Preparation Module | CULT Committee

Dear delegates of the MED MEP Nicosia,

First of all, we would like to welcome you to the MEP-Family. We are looking forward to being part of your MEP experience this October, where you will be able to meet other delegates, make new friends, explore the beautiful country of Cyprus and most importantly participate in fruitful discussions during the committee work and the general assembly.

As your committee presidents, we have prepared this document in order to provide you with the basic information regarding our topic, which you should use to begin your preparation. We recommend that you don't solely rely on the contents of this document and hope you expand your research beyond the pages of this module, bearing in mind the reliability of your sources.

We would also like to emphasize that you should all be well prepared on all aspects of the topic at hand in order to ensure a productive session full of lively debates and compelling arguments.

We look forward to meeting you all,

Jan Felix Inghelram
Anna Nishiotis

The question of Euroscepticism related to education

The European Union is built on values such as peace, freedom, tolerance, solidarity. Brexit and Euroscepticism, however, erode these ideals. These values must not be taken for granted; we have to work for them.
*W*hat role can Education play in promoting and preserving such values thus contributing towards strengthening European solidity and promoting the European spirit?

In this module, you will find a topic summary, our knowledge objectives, our focus questions and links that will be useful when you research the topic further.

As part of the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT), you will be discussing Euroscepticism and how it is related to education. This topic not only affects the EU as a whole but also each and every member state of the European Union.

Anti- EU and Eurosceptic mindsets have been on the rise over the last few years. The power of nationalist and populist parties that are openly opposed to the EU and its actions throughout Europe has steadily increased; a power given to them by the people.

This new threat to the EU is made even clearer through Brexit; in which the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the EU. Since then, Euroscepticism has spread even further throughout the continent, although it has changed form. Eurosceptics – perhaps due to the troubling Brexit negotiations – are no longer aiming to leave the EU but rather destroy it from within. After the most recent European Parliament Elections that took place last May, eurosceptics now control more seats than ever before.

Sadly, the surge of Euroscepticism is largely attributed to misinformation, lack of education and propaganda. The importance of the EU's fundamental values, what the EU represents and what the EU provides, are gradually escaping the minds of EU citizens and are commonly replaced with nationalist attitudes.

How can the EU put solutions forward to promote the European values and ideals using the tool of education?

Keep in mind that education has many forms. Education starts from an early age but never really ends. It is not only achieved in classrooms, but through many platforms such as social media, NGOs, news outlets and so forth.

Knowledge Objectives

The following are some **general points** that you should be able to debate about freely, use this as a checklist for your research:

- ✓ What the EU represents and its fundamental values e.g. equality, the rule of law
- ✓ What the EU provides to all its citizens
- ✓ EU election results (past and present configuration of the parliament, voter turnout, political parties)
- ✓ What is Euroscepticism and what contributes to its development
- ✓ The relation of Brexit to the topic
- ✓ Current EU stance on education
- ✓ European dimension of teaching
- ✓ Ways the EU has already used to promote its values in all member states

You should also be prepared on the following points regarding the country you are representing.

- ✓ Your country's stance on the topic
- ✓ your country's political situation in relation to Euroscepticism

✓ previous actions taken by your country in order to promote the European spirit and fight Euroscepticism

Focus Questions

First of all, the main topic question should be answered:

❖ *W*hat role can Education play in promoting and preserving such values thus contributing towards strengthening European solidity and promoting the European spirit?

The following are some questions you should find an answer to in order to form your positions on the topic and find solutions for the issue. These will also help you in your research:

- Which social groups are supporting eurosceptics and how can the EU reach and inform people of all backgrounds?
- How can the EU promote its values and fight Euroscepticism without violating freedom of speech and freedom of the press?

Preparation links

Euroscepticism:
- https://eavi.eu/what-is-euroscepticism/
- https://www.ft.com/content/ae3ebc46-4a99-11e9-bbc9-6917dce3dc62
- https://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR98_EUROSCEPTIC_BRIEF_AW_(4).pdf
- http://www.younglead.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/YEL-Booklet-Euroscepticism.pdf
- https://www.ecfr.eu/specials/scorecard/the_2019_European_election
- https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/what_europeans_really_feel_the_battle_for_the_political_system_eu_election
- https://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/Unlock_project_one-pager.pdf

Brexit:
- https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-education-higher-university-study-university-leave-eu-remain-voters-educated-a7881441.html

European Union
- https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-in-brief_en

EU Parliament Elections/ Political Situations in the EU
- http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/elections-press-kit/8/european-elections-results
- https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/26/eurosceptic-parties-reshape-eu-politics-strongest-showing-european/
- https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006
- https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/06/13/marine-le-pen-launches-new-anti-eu-alliance-far-right-parties/
- https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/c7zzdg3pmgpt/european-elections-2019

Education:

- https://www.europeaninterest.eu/article/education-eu-essential-tackling-disinformation-euroscepticism/
- https://oegfe.at/2016/01/the-european-dimension-in-education-a-new-strategy-to-an-ancient-theme/
- https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/council-recommendation-on-common-values-inclusive-education-and-the-european-dimension-of-teaching_en

An extremely intriguing 5-part podcast:

- https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/14/podcasts/the-daily/europe-liberal-democracy-germany.html?action=click&module=audio-series-bar&region=header&pgtype=Article