



ACADEMIC PREP KIT

**HAMBURG 2019 | 91. INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT**

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WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Delegates,

A truly extraordinary experience is about to begin. The Officials' team are working hard in preparation for Hamburg, where we cannot wait to welcome you all to the 91st International Session of the European Youth Parliament.

EYP sessions have the power to shift and define one's world view and open one's mind to new horizons and possibilities. In a time of profound crisis of the Western political model built in the aftermath of WWII, learning to navigate through the stream of information and propaganda - as well as being able to tell one from the other - is key for our active engagement. We should all cherish every change we got to have articulate and fact-based discussions, as these lay the foundation upon which to build our own political stances.

This booklet contains your first introduction to the session topics – the topics you will become experts in before and during your time in Hamburg. The chairpersons have written these overviews to help you with your research, they have collected and collated a broad subset of the information available and summarised it in such a way that it will help you dive deeper.

The topic overviews consist of three main sections. In the first one (panoramic view) you will find a general description of the issues at hand, their relevance, and the political questions to be answered. In the second one (zoomed view), you have the chance to dive deeper into the intricacies of the topic. There you will find a more detailed explanation of the critical concepts, stakeholders and figures relevant to the topic. The third section is meant as a tool for your individual research, and include a non-exhaustive list of resources to peruse.

It is now time to pay tribute to all those talented individuals whose contribution create this booklet.

My first thank goes to Alina, Lena, Kevin, Emilie, Rebeca, Daša, Nikos-Pavlos, Vedad, Lars, Klara, Annelotte, Jonas, Sabina, Vlady and Thanos, who spent many of their summer days researching, writing, and revising the contents. Moreover, they will keep helping you prepare for the Session in their capacity as Chairperson.

Secondly I want to express my gratitude to my amazing Vice-Presidents Rebecca Smith, Laura Teixeira and Waltter Roslin. Not only did they help in planning the structure for this document, but they also assisted the chairpersons in revising each Topic Overview.

Lastly I want to acknowledge the great work of Anna Barkenmeyer, Naomi Alcaide and Kaddle Franke - who helped develop the topics, and Chris Nolte - who took care of the formatting.

I hope you enjoy reading this booklet, and invest some time thinking about the questions that it prompts you to consider. I also hope that you are inspired to research even more broadly, and forming strong, well-informed opinions about your topic and others.

I cannot wait to meet you all in Hamburg!

On behalf of the Chairs' Team and the Board,

Andrea Stagni Morisi
President of Hamburg 2019
- the 91st International Session of the EYP



The European Union

- I Introduction
- II The Institutional Framework
- III Powers and Competences
- IV Legal Acts of the EU



I. Introduction

The peace-through-trade perspective

The European Union (EU) is a unique economic and political partnership between 28 European countries which, together, cover much of the continent.

The EU was created in the aftermath of World War II to foster economic cooperation and, thereby, peace - the idea being that countries who trade with one another become economically interdependent and, as such, more likely to avoid conflict. This idea led to the European Economic Community (EEC), created by the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The original core consisted of six countries: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany. Since then, the Community grew larger by a series of enlargements - the most recent of which brought Croatia into the block in 2013. Meanwhile, a Single Market was established among the Member States in 1986, and it continues to develop towards its full potential.

From economic to political union

What began as a purely economic union has evolved into an organisation spanning many policy areas, from development aid to environment. The Maastricht Treaty sanctioned such change in 1993, with the birth of the European Union.

The EU is based on the rule of law. Everything it does is founded on its constituent treaties, voluntarily and democratically agreed by all Member States. These binding agreements set out all EU's goals in its many areas of activity.

Mobility, growth, stability, single currency

The EU has delivered many decades of peace, stability and prosperity, helped raise living standards and launched a single European currency, the euro. The Single or Internal Market is the EU's main economic engine, enabling goods, services, investment and workers to circulate freely. Thanks to the abolition of border controls between EU Member States, people can travel freely throughout most of the continent, and it has become much easier to live and work abroad in Europe.

Human rights and equal opportunities

One of the EU's main goals is to promote dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights - both internally and around the world. Since the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force in 2009, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union brings all these rights together in a legally binding document.

Transparent and democratic institutions

As it continues to grow, the EU remains focused on making its governing institutions more transparent and democratic. More powers are being given to the directly elected European Parliament, while national parliaments are being given a greater role, working alongside the European institutions. In turn, European citizens have an ever-increasing number of channels for taking part in the political process.

II. THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The institutional structure of the EU cannot be compared to that of any other international organisation (e.g., the United Nations or the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation). It is neither a centralised unity like a nation state, nor a federation like the United States of America - it is an organisation sui generis. The structure is unique and continuously evolving, the most recent step in this process being marked by the Treaty of Lisbon. According to Article 13 of the Treaty on European Union, the institutional framework comprises 7 institutions.

1. European Commission

The European Commission (EC) is the executive branch of the Union. One Commissioner is appointed by each Member State (with one being the President of the EC, currently Jean-Claude Juncker from Luxembourg). Commissioners are approved by the European Parliament and put in charge of specific policy areas (e.g., agriculture, competition, foreign affairs).

The EC monitors the Member States' and the Union's adherence to the *acquis communautaire* (the ensemble of all EU legislation), represents the Union in foreign relations and has exclusive Right of Initiative (i.e. the ability to propose legislation to the European Parliament and Council of the EU).

The term 'Commission' also refers to the full administrative body of over 20,000 staff members working in various Directorates-General (DGs) or services, each responsible for a particular policy area. They are headed by a Director-General who reports directly to the President. The DGs draft laws, but their proposals become official only once the College of Commissioners adopts them during its weekly meetings.

2. European Parliament

The European Parliament (EP) is the lower chamber of the EU's legislative branch and consists of 751 Members of Parliament (MEPs) elected for five-year mandates by all EU citizens (over 18 years old, in Austria over 16). The first direct EP election was held in 1979 and the latest took place in 2014.

The EP is divided into seven large political groups plus several independent MEPs. The three largest are the European People's Party (EPP), followed by the Party of European Socialists and Democrats (PES) and by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats Party (ALDE).

It works either in a big plenary or in its 20 Standing Committees, each responsible for specific issue areas. The EP shares its legislative competences with the Council of the European Union.

II. THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

3. Council of the European Union

Also known as ‘the Council’, the Council of the EU is the higher chamber of the EU’s legislative branch. It is structured in issue-specific groups (councils) comprising the respective Ministers of the Member States (e.g., the Council for Justice and Home Affairs, with all Ministers of the Interior and Home Affairs). The presidency of the Council changes every six months and the ‘president’ in office supplies the different councils with a Chairperson, with the exception of the Council on Foreign Affairs, which is presided by the High Representative.

The issue areas are mirrored in those of the EP (e.g., environment, education, economy, budget), with whom the Council shares its legislative competences. Additionally, the Council also has certain executive powers. The Member States holding the presidency work together in groups of three, called ‘trios’, a system that was introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon. The trio set long-term goals and prepare a common agenda determining the topics and major issues that will be addressed by the Council over an 18-month period. On the basis of this programme, each of the three countries prepares its own more detailed six-month programme. The current trio is made up of Romania, Finland (the current president) and Croatia.

4. European Council

The European Council (no standard abbreviation is used) is an EU institution comprising the heads of state or government of the Member States, along with the Council’s own President (Donald Tusk, since December 2014) and the President of the European Commission (Jean-Claude Juncker, since November 2014). The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy takes part in its meetings. The European Council was established as an informal body in 1975; it became an official EU institution when the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force.

While the European Council has no formal legislative power, it is charged under the Treaty of Lisbon with defining “the general political directions and priorities” of the Union. It is thus the Union’s strategic (and crisis-solving) body, acting as the collective presidency of the EU.

5. Court of Justice of the European Union

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) is an EU institution that encompasses the whole judiciary. Seated in Luxembourg, it consists of two major courts and a number of specialised courts. The institution was originally established in 1952 as the Court of Justice of the European Coal and Steel Communities (as of 1958, the Court of Justice of the European Communities (CJEC)), changing to its current name with the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon.

Its mission is to ensure that “the law is observed [...] in the interpretation and application” of the Treaties. The Court reviews the legality of the acts of any EU institution, ensures that the Member States comply with obligations under the Treaties and interprets EU law at the request of national courts. It consists of two major courts: i) the European Court of Justice (created in 1952), the highest court in the EU legal system; ii) the General Court (created in 1988; formerly, the Court of First Instance).

II. THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

6. European Court of Auditors

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) was established in 1975. It is based in Luxembourg and its role is to check that EU funds, which come from the taxpayers, are properly collected and spent legally, economically and for the intended purpose. Its aim is to ensure that taxpayers get maximum value for their money, and it has the right to audit any person or organisation handling EU funds.

The Court has one member from each EU country, appointed by the Council for a renewable term of six years. The members elect one of their number as President for a renewable term of three years.

7. European Central Bank

The European Central Bank (ECB) is the central bank for the euro and administers the monetary policy of the euro area, which consists of 19 EU Member States and is one of the largest currency areas in the world. It is one of the world's most important central banks. The bank was established by the Treaty of Amsterdam, in 1998, and is headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany. Since 2011 (and until 2019), the President of the ECB has been Mario Draghi, former governor of the Bank of Italy. The owners and shareholders of the European Central Bank are the central banks of the 28 Member States of the EU.

III. POWERS AND COMPETENCES

Exclusive competences - as per Article 2 (1) and Article 3 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)

In these areas, only the EU may legislate and adopt legally binding acts. Exceptions are possible if the EU empowers Member States to act, or with regard to the implementation of Union acts:

- The customs union, including an internal free trade area with common customs tariffs (Art. 31 TFEU);
- The monetary policy of the EU for the Member States whose currency is the euro, overseen by the European Central Bank and with certain precepts formulated in the Stability and Growth Pact (Art. 129 (3) and (4), Arts. 132, 138, 219 TFEU);

Competition rules controlling state aid from national governments and the actions of companies necessary for the functioning of the internal market;

A common international trade policy, e.g., a common position in international trade negotiations (Art. 207 TFEU);

- The conclusion of certain international agreements (Art. 3 (2) TFEU);
- Common commercial policy;
- The conservation of marine biological resources (part of the Common Fisheries Policy, Art. 38 (1) TFEU).

Shared competences – as per Article 2 (2) and Article 4 TFEU

These are policy areas on which the Member States have agreed to act individually if the EU has not exercised (or planned to exercise) its competence. If a policy area is neither exclusive nor falls under supportive actions, it is a shared competence.

Some examples are:

- a) internal market;
- b) economic, social and territorial cohesion;
- c) agriculture and fishing (except the conservation of marine biological resources);
- d) social policy;
- e) transport;
- f) environment, pollution and energy;
- g) consumer protection;
- h) area of freedom, security and justice.

Supporting, coordinating or complementary competences – as per Article 2 (5) and Article 6 TFEU

The EU can financially support the actions of the Member States that have agreed to coordinate their domestic policies through the EU. This, however, does not entail harmonisation of regulations.

These areas include:

- a) education, vocational training, youth and sport;
- b) tourism;
- c) administrative cooperation;
- d) civil protection;
- e) protection and improvement of human health;
- f) industry;
- g) culture

IV. LEGAL ACTS OF THE EU

The two principal treaties on which the EU is based are the Treaty on European Union (TEU; Treaty of Maastricht, effective since 1993) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU; Treaty of Rome, effective since 1958). These main treaties, plus their attached protocols, have been altered by amending treaties at least once a decade since they each came into force, the latest being the Treaty of Lisbon (2009). The Charter of Fundamental Rights was then made legally binding, though it remains a separate document.

While the EU can issue several types of legal acts, not all are fully binding for its Member States. These acts are named according to their legal strength and are divided into:

Regulations – have to be strictly adhered to in all Member States and leave no room for adjustments during the implementation process.

Directives – provide a framework and give a certain policy direction, leaving the Member States with more flexibility and room for adjustments.

Decisions – always address certain recipients and are only valid for those specific countries or institutions.

Recommendations – without legal force, but negotiated and voted on according to the appropriate procedure, they are not binding for the Member States.

Opinions – similar to recommendations in that they have no legal force, but not voted on, simply emitted.

The European legislative procedure runs considerably longer than those of most Member States. In brief the EC (which has the exclusive Right to Initiative), the Council and the EP decide if the proposal becomes a legal act after having discussed relevant details. General policy guidelines and statements, especially from the EP, are formulated in Resolutions. They can entail instructions for future procedures, as well as regulations, which are formally valid in the Member States. Legal acts passed by the EP and the Council enter into force once the national governments have transposed them into national law.

AFCO

Committee on Constitutional Affairs

Chairperson: Alina Khan (LU)



HAMBURG 2019

91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

From the Luxembourg Compromise to Brexit - The crisis of the EU's institutional architecture:
In light of the debates regarding the perceived democratic deficit of the EU institutions, the Spitzenkandidat process and a Multi-speed Europe with different level of integration among its Member States, how can the EU reform its institutional framework whilst protecting its Member States' interests and fueling democratic participation?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the Problem and why does it matter?

'Never since the Second World War has Europe been so essential.' This statement was made by French President Emmanuel Macron during the 2019 European election period and it reflects one side of the polarising and controversial climate the EU finds itself in today.

At the time of its first constituent treaties, the European Communities were intended to ensure peace and economic cooperation among its members. Nowadays it is clear to see that the EU is not just an economic partnership but has evolved into political union, and the question of further integration is still on the table. One of the great successes of the EU is the assurance of the longest duration of peace and stability a union has brought between neighbouring countries with controversial past relations.¹

However, in recent times, criticism of the EU has grown stronger. As the graph² below shows, popular shared sentiment for EU citizens towards the EU is "doubt". With its perceived democratic deficit, the ongoing Brexit conundrum, a rise of populist, nationalist parties with an anti-EU agenda across Member States³, and even the heavy push for a reshuffle of the EU's priorities towards climate action⁴, it is important to reevaluate what the EU's future looks like.

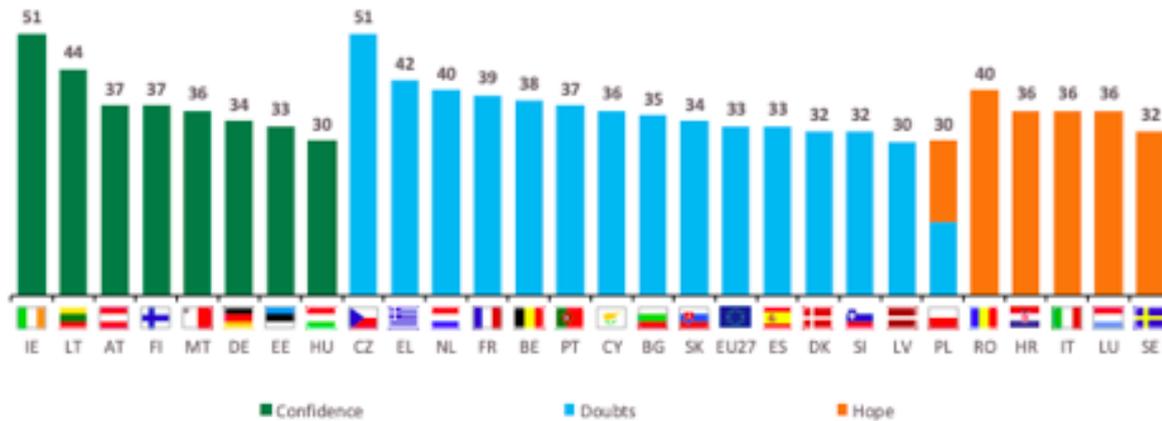
¹ Cato, Molly Scott, The EU, not Nato, has brought peace to our continent, The New Statesman (2016). <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/economy/2016/05/eu-not-nato-has-brought-peace-our-continent>

² Emotions and Political Engagement Towards the EU, Flash Eurobarometer (2019) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/files/be-heard/eurobarometer/2019/emotions-and-political-engagement-towards-the-eu/report/en-flash-2019.pdf>

³ Safeguarding democratic rule within the EU, The Economist (2017). <https://www.economist.com/special-report/2017/03/23/safeguarding-democratic-rule-within-the-eu>

⁴ Koch-Weser, Caio, Europe's youth want climate action. Elected leaders should give it to them, EURACTIV, (2019). <https://www.euractiv.com/section/climate-strategy-2050/opinion/europes-youth-want-climate-action-elected-leaders-should-give-it-to-them/>

Q1 When you think of the EU, what feeling first comes to mind?
(% - THE MOST MENTIONED ANSWER BY COUNTRY)



Base: all respondents, N=25,258

IMAGE SOURCE: Emotions and Political Eng 1

What has been done so far?

With time comes change, and that remains true for the institutional framework, aims, and purposes of the EU. The more the EU has expanded, the more competences were delegated by its sovereign Member States. The Luxembourg Compromise was one of the pivotal agreements shaping the newly founded pre-EU institutions. It helped resolve the empty chair crisis, where France caused a stalemate in any European Community discussions due to their disagreement on the role of NATO and the UK in Europe.⁵

One of the most fundamental steps towards reform was the proposal of a Constitution for Europe in 2004. After the French and Dutch refusal to ratify it, the content and reforms it brought along were amended and reintroduced as the Treaty of Lisbon, which was ratified in 2009. The significant changes⁶ focused on introducing more democratic procedures in the decision-making and institutional framework of the EU. The co-decision procedure also became the ordinary legislative procedure under which the Council and the Parliament must agree on the proposed legislation.

⁵ Luxembourg compromise, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2007). <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/luxembourg-compromise>

⁶ Fountoukakos, Kyriakos; Geurickx, Kristien; Buhart, Jacques, The Lisbon Treaty – brief overview of the key changes, Herbert Smith (2009). <https://s3.amazonaws.com/documents.lexology.com/47d1ef5e-a578-49bb-899a-963208f88ba8.pdf>

Apart from the codified changes brought about by the Lisbon Treaty, an attempt to reduce the democratic gap was made by an informal agreement aimed at establishing a best practice. After 2014 European elections, the European Council decided to take the results into account when proposing a candidate for European Commission President. According to the so called Spitzenkandidat process, the role should go to the leader of the party gaining the most ballots. This process democratically legitimises the Commission President as it is a reflection of how European citizens cast their voting ballots. However, this process was abandoned after the following 2019 elections. After heavy deliberations, the Council proposed Germany's Ursula von der Leyen who is not a Spitzenkandidat. With her confirmation on July 16th, the Parliament formally elected her.

Another debate gaining traction in recent years is about the nature of the integration process. With the existing discrepancies across Member States when it comes to political and economic conditions, the concept of a multi-speed Europe or differentiated integration has been in the works since the end of the Cold War. The concept it relies upon is that Member States should be given certain degree of flexibility in adhering to the shared objective of the EU. As an additional tool, there are certain policy areas where a Member State can negotiate to opt-out⁷, notwithstanding the fact that all Member States are bound by EU law on subject falling under the EU's exclusive competences. The opt-out mechanism is still considered controversial, as MEPs have even considered putting it off the table in the pursuit of further integration.⁸

What are the challenges of the topic?

European Sovereignty vs “United States of Europe”

Emmanuel Macron's election and the EU's economic recovery has provided a window of opportunity “to fix the roof [while] ... the sun is shining,” as European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker put it in 2017.⁹ However, there are competing visions within our borders. On the one hand, Macron's call for a more top-down union that shares responsibilities for borders, and defence.

⁷ Opting Out, EUR-Lex https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/glossary/opting_out.html

⁸ EU integration: MEPs want to end permanent opt-outs from EU law, European Parliament, (2019). <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190109IPR23023/eu-integration-meps-want-to-end-permanent-opt-outs-from-eu-law>

⁹ Deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union, European Commission (2017). https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/deepening-europes-economic-and-monetary-union-2017-dec-06_en

On the other, Salvini's Eurosceptic "Europe of nations" vision¹⁰ in which each country retains more sovereignty.¹¹ The delicate climate set by the rise of populism and nationalism across Europe ties EU decision-makers' hands. Any radical changes will not just be difficult to achieve but could be detrimental to the existence of the EU altogether.¹²

Despite the lack of consensus on the strategic direction to take, there are issues which need an answer in the short term, such as how to tackle climate change. Currently, the environment is a shared competence between the EU and its Member States, but it could be argued that this should change to provide a better action against climate change. Is this issue best handled by each Member States or should it directly addressed by the EU?

Democratic legitimacy

With the European Parliament being perceived by many as the sole democratically legitimate institution, the way the powers are structured seemed to be a continuing topic of discussion when it comes to a democratic deficit. One of the steps taken to enhance democracy is the aforementioned *Spitzenkandidat* process, which is now no longer followed as of 2019. Should it be resumed and/or become legally binding? If not, what can be done to ensure a stronger democratic link between the citizens and the European Commission?

Another key aspect is the legislative power of the European Parliament. Whilst it has continued to gain more powers, it cannot propose legislation as this is still the Commission's prerogative. However, others argue that the Commission has allowed itself to be influenced too heavily by the European Parliament, the only institution that can dismiss it, instead of acting as a balance between the Council of Ministers and the Parliament.¹³ Moreover, even though the turnout for the 2019 elections was a significant improvement from previous years, many voters are still inclined to prioritise national issues over European ones, and vote accordingly.¹⁴

¹⁰ The Brief: Europe of Nations and Freedom - a closer look, Euronews (2019).

<https://www.euronews.com/2019/05/21/the-brief-europe-of-nations-and-freedom-a-closer-look>

¹¹ Donadio, Rachel, Macron and Salvini: Two Leaders, Two Competing Visions for Europe, The Atlantic (2019).

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/05/emmanuel-macron-matteo-salvini-europe/589753/>

¹² Lehne, Stefan, EU Reform: Does Everything Have to Change for Things to Remain the Same?, Carnegie Europe (2018). <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2018/07/19/eu-reform-does-everything-have-to-change-for-things-to-remain-same-pub-76871>

¹³ How to address the EU's democratic deficit, The Economist (2017). <https://www.economist.com/special-report/2017/03/23/how-to-address-the-eus-democratic-deficit>

¹⁴ Ibid.

Fractured Camps

It is important to consider that even if there can be a large categorisation made between the pro-EU and anti-EU camp, there are even divisions within the pro-EU camp on what integration and reform should look like. With Macron proving himself to be a staunch European, he is hailed as one of the leading voices in Europe.¹⁵ However, his extensive list of reform suggestions and even treaty changes¹⁶ have not been met with enthusiasm in their entirety. As the other leading country in European politics, Germany is on the fence and claims that any major changes seem unrealistic, given the delicate climate of the EU.¹⁷

What now?

With people dissatisfied in the EU's complicated and strenuous decision-making, Poland and Hungary continuing to disrespect the rule of law, and Brexit looming, the future of the EU can head in two ways: either the discontent that people feel will fuel a drive for change or this same discontent will demotivate and anger critics further, which could ultimately lead to disastrous consequences for the EU. This begs the following questions:

- What should the EU's future look like?
- How can the EU further democratically legitimise itself?
- Where does the current institutional framework of the EU actually place power?
- Where should this power actually be placed?

¹⁵ Chrisafis, Angelique; Rankin, Jennifer, EU must learn from Brexit and reform, says Emmanuel Macron, The Guardian (2019). <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/04/eu-must-learn-from-brexit-and-reform-says-emmanuel-macron>

¹⁶ Clarke, Hilary, Macron sets out grand plan to relaunch 'weak and slow' European Union, CNN (2017). - <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/09/26/europe/macron-european-union-sorbonne-speech/index.html>

¹⁷ 'Not a good idea': Germany warns against Macron's EU reforms, The Local Germany (2017). <https://www.thelocal.de/20170515/not-a-good-idea-germany-speaks-out-against-macrons-reforms>

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

A **democratic deficit** defines a real or perceived lack of democratic accountability and control over the decision-making process. Within this topic, the democratic deficit within the institutional framework is highlighted extensively in the functioning of the European Parliament in relation to other EU institutions and the Member States.

Democratic accountability suggests that a body with given responsibilities should be held liable for its actions. With the European Parliament being the only democratically elected body of the EU, it is the voice of the people. The question then arises whether other institutions should have that same democratic accountability.

European integration is the process of industrial, political, legal, economic, social and cultural integration of Member States wholly or partially in the EU.

Harmonisation in the context of the EU aims to create consistency of laws, regulations, standards and practices, so that the same rules will apply to all EU citizens and businesses that operate in more than one member State. This process aims to incorporate different legal systems of all Member States under one basic framework.

Deepening and widening are the two schools of thought on the EU's development. **Deepening** stands for the increased integration of the Union. **Widening** is related to the idea of the EU's expansion through more countries acceding to the Union, thus making further political integration less likely due to the diverse stances brought in by new Member States.

Enhanced cooperation describes a mechanism, which allows a minimum of nine Member States to establish advanced integration or cooperation in an area within the EU's structures, without the other EU countries being involved. It allows the countries to move at different speeds and towards different goals within the same existing framework of the EU. It overcomes the impasse created by Member States blocking proposals that do not concern them, without, however, allowing for an extension of powers outside those permitted by the established EU Treaties.

Key figures

- **The voter turnout for EU elections went from 43% in 2014 to 51% in 2019.**¹⁸ This shows that people are now more than ever interested in what the EU is and it effectively also increases the legitimacy of the Parliament as more than half of all eligible EU citizens cast their vote. The Parliament is now more than ever accountable for its actions.
- **The popularity of liberal-democratic values has declined in Europe more than any other region in the world, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), particularly in Austria, Georgia, Hungary, Russia and Turkey, but most notably in Italy.** This is when the EU enters controversial and dangerous territory as anti-establishment politics taking power in countries such as Austria and Italy is "a reflection of the continued failure of mainstream parties to address the concerns and insecurities of significant swathes of the population"¹⁹
- Evolution of EU competences - Treaties wherein they are referenced for the first time.

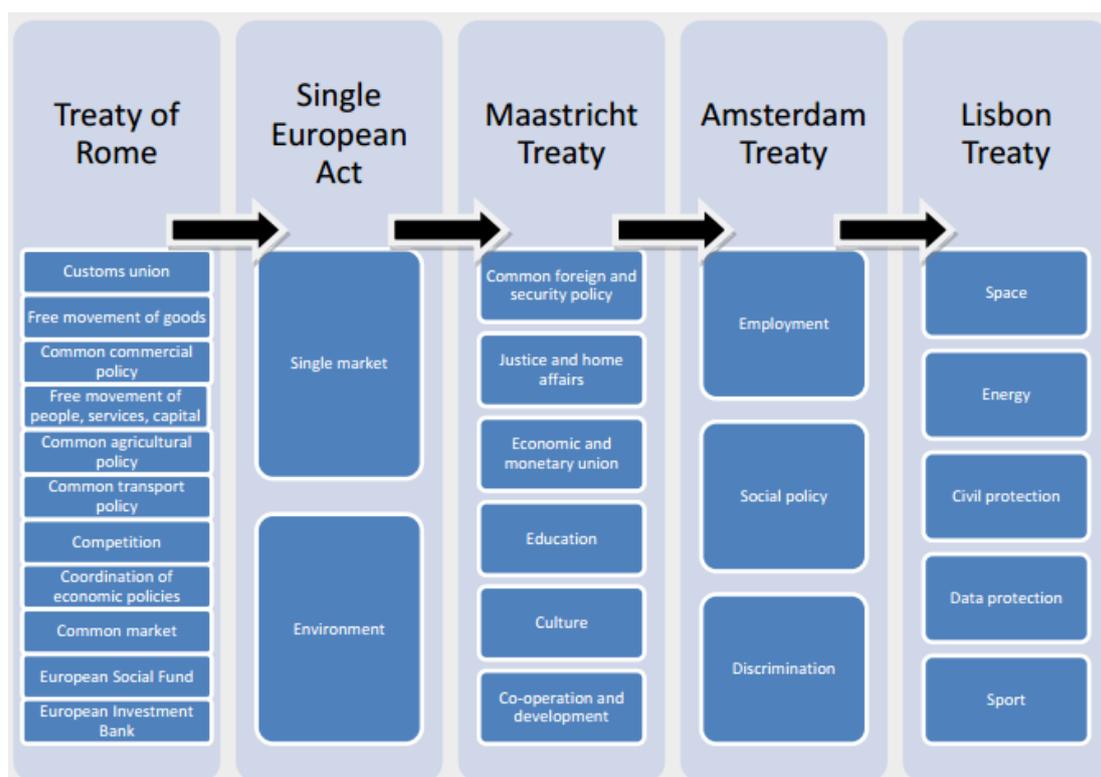


IMAGE SOURCE: <https://www.laurentiurebeg.com>

¹⁸ Elections 2019: highest turnout in 20 years, European Parliament, (2019).
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/eu-affairs/20190523STO52402/elections-2019-highest-turnout-in-20-years>

¹⁹ Kennedy, Racheal, Democracy in Europe 'has declined more than any other region', Euronews (2019).
<https://www.euronews.com/2019/01/09/democracy-in-europe-has-declined-more-than-any-other-region>

Key actors

- **EU Member States** are subject and bound to the *acquis communautaire*, which is in other words all existing body of EU law. To accede, a state must fulfil the Copenhagen criteria, which require a candidate to have a democratic, free-market government fulfil the four freedoms, respect the rule of law, and the EU institutions. The Heads of State and or government of each Member State are represented in the **European Council** or the Council. Thus, the Council represents the interests of the Member States. The President of the European Council is elected for 2.5 years and will now be taken over by Belgium's Charles Michel. It does not propose actual legislation, but rather sets the general political direction of the EU and creates a framework for the other institutions to follow.
- The **European Parliament** is the highlight of the debate on the shortcomings of democracy in the EU's structure. However, with eurosceptic parties still holding a significant voice in European politics, the 2019 European elections saw an increase in eurosceptic MEPs taking up their seats. Even though the results were not as detrimental to the EU as expected, critics continue to exist, and the EU is not out of hot water yet.
- The **European citizens**. Democracy is the principle according to which power is held by the people's representatives. With one of the pillars of the EU being the assurance of democratic institutions across the Union, it is important to uphold citizens' interests above all else, and ensure they are at the core of the decision-making process.

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

As our Committee deals with Constitutional Affairs, it is self-evident that we will be diving into the legal nature of the topic and therefore take a look at the institutional framework of the EU with attention to the legal details of the main treaties: the **Treaty on the European Union** and the **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union**. Of course, you do not need to know these by heart. It is more for you to consider that the way the EU makes treaty changes is not by replacing treaties all together but by building upon the existing framework. Therefore, try to understand the basic division of the **exclusive, shared and supporting competences** for instance. Additionally, in order to start off thinking about the solutions we hope to develop, consider the concept of **harmonisation**. Where can the EU easily create standardised guidelines for all Member States to follow, especially when it comes to EU election processes?

What to browse, read, and watch

- The debate regarding the Spitzenkandidat process has been reignited due to the recent election and confirmation of the new Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen. Discussions will unfold that will be highly relevant to our topic since the Spitzenkandidat process was one of the most significant attempts made in rendering the EU more democratic. For further reading, **POLITICO** <https://www.politico.eu/> is a good source for discovering diverging opinions. They even have a podcast called **POLITICO's EU Confidential** if that is more your thing.
- For general information on EU institutional reform, there are dedicated think tanks who have been working on how to improve not just the way EU institutions work together in general but also how Member States work in relation to the EU as well. Have a look at the **Center for European Reform** <https://www.cer.eu/> and delve into the different discussions surrounding reform in the EU.
- If you want to understand how the European Parliament works in terms of the different parties that exist, check out the following videos which provide a rundown of the different parties and an explanation of the 2019 European election results:
 - What EU Elections Tell Us About How Europe Feels - Brexit Explained, TLDR News (2019). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LQFDbSzs6E>
 - European Parliament elections explained, The Financial Times (2019). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5pg0X8xxYc>
- If you want to get a glimpse into why Brexit happened or have something to think about have a look at the following videos:
 - Betts, Alexander, Why Brexit happened -- and what to do next, TED (2016). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcwuBo4PvE0>
 - Is the European Union Worth It Or Should We End It?, Kurzgesagt in a Nutshell (2017) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XxutY7ss1v4>

CULT

Committee on Culture and Education

Chairperson: Lena Kreft (DE)



HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Towards a new culture of remembrance: Facing the shades of our past. Several European countries promote the positive aspects of their history without acknowledging their most critical legacies. Since this sanitisation of the past has detrimental impacts on society at large, how best can the culture and education sector adapt to reverse the trend? What concrete steps can be taken at both European and national level to improve public recognition of those who have suffered from oppression, colonisation and crimes against humanity?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

The term **Vergangenheitsbewältigung** describes the process of examining one's past. In Germany, it specifically refers to the on-going progress of reappraising the past, namely the horrendous crimes of the Holocaust. Germany is not the only country whose history is stained, as **colonialism** and **imperialism** - among many other crimes, were perpetrated by almost all other European powers. Yet, they are not always acknowledged.

In the British **school curriculum**, for example, History classes mainly focus on the development of the church, state and society of the United Kingdom and their ventures into other countries. Rarely do they include the involvement of said actors in slave trade, exploitation and oppression²⁰.

Is it justifiable that younger generations learn about the positive aspects of their past, while often remaining oblivious to the uncomfortable truths that come along with those? What kind of society does this shape?

Another critical issue is the question of responsibility and accountability. What is reasonable to be held accountable for? For how long? Should responsibility lie with the state or, more in general, to the descendants of those who collectively perpetrated the crime?

²⁰ Department for Education, *National Curriculum: History key stage 3 + 4*, UK government (2013).
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239075/SECONDARY_national_curriculum_-_History.pdf

It is important to investigate such events in a sensitive manner for the victims and their descendants, as even nowadays they may still suffer from the consequences and demand justice for themselves and their ancestors. Finally, it is important that such events are prevented from happening again. What can society learn from the behaviour of their predecessors? How will remembrance positively or negatively affect those who suffered from oppression or crimes against humanity?

What has been done so far?

To foster a culture of remembrance, certain Member States have implemented measures to reappraise their past. Since the most effective way to prevent ignorance is education, efforts have been made to include updated school curricula, multi-perspective history class, national remembrance days and research to present the most authentic and truthful portrayal of their past. In Germany for example, students have to study the crimes of the Nazi regime at least twice, and a field trip to a former concentration camp is often encouraged.

Some countries have promoted museums, commemoration days and memorials which deal with the negative aspects of the past. Another way of publicly recognising their wrongdoings is through officially declaring an event a crime. This, for example, has been the case with the Armenian genocide, when the Council of Europe recognised the crime of the Ottoman Empire in 2001.

Furthermore, international organisations such as the United Nations have the competence to set up tribunals. After the Yugoslavia Wars, the UN created the **International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)**, in charge of prosecuting the massacres and crimes against humanity perpetrated therein. To date, the ICTY has been one of the most successful tribunals and paved the way for future similar tribunals.²¹

What are the challenges of the topic?

Taking into account the sensitive and philosophical nature of the topic, many ethical and moral questions are raised.

Countries cannot be forced to reappraise their past and talk about it in an appropriate and sensible manner. Most of the time, the unwillingness to reflect one's past is an indication for a widespread problem. This can be seen in the increase of popularity of nationalist parties which often sanitise their countries' past.²² Why do certain groups of people refuse to acknowledge the past?

²¹ International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, *Infographic: ICTY Facts & Figures*, United Nations (2017). <http://www.icty.org/node/9590>

²² BBC, *Europe and right-wing nationalism: A country-by-country guide*, BBC (2019). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006>

Another challenge is that there is no consensus on which guidelines should be followed on how to provide a more honest representation of historical facts.. Who decides how a country can properly apologise for crimes they have committed and whether they have been forgiven, if that is even possible?

From a sociological perspective it is also important to observe what the perpetrators' descendants face as consequences from their national history. If people feel are ashamed of their country, they might not want to take up the responsibility to reappraise their past as a coping mechanism.

Part of this historical reassessment includes the use of language. While it might have been acceptable to refer to certain groups of people or historical events in a derogatory or glamorising way, this is not the case anymore. This includes, but is not limited to, so-called "N-Word" or the usage of the term "Oriental".

After many past wars, losing belligerents had to pay reparations for the war damage they had caused - in the form of money or goods. The issue of reparations was brought up again in early 2019, after Greece claimed that Germany still owes them €300 billion in war reparations. This shows that the hurt and consequences of past crimes can still be brought up again years later and can also be used as a political tool.

Even though the aforementioned aspects are already offering more concrete steps, it is crucial to keep in mind that the views and sentiments on the past can differ greatly, as no one can dictate how someone ought to feel about their past. On top of that, no case is similar to another one. Thus, it is a challenge to create guidelines, as an individual and unique approach will always be required.

What now?

It is now crucial to think of a strategy to promote historical awareness, so as not to repeat the same mistake again?

Furthermore, it ought to be discussed how former oppressing Member States should face their past crimes and the associated responsibility. An important topic is victims of oppression and their descendants: how should they be taken care for?

Additionally, it is also worth thinking about when remembrance should begin. Should it be right after the crime has taken place, or years later, after the country was able to recover from and reflect on the events? Hence, the establishment of remembrance and awareness culture could happen over a longer period of time.

Taking into account that commemoration and remembrance can be a delicate topic for many, how can countries and their cultural and educational institutions find a suitable solution for all actors involved? This includes handling the past and treating the victims with sensitivity, as well as condemning the past crimes of the oppressors.

Furthermore, the question arises: what is appropriate and proper remembrance? Given that there are no pre-existing guidelines or checklists, this is also important to consider, but difficult to answer.

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

Vergangenheitsbewältigung is a German term that describes the struggle to cope with one's past and how to work through it, or reappraising the past²³. **Erinnerungskultur** loosely translates to culture of remembrance and expresses a society's approach of treating their own past²⁴.

Collective memory is the shared knowledge, history and memories which heavily influences a group's identity²⁵.

Crimes against humanity are a number of crimes committed deliberately by a body of power to bring harm to a certain civilian group. Crimes against humanity are, for example, genocide, unethical human experiments or enslavement.²⁶

Colonialism is the set-up of colonies in foreign countries or territories, with the intention of profiting economically from the land's resources.²⁷ **Imperialism** is the invasion of a foreign country, mainly through power or military force. The invading country aims at ruling over the territory and influencing it.²⁸ The most prominent example is the rule of the British Empire over India.

Transitional Justice is the process of transitioning from a former criminal regime to a democracy. It includes the reappraising and redressing of the criminal past²⁹.

²³ Jesse, Eckhard, *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2013).

<https://www.bpb.de/nachschlagen/lexika/handwoerterbuch-politisches-system/202200/vergangenheitsbewaeltigung>

²⁴ Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, *Erinnerungskultur*, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung
<http://www.bpb.de/geschichte/zeitgeschichte/geschichte-und-erinnerung/39813/erinnerungskultur>

²⁵ Licita, Laurent & Aurélie Mercy, *Collective Memory*, International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioural Sciences (2015). <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/computer-science/collective-memory>

²⁶ United Nations, *Crimes against Humanity*, United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect. <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/crimes-against-humanity.shtml>

²⁷ <http://internationalrelations.org/colonialism-vs-imperialism/>

²⁸ <http://internationalrelations.org/colonialism-vs-imperialism/>

²⁹ International Centre for Transitional Justice, *What is Transitional Justice?*, International Centre for Transitional Justice. <https://www.ictj.org/about/transitional-justice>

Commemoration is the act of officially remembering and paying respect to an event or a group of people.³⁰ This can be achieved through designated days or public speeches.

Reparations are compensation in money or materials payable by a defeated nation for damages to or expenditures sustained by another nation as a result of hostilities with the defeated nation³¹.

Sanitising the past is the conscious act of trying to hide a country's negative past and only highlighting the heroic acts³². The government tries to act like the state and people were not taking actively part in specific crimes.

Key figures

- In 2010, 67% of German students deny the claim, that German history class is covering the Holocaust too extensively³³
- 59 % of German students feel ashamed because of the crimes of the Nazis³⁴
- 66% of eighteen to 34 year old Americans don't know what Auschwitz was.³⁵
- One in twenty Europeans have never heard of the Holocaust.³⁶
- All around the world, twenty Holocaust related memorial days exist. January 27 is the official Holocaust remembrance day for the EU, as well as worldwide.³⁷
- The International Court of Justice has prosecuted 165 cases since its establishment in 1946³⁸

³⁰ Cambridge Dictionary, *commemoration*, Cambridge Dictionary. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/de/worterbuch/englisch/commemoration>

³¹ Merriam-Webster, *reparation*, Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reparation>

³² HistoryExtra, *Sanitising the past: should historical drama reflect modern sensibilities*, BBC (2018). <https://www.historyextra.com/period/first-world-war/sanitising-the-past-should-historical-drama-reflect-modern-sensibilities/>

³³ Staas, Christian, *Jugendliche und NS-Zeit: Was geht mich das noch an?*, Die Zeit (2010). <https://www.zeit.de/2010/45/Erinnern-NS-Zeit-Jugendliche>

³⁴ Staas, Christian, *Jugendliche und NS-Zeit: Was geht mich das noch an?*, Die Zeit (2010). <https://www.zeit.de/2010/45/Erinnern-NS-Zeit-Jugendliche>

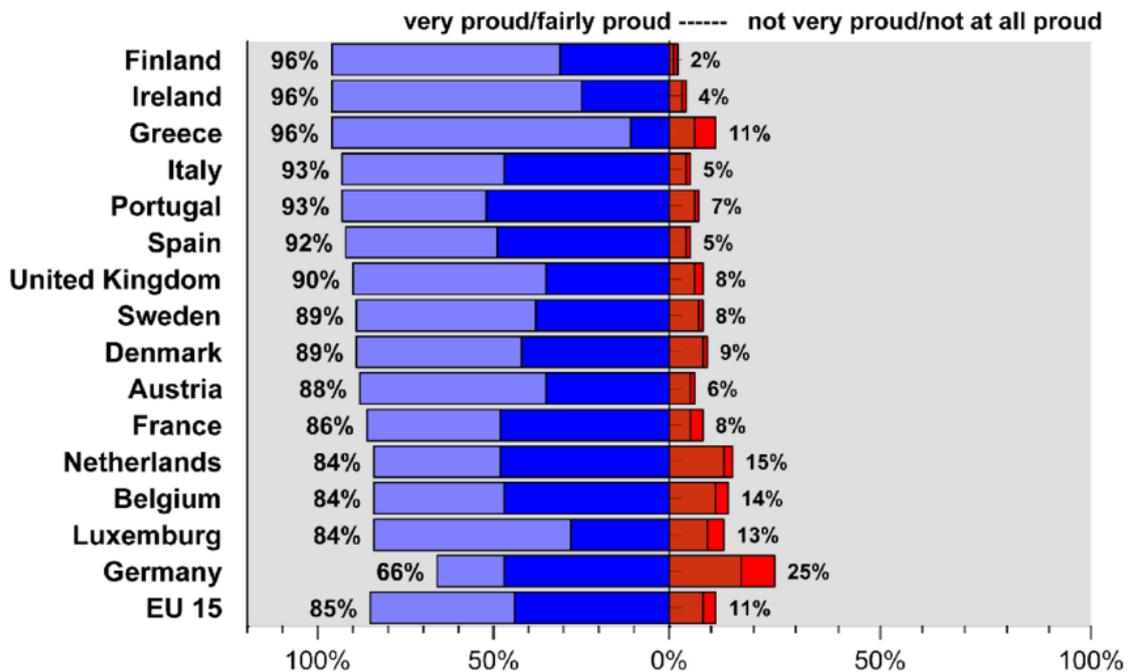
³⁵ Astor, Maggie, *Holocaust Is Fading From Memory, Survey Finds*, New York Times (2018). <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/12/us/holocaust-education.html>

³⁶ Allen Greene, Richard, *A Shadow over Europe*, CNN (2018). [://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2018/11/europe/antisemitism-poll-2018-intl/](https://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2018/11/europe/antisemitism-poll-2018-intl/)

³⁷ The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme, *Holocaust Remembrance*, United Nations (2005). <https://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/docs/res607.shtml>

³⁸ International Court of Justice, *List of All Cases*, International Court of Justice (2019). <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/list-of-all-cases>

National Pride in Europe 2003: "Would you say you are...?"



Eurobarometer 60.1 November 2003. "Don't know" not presented



International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia Facts & Figures³⁹

³⁹ International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, *Infographic: ICTY Facts & Figures*, United Nations (2017). <http://www.icty.org/node/9590>

Key actors

Member States: They are responsible for implementing new legislation in culture and education. The Member States are able to change school curricula, allocate funds for research and remembrance projects, make official apologies and decide on national remembrance days. They are the most important and, from a legislative perspective, most powerful actor with regards to this topic.

Educational Institutions and Ministries of Education: The schools of Member States are the actors who, in accordance with the curriculum determined by the Ministries of Education, teach the children about their countries' past. Moreover, they have the responsibility of portraying past events in an honest and legitimate way, without sanitising.

European Parliament: has the power to recognise crimes against humanity, and promote their remembrance.

European Remembrance Symposium: The European Remembrance Symposium is an NGO which aims at facilitating the exchange of methodologies and experiences between institutions. They organise events where European cultural remembrance is discussed.

Europe for Citizens: An initiative of the EU that allocates funds to remembrance projects. Its mission is to educate EU citizens on Europe's history, diversity and collective memory.

International Criminal Court (ICC): The ICC has the competence to prosecute crimes against humanity, such as genocide or war crimes. Up until now, the ICC has not convicted any individuals or regimes in Europe.

Citizens: The largest actor to play into the topic of remembrance are the citizens. The citizens play a big part in actively remembering their past and also pointing out when a government is not providing the needed structures and legislations. On the other hand, citizens also have to be open to be educated on the past.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs): Much of the work of remembrance is done by NGOs, whose main task is to raise awareness. They are able to provide citizens with more information and knowledge about their countries' historical background. On top of that, they can also provide help in researching the past through their own researchers and historians.

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

Given that every European country has an extensive history of their own, this Topic Overview cannot mention every historical occurrence. For further research, events such as the Armenian genocide (as an example of the crimes of the Ottoman empire), the Holodomor (example for the crimes of Stalinism) or the Yugoslavia wars can be investigated. Spain is also a noteworthy example. Spain has not done much to reappraise their past, hence being a counter-example to Germany. In addition to the aforementioned examples, the countries who collaborated with the Nazi regime in World War II can also be investigated, such as France, Austria or Eastern European countries.

When speaking about Eastern Europe, the theory of postmemory has been brought up in the last decade. It describes the trauma later generations face after their ancestors have been on the receiving end of oppression. Additionally, museums and the representation of culture is another aspect. Here, it is interesting to research what museums represent and how they view artefacts from other cultures. An example for that would be the Africa Museum in Tervuren, Belgium.

Before investigating other countries, it is important to know one's own historical background. What historical events have shaped your society? How does your society cope with that today?

What to browse, read, and watch

National remembrance

Try to investigate your own country's past. What historical events took place? How does your country deal with them? What does your school teach you about it. You can refer to:

- Your national Ministry of Education for school curriculums
- Lists of commemorative days in your country
- National museums of history websites

European Remembrance Symposium

The European Remembrance Symposium has organised many talks and conventions which deal with European remembrance. Below you can find a video about a debate held at one of the conventions and a speech which tackles different cultures of remembrance

- <https://enrs.eu/video/century-of-change-where-do-we-stand-now-discussion>
- <https://enrs.eu/article/not-a-laughing-matter-different-cultures-of-the-second-world-war-remembrance-across-europe>

Transitional Justice

The links below will provide you with a deeper look into the works of the International Centre for Transitional Justice, as well as an exemplary case.

- <https://www.ictj.org/our-work/transitional-justice-issues/criminal-justice>
- <https://www.slideshare.net/NationalMediationConference/transitional-justice>

Postmemory

Having briefly mentioned the theory of postmemory, you can find more explanatory documents and videos below. The inventor herself will introduce the concept to you and you will also find a take on it by the International Holocaust Remembrance Centre.

- <https://www.yadvashem.org/de/education/newsletter/18/post-memory.html>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0XdO1EEGdk>
- <https://www.postmemory.net/>

Example of no remembrance

There are also countries which do not engage in remembrance culture and try to sanitise their past. Please look up the following examples for reference:

- Spain: “Francisco Franco National Foundation”, which aims at delivering a positive interpretation of the dictator.
 - Poland: ‘Act on the Institute of National Remembrance’ & the ‘Polish death camp’-controversy.⁴⁰
- Hungary: Viktor Orban ordered to erect a statue in Budapest which symbolises Hungary

⁴⁰ Noack, Rick, *Poland’s Senate passes Holocaust complicity bill despite concerns from U.S., Israel*, The Washington Post (2018). https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/02/01/polands-senate-passes-holocaust-complicity-bill-despite-concerns-from-u-s-israel/?utm_term=.1f7eb2b105ba

DEVE

Committee on Development

Chairperson: Kevin Boland (IE)



HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

From post-colonial policies to strategic partnership: A Marshall Plan for Africa?

As Africa is home to the world's fastest-growing economies⁴¹ and largest population growth rates⁴², it is becoming an increasingly important actor in the ever-changing global geopolitical landscape. In the face of growing migration pressures from Africa, ongoing immigration concerns within Europe and increasing Chinese presence, what role should the EU development policy and governmental international aid programmes play in shaping the future euro-african relations?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

While there remain many challenges for the African continent, undoubtedly there has been transformational change across the continent over the last handful of decades. Jean Claude Juncker, former President of the European Commission noted in his 2018 State of the Union Address "*Africa does not need charity, it needs true and fair partnership. And we, Europeans need this partnership just as much*"⁴³. However this new relationship is as of yet to be defined

Across Europe there has been a significant rise in nationalism and **protectionism** due to the ongoing economic uncertainty in the aftermath of the Great Recession (2007-2009)⁴⁴.

Many EU Member States governments would be hesitant to support programmes that send aid abroad when citizens feel unsupported.

⁴¹ https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/NGDP_RPCH@WEO/OEMDC/ADVEC/WEOWORLD

⁴² <https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/population/>

⁴³ Juncker, Jean-Claude. "European Commission - PRESS RELEASES - Press Release - State Of The Union 2018: Towards A New 'Africa - Europe Alliance' To Deepen Economic Relations And Boost Investment And Jobs". *Europa.Eu*, 2019, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-5702_en.htm.

⁴⁴ Chappelow, Jim. "The Great Recession". *Investopedia*, 2019, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/great-recession.asp>.

The ongoing **migrant crisis** has also created a negative perception towards migrants⁴⁵, many which would be **economic migrants**⁴⁶ from African countries. It must be noted that many Africans leave their country due to poor economic conditions on which development policies can have a large impact.⁴⁷

Furthermore, if Europe fails to develop a new relationship with Africa it could be isolated by a proactive China, whose geopolitical power is growing globally⁴⁸.

Taking into account the reasons why Europe needs to establish a new relationship with Africa it is equally important to establish what this relationship should be. While the political role of the EU is widely acknowledged and appreciated throughout Africa, conditionality and sanctions are usually seen as a post-colonial practice infringing on the right of self-determination.

Therefore the **unintended consequences** of each proposed development plan must be analysed, both when it comes to the actual economic impact and the way they will be perceived by the local stakeholders.

What has been done so far?

The cornerstone of current EU-African relations stems from the Joint Africa-EU Strategy⁴⁹. Its main focus is to move the relationship between Africa and the EU from a donor based model to a long-term cooperation projects around complementary interests. To achieve this a number of areas have been focused on;

⁴⁵ Berry, Mike et al. "Press Coverage Of The Refugee And Migrant Crisis In The EU: A Content Analysis Of Five European Countries". *Unhcr.Org*, 2015, <https://www.unhcr.org/56bb369c9.pdf>. pg3-12

⁴⁶ Smith, Saphora. "Europe Grapples With Distinction Between Refugees And Economic Migrants". NBC News, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/europe-grapples-distinction-between-refugees-economic-migrants-n965161>.

⁴⁷ Pérez de la Fuente, Beatriz. "Economic Growth And Poverty Reduction In A Rapidly Changing World". *Ec.Europa.Eu*, 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/file_import/eb019_en_2.pdf.

⁴⁸ Albert, Eleanor. "China In Africa". *Council On Foreign Relations*, 2017, [://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-africa](http://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-africa).

⁴⁹ "Joint Africa–EU Strategy - International Cooperation And Development - European Commission". *International Cooperation And Development - European Commission*, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/africa/continental-cooperation/joint-africa-eu-strategy_en.

Task Force for Rural Africa⁵⁰

For decades the EU has been working with their African counterparts to encourage the promotion of sustainable agricultural development. The role of the private sector is critical to this. Balancing how to mobilise the private sector to invest within Africa in a sustainable way while also guaranteeing affordable and quality goods is key. Bearing in mind existing gender inequality and the institutional barrier that exist across Africa⁵¹ the education and upskilling of women and young people in particular is a key focus but may face cultural challenges.

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)⁵²

EPAs are trade and development agreements negotiated between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) partners engaged in regional economic integration processes. These agreements extend beyond the typical World Trade Organisation⁵³ standards by attempting to open up tariff-free access to the EU market for African countries. However, under previous trade deals⁵⁴, the EU did not have similar access to African markets. EPAs open African markets to European competition for the first time which could potentially damage fledgling enterprises across Africa⁵⁵.

⁵⁰ "Strengthening The EU-Africa Partnership". *European Commission - European Commission*, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/farming/international-cooperation/africa/eu-africa-partnership_en.

⁵¹ Wachira, Shiro. "Financial Inclusion Is Key To Tackling Africa's Gender Inequality". *World Economic Forum*, 2018, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/07/financial-equality-for-africa-s-women-farmers>.

⁵² "Economic Partnerships - Trade - European Commission". *Ec.Europa.Eu*, 2019, <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/development/economic-partnerships/>.

⁵³ "WTO | What Is The WTO?". *Wto.Org*, 2019, https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/whatis_e.htm.

⁵⁴ "Everything But Arms". *Trade Helpdesk*, 2019, <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/tradehelp/everything-arms>.

⁵⁵ Barbière, Cécile. "New African Economic Partnership Enters Into Force, Critics Still Unconvinced". *Euractiv.Com*, 2016, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/development-policy/news/new-african-economic-partnership-enters-into-force-critics-still-unconvinced/>.

EU External Investment Plan (EIP)⁵⁶

Adopted in 2017, the EIP aims to promote sustainable investment across African countries. It aims to achieve this through the mobilisation of finance, providing technical assistance and encouraging public/private partnerships⁵⁷.

It has been very successful to date but an increase its transparency measures alongside the strengthening of African institutions to enable the administration of the funds is needed⁵⁸.

What are the challenges of the topic?

Conflicting strategic visions

Within the EU there is not clear consensus across Member States on what the future direction of the Union's relationship with Africa should be. On one hand, Member States such as Germany are proactively pursuing further cooperation with Africa through such programmes as their Marshall Plan with Africa⁵⁹, whereas the Visgard Group response has been mixed⁶⁰. Different approaches to development aid are mostly impacted by the ongoing migrant crisis and the rise of nationalism and right extremist parties⁶¹. While development aid is only one of a number of issues causing these divisions, this must be taken into consideration when shaping solutions for this issue.

⁵⁶ "What Is The EU's External Investment Plan". *European Commission - European Commission*, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/eu-external-investment-plan/what-eus-external-investment-plan_en.

⁵⁷ "EU External Investment Plan - Factsheet | EU Neighbourhood Library". *Library.Euneighbours.Eu*, 2017, <https://library.euneighbours.eu/content/eu-external-investment-plan-factsheet>.

⁵⁸ Bilal, San, and Sebastian Große-Puppenthal. "The European External Investment Plan: Challenges And Next Steps For A Game Changer - ECDPM". *ECDPM*, 2018, <https://ecdpm.org/publications/european-external-investment-plan-challenges-next-steps-game-changer/>.

⁵⁹ Orth, Martin. "Ten Starting Points On Africa'S Future". *Deutschland.De*, 2018, <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/politics/marshall-plan-with-africa-ten-starting-points-for-africas-future>.

⁶⁰ Chmiel, Oskar. "The Engagement Of Visegrad Countries In EU-Africa Relations". *Die-Gdi.De*, 2018, https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_24.2018.pdf.

⁶¹ "Is Europe Seeing A Nationalist Surge?". *BBC News*, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006>.

Across African Countries there is also internal disputes among members of the African Union (AU)⁶². Upcoming challenges for the AU include, maintaining peace and stability across its Member States, balancing its position on the global stage and general social unrest and political contestation within its Member States⁶³.

China

China does not have the same restrictions in regulations and respect for fundamental rights as the EU⁶⁴. Within developing countries economic necessity often trumps high standards of fundamental rights. As a consequence, the EU aid and trade agreements could be at risk of being uncompetitive compared to its Chinese rivals. The EU must ensure that they have the support of all local stakeholders and that all local stakeholders are equally empowered if they are to successfully halt the rise of Chinese dominance in developing countries.

Institutional weakness within Africa

A main challenge for the development of aid programmes is the lack of stable institutions as well as the lack of accountability as to where funding goes. However aid in itself can sometimes prevent the strengthening of these institutions. When a donor country has a large presence within a country, the recipient country can become over reliant on the donor and fail to develop its own internal governance systems. Alongside this, the traditional check and balance between the citizens of the country and their government can be damaged. Governments feel that they have a duty towards the donor country and not towards the citizens. Ensuring participatory democracy within African countries is key for their long-term development.⁶⁵

⁶² "Time To Reset African Union-European Union Relations". Crisis Group, 2017, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/255-time-reset-african-union-european-union-relations>.

⁶³ "Eight Priorities For The African Union In 2019". Crisis Group, 2019, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/eight-priorities-african-union-2019>.

⁶⁴ "World Report 2018: Rights Trends In China". *Human Rights Watch*, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/china-and-tibet>.

⁶⁵ Rodrik, Dani. "Institutions For High-Quality Growth: What They Are And How To Acquire Them". *NBER*, 2000, <https://www.nber.org/papers/w7540>.

What now?

If we continue to stand still, we will eventually begin to go backwards. This topic is about accessing a new relationship between the EU and the AU while taking into consideration that no decisions acts within a vacuum.

They say “intelligence is measured by a person's ability to see validity within both sides of contradicting arguments”, and this is the approach you should take to this topic. With this mindset in place there is in particular a number of questions you should ask yourself;

Has the post-war concept of aid distribution been successful?⁶⁶ Are there other examples of where aid programmes have worked and if so why? What was the reason explaining the different growth rate of South America and Asia compared to Africa⁶⁷? Has the conditionality attached to such aid been too strict and if so what alternative arrangements could be put in place to counteract this⁶⁸?

The value of development aid in the first place could be questioned taking into account that the development of these economies is often stifled due to the over reliance on this aid. What alternative measures could be put in place? Are the concepts of the programmes not working or is it the implementation of the programmes that need to be changed and if so how?

Lastly what should be the EU relationship with the rest of the world is something that needs to be discussed. How much of a role should the EU continue to play on the world stage when it comes to development aid? How should it react to the changing nature of other actors such as China and Africa itself in this regard?

⁶⁶ Williamson, John. "The Washington Consensus As Policy Prescription For Development". *Piie.Com*, 2004, <https://www.piie.com/publications/papers/williamson0204.pdf>.

⁶⁷ kohli, Atul. *Coping With Globalization: Asian Versus Latin American Strategies Of Development, 1980-2010*. 2012, http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0101-31572012000400001. Accessed 9 July 2019.

⁶⁸ "Perspectives On Global Development 2019". *Oecd.Org*, 2019, https://www.oecd.org/dev/Overview_EN_web.pdf.

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

Actual Economic Impact

Often when policies are put in place the impact they have is not the intended outcome they wanted to achieve (**unintended consequences**). In many cases development intended to support people to self sufficient can make them self reliant as they become dependent on the aid. Overall programmes should always be supported by fact-based evidence and not short.sighted opportunistic solutions.

Cultural Sensitivity

Western societies often tend to promote certain rules and values that, while effective in their countries, may not necessarily work in other cultural contexts. This is not to say that fundamental human rights should not be upheld, but it is important to recognise that countries are in different stages of social and cultural development.

Development Plan

Development Plans are documents that outline the vision, the overarching aim of the plan (i.e reduce child poverty), the goals, the areas that need to be improved to achieve the vision (i.e increase literacy rates amongst children) and the objectives, which are the actions that need to be carried out to achieve the goals(i.e increase the number of schools).

Economic Migrants

A person who moves to another country to seek better economic opportunities. Their life is not under immediate threat if they remain within their home country.

Geopolitical Powers

This refers to the relationship between different countries and the amount of influence one country can exert over another be it in hard power sense (military strength) or soft power. Soft power is the ability to shape opinion through dialogue, cultural influence and general interaction between countries.

Migrant Crisis

The name given to the influx of migrants into Europe since 2015, from both war torn and African countries.

Protectionism

This is the practice of shielding home country industries from outside companies to ensure the survival of home industries from foreign competition.

Key figures

KEY FIGURES

INSIGHTS INTO THE EU/AU RELATIONS

POPULATION

The African population reached almost 1.3 billion people in 2017, more than double the population of the EU (512 million people).

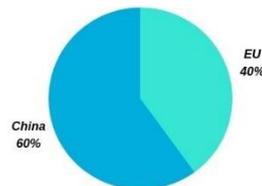


GROWTH

From 2016 to 2017, GDP grew faster in Ethiopia (10.3%), Ghana (8.5%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (7.6%) than in the best performing EU country (Ireland 7.2%).

CHINA VERSUS EU INVESTMENT

Recent reports show that China has investment \$60 billion into Africa, whereas the EU has invested \$40 billion



TRADE



Africa accounted for around 7 % of imports to the EU-28 and 8 % of the EU-28's exports in 2017.

This is far behind Asia, which accounted for 46 % of imports to the EU-28 and 37 % of exports



Key actors

European Commission

The European Commission proposes and initiates legislation for the European Union. In any trade agreement between African countries the EU it would be the actor that would represent the EU in this process. The outgoing Commission under Juncker has recognised the importance of establishing a new relationship with Africa⁶⁹. In terms of development aid, the EU commits to an overall development goal alongside a target for individual Member States which is non binding⁷⁰.

Member States

The citizens of Member States play a vital role in directing the national politicians that in turn set the Member State development targets and indirectly the European development target as a whole. Fears surrounding migration or general economic hardship within a Member States heavily dictate the Member States response towards development aid⁷¹.

⁶⁹ "Africa-Europe Alliance". European Commission - European Commission, 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/africaeuropealliance_en.

⁷⁰ "Extract From: OECD Development Co-Operation Peer Reviews European Union 2018". *Oecd.Org*, 2018, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/European-Union-2018-MFR.pdf>.

⁷¹ Faust, Jörg, and Svea Koch. "Foreign Aid And The Domestic Politics Of European Budget Support". *Die-Gdi.De*, 2014, https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_21.2014.pdf.

Interest Groups

There are many business interests that would like to maintain the status quo, especially in areas where they currently have a competitive advantage in relation to their African counterparts. They would also argue that high standards are needed to ensure the quality of the products produced within Europe are not negatively impacted by lower quality alternatives from Africa. This leads rise to what is known as technical barriers to entry⁷².

African countries⁷³

Historically, the African countries that are part of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group and the African countries of the Mediterranean. However, at the turn of the new millennium, the EU launched a new strategy to strengthen dialogue with the continent as a whole, which was further reinforced by the creation of the African Union in 2002.

China⁷⁴

As the world's new largest economy China is looking to build its political and economic dominance across the globe large scale infrastructure projects can be seen across much of the developing world. China is keen to make its presence known across Africa.

⁷² Faust, Jörg, and Svea Koch. "Foreign Aid And The Domestic Politics Of European Budget Support". Oecd.Org, 2014, <https://www.oecd.org/tad/45489713.pdf>.

⁷³ Fioramonti, Lorenzo. "African Perceptions Of The European Union: Assessing The Work Of The EU In The Field Of Democracy Promotion And Peacekeeping". *Idea.Int*, 2009, <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/chapters/the-role-of-the-european-union-in-democracy-building/eu-democracy-building-discussion-paper-50.pdf>.

⁷⁴ Esposito, Mark, and Terence Tse. "What Does China's Role In Africa Say About Its Growing Global Footprint?". *The Conversation*, 2015, <https://theconversation.com/what-does-chinas-role-in-africa-say-about-its-growing-global-footprint-49474>.

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

A good way to approach researching for this topic is trying to establish your opinion on what the long term relationship between the different actors should be and what framework can be used to underpin it. I would suggest you also try to get a sense of the feeling of what would be socially acceptable in your own country, if you agree or disagree with it and if so why?

In terms of areas that should be focused upon it would be good to get a sense of history of the topic. Understanding what has led to the current relationship and what impact previous efforts had is key. Establishing a vision that you are happy with is more important than focusing on mechanism to implement them. Once you know what you want to achieve the means to do it will become clear.

What to browse, read, and watch

I would suggest skimming through the above links alongside the following links.

Current EU policy

[Overview of the current EU approach primarily to Africa](#)

Changing global landscape

[Overview of the growth of the African Economy](#)

[Overview of the changing value chain landscape](#)

[Overview of Chinas role in globalisation](#)

[Rise of geopolitical alliances](#)

International Trade

[Overview of Generalised Scheme of Preferences](#)

[Overview of the Washington consensus](#)

Migration

[Options of dealing with immigration from Africa.](#)

How aid works

[Effectiveness of Aid](#)

[Role of Institutions](#)

[Use of FDI in Development](#)

ECON

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

Chairperson: Emilie Lutz (FR)



HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Tax evasion and tax avoidance: The unsolved issues of Europe's fiscal policies.

The Panama papers and Luxleaks scandals have revealed that large networks of individuals and businesses utilise loopholes in financial markets' regulations to lower their tax contributions and shield their capital offshore. With tax avoidance and evasion costing billions to European countries each year, what steps should be taken to ensure a fairer and more effective taxation while respecting the diversity of political stances taken by national governments on the issue?

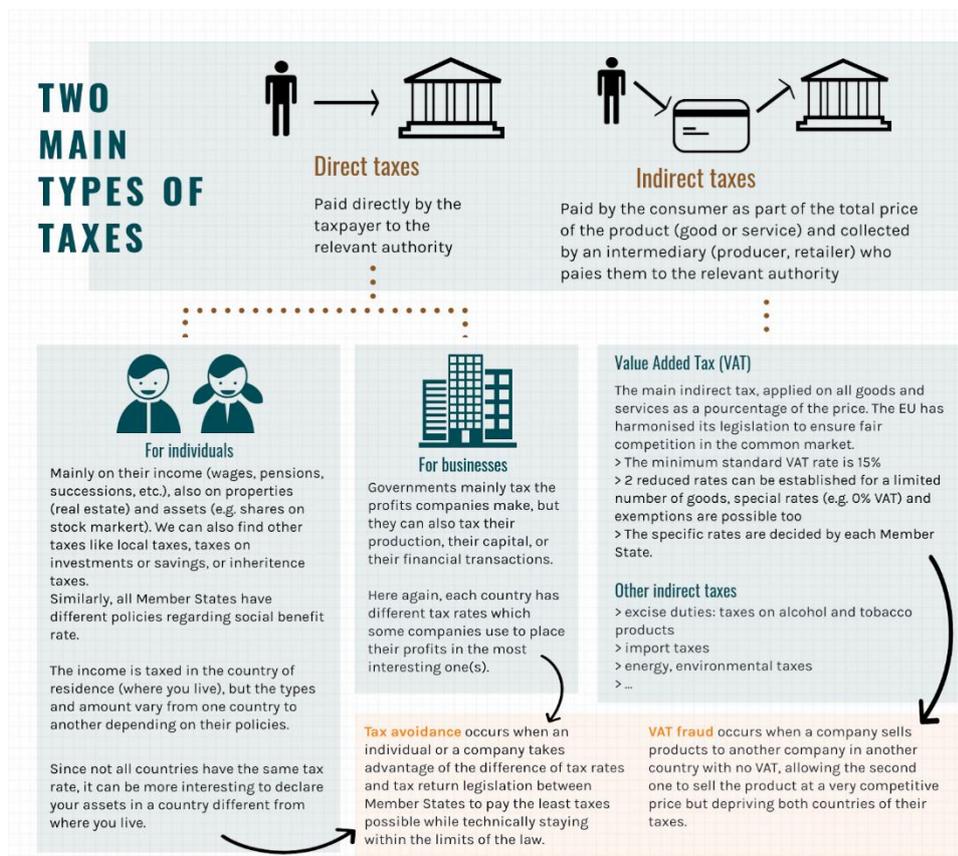
SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

Several financial scandals (Panama papers, LuxLeaks, Paradise papers) have brought light on the tax optimisation practices of some multinational companies and very wealthy individuals. The goal is to reduce the amount of tax paid, either by exploiting loopholes in different national tax systems, or by arranging complicated scheme targeted at hiding money from the government.

The [EU objectives](#) in taxation are **to fight tax evasion**, tax competition between Member States, and avoid [double taxation](#) (avoid for cross-border workers to be taxed twice on the same income), which for now can only be addressed through bilateral agreements. For company taxes, the goal is to ensure fair taxation to protect competitiveness in the single market. Each Member State is competent to establish their own tax policies. Hence, on the EU level, only the Council of the EU can decide on common tax policies, but the European Parliament can give advice or opinions on the matter. This is how policies have been implemented to harmonise [VAT](#) standards for example.

Taxes represent the main revenue for governments. The difference between the expected and the actual income creates a gap that directly impact the policies governments can implement. As a result, when public services run with lower funds and investment capacities are reduced, it negatively impact the economy as a whole. Tax avoidance and evasion have thus a direct impact on quality of life for all citizens. However, without an intergovernmental consensus on what constitutes tax avoidance and evasion it will not be possible to tackle the problem effectively.



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What has been done so far?

The special parliamentary committees TAXE, TAXII, PANA, and TAX3 that all succeeded one another, have studied and proposed solutions to tackle tax fraud. The last one having ended its term in March 2019: produced a [final report](#) containing recommendations for actions and denounces the lack of political will to tackle avoidance and evasion. The ECON committee is now responsible for tax fraud in the European Parliament.

In 2016, the European Commission proposed the [Anti Tax Avoidance Directive](#), as part of a larger anti-tax avoidance package, which contains a set of measures that Member States have to apply to address abusive measures companies use to get away from taxes.

The EU has furthermore created a [list of tax havens](#), which aims to impose standards the EU stands by (transparency, fair tax competition, and real economic activity) to all other jurisdictions it deals with.

The European Commission has been focusing on creating frameworks to harmonise taxation on international companies on the EU level. The [Common consolidated corporate tax base \(CCCTB\)](#) is a set of rules meant to measure a global amount for companies' taxes covering their activities in every country, payable to one entity that would then redistribute the money amongst the involved

States. The proposal has been re-launched in 2016 and it could be the first step towards a [harmonised tax system in the EU](#). At the same time, the Commission has also drafted in 2018 a proposal for a harmonised [tax on digital services](#) to adapt tax systems to the new digitised economy.

The [Fiscalis 2020 program](#) (Regulation 1286/2013) implemented by the European Commission with the objective to improve the coordination and cooperation between the taxation systems of Member States, in order to fight tax fraud, evasion, and **aggressive tax planning**.

Since the London Summit of 2009, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has also put in place actions to fight tax evasion and address tax avoidance. In particular, in cooperation with the G20, there is a common set of 15 [actions](#) against Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) applicable in every OECD Member States.

What are the challenges of the topic?

Tax systems are complicated setups and assembling of legislation, and even more so when considered from an EU cross-border perspective as different **taxation models** exist and different **tax schemes** can be implemented depending on the government's goals.

These concepts are important to keep in mind when analysing current and possible tax systems for the EU and its Member States. The existence of different taxation models and systems underline the fact that there is no "perfect" taxation: the right amount of taxes depends a lot on politic ideology and the aims governments want to achieve. Strong legislation needs to be developed in order to act against tax fraud. Avoidance and evasion scheme take advantage of the differences in tax rates between Member States, as well as the different **tax exemptions** that exists in different countries. If those exemptions can make taxes more attractive on the national level, at the international level it creates loopholes that wealthy businesses or individuals can exploit.

Cooperation in taxation is important at the EU level for the creation of an integrated single market as issues like double taxation or compliance costs can undermine cross country trade and mobility. Furthermore, some level of harmonisation is now becoming essential between Member States to avoid any kind of **fiscal dumping**, when one country significantly lowers their tax rates to attract more businesses, at the expense of other states. However, taxation is one of the main component of modern States and a major trait of a country's sovereignty, which explains why Member States can be reluctant to give this competence to the EU. As a result, the Commission and the Parliament are currently rather powerless in the field of taxation as they cannot initiate any legislation without a mandate from the member states.

What now?

Legislation has been developed to address tax avoidance and tax evasion, especially over the past decade, yet it is still an important problem and the new European legal acts have yet to prove their effectiveness. Tax harmonisation between Member States has been discussed since 2007 with almost no policy implemented in that direction, as it requires a high degree of cooperation and willingness for EU integration. However, some argue that it would be the best way to address tax evasion issues, as international fraud requires international solutions.

Harmonisation could also help solving fiscal dumping in the EU, as if all legislations meet similar pattern many existing loopholes will naturally disappear. Others argue, however, that avoidance and evasion are inherent flaws of the globalised financial markets, as the flow of money exchanged everyday needs a place stream through, ideally with as little losses as possible. This would explain in particular the existence of tax havens (or generally low tax states) as optimal points in the international financial exchange.

Behind all the technicalities, tax evasion and avoidance pose an important moral issue: how much should everyone pay in taxes, and what to do with the ones who circumvent [the system](#)? How come some can get away without paying their taxes, impacting the economy and the services available for the rest of the population? **Tax fairness** and tax transparency are important issues for the political organisation of any state, especially in times of financial and economic crisis.

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

The line between tax avoidance and tax evasion is complicated to draw. **Avoidance** refers to the arrangement of a taxpayer's assets intended to reduce his tax liability, using strictly legal mechanisms but in contradiction with the intent of the law. **Evasion** refers to illegal arrangements where tax liability is hidden or ignored (the taxpayer pays less by hiding information from the authorities).

[Tax havens](#): a territory that combines forms of financial secrecy and low to no tax rates; a large share of their scheme hosts money from illegal activities and money laundering and they allow people and businesses to bypass national tax systems.

[Aggressive tax planning](#): refers to the set of methods a company can use to avoid paying their taxes in the country where most of their profits taxes place, if the tax rate of that country is considered too high.

[Fiscal dumping](#): when a country intentionally sets lower tax rates in order to attract companies or investments.

Tax exemption or deduction: a rule that exempts an individual or a company from paying their taxes, or lower its amount, if they fulfil some requirements. Those policies can be used by governments to influence people's behavior, e.g. in several countries, you can get a tax deduction if you donate money to a charity.

Tax fairness: a tax system that would be equitable to all taxpayers, with taxes based on their ability to pay.

Economic models and taxation: on one hand, welfare state models advocate that the state should provide services to its population (health, education, protection against unemployment, retirement, etc.), and high taxes are needed to fund them. Individuals pay a lot of taxes, but in return they are entitled to free or cheap access to those services.

On the other hand, liberals advocate that taxes weigh down companies because of the big charge it represents. If they have less expenses, they are more flexible with their funds to employ and invest more.

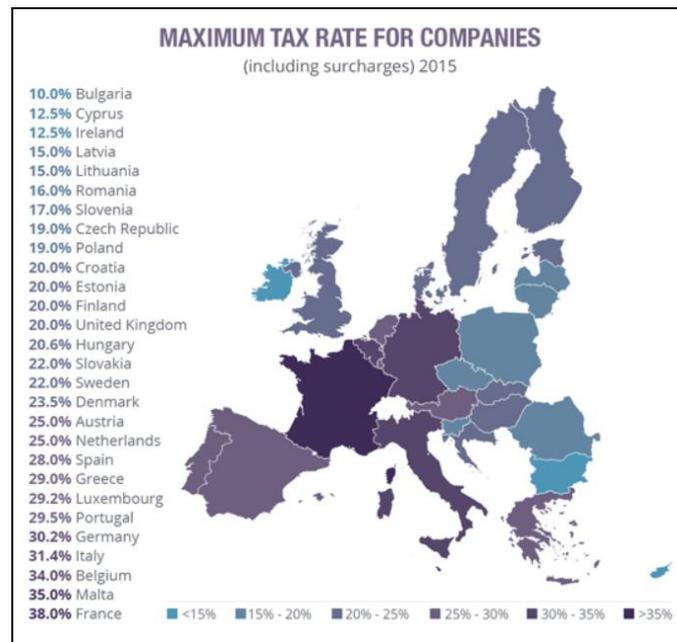
Progressive tax: taxes are calculated proportionally to the person's income, so the more you earn, the more you pay.

Proportional of **flat tax:** a system in which there is only one income tax rate, regardless of individual situations.

Regressive tax: a system where all consumption items are taxed in the same way, having a larger impact on the ones with low income; VAT could be an example of a regressive tax.

Key figures

- The EC estimates between €160 and 190 billions annual revenue losses for EU countries because of tax avoidance by companies.
- In the EU, taxes and compulsory social contributions represent on average for 40.2 % of GDP in 2017, the highest percentage being France with 48.4% of its GDP, meaning that governments rely heavily on taxes to function and implement their policies.
- In 2015 only, the total amount of EU VAT lost was at EUR 151.5 billion. The latter represents a loss of 12% of the total expected VAT revenue and shows a significant increase over a 10-year period.



The difference in tax rates for companies, which multinational businesses use to place their assets in lower taxed countries and pay less.

Key actors

- The Council of the EU the responsible ministers from each Member State, it is the only body in the EU with competences to make changes on fiscal policies, and need unanimous vote for the policy to be developed and implemented. The European Commission drafts proposals, and the European Parliament can be consulted for advice.
- The Member States have the power to make their own independent fiscal policies and are responsible for implementing EU legislations. Their tax policies are in the end interdependent as fiscal dumping is based on the differences between their tax rates.
- Companies usually seek to have as low taxes as possible to have larger margins and freedom in the usage of their money. They sometimes hire fiscal lawyers who can build complicated avoidance or evasion schemes for them using the loopholes of fiscal policies (although small and medium size enterprises have less resources to build those schemes).
- Lobbies work at the European Commission and the European Parliament to influence the legislation. If some are in favour of tax harmonisation, [others](#) actively promote low tax rates which are used in tax avoidance.

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

→ Check youtube videos and podcasts about taxation models, avoidance and evasion: a lot of interesting material is available and often easier to understand than pages of text. Some examples include:

- European Parliamentary Research Service podcast “[The fight against tax fraud \[Policy Podcast\]](#)” (08/03/2019)
- Crash course, “[Taxes](#)” (27/04/2016)

→ To understand the topic and relate it to moral and ethical issues, you can look into you own country’s tax scheme for businesses and individuals: are there debates about tax injustice? Are some business sectors or categories of population more favoured than others by the fiscal policy, and why? How has the fiscal policies evolved in the recent years (increase or decrease of taxes, creation or dissolution of taxes, etc.)?

What to browse, read, and watch

Here are some examples of research areas and sources you can check for more information. These are not exhaustive, and you are encouraged to look for more on your own!

- Extensive [briefing](#) on the policies in place to fight tax fraud in the EU by the European Parliamentary Research Service (a bit long but quite comprehensive and easy to read)
- [Taxedu](#), a website by the EU about the importance and impact of taxes.
- [Eurodad](#) is conducting research on tax justice.
- Oxfam produced this [report](#) which both explains the state of play and includes some recommendations, you can read some parts of it.
- [ECCVAT](#) is offering another opinion, lobbying for a reduction of taxes and VAT for NGOs.

There is a lot more available on EU and NGOs websites for general information about the topic, as well as newspapers, possibly in your own language, for country related updates and opinions about tax fraud. Everything you can find is interesting, as long as you make you the source is reliable.

EMPL

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Chairperson: Rebeca Leal (PT)



HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

The Fourth Industrial revolution: Doom or boon scenario? While bringing many benefits, ongoing automation and digital transformations are estimated to cause the transformation of up to 45% of the European workplaces in future decades⁷⁵. What measures should be taken to ensure that current and future workers acquire and retain the skills to remain relevant in a rapidly changing economy? How best should labour conditions be adapted to this new scenario?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

Technological progress is happening faster than ever before. Terms which used to be labelled as “Science Fiction fantasy”, such as **big data**, **artificial intelligence**, **robotics** and the **internet of things**, are now very much a reality.⁷⁶ These changes come with great benefits, such as an increase in productivity, efficiency of resource consumption, work safety and overall product or service quality.⁷⁷ However, what many call “the **Fourth Industrial Revolution**” is also cause for concern.⁷⁸ Infact, this new era could potentially bring about a massive increase in unemployment, in particular for **blue-collar workers**, as well as increasing **inequality** between different social classes⁷⁹, including the lack of benefits for “gig workers”. Other disadvantages connected with the shift to an **automated** world are the high investment required to put automated systems in place, an increase in maintenance costs and a decrease in the level of flexibility with regard to the product or service being provided.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_625866.pdf

⁷⁶ Marr, Bernard, *Are We Headed For 'Automated Luxury Communism'?*, Forbes (2016).
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2016/06/30/are-we-headed-for-automated-luxury-communism/#46bbefae37e3>

⁷⁷ *Advantages and disadvantages of automation*, Encyclopaedia Britannica (2018).
<https://www.britannica.com/technology/automation/Advantages-and-disadvantages-of-automation>

⁷⁸ Jackson, Gavin, *Job loss fears from automation overblown, says OECD*, Financial Times (2018)
<https://www.ft.com/content/732c3b78-329f-11e8-b5bf-23cb17fd1498>

⁷⁹ Montoya, Laura, *Effects of Automation & Retraining for the 4th Industrial Revolution*, Medium (2017).
<https://medium.com/accel-ai/effects-of-automation-retraining-for-the-4th-industrial-revolution-674ceca4a115>

⁸⁰ *Advantages and disadvantages of automation*, Encyclopaedia Britannica (2018).
<https://www.britannica.com/technology/automation/Advantages-and-disadvantages-of-automation>

Previous industrial revolutions also posed a significant level of controversy, but they did not occur at the same exponential speed as the current one. Elon Musk himself, a driver of this innovation era, alerts governments to the need for “precautionary, proactive (...) intervention”, as the time to think about reactive regulation is now.⁸¹ The EU has taken notice of this and has already started developing a digitisation strategy for the European industries. As Günther Oettinger, former European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, put it: “Our challenge is to turn the 4th Industrial Revolution to our advantage”.⁸²

What has been done so far?

The European Commission put in place the **European Pillar of Social Rights** in 2017. This measure aims to set the general direction for social development in the European Economic and Monetary Union. It covers education, training, life-long learning, active support to employment, secure and adaptable employment.⁸³

The **New Skills Agenda for Europe** was proposed by the European Commission in 2016 and its actions are still underway. It covers **upskilling pathways, digital skills and job coalition**, vocational education and training and key competences.⁸⁴

Also proposed and managed by the European Commission since 2014, is the **EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)**. The EaSI works as a financing and knowledge-sharing instrument to promote quality and sustainable employment in the EU. One of the topics covered by the programme is modernisation of employment and social policies.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Montoya, Laura, *Effects of Automation & Retraining for the 4th Industrial Revolution*, Medium (2017). <https://medium.com/accel-ai/effects-of-automation-retraining-for-the-4th-industrial-revolution-674ceca4a115>

⁸² *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*, European Commission (2018). <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/fourth-industrial-revolution>

⁸³ *European Pillar of Social Rights*, European Commission (2017). https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights_en

⁸⁴ *New Skills Agenda for Europe*, European Commission (2016). <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223>

⁸⁵ *EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)*, European Commission (2014). <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081>

Another relevant measure is the **European Employment Strategy** where priorities and targets for employment policies are proposed by the Commission, agreed on by the Member States and adopted by the EU Council. It aims at ensuring compliance with Europe 2020 - the EU's strategy for growth and jobs for the current decade, bearing in mind the goal of a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth - and improving the employment situation on a national level.⁸⁶

What are the challenges of the topic?

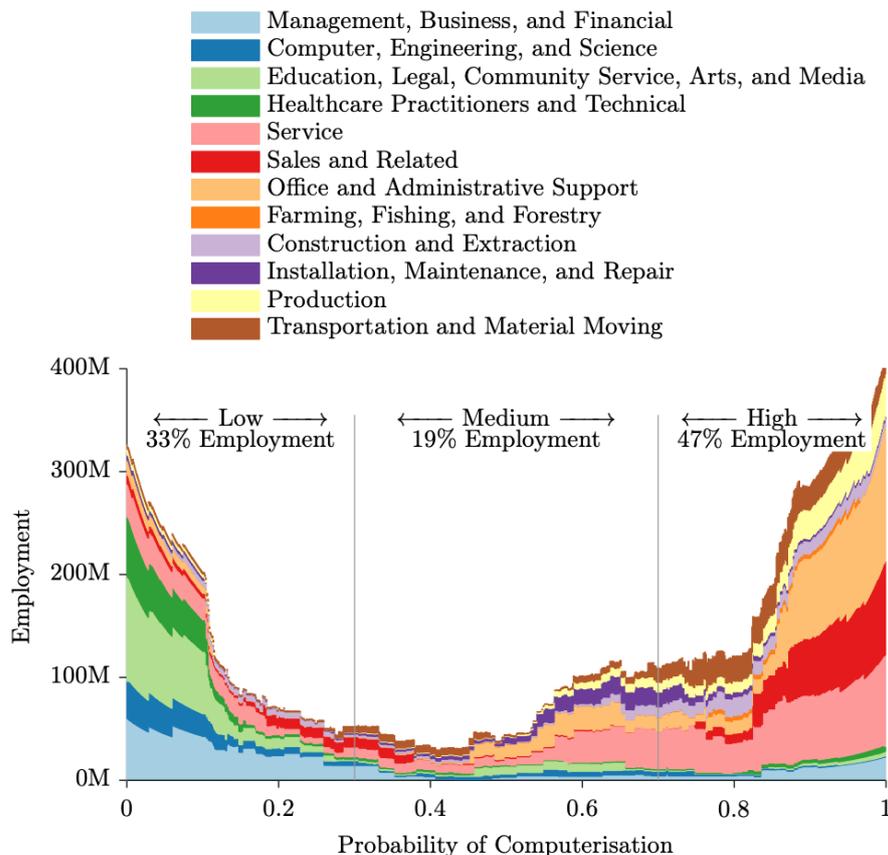
While it is clear that the switch to an automated world will bring increased quality of life and improve the social and economic environments we currently live in⁸⁷, this will come with challenges. The biggest critique of digital transformations is the impact they will have on the unemployment rate, contributing to its increase, and the inequality between classes it could cause. It is believed that lower-skilled jobs will be affected the most, as repetitive tasks are the easiest to automate. In turn, this will contribute to a greater disparity between working classes as the higher-ranks of workers will not only be less likely to have their roles disappear, but they will also be the ones making the most profit out of automation.⁸⁸ With automation, blue-collar tasks will be performed more efficiently but the workers' wage and status will most likely remain the same. This means employees and business owners would be the only ones benefiting from this increase in profit, contributing to further inequality between classes.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ *European Employment Strategy*, European Commission.
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=101&langId=en>

⁸⁷ *Advantages and disadvantages of automation*, Encyclopaedia Britannica (2018).
<https://www.britannica.com/technology/automation/Advantages-and-disadvantages-of-automation>

⁸⁸ Choi, Jieun, *The Future of Jobs and the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Business as Usual for Unusual Business*, World Bank (2017) <https://blogs.worldbank.org/psd/future-jobs-and-fourth-industrial-revolution-business-usual-unusual-business>

⁸⁹ Brooks, Mick, *An introduction to Marx's Labour Theory of Value*, In Defense of Marxism (2002).
<https://www.marxist.com/marx-marxist-labour-theory-value.htm>



The rates of employment against the probability of computerisation ⁹⁰

This higher profit comes with a catch, it also requires a higher investment to conceptualise, design, implement, test and install such digital systems, as well as their life-long maintenance costs.⁹¹

The working panorama is also changing for blue-collar workers, as with digitalisation also comes more flexibility and ownership over how they can spend their time. That is an important motivation for individuals who turned from 9-5 jobs to self-employment through platforms such as Uber or Airbnb.⁹²

⁹⁰ Frey, Carl and Osborne, Michael, *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are Jobs to Computerisation?*, Oxford Martin Programme on Technology and Employment (2013).
<https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/future-of-employment.pdf>

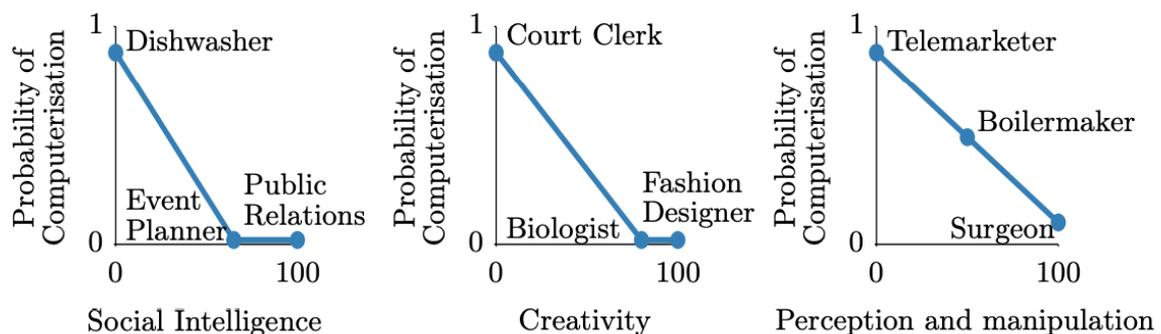
⁹¹ *Advantages and disadvantages of automation*, Encyclopaedia Britannica (2018).
<https://www.britannica.com/technology/automation/Advantages-and-disadvantages-of-automation>

⁹² Chu, Ben, *The four-day working week: Careful what you wish for?*, Independent (2018).
https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/four-day-working-week-jeremy-corbyn-job-work-automation-retirement-ageism-a8633181.html

Nevertheless, the “gig economy” also raises some challenges, among them the lack of a clear employment status for “gig workers” and, consequently, the lack of working rights and protections, such as health insurance.⁹³

What now?

The most discussed solution for tackling unemployment is **re-skilling**. This would mean ensuring access to relevant training and education opportunities, to enable workers to become proficient in the arising digital fields.⁹⁴ A study identified the bottlenecks to computerisation and categorised them into 3 groups: **perception and manipulation tasks, creative intelligence tasks** and **social intelligence tasks**. The authors argue that many routine and non-routine tasks might quickly become automated in the near future, while positions which involve the type of tasks listed above will not. Such tasks represent an obstacle to automation as they would require whole brain emulation, a technique which is still far from reality. These types of skills are where, some argue, we should target our focus of re-skilling current and future blue-collar workers.⁹⁵



Probable variation of the probability of computerisation in jobs with given skills⁹⁶

⁹³ Stewart, Emma, *The risk of gig working is flexibility at what price?*, Timewise (2016). <https://www.kinetic-plc.co.uk/media/GIG-Economy-Report-REC-2016.pdf>

⁹⁴ Vinoski, Jim, *"Towards A Reskilling Revolution:" What It Means For Manufacturing*, Forbes (2019). <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jimvinoski/2019/02/28/reselling-revolution-wef-manufacturing-manufacturers-workforce-workers-retraining/#520f60a2db02>

⁹⁵ Frey, Carl and Osborne, Michael, *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are Jobs to Computerisation?*, Oxford Martin Programme on Technology and Employment (2013). <https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/future-of-employment.pdf>

⁹⁶ Frey, Carl and Osborne, Michael, *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are Jobs to Computerisation?*, Oxford Martin Programme on Technology and Employment (2013). <https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/future-of-employment.pdf>

Another solution that is increasingly discussed is the option of having shorter work weeks, an idea acclaimed by many European leaders. The argument is that shorter work weeks would not only tackle the challenges of the Digital Revolution, but also improve the mental health and wellbeing of workers, increase productivity, reduce gender inequality in the workplace, and aid in the ongoing environmental crisis.⁹⁷ On a more macro scale, shorter work weeks could boost the economy by increasing consumption in the entertainment sector and domestic tourism. However, there is the risk that productivity does not increase enough to cover the loss caused by working fewer hours. If this were the case, the economy would suffer and that could be reflected in lower income and lower standards of living for workers. It is also important to bear in mind the case of shift jobs, such as nurses or firefighters, for which the reduction of hours would imply hiring more employees to cover the whole schedule. This, in its turn, would once again decrease profitability, which would affect the economy and the average income of workers⁹⁸.

A potential solution for this could be the **Universal Basic Income** (UBI), a cash payment made to every individual on a regular basis, without any work requirements.⁹⁹ Such an approach has gained supporters worldwide, one of them being former French minister Benoit Hamon who presented a 3 step plan on how to implement it in France.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Stronge, Will and Harper, Aidan, *The Shorter Working Week: A Radical And Pragmatic Proposal*, Autonomy (2019).

<http://autonomy.work/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Shorter-working-week-docV6.pdf>

⁹⁸ Chu, Ben, *The four-day working week: Careful what you wish for?*, Independent (2018).

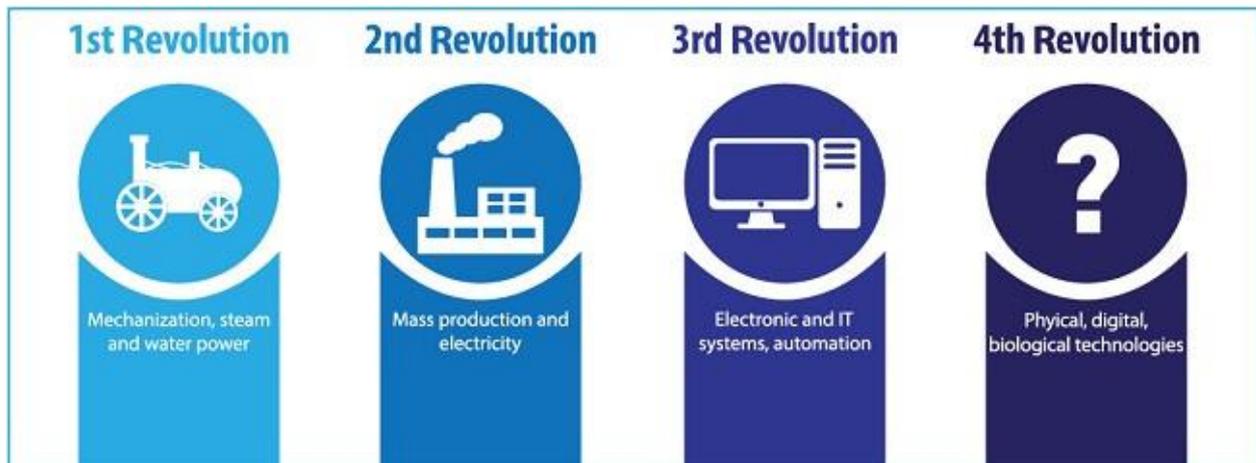
https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/four-day-working-week-jeremy-corbyn-job-work-automation-retirement-ageism-a8633181.html

⁹⁹ *About Basic Income*, Basic Income Earth Network. <https://basicincome.org/basic-income/>

¹⁰⁰ Williamson, Lucy, *France's Benoit Hamon rouses Socialists with basic income plan*, BBC (2017). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38723219>

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts



The four industrial revolutions¹⁰¹

Fourth Industrial Revolution: Also known as the Digital Revolution, it is built upon the Third Industrial Revolution, where the transition from analog electronic and mechanical devices to the digital technology took place.¹⁰² The Fourth Industrial Revolution brings together the physical, the digital and the biological spheres of knowledge, culminating in new fields of study such as the Internet of Things, 3D Printing and biotechnology.¹⁰³

Big data: Data sets whose size or type is beyond the ability of traditional databases to efficiently capture, manage and process the data. Big data can be characterized by high volume, high velocity and/or high variety.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Li, Zhou, *China and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)*, Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business (2017). <http://knowledge.cgsb.edu.cn/2017/07/12/globalization/china-fourth-industrial-revolution-4ir/>

¹⁰² *Digital Revolution*, Techopedia. <https://www.techopedia.com/definition/23371/digital-revolution>

¹⁰³ Schwab, Klaus, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution: what it means, how to respond*, World Economic Forum (2016). <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond/>

¹⁰⁴ *Is Big Data a Database?*, EDUCBA. <https://www.educba.com/is-big-data-a-database/>

Artificial intelligence: The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages.¹⁰⁵

Robotics: The development and use of robots and respective controlling computer systems. In theory, these machines can replace humans and replicate human actions, including sensory feedback and information processing.¹⁰⁶

The internet of things: The interconnection of different devices embedded in everyday objects (ranging from watches and phones to ovens and cars), enabling them to send and receive data via the Internet.¹⁰⁷

Automation: The technology which enables a process or procedure to be effectively performed with minimal human assistance.¹⁰⁸

Upskilling pathways: Support given to low-skilled adults to acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or acquire a broader set of skills by progressing towards an upper secondary qualification or equivalent.¹⁰⁹

Blue-collar workers: A worker who performs manual labour.¹¹⁰

White-collar workers: A worker who performs office, managerial, or administrative work.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ *Artificial Intelligence*, Oxford Dictionary. https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/artificial_intelligence

¹⁰⁶ *Artificial Intelligence and Robotics*, International Journal of Advanced Research in Computer Engineering & Technology (2016). <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/450c/dd4d7650e457544454996f47d677fe45f28a.pdf>

¹⁰⁷ McClelland, Calum, *What Is IoT? – A Simple Explanation of the Internet of Things*, IoT for all (2019). <https://www.iotforall.com/what-is-iot-simple-explanation/>

¹⁰⁸ *Automation*, Dictionary.com. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/automation>

¹⁰⁹ *New Skills Agenda for Europe*, European Commission. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223#upskilling>

¹¹⁰ Parietti, Melissa, *Blue Collar vs. White Collar: What's the Difference?*, Investopedia (2019). <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/wealth-management/120215/blue-collar-vs-white-collar-different-social-classes.asp>

¹¹¹ Parietti, Melissa, *Blue Collar vs. White Collar: What's the Difference?*, Investopedia (2019). <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/wealth-management/120215/blue-collar-vs-white-collar-different-social-classes.asp>

Perception and manipulation tasks: Tasks which require a high-level of perception and manipulation skills, such as identifying objects and their properties in a cluttered field of view or planning out in detail the sequence of actions required to spontaneously move an object from one place to another.¹¹²

Creative intelligence tasks: Tasks which require creativity skills, meaning the ability to come up with ideas or artifacts that are novel and valuable, including making unfamiliar combinations of familiar ideas.¹¹³

Social intelligence tasks: Tasks which require the use of social intelligence skills, such as those involving negotiation, persuasion and care.¹¹⁴

- **Re-skilling:** The process of acquiring new skills and competences.¹¹⁵
- **Gig Economy:** A free market system in which organizations contract independent workers for short-term engagements, without any long-term guarantees.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Frey, Carl and Osborne, Michael, *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are Jobs to Computerisation?*, Oxford Martin Programme on Technology and Employment (2013). <https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/future-of-employment.pdf>

¹¹³ Frey, Carl and Osborne, Michael, *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are Jobs to Computerisation?*, Oxford Martin Programme on Technology and Employment (2013). <https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/future-of-employment.pdf>

¹¹⁴ Frey, Carl and Osborne, Michael, *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are Jobs to Computerisation?*, Oxford Martin Programme on Technology and Employment (2013). <https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/future-of-employment.pdf>

¹¹⁵ *Reskilling*, Cambridge Dictionary. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/reskilling>

¹¹⁶ *What is gig economy?*, What is. <https://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/gig-economy>

Key figures

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)'s disruption of society is happening ten times faster and at 300 times the scale when compared to the 18th century Industrial Revolution.¹¹⁷
- 45-60% of all European workers could see their job transformed by automation by 2030.¹¹⁸
- While there are fewer new jobs created directly by technological progress, one additional technology-related position creates around five new, complementary jobs in the local non-tradable sector (e.g. health, education, retail and construction).¹¹⁹
- If given adequate training, it is estimated that 96% of all workers at threat from technology could find similar or better work.¹²⁰
- Past experiences have shown that when employees work fewer hours they tend to be more productive and take less sick leave.¹²¹
- Around a sixth of the British workforce is now self-employed.¹²²
- The number of gig workers increased 47-fold over the period of 2012 to 2015 in the USA, with the use of digital work platforms growing particularly rapidly.¹²³

¹¹⁷ *The four global forces breaking all the trends*, McKinsey & Company (2015).

<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-four-global-forces-breaking-all-the-trends>

¹¹⁸ Dolphin, Tony, *Technology, Globalisation and the Future of Work in Europe Essays on Employment in a Digitised Economy*, Institute for Public Policy Research (2015).

https://www.ippr.org/files/publications/pdf/technology-globalisation-future-of-work_Mar2015.pdf?noredirect=1

¹¹⁹ Frey, Carl and Rahbari, Ebrahim, *Do labor-saving technologies spell the death of jobs in the developing world?*, Brookings Blum Roundtable (2016).

https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Global_20160720_Blum_FreyRahbari.pdf

¹²⁰ Cann, Oliver, *Global Leaders Join Reskilling Revolution with Push to Provide Skills to 10 Million People by 2020*, World Economic Forum (2018).

<https://www.weforum.org/press/2018/01/global-leaders-join-reskilling-revolution-with-push-to-provide-skills-to-10-million-people-by-2020>

¹²¹ Stronge, Will and Harper, Aidan, *The Shorter Working Week: A Radical And Pragmatic Proposal*, Autonomy (2019).

<http://autonomy.work/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Shorter-working-week-docV6.pdf>

¹²² Chu, Ben, *The four-day working week: Careful what you wish for?*, Independent (2018).

https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/four-day-working-week-jeremy-corbyn-job-work-automation-retirement-ageism-a8633181.html

¹²³ *GIG Economy: The Uberisation of Work*, REC (2016). <https://www.kinetic-plc.co.uk/media/GIG-Economy-Report-REC-2016.pdf>

Key actors

- **International Labour Organisation (ILO):** The ILO is the only tripartite U.N. agency, involving workers, employers and the national governments since 1919. It aims to set labour standards, develop policies and create programmes promoting decent work for all people. They are responsible for elaborating the report “Future of Work”¹²⁴ on the current working conditions, useful information for decision makers on a national and European level.
- **European Commission:** Within this topic, the European Commission is in charge of enforcing the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Employment Strategy. The Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion carries out the European Commission’s policies on employment, education and training.¹²⁵
- **European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT):** A European institution which forms multi-country partnerships that train new entrepreneurs and performs research on the topic of automation.
- **National Governments:** The Member States coordinate their employment policies with the EU and draw yearly National Action Plans under the European Employment Strategy.
- **Companies:** They are interested in staying ahead of the competition and generating more profit through the use of automated and digital systems. This increase in profit often comes without the increase in compensation for the employees.
- **Labour Unions:** Organizations which protect and represent the collective interests of the workers. They serve as a means for employees to negotiate working conditions such as wages, hours and other benefits, with employers.

¹²⁴ *Future of Work*, International Labour Organization. <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/future-of-work/lang-en/index.htm>

¹²⁵ *Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion*, European Commission (2019). https://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/employment-social-affairs-and-inclusion_en

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

During the research on this topic, please refer to the following sources for a solid research start:

- European Commission’s “New Skills Agenda”:
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223> (reading in depth about the measures taken by the European Commission)
- Section C (Policy Avenues for Upward Convergence) of the ILO’s “Building a Social Pillar for European Convergence”: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_490959.pdf
- *Autonomy’s* report “The Shorter Work Week: A Radical and Pragmatic Proposal”:
<http://autonomy.work/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Shorter-working-week-docV6.pdf>

What to browse, read, and watch

The Digital Revolution: an introduction

- *Understanding the digital revolution and what it means*, Meyer, Henning (2017).
<https://www.oecd-forum.org/users/52524-henning-meyer/posts/17957-understanding-the-digital-revolution-and-what-it-means>

The Digital Revolution as a cause of unemployment

- *The Rise of the Machines – Why Automation is Different this Time*, Kurzgesagt (2017).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSKi8HfcxEk>
- *The Future of Employment*, Frey, Carl and Osborne, Michael (2013).
<https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/future-of-employment.pdf>

Reskilling and upskilling of workers during the Digital Revolution

- *Retraining and reskilling workers in the age of automation*, McKinsey & Company (2018). <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/retraining-and-reskilling-workers-in-the-age-of-automation>
- *10 skills you'll need to survive the rise of automation*, World Economic Forum (2018).
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/07/the-skills-needed-to-survive-the-robot-invasion-of-the-workplace>

Shorter Work Weeks as a potential solution to increasing unemployment

- *The Shorter Work Week: A Radical and Pragmatic Proposal*, Autonomy (2019). <http://autonomy.work/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Shorter-working-week-docV6.pdf>
- *The four-day working week: Careful what you wish for?*, Independent (2018). https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/four-day-working-week-jeremy-corbyn-job-work-automation-retirement-ageism-a8633181.html

Universal Basic Income as a potential solution to increasing unemployment

- *Universal Basic Income Explained – Free Money for Everybody? UBI*, Kurzgesagt (2017). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kl39KHS07Xc>

The “uberization” in the Digital Revolution

- *GIG Economy: The Uberisation of Work*, REC (2016). <https://www.kinetic-plc.co.uk/media/GIG-Economy-Report-REC-2016.pdf>

ENVI I

Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety I

Chairperson: Daša Pogorelec (SL)



HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Climate change and demographic growth in least developed countries: An explosive combination? Climate change has already had observable effects on the environment¹²⁶, and its impact is particularly harmful to economically least developed countries whose populations are projected to increase substantially¹²⁷. Given Europe's historic contribution to global warming, what measures should be taken to ensure climate justice¹²⁸ and preserve living conditions in least developed countries?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that at least **1 million lives** per year are lost due to **climate change**.¹²⁹ In recent decades, concerns about the living conditions of future generations have been side-tracked to maintain the current production and consumption levels, while the economic advancements in higher-income countries have been often made at the **expense of the rest of the world**. The extent of recent environmental change suggests that it will not be possible to continue exploiting natural resources at the same pace to **sustain the growing world population**.¹³⁰ Moreover, changes in the environment - including climate change, air pollution, ocean acidification, land degradation, water scarcity, overexploitation of fisheries and biodiversity loss - pose serious challenges to recent advancements in human health.¹³¹ Life expectancy is at an all-time high, yet many ecosystems are degrading at an unprecedented rate.

Climate change is a **global issue** that cannot be solved by individual countries alone. Increasing the use of renewable energy instead of fossil fuels in one country will not change the fact that many developed and developing nations are **refusing or unable to do the same**. Climate change has advanced rapidly since the Industrial Revolution and affects every country in the world, yet it

¹²⁶ <https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/>

¹²⁷ <https://population.un.org/wpp/>

¹²⁸ <https://www.mrfcj.org/pdf/Principles-of-Climate-Justice.pdf>

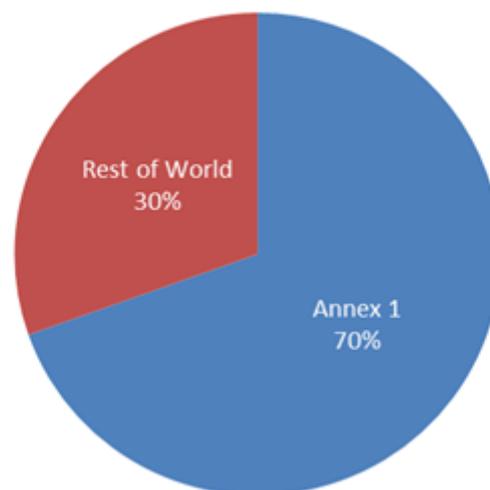
¹²⁹ Damian Carrington, *Save Millions of Lives by Tackling Climate Change*, The Guardian (2018). <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/05/save-millions-of-lives-by-tackling-climate-change-says-world-health-organization>

¹³⁰ *Current World Population*, Worldometers (2019). <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>

¹³¹ EASAC Policy Report: *The imperative of climate action to protect human health in Europe*, European Academies Science Advisory Council (2019). https://easac.eu/fileadmin/PDF_s/reports_statements/Climate_Change_and_Health/EASAC_Report_No_38_Climate_Change_and_Health.pdf

has historically been overwhelmingly **caused by the more economically developed nations**. Its effects, however, will harm developing countries of Africa, Asia and Oceania the most. In recent years, there has been a rise in spreading misinformation originating from and leading to a **confused understanding** of the phenomenon.¹³² Therefore, despite the overbearing evidence of the dangers of climate change, many countries do not believe it is an issue worth prioritising in.

Cumulative CO2 equivalent emissions 1800 - 2010



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*Annex 1 Parties include the industrialized countries that were members of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) in 1992, plus countries with economies in transition (the EIT Parties), including the Russian Federation, the Baltic States, and several Central and Eastern European States.¹³⁴

¹³² EASAC Policy Report: *The imperative of climate action to protect human health in Europe*, European Academies Science Advisory Council (2019). https://easac.eu/fileadmin/PDF_s/reports_statements/Climate_Change_and_Health/EASAC_Report_No_38_Climate_Change_and_Health.pdf

¹³³ Boden, T.A., G. Marland, and R.J. Andres, *Global, Regional, and National Fossil-Fuel CO2 Emissions*, Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, 2011. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/231/climate-justice-and-equity>

¹³⁴ *Types of Parties of UNFCCC*, United Nations (2018). https://unfccc.int/process/parties-non-party-stakeholders/parties-convention-and-observer-states?field_national_communications_target_id%5B515%5D=515

What has been done so far?

Kyoto Protocol¹³⁵ was developed in 1997 by the UN countries. It legally binds developed countries to emission reduction targets. We are currently in the second commitment period of the Protocol, lasting from 2013 - 2020 during which the EU, some other European countries and Australia have committed to meeting 20% emissions reduction targets.¹³⁶ 192 countries have ratified the Kyoto Protocol.

European Climate Change Programme (ECCP I)¹³⁷ was launched by the EU to align its strategy with the Kyoto Protocol in 2000.

Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II)¹³⁸ was adopted in 2005 as a follow-up to ECCP I. ECCP II facilitates and supports priorities from the first phase and further explores cost-effective options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions for increasing economic growth and job creation as well as biofuels and vehicle taxation.

The Paris Agreement¹³⁹ brings all nations together for the first time to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. Its central aim is to keep the global temperature rise this century below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The agreement was first presented in 2015 and is now signed by 184 countries. Critics say that the Paris agreement has “no teeth” as it presents no sanctions for countries not meeting its targets.

The 2030 Climate and Energy Framework¹⁴⁰ sets out a policy framework for EU climate and energy policies for the period of 2020 to 2030. It aims to make the EU climate and energy system more secure, sustainable and competitive. It also aims to encourage investment in green technology.

¹³⁵ *Kyoto Protocol - Targets for The First Commitment Period*. United Nations (2019). <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-kyoto-protocol/what-is-the-kyoto-protocol/kyoto-protocol-targets-for-the-first-commitment-period>

¹³⁶ *Kyoto second Commitment Period (2013-20)*, United Nations (2019). https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/progress/kyoto_2_en

¹³⁷ *First European Climate Change Programme*, European Commission (2019). https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eccp/first_en

¹³⁸ *First European Climate Change Programme*, European Commission (2019). https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eccp/first_en

¹³⁹ *Report of the Conference of the Parties on its twenty-first session*, United Nations (2015). <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/10a01.pdf>

¹⁴⁰ *Tackling Climate Crisis in the EU*, Council of the European Union (2019). <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/climate-change/>

Green Climate Fund(GCF) is a global financial fund focused on investments related to mitigation and adaptation initiatives, following the Paris Agreements goal of keeping climate change below two degrees Celsius. While paying particular attention to the needs of societies that are highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, in particular Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and the African States. The Fund's current portfolio counts with 73 projects, reaching 217 million people, avoiding the emission of 1,3 billion carbon dioxide (CO₂).

The Climate Investment Funds (CIF) is one of the world's leading climate finance mechanisms. Founded in 2008, it represents one of the first global efforts to invest in dedicated climate finance.

What are the challenges of the topic?

Recent reports claim that it is already **too late to reverse the effects of climate change** and we are now only fighting to decrease its effects as much as possible.¹⁴¹ Its vast scope presents an unprecedented challenge for the international community. Even if all the Paris agreement targets were met by 2030, the temperature increase is still estimated to reach **3 °C**, unless other severe measures are taken.¹⁴² Some of the most pressing ramifications are the rise of sea level due to ice melting in the Arctic and Antarctica, the rise of extreme weather events¹⁴³, a serious threat to human health¹⁴⁴ as well as continued loss of biodiversity. No country is immune to climate change, however, **95% of the cities** most affected are in the poorest and most vulnerable regions of **Africa and Asia**, despite having a far less significant impact on the environment than the developed nations.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Matt McGraph, *Final Call to Save the World From "Climate Catastrophe"*, BBC (2018).
<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-45775309>

¹⁴² Matt McGraph, *Final Call to Save the World From "Climate Catastrophe"*, BBC (2018).
<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-45775309>

¹⁴³ *Mapped: How Climate Change Effects Extreme Weather Around the World*, Carbon Brief (2019).
<https://www.carbonbrief.org/mapped-how-climate-change-affects-extreme-weather-around-the-world>

¹⁴⁴ *The imperative of climate action to protect human health in Europe*, EASAC (2019).
<https://easac.eu/publications/details/the-imperative-of-climate-action-to-protect-human-health-in-europe/>

¹⁴⁵ *84% of the world's fastest growing cities face "extreme" climate change risks*, Verisk Maplecroft (2018).
<https://www.maplecroft.com/insights/analysis/84-of-worlds-fastest-growing-cities-face-extreme-climate-change-risks/>

The European Union is the world's **largest provider of climate finance**. The EU and its Member States are cooperating on **adaptation and disaster risk reduction efforts**, especially with small island developing states (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries. At home, the EU is planning to cut down its own emissions by 40% (which critics argue may not be enough)¹⁴⁶ by 2030 with the aim of achieving the vision of a **climate-neutral Europe by 2050**.¹⁴⁷ While the EU has stepped up its environmental protection, the European Union's internal agreements still exclude significant factors such as **deforestation, aviation and tourism**, the actual and historical consumption of energy. Moreover, many European companies have adapted to the EU's policies by **moving the energy intensive, polluting and climate gas emitting industry to Asia and South America**, where environmental protection laws are looser.

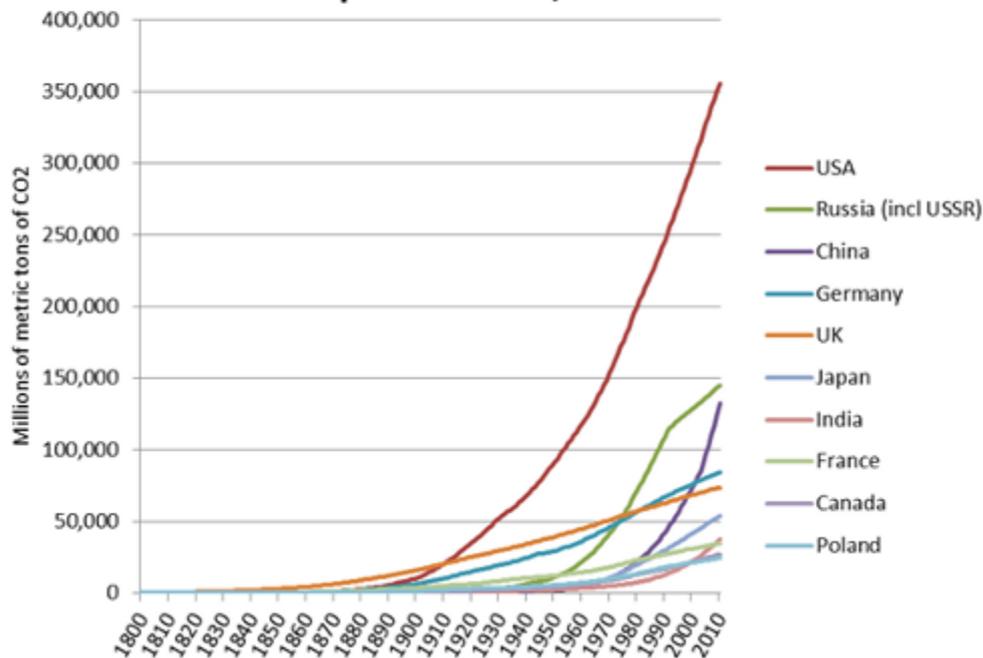
The current global legislation in place is **not enough to mitigate the effects** of climate change. Countries are expected to meet their targets mainly through **domestic policies and measures**, but they are not equally invested in the cause. While some countries are leading the way to a **more sustainable future**, like Sweden, three out of the four biggest CO₂ emitters - China, USA and Russia - are classified as being **highly insufficient or even critically insufficient** when it comes to combating climate crisis, with the USA even declaring its intention to withdraw from the Paris Agreement.¹⁴⁸ On the other hand, China and several other countries with large Greenhouse Gas emissions **do not have binding targets** under the protocol. As climate change is a truly global issue, it cannot be solved without every country doing their part, especially those providing the greatest contribution to the problem.

¹⁴⁶ *CAN Europe calls for an increase of the EU's 2030 climate target to at least 65%*, Climate Action Network Europe (2019). <http://www.caneurope.org/publications/blogs/1740-can-europe-calls-for-an-increase-of-the-eu-s-2030-climate-target-to-at-least-65>

¹⁴⁷ *EU's call to raise global ambition on climate change*, European Union External Action Service (2019). https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58210/eus-call-raise-global-ambition-climate-change_en

¹⁴⁸ John P. Rafferty, *U.S. Exits the Paris climate Agreement*, encyclopedia Britannica (2017). <https://www.britannica.com/story/us-exits-paris-climate-agreement>

Cumulated CO2 equivalent emissions Top 10 nations, 1800-2010



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What now?

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in order to keep global warming **below 2 degrees Celsius**, emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases must be **reduced by half** by 2050 (compared with 1990 levels). **Developed countries will need to reduce more** – between 80 % and 95 % by 2050, while advanced developing countries with large emissions (e.g. China, India and Brazil) will have to **limit their emission growth**.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Boden, T.A., G. Marland, and R.J. Andres, *Global, Regional, and National Fossil-Fuel CO₂ Emissions*, Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, 2011. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/231/climate-justice-and-equity>

¹⁵⁰ *Climate Change Policy*, European Environment Agency (2016). <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/climate/policy-context>

The EU is allegedly on course to meet the 40% reduction targets, but critics say that will not be enough to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement. In fact, the EU should increase its targets to **at least 65%** reduction rates compared to 1990. Even within Europe, the effects of climate change are and will be **hitting the poorest and most disadvantaged regions the hardest**.¹⁵¹ Across the EU's borders, however, the situation is even more dire. According to a report from SDG Watch Europe, many of the current EU's policies are having a **negative impact on less developed countries** and hinder the advancement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by failing to regulate overseas European companies' environmental practices, exporting European waste abroad and the impact of EU trade on developing countries among others.¹⁵²

- What is the EU's role in tackling climate crisis? Is it living up to its self-proclaimed leadership position or is it still hindering the progress of developing nations in the matter?
- How can the leading emitters be persuaded to put greater emphasis on protecting the environment?
- Should the developed countries invest more in measures such as the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) or should they rather focus on employing more environmentally-friendly practices at home?
- Are initiatives such as the certified emission reduction (CER) credits and emission reduction units (ERUs) the best way to tackle climate change in developing countries or do they offer developed nations an easy way out from solving their own environmental challenges?
- How should the EU tackle big corporations and their tendency to exploit the environmental resources of undeveloped nations?

¹⁵¹ Trio, W., *Letter to EU environment ministers on EU climate ambition ahead of their informal meeting in July*, Climate Action Network Europe (2019). <http://www.caneurope.org/publications/letters-to-policy-makers/1797-letter-to-eu-environment-ministers-on-eu-climate-ambition-ahead-of-their-informal-meeting-in-july>

¹⁵² Spotlight report on sustainability in Europe: *Who is paying the bill?*, SDG Watch Europe (2019). <http://www.caneurope.org/docman/climate-finance-development/3551-spotlight-report-on-sustainability-in-europe-who-is-paying-the-bill/file>

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

Climate change refers to a broad range of global phenomena created predominantly by burning fossil fuels, which add heat-trapping gases to Earth's atmosphere. These phenomena include increased temperature trends, sea-level rise, shifts in flower/plant blooming and extreme weather events.

Global warming refers to the long-term warming of the planet since the early 20th century, and most notably since the late 1970s, due to the increase of fossil fuel emissions since the Industrial Revolution.

Climate justice insists on a shift from a discourse on greenhouse gases and melting ice caps into a civil rights movement with the people and communities most vulnerable to climate impacts at its heart.

Greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) are gases that absorb and emit radiant energy within the thermal infrared range. Greenhouse gases cause the greenhouse effect. The primary greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere are water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone.

Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allows a country with an emission-reduction or emission-limitation commitment under the *Kyoto Protocol* to implement an emission-reduction project in developing countries. Such projects can earn saleable **certified emission reduction (CER) credits**, each equivalent to one tonne of CO₂, which can be counted towards meeting Kyoto targets. The CDM is also meant to support sustainable development, e.g. by financing renewable energy projects.¹⁵³

Joint Implementation (JI) allows a country with an emission reduction or limitation commitment under the *Kyoto Protocol* to earn **emission reduction units (ERUs)** from an emission-reduction or emission removal project in another Party, each equivalent to one tonne of CO₂, which can be counted towards meeting its Kyoto target. Joint implementation offers Parties a flexible and cost-efficient means of fulfilling a part of their Kyoto commitments, while the host Party benefits from foreign investment and technology transfer.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ *Climate Change Policy*, European Environment Agency (2016). <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/climate/policy-context>

¹⁵⁴ *Climate Change Policy*, European Environment Agency (2016). <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/climate/policy-context>

EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS)¹⁵⁵ is a cornerstone of the EU's policy to combat climate change and its key tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions cost-effectively. It is the world's first major carbon market and remains the biggest one. It operates in 31 countries (EU, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and limits emissions for more than 11.000 power stations and industrial plants and airlines operating between these countries. EU ETS covers about 45% of EU greenhouse gas.

Key figures

- EU emissions represent about 10% of the total global emissions.¹⁵⁶ Through the internal EU "burden-sharing agreement", some EU Member States are permitted increases in emissions, while others must decrease them.
- The EU has demonstrated that emissions can be reduced while economic growth continued: between 1990 and 2013, the GDP of the 28 Member States increased by 45% while emissions were reduced by 19%.¹⁵⁷
- To achieve the goal of limiting climate change to 2°C, countries need to triple the level of their commitments made under the Paris Agreement. To achieve the goal of limiting climate change to 1.5°C, countries would have to increase their level of ambition by 5x.¹⁵⁸
- Only 57 countries (representing 60 percent of global emissions) are on track to meet their commitments by 2030.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ *EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS)*, European Commission (2019).

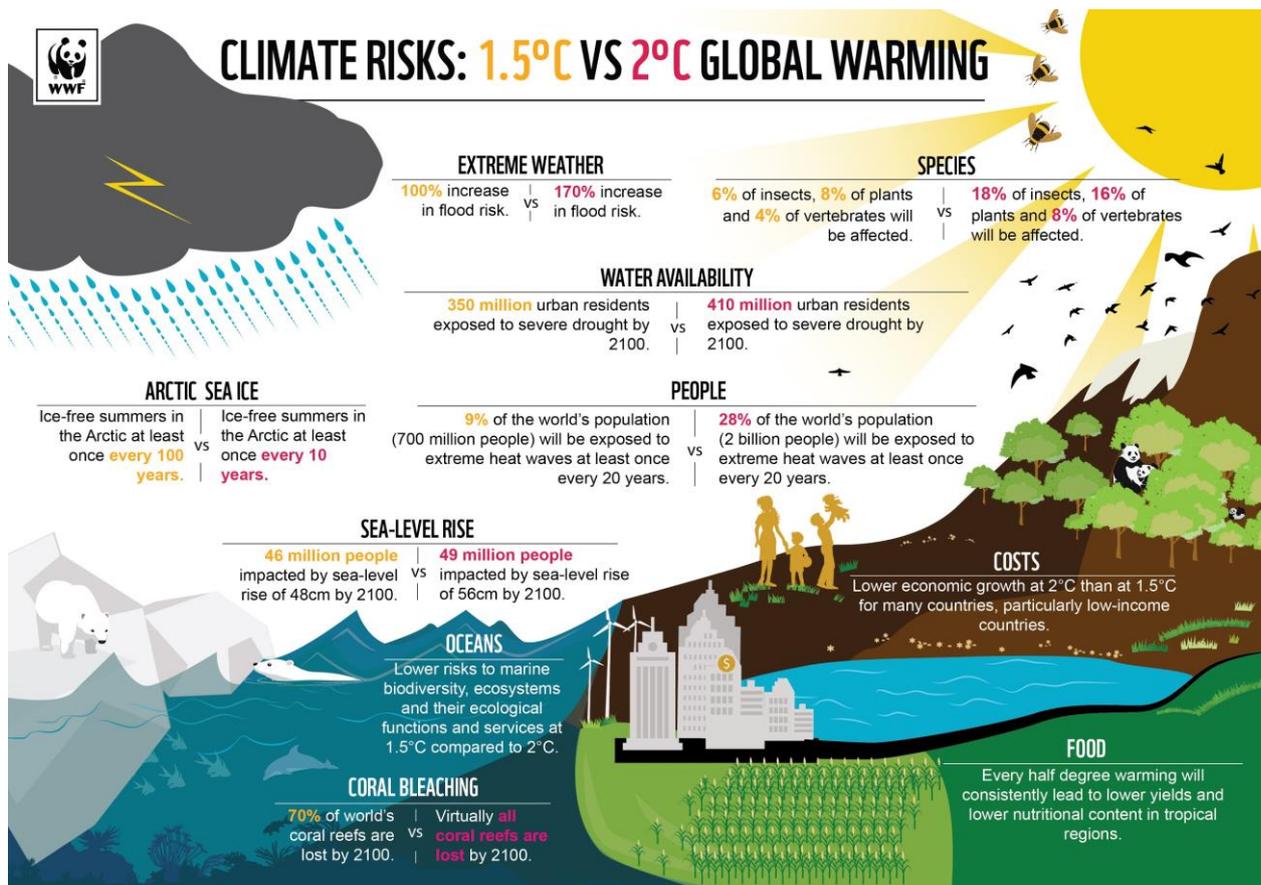
https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets_en

¹⁵⁶ *Climate Change Policy*, European Environment Agency (2016). <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/climate/policy-context>

¹⁵⁷ *EU Climate Policy Explained*, European Union (2016). https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/eu_climate_policy_explained_en.pdf

¹⁵⁸ UN, *Environment Emissions Gap Report*, UN (2019). <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-facts-and-figures/>

¹⁵⁹ UN, *Environment Emissions Gap Report*, UN (2019). <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-facts-and-figures/>



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Key actors

- **European Environment Agency** provides relevant and accessible knowledge to help policymakers and the public to act on timely, relevant and robust information on climate change.
- **The European Commission** represents the interests of the entire European Union through 28 (soon to be 27) commissioners, one from each Member States. It can propose legislation to tackle climate change on a European level.

¹⁶⁰ Our Warming World: How Much of a Difference Will Half-A-Degree Really Make?, WWF (2018).

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/updates/our-warming-world-how-much-difference-will-half-degree-really-make>

- **Member States** - the environment is a shared competence, meaning that the Member States can adopt their own legislation on those areas where the EU does not already have legislation in place.
- **The Council of the European Union** (also: The Council) brings together government ministers of each EU country from the relevant area. **Environment Council (ENVI)**¹⁶¹ is responsible for EU environment policy, including environmental protection, use of resources and the protection of human health. It also deals with international environmental issues, especially in the area of climate change. There are about four ENVI meetings every year.
- The **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**¹⁶² is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. It provides policymakers with regular scientific assessments on climate change, its implications and potential future risks, as well as puts forward adaptation and mitigation options.
- **UN environment programme (UNEP)** is the leading international authority. Many times it works as a bridge between different players through conferences, secretariats, and multilateral programs. UNEP is known for assessing global, regional and national environmental conditions and trends, helping in the developing international and national environmental instruments, and strengthening institutions for the wise management of the environment
- **Climate Action Network (CAN)** is a worldwide network of over 1300 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in more than 120 countries, working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels.
- **Corporations** - just 100 companies are responsible for 71% of global emissions since 1988. Most of these are coal and oil-producing companies and include ExxonMobil, Shell, BP, Chevron, Gazprom, and the Saudi Arabian Oil Company. China leads the pack on the international stage with 14.3% of global greenhouse gas emissions due to its coal production and consumption.
- **Civil society** can change consumer patterns and influence big corporations to change their production processes and it can start initiatives to combat climate change on a local level. One of the more recent influential movements is #FridaysForFuture which began in August 2018, after 15-year-old Greta Thunberg sat in front of the Swedish parliament every school day for three weeks, to protest against the lack of action on the climate crisis. She posted what she was doing on Instagram and Twitter and it soon went viral with millions of young people worldwide joining the school strikes to demand greater action on climate change.

¹⁶¹ Environment Council configuration (ENVI), Council of the EU (2019). <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/configurations/env/>

¹⁶² The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, UN (2019). <https://www.ipcc.ch/>

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

- All EU climate policies in one place: <https://ec.europa.eu/clima/>
- EU's impact on the undeveloped world: <http://www.caneurope.org/docman/climate-finance-development/3551-spotlight-report-on-sustainability-in-europe-who-is-paying-the-bill/file>
- EU calling to raise climate ambition globally.
https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58210/eus-call-raise-global-ambition-climate-change_en

The second and third links present a distinct contrast between the EU's contribution to pollution and climate-altering factors in less developed countries across the world and its ambition to tackle the climate crisis. Keep in mind that you do not have to read the entire report, but just some extracts. You can start by reading the introduction and the headliners of each chapter and then see what interests you the most.

What to browse, read, and watch

- How is your country doing? <https://climateactiontracker.org/>
- Short video explaining climate change: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifrHogDujXw>
- TED talk on how climate change is threatening human rights:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JVTirBEfho>
- Climate Summit in September 2019: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNe-jBVij-g>
- Facts and figures on Climate Change: <https://climate.nasa.gov/>
- Climate change is reducing land's ability to sustain humanity
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/08/climate-crisis-reducing-lands-ability-to-sustain-humanity-says-ipcc>
- 84% of the world's fastest growing cities face "extreme" climate change risk
<https://www.maplecroft.com/insights/analysis/84-of-worlds-fastest-growing-cities-face-extreme-climate-change-risks/>
- How climate change is causing premature deaths and health risks:
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/31/climate-crisis-already-causing-deaths-and-childhood-stunting-report-reveals>

- How fossil-fuel industries are influencing politics:
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/aug/07/fossil-fuel-lobby-pollute-politics-climate-crisis>
- How Climate Change Effects Extreme Weather Around the World
<https://www.carbonbrief.org/mapped-how-climate-change-affects-extreme-weather-around-the-world>
- Final Call to Save the World From “Climate Catastrophe”
<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-45775309>

ENVI II

Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety II

Chairperson: Nikos-Pavlos Kotzias (GR)



HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Healthy by design: The new frontier of medicine. With the first human trials using CRISPR163 on cancer patients underway, there has been growing concern regarding the future of gene modification as an effective treatment and prevention tool. How can the integrity of patients be safeguarded, whilst realising the potential of precision medicine164?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

It has been 201 years since Mary Shelley wrote the literary masterpiece that is Frankenstein. The novel about a scientist creating a sapient creature might have been science fiction at the time, yet were for Shelley to be alive today, she would be surprised to see that what once existed in the realm of fiction, today is reality. Frankenstein is fundamentally about the quest of a scientist to help humanity through discovering the "element of life", only to see the world appalled by his creation and the creature itself isolated out of fear. An element of life which could be our DNA and the humans we can create through manipulating it. Fiction or not, the questions remain the same; to what extent can we interfere with life?

The discovery of **CRISPR/Cas9** revolutionised modern genetic science. It endowed scientists with the opportunity to precisely modify portions of **DNA** on a much larger scale, with relative speed and ease. While we do not exactly understand what every part of **DNA** does and how it affects human health and development, it is certain that every bit is important.¹⁶⁵ Scientists have started to unlock the secrets of genes and discovered that many diseases may be caused by a particular **genetic disorder** or **mutation**, ranging from Alzheimers' to hemophilia and cancer. For example, women possessing the BRCA 1 or 2 gene are much more likely to develop breast cancer.¹⁶⁶ Intervening with the genetic code to erase or alter the corruption can cure many diseases, let alone prevent some from occurring in the first place.

¹⁶³ The Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) is a recent approach to genome editing, being considered more accurate and efficient than the other available ones.

¹⁶⁴ The concept of tailoring health care on the basis of a person's genes, lifestyle and environment

¹⁶⁵ Smith, Dana, The mysterious 98%: Scientists look to shine light on the 'dark genome', Phys (2017), <https://phys.org/news/2017-02-mysterious-scientists-dark-genome.html>

¹⁶⁶ University of Birmingham, Ovarian and breast cancer research finds new ways BRCA1 gene functions, ScienceDaily (2019),. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/07/190703134058.htm

Gene modification and, more broadly, **precision medicine**, could potentially transform modern healthcare. Curing cancer might become as simple as performing a small operation and the chances of developing a particular genetic disease could be almost brought down to zero.¹⁶⁷ Nevertheless, the technology is still in its early development stages. For as much as CRISPR might seem like a powerful tool, its precision and exact impact has yet to be sufficiently analysed.¹⁶⁸

Last November, news broke that a Chinese scientist secretly used CRISPR on human embryos in order to help them develop resistance to the HIV virus.¹⁶⁹ The very notion of a single person modifying certain genes seemed terrifying to many. Furthermore, given that there are no guidelines for this type of experimentation, the success of the operation was a surprise for many. As a consequence, some even pushed for gene modification practices to be banned altogether, arguing that it is still largely unsafe and inconsistent.¹⁷⁰ It thus needs to be acknowledged that despite gene modification being a powerful a treatment and prevention tool, the fact that it can occur in a legal limbo under uncertain circumstances is indicative of the need to approach precision medicine with a more critical mind.

¹⁶⁷ Genes: What We Knew, Know, and Hope to Learn, National Institutes of Health (2018)
<https://report.nih.gov/NIHfactsheets/ViewFactSheet.aspx?csid=91>

¹⁶⁸ Schwartz, Mark, Target, delete, repair, Stanford Medicine (2018), <https://stanmed.stanford.edu/2018winter/CRISPR-for-gene-editing-is-revolutionary-but-it-comes-with-risks.html#>

¹⁶⁹ Belluz, Julia, Is the CRISPR baby controversy the start of a terrifying new chapter in gene editing?, Vox (2019), <https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/11/30/18119589/crispr-gene-editing-he-jiankui>

¹⁷⁰ Belluz, Julia, After China's gene-edited baby debacle, CRISPR scientists want a moratorium, Vox (2019), <https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2019/3/13/18261888/crispr-gene-editing-china-babies>

What has been done so far?

The exact legal standpoint of precision medicine remains ambivalent. On one hand, human trials have been greenlighted¹⁷¹, which could be indicative of precision medicine soon being made available for commercial use. Testing will certainly take time, but it is also an excuse to further improve upon the technology, making it safer and understanding its potential impact. On the other hand, the use of **advanced therapies** in the EU are reliant on legislation that is largely obsolete and does not cover all applications of precision medicine.¹⁷² However, said legislation does outline a very comprehensive procedure for the approval and marketing of such practices, something which underlines the need to create a rigid framework that minimises risk and ensures the protection of patients. Extensive clinical trials and **market authorisation** procedures predate the provision of such therapies, which are to be performed under a strict set of rules.¹⁷³

According to Article 3 of the **European Union Charter on Fundamental Rights** states that:

*“Everyone has the right to respect for his or her physical and mental integrity. In the fields of medicine and biology, the following must be respected in particular: the free and informed consent of the person concerned, according to the procedures laid down by law; the prohibition of **eugenic** practices, in particular those aiming at the selection of persons; the prohibition on making the human body and its parts as such a source of financial gain; the prohibition of the reproductive cloning of human beings.”*

Therefore, while certain applications of gene modification are in accordance with EU law, others are inherently illegal and some remain in the realm of legal speculation.

¹⁷¹ Stein, Rob, First U.S. Patients Treated With CRISPR As Human Gene-Editing Trials Get Underway, National Public Radio (2019), <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/04/16/712402435/first-u-s-patients-treated-with-crispr-as-gene-editing-human-trials-get-underway>

¹⁷² Regulation 1394/2007 on advanced therapy medicinal products and amending Directive 2001/83/EC and Regulation 726/2004

¹⁷³ Ibid

What are the challenges of the topic?

Gene modification is an extremely powerful tool that can be used to eradicate **hereditary** or **genetic diseases**. Hence, aside from the ethical aspect of gene modification, the challenge needs to be approached from a practical perspective too. Precision medicine could significantly speed up development of new treatments¹⁷⁴, enable larger-scale interventions and enable the treatment of multiple **rare diseases**. Another claim to be made is that precision medicine could be less fastidious than conventional treatments. For example, current cancer treatments are both very expensive and severely impact human physical, as well as mental health. From an economic perspective, these types of operations could become increasingly lucrative; should they be banned across the EU, it could spark a new wave of **Medical Tourism** towards countries where such practices are legal, even if their safety is dubious.

From an ethical standpoint, however, the issue is more complex. Today's cure for Alzheimer's could be tomorrow's modification at will, because **Germline** editing for the benefit of human health and prevention can also be used to mix and match traits, keeping only what seems desirable. In theory, someone could design their child to be taller, more muscular, have better memory or improved intelligence. While it would be inaccurate to claim that **designer babies** are going to be a reality in the near future, the possibility is undeniably present.¹⁷⁵ The very essence of life could be commodified and set up for sale. While an Orwellian dystopia seems unlikely, gene modification opens the door for an era of **eugenics**, where every living being can be modified to suit our preferences.

Regardless of whether precision medicine should be demonised or not, at the heart of it all lies the human **right to integrity** and dignity.¹⁷⁶ If precision medicine could provide a more dignified treatment to some of the most serious ailments, why should it not be accepted as the norm? The human nature is constantly evolving and society is given an opportunity to take control of the process. To this end, the role of different regulators and agencies is vital. Even though the EU might have appeared sceptical towards CRISPR-edited crops, classifying them as **Genetically Modified Organisms** (GMOs)¹⁷⁷, advanced therapies and certain aspects of genetic based medicine are thoroughly encouraged

¹⁷⁴ Mattick, John Stanley, Four ways precision medicine is making a difference, The Conversation (2018), <http://theconversation.com/four-ways-precision-medicine-is-making-a-difference-90459>

¹⁷⁵ Ball, Phillip, Designer babies: an ethical horror waiting to happen?, The Guardian (2017), <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/jan/08/designer-babies-ethical-horror-waiting-to-happen>

¹⁷⁶ Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, OHCHR (1997), <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/HumanGenomeAndHumanRights.aspx>

¹⁷⁷ Wight, Andrew, Strict EU ruling on gene-edited crops squeezes science, Nature (2018) <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-07166-7>

What now?

Legislating on the EU level might be necessary, yet embracing precision medicine requires completely reimagining and upgrading National Health Systems. On the other hand, safeguarding the integrity of human beings could also come hand in hand with impeding scientific progress. Such decisions ought not to be taken lightly; changes in our genetic code via germline editing for the purposes of prevention will impact generations to come and their future consequences are unpredictable.¹⁷⁸ Perhaps, is it too early to even legislate on something there is little understanding of?

Precision medicine will undoubtedly become more prevalent in the future and its potential benefits as a successful treatment and prevention tool cannot be sidelined. In many ways, it can be approached in the same manner as any new drug, meaning it should be thoroughly tested to determine its best application.

Albeit human integrity should never be on the line, denying people the right to efficient treatment, if there is one, gives birth to a huge moral dilemma. Although few would argue that scientific progress should be sacrificed, it may have reached a point where more intervention and regulation is needed.¹⁷⁹

Maybe precision medicine should only be allowed for scientific purposes, giving us a better understanding of diseases that we can treat using more conventional methods. Or perhaps, it should be used only to treat genetic diseases after they occur and not prevent them. What is the difference between treatment and prevention in such a case? It is therefore a question of striking a delicate balance between human development on the one hand and newfound utilitarianism on the other.

¹⁷⁸ Steenhuisen, Julie, Experts call for halt to gene editing that results in 'designer babies', Reuters (2019), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-geneediting-embryos/experts-call-for-halt-to-gene-editing-that-results-in-designer-babies-idUSKCN1QU2HJ>

¹⁷⁹ Curry, Stephen, Who governs science?, The Guardian (2014), <https://www.theguardian.com/science/occams-corner/2014/aug/15/who-governs-science>

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

- The **Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR-Cas9)** is a recent approach to genome editing, being considered more accurate and efficient than the other available ones.¹⁸⁰
- **Genetics** is the study of heredity or more particularly, DNA. **DNA** (short for Deoxyribonucleic Acid) is a molecule within the nucleus of a cell that codifies genetic information that essentially determines how an organism grows and develops. Larger strands of DNA serving a particular purpose are called **Genes**. A **Gene Mutation** is a permanent alteration (natural or not) in the DNA sequence that makes up a gene.
- A **Genetic Disease** is a condition that occurs as a result of a mutation or an anomaly in an individual's genome. Genetic diseases, while they may or may not be hereditary, will always be the result of a mutation. **Hereditary Diseases** are health conditions that are caused by genetic mutations and have the potential of being passed down a line of generations. For example, cancer is always a genetic disease since it is the result of a genetic mutation, but the majority of cancers are not hereditary, as the mutation is new in the individual and not passed down from their parents.¹⁸¹
- Similarly, **Somatic Cell** editing alters cells which are not reproductive, such as blood or skin cells and is mainly a treatment tool. In **Germline** editing, changes are made in sperm cells or embryos, which will be incorporated in the person's genetic code, and being passed on to generations to come.
- **Precision Medicine**, also known as **personalised medicine**, is a form of medicine that uses information about each person's genes, proteins, and environment to prevent, diagnose, and treat disease, instead of the traditional "one size fits all" traditional approach of medicine.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ US National Library of Medicine (2019), What are genome editing and CRISPR-Cas9, <https://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/primer/genomicresearch/genomeediting>

¹⁸¹ Day, Laura, Hereditary vs. Genetic: How Genetics Differs from Heredity, Kelsey Group (2018), <https://www.kelseygroup.com/hereditary-vs-genetic/>

¹⁸² US National Cancer Institute, Precision Medicine, <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/precision-medicine>

- **Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs)** are medicines for human use that are based on genes, tissues or cells. They offer groundbreaking new opportunities for the treatment of diseases and injuries. ATMPs can be classified into three main types: gene therapy medicines, somatic-cell therapy medicines and tissue-engineered medicines.¹⁸³
- **Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)** can be defined as organisms (i.e. plants, animals or microorganisms) in which the genetic material (DNA) has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination. It allows selected individual genes to be transferred from one organism into another, also between non related species.¹⁸⁴
- In medicine, **Market Authorisation** refers to the procedure through which a particular tool, method or product is tested, evaluated and allowed to be used commercially. It covers everything from diagnostic tools, specific treatments, drugs of any form to more particular practises (ex. gene therapy).
- **Eugenics** is the study of or belief in the possibility of improving the qualities of the human species or a human population, especially by such means as discouraging reproduction by persons having genetic defects or presumed to have inheritable undesirable traits (negative eugenics) or encouraging reproduction by persons presumed to have inheritable desirable traits (positive eugenics).¹⁸⁵
- Any disease affecting fewer than 5 people in 10,000 in the EU is considered a **Rare Disease**. Some diseases are even rarer affecting 1 person in 100,000 or more. A large portion of these diseases are usually genetic and due to their nature require very-specialised treatment, rendering the search for an adequate cure almost impossible.¹⁸⁶
- A **Designer Baby** is a baby genetically engineered in vitro for specially selected traits, which can vary from lowered disease-risk to gender selection.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ European Medicines Agency (EMA), Advanced therapy medicinal products: Overview
<https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/human-regulatory/overview/advanced-therapy-medicinal-products-overview>

¹⁸⁴ World Health Organisation (WHO), Frequently asked questions on genetically modified foods,
https://www.who.int/foodsafety/areas_work/food-technology/faq-genetically-modified-food/en/

¹⁸⁵ Dictionary.com, Eugenics, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/eugenics>

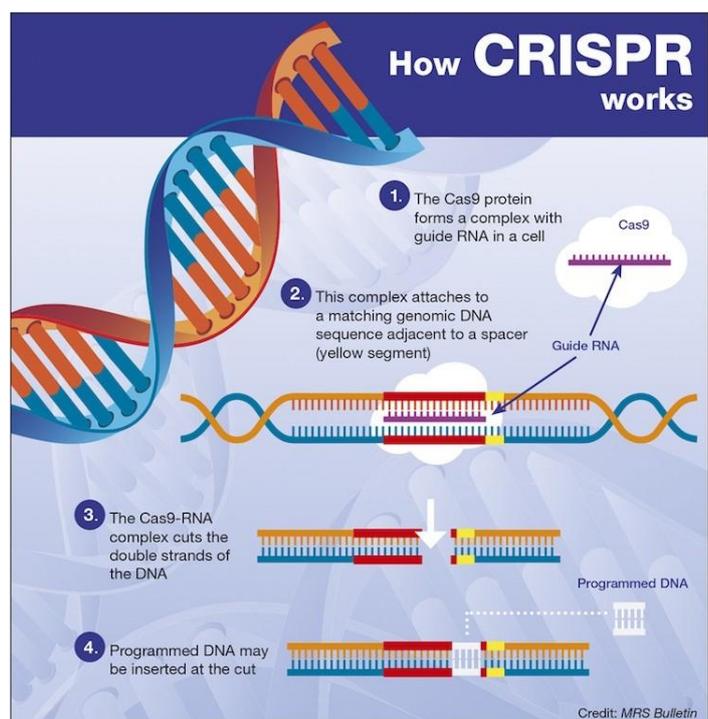
¹⁸⁶ European Commission, Rare Diseases, https://ec.europa.eu/health/non_communicable_diseases/rare_diseases_en

¹⁸⁷ Ly, Sarah, Ethics of Designer Babies, Embryo Project Encyclopedia (2011), <https://embryo.asu.edu/pages/ethics-designer-babies>

- **Immunisation** is the process whereby a person is made immune or resistant to an infectious disease, typically by the administration of a vaccine.¹⁸⁸
- **Medical Tourism** can be defined as the process of traveling outside the country of residence for the purpose of receiving medical care.¹⁸⁹

Key figures

Most genetic diseases are located in specific -and limited- parts of our genome which have mutated in such a manner that they cause the disease. The aim of CRISPR is to find that exact section and “cut it” out of the DNA strand, often replacing it with a health strand of DNA. Its benefit is that CRISPR only works with that specific strand of DNA, and can enable for targeted editing, without (possibly) affecting other parts of the genome. This seriously speeds up the process of gene modification and enables for larger scale interventions. Its main difference to other methods is that it does not require changing specific DNA bases, making it work for every type of cell, even living ones.



¹⁸⁸ World Health Organisation (WHO), Immunization, <https://www.who.int/topics/immunization/en/>

¹⁸⁹ Meštrović, Tomislav, What is Medical Tourism?, News-Medical (2019), <https://www.news-medical.net/health/What-is-Medical-Tourism.aspx>

Key actors

The **European Commission** has been at the forefront of both supporting and regulating genetic science. More specifically, the **Directorate General on Health (DG-SANTE)**¹⁹⁰ has been responsible for following all relevant developments in the field and acting accordingly. Thus, it aims to promote innovation in precision medicine while also ensuring that strict standards are met that protect the integrity of EU citizens.

The most active actor in the field has been the **European Medicines Agency (EMA)**.¹⁹¹ Aside from authorising the commercial use of certain treatments, it has also created a specific committee on advanced therapies. The goal of the committee is to observe and regulate the field, deciding on which practices should be approved and be made available to the public.¹⁹²

At the same time, the **pharmaceutical industry** also has particular interest in precision medicine. While medical research might be expensive, the potential benefits of a breakthrough far outweigh the initial development costs. Yet, aiming at profit, certain treatments might be barred from entering the market or be sold at exorbitant prices, if they have limited application or high development costs.

Member States are yet another actor to consider. The final provision of precision medicine remains up to them. To that end, further modernisation may be possibly needed as gene modification requires special equipment and trained staff, a change which comes hand in hand with a significant financial burden. **National Health Systems** should therefore be able to ensure fair and well-priced access to precision medicine, putting further strain on an already-fragile system, keeping in mind the aging population of Europe. More broadly, any transition also requires a change of mindset in the way States and citizens perceive the provision of medicine, let alone in how medicine is taught in the first place. This is particularly relevant when considering the need to make these advances to people from lower socio-economic backgrounds or remote or underdeveloped regions of the European Union.

¹⁹⁰ European Commission, Health and Food Safety, https://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/health-and-food-safety_en

¹⁹¹ European Medicines Agency (EMA), What we do, <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/about-us/what-we-do>

¹⁹² European Medicines Agency (EMA), Committee for Advanced Therapies (CAT), <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/committees/committee-advanced-therapies-cat>

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

Having taken everything into account, this topic is far from being exhausted. On the one hand, further research is needed to understand the practical application of this technology and its potential development. On the other, there are serious ethical considerations to be made, as gene modification and precision medicine remain divisive. Controversy aside, it is also a matter of if and how these breakthroughs should reach the general public, pondering about the future of medicine as a whole.

It is recommended that you start with the more technical part of the topic in order to better understand its complexity, potential applications and how it impacts human health. Undeniably, precision medicine and genetics are an extremely convoluted field of science, yet their principles can be rather simple. Having adequate technical knowledge is important in conceptualising the ethical dilemma and having an informed, fact-based, opinion.

Some possible keywords to search online are: *Genetic Disease, Rare Disease, Bioethics, Precision Medicine, Eugenics, Clinical Trials, Market Authorisation, Human Cloning, Assisted Reproductive Medicine, Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis, CRISPR/Cas-9*

What to browse, read, and watch

General

1. [Genes and Human Diseases](#). WHO
2. [Genetic Engineering Will Change Everything Forever – CRISPR](#). Kurzgesagt - In a Nutshell
3. [Are our life chances determined by our DNA?](#), Financial Times
4. [Social, Legal, and Ethical Implications of Genetic Testing](#), US Institute of Medicine

Gene Editing and Morality

1. [How soon will CRISPR gene-edited babies come to the US?](#), Vox
2. [CRISPR Ethics: Moral Considerations for Applications of a Powerful Tool](#), Journal of Molecular Biology

Precision Medicine

1. [Precision Medicine in Cancer Treatment](#), US National Cancer Institute
2. [Precision Medicine: From Science to Value](#), Geoffrey S. Ginsburg and Kathryn A. Phillips
3. [Gene therapy may have its first blockbuster](#), MIT Technology Review

IMCO

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Chairperson: Vedad Misirlic (BA)



HAMBURG 2019

91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Online service providers and users' data: Consumers becoming the product?

Collection of consumer data in exchange for online services has become a regular part of many business models. While specific provisions have been adopted at the EU level to protect personal information (e.g. GDPR), the practice of mass data collection remains unchanged. What further steps should be taken to protect consumers' right to their data, while minimising the financial impact on companies and their stakeholders?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

Personal data collection has been a part of many business strategies for a long time, before the digital age. **Personal data** was mostly collected through questionnaires or company loyalty cards, through which a company would accumulate large amounts of data on their customers and their buying patterns. An example is the US department store "Target", which, through data analysis, could predict which women were pregnant.

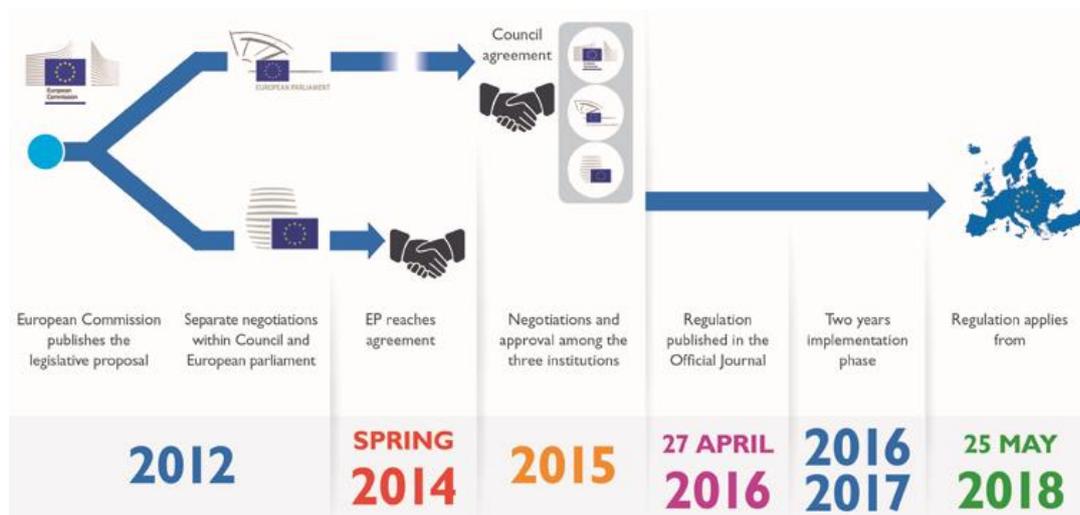
As many online services are **free**, rather than paid or subscription-based, large amounts of personal data are collected and processed as a way to generate income and cover the **costs of the service**. One of the main purposes of personal data collection is **targeted advertisement**, which is one of the main strategies for generating revenue for these online services. By taking the personal data which is collected and running it through a set of commands and preset parameters, a system is able to determine which product has the highest chance of being sold to a specific consumer. Based on this, the service places a targeted advertisement on the user's feed, and when the user buys the product or just sees the advertisement itself, the company gets a cut.

Although most data is collected legally, and users accept the **terms of service** when signing up for a service, the data may repeatedly be **misused** by online services. The best and most well-known example of this is the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica scandal, where the company harvested personal data of millions of Facebook users without their consent, and used it for political purposes. All of these problems raise many moral and legal questions. These range from how the terms of service are structured and how much freedom is given to the consumer, up to how "moral" it is to place targeted advertisements or use user data to enhance artificial intelligence.

What has been done so far?

The most important measure in place so far is the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**, implemented by the EU in 2018. The main purpose of the GDPR is to regulate the laws on data protection and **privacy** within the EU and the European Economic Area (EEA), as well as address how the export of data from within the EU/EEA is handled outside of the EU. This regulation has proved to be effective as, thanks to it, many companies were **fined** for the misuse of personal data.

One significant example was the €50 million fine given to Google by the French Data Protection Regulator (CNIL) for failing to comply with its GDPR obligations. Facebook has also been the target of the GDPR and could face fines up to \$2.2 billion based on their breach of the GDPR.



The graph above shows a timeline of how the GDPR was created, from its idea to its implementation.

An important measure within the GDPR is the way users have to be **informed** about the processing of their personal data and the reinforced requirements regarding their **consent** in order for the company to use their data. In this case, the company has to clearly state what data will be processed, how it will be processed, for how long, the purpose of the processing, as well as all the recipients to whom the data may be transferred to. This is further expanded by the option to withdraw consent, in which case the company can no longer use the consumer's personal data after they indicate this consent withdrawal. This measure has given a lot of **ownership over personal data** to the consumers and has vastly improved how data is not only submitted, but also handled from the consumer's point of view.

Following the past Facebook scandals, the European Parliament has called for a full audit of Facebook, where Facebook's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, would answer questions about Facebook's **privacy** policy and their ethics of handling data. This could lead to further discussion in this area, as Zuckerberg's testimony in front of the US Congress has not only addressed and answered many questions, but also encouraged public debate.

What are the challenges of the topic?

An important challenge of this topic is the **different interests of consumers and companies**. While consumers tend to ask for greater respect of **privacy** and lesser use of their personal data, companies defend their profits, and thus tend to remain in favour of using personal data for commercial use. Taking Instagram as an example, high executives and everyone with access to the company's database can theoretically access personal data.

Even though this is strongly against the policy of the company and the data is encrypted in many ways, there is a theoretical chance that their data can be accessed by a human, rather than leaving everything up to an algorithm which does everything automatically, which can be troubling to consumers. These algorithms calculate many different parameters and results for the user which range from the pictures they will see next, how profiles will be ordered, up to targeted advertisements that will be shown on the consumer's feed.

One difficult aspect of this topic is that it **changes rapidly**, as new online services are developed every day. Because of this, the challenge is developing solutions that are flexible enough to apply to current and future services, with uses that are not known yet. Although there are definitions of online services and obligations, there are many grey areas that companies currently exploit, as not many measures have yet been introduced which could regulate this.

What now?

As the GDPR has addressed most of the issues with illegal data misuse, current questions look at **legal uses of personal data**. Consumers might not like how companies are collecting and using their personal data, even though they have willingly and consensually submitted it to access online services. However, it can also be argued that targeted advertising is also beneficial to the consumer, who is more likely to see products they would be interested in.

Many companies have switched their focus after the implementation of the GDPR and are abiding by the rules it sets, having a quick reaction time and adapting their webpages and online services in order to comply with most rules. However, with almost 60,000 data breaches reported in the post-GDPR era, this issue is far from solved.

The focal point has now shifted to the misuse of data from a more moral perspective. As the current situation stands, many users feel like companies do not respect their **privacy**, although they willingly submitted their personal data. Companies can also argue that data processing benefits the users of the service.

When it comes to the **“cost of a free service”**, one question to consider is whether it is worth it to provide personal data to companies in exchange for a service. If our personal data is so valuable, why don't we sell it ourselves? If the business strategy of online service companies is using and processing our data, why do we consent to the data and later on are troubled and concerned with how it is being used, even though we gave consent in the first place? At the same time, do we really have a choice on whether or not to use online services when they have become such an integral part of our everyday lives?

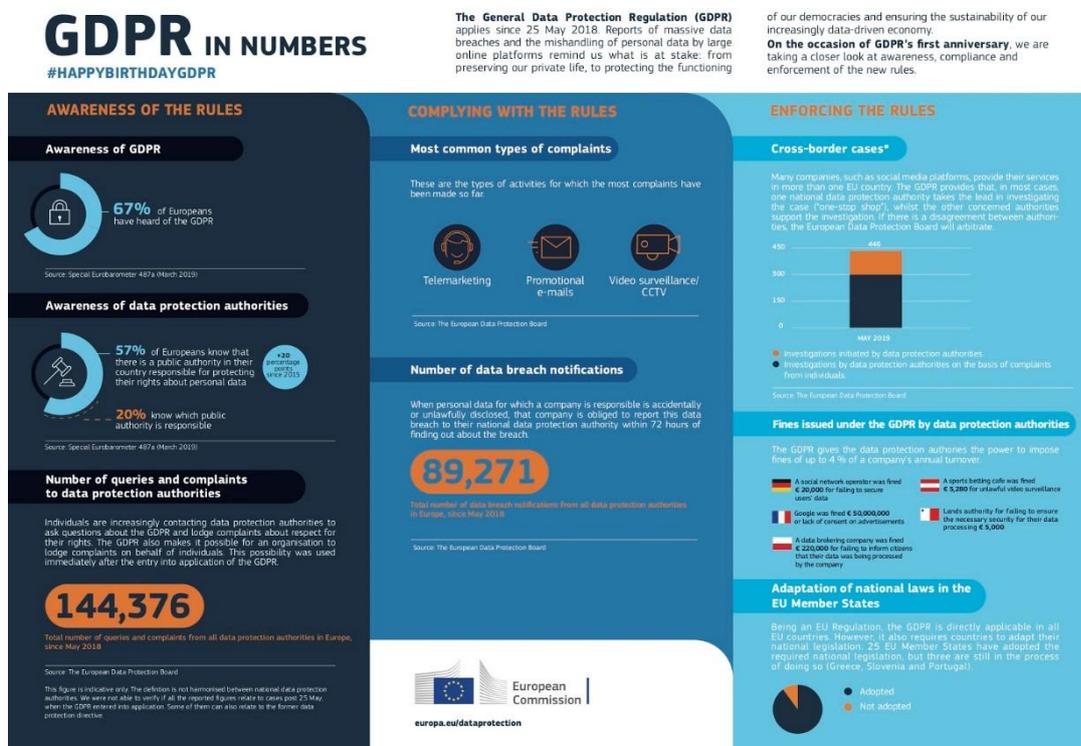
SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

- **Consumer** - A person who purchases goods and services for use. In the context of the topic, the consumer is the person who uses online services and whose personal data is collected.
- **Personal Data** - Any information that relates to an identifiable individual. In the context of the topic, personal data is the data which the consumer submits on a certain webpage in order to use the given service. Furthermore, personal data is also the data which is collected through the consumer's habits and usage of the given service. Examples of personal data are name, age, address, date of birth, etc.
- **Privacy** - Ability of a person or group to seclude themselves or information which they choose selectively. In the context of the topic, privacy is directly connected to the consumer's wishes of which data is collected and how the data is handled.
- **Online Services** - tools and services which are offered online, usually through a certain webpage or application which has a clearly defined user interface, as well as a purpose for their existence.
- **Targeted Advertising** - ads that are tailored to the customer, based on the personal data collected about them. The final advertisement placed is usually decided through a complex algorithm which takes many factors like demographics, previous purchases and behaviour into consideration.
- **Terms of Service** - An agreement made between the company (service provider) and the consumer (service user) where the user gives consent and legally agrees to provide the data mentioned in the agreement in exchange for using the service which the company offers. The consumer must agree in order to use the service.
- **Data Breach** - incident which exposes confidential and/or protected data. In the context of this topic, data breaches are incidents where consumer data is stolen, and the data can range from basic information like name and age, up to bank account details in severe cases

Key figures

- Although there were over 59,000 data breaches reported, only 91 resulted in fines. This significantly low number shows that, although the GDPR is a first step to address these, there are still many issues.
- The largest GDPR fine issued to date is the €50 million fine issued to Google, under terms of lack of data and ad transparency. This shows that the GDPR started to work effectively and that companies have to fundamentally change their approach when it comes to data collection, storing, processing and usage if they want to legally operate within the EU
- The following graph shows the GDPR in numbers since its implementations:



Key actors

Online service companies

They are one of the main stakeholders as they are the ones who design and provide the service and the data collection. Their interest lies in collecting as much user data as possible, as the amount of data they collect is often closely related to the profit of the company. These companies have a lot of power in decision-making because of their size and how useful their services are. Through this, they get a say in many things and in some cases the government can't even regulate the company because of their size and influence.

Consumers

This is the biggest stakeholder group as they are the ones who are using the service and providing their personal data in exchange for the free service which they use. The main interest of this user group is that their data is not misused or used immorally and unethically, and to maintain their privacy.

European Parliament

The European Parliament drafted the GDPR together with the Council of the European Union. As the European Parliament is the law-making branch of the institutions of the EU, the main focus point and purpose of the European Parliament in this topic is to discuss and pass new laws concerning online data services and personal data collection.

Council of the European Union

The Council of the European Union drafted the GDPR together with the European Parliament and shows the interests of ministers of the Member States. The main purpose of the Council of the European Union is to gather the different viewpoints from ministers of different EU countries and through that, amend and adopt laws.

European Commission

In light of this topic, the European Commission is in charge of implementing the GDPR. Furthermore, the European Commission as a body can be used to regulate data collection through proposing creative ideas which have to run through the EU legislative procedure.

Consumer International

This is a membership organisation which is run by consumers, for consumers. The main goal of this company is to uphold and improve the rights and legislative measures of the consumers. Their main viewpoint is that the consumers should have more rights over their data. This company has a major impact as they are one of the most accurate and detailed organisations when it comes to 3rd party research. This organisation has over 200 member organisations, runs in over 100 countries and is active for 59 years and counting.

Shareholders

The shareholders in companies usually take the opposite stance than the one which is promoted in Consumer International. Their main viewpoint is often that personal data should be used to its fullest potential in order to maximise profit. Public Limited Companies tend to focus on the shareholder's interests as they are the ones who are investing in the company and can withdraw their shares at any time should they not agree with how the company is developing.

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

The main challenge of this topic is to understand all the different viewpoints from the different stakeholders. With this in mind, the research should be done very thoroughly, with a focus on understanding the clash of opinions and interests, rather than technically mastering the topic. A good approach is to research each stakeholder group, and try to understand what their main motives are, as well as the ideas behind which they stand. Through further researching this and actually critically understanding what every stakeholder wants, you will have an easier time understanding the topic and coming up with solutions.

You are also strongly encouraged to read the GDPR, or a summary of the GDPR, as it will be one of the main points of our topic. Although it is a great start, based on the factual data which was collected since its implementation, it has flaws and choke points which eventually could be fixed.

What to browse, read, and watch

GDPR

- The full document can be found here. It is highly recommended that you read through the document in order to understand what it is.
 - <https://gdpr-info.eu>
- Wired has created a very good summary of the GDPR. It can be found here.
 - <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/what-is-gdpr-uk-eu-legislation-compliance-summary-fines-2018>
- the GDPR has its flaws. Some of the main loopholes are very well-explained in the following article.
 - <https://medium.com/mydata/five-loopholes-in-the-gdpr-367443c4248b>

Personal Data

- A very basic, yet concrete definition and explanation of personal data can be found here.
 - <https://www.atinternet.com/en/glossary/personal-data/>
- There is a very detailed WIRED guide on how personal data is collected. it explains some of the main concepts of our topic in great detail.
 - <https://www.wired.com/story/wired-guide-personal-data-collection/>
- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has created a draft resolution on the protection of privacy and personal data on the internet and online media. The document can be found here.
 - <http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2011/RihterviepriveeE.pdf>

The Clash

- A very good overview of the biggest data scandals of 2018 can be found here. It explains the conflicts of this topic really well and can serve as a good basis for further research.
 - <https://www.fastcompany.com/90272858/how-our-data-got-hacked-scandalized-and-abused-in-2018>
- A very good and interesting video showing Google's congressional hearing can be found here. It illustrates many issues which were defined in the topic overview.

INTA

Committee on the International Trade

Chairperson: Lars Kieni (CH)

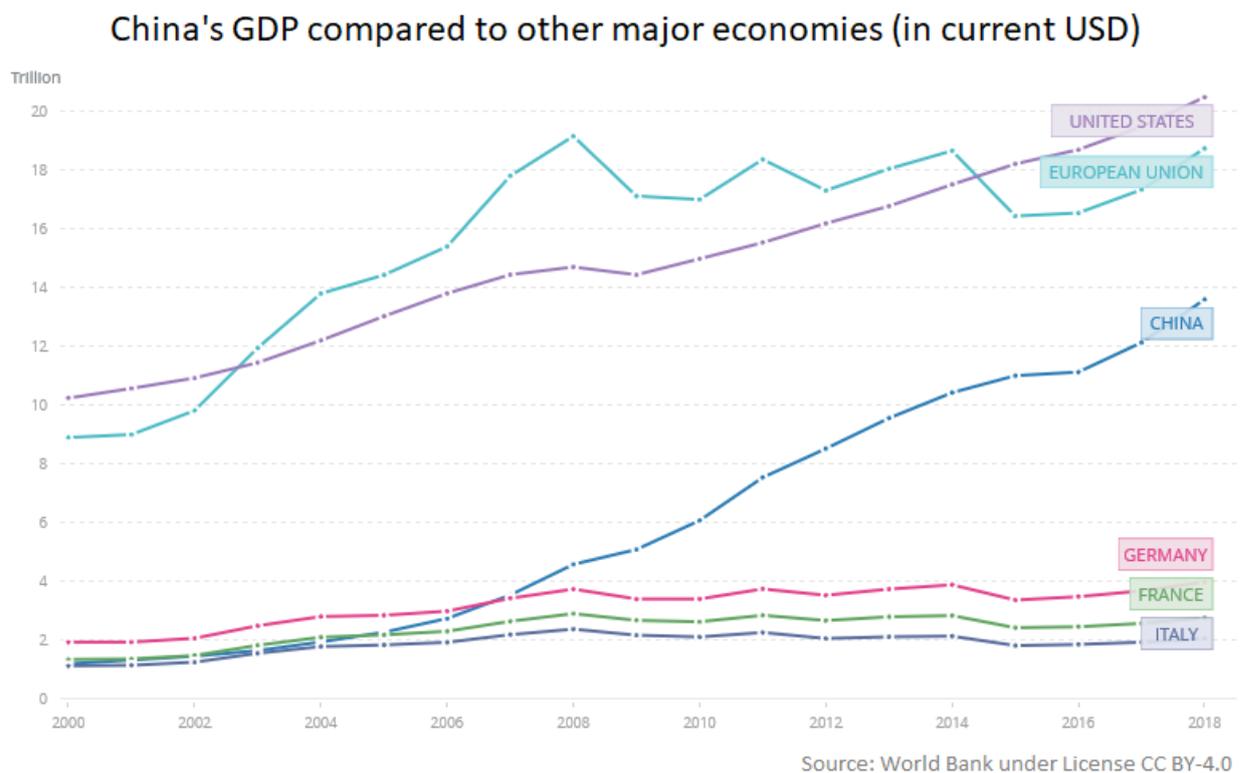


HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

The New Silk Road: A pathway to development or a geopolitical threat?

While China's Belt and Road Initiative aims to connect and integrate Asian, African and European economies, critics perceive the move as a way to foster Chinese hegemony and irreversibly shift the balance of power. How can Europe seize the initiative's benefits without sacrificing strategic interests, environmental sustainability and workers' rights?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW



What is the problem and why does it matter?

Only in 2005, China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was comparable to the one of France; in 2007 it was similar to Germany's. Today, it makes up for more than 15% of the entire world's economic activity. Since 1990, the Chinese economy has grown by at least 6% every single year, so it is not surprising that the China-EU trade in goods has doubled in the last ten years¹⁹³ - a trend which is not expected to turn around anytime soon;

To better connect its economy with Europe and Africa, Chinese President Xi Jinping unveiled plans for the **"One Belt, One Road Initiative"** (also referred to as 'Belt and Road Initiative', **BRI** for short) in 2013. The idea of the initiative is to further **boost trade** between Asia, Africa and Europe by strongly **investing in new infrastructure projects** such as harbours, highways and railroads, but also by concluding new trade and investment agreements.

While the economic benefits of the initiative is uncontested, criticism has grown that China uses the BRI as a *"ploy to lure less powerful nations into its economic orbit and boost its geopolitical power"*¹⁹⁴. In fact, since 2013, China has invested over USD 90 billions in 125 countries¹⁹⁵, funding infrastructure projects and providing loans to governments. With these investments, China increases its influence on the receiving countries. Critics fear that these loans fuel an unsustainable growth that China is eager capitalise off; a tactic known as **Debt Trap Diplomacy**.

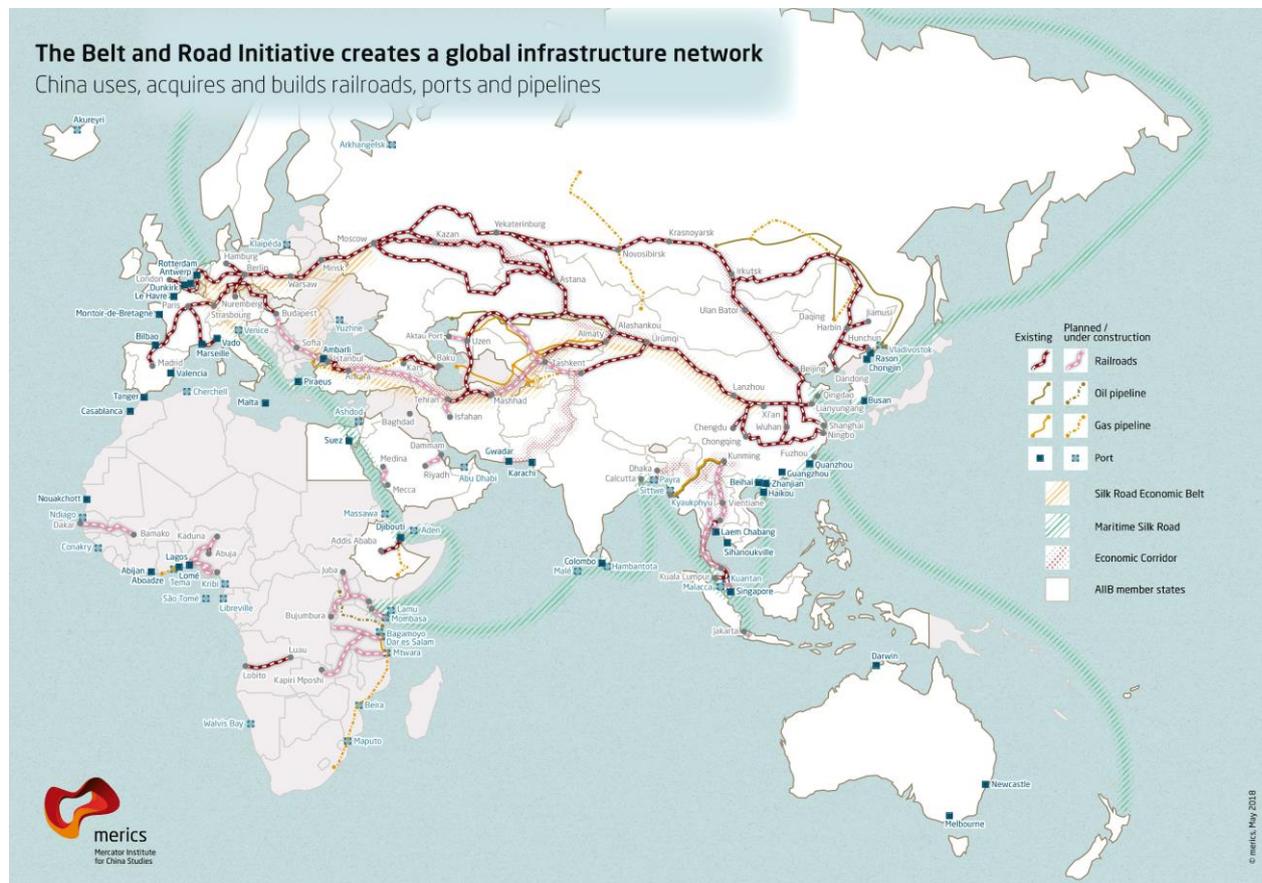
The power of China and the need for development in certain areas is clear. The question now however is: How should the EU and its Member States deal with this Chinese offensive?

¹⁹³ Eurostat (2019): "China-EU - international trade in goods statistics", https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/China-EU_-_international_trade_in_goods_statistics#EU_and_China_in_world_trade_in_goods

¹⁹⁴ The Guardian (2017): "China's Xi lays out \$900bn Silk Road vision amid claims of empire-buiding", <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/may/14/china-xi-silk-road-vision-belt-and-road-claims-empire-building>

¹⁹⁵ The Guardian (2019): "Belt and Road forum: China's 'project of the century' hits tough times", <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/25/belt-and-road-forum-chinas-project-of-the-century-hits-tough-times>

What has been done so far?



To coordinate the ongoing projects and to discuss the major strategy, China hosts the so-called **Belt and Road Forum (BRF)** summits. The 2019 meeting was attended by 37 heads of state and government (12 of which from Europe); whereas other countries have sent diplomatic delegations. However, numerous regional powers, such as Germany, France, the UK, Turkey, India, Japan or South Korea refused to attend, criticising the project as an attempt of “debt trap diplomacy” or raising concerns about geopolitical issues.

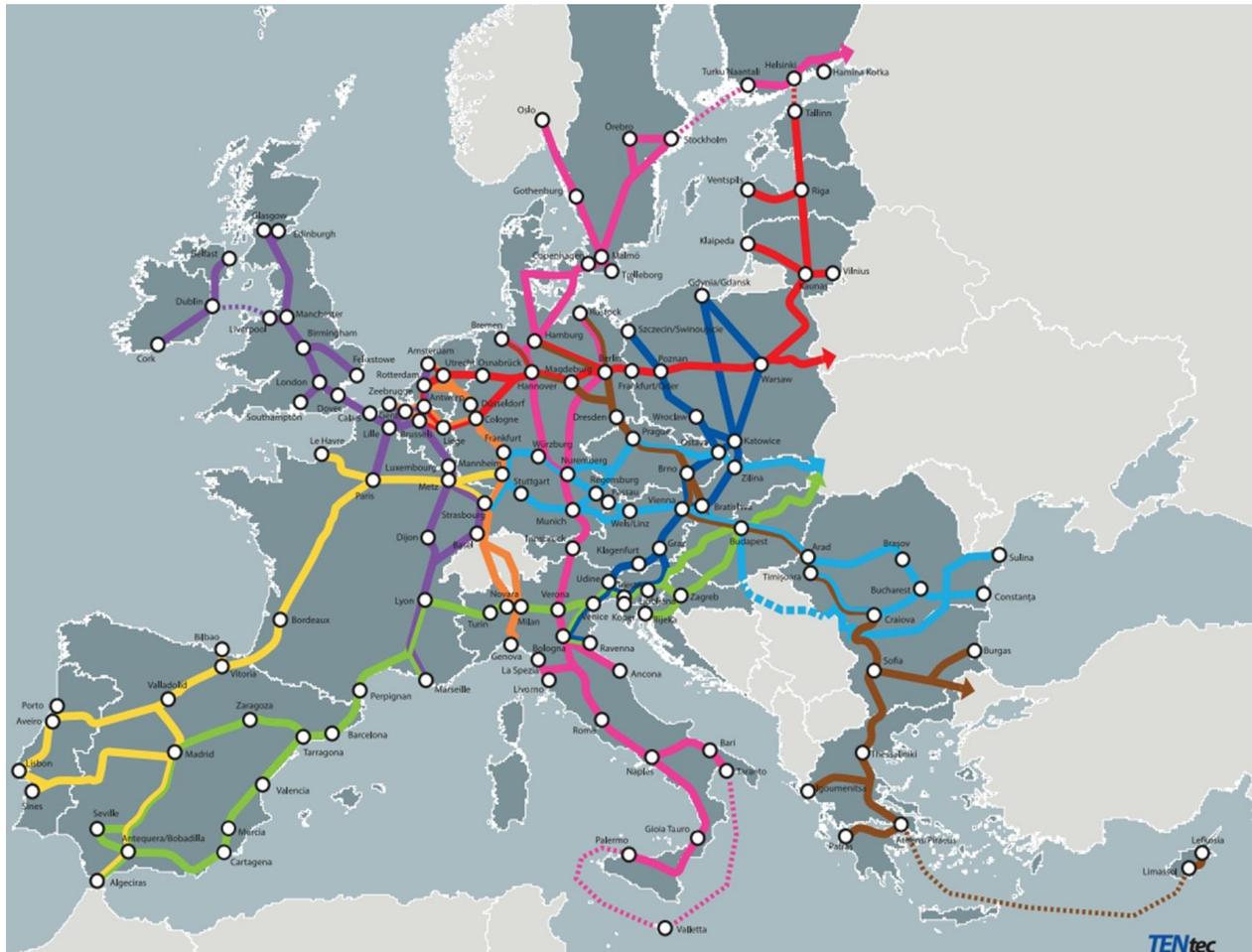
To coordinate its efforts with the 17 participating countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), China has set up a **17+1 format** (this being the 17 CEE states plus China). Here, Chinese officials hold yearly summits with the involved countries in CEE, including 12 EU Member States, as well as 4 candidate countries like Serbia and Albania. Seeing these alternative fora of decision-making, critics accuse China of *“undermining the European integration process by turning the CEE countries into ‘Trojan horses’ and sowing division in the continent”*¹⁹⁶; of *“playing ‘divide and conquer’”*¹⁹⁷. Lately, Italy was the first G7 country to sign up to the Initiative.

The EU is thus struggling to speak with one voice: In March 2019, Xi Jinping met with President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, French President Emmanuel Macron, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Paris. Macron called upon China to “respect the unity of the European Union”. Interestingly, Xi arrived to France directly from Italy, where he met with the Head of the Italian government Giuseppe Conte and signed deals worth €5 billions.

With the **Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)** for short, the EU has launched its own infrastructure development programme: Having identified nine core aspects of EU-wide importance, the EU is investing over 24 billion Euro in the 2014-2020 period, also obliging Member States to orient their infrastructure policies (and investment plans) according to these priorities. The realisation of all projects along these nine aspects is estimated to require investments of 500 billion Euro until 2030, to be borne not only by the EU, but also by the Member States and private investors.

¹⁹⁶ The Diplomat (2019): “China’s “16+1” Is Dead? Long Live The “17+1””, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/03/chinas-161-is-dead-long-live-the-171/>

¹⁹⁷ National Public Radio NPR (2019): “What China’s Belt And Road Means For Europe”, <https://www.npr.org/2019/04/26/717389584/what-chinas-belt-and-road-means-for-europe?t=1561904181746>



What are the challenges of the topic?

As the European Commission assessed in March 2019 in a press release, *“China is simultaneously a cooperation partner with whom the EU has closely aligned objectives, a negotiating partner, with whom the EU needs to find a balance of interests, an economic competitor in pursuit of technological leadership, and a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance”*¹⁹⁸.

China is a rising star on the world stage; it heavily invests in other countries and with its population of almost 1.4 billion, it is a very interesting market and trading partner for European companies. However economic considerations cannot swipe off concerns about Chinese record in the subject of human rights.

¹⁹⁸ European Commission (2019): “Commission reviews relations with China, proposes 10 actions”, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-19-1605_en.htm

In an unprecedented move in July 2019, 22 Member States of the United Nations' Human Rights Council have issued a joint condemnation¹⁹⁹ of China's "*arbitrary detention... as well as widespread surveillance and restrictions, particularly targeting Uighurs and other minorities*"²⁰⁰ in the Xinjiang province. Thus, the fundamental question is whether **we should trade with China at all, and if so, to what extent?**

While Chinese companies are active in Europe, European Companies complain about not being granted **a level playing field** in the Chinese market²⁰¹ because of unequal enforcement of environmental regulations, governmental demands to access technology and company secrets, administrative hurdles such as lack of transparency, as well as unfair competition from state-owned companies²⁰².

The BRI also creates tension in a different dimension, namely the relation between the EU and its Member States. While the EU has the exclusive **competence** to negotiate foreign trade agreements with third countries; these competences are shared with the Member States in questions of transport. Lastly, infrastructure issues are completely up to the Member States. As many Member States want to profit from the BRI, China is accused of circumnavigating the established political institutions (the EU) by creating new mechanisms such as the BRI summits and the 17+1 format. This makes it difficult for the EU to speak with one voice, and to defend the interests of the Union as a whole.

Lastly, it is worthwhile to address the concern that the Chinese government is pursuing a second agenda with its investments, using them to further its geopolitical interests on a global level. It has already been noted that in the matter of the geopolitical conflict in the South China Sea, Member States that strongly benefit from the Chinese investments, such as Greece and Hungary have become "*unwilling to criticise Beijing*"²⁰³ over its violations of international law. These internal divisions make it increasingly difficult for the EU to take a strong stance vis-a-vis China. The big question thus is: **do we see the BRI as an opportunity or as a geopolitical threat?**

¹⁹⁹ Human Rights Watch (2019): "Joint statement by several UN Permanent Representatives to the UN Human Rights Council"

"https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/supporting_resources/190708_joint_statement_xinjiang.pdf

²⁰⁰ The Guardian (2019): "More than 20 ambassadors condemn China's treatment of Uighurs in Xinjiang", <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/11/more-than-20-ambassadors-condemn-chinas-treatment-of-ughurs-in-xinjiang>

²⁰¹ The Irish Times (2017): "European firms in China seek a more level playing field", <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/economy/european-firms-in-china-seek-a-more-level-playing-field-1.3102630>

²⁰² Deutsche Welle (2019): "Xi, Merkel, Macron and Juncker meet in Paris", <https://www.dw.com/en/xi-merkel-macron-and-juncker-meet-in-paris/a-48060985>

²⁰³ Reuters (2016): "EU's statement on South China Sea reflects divisions", <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-ruling-eu/eus-statement-on-south-china-sea-reflects-divisions-idUSKCN0ZV1TS>

What now?

There are undoubtedly concerns that the BRI is not equally beneficial to all involved partners. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian publicly insisted that *“If we’re going to talk about a new Silk Road, then it must be one that goes in both directions”*²⁰⁴.

Leading up to a high-level summit, the EU has reviewed its relations with China in March 2019, demanding *“a more balanced and reciprocal economic relationship”*²⁰⁵, particularly on the topics of subsidies for Chinese state-owned companies and on forced transfers of technology and know-how from European businesses. At the mentioned high-level meeting in Paris, Juncker called upon China to *“give EU companies the same access to Chinese markets as Chinese companies enjoy in the EU”*²⁰⁶.

On another note, there is the question of sovereignty: How much can European countries trust a *“systematic rival”*²⁰⁷, as the EU calls China, with a **strategic infrastructural project**? How can they avoid dependencies and make sure the Chinese investments are not turned into political leverage during later negotiations?

On a more general note, **the EU struggles to maintain unity among its Member States**, as a sizeable number of national governments have signed onto the BRI unilaterally in one way or another, without coordinating with Brussels. As the initiative is so multifaceted, The EU struggles to establish its coordinating instance as the initiative is so multifaceted and the opportunities are seen as too attractive for some MS to refuse. The question is how the strategic interests of Europe as a whole can be safeguarded if every country unilaterally tries to seize the benefits of the BRI

²⁰⁴ Geopolitical Monitor (2019): “China in Europe: Does the New Silk Road Go Both Ways?”, <https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/china-in-europe-does-the-new-silk-road-go-both-ways/>

²⁰⁵ European Commission (2019): “Commission reviews relations with China, proposes 10 actions”, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-19-1605_en.htm

²⁰⁶ The Guardian (2019): “Macron meets Xi Jinping to strengthen EU-China relationship”, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/26/emmanuel-macron-meets-chinese-leader-in-attempt-to-strengthen-ties>

²⁰⁷ European Commission (2019): “Commission reviews relations with China, proposes 10 actions”, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-19-1605_en.htm

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

The One Belt, One Road Initiative:

The whole idea can to a certain extent be subdivided in two parts;

The One Road initiative covers infrastructure projects connecting China to Southeastern and Southern Asia, the Middle East and Africa, whereas the One Belt initiative focuses on economic development in Europe and Central Asia. This part of the project (which shall also be the focus of this committee) is also referred to as “**New Silk Road**”, drawing parallels to the ancient trading network that connected civilisations in Europe and Asia for centuries, benefiting them mutually through the exchange of goods such as silk, spices, glass and gunpowder.

Debt Trap Diplomacy

A way for a wealthy or powerful country to achieve its goals versus another country by a two-step strategy. In a first step, the lender supports another country by giving loans at an excessive interest rate. In a second step, once the indebted country becomes unable to pay back the credit, the lender country demands political and/or economic concessions to make up for the debt. The most famous example is the **Hambantota Harbour**: The Sri Lankan government decided to build a big cargo port with Chinese help, hoping to profit off its location along one of the world’s busiest shipping routes. The port however proved to be heavily unprofitable and when Sri Lanka failed to repay the credit to China, it was pressured into signing a 99 year lease²⁰⁸, conceding **exclusive rights over this geopolitically very interesting harbour** just off the coast of India - one of China’s main competitors.

Critical infrastructure: The term ‘critical infrastructure’ describes buildings, networks, capacities and services that are essential for the functioning of society and the state, and a sudden disruption of their availability often has dire consequences. This very broad definition includes among others the supply of fuel, electricity and telecommunication services, as well as the functioning of airports, harbours, highways and train tracks. If a state is not in control of its critical infrastructure, it becomes potentially vul

nerable to those who control them instead. This is also a reason why the United States of America have banned the use of **5G technology** from the Chinese company **Huawei**, claiming it “*poses an undue risk of sabotage or subversion of the design, integrity, (...) operation, or maintenance of information and communications technology or services in the United States*”²⁰⁹.

²⁰⁸ The New York Times (2018): “How China Got Sri Lanka to Cough Up a Port”, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/25/world/asia/china-sri-lanka-port.html>

²⁰⁹ The White House (2019): “Executive Order on Securing the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain”,

Key figures

The actions China has taken in the context of the BRI in Europe are manifold. Here are some examples:

- In **Greece**, the state-owned China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO) has acquired a majority share of the port of Piraeus. It has slashed salaries and cut existing jobs, much against the resistance of unions, but greatly improved the economic performance of the port.²¹⁰ The investment of €3.5 billion has pushed Piraeus to be the second most significant port in the Mediterranean Sea, created new jobs and has more than sextupled the amount of cargo handled there.²¹¹
- Similarly, in **Spain**, COSCO has acquired a 51% share of the company operating the ports in Bilbao and Valencia.
- In **Serbia and Hungary**, China is funding the construction of a high-speed railway line between Belgrade and Budapest, bringing down the travelling time for passenger trains from 8 to less than 4 hours. The entire undertaking is projected to cost €3.2 billions²¹² and should also serve as a corridor for freight trains, bringing goods from the port of Piraeus to Central Europe. Most of the construction will be done by Chinese enterprises and discussing the geographic and economic interests of Hungary, observers criticise that the project is *“more ideal for China than for Hungary”*²¹³.
- In **Albania**, a Chinese company has taken complete ownership of the company operating and managing the country’s biggest airport in Tirana.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-securing-information-communications-technology-services-supply-chain/>

²¹⁰ The New York Times (2012): “Under Chinese, a Greek Port Thrives”, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/11/business/global/chinese-company-sets-new-rhythm-in-port-of-piraeus.html?pagewanted=all>

²¹¹ The National Herald (2019): “China’s Cosco makes Piraeus 2nd Largest Port in Mediterranean”, <https://www.thenationalherald.com/229205/chinas-cosco-makes-piraeus-2nd-largest-port-in-mediterranean/>

²¹² Financial Observer (2018): “Modernization of Belgrade-Budapest railway line as One Belt One Road initiative”, <https://financialobserver.eu/ce/hungary/modernization-of-belgrade-budapest-railway-line-as-one-belt-one-road-initiative/>

²¹³ The Diplomat (2018): “Who Benefits From the Chinese-Built Hungary-Serbia Railway?”, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/who-benefits-from-the-chinese-built-hungary-serbia-railway/>

- **Montenegro** is building highways for €807 millions²¹⁴. After the European Investment Bank was unwilling to loan the money, its Chinese counterpart provided the money. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have assessed this loan to be *“a threat to Montenegro’s long-term stability”*²¹⁵.
- A project that has already been realised is the so-called **Yiwu-London railway line** which connects the Chinese east coast with Europe. This way, goods can travel 12,000 kilometres within 15 days. Transporting goods on freight trains is cheaper than air travel, and faster and more eco-friendly than shipping, so the number of freight trains operating on this line is rising steadily. In 2016, 1702 freight trains have made this trip²¹⁶; in 2018, it was already an estimated number of 6,000²¹⁷.
- One more interesting project to look at is the new railway line from Nairobi to Mombasa in **Kenya**: In the hope of curbing freight transport from its capital to the major ocean port of Mombasa, Kenya committed to its most expensive infrastructure project ever, amounting to USD 3.6 billion. The project is far from profitable and the first repayment of the credit is due soon, it has been reported that *“China could take ownership of Mombasa Port – a strategically significant asset and a symbol of sovereignty”*²¹⁸. At the same time, the Kenyan workers accuse their Chinese managers of “neo-colonialism, racism and blatant discrimination”²¹⁹.

²¹⁴ European Parliament (2018): “Research for TRAN committee: The new Silk Road - opportunities and challenges for EU transport”,
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/585907/IPOL_STU\(2018\)585907_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/585907/IPOL_STU(2018)585907_EN.pdf) (p. 37).

²¹⁵ VICE News (2018): “China’s One Belt One Road Could Make Or Break This Poor European Country (HBO)”,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0gk_m0gZ0A

²¹⁶ BBC (2017): “All aboard the China-to-London freight train”, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-38654176>

²¹⁷ Global Construction Review (2018): “Silk road of steel: Chinese rail freight to Europe set to double in 2018”, <http://www.globalconstructionreview.com/news/silk-road-steel-chinese-rail-freight-europe-set-to/>

²¹⁸ The Spectator (2019): “From capital to coast: The Mombasa-Nairobi railway”,
<https://life.spectator.co.uk/articles/from-capital-to-coast-the-nairobi-to-mombasa-railway/>

²¹⁹ Standard Media (2018): “Revealed: SGR workers treated badly by Chinese managers”,
<https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001287179/revealed-sgr-workers-treated-badly-by-chinese-masters>

Key actors

The **People's Republic of China ("China")** is the most populous country in the world. Having undergone decades of rapid economic growth, it has now emerged as the world's third biggest economy after the USA and the EU. It is now interested in spreading its sphere of political power and influence

The **European Commission** is the executive branch of the EU, so it drives major projects such as the TEN-T. It also kickstarts the lawmaking process within the competences that the Member States have delegated to it. Regarding foreign trade agreements, the European Commission has the exclusive competence to act on behalf of the entire Union; in questions such as transport and networks, it shares the competence with the Member States. Lastly, it represents the interests of the entire Union towards external actors, as opposed to national interests.

Further important is the Committee on **International Trade (INTA) of the European Parliament**. Its Members are focusing on the economic cooperation and commercial exchange with other countries or territories; such as China in our case. The biggest part of the lawmaking process in Parliament will happen within the committee, as it will discuss the matter in-depth, agree on a position and then propose the entire European Parliament to follow its direction.

The **European Investment Bank (EIB)** is the EU's institution lending money to governments and agencies for projects such as infrastructure with the mission of driving European integration and social cohesion. 90% of the projects it supports take place in EU Member States. The EIB however only funds projects if they meet certain requirements, and only contributes up to 50% of the funding.

The **EU Member States** however have individual interests which can differ from the EU significantly. For example, the Italian government signed onto the BRI because it saw it as an opportunity to get its struggling economy back to flourish²²⁰. Luxemburg joined the initiative with the goal to maintain its status as an international financial hub²²¹; and Lithuania did so hoping for cooperation in technologies such as engineering, electronics and biotech²²². The Swedish government has taken a “highly cautious” “wait-and-see” approach²²³ whereas Germany actively criticised participating countries, warning of the danger of dependency and stating that “we can only survive if we are united”²²⁴.

Third countries have the same needs and wishes as EU Member States; however they lack the collective obligations EU states have. Not being involved in EU-wide projects such as the TEN-T and it is more difficult for them to obtain funding from the EIB. This makes it easier for other actors like China to give them a different (non-European) perspective. It is worth noting that this category also includes countries that are well underway to become EU Member States, such as Serbia and Montenegro.

European businesses have a big interest in the BRI. They want to seize the opportunity of being involved in and benefitting from all these construction works and want to get a foot in the door of the Chinese market in general. In China however, they struggle with administrative hurdles which makes it hard for them to compete with their Chinese counterparts.

²²⁰ Euronews (2019): “China’s Belt and Road plan: Why did Italy sign it and why is Brussels worried? Euronews answers”, <https://www.euronews.com/2019/03/24/china-and-italy-sign-silk-road-project>

²²¹ One Belt One Road Europe (2019): “Luxemburg, a member of the BRI“, <https://www.oboreurope.com/en/luxembourg-member-bri/>

²²² Xinhua (2017): “Interview: Lithuania welcomes China’s effort for connectivity under Belt and Road Initiative”. http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-04/15/c_136210403.htm

²²³ Swedish Institute of Foreign Affairs (2017): “Sweden’s approach to China’s Belt and Road Initiative”, <https://www.ui.se/globalassets/ui.se-eng/publications/ui-publications/2017/paper-1-swedens-approach-to-chinas-belt-and-road-initiative.pdf>

²²⁴ Daily Sabah Europe (2019): “Germany criticizes Italy on decision to join China’s Belt and Road Initiative”, <https://www.dailysabah.com/europe/2019/03/24/germany-criticizes-italy-on-decision-to-join-chinas-belt-and-road-initiative>

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

Geopolitics is a very global topic and the BRI is just one element of China's foreign policy. While our committee focuses on the BRI's implications for Europe, **it is also worth familiarising yourselves with what China is doing in other parts of the world**, e.g. the conflict in the South China Sea, China's standing in Africa or its interests in the North Korea situation.

The BRI itself is very multifaceted, as almost every project is different, many actors are involved and different countries have taken starkly contrasting stances towards the BRI.

For the session, it is important that we all have a good grasp of the concepts that are at stake. Please find below some starting points for your research, covering a wide range of possible facets of the topic; from a general document on the EU's relations with China to a very specific documentary about a highway project in Montenegro.

Find out what your stance your country has taken towards China and the BRI. What projects are undertaken under the BRI and the TEN-T? Who is behind these projects and who will benefit off them?

An interesting side question might also be the one about critical technology: has there been a debate about who shall provide the infrastructure for the new 5G technology in your country? Are there any reservations towards major Chinese companies such as Huawei? Or what stance does your country take towards China in general?

What to browse, read, and watch

In March 2019, the European Commission has published a strategic outlook on the future of EU-China relations, discussing the current situation and listing 10 concrete points where improvement is necessary (particularly relevant are chapters IV and V):

<https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-eu-china-a-strategic-outlook.pdf>

A very informative video report on the construction of a highway in Montenegro under the BRI, saying that this project will "make or break" the country (7 mins):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0gk_m0gZ0A

An in-depth analysis of the strong development of the Port of Piraeus (Greece) following Chinese investments:

<https://www.thenationalherald.com/229205/chinas-cosco-makes-piraeus-2nd-largest-port-in-mediterranean/>

On a broader perspective: A video from an American perspective on why China invests so much money in Africa and how this translates into political influence on the world stage (10 mins):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQV_DKQkT8o

This study by the European Parliament gives an overview on the agreements China has concluded in the wake of the BRI, as well as a (non-conclusive) list of projects that are funded throughout Europe. Particularly interesting are Annex 2 on agreements (pages 97-105) and Annex 3 on the concrete projects (pages 106-114):

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/585907/IPOL_STU\(2018\)585907_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/585907/IPOL_STU(2018)585907_EN.pdf)

In contrast, a good list of projects pursued under the TEN-T, grouped by focus corridor, can be found here:

https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure_en

On the occasion of the 2019 summit of the BRF, this article summarises the diverse criticism of countries who decided not to attend the summit, as well as suggestions on how to improve the initiative:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/25/belt-and-road-forum-chinas-project-of-the-century-hits-tough-times>

In spring 2019, Greece joined the 17+1 format. This article discusses the 17+1 format and the challenge it poses to the EU:

<https://thediplomat.com/2019/03/chinas-161-is-dead-long-live-the-171/>

This study by the Austrian National Bank analyses the implications of the BRI on South Eastern Europe and Europe as a whole, also discussing why Chinese loans are more interesting to certain countries than EU loans:

https://www.suerf.org/docx/f_b5f1e8fb36cd7fbeb7988e8639ac79e9_2067_suerf.pdf

“Why is China buying up Europe’s ports?” This report studies the Chinese activities in European waters from a Chinese perspective:

ITRE

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

Chairperson: Klara Birchley (PL)



HAMBURG 2019

91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Technological innovation in the energy sector: transitioning towards a sustainable Europe. With the transformation within Europe's energy systems from conventional to renewable power potentially taking decades, investments in research and development are key to facilitating and expediting the process. What steps should be taken to promote innovation and provide the best conditions for this transition to occur?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

The European Union is currently facing a multitude of challenges within the energy sector. The roots of these challenges are spread across a variety of factors. To begin with the European Union currently relies on fossil fuels for 80%²²⁵ of its energy supplies. This figure raises concerns both for the Union's future energy supply security as well as poses a serious threat to the continent's environment. Furthermore, the European Union's dependency rate on foreign imports of energy was 55% in 2017²²⁶.

This means that in order to meet its energy needs the Union is heavily reliant on importing its crude oil, natural gas and solid fuels from countries outside its borders. A significant part of these imports are supplied by Russia whose disputes with transit countries and the recent conflict in Ukraine have further raised concerns about energy security. Another factor in these challenges are the aforementioned environmental concerns. In 2017 energy producing industries were responsible for the largest share (28.2%)²²⁷ of total greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) which directly affect the future of our planet. The burning and exploitation of fossil fuels also contributes to air and water pollution, ocean acidification and the degradation of land.

²²⁵ Energy & Technology Innovation, EU Science Hub (2018)

https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/research-topic/energy-technology-innovation?fbclid=IwAR2cZ82o7uVOXsMrmwa1Vfq2rUjIw8BJrCd-ij94y96tba_YRoeekEaFtg

²²⁶ Energy imports dependency, Eurostat (2017)

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-2c.html>

²²⁷ European Environmental Agency, Share of EU GHG emission by source, Eurostat (2017)

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-4a.html>

These threats have led the European Union to the creation of its 2030 targets in which it foresees a 40% reduction in GHGs, raising renewable energy consumption to 32% and 32.5%²²⁸ improvement of energy efficiency. However, to meet these targets, and follow through to the eventual aim of reducing emissions by 80-95% by 2050²²⁹, there is an essential need for transformation in the energy sector. Moreover, this transformation needs to be supported by technological innovation in order to provide the Union with a sustainable, efficient and cost-effective solutions to the challenges it currently faces within the energy sector.

What has been done so far?

The **Energy union and climate** was established by the Juncker Commission as one of its top 10 political priorities. In February 2015 the Commission published a communication on the Energy Union Package²³⁰ that called for the fundamental transition of Europe's energy system. The package is based on five dimensions, with its **fifth dimension** concentrating on innovation and competitiveness. A core element of this dimension is the **Strategic Energy Technology Plan** (SET Plan) that focuses on the development of low-carbon technologies, as well improving new technologies and reducing costs through financing projects and coordinating the research throughout the Member States. Diverse examples of implementing the plan can be seen across the continent.

One of these projects is the creation of the Markbygden Wind Farm - Europe's largest onshore wind farm in Piteå, Sweden. The project received €180 million by the European Investment Bank,²³¹ and it is currently being implemented by two private companies: Svejvind and Enercon. Another example of these projects is the introduction of green bonds in the Netherlands. Backed by the European Investment Bank and the Radobank group, the lender Obvion sells bonds that are composed of mortgages on energy efficient homes²³². The company's aim is to attract more

²²⁸ 2030 climate & energy framework, European Commission (2018)

https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2030_en

²²⁹ Energy & Technology Innovation, EU Science Hub (2018)

https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/research-topic/energy-technology-innovation?fbclid=IwAR2cZ82o7uVQXsMrmwa1Vfq2rUjIw8BJrCd-ij94y96tba_YRoeijkEaFtg

²³⁰ Communication 2015/80/EC 'Communication on a Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy' https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:1bd46c90-bdd4-11e4-bbe1-01aa75ed71a1.0001.03/DOC_1&format=PDF

²³¹ *EU Invests in the Planet: Ten Initiatives for a Modern and Clean Economy*, European Commission (2017) <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4c7ab013-1dcd-11e8-ac73-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-101987939>

²³² Ionova, Mariana,, *Obvion plans Europe's first Green ABS bond*, Reuters (2016)

<https://www.reuters.com/article/green-abs/obvion-plans-europes-first-green-abs-bond-idUSL5N18K4NJ>

investment from ecologically-conscious consumers. A further example is the Rev3 Project in France which is a low-carbon economy strategy in the Hauts-de-France region.

The initiative concentrates on bringing together private and institutional investments, and distributing them to projects that will develop the region's renewable energy, as well as create more jobs and make the region more competitive.

A key element in adopting and developing new technologies is collaboration between researchers but also between Member States, regions and cities. The Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy brings together over 7,000 local and regional authorities from 57 countries who have committed to EU climate and energy objectives.

What are the challenges of the topic?

In its 194th article, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)²³³ puts forward the assurance that the Union will ensure the functioning of the energy market and security of energy supplies, as well as promote energy efficiency, the development of new technologies and renewable energy sources. However, this article also insures these policy areas are a shared competence between the European Union and its Member States. In order to seek Member States further commitment to transforming their energy sectors, the European Parliament and European Council adopted the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action²³⁴ in December 2018.

The regulation stipulates that Member States must present integrated national energy and climate plans, which will include national targets, contributions, policies and measures for each of the five dimensions of the Energy Union. However, while the regulation requires Member States to report on their progress to the European Commission and reminds them of the European Union's climate targets, it does not impose any concrete policy changes or immediate actions on the Member States. Therefore, even though energy rules are set at the European level, in practice the Energy Union functions with 28 national regulatory frameworks.

²³³ Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union art 194, 2008 O.J. C115/47
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12008E194:EN:HTML>

²³⁴ Regulation 2018/1999/EU 'Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action'
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R1999&from=EN>

Another challenge that arises with the process of transformation is that a lot of green technologies get stuck in the so called “**valley of death**”. This recently coined expression means that companies that create new technologies cannot generate the capital or partnerships they need to further the development and promotion of their products. Nonetheless, investments in new technologies are not enough to guarantee the successful transition to renewable energy. According to the Fourth report on the State of the Energy Union²³⁵, reaching climate-neutrality will require additional investments in the range of €142-199 billion a year between 2030 and 2050 on top of the already existing baseline €400 billion investment each year.

What now?

Bearing in mind the aforementioned differences between Member States’ regulatory frameworks, it is now important to consider what should be done in order to prepare the Union’s energy sector for a successful transition to renewables and new technologies. The Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action lays a ground for these actions; however it is now crucial to decide upon the next steps forward, and the policies that will support innovative solutions, as well as reduce the European Union’s dependency on fossil fuels. Member States have different priorities when it comes to the breakdown of their energy sector, with countries like Poland, Estonia and Greece still heavily relying on solid fossil fuel production (79%, 73% and 61% respectively)²³⁶ for their energy needs but also for their economies and labour markets. Therefore, their national interests for embracing these changes will be different from Member States like Malta, Latvia or Cyprus where 90% of the countries’ energy is produced from renewable sources. Furthermore, it is also crucial to attract investment beyond the available institutional funds into energy sector’s transition to help both eliminate the valley of death and further the ambitious goals the European Union has put forward.

Among the questions yet to be answered are:

- How to ensure a successful transition to renewable energy across all Member States while also appealing their national interests?
- What policies should be introduced to help foster research into new technologies and prepare Member States for a transition to renewable energy?
- How to foster a larger cooperation among the Member States in research and the implementation of new technologies?
- What should be done to ensure new technologies are available to all regions across the European Union?
- How to encourage more support from the private sector in process of transitioning to renewable energy?

²³⁵ Communication 2019/175/EC ‘Communication on the Fourth Report on the State of the Energy Union’ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/fourth-report-state-of-energy-union-april2019_en_0.pdf

²³⁶ Simplified energy balances, Eurostat (2019)

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-2b.html>

Key concepts

Energy union and climate - is a strategy that stems from three of the European Union's energy policy objectives: security of supply, sustainability and competitiveness. Its main objective is to provide consumers across the European Union with secure, sustainable, competitive and affordable energy.

The basis of the Energy Union is a package that concentrates ensuring this goal in five interlinked dimensions: energy security, the internal energy market, energy efficiency, decarbonisation of the economy, and research, innovation and competitiveness.

Fifth Dimension of the Energy Union - is research, innovation and competitiveness. It currently concentrates on four sectors: energy storage, the Strategic Energy Technology Plan, the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) and fusion, and smart cities.

Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan) - is based on 10 key research and innovation actions (presented below). Each of these actions has its own priorities and targets which were translated into 11 implementation plans²³⁷. The SET plan is managed by a steering group that is chaired by the European Commission and gathers all the Member States as well as a representative from Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. It is also supported by the research community through the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) and by industry stakeholders. To provide information about its progress, it uses its own SET-Plan Information System (SETIS)²³⁸.

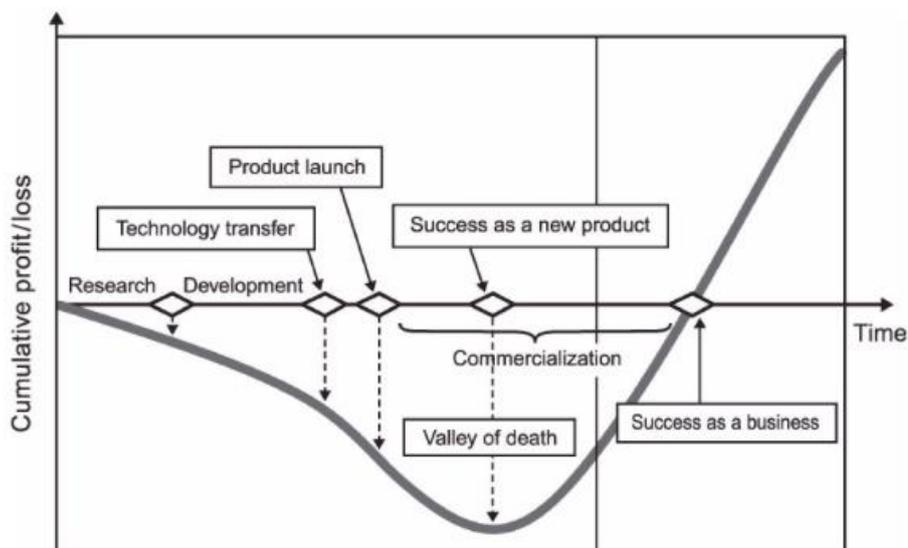
²³⁷ **Implementation plans** cover a variety of topics in the transition to sustainable energy, an example is the initiative for Global Leadership in Ocean Energy

²³⁸ The **SETIS** provides reports and updates accessible to all on the projects the SET Plan is currently working on.



Putting research and innovation at the heart of the Energy Union, European Commission

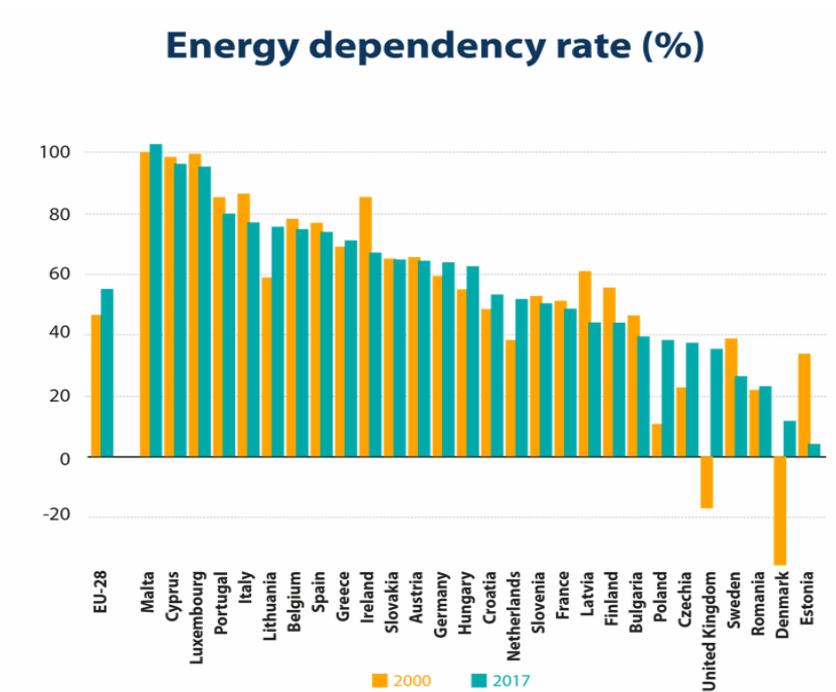
Valley of Death - is a term used by financial experts to describe the period of time that startups and small businesses often find themselves while developing a new product. The valley of death occurs when a product has already been developed and launched but hasn't yet started to bring in profit. Often times this means substantial losses for a company, and in some cases bankruptcy.



Osawa, Yoshitaka, Miyazaki, Kumiko, Ane

Key figures

Energy Dependence

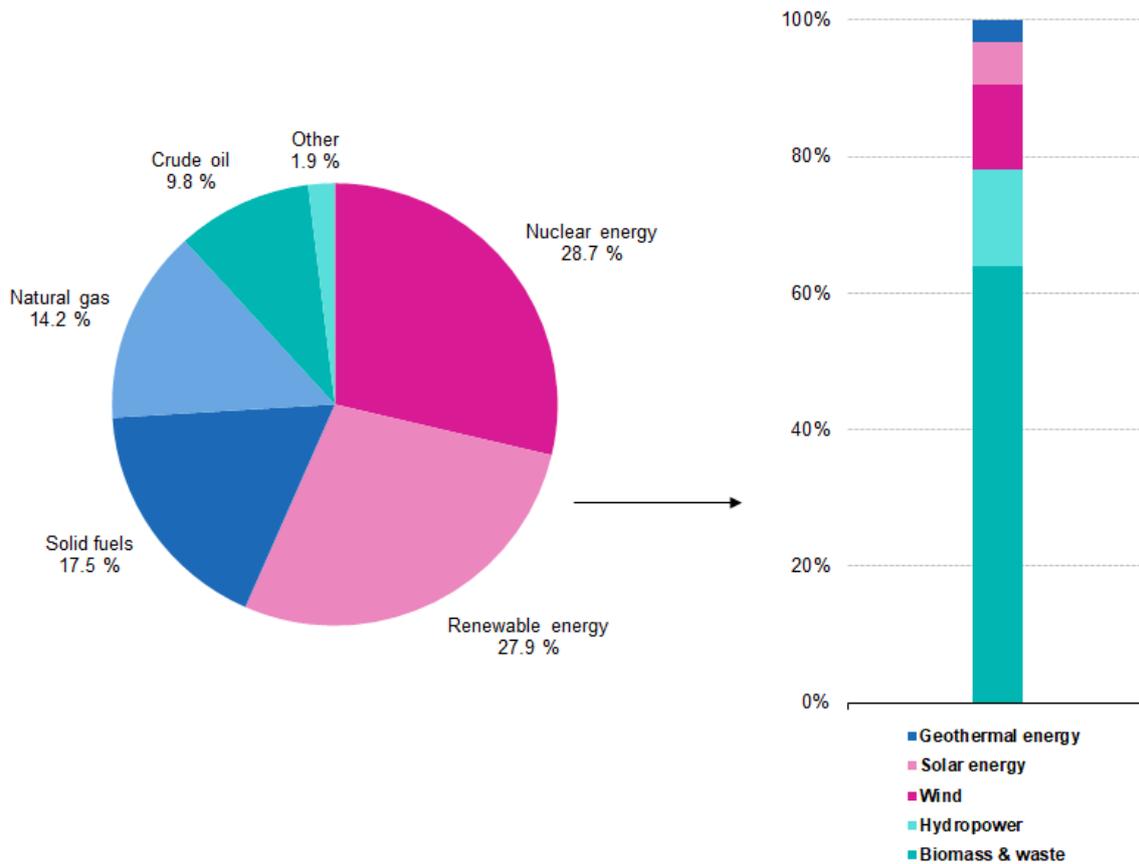


Energy imports dependency, Eurostat (2011)

In 2017, the European Union’s energy dependency was 55%. The rate has increased from around 47% in the year 2000. Although this rate has risen on average across the Union, there are Member States that have seen a significant decrease throughout this 17 year period such as Estonia, Ireland and Finland.

Production of Energy

Production of primary energy in the European Union in 2016. (% of total, based on tonnes of oil equivalent)



Production of primary energy, EU-28, Eurostat (2016)

In 2016, the share of renewables in energy sector was 27.9%, with the main contributor to renewables being Biomass and waste. Although the biggest singular source was nuclear energy, the combined share of solid fuels, natural gas and crude oil amounted to 41.5%. This means that fossil fuels are the most significant contributor to the Union's energy needs.

Key actors

European Commission - with energy being one of its top priorities, the European Commission is one of the biggest actors in the transition within the energy sector. It put forwards energy policy that helps foster the five dimensions of the energy union and allocates funding to programmes like Horizon 2020 that support research and innovation within the field.

Member States – are now required, on the basis of the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, to develop integrated national energy and climate plans that will incorporate the five dimensions of the energy union. However, due to their shared competence with the European Union on energy, they are the leading force when it comes to policy reform in the energy sector transformation.

European Investment Bank - plays an important role within the funding of sustainable change throughout Member States. It offers loans and investments to projects focusing on energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy networks, and research and innovation. It also takes part in initiatives and partnerships with the European Commission and private enterprises that work to provide funding to projects with the aforementioned goals.

Private Stakeholders - hold a crucial role when it comes to the funding of research and innovation. In order for startups and researchers to produce new technologies they need the backing of more significant private stakeholders to ensure they receive the capital as well as the promotion that is needed to successfully implement a new product in the energy sector.

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

To better understand the topic it is useful to approach it in three steps. The first is to gather information about the energy sector's current situation. What sources of energy are being used by countries? What infrastructure does a Member State possess? What are the Member States' individual priorities when it comes to the energy sector? The second, is to look at what the European Union wants to achieve with its targets and goals, as well as what are its priorities? The final step, is finding a bridge between the current situation and the imagined future. What technologies do we need to embrace to make this possible? What research should we concentrate on? What policies do we need to adopt to foster these technologies and research? By doing so, it is easier to identify the key elements of the topic and search for possible solutions.

What to browse, read, and watch

New Energy Solutions - with new technologies being the core of the topic, it is interesting to see what researchers are currently working on and how they could impact our energy sector:

Examples of new energy innovations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRZKIDFNgRQ>

The fully charged show is a series of videos about clean energy and electric vehicles:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/fullychargedshow/featured>

The European Investment Bank produces a podcast series 'Future Europe' in which it explores possible solutions for the continent's challenges, like innovation in the energy sector:

<https://www.eib.org/en/podcasts/series/future-europe>

Evaluating the Energy Union's progress:

Throughout the term of the previous European Commission (2015-19) four reports were created to track the progress of Energy Union:

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:ebdf266c-8eab-11e5-983e-01aa75ed71a1.0008.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/2nd-report-state-energy-union_en.pdf

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/third-report-state-energy-union_en.pdf

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/fourth-report-state-of-energy-union-april2019_en_0.pdf

The Commission also produced factsheets for each Member State:

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/energy-union-factsheets-eu-countries_en

The Energy Union also has an interactive guide:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-1.html>

The European Union's Energy in numbers

To get an overview of the EU's energy sector, you can look at its statistical pocketbooks

<https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/eu-energy-statistical-pocketbook>

Funding Clean Energy

Funding through foundations

<https://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/3076504/bill-gates-and-the-eu-launch-eur100m-clean-tech-investment-fund>

Institutional Funding

<https://www.etip-snet.eu/energy-new-e10-billion-eu-innovation-fund-established-period-2021-2030/>

The shift in companies' priorities

<https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out-law/news/technology-investment-to-drive-european-energy-sector-growth>

A possible solution to the valley of death

<https://fortune.com/2012/09/24/green-energy-in-the-valley-of-death/>

JURI

Committee on Legal Affairs

Chairperson: Annelotte de van der Schueren (NL)



HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

The rise of big data and the danger of a surveillance state: Balancing between safety and privacy. Although big data is used for the development of knowledge and scientific progress, there are many examples in history of its misuse by the public sector. Given that potential violations of privacy by government agencies are becoming easier with the ongoing digitalisation of services, how can the EU ensure the responsible use of big data within Member States?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

The ads received on web platforms can now target users individually, by taking into account their past activities on said platforms. This applies not only to products and services but also to content in general - which may be provided according to political preference or affiliation. . Data collected about personal interests and preferences can be used for many things - by private companies but also by the governments.²³⁹ Moreover, the Internet is to a point and will be increasingly controlled by smart objects and devices rather than humans (**Internet of Things**), which poses ethical concern about the supervision process.

If the government has facial recognition software, and you decide to cross the street when the light is red, should they be able to fine you? This already happens with the reading of license plates, so should facial recognition be off-limits? In the latter case, a major issue of privacy arises. If one is followed by facial recognition software everywhere they go, do citizens still have enough privacy? If people are using a media platform and everything that is shown to them is based on your past activity, are they still using the media platform, or is their experience controlled?

In the past, leaks and hacks have shown how fragile the stability of network and data security is, which shows that, if misused, **big data** can be dangerous for the well-being of a free society.

²³⁹ CBS News, How do Facebook ads target you?, (2018) <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-do-facebook-ads-target-you/>

What has been done so far?

Regulations are needed in order to control this process and determine what is and what is not allowed. A lot of process has been made regarding this part of the issue with the [General Data Protection Regulation](#) (GDPR). It provides protection for the **personal data** of users, such as email addresses, phone numbers, names, dates of birth, and more, but this does not include the regulation of **non-personal data** (data mined through, for example, cookies).

In order to optimise the benefits of this data economy, the European Commission has developed a communication '[towards a common European Data Strategy](#)'. In order to reach this common European Data Strategy, the European Commission has established multiple other communications. These include '[towards a thriving data-driven economy](#)', to increase competitiveness in the global market, with the EU as a key player, and "[Building a European Data Economy](#)', on the liabilities of new data technology. In the latter, a legislative proposal on the [Free Flow of Non-Personal Data](#) was formed, commenting on the free movement of data across borders, and the availability of data for regulatory control. Other measures that are taken by companies and institutions in order to protect the data of their users are being implemented rapidly as well. Examples of these measures are the consent needed for the use of cookies, and de-identification techniques to eliminate the risk of discrimination or ethnical profiling.

What are the challenges of the topic?

The biggest challenge in the topic of Big Data is finding a balance between the needs and benefits for all actors involved, and maintaining that balance. Citizens are worried about their privacy and safety, and the use of big data, if well regulated can influence aspects of both privacy and safety. Aspects of data processing such as the screening for people with possible terrorist motives can contribute to the safety of citizens. However, some are afraid that the processing of data can harm their privacy, if all their **personal data** is collected and available. The challenge is to find the best way to protect the privacy of citizens, whilst exploring all the benefits of data processing for Member States.

The benefits of data processing range widely. The value of data increases every year, whether it is for the purpose of advertising and targeting the right audience or for the purpose of improving services, such as healthcare. Electronic Health Records (EHRs) are used to transfer patient information between doctors and hospitals, as an online passport of your health. This information is private, but the combination of these records can be analysed for the improvement of services and finding patterns in patients' data. If this process is conducted securely, there are a lot of benefits, but as this information is uniquely personal and private, it can easily backfire if there is a hack or leak of data.

Member States can also use big data to improve analyse when and where criminal activities are most prone to happen, and prevent those.²⁴⁰ The best known data leak was the leak by Facebook to Cambridge analytics, when the data of many Facebook users was given to this third party. This leak led to a big fine for Facebook imposed by the United Kingdom, based on the GDPR. This is a one-time case, which seems to be more the exception than the rule, although there are more cases of data leaks and hacks known. How should the sanctions for this be regulated?

What now?

How far can governments go with **data mining** and **data processing**? Should we consider data as a free product of intelligence, or should the mining and processing of data be regulated? How should the benefits of data mining be weighed against the disadvantages and privacy issues that go with it? With your committee, you will dig into these questions and aim to answer them. Political measures need to be considered to monitor the use of big data and data mining, also keeping in mind that big data has large implications on the democratic process as well.²⁴¹ Big data is in fact used to determine the behaviour of voters and personalisation of electoral campaigns, and whether this should be allowed is a question that needs to be answered. Some view the use of big data analytics in electoral campaigns a way of manipulating citizens into agreeing with a certain standpoint, and vote for a certain party.

Another area of concern is the possibility that governments use these techniques to pervasively monitor citizens' behaviour, under the pretense of ensuring law abidance. In China, a social credit system has been introduced according to which individuals are rewarded for a positive score, and punished for a negative score. Examples of punishments include travel restrictions, or banning kids from accessing better schools and throttling internet speeds.²⁴² Human Rights Watch has expressed its concern with the credit system, and is wondering whether it poses an unjustified restriction to civil liberties.²⁴³ If other governments start implementing these systems, the Orwellian hypothesis of a surveillance state without any privacy does come true. On the other

²⁴⁰ Rijmenam, Mark van, *4 Benefits For The Public Sector When Governments Start Using Big Data*, DATAFLOQ (2018). <https://datafloq.com/read/4-benefits-public-sector-governments-start-big-dat/171>

²⁴¹ *How does big data influence electoral campaigns and elections.* <https://www.agiliacenter.com/big-data-elections/?lang=en>

²⁴² Alexandra, Ma, *China has started ranking citizens with a creepy 'social credit' system — here's what you can do wrong, and the embarrassing, demeaning ways they can punish you.* (2018). <https://www.businessinsider.nl/china-social-credit-system-punishments-and-rewards-explained-2018-4?international=true&r=US>

²⁴³ Maya, Wang, *China's Chilling 'Social Credit' Blacklist*, (2018) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/12/12/chinas-chilling-social-credit-blacklist>

hand, it can improve the security of citizens and countries significantly. Where to strike the balance?

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

- **Big Data:** Refers to large amounts of data produced in a very short amount of time, by a high number of diverse sources. Data can be created by people or generated by devices, such as GPS trackers.²⁴⁴
- **Data mining:** the process of retaining data and information from machine-read material. It works by copying large amounts of data, retraining the data, and putting it in new combinations to find patterns.²⁴⁵
- **Data processing:** wide range of activities performed on personal data. This includes, but is not limited to, the collection, recording, organisation, and destruction of personal data.²⁴⁶
- **Personal Data:** Type of data entailing everything that is unique to a person and could identify them specifically from a list of individuals. They include (e-mail) addresses, name, date of birth and phone numbers. **Non-Personal Data:** According to the inquiry done by the IMCO committee, there is not an easy distinction between personal and non-personal data. As a rule of thumb non-personal data is everything else besides personal data. However, this proposition poses several questions, as there are increasing concerns about security and privacy of the providers of the non-personal data.²⁴⁷ During the Session, we will use this term when describing data that can be obtained without needing permission of the supplier.
- **Internet of Things (IoT):** The internet of things is the combination of every device that can be connected to the internet. By 2008, there were already more objects connected to the Internet than people. The IoT is a network of all these ‘things’ connected to each other, consisting of devices as well as people that have access to the internet. All of these are in constant communication with each other, which offers for the creation of big data.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ European Commission, *Big Data*, (2018). <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/big-data>

²⁴⁵ European Commission, *Data Mining in the law*, (2018). http://ec.europa.eu/research/infocentre/article_en.cfm?id=/research/headlines/news/article_18_07_03_en.html?infocentre&item=Infocentre&artid=49398

²⁴⁶ European Commission, *What constitutes data processing?*, (2017). https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection/reform/what-constitutes-data-processing_en

²⁴⁷ IMCO Committee, *Optimal Scope for Free-Flow of Non-Personal data in Europe*. (2018). [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/618988/IPOL_BRI\(2018\)618988_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/618988/IPOL_BRI(2018)618988_EN.pdf)

²⁴⁸ Jacob, Morgan, *A simple explanation of the internet of things*. (2014), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2014/05/13/simple-explanation-internet-things-that-anyone-can-understand/#4f5721d41d09>

Key figures

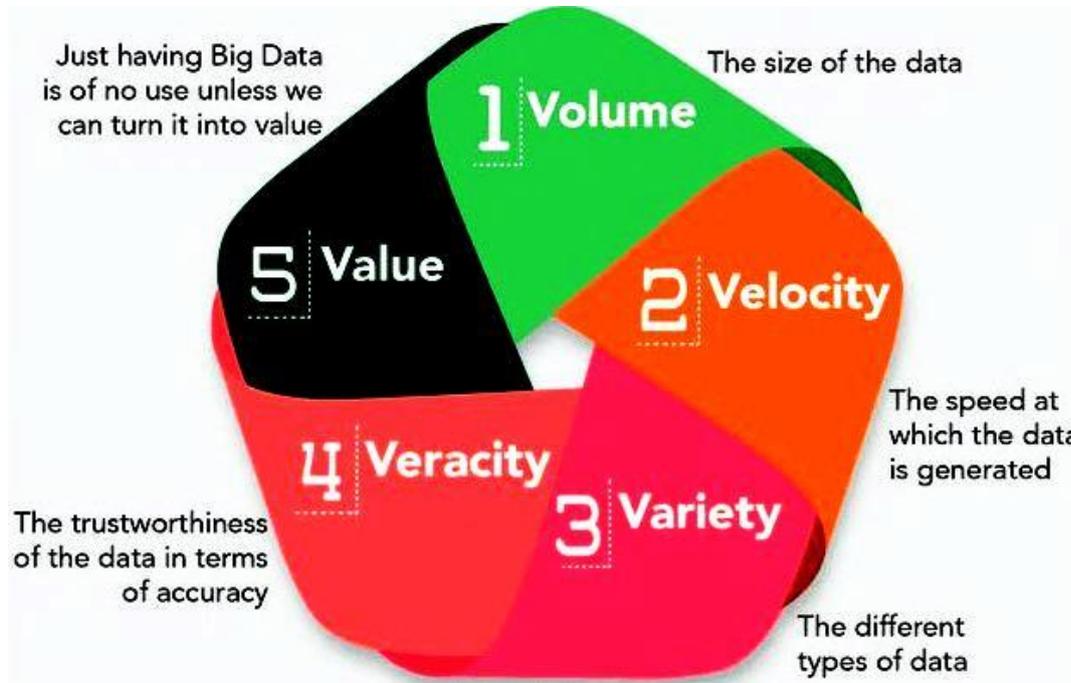


Chart explaining the 'five Vs' needed to create Big Data²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ Yusuf, Perwej, *An experimental study of the Big Data*, (2017).

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315613026_An_Experiential_Study_of_the_Big_Data

- In 2015, the value of the EU data economy was estimated at €285 billion, with an expected increase to €739 billion in 2020. ²⁵⁰
- In 2015, the value of the EU data economy was 1,94% of the overall GDP of the EU, this will be 4% in 2020. ²⁵¹
- Cambridge Analytica gained access to the data of 87 million Facebook users, without their prior consent, in Facebook's data breach. ²⁵²
- The use of Big Data has been rapidly increasing, with 90% of the available data being created over the past two years.
- By 2020, 250,000 vehicles will be connected to the internet, collecting and creating important big data in traffic situations. ²⁵³ Internet users generate 2.5 quintillion bytes of data each day. ²⁵⁴
- 97,2% of organisations are investing in big data and artificial intelligence. ²⁵⁵

Key actors

Next to governments and citizens, there are more actors involved in the dilemma. Companies, especially multinational companies, use data processing tools a lot. They are used to improve the customer experience, improve products, advertise and much more. In theory, due to one's (social) media usage, a company can know a lot of details about them.

European Data Protection Board (EDPB): This council is involved as a mediator between companies, governments and citizens. It is the role of the European Data Protection Board to ensure the correct application of existing regulations that protect the security and privacy of citizens, as well as play into the advantages of big data for the EU. It is composed of representatives of the national protection. ²⁵⁶

²⁵⁰ European Commission, *Elements of the European Data Economy Strategy*, (2018)
<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/towards-thriving-data-driven-economy>

²⁵¹ European Commission, *Elements of the European Data Economy Strategy*, (2018)
<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/towards-thriving-data-driven-economy>

²⁵² Jim, Waterson, *UK fines Facebook 500,000 pounds for failing to protect user data*, (2018)
<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/oct/25/facebook-fined-uk-privacy-access-user-data-cambridge-analytica>

²⁵³ Jacob, Morgan, *A simple explanation of the internet of things*. (2014),
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2014/05/13/simple-explanation-internet-things-that-anyone-can-understand/#4f5721d41d09>

²⁵⁴ Christo, Petrov, *Big Data Statistics 2019* (2019), <https://techjury.net/stats-about/big-data-statistics/>

²⁵⁵ Christo, Petrov, *Big Data Statistics 2019* (2019), <https://techjury.net/stats-about/big-data-statistics/>

²⁵⁶ EDPB, who are we, (2019), https://edpb.europa.eu/about-edpb/about-edpb_en

European Commission: It is the responsibility of the European Commission to listen to the needs of different actors and draft legislation and regulations based on those needs. This is in cooperation with the EDPB.

Big Data users (companies, institutions, etc.): The people who are interested in using big data for their proceeds as well as their product development and improvement. Their role in the conflict is their need to use data mining as opposed to the need for privacy and security for the users of applications.

- Social media: Recovers a lot of information from its users, alters advertisements to your activity on the platform. Most social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook have a detailed profile of personal information of you, on which they base what they show you. ²⁵⁷
- Security companies: Companies such as Symantec look for the vulnerabilities of online digital systems that have the possibility of leaking personal data. They are involved in the creation of security regulations as well as providing platforms for the secure storage of big data. ²⁵⁸
- Private companies: Private companies are struggling to oversee the rapid changes in big data technology as well as the uses for big data, which is why they are starting to implement Chief Data Officers (CDOs), which monitor the data and filter what is useful for the company and what is not. Uses of big data for private companies can include product improvement, advertising techniques, and improving on their target audience. ²⁵⁹

Member States: Member States can both benefit from data processing and use the techniques to improve their systems, but are also responsible for the controlled regulation of applications and data processing.

Users of Applications: It is their data that is mined and processed, whether this is personal data or non-personal data. The data is used for many different things, but their concern is their privacy and the security of the networks that store the data.

²⁵⁷ Jacob Siegal, How to see everything that Facebook knows about you, (2016), <https://bgr.com/2016/01/14/facebook-ad-preferences-data-collection/>

²⁵⁸ The software report, (2018), <https://www.thesoftwarereport.com/top-25-cybersecurity-companies-of-2018/>

²⁵⁹ Norwich University Online, *Public and Private Sector Problem Solving With Data Analytics*. (2018). <https://online.norwich.edu/academic-programs/masters/public-administration/resources/infographics/public-and-private-sector-problem-solving-with-big-data-analytics>

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

The European Commission has developed, in cooperation with experts, multiple communications as well as briefings on the topic of big data. Most of these are developed to promote the use of Big Data and create an European Data Economy. Of course, there are benefits to this ideal, but there are also drawbacks. There are more sides to the issue, which are not always explained in these communications and briefings. Other sides to the issue can include the effects of data leaks or hacks, like when the data of 87 million Facebook users was shared with a third party. What should be done about these events? Are they all the same, and if not what are the big differences? Looking at different leaks and the dangers of big data will be very useful in your research on the topic of big data. Moreover, you should ask yourself what the drawbacks are of a state where the government has a digital profile of every citizen. On the other hand, there are companies and social media pages that already have this profile of every user, so if it is publicly accessible, why shouldn't the government have one as well? Try to form an opinion based on research you have done about the effects of big data, rather than the feeling it might give you.

What to browse, read, and watch

In this section you can find a few sources and TedTalks on the areas of big data that are less touched upon in the rest of the topic overview. This is of course an introduction to your research, and is not exhaustive. You are encouraged to do your own research expanding on this and find out what is important to you in the topic of data mining.

Research areas:

Data Mining in the Public Sector:

- What is government data mining? <https://www.expertsystem.com/government-data-mining/>
- Data mining application in Public organisations
[.https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d096/73047bc1b39beedfa799c0c7cdd6c5bed383.pdf](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d096/73047bc1b39beedfa799c0c7cdd6c5bed383.pdf)
- Big data in the public sector: uncertainties and readiness.
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10796-016-9686-2>
- Ted talk on the government use of Big Data,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= EUlf aMLqU>

Past Hacks and Leaks of big data analytics:

- Facebook scandal
<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/oct/25/facebook-fined-uk-privacy-access-user-data-cambridge-analytica>
- Ted talk on data hacking: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FL9Y0YvNjq8>
- List and explanation of the biggest data leaks
<https://www.techworld.com/security/uks-most-infamous-data-breaches-3604586/>

Legal implications and difficulties monitoring big data:

- Legal implications of big data
<http://acis.uva.nl/binaries/content/assets/subsites/amsterdam-centre-for-insurance-studies/2016/10/presentaties-18-10/helena-ursic.pdf>
- Expert on legal implication of big data <https://www.digitalistmag.com/cio-knowledge/2017/08/07/legal-implications-for-big-data-05240491>
- Why monitoring is a problem in big data
<https://www.networkworld.com/article/3191479/modern-monitoring-is-a-big-data-problem.html>

LIBE I

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs I

Chairperson: Jonas Weider (DE)



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EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

The rise of illiberal democracies: Defending civil liberties at a time of crisis of the Western model. Over the past decade, some populist governments have been thwarting the democratic order by undercutting the division of powers, neutralising the judicial systems and actively engaging in propaganda. What steps should be taken to protect citizens' rights, thus living up to the Council of Europe's fundamental values?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

The EU was designed as a club of nations that would trade and cooperate, becoming politically and economically intertwined enough to discourage any further conflict. And at the heart of this system laid the idea of **liberal democracy**, bringing together **constitutional liberalism** and **parliamentary democracy**. However, various people from within Europe have recently endorsed another idea; one that does not see liberal values and democracy as inherently linked.²⁶⁰

The term “**illiberal democracy**” was introduced by Fareed Zakaria in 1997²⁶¹ and entered European discourse after a 2014 speech by Victor Orbán, the Hungarian Prime Minister, in which he laid out his vision for establishing a new illiberal state in Hungary. In response, many European officials feared that at least some parts of Orbán's vision could resonate with other **populist governments** in Europe.²⁶² Indeed the idea of illiberal democracy went beyond Central and Eastern Europe, across Western Europe and North America.²⁶³

Champions of illiberal democracy in Europe have already promoted policies impacting the lives of millions of EU citizens. For example, Central European University in Budapest - a leading higher

²⁶⁰ Barbaro, Michael, Bennhold, Katrin, *Part 1: The Battle for Europe*, The Daily (2019).
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/10/podcasts/the-daily/europe-nationalism.html?showTranscript=1>

²⁶¹ Zakaria, Fareed, *The Rise of Illiberal Democracy*, Foreign Affairs (1997).
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1997-11-01/rise-illiberal-democracy>

²⁶² Hegedűs, István and Végh, Zsuzsanna, *Illiberal Democracies: What can the European Union do in case a member state regularly and systematically breaches European values and regulations?*, Hungarian Europe Society (2015). <https://www.europesociety.hu/sites/default/files/open-space/documents/magyarorszagi-europa-tarsasag-illiberaldemocracies-policypaper-finalversion.pdf>

²⁶³ Kostreci, Keida, *Are Illiberal Democracies on the March in Europe?*, VOA News (2018).
<https://www.voanews.com/a/are-illiberal-democracies-on-the-march-in-europe/4358311.html>

education institution endorsing liberal values and open societies - was pushed out of Hungary by Orbán's government, as a result of targeted laws restricting the functioning of higher education institutions. Furthermore, many judges have been forced out of their jobs and replaced by advocates of the ruling parties during vast judicial overhauls in Poland²⁶⁴ and Hungary²⁶⁵; the rights of minorities all over Europe are under attack; in ten Member States political independence of the media is under severe threat by governments trying to instrumentalise the public sector as propaganda machines.²⁶⁶

Others around Europe are pushing back against the proponents of illiberal democracy, such as French President Emmanuel Macron, who recently told the European Parliament: "In the face of authoritarianism, the response is not authoritarian democracy but the authority of democracy".²⁶⁷

The battle around the EU's liberal order has the potential of significantly changing the future of European societies.

²⁶⁴ Galaxy, Henry, *Poland's judiciary reforms 'violate' EU law, says court adviser*, POLITICO (2019). <https://www.politico.eu/article/poland-judiciary-reforms-violate-eu-law-says-court-advisor/>

²⁶⁵ Szabó, Máté, *Hungary's Fidesz Government will be able to Hand Pick Judges*, Civil Liberties Union for Europe (2018). <https://www.liberties.eu/en/news/hungary-transformation-of-the-judiciary/16366>

²⁶⁶ Polyakova, Alina et al., *The anatomy of illiberal states: Assessing and responding to democratic decline in Turkey and Central Europe*, Brookings Institute (2019). <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/illiberal-states-web.pdf>

²⁶⁷ Erlanger, Steven, *Fight Over Values Risks a 'European Civil War,' Macron Says*, New York Times (2018). <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/17/world/europe/macron-european-parliament-strasbourg.html>

What has been done so far?

Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) precisely lists the fundamental values of the European Union. These include the “respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities” based on societies supporting “pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men”.²⁶⁸

Article 7 of the TEU grants the European Council the power to sanction non-conforming Member States, either through issuing recommendations for Member States at serious risk of breaching the values listed in Article 2, by a four fifth majority, or withdrawing said Member State’s voting rights, via a unanimous vote.²⁶⁹ Due to its severity the mechanism is also known as the “nuclear option”²⁷⁰, and only after long struggles was opened against the governments of Poland and Hungary. So far, the European Parliament has adopted a resolution on both states, declaring their current status as a “serious breach of the values referred to in Article 2”, urging a change in their policies. However, no concrete sanctions have been imposed.²⁷¹

The “infringement procedure”²⁷² can be used in cases where a Member State disobeys a specific EU law. The European Commission then has the ability to sue the Member State in front of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). If a Member State is sentenced but then fails to adapt its practices in accordance with the court’s recommendation, the Commission can refer to the court a second time, and must demand financial penalties.

²⁶⁸ Article 2, *Treaty on the European Union*. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:12012M002>

²⁶⁹ Article 7, *Consolidated version of the Treaty on the European Union*. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:12012M007>

²⁷⁰ Cuddy, Alice, *European Parliament votes to trigger Article 7 sanctions procedure against Hungary*, Euronews (2018). <https://www.euronews.com/2018/09/12/european-parliament-votes-to-trigger-article-7-sanctions-procedure-against-hungary>

²⁷¹ López Garrido, Diego and López Castillo, Antonio, *The EU framework for enforcing the respect of the rule of law and the Union’s fundamental principles and values*, Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs (2019). [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608856/IPOL_STU\(2019\)608856_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608856/IPOL_STU(2019)608856_EN.pdf)

²⁷² *Infringement Procedure*, European Commission (2019). https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/applying-eu-law/infringement-procedure_en

The European Commission adopted the “Rule of Law Framework”²⁷³ in March 2014 which further allows it to conduct independent investigations into Member States suspected of breaching European values and establish a conflict-resolution dialogue before triggering Article 7. The framework has so far only been opened once against Poland.²⁷⁴

Under Article 259 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), individual Member States have the right to bring another Member State to court if they consider it to breach European laws and values. However, this procedure is almost never used²⁷⁵, raising the question of why, and also the challenges of having Member States in open conflict within the EU.

What are the challenges of the topic?

A major challenge in this topic is what to do when popular wishes conflict with the civil liberties of citizens. On the one hand, illiberal democracies infringe on their citizens’ civil liberties, openly defying laws and values stated in the founding treaties of the EU. On the other hand, millions of people in Europe have used democratic elections to express their wishes of protecting their culture and economic status from the open, pluralistic society, endorsed by the EU, in an apparent rejection of liberal values.²⁷⁶

Another contentious question is whether the EU should bind financial aid to the respect of the rule of law.

For example, Poland - which made attempts to neutralise its judicial system - is the biggest recipient of European Structural and Investment Funds²⁷⁷. Today's bastions of populism heavily rely on European financial aid, whose conditional allocation could then become an effective leverage to ensure the respect of European values. It also raises the question of fairness: is it justified to participate in a system for its benefits without abiding by its fundamental obligations?

²⁷³ *Promoting and safeguarding the EU's values*, EUR-Lex (2015). <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3A133500>

²⁷⁴ López Garrido, Diego and López Castillo, Antonio, *The EU framework for enforcing the respect of the rule of law and the Union's fundamental principles and values*, Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs (2019). [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608856/IPOL_STU\(2019\)608856_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608856/IPOL_STU(2019)608856_EN.pdf)

²⁷⁵ Kochenov, Dimitry, *Biting Intergovernmentalism: The Case for the Reinvention of Article 259 TFEU to Make It a Viable Rule of Law Enforcement Tool*, The Hague Journal of the Rule of Law (2015). https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2672492

²⁷⁶ Bennhold, Katrin, *Part 5: Can Liberal Democracy Survive in Europe?*, The Daily (2019). <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/14/podcasts/the-daily/europe-liberal-democracy-germany.html?showTranscript=1>

²⁷⁷ Krastev, Ivan, *Eastern Europe's Illiberal Revolution: The Long Road to Democratic Decline*, Foreign Affairs (2018). <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/hungary/2018-04-16/eastern-europes-illiberal-revolution>

However, reallocation of money within the Union was never meant as a reward but as a means to foster economic development helping less affluent states in their transition into the bloc. Linking these funds to countries trying to disengage from the EU's values could, therefore, lead to the opposite effect, hindering development, strengthening populist governments in the public eye, estrange citizens, and deepen the divides between Member States.²⁷⁸

Many people still hold the values of national culture and identity very dearly, and see illiberal democracy as the only way to protect them.²⁷⁹ An approach to this topic has to be mindful of the causes of support for illiberal democracies, and in particular fears of losing identities.

What now?

In response to the push-back against liberal democracy in the EU, there have been multiple proposals on how to broaden the EU's competences to protect civil liberties.

The **Venice Commission**, for example, serves an advisory role on how to improve democratic standards. Some have argued for the establishment of a similar body into the EU institutional framework, which would be equipped with more significant legal competences. The political scientist Jan-Werner Müller has proposed the establishment of a so called "Copenhagen Commission"²⁸⁰ that would be tasked with independently monitoring the democratic status of Member States along the Copenhagen Criteria²⁸¹. These are to be fulfilled by every country applying to become an EU member, however are not continually checked after admission.

There are also a lot of open questions. Should the EU be given competences to interfere in Member States constitutional arrangements? If so, which European body(s) should be charged with this? Is it sensible that candidate countries for EU accession need to extensively prove their liberal democratic status, but not once they are Member States? How should Member States breaching the EU's fundamental values be sanctioned?

²⁷⁸ The New York Times Editorial Board, *Should the European Union Sanction Illiberal Members?*, New York Times (2018). <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/03/opinion/european-union-illiberalism-poland.html>

²⁷⁹ Krastev, Ivan, *Eastern Europe's Illiberal Revolution: The Long Road to Democratic Decline*, Foreign Affairs (2018). <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/hungary/2018-04-16/eastern-europes-illiberal-revolution>

²⁸⁰ Jan-Werner Müller, *What, if Anything, is Wrong with a Copenhagen Commission?*, Transatlantic Academy (2013). <http://www.gmfus.org/publications/what-if-anything-wrong-copenhagen-commission>

²⁸¹ *Accession criteria*, European Commission (2016). https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/accession-criteria_en

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

- **Liberal democracy** is a type of government that combines **constitutional liberalism** and **democracy**.²⁸²
- **Constitutional liberalism** inscribes the rule of law, civil liberties, and civil rights into a constitution, to protect citizens from illegitimate political coercion and so political decision makers can be held accountable.²⁸³
- **Democracy** in its most basic form describes a political system in which sovereignty ultimately lies in the hands of the people, who can exercise their political power through voting.²⁸⁴

Nevertheless, modern theories of democracy can be a lot more complicated. One possible addition are the conditions that must be met during elections: what does it take to have “free and fair” elections?²⁸⁵

- **Civil liberties** are the rights to do, say, or think whatever one wants unless it harms the freedoms of others. These include, but are not limited to freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of press, freedom of religion, the right to equal treatment under the law, and the right to vote.²⁸⁶
- **Division of powers** means splitting political systems into an executive, legislative, and judicial body. Traditionally, the legislative passes laws and decides over the budget; the executive is responsible for implementing and administering passed laws; the judicial body decides over legal controversies by interpreting the constitution. The division of powers is a core aspect of constitutionalism, as it ensures accountability of all bodies towards each other.²⁸⁷

²⁸² *liberal democracy*, Lexico (2019). https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/liberal_democracy

²⁸³ Warren, Mark, *Liberal Constitutionalism as Ideology: Marx and Habermas*, Georgetown University (1989). https://www.jstor.org/stable/191394?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

²⁸⁴ *Democracy*, Merriam Webster (2019). <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/democracy>

²⁸⁵ Isaac, Jeffrey C., *Is there illiberal democracy?*, Eurozine (2017). <https://www.eurozine.com/is-there-illiberal-democracy/>

²⁸⁶ Oldham, Cyd et al., *Civil Liberties*, Legaldictionary (2016). <https://legaldictionary.net/civil-liberties/>

²⁸⁷ *Separation of Powers--An Overview*, National Conference of State Legislatures (2019). <http://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/separation-of-powers-an-overview.aspx>

- **Illiberal democracies** are democratically elected regimes, whose officials – either through the sheer political power they possess or referenda – overstep their constitutional limits on power and strip their citizens of fundamental civil rights and liberties.²⁸⁸
- **Tyranny of the majority** describes the risk that without limits on democratically elected governments, the majority could potentially deprive the minority of their rights, or tyrannise them in other ways by exclusively enforcing their ideas.²⁸⁹
- A **Regime**, contrary to a **government**, refers to the entire overarching political system of a state, including its constitutional arrangements, whereas governments are merely the entirety of a country's executive staff and institutions.²⁹⁰
- **Authoritarian regimes** are political systems in which there is no or little restriction to governmental positions by pluralistic, free and fair elections. They tend to undermine the rule of law and even use repressive practices against their political opponents.²⁹¹
- **Populist governments** base their political legitimacy on the existence of a perceived “will of the people”, instead of verifiable majorities. They theoretically split the electorate into two subjective categories – the “true people” and the “corrupt elite” – proclaiming that only the wishes of the “true people” are legitimate. Consequently, they render non-majoritarian institutions – such as minority rights – as obstacles to the will of the people (the perceived majority) and try to delegitimize them. Current populist politicians have also embraced strategies of undermining the media, attacked domestic judicial independence, and made use of conspiracy theories to polarise the public.²⁹²
- **Propaganda** is the systematic, one-sided spreading of political or ideological, information, images or beliefs with the intent of influencing public opinion.²⁹³

²⁸⁸ Zakaria, Fareed, *The Rise of Illiberal Democracy*, Foreign Affairs (1997).
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1997-11-01/rise-illiberal-democracy>

²⁸⁹ *Tyranny of the majority*, Oxford Reference (2019).
<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803110431595>

²⁹⁰ Ward, Kevin, *Regime*, Encyclopaedia Britannica (2019). <https://www.britannica.com/topic/regime>

²⁹¹ Tóth, Gábor Attila, *Authoritarianism*, Oxford Constitutional Law (2017).
<https://oxcon.oup.com/view/10.1093/law-mpeccol/law-mpeccol-e205>

²⁹² Krastev, Ivan, *Eastern Europe's Illiberal Revolution: The Long Road to Democratic Decline*, Foreign Affairs (2018). <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/hungary/2018-04-16/eastern-europes-illiberal-revolution>

²⁹³ *Propaganda*, Cambridge Dictionary (2019).
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/propaganda>

Key figures

- Only 2% of the Hungarian population was born in a different country, whereas in Austria, a neighboring country of similar size, foreign born citizens make up 15% of the population.²⁹⁴
- The Hungarian economy grew by 4.6 percent between 2006 and 2015, yet a study by KPMG and the Hungarian economic research firm GKI estimated that without EU funds, it would have shrunk by 1.8 percent.²⁹⁵
- EU funds account for 61 percent of infrastructure spending in Poland and 55 percent in Hungary"
- Almost 78% of the Hungarian news media is currently controlled by the ruling party.²⁹⁶
- Freedom House's Nations in Transit project, which analyses the democratic status of the 29 former communist countries found that in 2018 19 states had declined in their overall democracy score²⁹⁷
 - Poland scored the second-largest decline in democracy score in the history of the project.
 - Hungary has scored the largest total decline in Nations in Transit history after declining for 10 consecutive years.

²⁹⁴ Krastev, Ivan, *Eastern Europe's Illiberal Revolution: The Long Road to Democratic Decline*, Foreign Affairs (2018). <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/hungary/2018-04-16/eastern-europes-illiberal-revolution>

²⁹⁵ Keszthelyi, Christian, *Hungary's economy heavily depends on EU funds, study finds*, Budapest Business Journal (2017). https://bbj.hu/economy/hungarys-economy-heavily-depends-on-eu-funds-study-finds_130880

²⁹⁶ Sven Giegold, *Green study reveals dangerous media concentration in Hungary: 78 percent of news media under Orban's control*, Sven Giegold Blog(2019). <https://sven-giegold.de/dangerous-media-concentration-in-hungary-78-percent-under-orbans-control/>

²⁹⁷ Schenkan, Nate, *Nations in Transit 2018: Confronting Illiberalism*, Freedom House (2018). <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018>



Findings on the state of democracy in the Nations in Transit countries (2018)

source: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018>

Key actors

- The **different bodies of the EU** play a key role in addressing illiberal democracy in Europe:
 - The **European Commission** is the executive body of the union. This means that it is the primary body responsible for ensuring that all Member States respect European laws and values. However, under the current system, it lacks sufficient legal competences to effectively investigate governments that are suspected of following illiberal ideologies.
 - The **European Council** is also directly involved in the task of tackling breaches of EU law and values. Its most significant competence in this regard is the Article 7 procedure. A significant blockade, however, is the fact that it usually needs unanimity (or otherwise vast majorities) to be able to impose something on a Member State. Thus, two countries like Poland and Hungary, both supporting illiberal values – who are both currently amid Article 7 procedures – can veto any sanctions on each other.
 - **Political groups in the European Parliament** also have a stake in this matter. To ensure cohesion and coordination between the numerous parties of individual Member States, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) sit by political groups,

rather than nationality. Being part of a political group gives parties access to increased funding, a greater chance at having their MEPs elected as chairperson of the committee, as well as more speaking time in parliamentary discussions. These groups have noteworthy powers as they can suspend or even exclude parties violating their principles, as the EPP did with Orbán's Fidesz party

- Lastly, the **European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)** currently has the competence to conduct in-depth investigations into countries whose governments disrespect certain fundamental European rights, which include civil liberties. It could, therefore, significantly help the Commission with investigating illiberal governments with their resources and competencies.

- The **Council of Europe** is a European human rights organisation, separate from the EU. It is committed to protecting the values of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law²⁹⁸ and includes 47 Member States²⁹⁹. The most important body of the organisation regarding illiberal democracies is its **Venice Commission**. The Venice Commission is tasked with helping Member States wishing to bring their legal and institutional structures in line with European standards of liberal democracy. It has lately been vocal in expressing its concerns about violations of its core values in Hungary³⁰⁰ and Poland, but also Romania.³⁰¹ However, as it is an advisory body, its legal competencies are limited to conducting studies, expressing opinions and giving advice.³⁰²

- Moreover, the **individual Member States** of the EU have a lot of power in this matter, which also divides them profoundly.

On the one hand, proponents of liberalism could criticise their illiberal counterparts much more strongly or make more use of their competences provided by Article 259.

On the other hand, populist governments with illiberal affiliations can currently abuse the legislative framework of the EU, and mostly the Council, by mutually protecting each other and vetoing consequential policies and decisions aimed at confronting illiberal tendencies within Europe.

²⁹⁸ *Values: Human rights, Democracy, Rule of Law*, Council of Europe (2019).
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/about-us/values>

²⁹⁹ *47 Member States*, Council of Europe (2019). <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/47-members-states>

³⁰⁰ CDL-AD(2013)012-e 'Opinion on the Fourth Amendment to the Fundamental Law of Hungary'
[https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2013\)012-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2013)012-e)

³⁰¹ Meyer-Resende, Michael, *Is Europe's Problem Illiberal Majoritarianism or Creeping Authoritarianism?*, Carnegie Europe (2018). <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2018/06/13/is-europe-s-problem-illiberal-majoritarianism-or-creeping-authoritarianism-pub-76587>

³⁰² Resolution(2002)3 'Revised Statute of the European Commission for Democracy through Law'
https://www.venice.coe.int/WebForms/pages/?p=01_01_Statute

- Last but not least, there is **civil society**, which also plays an important role in protecting civil liberties
 - **Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)** often provide visibility of and resistance to violations of civil liberties. They assist in monitoring the situation "on the ground" and report to the European Commission, among others.
 - **European Citizens**, particularly from populist controlled Member States, are an integral part to the legitimacy of populist ideologies. Indeed, Populist governments all over Europe have been elected by a significant portion of the population, giving them democratic legitimacy. Thus, the citizens have great power in determining whether democracy is liberal or illiberal in Europe

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

This topic requires both a good understanding of the current constitutional and legal provisions the EU can work with and an understanding of the more theoretical, ideological questions behind it.

For understanding the legal backgrounds it is always helpful to look at the primary sources from the EU. So, taking a good look at the important articles of the TEU or TFEU can be a great starting point. The website of the European Commission also has very informative explanations of all the frameworks, such as infringement procedures or the Rule of Law Framework.

The “Foreign Affairs” magazine has several useful articles giving an overview of the ideological viewpoints. Other good starting points could be the “New York Times” Opinion section, The Economist, POLITICO EU, or the EU observer.

For deeper studies and statistics on the democracy levels of countries, the Freedom House Index has great analyses on almost every country in the world, and its Nations in Transit project has great information on illiberalism in Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, The Economist also has a good democracy index.

What to browse, read, and watch

Currently debated ideas for tackling the issue

- Bayer, Lily and Grey, Andrew, *Brussels unveils battle plan to hit ‘illiberal democracies’*, POLITICO (2018). <https://www.politico.eu/article/mff-commission-eu-budget-proposal-brussels-looks-to-link-eu-payouts-to-justice-standards/>
- Mudde, Cas, *When illiberal forces win, the answer is more – not less – democracy*, The Guardian (2018). <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/06/when-illiberal-forces-win-the-answer-is-more-not-less-democracy>
- Hegedűs, István and Végh, Zsuzsanna, *Illiberal Democracies: What can the European Union do in case a member state regularly and systematically breaches European values and regulations?*, Hungarian Europe Society (2015). <https://www.europesociety.hu/sites/default/files/open-space/documents/magyarorszagi-europa-tarsasag-illiberaldemocracies-policypaper-finalversion.pdf>
- *The EU Democratic Governance Pact: Upholding the Rule of law and Fundamental Rights*, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group (2015). <https://europa.d66.nl/content/uploads/sites/240/2015/01/The-EU-Democratic-Governance-Pact-Upholding-the-Rule-of-law.pdf>

Deeper background information on the History of illiberal democracy

- Plattner, Marc F., *Illiberal Democracy and the Struggle on the Right*, Journal of Democracy (2019). <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/illiberal-democracy-and-the-struggle-on-the-right/>
- Zakaria, Fareed, *The Rise of Illiberal Democracy*, Foreign Affairs (1997). <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1997-11-01/rise-illiberal-democracy>
- Kauffmann, Sylvie, *Europe’s Illiberal Democracies*, New York Times (2016). <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/10/opinion/europes-illiberal-democracies.html>

More information on already existing measures:

- *Factsheet: The EU's Rule of Law toolbox*, European Commission (2019).
https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/rule_of_law_factsheet_1.pdf
- López Garrido, Diego and López Castillo, Antonio, *The EU framework for enforcing the respect of the rule of law and the Union's fundamental principles and values*, Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs (2019).
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608856/IPOL_STU\(2019\)608856_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608856/IPOL_STU(2019)608856_EN.pdf)
- Bárd, Petra et al., *An EU mechanism on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights*, European Parliament Research Service (2016).
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/579328/EPRS_IDA\(2016\)579328\(ANN2\)_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/579328/EPRS_IDA(2016)579328(ANN2)_EN.pdf)

Videos reflecting on Illiberal democracy in the EU.

Viktor Orban's 'illiberal democracy', BBC Newsnight (2018).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrftUpWOsc>

Michael Ignatieff on the Challenge of Illiberal Democracy and Capitalist Authoritarianism, Central European University (2015). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zU5RujpqJcl>

The Rise of Illiberal Democracies, Council on Foreign Relations (2018).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veF1cek9t1A>

LIBE II

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs II

Chairperson: Sabina Şancu (RO)



HAMBURG 2019

91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Asylum seekers and reception standards: Safeguarding human rights in an increasingly hostile continent. Despite European-level legislation addressing asylum seekers' right to healthcare, in reality their access to it is hindered by practical obstacles such as language barriers and improper reception facilities. What measures should be taken by Member States to safeguard the physical and mental health care needs of asylum seekers following their arrival in the EU?

I. PANORAMIC VIEW



Foto source :Lima, Mauricio. A doctor checking an 11-month-old Iraqi baby with a respiratory infection at the

What is the problem and why does it matter?

Within the European Union, access to preventive **healthcare** and treatment is a **right** for everyone enshrined in law³⁰³. The formulation of article 35 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights does not discriminate on the basis of issues such as migration background, and any restriction faced by asylum seekers is therefore a challenge to the very fabric of the EU's rights-based system.

Nonetheless, asylum seekers face significant challenges when attempting to access healthcare in EU Member States, which impair their living conditions and **integration** within society and may have long-lasting effects. Migrants without **legal status** within the EU are affected by the **different systems** of healthcare provision³⁰⁴. Harsh situations are faced by refugees and asylum seekers both in **camp**s³⁰⁵ and once resettled in countries whose systems are difficult to navigate³⁰⁶. Although the EU has pledged to provide adequate care in reception facilities³⁰⁷, it has been repeatedly noted that conditions for both physical and mental healthcare are inadequate³⁰⁸. It is within these camps, rather than before, that refugees contract diseases due to poor sanitation; moreover, refugees stand at higher **health risks** than the rest of the population³⁰⁹.

People that stand at a particular risk in the current situation are unaccompanied minor refugees, people with existing diseases, pregnant women, and all people with low or no incomes. Beyond just physical problems, migrants³¹⁰ and refugees³¹¹ alike are also affected by **mental health** issues.

³⁰³ [European Charter of Fundamental Rights. \(2000\).](#)

³⁰⁴ [Healthcare entitlements of migrants in an irregular situation in the EU-28. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. \(2015\).](#)

³⁰⁵ [World Health Organisation. Migration and health: key issues. \(accessed 29.06.2019\).](#)

³⁰⁶ [People's Health Movement. Access to healthcare of migrants in the EU. Global Health Watch 5. \(2018\).](#)

³⁰⁷ [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. Thematic focus:healthcare.\(accessed 29.06.2019\).](#)

³⁰⁸ [Kingsley, Patrick. 'Better to Drown': A Greek Refugee Camp's Epidemic of Misery. NYT. \(2018\).](#)

³⁰⁹ [United Nations News. Migrants and refugees face higher risk of developing ill-health, says UN report on displaced people in Europe. \(2019\).](#)

³¹⁰ [Mihala, Lorelei. Why Romanian migrant women suffer from 'Italy syndrome'. Al Jazeera. \(2019\).](#)

³¹¹ [Sandalio, Rocío Naranjo. Life After Trauma: The Mental-Health Needs of Asylum Seekers in Europe. Migration Policy Institute. \(2018\).](#)

What has been done so far?

Irregular migrants, who do not have legal status to live and work in the EU, often face prohibitive costs and other barriers for healthcare in most of the EU. This is dictated by a set of heterogeneous laws which differ in each Member State, and no EU-wide provision or guideline exists.

Asylum-seekers and refugees are mostly under the aegis of what is commonly known as the **Reception Conditions Directive of 2013**³¹². This aims to harmonise reception conditions throughout the EU for all aspects of asylum-seekers' lives, and in terms of healthcare they make both physical and mental healthcare a priority that national governments need to be equipped to ensure. In 2016, the EU suggested that a more cohesive and thorough approach would be beneficial³¹³; a long legislative journey³¹⁴ towards a common **EU Resettlement Framework** is still developing³¹⁵. This policy instrument is not without its flaws, and many people doubt its sustainability³¹⁶. The EU also supports its Member States with concrete suggestions through measures such as the **Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals**³¹⁷, or **financial support** within the **Integrated Border Management Fund**³¹⁸. Importantly, the Action Plan proposes measures covering pre-arrival, healthcare, and social inclusion³¹⁹. The Fund supports the development of border control.

³¹² [European Parliament and the Council. Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection \(recast\). Official Journal of the European Union. \(2013\).](#)

³¹³ [European Commission. Enhancing legal channels: Commission proposes to create common EU Resettlement Framework. \(2018\).](#)

³¹⁴ [European Resettlement Network. Resettlement in Europe. \(accessed 30.06.2019\).](#)

³¹⁵ [European Parliament. Legislative train schedule - Towards a new policy on migration. EU Resettlement Framework. \(accessed 30.06.2019\).](#)

³¹⁶ [Bamberg, Katharina. The EU Resettlement Framework: From a humanitarian pathway to a migration management tool?. European Policy Centre. \(2018\).](#)

³¹⁷ [European Commission. Factsheet: Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals. \(2016\).](#)

³¹⁸ [European Commission. Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing, as part of the Integrated Border Management Fund, the instrument for financial support for border management and visa. \(2018\).](#)

³¹⁹ [European Commission. Europe: Integration Action Plan of Third-Country Nationals launched. \(2016\).](#)

What are the challenges of the topic?

Despite the fact that most of the people who migrate are on average healthier than the general population³²⁰, certain policies are causing health risks for asylum seekers **before they even reach Europe's shores**. The recent criminalisation of search and rescue operation by the hand of the Italian government, as well as the bureaucratic obstacles put in place by Malta and Spain, show a blatant disregard for their mental and physical well-being³²¹. Many non governmental organisations (NGOs) organising search and rescue mission in the Mediterranean these ships are being prosecuted, and doubts exist whether these judicial actions are compliant with the relevant international, Council of Europe and EU fundamental rights law and refugee law standards³²².

The main problem in this regard is making the distinction between smugglers and those enforcing the human rights imperative of saving lives at sea, either by acting out of humanitarian considerations or by following international obligations for rescue at sea. National authorities and courts need to find the balance between applicable international and EU law, and national law. In this regard, the 2017 UNHCR guidance on search and rescue operations at sea³²³, including the non-penalisation of those taking part in these activities, gives useful guidance.

Once asylum-seekers **arrive in camps**, they may be subjected to a plethora of issues such as **trauma** from the conflict they left home, the aftermath of the strenuous journey, and the **poor conditions** in camps³²⁴. Vulnerable groups such as children, elders, pregnant women, or those with pre-existing issues are particularly hard-hit. **Legal status** is most often the thing keeping asylum-seekers from accessing healthcare services, which increases the physical and mental health risk of camp residents

Should their asylum request be approved, there are further issues affecting them³²⁵ once refugees leave the camps in order to **resettle**. Among the basic problems they may encounter are the ability to access essential healthcare, which is not always thorough and affordable, and **communicating** their needs to medical professionals. Moreover, refugees' perception of the health system of the country they have settled it strongly influences their proneness to seek help when needed.

³²⁰ [European Commission. Migrant health across Europe: Little structural policies, many encouraging practices. \(2018\).](#)

³²¹ [Knight, Ben. Migrant rescue vessel Sea-Watch 3: What you need to know. Deutsche Welle. \(2019\).](#)

³²² [EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. Fundamental rights considerations: NGO ships involved in search and rescue in the Mediterranean and criminal investigations. \(2018\).](#)

³²³ [General legal considerations: search-and-rescue operations involving refugees and migrants at sea \(2017\)](#)

³²⁴ [European Parliament. Briefing: The public health dimension of the European migrant crisis. \(2018\).](#)

³²⁵ [O'Donnell, Catherine. Health Care Access for Migrants in Europe. Oxford Research Encyclopedias. \(2018\).](#)

The EU institutions have been actively trying to support refugees in their need to access healthcare in their countries of settlement. Moreover, **NGOs supplement the work** that the EU and its Member States are not able to fulfill³²⁶.

Special needs

Refugees are often affected by past trauma as well as the stress of uncertainty about their future³²⁷, both of which can cause mental health issues as severe as depression or **post-traumatic stress disorder**³²⁸. Adapting to a different culture may also take a toll on asylum-seekers³²⁹. Moreover, people from marginalised categories such as **LGBT** or **minor** migrants and refugees also require special mental and physical healthcare and their needs are difficult to address³³⁰. About a fifth of refugee children in Europe arrived unaccompanied, making them a very vulnerable group³³¹.

What now?

European citizens are concerned about the complex situation of incoming refugees and asylum seekers, and they are influenced by public discourse coming from their leaders. Most often, public debate concerns fears like cultural differences or crime.

Policy, then, is highly dependent upon the population and its leaders both at national and European levels. Refugee healthcare, as all policies, is dependent upon the social stances adopted by EU citizens. On the other hand, the opposite view is also relevant, wherein from the top down legislation on refugee integration, especially social aspects such as healthcare, could influence attitudes.

What stance should the EU or specific Member States take regarding the provision of healthcare to migrants and refugees? Should they have the same benefits as citizens who had lived in a country their entire lives? In order to think realistically about the future of this topic, one must pragmatically take into consideration its many dimensions and the larger context in which specific measures exist.

³²⁶ [European Economic and Social Committee. How Civil Society Organisations Assist Refugees and Migrants in the EU. \(2017\).](#)

³²⁷ [Medecins Sans Frontieres. Uncertain life situation leads to mental health distress among asylum seekers. \(2018\).](#)

³²⁸ [World Health Organisation. WHO Europe policy brief on migration and health: mental health care for refugees. \(accessed on 11.07.2019\).](#)

³²⁹ [WHO Europe. Mental health promotion and mental health care in refugees and migrants. \(2018\).](#)

³³⁰ [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. Current migration situation in the EU: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex asylum seekers. \(2017\).](#)

³³¹ [WHO Europe. Health of refugee and migrant children. \(2018\).](#)

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

Healthcare is the set of services provided by a country or an organisation for the treatment of the physically and the mentally ill³³².

Public health involves preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting health through the organised efforts of society, focusing on overall well-being³³³.

EU health policy complements Member States' own policies. It aims to protect and improve the health of EU citizens, support the modernisation of health infrastructure, and improve the efficiency of Europe's health systems, and each EU institution plays a different part in it³³⁴. EU health policy is also developed and implemented with the help of specialised agencies³³⁵.

Resettlement is the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another State that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement³³⁶.

A refugee is someone who was displaced or forced to escape their country due to radical circumstances such as conflict or violence³³⁷.

An **asylum seeker** is someone whose request for sanctuary in another country has yet to be processed³³⁸.

The **difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker** lies in the status of their resettlement.

³³² [Cambridge Dictionary. Definition of Healthcare. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

³³³ [World Health Organisation. Public Health Services. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

³³⁴ [European Commission. Overview: Health Policy. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

³³⁵ [European Union. EU by topic: Health. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

³³⁶ [UNHCR. Resettlement. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

³³⁷ [UNHCR. What is a refugee? \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

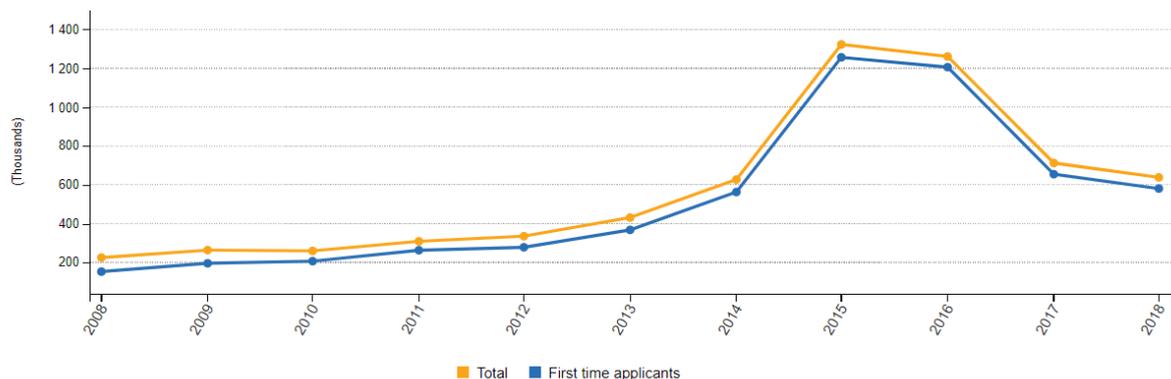
³³⁸ [UNHCR. Asylum-seekers. \(accessed on 31.07.2019\).](#)

The **difference between a migrant and a refugee** lies in the agency of their decision to leave - in principle, migrants usually have a choice of whether to leave or not; refugees do not. While migrants relocate for economic, persecution, or environmental reasons, refugees relocate for survival, though the lines between the two are blurred. **Both** migrants and refugees have the right to healthcare in the EU.

Key figures

Figures on asylum-seekers in the European Union

Asylum applications (non-EU) in the EU-28 Member States, 2008–2018



Total: 2008 - 2014: Croatia not available.

First-time applicants: 2008: Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Slovakia and Finland not available. 2009: Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Slovakia and Finland not available. 2010: Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria, Romania and Finland not available.

2011: Croatia, Hungary, Austria and Finland not available. 2012: Croatia, Hungary and Austria not available. 2013: Austria not available.

eurostat

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Figures on Migration and Healthcare³⁴⁰

Half of the Member States offer possibilities of mediation and interpretation in order to ease access to healthcare.

Zero out of the 28 Member States, as of the end of 2017, had implemented any strategy addressing migrant healthcare. By the same date, four Member States had developed indicators for measuring migrant integration in their systems. Overall, there is significantly improper research by the EU and its Member States on the situation of refugees within their healthcare systems. This means that there are no accurate and meaningful statistics.

³³⁹ [Eurostat. Asylum statistics. \(accessed on 12.08.2019\).](#)

³⁴⁰ [European Commission. Migrant health across Europe: Little structural policies, many encouraging practices. \(2018\).](#)

Key actors

ASYLUM SEEKERS

Asylum seekers are the human aspect at the heart of this issue. They are the vulnerable actor that deserves empowerment in the current situation.

NATIONAL ACTORS

National health systems have varying provisions for asylum seekers' healthcare. These range from according them free care to only doing so against prohibitive costs. Member States' laws are not coordinated with each other. When it comes to actual policy making, everything depends on **Member States governments'** willingness and ability to integrate these marginalised groups - both migrants and refugees - within their healthcare systems. Studies, however, show that it is cheaper to actually include refugees within healthcare schemes³⁴¹.

EU & MEMBER STATES

The protection and improvement of human health is one of the **EU's supporting competences**³⁴², meaning that the EU only supplements or gives general guidelines for its Member States. We cannot, therefore, ask the EU to create health-related laws for its Member States to uniformly comply to. Nonetheless, the EU is actively involved in policy areas connected to it, such as public health³⁴³. Within the latter, it has **shared competences** with the Member States and is working on coordinating their national health systems³⁴⁴.

The **European Commission** supports national health systems, can create legislation related to healthcare that pertains to other fields (such as consumer rights of EU citizens), and provides funding which is channeled through national programmes³⁴⁵. The **European Migration Network**³⁴⁶ supplements the Commission's work with research and information.

The **European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control** is a decentralised agency that supplements the convoluted process of EU and national policy and decision making with information for policies. Concretely, they monitor threats to human health in the EU, especially transmittable diseases³⁴⁷, which ultimately pertains to public health.

³⁴¹ [Sagener, Nicole. Study: Restrictions on refugee healthcare cost more than free access to services. Euractiv. \(2015\).](#)

³⁴² [EUR-lex. Division of competences within the European Union. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

³⁴³ [European Commission. EU health policy - Overview. \(accessed on 03.07.2019\).](#)

³⁴⁴ [European Commission. EU health policy - Health systems coordination. \(accessed on 03.04.2019\).](#)

³⁴⁵ [European Commission. Migration and home affairs - Asylum, migration, and integration fund \(AMIF\). \(accessed on 02.07.2019\).](#)

³⁴⁶ [European Commission. Migration and home affairs - European Migration Network \(EMN\). \(accessed on 02.07.2019\).](#)

³⁴⁷ [ECDC. ECDC's mission and main activities. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

The **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees** (UNHCR) addresses all migrant and refugee issues on an international level, but is not actively involved in policy making. They cover issues ranging from advocacy, inclusion, assistance, shelter, to public health³⁴⁸. Within public health, their initiatives cover issues like transmittable and sexual diseases, nutrition, sanitation, and reproductive health³⁴⁹.

The **World Health Organisation** (WHO) takes upon itself the task of promoting migrant and refugee health and the right to access healthcare³⁵⁰. Just like the UNHCR, they can influence policy-making but they do not directly do it within Member States; their activity is more focused on research and provision of aid.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) cover various issues that facilitate migrants' and refugees' access to healthcare, such as advocacy and lobbying situation analysis, procedural and financial aid, and actual service provision. While they are not directly involved in the legislative process, they can influence it, bringing issues into the public's attention and thus pressure lawmakers. Most importantly, they assist people in need with vital first intervention, filling the gaps left by governmental actors. Important non-governmental actors within this topic are the European Council on Refugees and Exiles³⁵¹, Médecins Sans Frontières³⁵², and Refugee Rights Europe³⁵³.

³⁴⁸ [UNHCR. What we do. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

³⁴⁹ [UNHCR. Public Health. \(accessed on 30.06.2019\).](#)

³⁵⁰ [WHO. Refugee and migrant health. \(accessed on 02.07.2019\).](#)

³⁵¹ [European Council on Refugees and Exiles \(ECRE\). Our Work. \(accessed on 02.07.2019\).](#)

³⁵² [Médecins Sans Frontières. What we do. \(accessed on 02.07.2019\).](#)

³⁵³ [Refugee Rights Europe. Who we are. \(accessed on 02.07.2019\).](#)

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

Before you delve in, make sure you understand the basic notions of the topic. Further, news and reports from major actors such as NGOs and the EU as well as its Member States are a good way of understanding the current situation of refugee and migrant access to healthcare. Start with following some links to something you find intriguing in the Topic Overview, and see where that takes you! Make sure to have a balanced view on both migrants and refugees, since they have very different needs.

Do you know someone who is a refugee, or someone who works in the health or refugee care system? Ask them about their experience with this issue. The best way to understand how these systems can be improved is seeing how they affect people.

A great way of starting to understand the gravity of a topic so far removed from our daily lives could be visualising it. Investigative written, video-, and photojournalism sources show the conditions in refugee camps. Find them in places such as [NYT](#) or [National Geographic](#).

What to browse, read, and watch.

Everything you need to know about asylum in the EU, you can find summed up in this European Parliamentary Research Service [infographic](#).

Moreover, if you are keen on the legislative aspect of this issue, you can find communications regarding all the legislative documents from the European Agenda on Migration [here](#).

This short [documentary](#) from the BBC about “the worst refugee camp on Earth”.

Listen to this [podcast](#) on the mental health of refugees and asylum seekers (it also has a handy transcript!).

A recent [panel](#) from the WHO Regional Office for Europe regarding the role of cultural mediators within refugees’ access to healthcare.

One past [project](#) of cross-border cooperation between the EU, national health authorities, and NGOs in providing healthcare to newly arrived refugees, as an example of what can be developed.

Keep an eye out for any other interesting multimedia sources!

REGI

Committee on Regional Development

Chairperson: Vladyslav Korshenko (UA)



HAMBURG 2019
91ST INTERNATIONAL SESSION
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

The scars of deindustrialisation in Europe's landscape: Bringing former industrial sites to a new life. With the European Commission's New Industrial Policy Strategy³⁵⁴ aiming to empower European industries, how can the social, economic and environmental challenges of deindustrialisation be addressed throughout Europe? What measures should the EU and local authorities take in order to secure the sustainable development of former industrial sites?

SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

The industrial revolution deeply changed the look of Europe not only when it comes to its socioeconomic structures, but also in its urban development. However, a process known as deindustrialisation started to occur in most European economies from the early 1970s. Producing goods overseas and shipping them to Europe got cheaper than manufacturing them locally, also often leading to carbon leakage. European companies started to either decrease the number of employees or close completely. It forced people to either change their profession or move to another region³⁵⁵, leaving ghost towns behind. People who wanted to stay faced the tough challenge of changing their profession and the decline³⁵⁶ of their economic welfare.

This situation had a detrimental effect on the feeling of identity³⁵⁷ for the inhabitants of industrial regions. Moreover, factories left an immense negative ecological footprint on local environments like the creation of brownfields³⁵⁸, uninhabited areas hazardous for further usage.

Industries such as cement, steel and chemicals remain vital for the European Union. 50 million jobs in the EU are manufacturing-related. Industry produces a quarter of the whole GDP of the EU and

³⁵⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/new-industrial-policy-strategy-2017-sep-18_en

³⁵⁵ Richard McCormack, *The Social Costs Of Deindustrialization* (2009). <http://cwcs.yzu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/The-Social-Costs-Of-Deindustrialization.pdf>

³⁵⁶ *Poverty rising in Germany's industrial Ruhr region*: the Local.de (2019). <https://www.thelocal.de/20190403/poverty-on-the-rise-in-german-cities>

³⁵⁷ George Karl Ackers, *The impact of deindustrialization of masculine career identity*: Thersis, the University of Huddersfield (2017). https://researchportal.port.ac.uk/portal/files/8185798/Phd_Final.pdf

³⁵⁸ *Environmental Rehabilitation of brownfield Sites in central Europe*: The European Environment Agency (2014-2020). <https://www.keep.eu/project/17797/environmental-rehabilitation-of-brownfield-sites-in-central-europe>

the trade of manufactured goods in 2018 constituted 82% of all exports³⁵⁹. Now that foreign competition is higher than ever before due to globalisation, the European Commission emphasised the importance of supporting European industries in order to secure the sustainable economic growth of the Member States and competitiveness of the EU on the international market, in particular through small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Digitalisation and cyber security add another layer to the problem of re-industrialisation. As the process of manufacturing is often as important as the actual capacity to produce goods, in the era of industrial espionage, the protection of such sensitive data becomes vital for the protection of European manufacturers on the international market³⁶⁰.

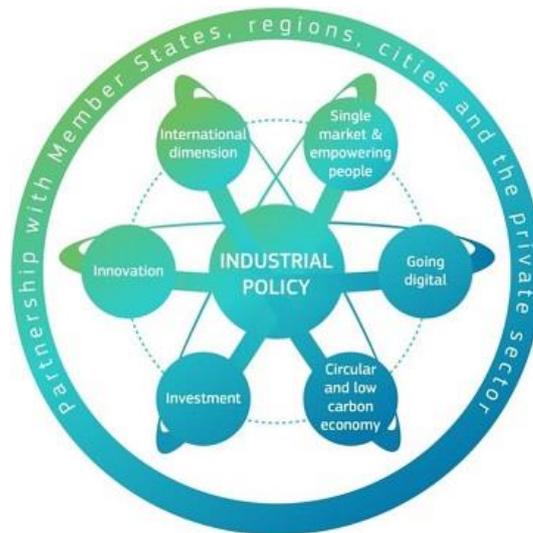
What has been done so far?

In 2017 the European Commission adopted the Industrial Policy Strategy that brought all previously existing initiatives into one comprehensive legal framework. It is aimed at facilitating the dialogue between the private and public sector, in order to promote sustainable, smart and innovative industry across all the Member States, while tackling the negative effects of deindustrialisation. The strategy aims at innovative technologies that would allow for modernising production, and securing a stable and continuously growing job market for industry-related fields. The Strategy reassures European commitment to environmental protection, and emphasizes the necessity of industrial decarbonisation in order to meet the goal of becoming completely climate-neutral by 2050.

³⁵⁹ *Extra-EU trade in manufactured good*: Eurostat (2019).

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Extra-EU_trade_in_manufactured_goods#Manufactured_goods_dominant_international_trade

³⁶⁰ *The scale and impact of industrial espionage and theft of trade secrets through cyber*: the European Commission (2019). <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b3b5fcfb-4541-11e9-a8ed-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-90181868>



*State of the Union 2017 – Industrial Policy Strategy: the European Commission (2017)*³⁶¹

The Industry 2030 High Level Industrial Roundtable was established in order to provide a platform for negotiations featuring representative of small and big businesses, trade unions and the innovation community in order to shape a common vision of the EU's industry.

The EU Cluster system is a group of specialised enterprises – often SMEs – and other related supporting actors that cooperate closely in a particular location, so they can be more innovative, create more jobs and register more international trademarks and patents. The EU Cluster Portal provides tools and information on key European initiatives, actions and events for clusters and their SMEs with, the aim of creating more world-class clusters across the EU.

Finally, the European Cybersecurity Research and Competence Centre is a body proposed by the European Commission. It would be a hub connecting dedicated centres in all the Member States, providing a comprehensive framework to protect European industries from foreign interference and industrial espionage. One of the underlying documents for the Centre's operation would be the Regulation on the free flow of non-personal data adopted on 28 May 2019. It constitutes one of the prerequisites for a competitive data economy within the EU and secures the free flow of non-personal data within the union.

³⁶¹ *State of the Union 2017 – Industrial Policy Strategy: the European Commission (2017).*
https://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/state-union-2017-%E2%80%93-industrial-policy-strategy-investing-smart-innovative-and-sustainable_en

What are the challenges of the topic?

A fundamental challenge is what is meant by the term “deindustrialization”. Indeed, experts do not agree on a definition, and as a consequence, there are different approaches to conducting re-industrialization. The problem gets additionally complicated by the number of different dimensions to be addressed simultaneously: economic, social and environmental.

Innovation is the key factor in the competitiveness of European industries in the global market, and 65% of private Research & Development (R&D) comes from manufacturing³⁶². Despite the fact that the EU is among global leaders when it comes to the percentage of GDP for R&D, the adoption of newly developed technologies in the industry sometimes takes too long to meet the needs of rapidly shifting markets.

Sustainability is another key issue. As most of the industrial activities in the XXth century were carried out without any regard to environmental protection, those factories had a damaging effect on the environment, with soil, air and water contamination. Furthermore, despite a range of newly adopted environmental standard, modern industries remain one of the biggest factors influencing global climate change by emitting CO₂.

Social welfare is another aspect to consider. With fewer industrial jobs, many people can no longer find work with their skills, and are not trained to work in another field. Furthermore, new jobs may be paid less and without the feeling of camaraderie present in manufacturing jobs³⁶³.

What now?

There are three approaches to how post-industrial regions can be brought to a new life. The first one is continuing the plan specified in the Industrial Policy Strategy. By bringing industrial manufacturing back to the EU, new working places can be created and, at the same time, the EU will increase its ability to compete with developing countries like China or Malaysia. Overall this approach is more evolutional than revolutionary and focuses on environmental protection while enhancing the cyber protection of the EU against industry theft.

³⁶² Marine D'Hollander, *An Ambitious FP9 Strengthening Europe's Industrial Leadership*: ASD (2017).

<https://www.asd-europe.org/an-ambitious-fp9-strengthening-europe%E2%80%99s-industrial-leadership>

³⁶³ Tejvan Pettinger, *Deindustrialization: Economics help* (2017).

<https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/glossary/deindustrialisation/><https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/glossary/deindustrialisation/>

The second approach was introduced in a report called *Re-finding industry - Defining Innovation*³⁶⁴ released by the Horizon 2020 High-level Strategy Group on Industrial Technologies. The focal point of their proposal is to cease trying to bring back manufacturing as we know it, and instead to identify the key technology - Artificial Intelligence (AI) - that will shape the industry in the future and take advantage of the EU's lead in R&D to gain an advantage over foreign competitors. By investing in AI now, the EU can secure its leading position in this relatively new sector, create jobs and secure ground for future innovation and development.

The third approach is transformative. Post-industrial areas have been increasingly redeveloped as cultural hubs. Industrial sites are becoming relevant again by inviting world leading artists and serving as large-scale monuments to the industrial past that shaped the country. A great example of such an approach is the Ruhr region in Germany, with ex-industrial facilities like Gasometer Oberhausen or Zeche Zollverein.

What strategy is the most beneficial for the regional development of post-industrial regions? How can they contribute to the development of a competitive and innovative European industry?

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

The Information era sees data as the main driver to development of societies, organisations and individuals³⁶⁵, and is characterised by information being universally accessible.

Industrial society is a society that features vast industrial production and societal mechanisms to support such production³⁶⁶. It used to be structured into classes with strict division of labour.

Knowledge society is a society in which acquiring, processing and disseminating knowledge has become the main factor of production³⁶⁷. Often referred to as “post-industrial” society and characterised by the growth of the service sector compared to the industrial sector of the economy.

³⁶⁴ *Re-finding industry*: the European Commission (2018). <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/28e1c485-476a-11e8-be1d-01aa75ed71a1>

³⁶⁵ *What is Information Era*: IGI Global <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/information-society-discourse/36120>

³⁶⁶ Ashley Crossman, *What Is an Industrial Society?*: ThoughtCo (2019). <https://www.thoughtco.com/industrial-society-3026359>

³⁶⁷ Md. Ashikuzzaman, *Knowledge society definition*: LIS BD Network (2013). <http://www.lisbdnet.com/knowledge-society-definition/>

Carbon leakage occurs when production is moved to a country with lower environmental protection standards, and thus moving the emission of greenhouse gases³⁶⁸. This may result in the increase of the overall amount of emissions.

Deindustrialisation is when an economy's industry sector decreases³⁶⁹. Deindustrialisation is followed by the decrease of the number of goods manufactured and an increase in the service sector of the economy.

Ghost town is a town with either a very small number of inhabitants or no inhabitants at all³⁷⁰. Ghost town is a town of great value for industry in the past, the population of which has depleted due to deindustrialisation.

Brownfield is an area of land previously used for industrial needs, the re-use of which might be complicated due to contaminants left after the industrial activity³⁷¹. Usually, brownfields can no longer be used for human activity.

Industrial espionage is a kind of espionage directed towards stealing sensitive information from a rival company or foreign competitors³⁷².

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are enterprises that have less than 250 staff members employed, and their annual turnover is below 50 million euros³⁷³.

Gross domestic product (GDP) is an economic indicator of the total value of goods produced in a country³⁷⁴.

³⁶⁸ *Carbon leakage*: The European Commission.

https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets/allowances/leakage_el

³⁶⁹ Tejvan Pettinger, *Deindustrialization*: Economics Help (2017).

<https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/glossary/deindustrialisation/>

³⁷⁰ *Definition of ghost town*: Merriam-Webster.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ghost%20town>

³⁷¹ *Brownfield*: Cambridge dictionary.

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/brownfield>

³⁷² Margaret Rouse, *Industrial espionage*: WhatIs (2012).

<https://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/industrial-espionage>

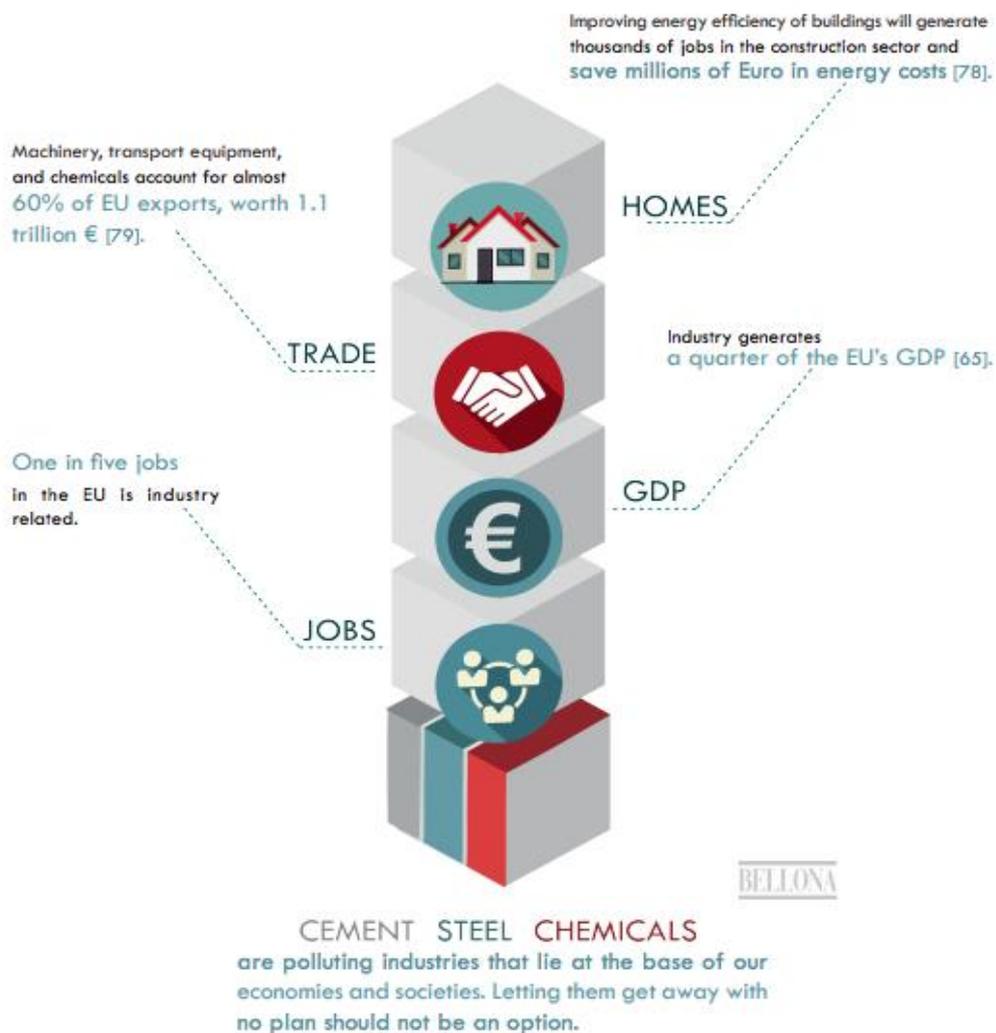
³⁷³ *What is an SME?*: The European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en

³⁷⁴ Leslie Kramer, *What is GDP and Why is It So Important to Economists and Investors?*: Investopedia (2019).

<https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/what-is-gdp-why-its-important-to-economists-investors/>

Artificial Intelligence is a digital system able to carry out a task usually requiring human intelligence³⁷⁵. This process includes learning, reasoning and self-correction of the system.

Key figures



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The Industrial sector accounts for 80%³⁷⁷ of exported goods in the EU.

³⁷⁵ Margaret Rouse, *AI (artificial intelligence)*: TechTarget
<https://searchenterpriseai.techtarget.com/definition/AI-Artificial-Intelligence>

³⁷⁶ *Too important to ignore: 5 reasons to speak up and act on industrial emissions*: Bellona Europa (2019).
<https://bellona.org/news/eu/2019-04-industry-decarbonization-leaking-carbon-and-jobs-in-europe>

³⁷⁷ *More than 80 % of EU exports are manufactured goods*: Eurostat (2017).
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20170606-1?inheritRedirect=true>

More than 1 169 650 sites with contaminated soil have already been identified³⁷⁸ with only 15% of them having been remediated. It is estimated that the total number of brownfields will be three times as big.

Two annual Industry Days were organised since 2017. They are a set of flagship events on industrial policy introduced as a part of the Strategy by the European Commission, where the industry is discussed in the context of globalisation, digitalisation and environmental sustainability.

Between 2015 and 2025 the number of jobs requiring high-skilled workers is expected to grow by 21%³⁷⁹. Opportunities for middle-skilled workers will likely stay the same. At the same time, low-skilled workers will struggle to find a job even more as the demand for their labour will decrease by 17%.

38% of European jobs are based in regional clusters³⁸⁰ and SME participation in such clusters leads to more innovation and growth.

About 20% of European companies suffered a leakage of data due to industrial espionage³⁸¹;

The transition to a knowledge society has not been identical in all the Member States, with employment in the tech sector varying from country to country. For example, France managed to achieve 7.3% employment growth³⁸² in the tech sector in 2018, while in Poland it was 3.9%.

The industrial sector of the 33 countries that are members of European Environment Agency produces 64% of their total CO₂ emissions³⁸³.

³⁷⁸ *Progress in management of contaminated sites*: European Environment Agency (2019).

<https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/progress-in-management-of-contaminated-sites-3/assessment>

³⁷⁹ *Skills for industry*: The European Commission.

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/skills_el

³⁸⁰ *EU Cluster Portal*: The European Commission.

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/cluster_en

³⁸¹ *The scale and impact of industrial espionage and theft of trade secrets through cyber*: The European Commission (2018). <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b3b5fcfb-4541-11e9-a8ed-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-90181868>

³⁸² Diksha Dutta, *What's driving Europe's tech economy*: Dataconomy (2019).

<https://dataconomy.com/2019/01/what-is-driving-europes-tech-economy/>

³⁸³ *Industrial pollution in Europe*: European Environment Agency (2018). <https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/industrial-pollution-in-europe/assessment-1>

Key actors

The European Commission supports national bodies engaged with industrial matters and provides a common framework for their subsequent coordination.

Horizon 2020 High-level Strategy Group on Industrial Technologies is an expert group established for the purpose of drafting an advisory report on how to promote the further development of the EU's industries while determining and employing the underlying technologies for this matter.

European Committee of the Regions (CoR) is an assembly of the EU's local and regional representatives that allows regional authorities to have a direct say in the EU's institutional network. It consists of 350 locally chosen politicians and their alternates from all 28 countries of the Union. CoR gathers six times per year to discuss further development of regions and propose legislation on the subject matter.

Transnational companies are international companies operating in more than one country. They are characterised by a very large turnover that sometimes can be bigger than the economy of a country. While operating, transnational companies are trying to minimise costs of production often relocating manufacturing to developing countries, and thus can contribute to deindustrialisation.

National governmental bodies engaged in the matters relating to energy and industry, such as the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy in Germany or the French Ministry of Industry. Taking into account that industry is a supportive competence of the EU, such bodies have the main responsibility regarding legislation in their respective spheres.

European small and medium enterprises are the driving force of the EU's countries constituting 99%³⁸⁴ of the EU's companies. They are the employers of two-thirds of European employees and produce 57 cents of every euro per value-added goods.

Citizens were the most affected by industrialisation. It directly affected their environment, work options and cultural identity. They can tackle the issue either directly by establishing, promoting and participating in non-governmental organisations, which also play an important role in this topic, taking part in protests, or manually altering post-industrial areas by turning them into tourist attractions or through their right to vote and elect their representatives to local municipalities.

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

³⁸⁴ *Entrepreneurship and Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)*: The European Commission.
https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes_en

Research tips

It is important to understand deindustrialisation, so you are encouraged to start your research by learning more about this process in your own country. Get to know the factors that influenced the decrease in the industry sector, and consequences for both the economy and local inhabitants.

Another important aspect is the development of deindustrialisation and potential reindustrialisation in the United States of America as they constitute the largest economy in the world, the biggest potential partner for the European Union and are a capitalist country. By studying the case of the United States, lessons can be learnt about how to enhance the EU's approach to deindustrialisation.

It is also recommended to study the differences between developing countries and countries that have already switched to a service-oriented economy, in order to better understand the need for both types of countries and the underlying differences between them.

Finally, you are encouraged to research the ways to use AI in the production of goods and the way it can potentially bring back the working spaces that leaked to foreign countries.

What to browse, read, and watch

The EU industry overview:

Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs: The European Commission.

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry_en - General information by the European Commission;

European champions vs. hidden champions: What's the future of European industry?: Euractiv (2019).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMztcivQuVU>

A renewed Industrial Policy Strategy: European Parliamentary Research Service (2017).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mj_kZHSNpjs

Deindustrialization:

Vinko Kandžija, Marko Tomljanović, *Deindustrialization as a process in the EU*: ResearchGate (2017).

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322288880_DEINDUSTRIALIZATION_AS_A_PROCESS_IN_THE_EU - Deindustrialisation as a process in the EU;

Anna Runge, Iwona Kantor-Pietraga, Jerzy Runge, Robert Krzysztofik, Weronika Dragan, *Can Depopulation Create Urban Sustainability in Postindustrial Regions?:* University of Silesia

Department of Economic Geography (2018). <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/10/12/4633/htm>

Foreign competitors:

Why Some Countries Are Poor and Others Rich: The School of Life (2014).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-4V3HR696k>

Artificial intelligence:

Kevin Kelly, *How AI can bring on a second Industrial Revolution*: TED (2017).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljbTiRbeNpM>

Forbes Technology Council, *13 Industries Soon To Be Revolutionized By Artificial Intelligence*: Forbes (2019).

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2019/01/16/13-industries-soon-to-be-revolutionized-by-artificial-intelligence/#4689a4fe3dc1>

Sam Charrington, *Artificial Intelligence for Industrial Applications*: CloudPulse Strategies (2017).

https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5a6a107a0a6e6500019f9a5d/5bd87cc016e1ea3efb5c4420_CloudPulse_Industrial_AI_Report_2017062301.pdf

Environment

Rick Dancer, *What is a Brownfield? Redevelopment of Industrial Properties* (2012)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4RcUacsW3U>

Influence of deindustrialization on society

Aleck S Ostry, Ruth Hershler, Shona Kelly, Paul Demers, Kay Teschke, Clyde Hertzman, *Effects of deindustrialization on unemployment, re-employment, and work conditions in a manufacturing workforce*: US National University of Medicine (2001).

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC64495/>

SEDE

Committee on Security and Defense

Chairperson: Thanos Theofanakis (NL)



HAMBURG 2019
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EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT

From the Pleven Plan³⁸⁵ to the 2016 EU Global Strategy³⁸⁶: A new role for European Defence. With the changing nature of foreign threats close to Europe's borders as well as violent conflicts globally, new forms of defensive cooperation are required. What role should the Member States' armed forces play? What should the extent of military cooperation at the EU level be in the future?

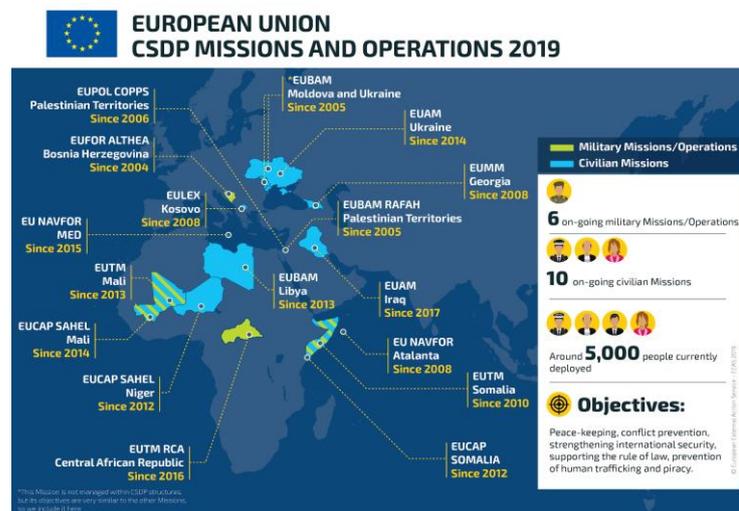
SECTION 1 - PANORAMIC VIEW

What is the problem and why does it matter?

Following one of the most devastating wars in history, the European Communities had among its **main aims** the establishment of durable **peace** in the continent. Since then, the EU has been promoting peace **both domestically and internationally**. These efforts have been recognised with a Nobel Peace Prize in 2012. Currently, the European Union is no military alliance and has no army of its own. However, the pursuit of peace is not always a peaceful process and may well, sometimes, require the use of military force.

While **inter-state wars** used to be the most common kind of conflict, from the 20th Century the majority of them have been **intra-state** - either between a state and a non-state actor (e.g. terrorist organisation, rebellious group), or between two or more non-state actors.

The EU can intervene in such conflicts by dispatching military or civilian missions. However, since the EU does not have any military personnel of its own, it is **fully dependent on Member States' support**, as matters of security and defence fall under the Special



³⁸⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3Aa19000>

³⁸⁶ https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/eu-global-strategy/17304/global-strategy-european-unions-foreign-and-security-policy_en

Competencies of the Council and most often require Member State unanimity to act, severely limiting the EU's ability to act and its overall effectiveness in these missions.

Furthermore, while **all-out wars** seem to be largely condemned to the past, the threat from foreign nations itself is not. For instance, cyberwarfare threatens the EU both abroad³⁸⁷³⁸⁸ and domestically.³⁸⁹³⁹⁰ Donald Tusk, former president of the European Council, has named Russia, China and a number of countries in the Middle-East as the biggest foreign cyber-threats to the EU.³⁹¹ The effects of such an attack on the digital infrastructure of the European Union could have far-reaching consequences for everything from elections to energy supply and telecommunications.³⁹²³⁹³ While these new threats are rising, the White House is sounding increasingly critical of its role as Europe's protector. President Trump openly drew into question his dedication to NATO's mutual defence pact,³⁹⁴ instilling the realisation in European leaders that Europe must become able to fend for itself - militarily.

What has been done so far?

The EU currently has a number of different measures in place for security cooperation between Member States. An example would be **Article 188 of the Lisbon Treaty**, containing a so-called solidarity clause, according to which all Member States should participate in defending one another in case of an attack. A similar solidarity clause exists in the **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)**, a military alliance to which all EU Member States are either a member or a partner.

However, there are many other organisations and cooperation structures in place as well. With regards to the EU's foreign policy, the **Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)** sets out the EU's and Member States' common vision, objectives and strategy but does not include far-stretching

³⁸⁷ Source: EUObserver, *Russians hacked EU embassy in Moscow*, EUObserver (2019), [Link](#)

³⁸⁸ Source: Roberts, Jeff J.; Hacket, Robert, *Chinese Hackers Stole Diplomatic Cables, Report Says. Here's How They Did It*, Fortune (2018), [Link](#)

³⁸⁹ Source: BBC, *How the Dutch foiled Russian 'cyber-attack' on OPCW*, BBC (2018), [Link](#)

³⁹⁰ Source: Browne, Ryan, *Russian hackers are targeting European governments ahead of May election, FireEye says*, CNBC (2019), [Link](#)

³⁹¹ Hume, John, *How EU can help keep the peace*, Politico (2014), [Link](#)

³⁹² Source: Baron, Jessica, *EU seeking ethical hackers to find software bugs*, TechEngage (2019), [Link](#)

³⁹³ Source: Helmbrecht, Udo, *EU strategies to secure the EU cyberspace and critical infrastructure against hackers*, ENISA (2017), [Link](#)

³⁹⁴ Source: The Guardian, *'Very aggressive': Trump suggests Montenegro could cause world war three*, The Guardian (2018), [Link](#)

legal commitments for Member States.³⁹⁵ Under the CFSP, the **Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)** concerns itself with matters specifically relating to, as the name suggests, security and defence and is an instrumental part of the CFSP. To achieve its aims, a number of concrete measures have been taken.

Firstly, the **European Defence Agency (EDA)**, in which all Member States except Denmark are represented, concerns itself with the coordination of military efforts, Research & Technology (R&T) and carrying out military policy on the EU-level. In its efforts to unify Member States' defence policies, the **Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)** was established in 2017 to create a platform for Member States to jointly invest in defence programmes. Under PESCO, Member States work together on 34 projects on a voluntary but legally binding basis to harmonise their defence programmes and increase military interoperability. Projects under PESCO, as opposed to unilateral military projects, are eligible for more funding from the **European Defence Fund (EDF)**, which was set up to incentivise the more efficient allocation of funds to European military projects. The EDA also reviews Member States' military spending and identifies opportunities for further and more efficient military investment under the **Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)**.

With regards to the European Union's broader outwards security policy, the **European External Action Service (EEAS)** is the main body responsible for ensuring a coherent EU-approach. Headed by the **High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**, it is responsible for the EU's diplomatic missions, civilian or military, abroad. The EEAS, together with the EDA, oversees PESCO projects.

What are the challenges of the topic?

There are a number of critical challenges of this topic. Firstly, a majority of European citizens are of the opinion that there should be a greater role for the EU in ensuring European security and defence.³⁹⁶ There are also indicators³⁹⁶ that this would increase overall EU's military efficiency and effectiveness.

However, the question of how to achieve this inevitably leads back to the decade-long debate about the EU institutional framework: to heave over responsibilities to Brussel and **centrally coordinate** the efforts of all Member States for **higher efficiency and effectiveness** or to maintain **national sovereignty** and always allow Member States the final say? While this debate is relevant to all policy fields of the EU, in the fields of foreign affairs or security, also known as **High Politics**, states are notoriously cautious to give up autonomy as they affect the **existential core of the state**: to conduct foreign affairs and to protect one's territory and citizens.

Closely related to this is the question of when the EU should get involved in a conflict. While there is no controversy regarding the extent to which the EU and its Member States should defend their national borders, such a clear consensus does not exist for **military intervention missions abroad**.

³⁹⁵ Source: Maastricht Treaty, *PROVISIONS ON A COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY (Title V)* (1992), [Link](#)

³⁹⁶ European Commission, *EUROPEAN VIEWS: Clear support for a common security and defence policy*, Medium (2017), [Link](#)

When should the EU get involved in conflict? Where should the decision making regarding such questions be vested? And from where should the EU draw personnel to carry out such missions? All these questions will be crucial to finding a solution to the core problems of this topic that is acceptable to all stakeholders involved.

What now?

Security and defence, both domestically and internationally, are not controversial topics. How to achieve said security is. Our committee will have to discuss the fundamental questions surrounding the mandate, right of initiative and balance of power: should the EU be able to act on its own accord in conflict situations, increasing its effectiveness and ability to act, or should Member States always have the last say on matters of High Politics, maintaining national sovereignty in this regard? Should there be a distinction in this regard between defensive military operations and interventionist military operations? And, in the case of an intervention, on what basis should the EU decide to get involved in a conflict to which it is not a party in the first place?

However, reaching a consensus on *what* exactly the EU should strive for is only the first step. Different strategic approaches to foreign affairs and security policy require different EU legal and organisational structures to support these strategies. How can the EU maximise its military efficiency, effectively operate in crisis situations and ensure the safety of its citizens against the trans-border threats of the 21st Century?

SECTION 2 - ZOOMED VIEW

Key concepts

Supranationalism - it is the school of thought that describes European integration in a top-down manner; by bundling their efforts, interest groups all over Europe can work together towards a common, cross-border goal. Examples include a common fisheries policy, a common border or a common valuta. The military is a good example of a field which may have its efficiency improved by integration.

Intergovernmentalism - it prescribes a different approach to cooperation. According to this theory, the importance of foreign affairs and security, so-called "high politics," explains why Member States oppose this idea. Under intergovernmentalism, all actors in integration have to consent to any process. As such, integration is an active process. This is relevant to the topic because all of the currently 28 Member States would have to agree to any military reforms as it touches upon the field of High Politics.

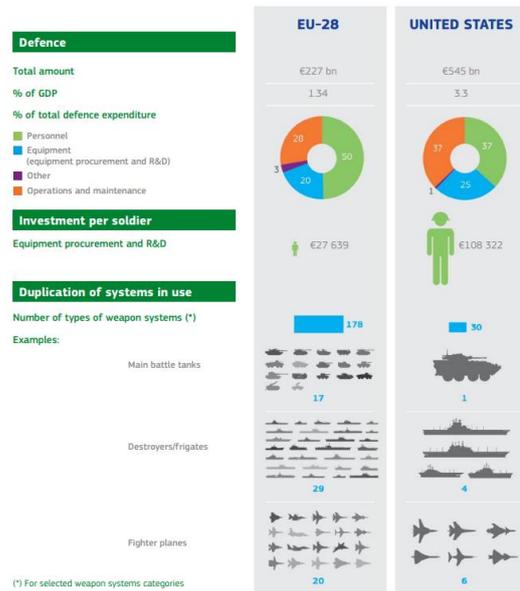
Intervention - it refers to a set of actions, most commonly carried out by states or International Organisations, aimed at de-escalating a conflict to which it is not a party. Intervention usually consists of **peacemaking** (e.g. mediating a ceasefire between conflicting parties) and, ideally, also of **peacekeeping** (e.g. enforcing a ceasefire, policing a no-fire-zone). Peacekeeping, obviously, requires the availability of deployable troops but peacemaking, too, is more successful when a mediator has military leverage over the disputants.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁷ Source: Beardsley, Kyle, *Using the right tool for the job: Mediator leverage and conflict resolution*, Penn St. J.L. & Int'l Aff. 2 (2013)

Key figures

As can be seen on the graphic to the side, the USA spends **€ 545 billion** on defence. The EU spends **€ 227 billion**, roughly half, but is able to spend barely a quarter as much per soldier as the USA. The largest source of inefficiency is the duplication of systems in use between different Member States: a lack of coordination?³⁹⁸

Within NATO, the USA is the biggest contributor, making up 22% of NATO's budget with € 1431.9 million and accounting for 67% of the alliance's total military spending in 2018, with \$ 618 billion out of \$917 billion.³⁹⁹



In 2018, the EU was involved in **16 CSDP operations** in **11 countries** in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. **6 of these were military** and **10 were civilian**.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁸ Source: Roser, Max; Nagdy, Mohamed, *Military Spending*, OurWorldInData (2019), [Link](#)

³⁹⁹ Source: NATO, *Funding NATO*, NATO (2018), [Link](#)

⁴⁰⁰ Source: EEAS, *EU acts for peace and security*, EEAS (2018), [Link](#)

Key actors

Member States - Since Member States currently have full autonomy on all matters regarding foreign affairs and security policy, among which, notably, military affairs, any suggested changes to the *status quo* must be acceptable to all Member States, as they each hold an effective veto in this field.

The European Defence Agency - As one of the supranational organisations with the broadest mandate within the field of European defence, the EDA plays a central role in the carrying out of any policy decisions made. The EDA is headed by the High Representative.

The High Representative - As the main EU-official responsible for foreign affairs and security policy, the High Representative plays a key role in any structural reforms regarding the military or strategic role of the EU. Currently, it is the HR/VP's responsibility to propose policy under the CSDP, to liaise between Member States and to carry out the EU's foreign and security policy.

NATO - Despite not being a European organisation, NATO is at the core of the European defence structure, as the United States of America are militarily the most important ally of the EU. As a common saying within the EU puts it: "The EU and NATO are separable but not separate."

SECTION 3 - RESEARCH TOOLS

Research tips

There are a thousand-and-one different policy papers to be found on the EU's foreign and security policies, precisely because this is such a highly complicated field. To help you in your preparation, please find below a number of tips specifically relevant to this topic:

- The EU publishes organisational charts of all its agencies and other organisations. These can give you a good overview of how the decision making process is structured within a particular agency and who has decision-making power in a specific field. Use this to your advantage when creating an overview for yourself of which decisions are made supranationally and which processes are intergovernmentalist.
- Because all conflicts are different, there is no one set EU response to conflict. Because of this, it can be difficult to get an idea of what happens in case of emergency. To help you get a good idea of this anyway, it may be helpful to look at the EU's response to a past conflict rather than try and determine a generalised pattern.
- Because defence is such a highly interconnected topic, it is crucial to have a basic understanding of non-EU defence structures as well. If you are not familiar with them already, it may be worthwhile to look into the basic functioning of NATO, the UN Security Council and your own country's national security structures.

What to browse, read, and watch

The below questions, topics, or debates will be at the core of our discussions as well. A number of sources to read up on these concepts and what they mean in European defense can be found below:

Intergovernmentalism vs Supranationalism

An overview of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism in European defense matters:

Haroche, Pierre, *EU defense policy is becoming increasingly supranational*, London School of Economics, [Link](#)

An interesting read about how the NATO budget works and why it was designed this way:

Haltiwanger, John, Here's how NATO's budget actually works, BusinessInsider (2018), [Link](#)

The EU as an effective peacemaker abroad (mediation, peacemaking, peacekeeping)

An insight into the cooperation between the EU and NATO in Peacemaking and Peacekeeping in Iraq:

Smith, Paul A., *10 Racing Tips on NATO-EU Cooperation inside Iraq*, EUNPACK, [Link](#)

Written by two scholars but in a very legible manner, this article discusses the EU's role as a Peacemaker:

Dijkstra, Hylke; Petrov, Petarm *The EU as peacemaker*, Maastricht University, [Link](#)

European Defence

A very clear overview of the 2016-2017 timeline since the launch of the EU Global Strategy leading up to the creation of a number of key defence mechanisms of the EU:

EEAS, *Timeline: European cooperation in the area of security and defence*, EEAS (2017), [Link](#)

The founding charter of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Dry read but very informative:

Maastricht Treaty, PROVISIONS ON A COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY (Title V) (1992), [Link](#)

A newspaper article elaborating on the current possibilities for further European defence integration: Staff, *'Means identified' to create European Union defense directorate with Commissioner*, *The Defense Post*, [Link](#)

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