experience. She became a trainee at the Embassy of Lithuania in Ireland.

Justina tells that before jumping into this new adventure, she had to leave everything behind, to quit her job where she was working for four years.

In the beginning it was challenging for her to find where to live and settle in a new city by herself. On the bright side, all this worked out even better than expected. She found a place close to the embassy, her roommates were from Ireland so in this way she could practice her English.

Justina names pluses of her experience in the embassy – she improved her knowledge and skills, participated in various events with the Lithuanian community, had a chance to travel around Ireland. On top of all this, she will be employed at the embassy and start her career in Dublin.

As this story proves Erasmus+ programme can be a great opportunity for young people to broaden their horizons, to help them pursue a career or enrich the personality. On the other hand, some studies like House Erasmus+ Research suggest that trainees under the Erasmus+ programme more often face difficulties with accommodation than students. The Higher Education Institutions take care of exchange students while such support is usually not available to graduate students going abroad on a traineeship.

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General
Achievements

Woman in the business

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is an EU body created by the European Union in 2008 to strengthen Europe's ability to innovate. The EIT Alumni Community is a community that is dedicated to promoting and supporting women's leadership and increasing the number of women involved in entrepreneurial activities.

Kate Hofman is one of the EIT community women leader and entrepreneur, founder of GrowUp Urban Farms and EIT Change Award winner. She was involved in the EIT community since she took part in the EIT Climate-KIC summer school in 2011.

The idea of GrowUp Urban Farms was part of the EIT Climate-KIC Contextual Learning Journey. She was impressed by the concept of taking waste from one system and using it as the resource for another. What's more she wanted to take the challenge of commercializing a technology that had been around for a while, but no one had yet found an appropriate business model for. When she met a business partner they decided to build a small scale farm together.

The most rewarding moments, as Kate says, is the possibility to create job opportunities for others, and what is more important to hear them tell, that they enjoy working in the company. She tells, that with her partner they had to overcome many obstacles but being a female entrepreneur is not one of them.

Even though, Kate hadn't noticed that being a female entrepreneur is an obstacle, it is still true that there is a gender imbalance in the field of entrepreneurship. As data shows women constitute 52% of the European population but only 30% of entrepreneurs and only 32% of economic leaders.

Women@EIT network inspires other women to become entrepreneurs by promoting female role models, creating comfortable learning environments, female networking, raising awareness that inequalities between men and women still exist and trying to diminish them.

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General
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Moving Cinema

The Moving Cinema is a project co-funded by the EU's Creative Europe MEDIA programme which aims to strengthen the links between young people and European cinema.

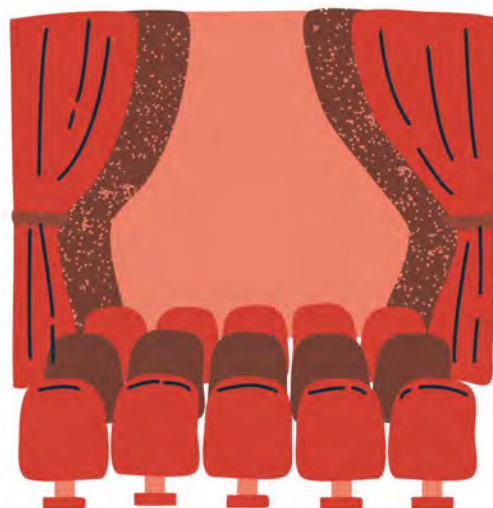
Between 1 and 2 February, the Moving Cinema Young Programmers took over the programming at Edinburgh Filmhouse, screening films. Each film introduced by the Young Programmer cohort, who presented new films as part of the Edinburgh International Film Festival in June.

As Young Programmers youth are part of a network of young curators in Vilnius, Barcelona Izola and Berlin. Over the last five months they have met weekly to watch, discuss and eventually select two films to share with Filmhouse audiences in February.

One of the Young Programmers tells that he enjoyed discussions with like-minded young people and learned valuable lessons on how to organise events around the screenings, write copy for the brochure, design marketing material. They even got to go through the whole experience of programming for a cinema including disappointment when favourite movie not being available to book.

Moving Cinema project is a chance for youth not only to learn all about cinema, how it operates and to see the work behind organising screenings or cinematic events, but also see European films in the different light. Moreover, young programmers say it allows expressing their opinions to the audience and peers as well as industry professionals and what is most important talk about topics relevant to them.

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General
Achievements

Talent Labs

Berlinale Talents is an initiative of the Berlin International Film Festival, funded by the Minister of State for Culture and the Media, in cooperation with Creative Europe MEDIA programme of the European Union.

Josephine Lohar Self is a Scottish BAFTA-nominated writer, director and animator working in stop-motion animation. In 2017 she graduated from The Glasgow School of Art in Fine Art: Painting & Printmaking.

Josephine's opinion about Berlinale Talents was positive from the beginning. She thought it is the most prestigious talent labs in the world. That is why, after completing her film "The Fabric of You" she decided to participate there. The main reason she chose these labs was the opportunity to connect filmmakers from all around the world.

She thought the application process to get in talent labs was long, she had to complete a number of questions and submit a short clip from one of her films. One way or another, she was quite positive about this process.

Josephine says participating in talent labs was a great opportunity for her to meet some of the most exciting filmmakers from around the globe and get to know more about this many-sided industry. Since coming home from the Berlinale she feels energized and inspired and looking forward to applying her experience to her next projects.

The biggest benefit of such programmes is the networking, as well as, the inspiration participants get from attending one of the biggest film festivals in the world. On the other hand, it is important to have clear goals before planning and entering such a talent lab. Participants should be prepared for the application process, which can take more time than expected.

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COUNTRY SPECIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS

AUSTRIA

EU-Program "Horizon 2020", an economic success

About 1 billion Euro of the "Horizon 2020" program could be funded in Austrian projects, if Austrian companies and researchers keep on going with finding new good ideas. Austria had about 3.200 participants between 2007 and 2013 who received around 950 million Euro from the funding pot of the EU. This means that the return flow rate adds up to 130% into the Austrian research section. Therefore, Austria is the most successful country of the EU that receives 1,30 Euro for each Euro that is payed into the EU-Budget.

Many good ideas could not be realized due to financial resources. Therefore, the EU founded the program "Horizon 2020" which supports important research on future topics and global challenges. The EU provide between 2014 and 2020 about 80 billion Euro for research funding.

The EU program "Horizon 2020" supports many researchers and companies to realize their innovative projects. The myth that Austria is only paying the EU and not getting anything in return is wrong, due to programs like "Horizon 2020" the money returns to the citizens for projects or in this case for research on future topics and global challenges.

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ments

CYPRUS

The European Solidarity Corps volunteers' experience during COVID-19 curfew in Cyprus

European Solidarity Corps volunteers: The European Solidarity Corps is the new European Union initiative which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe. The young people who participate in the European Solidarity Corps will all agree with and uphold its Mission and Principles. You can register for the European Solidarity Corps when you are 17 years old, but you cannot start a project until you are over 18. European Solidarity Corps projects will be available to people up to the age of 30 years old. After completing a simple registration process, European Solidarity Corps participants could be selected and invited to join a wide range of projects, such as helping to prevent natural disasters or rebuild afterwards, assisting in centres for asylum seekers, or addressing different social issues in communities.

Projects supported by the European Solidarity Corps can last from two to twelve months. They will usually be located within the European Union Member States.

Youth Board of Cyprus: The Youth Board of Cyprus was founded in 1994 as a public legal entity pursuant to the Youth Board Law of 1994 (N.33 (I)/94), which was passed unanimously by the House of Representatives. Since the beginning of its operation on the 2nd of June 1994, when the first Board of Directors was appointed, the organisation has offered young people multiple opportunities for active participation in social activities in Cyprus and abroad. The organisation's main role is advisory but it also undertakes youth related projects, following the approval of the Council of Ministers, either during the approval on the organisation's annual budget or under another special decision. As an advisory body, the Board of Directors submits proposals on the formation of a comprehensive and specialised youth policy to the Council of Ministers, via the Minister of Education and Culture. The aim of the YBC policies are:

- progress and welfare of all young people in Cyprus
- providing opportunities to young people and their organisations to actively participate and be responsible for the social, economic and cultural development of their community and country
- young people's creative engagement and entertainment dealing with youth related problems directly and effectively.

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Due to the COVID-19 restrictions and the curfew measures that the Cypriot government took, lots of volunteers who came in Cyprus through the European Solidarity Corps programme were blocked in the island. This could be a unpleasant experience if the responsible organisation for them, Youth Board of Cyprus, did not take care of them and did not directly address their questions, needs and concerns. So, in 30.4.2020, the Youth Board of Cyprus organised an online meeting with all of them. Throughout the call a "solidarity network" came up which is a great legacy for similar situation in the future.

The first thing to mention is that the smiley faces of the blocked European volunteers show that within the EU, solidarity is something to find and to offer. People who take the decision to take part in that kind of mobilities can have peace of mind that whatever happens, the national organisations who are responsible for them will be by their side. What a great lesson of solidarity, professionalism and consistence for the young EU citizens!

[Read More](#)

Youth Peace Camp of the Strasburg Youth Center: Greek and Turkish Cypriots meet in peace and tranquility

The Youth Peace Camps were initiated by the Council of Europe in 2003. In the past years the peace camp project brought together young people (of ages 18-25) from Armenia, Albania, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia (including Abkhazia and South Ossetia), Israel, Kosovo[1], Montenegro, the Palestinian Authority, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Ukraine.

During the 1-week Youth Peace Camp, the participants followed an experiential learning process and acquired competences in the fields of intercultural learning, dialogue and conflict transformation within a human rights framework. The Youth Peace Camp has been made possible each year with the support of Europa Park in Rust, Germany, which also previously hosted the activity. Since 2011 the camp is held at the European Youth Centres.

The call for participants from the part of Cyprus for the 2020 Camp presents a particular interest as it is addressed both to Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

This is among the very rare reconciliation contributions that institutions in the free territories of the Republic of Cyprus offer to Turkish Cypriot youth.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 restrictions, this year's camp was cancelled. The call which is addressed to the youth of both major ethnic communities is a heritage to build on.

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Experiences of Cypriots from their participation in EU projects

Several EU projects related to IDEP Cyprus (National Agency for Erasmus+ Projects) and Youth Board of Cyprus

The remarks that follow are transcriptions of on-camera statements made by Cypriot professionals who benefited from different types of EU mobilities:

Constantina Philippou, teacher: The opportunity that was given to me to teach abroad through EU programmes, helped to gain experience and be better prepared to teach at school. I was finally in front of pupils and I was part of a school community! I could finally offer and teach. It was a life experience!

Foteini Papahatzaki, Maritime Studies Student: I had the opportunity to travel, to have fun, to change views, to meet a new way of living, to enrich my knowledge, to see how universities work abroad, to even open new doors for my future.

Costas Scoinis, Highschool Teacher (electric engineer): When we went to Scotland, I learnt things that I'd never learn outside a specific industry premise like the one we visited

Vasos Vasileiou, Highschool Teacher (mechanic engineer): We have gained amazing experience and learned new teaching methods

Giorgos Konstantinou, primary school principal: EU programmes give our schools the opportunity to meet each other's methodology. In this way, we get to know how other schools work

The above individuals are not just participants in one-off EU programmes. They are professionals or future professionals who seek to boost their efficacy, excess and skills throughout their engagement with EU mobilities. They are only some among the hundreds of Cypriots who have highly benefited and bring back to Cyprus a precious knowhow which, in turn, upgrades the local knowhow.

[Watch the video](#)

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Erasmus+ Festival (Nicosia)

The Foundation for the Management of EU Lifelong Learning Programmes (IDEP) and the Cyprus Youth Organisation (ONEK) in cooperation with the European Commission Representation in Cyprus would like to invite you to the Erasmus+ Festival. The Festival is organised each year within the framework of the Erasmus Days initiative. Apart from the NGOs, companies and other entities who can present their engagement with EU projects, lots of artists can also take part in the music and artistic programme.

The last Erasmus+ Festival celebrated the most successful European programme for Cooperation and Mobility in the fields of Education, Training, Youth and Sport. The theme of this year's Festival revolved around the European Year of Democratic Participation. The public had the opportunity to learn about the opportunities offered through participation in the Erasmus+ programme by project beneficiaries themselves, but also from representatives of the Erasmus+ National Agencies in Cyprus. In especially designed exhibition stalls, participating organisations will have the opportunity to present good practices with regard to already implemented projects and disseminate information material to visitors. The Festival was enriched with activities from already implemented Projects, which were funded by the two national agencies in the context of Erasmus+ Projects. Thus, participants had the opportunity to take part in a robotics workshop, experience 3D printing, participate in a treasure hunt, enjoy dance and theatre performances by project beneficiaries, but also try out the specifically designed quiz titled "The strongest European". The Festival also included a Live Link from 17:00 until 19:00 with KLIK FM radio producers Giorgos Roussos and Giorgia Panagi. The Erasmus+ Festival was opened to the general public and had a significant impact on informing all persons participating about the opportunities Erasmus+ offers.

The local community of Nicosia shows a continuous enthusiasm and support to the Erasmus+ project. Every year, hundreds of people get to learn about the EU mobilities reality and benefit from the information but also have a lot of fun with the quality artistic programme. It seems that Erasmus+ Festival has become a must for Nicosia, which shows that youngsters and not only feel very familiar with its values and aims.

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"Quality Life!" That's the name of the partnership within the framework of Comenius EU programme in which GCS private school from Cyprus takes part. 3 more primary schools from Greece, Poland and Spain also participate. The aim of this 2 years-duration project is for students to realise the importance of balanced dietetical habits, emotional health, physical exercise and protection of the environment as basic factors for the amelioration of quality of life within the domestic communities.

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In parallel, the students from Cyprus will have the opportunity to learn more both about the Cypriot traditions but also the traditions of the other partner countries. What's interesting with this project is that it will be implemented within the schools and as part of the daily curricula.

What a great example of future citizens learning how to boost their quality of life in their countries while exchanging experiences on the issue with other people of their age in other EU countries. Above all, what a nice feeling these students must have when they get to know better not only the other countries' culture but also of their own, Cyprus. This is exactly what the founding treaties of the EU stand for: maintaining you culture but also challenge it, broaden it, transforming it into an embracing gesture.

[Read More](#)

Sports and students in the EU can change the EU!

Comenius project on football

OMONIA is one of Cyprus the oldest and most historic football clubs. They have participated several times in EU football tournaments (like Champions League and Europa League). In parallel, following the club's principles and values, its players continuously stand by the community, trying to raise awareness regarding different issues of the youth. In this framework, OMONIA took part in the «Comenius project on football» (2014), funded by the European Commission and involving students from Cyprus, Finland, Poland, Spain, Portugal, Turkey and Germany. The aim of the project is to bring together teachers and primary education students closer and sensitize them in the issue of respect and diversity. A parallel aim is to boost students' and teachers feeling of being part of EU's citizenship concept and to give them the opportunity to exchange ideas and perspectives related to the structure and operation of their schools.

Football has been always a common ground for Europeans. When we meet a person from another EU country, one of our first questions we usually do is what football club he/she supports. This is just a simple example of our interest to share, to exchange and to learn from foreign EU citizens. This was the basic idea and also the base of this successful project. Primary school students who are fascinated by their football stars are very open to influence. If this influence takes place in a well-structured, safe and promoting context like the "Comenius project on football" then miracles can happen. Especially regarding respect and diversity, you cannot explore these values without getting to know how other cultures perceive them. This little example from Cyprus reveals the gigantic possibilities that EU citizens can utilise to promote basic human values within the national contexts but also across the European continent.

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FRANCE

ALGODEE

French start up of an artificial intelligence upgrade financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

The startup wants to help companies to engage and use artificial intelligence to be more competitive. Both partners want to employ commercial clerks in every city they want to locate in.

Specialized in computer programming, the French startup won the WILCO contest, a French contest in the Ile de France region that serves as a startup accelerator. After obtaining a grant and European aid from the ERDF, they have developed their business thanks to a financial follow-up of 5 years and the help of specialists.

EDF and Enedis, two of the largest French groups, are among their clients. After France, they want to establish themselves all over Europe.

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Towards a bio production

3 milk producers in Lozere want to transite towards a bio production. The transition is possible thanks to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Beneficiaries of this project are the three small producers active in Lozere, a harsh land where to raise dairy cows and sheep. But also the consumers, who can benefit from a high quiality product in short food supply chain along with the intermediaries (shop) and their own consumers.

In order to improve quality, open up to a market and have a more environmental-friendly approach, the producers have applied for funding from the CAP and have obtained approximately €40,000 to realise the transition.

The transition to BIO production was a great success.

One of the 3 producers is now a member of the agricultural union FNSEA and fights for a better consideration of the economic stakes of women in agriculture. She has also become an ambassador of the fight against climate change, the reason why she made the transition.

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ANIMINE

Created in 2010, this French enterprise (Small and Medium-sized Enterprise, SME) specialised in the trade of cereals, seeds and animal feeds, benefits from the Eurostars programme via Horizon 2020

As an innovative SME, Animine relies heavily on research and development with a team totally dedicated to this purpose. In addition, Animine works in collaboration with several universities and SMEs from all over Europe.

The SME could develop a new source of feed rich in trace elements for farm animals.

This project served as a base for further tests with other trace elements which are now planned for the future

This project served as a base for further tests with other trace elements which are now planned for the future. This project served as a base for further tests with other trace elements which are now planned for the future

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Programme FAJE (Formation Accompagnement de Jeunes diplômés vers l'Emploi)

The programme is co-financed by the European Social Fund (€232.500 out of a total of €465.000)

The beneficiaries are young people under 30 years old and coming from the Region Sud, France, who have attained their bachelor's degree, and are facing difficulties in seeking a job.

The FAJE programme aims at fostering the professional inclusion of young graduates by enabling them to a professional experience abroad. The programme includes a 8-weeks period of training before the mobility.

By the end of 2020, the programme will provide 360 young graduates coming from the Region Sud to benefit from a personalised follow-up and a professional experience abroad. This programme has also resulted in a partnership between the region and the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse (OFQJ) which allowed 80 young French people to experience a 6-months internship in Canada.

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A project to create a platform for grouping together local agricultural products

Project of the Agricultural Chamber of Vaucluse co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (FEADER) - €124.419 out of a total of € 264 455

A dozen farmers from Vaucluse.

Producers engaged in direct sales (market, collective shop...) and producers already supplying the catering industry (middle schools, high schools, etc.)

Together with the protection and valorisation of local, high quality products, the project allowed to centralise the farmers' productions and to carry out a grouped delivery of orders in the city of Avignon and the Vaucluse. More precisely, the platform has two distribution channels: collective restoration/catering on the one hand, and automatic dispensers on the other composed of lockers of different sizes to adapt to the products sold.

The service also includes an advisor who leads the group and manages the sales of the products, and a full-time delivery person to supply distributors and restaurants.

Exceeding all expectations, 44,000 lockers have been sold to local citizens since the opening in April 2017.

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Marseille capital of culture 2013

A European Capital of Culture is a city designated by the EU for a period of one year during which it organises a series of cultural events.

Being recognised as a European Capital of Culture can be a great opportunity to generate considerable cultural, social and economic benefits.

Marseille, France, was the European Capital of Culture in 2013 (Marseille-Provence 2013, "MP2013").

Being designated as European Capital of Culture can help foster urban regeneration, change the city's image and raise its visibility and profile on an international level and so it was for Marseille. The city, which has always suffered from a "bad reputation" in France and internationally, took full advantage from this opportunity and was able to capitalise on it both economically and, of course, culturally speaking.

Thanks to MP2013, 950 cultural events took place across Marseille and the surrounding municipalities. It also produced more than €600 million of new investments in cultural infrastructures in and around Marseille, including the emblematic MuCEM which, today, is among the 50 most visited museums in the world.

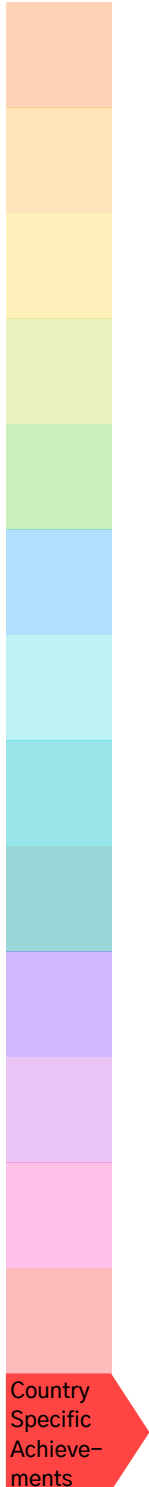
The economic impact is estimated at nearly 500 million with more than 2.500 jobs generated or maintained.

With more than 10 million visitors, including 2 million more tourists compared to the previous year, the customer base increased by 17%.

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GERMANY

Active inclusion of young people facing occupational barriers in Lower Saxony, Germany

The project "Pro-Aktiv-Centres" (PACe) aim to socially stabilise young people with special support needs and to enable them to cope with everyday life and to create everyday structures. In this way, Pro-Active-Centres make an important contribution to improving the living situation and to the social and professional integration of these young people.

The centres offers young people between 14 and 26 years support in overcoming problems that hinder them in taking up employment or training. Here, young people find advice and assistance in shaping their professional future and in planning a self-responsible life. The offer is free of charge and voluntary.

The PACe are based in many different regions in Lower Saxony and, in addition to the advice provided by the social education workers of the Pro Aktiv Center, they also provide other offers such as the possibility of using the Job Clubs free of charge at the various locations (e.g. in the district of Hildesheim) or regular counselling sessions.

Read more about Pro Aktiv Center

There have been 188 projects funded within this programme so far.

Funding for local projects by the European Social Fund

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Country
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ments

ITALY

MovEurope: Mobility of refugees in Europe

Erasmus + mobility projects and European Solidarity Corps

A group of young people from different backgrounds and nationalities, living in Bologna (Italy), doing volunteering or working with migrants. They were taking part in the project European Structural Orientation Program for Migrants promoted by the Universo association. Such project developed a training putting together young Europeans and young newcomers (refugees and migrants).

After six months programme, they become like a family.

Thanks to this programme, they realized that every migrant already in EU dreams to move in another country.

Furthermore, they observed that there is a lot of country related information on asylum rights and integration but there is a lack of information about the all EU space (mobility rights, EU citizenship rights as a refugee, etc.)

This unbalance creates a problem, due to this information is fundamental on the integration. If they don't know their rights they will find themselves in legal limbos.

So that's why they want to create a project to clarify and put together all this information, but also to find alternatives to legal migration/ mobility through educational and vocational opportunities (internship, EVS, youth exchanges...)

The group of these 20 people decided to start a pilot project to facilitate the mobility of migrants arriving in Italy willing to live in Germany. Thus they opened the association Migration Mitenander (Migration Together) in Witten, in 2017.

Through this action, they have the possibility to promote the mobility opportunities that the EU offers for young people in equality for young newcomers; strengthen their feeling of belonging to the EU, and identify themselves on European values and society.

Promoting information on legal migration and rights will prevent secondary movements and the rising of illegal networks.

Through this programme they can offer alternative long term perspective for refugees in another European countries, which enables them to build up a self-determined and independent life in Europe.

[Read More 1](#)

[Read More 2](#)

Country
Specific
Achievements

Bandiougou Diawara: inspiring to be a rolemodel

Erasmus +: ROLE MODELS - PROMOTING COMMON VALUES (an initiative of European Commission and Erasmus+ National Agencies)

Badiougou Diawara is from Mali, he has a happy life, but his mother's death turned everything into a nightmare, so he has forced to leave his country. After having lived in Algeria and Libya, he escaped in Europe and arrived in Sicily, where his life started again. He had the opportunity to study, to find a new family, friends and to achieve his dreams founding his own association.

Bandiougou ends his story by saying: "I want to do something for the country that welcomed me".

Through "Resilience Stories" project, funding by Erasmus +, Bandiougou had the opportunity to be part of a network of positive reference figures - role models - who can through the telling of their stories, inspire those who live in difficult contexts, activating processes of trust in the possibility of drawing positive effects from negative situations.

During 2018 he was a "testimonial" in schools, prisons and adult learning institutions telling his story from a role model perspective.

Usually, the media show refugees and migrants arriving in Europe as people in need, charged with stereotypes and prejudices that are often very negative. This initiative overturns this narrative, putting the "needy" people as role models their stories of resilience inspiring many others.

The initiative is part of the European Commission's measures to support Member States in the fight against radicalisation and social discrimination, through a combination of actions involving the relevant authorities, society and the community at both national and European level.

[Read More 1](#)

[Read More 2](#)

Country
Specific
Achieve-
ments

Luca Delfino: Art and act

Creative Europe CULTURE: Cross Sectoral Strand– Refugee Integration Projects
Luca Delfino is a young Sicilian painter and art historian. He also manages a street art workshops for kids in the “Zen” neighbourhood, in Palermo city.

At certain point of his journey, after having worked a bit in museums he was included in some social interest projects of urban renewal, he painted squares and streets among people and with people and he understood that that was for him the best situation possible painting and sharing with people.

He started working for JOURNEYS project and he was very enthusiastic because the project gave him the opportunity to give a voice to stories that usually go untold.

The JOURNEYS project deals with refugees, but Luca decided to deal specifically with refugees women. This project gave him the opportunity to express himself, to work in his big passion and finally to do an exposition on Palermo streets with his art work

This project, which aimed to give EU citizens the opportunity to discover, learn and understand the values and cultures of refugees and immigrants and to rediscover and enrich their own, has fulfilled a double objective, giving a young artist, coming from one of the regions with the highest youth unemployment, the opportunity to express himself through art and recognize his work in a street art exhibition.

[Read More](#)

[Watch the video](#)

A digital experience Made in Palermo

Erasmus+ Key Action 2: Strategic Partnership in the field of Adult education

Thirteen women coming from different countries as Kenya, Ivory Coast, Mali, Nigeria and Chile, and living in Palermo, with a low level on media literacy that difficulties her on their job research and in their daily life.

The group of migrant women participated in a 3-months training course of the MedLit project, long learning pathway that contributed to improve their knowledge of the digital devices, to improve problem solving skills and to empower their confident in public or during a job interview.

By giving some theoretical contents in the beginning of the lessons, by making practical exercises to go deeply on what was taught and to make contents more intelligible, the participants reached their own individual goals.

Thanks to this project the participants have improved their personal and academic skills and their independence, but also their freedom of thought. They published an intercultural recipes book developing their personals and professional skills and inspiring for their careers.

[Read More](#)

Country
Specific
Achievements

Training for success

Course co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) run by EOI Business School José left school at 14 with no formal qualifications– he discovered an affinity for metal work. After learning the trade, he eventually decided to start his own factory in 1983, making car trailers and building fixtures. Together with his wife, he ran all aspects of the business from a tiny 20 m² premises.

Things went from bad to worse with the onset of the crisis. The loss of their biggest client and the threat of bankruptcy left José battling depression and he started to see a therapist. It was during one of these sessions that the idea of business training first arose, and pretty soon he came across the initiative.

During the crisis, José decided to participate in a training course. The course completely changed how he thought about business and how he ran his own, bringing in specialist staff and new processes. “I was able to put into practice what I was learning”.

Importantly, he also adds, “I saw the results immediately.”

Nowadays the company has diversified and is growing fast. Staff has doubled to over 70 full-time workers and there are plans to expand the factory. His outlook is far more positive now, “I’ve learned that the most important thing in a business is the people. I’m really proud of the team we’ve built. Together we are prepared for the future ... whatever it brings”.

It was when José took the course co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) that he was able to turn around the ailing fortunes of his business. Having struggled with a stagnating business for years, the arrival of the financial crisis appeared to be perhaps the final nail in the coffin. However the training course changed that and his company is now thriving.

The training run by EOI Business School gives entrepreneurs from Spain counseling and business training on how to improve their companies and expand their markets. It offers innovative practices and networking opportunities to its participants and training specifically aimed at how to run a company.

[Read More](#)

Country
Specific
Achieve-
ments

Nelly Davtyan: Young woman IT entrepreneur

Erasmus for young entrepreneurs programme

Nelly Davtyan from Armenia, she is an IT entrepreneur and thanks to Erasmus for young entrepreneur program she managed to make her small start-up into sustainable growing business.

In 2016, she was still a young woman from a small country and she had just many ideas how to start her business with a small amount of money in the bank and just a lot of motivation to do it.

She had a lot of difficulties to start the business as an IT entrepreneur, because in Armenia women entrepreneurship is not promoted and supported. Her first product was Busticks, a travel application which helps people find tours online. She realised that she still needed a lot of advice about on how to manage her business as a woman entrepreneur.

A friend told her about the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneur programme so she went to an intermediary organisation which helped her a lot to apply for this programme and go to Malta for three months.

As a host entrepreneur she chose Angele Giuliano from Malta because she had an 20-year experienced IT company.

She couldn't even imagine how this programme would change her life.

After 1 month, they started to make together educational programmes, which was very new for Nelly and she realised that this was a new field that interested her and when she came back from Malta she started an online chess learning platform for children with hearing impairments.

After the huge experience she got from this programme, Nelly realised that she could become a host entrepreneur and give other young persons like her the opportunity to become an entrepreneur, encouraging more young women from small countries.

[Read More](#)

Country
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Achieve-
ments

Enrica Sciandrone: Music to live

Erasmus+ traineeship - Leonardo da Vinci.

After having studied composition, harmony, counterpoint and piano at the Conservatorio 'L. Refice' di Frosinone near Rome, Enrica moved to London to complete a Master's degree at the Royal College of Music.

She stayed there and was accepted for an traineeship (as part of the programme formerly called Leonardo da Vinci).

She improved her competences and skills as a teacher during this international experience.

When her traineeship finished, she found out there was an open teaching position and Enrica got the job.

Several years on, Enrica is not only a university professor, but she has also composed soundtracks for many award-winning independent films, documentaries, animations and television commercials. Most recently, she worked on the 2017 film Life, starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Rebecca Ferguson.

When she applied for the teaching position, Erica thought that she was 'extremely young for a professor,' But Enrica got the job.

[Read More](#)



Country
Specific
Achieve-
ments

Éva: Cooking up a great job

LIFT (Likeness, Integration, Full employment, Training) project – funded by European Social Fund

Éva is from Szekszárd in Hungary and she has been almost totally deaf since birth. Her condition of disability had hindered her professional progress and she had faced barriers that stucked her in unskilled work.

Éva's career didn't rise up, until a catering course backed by the European Social Fund changed her life.

Éva got her break through the LIFT (Likeness, Integration, Full employment, Training) project, which was launched by the Blue Bird Foundation in 2006. LIFT's goal is to help young people with low educational attainment and disabilities gain new skills which will help them find jobs.

Éva signed up as one of 16 people on the catering course (a further 20 learned building skills). The training lasted for a year, and during that time she received a salary from the project budget.

In 2007, she qualified as a cook and got a job at Ízlelő, a family-friendly restaurant which the Foundation also runs. She was joined by six of her course colleagues who do the cooking, washing up and wait at table.

Sweets are Éva's speciality – she likes to cook pancakes as well as strudels and cheesecake. It is a far cry from her first job in unskilled piecwork, sewing nappies in a factory.

The training gave Éva the skills she needed land a great job in a local restaurant. The restaurant job provides a reliable second income for Éva and husband Zoltan, which has allowed them to realise their dream of buying their own home. They moved into their house outside Szekszárd in 2008, relishing the challenge of renovating the property.

Éva feels fortunate to have found the Ízlelő restaurant. "There are people with disabilities all over Hungary who would like to work in a place like this," she points out. "The idea should be copied. We wouldn't mind – we would be really happy!"

[Read More](#)

Country
Specific
Achieve-
ments

Helping Tunisia's Slama Group grow

The Slama Group, supported by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development-funded Advice for Agribusiness programme

Slama is a family business from Kairouan, Tunisia. The family has grown olives since the 1930s.

The region of Kairouan has a special olive trees, so they produce a high quality olive oil. From the tradition the oil is used for several things: some use it for hair and for coughs; people who suffer from rheumatism rub their knees with it.

The EBRD's European Union-funded Advice for Agribusiness programme helped the Slama family business become more competitive on the international market.

Now, thanks to the participation in this programme, Slama produce 3,300 tonnes of olive oil every year.

The Slama Group has diversified, producing several different products (ice cream, butter...) and opening more than 165 supermarkets, with 4,000 Tunisians employees and they export to EU, North America, China and Russia.

They reached a point when their business is successful but they had to come to another step to look at international growth.

International advisors have provided support to help Slama grow. They changed the way they are running their businesses and they changed the way they were organising their governance of their whole group and this made the whole business more performant and more transparent. Their ambition for the coming years is to move from a local Tunisian player, to a more international and bigger regional and high performance player

[Watch the video](#)

Country
Specific
Achievements

LITHUANIA

The first pancake made a dream come true

The EU-funded project "Active and needed" aims to address the unemployment of socially excluded people and help them become active participants in the labour market.

Povilė, who has a disability, was actively looking for work and self-realisation. Although she had acquired two professions, she had difficulty finding a job.

Participation in the project "Active and needed" helped her to open the door to the labour market, she was hired to a social enterprise, restaurant "Piramas blynas", which created jobs for the disabled.

At first, Povilė faced difficulties at work, she was not very successful in adapting and communicating with strangers, carrying orders, because she often spilled coffee due to disability, but with enough self-will she practiced at home and now performs various tasks – working with the cash register, carrying orders, working at the bar. Sometimes the manager leaves her in charge of the whole team and she oversees the work of other colleagues.

Work at the "Piramas blynas" helped Povilė to fulfil her dream of participating in dolphin therapy. She spent the tips and salary saved on this dream and is happy with the impressions.

The EU-funded project "Active and needed" provides an opportunity for socially excluded people to integrate into society and the labour market and to feel like full members of society. The story of Povilė is a great example of this. By participating in the project and getting a job, she had the opportunity to feel "like everyone" and make her dreams come true.

[Read More](#)



Country
Specific
Achievements

Experiential journey to grown-ups life

The youth center "Vartai" organizes experiential trips for young people under the program "Accompanied Adolescence" which is financed by the European Social Fund.

In the summer of 2017 nine young people took part in the experiential hike in the forests of Kazlų Rūda together with the coordinators and social workers of the open youth center "Vartai".

Experiential hike therapy is designed to develop positive youth behavior and self-confidence. The principles of experiential teaching are based on the perspective of strengths, ideas of ecological psychology.

During this trip, the young people were encouraged to make decisions independently and in a group, while the leaders helped to moderate and reflect on these processes. The conditions were created under which young people could experiment safely, learn to take responsibility for their actions and decisions.


During the hike, the youngsters had to leave their comfort zone, which helped them recognize their reactions to different situations and discover strengths.


Experiential hikes organized for young people with the funds of the European Social Fund help teenagers to gain self-confidence, self-reliance, and teamwork skills, which is especially important when moving into the adult world. Even though, this hike is free of charge, not all youth can get in as smaller groups are selected. For some young people this hike can become a real challenge, it requires endurance, physical strength, leaving a zone of comfort.

[Read More](#)


Country
Specific
Achieve-
ments

ANNEX


1. 


Europos sajunga uždraus siurblius. Platiname!!!
2. 

The EU is going to ban memes I guess, but the Internet has a fix for that.

A picture of Drake looking away and holding his hand up. He clearly doesn't like what's going on.	Giving up on life after EU bans memes
A picture of Drake pointing as to say: "Hey, I like this".	Finding a workaround
3. 


The EU wants to ban doner kebabs — yet another example of discrimination against food vendors
bit.ly/2AWtpWu



10:10 PM · 5 dic 2017 · Buffer
4.  **La Verità**
@LaVeritaWeb

Funzionari e deputati di Bruxelles hanno ricevuto una guida per l'utilizzo del linguaggio «gender neutral». Vietato usare «manpower», «statesman», «fireman» e tutti i vocaboli in cui compare il riferimento all'uomo.

@franborgonovo



L'ultima del Parlamento europeo: ha cancellato il maschio per ...
Funzionari e deputati di Bruxelles hanno ricevuto una guida per l'utilizzo del linguaggio «gender neutral». Vietato usare ...
laverita.info

11:30 AM · 7 gen 2019 · LaVerità webapp

5. Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo di Strasburgo: [#aborto](#) non è omicidio e chi lo afferma può essere censurato perché necessario "in una società democratica". La libertà d'espressione è limitata quando è non conforme. MA L'ABORTO RESTA UN OMICIDIO E LA VITA IL PRIMO DIRITTO.

5:53 PM · 21 set 2018 · [Twitter Web Client](#)

6. (Ci tolgono anche l'euro dal carrello per darlo agli immigrati) Playhitmusic - playhitmusic.it/2019/11/ci-tol



7. [@matteorenzi](#) l'UE boicotta,uccide i nostri prodotti e tu sei il loro complice ,sei lo zerbino...sei no schifoso, che Dio t'accolga presto.

9:32 AM · 10 feb 2016 · [Twitter for Android](#)

8. EU wants to interdict crispy dark french fries..
UK not even left and they make new rules. Will they also ban fried Mars bar? @JameessReality



5:32 PM · 20 Aug 2017 · Twitter for iPad

9. Il balzello Ue: tassa sull'aria condizionata:
opinione.it/politica/2017/...

7:09 PM · 1 Apr 2017 · Twitter Web Client

10. @abruzzolive.tv - #Allevatoriabruzzesi contro
#UnioneEuropea : 'No al #formaggio senza #latte '
abruzzolive.tv/Allevatori_abr...

5:41 PM · 2 Aug 2015 · Twitter Web Client

11. Sunday Express front page:
EU declares war on drivers
[#tomorrowspaperstoday](https://twitter.com/tomorrowspaperstoday) [#bbcpapers](https://twitter.com/bbcpapers)



12. In risposta a @matteosalvinimi

La UE voleva vietare anche la pizza cotta con il forno a legna.

2:50 PM · 5 dic 2019 · Twitter Web App

13.



NASCONDERE I RISPARMI A CASA DIVENTA REATO?

L'ultimo suggerimento dell'Unione europea per colpire il risparmio... fb.me/83JlepU7f

9:49 PM · Oct 24, 2016 · Facebook

14. Microchip sottocutaneo: Nuova normativa Europea, entro due anni ognuno di noi dovrà farselo.. | Il Messaggio



Microchip sottocutaneo: Nuova normativa Europea, entro due...
Chip sottocutaneo obbligatorio, entro due anni tutti lo dovranno avere in Italia. "Entro due anni tutti avranno il ..."
ilmessaggio.it

12:44 PM · 10 mag 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

15. L' #orto in #casa? #Addio, ci vuole il #patentino lanazione.it/commento-pardi... via @qn_ #qualefuturo #sistavameglionquandosistavapeggio #Europa

2:32 PM · 16 set 2015 · Mobile Web

16. La legge sul copyright potrebbe decretare la fine di YouTube in Europa, secondo il suo CEO ift.tt/2OEIrTj



6:23 PM · 12 nov 2018 · IFTTT

17. La Ue ci vuole togliere anche uno dei nostri piatti preferiti
Gli spaghetti con le vongole
Impone ai pescatori italiani, vongole con una lunghezza di 25 millimetri...con enormi problemi per loro



12:25 AM - 4 nov 2019 · Twitter Web App

18.  wegen der DSGVO muss jetzt immer eine Einwilligungserklärung oder irgendwelche anderen Genehmigungen eingeholt werden.. Reinste Bürokratie. Die EU ist schon lästig mit ihren neuen Richtlinien. Die Büroarbeiten werden dadurch immer mehr 😞
#genervt #EU #Bürokratie #sucks

3:56 nachm. · 27. Mai 2020 · Twitter Web App

19.  Die EU will bald EPS-Chips in Babys einpflanzen!!! DAS GEHT DOCH ZU WEIT!! 🚫 #scheißeU #frechheit

2:39 nachm. · 14. Mai 2020 · Twitter Web App

20.  Von Jahr zu Jahr kommen immer mehr Flüchtlinge in die #EU und nutzen unser #Sozialsystem total aus!! Die EU begrüßen noch #Flüchtlinge mit offenen Armen und wir Bürger dürfen es ausbaden... Die meisten sind nicht mal in Lebensgefahr, sondern sind Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge 🙄🙄🙄🙄

9:44 vorm. · 2. Juni 2020 · Twitter Web App

21.  28 avr.
En réponse à @...
Peut-être mais ce n'était pas mon propos, l'OTAN est un formidable moyen de domination de l'Amérique sur l'Europe.
L'Europe dépend des USA pour sa défense et ils savent parfaitement nous le faire payer.

22.



23.

Follia UE, corsi di masturbazione per bimbi di 4 anni:
imposizione su materne ed elementari

MASSIMA DIFFUSIONE:... fb.me/20vIZG0i7

1:01 PM · 20 giu 2015 · Facebook

24.

Analitikas: Europos Sąjunga siekia Baltijos šalių
pramonės likvidavimo

10:29 AM · Jul 15, 2020 · IFTTT

25.



26.

 [Redacted]

Durch den #Euro können wir uns bald nichts mehr leisten. Alles wird durch den Euro teurer! Zurück mit den Schillings! Die EU zerstört unsere Lebensstandards...
#früherwarallesbesser #öxit #EU #Schilling #Oesterreich

10:57 vorm. · 4. Juni 2020 · Twitter Web App


27.

 [Redacted]

Viel zu viele Beamte und Institutionen in Brüssel und wir dürfen alles zahlen. Die EU lebt auf unsere Kosten in Saus und Braus, während wir uns abrackern sollen 🇪🇺 Die EU ist eh für nix zu gebrauchen!
#unnötig #EU #Brüssel #Österreich

1:47 nachm. · 4. Juni 2020 · Twitter Web App

28.

 [Redacted] · 6 avr. 2019

Tous ces "connards" de **fonctionnaires européens**, de technocrates au rabais, devraient de faire oublier un peu : ce sont eux qui sont à la base du rejet de l'UE, par les **européens**. En plus ils **coûtent** bien **trop cher** : dehors !

[Redacted] · 5 avr. 2019

- 100 trains neufs interdits de circuler
- boîtes noires dans les voitures

Voici l'UE aujourd'hui, un carcan de normes et de réglementations !
Le 26 mai pour les #Européennes2019, changeons pour l'Europe des Nations et des coopérations ! #JeVoteBardella

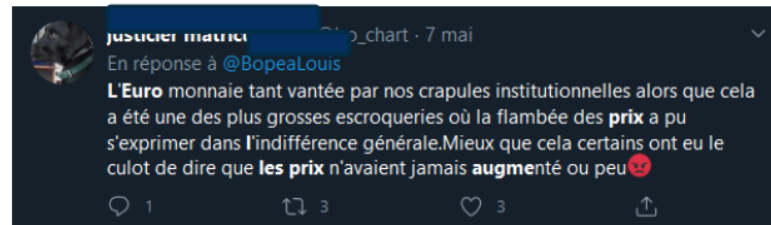
29.

 [Redacted] @Valeurs · 6 avr.

Président [Redacted] et conseiller région [Redacted] dénonce la gestion de la crise par le gouvernement, corseté dans une idéologie qui détruit le service public et **délocalise** la production nationale.
#Frexit #UE #européisme

Face à la crise, il faut sortir de l'eupéisme devenu r...
Derrière ces choix, un continuum idéologique devenu au fil des ans nouvelle religion d'Etat, le corset absol...
valeursactuelles.com

30.



31.



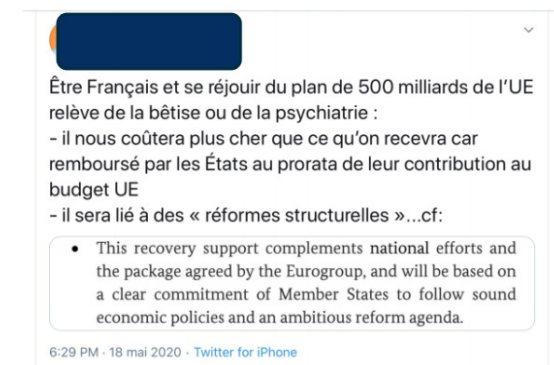
32.



33.



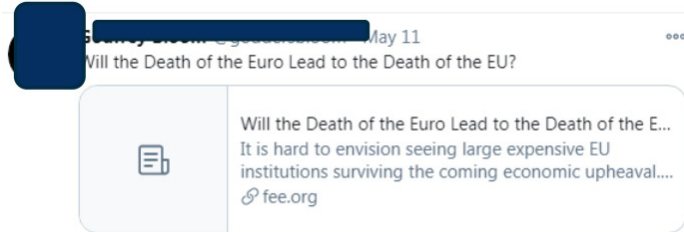
34.



35.



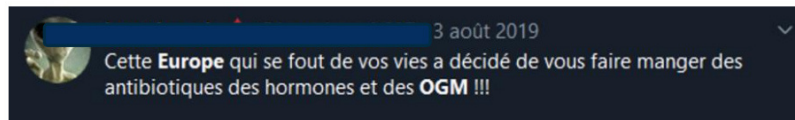
36. Tweet



37.



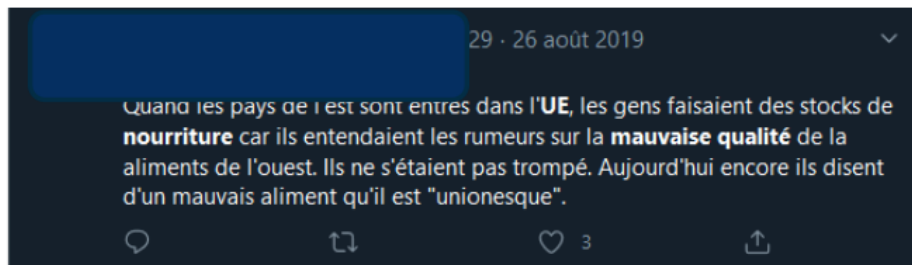
38.



39.



40.



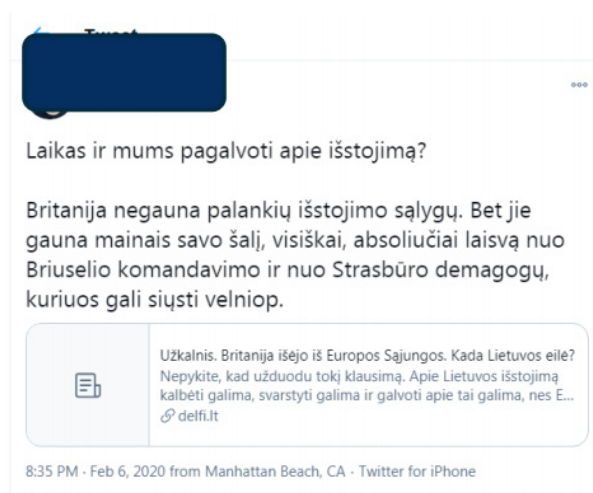
41.



42.



43.



44.



bahn...

45.



Jetzt wo die Briten weg sind, hätten wir bis 31. Jänner 2020 die Euromünzen von England wechseln sollen. Als ob die EU nicht geglaubt hätte, dass die Engländer gehen. 😞😡 #EU #brexit #öxit

10:30 nachm. · 5. Feb. 2020 · Twitter Web App

46.



Noch ein Verbot! Die EU möchte uns die knusprigen Pommes verbieten 🙄 sie sollten sich echt um andere Dinge kümmern anstatt sich um den Knusprigkeitsgrad von Pommes zu scheren...

#EU #nächstesVerbot #österreich #pommes

9:06 vorm. · 26. Mai 2020 · Twitter Web App

47.

Ich seh's schon, sobald es einen Impfstoff für #CoVid19 gibt, wird die #EU fix eine Impfpflicht einführen... Österreich wird nichts dagegen machen, weil die türkis-grüne Regierung alle für eine Impfpflicht sind.. 🙄🙄
#impfpflicht #Corona

2:43 nachm. · 28. Mai 2020 · Twitter Web App

48.

Dunque il #COVID2019 non è che un'#influenza più pericolosa delle altre.
Che può far finire in #rianimazione.
Ma in rianimazione non ci son letti, non c'è personale, non c'è un cazzo, perché l'#Ue da anni vieta la spesa sociale.
Dietro ogni casino, sempre i soliti porci euristi.

7:26 PM · 28 feb 2020 · Twitter Web App

49.

EU red tape 'condemning cancer victims to early death'
telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/0...



8:58 AM · 7 giu 2016 · Echobox

50.



51.

Corte Europea: se sei Cristiano puoi essere discriminato
fb.me/2ID8yDMYo

12:11 AM · 29 mag 2013 · Facebook

52.

Kaum zu glauben, dass das Europäische Gerichtshof Pädophilie duldet, wenn man die richtige Religion hat. Sowas ist einfach nur abstoßend. Wahrscheinlich sind die vom Gerichtshof selbst alle pädophil, dass sie Sex mit Kindern heilig sprechen...
[#fassungslos](#) [#EUspinnt](#)

1:13 nachm. · 26. Mai 2020 · Twitter Web App

53.

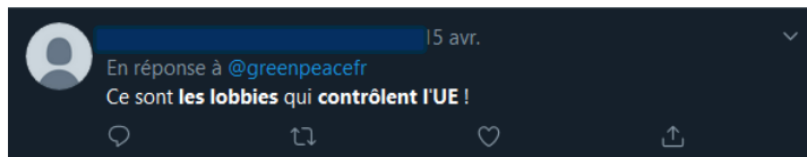
Die EU lässt sowieso jeden ein und ausspazieren wie es einem so passt. Das nutzen natürlich Kriminelle gerne aus. Schengen hin oder her.. Die EU hat da nicht mehr zu sagen!! Genug Scheiße gebaut. [#Österreich](#) soll selbst entscheiden!
[#öxit](#) [#EU](#) und [#politik](#) [#Schengen](#)

8:43 nachm. · 18. März 2019 · Twitter Web App

54.



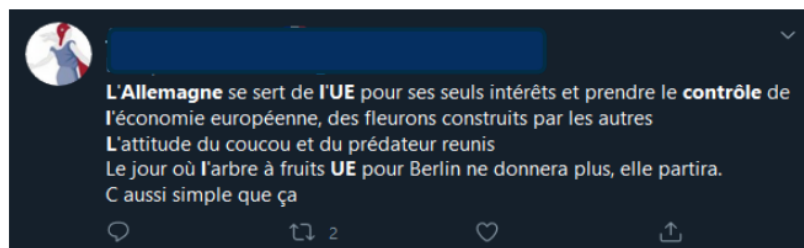
55.



56.



57.



58.



59.

4 déc. 2019

Le journal danois Dagbladet Information révèle que les sondages officiels Eurobaromètre :

- ont des taux de répondants si faibles qu'ils n'ont pas de valeur scientifique,
- surestiment systématiquement le soutien public à l'UE.

upr.fr/actualite/le-j...

Information

New data reveals serious problems with the EU's official public opinion polls

In the light of new documents obtained by Information, experts fear that the EU's official public opinion polls, Eurobarometer, may systematically overestimate public support for the EU

60.

RT @DELFIlietuva: Situacija ištis gąsdina #Briuselis #saugumas fb.me/Y02EE1db Priimkit daugiau "pabegeliu", idiotai.

Is Briuselio į Vilnių skridęs vyras pasibaisėjo saugumu: visur ga...
Nevaržomai judėti leidžianti Šengeno erdvė daugumai Europos Sąjungos piliečių patinka, nes joje nėra pasienio kontrolės. ...
delfi.lt

2:21 PM · Mar 22, 2016 · Gravity!

61.

@BrexitBetrayed

EU regulations interfere everywhere. They're even forcing garden centres to throw away plants



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62.

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3:56 PM · 9 mag 2016 · Facebook

63.



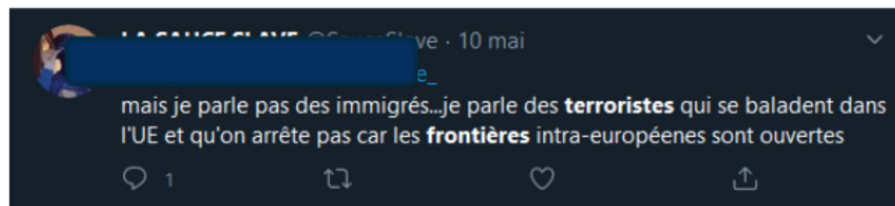
64.



65.



66.



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