

Why is EU important for me?



**A competition held to
(honour and) commemorate
our colleague Grazia Cecere**

Why EU is important for me

EU started as a result after the Second World War. The people were tired of war and didn't want it to happen again. Six countries: Belgium, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Luxemburg and Germany created a common market for coal and steel to prevent future war. The common market was controlled by a supranational authority to stop the manufacture of the dangerous nuclear weapon. The common market would also make countries get along with each other if they wanted to buy coal and steel. The common market became more and more popular and year 1957 it grew to a market for all products and services. The common market got the name EEG. In 1986 the EEG changed names again to EG, 12 countries were members of EG and today EG is called EU and is a European Union. 27 countries are members of EU and 6 countries are waiting for membership. Sweden joined the EU in the year 1995.

I have benefit of EU because EU makes it easier for me to travel, work, study, shop or move to another EU country. My dream is to study in Spain. I love Spain it's beautiful there and the culture there is really interesting and very different from Swedish culture. Spain is also a country where you can do a lot of things like go to the beach, go to restaurants and eat tapas or tortillas, dance salsa, bolero or maybe flamenco. Spain is such a fascinating country. I would love to study in an English university in Madrid and live in a house next to the beach with a couple of roommates. Spain has a lot of good universities and I would like to study in an English university because I'm better at English than Spanish. I would like to be a psychologist and if things go well in Spain then I might consider moving there.

Spain is a member of EU and because of that it makes it easier for me to study and move there. I have as a Swedish citizen right to search educations in another country. I can study at the same conditions as a citizen of the country (in this case a Spanish citizen). I need money and a health insurance to study in another EU country. I can contact the Spanish university by myself and I'm allowed to stay in Spain as long as I study but I might need to register myself at the government agency if I stay there more than three months. I need a passport or a national id card to travel in Spain. When you travel to a country that is inside the schengen area then you only need a national id card to travel. Almost every EU country is inside the schengen area. My plan is to stay and study in Spain for five years because the psychologist is for five years. I want to live with a couple of roommates because it will be funnier and cheaper for me. I don't know anybody in Spain but I'm good at making friends and I will get to know new friends in the university that I might be able to live with, until then I have to live in a budget hotel because I won't afford to live in a luxury hotel. It costs to study in another country so I have to be aware of how much I spend. I will need to get a job to pay rent, food, study material, etc and I thought that I might work at a restaurant or something similar because Spain has a lot of restaurants and cafes with much customers. I don't need a permission to work in Spain but I need to show the government that I am hired and that I can support myself. The job would be a part time job and I would only work a couple of hours every month because I don't have time to both study and work all the time. After work would I go to the beach and swim or explore Madrid. I would definitely go to a Madrid soccer game because I haven't been to a soccer game and soccer is my favourite sport. There's so much to do in Spain and to live there for five years is much, what if I never want to leave?

Well I can live in Spain if I want to but I need register myself as a resident of Spain and report my relocation to the Swedish Tax Agency. If I move to Spain I will be so

happy, I would swim almost every day, dance Spanish dances on clubs, eat tapas and enchiladas, look at architecture, go on guided tours, watch soccer games and more activities. But I would also study really hard of course because I want to be a psychologist and you need to study a lot for that, some people say it's even harder to be a psychologist than a doctor. I don't care how hard it is I must be a psychologist because I wanted to have that profession since primary school. So psychologist job and viva la España, here I come.

By; Maria Åhrlin

Why EU is important for me

I think that EU is important for me because of all the rights I have when I live in another EU country and when I visit another EU country.

Here are some examples of the rights I have:

As a citizen in one of the European Union member state, I am also an EU citizen. Which means that I can move freely wherever I want in another EU country, which is important for me, because if I want to move to another EU country in the future to work or to start a life there I can do that. Another good thing is, that if I want to, my family can move to the other country with me. The only thing that I need is enough money. I can even have the right to study in another EU country. If I am staying in an EU country less than three months I only have to show a passport or an ID-card.

As a member of an EU country, you are entitled to vote in the country where you live. And that's important, because then you have the chance to change something that you don't like.

If I get sick while I am visiting another EU country I can get hospital treatment for free or for a lower price. Every country has different rules, so it depends on what country I am visiting. So in one country I can get it for free, in another country I need to pay a little bit and in another country I have to pay all of it and then request reimbursement in retrospect. I think that it's good that I can get hospital treatment, because then I don't have to worry if I get sick.

It's thanks to the EU that we can have our Erasmus project, which is a good thing, because I get to know not only people from other countries, but I also get to know how things work in other countries, and if there are any differences from Sweden.

So that's why EU is important for me.

Evelin

Why is EU important for me?

I'm a youth who lives in Sweden. I'm fifteen years old and I have the whole life in front of me. I have a lot of dreams. I want to travel a lot, go to school in other countries and maybe work in another parts in the world. These things can be possible nowadays.

EU was founded in 1993. Earlier it was a cooperation in Europe called EG. They worked together around the farmers, to skip the customs between the member countries, and to keep peace in Europe.

Sweden became a member in 1994. In Sweden 52% of the people voted for a membership in EU.

The most important facts were that if the countries cooperated there wouldn't be war. The countries should have the same money. But in 2003 the Swedish people voted no to the Euro and because that we still use the krona in Sweden.

For me as a youth in Sweden, EU is very important.

At first EU makes Europe a safe place to live in. It's almost impossible to have a war. Then I can travel around Europe, between the member countries without a passport. I can stay as long as I want in the countries and I can even live there without problems. I can get a job and work there for a long time and maybe get married and get children.

If I become sick I can go to a hospital and get help. I just have to show my insurance card.

For pupils, their school can apply for a project and get money for it. They use the money to travel and visit other schools in other countries. In the project they will learn about other countries, their schools and their culture. Of course they will get friends, maybe for the whole life. For example in our Comenius project, we have travelled three times. At first some of our pupils went to Italy, then Germany and then they visited us in Stockholm. In September we went to Greece, and it was lovely. Now we are waiting for the visit in December, it will be fun!

Sandra 9c

Why is EU important for me?

EU is important for me because it has allowed the easier movement of EU citizen from country to another country and is continually working for common ground for laws.

I am an EU- citizen, and I have rights to freely move anywhere within EU. I can also vote in municipal land and vote in Europe parliament in the member state I reside. And I can also stand up as a candidate in the elections. If I live in another EU- country then I get protection from the diplomatic or consular authorities.

If I work in another EU-country I have same rights as the countries workers. And my family has right to move to the country where I work with me. If I work in another EU-country my social security must be guaranteed. Today I have right as an EU- citizen to move to another EU- country even though I am not a worker, pensioner or a student.

And if I move to another EU-country with my family, then my family must have enough money to be able to support them. If I travel to another EU- country for shorter than three months I only need my identity card. But if I stay in the country for more than three months then I need a passport.

And If I want to study in another EU- country I can arrange it by myself. The only thing I have to do is to contact the university where I want to study. I can stay in the country as long as I haven't completed my studies.

This is just some of the rights I have as a EU- citizen I mean as a EU- citizen I have so many rights! I have opportunity to study, move and work in another EU-country. That's great! Because if I move to another EU- country I learn so many things from the habitants there. The best thing is that I don't even need to worry about so many thing is because in EU nobody should feel like they cannot do anything.

The project Comenius is really good because we learn so many things about EU and we have the opportunity to travel to different countries within EU. Its thanks to EU we have this project. This project is good because we learn so many things about the countries we visit and we make some new friends.

All citizens in EU- countries have practically rights to stay in another EU-country as students.

So this is why EU is important for me!

SABINA 9A

Why is EU important to me?

In 1952 the European Coal and Steel Community was formed. There were six countries there and it was Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and West Germany.

The European Economic Community was extended in 1958. They decided that all countries should have a common Community market. In 1986 there were 12 countries that became members. EU was created instead of EEG (European Economic Community) in 1993. Sweden became part of it in 1995. From the year 2000 up until now there were 12 countries that became members in the EU. Now there are 27 countries in the EU. Croatia is going to become a member in the EU in 2013. There are countries that are applying to be part of the EU. Turkey, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro are countries that want to be part of the EU.

For me EU is very important because I am a girl that wants to travel, study and maybe move to other countries. I really like to shop online. So for me that I am part of EU is very good. I can apply to study in all the EU countries and study on the same terms as the people in the country and I can stay as long as I study and if I want to be in that country more than 3 months then I have to register with the authorities. If I already study in a university or a college in Sweden then I can apply for a place in the EU student exchange programs. So I can study in an EU country and still achieve study assistance from CSN. There is one condition and that is that the education I choose is approved by CSN and I have to study full time. I can even study in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland and these countries aren't even member in the EU but I need a residence permit.

A big part of the EU cooperation is the fact that we as citizens of the EU can travel to EU countries more easily. I as a citizen of the EU can stay in a country the whole three months without applying for citizenship in that country. The important thing is that I have my passport and my ID-card so I can prove that I am part of the EU. If I want to stay more than three months then I have to register with an authority.

I've decided that I am going to move to another country when I become an adult. I want to move to England and work there. When I'm moving to England I don't need residence or work permit. However, I have to choose where to pay taxes and where I want to be registered. The good thing is that I do not lose my old citizenship here in Sweden when I register in England. I have to pay taxes in the country I make money. It's really good that I am a member in an EU country because I can work in all the 27 countries that are in EU. I don't have to have a work permit or anything else.

One of the best things about being a member of the EU is that I can freely buy things in other EU countries but if I'm shopping online sometimes I have to pay Swedish vat. All consumer rules apply to me in the country I shop. I can contact European Consumer Centre if there is a problem when I shop in Europe. These are things about the EU that are important to me and I am glad that I am part of it.

Why is EU important to me?

Fundamental European values are based on tolerance, humanity and fraternity. We aren't Greek, German, Swedish or Italian: we're all European Citizens. It doesn't matter about the language, the customs or the traditions of a country: we're all equal.

To be European means growing up in a big family with the same values and rights. Together we must help each other, we have to fight for a better world, for peace, solidarity, tolerance.

European citizens should be free and have the right to be respected. Equal rights among the countries of the European Union are: the rights to reside and move freely within the territory of the European Union, the rights to petition the European Parliament, the right to vote and to be elected to the European Parliament. In addition, there mustn't be discrimination in a family, we have to overcome racial ideologies!

In my opinion, being a European citizen means feeling closer to any people who live in other countries. Being a citizen of the European Union, also, means being able to travel more freely, having many opportunities to study or work in other countries.

Thanks to my school, we are part of projects and cultural exchanges like the Comenius project. It's a project of cooperation in school education, sponsored by the European Community. At the end of this project, we should be more aware of many things: training of future citizens, variety of languages and cultures, comparison of international experience.

With the Comenius project activities we have made Greek, German and Swedish friends. I think this is one of the best experiences of our lives because we have had the opportunity to compare the food, the places, the cultures and much more. I have had this experience with my friends. I hosted a Greek student and this summer I went to Greece. They

were welcoming and friendly and with them I visited many beautiful places and learned a lot about local culture. They have many customs similar to those in Italy, it was a wonderful experience.

Now I am looking forward to going to Sweden, to learn new things, eat different food, meet new friends. I want to say thanks to the school and the teachers for these unforgettable experiences. I think everyone should have these experiences to better understand the values and rights of being European citizens.

CINZIA PETRELLI 3 BP

THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM

This is the story of a woman, a great woman, who wanted to change the rules of her country and to enforce women's rights: her name was Annika.

Annika was intelligent, brave, humble and determined, she believed in her ideas for a different Africa. One day, coming back home, she saw her father and said: "Father, I want to change this society, why are women so despised?" He answered: "You won't change anything. Women are stupid because they aren't strong enough to fight wars, to endure pain and to do everything like men do! You're just like all the other women, you can't understand the world and its problems!"

After these harsh words Annika got angry and said: "You're talking like a beast! You can't imagine the horrible situation that we live in and you can't understand what it means to be a woman in this disgusting society! I don't want to submit to your rules anymore. You're not the sweet and kind father that I remember in my childhood. Why?"

Her father answered: "Things have changed. I have changed and if you don't agree with our rules, you can leave this village so you won't be my daughter anymore!"

Annika stood up, went to her bedroom and began to cry. Her mother came to her and said: "I believe in you and I want to help you." She took a small jar locked in a drawer and gave it to her: "This money is for you and for your freedom. I've paid for your ticket on a plane; you're leaving tomorrow. Good luck my love." She sent her a kiss and went away.

In that moment, Annika realized that she had to believe in her ideas so she packed her bags, went to the city airport and said farewell to her hometown. The flight took 3 hours but finally she arrived in "the land of freedom". She asked for a

taxi and went to explore her new big city. As soon as she arrived in the centre of the city, she began to look for a place to stay. After a long and unsatisfactory research, she stopped in a bar and she asked for a drink and something to eat.

A guy, James, saw her sad and desperate. He approached Annika, introduced himself and asked: "What are you looking for?" She answered: "I'm looking for an apartment; but after this afternoon I realized that it's impossible. I don't know what to do. Can you help me?" He answered: "Yes, of course. If you want, you can stay at my house with me and two other people. I share it with them. If you can't pay at the moment, don't worry, I'll help you."

Annika made a new friend who helped her to find a good job. She also joined an association which fought against the cruel conditions of women in Africa. She became loved and respected by all the people around her and she understood the real meaning of freedom.

After 4 years Annika married James and they had 2 children. They were happy and satisfied with their life. But one day, Annika discovered that her African family was involved in a horrible civil war. Her father was dead but her mother was still alive. She decided to take a plane to go to Africa to fetch her mother so she could live in Europe as well. And like the best of fairy tales, they all lived happily ever after.

This story explains how the UE can set people free. Being a European citizen means helping people to find their freedom. It means sharing personal experiences and values, it means being willing to open up and to discover and understand other cultures. It means being united and feeling part of a single nation. It doesn't matter where you come from but who you are and what you want to do that counts.

Clara Lomonaco 3AL

The 12th of October

of this year was an extremely important day for all of us because the European Union received the Nobel Prize for peace. This means that each and every one of us, not only the institutions that represent us, has been rewarded for all the values and activities that we have developed since we joined the EU more than 60 years ago. As a matter of fact, it's only thanks to this union that Europe has

changed from a continent of war to a continent of peace and now we're all promoting peace and security in the rest of the world.

I'm very proud of this. Indeed the award of the Nobel peace prize represented an opportunity to think about all the things that the EU has accomplished during these years. Just think about the terrible wars which struck our countries until the middle of the 20th century and about the current situation: it's unlikely that such a thing could happen again in our countries. In our mind the idea of fighting against France, Spain, the United Kingdom or even the farther eastern European countries is inconceivable. This is marvelous because for us young people it's difficult to imagine Europe differently from what it is now since we haven't personally experienced what it means to live in isolation always on the brink of conflict.

The EU was born to spread peace, but peace isn't only the absence of war, but rather the impossibility to make war. This is achieved through the elimination of any threat through a common law agreed to by everyone, to reach this goal the EU is committed to spreading some fundamental values like: the respect for human rights, liberty, democracy, equality, solidarity, justice and social protection for different cultures. All of these values are really great and it would be wonderful if they were put into practice all over the world. Nowadays this is still only a dream: you just have to look around to see it. But we could state that the first steps have been made thanks to organizations like the EU and the ONU.

I can say I'm sincerely glad to be a European citizen because, as such, we have many advantages: for example we have the possibility of studying in whatever country of the EU that we choose and can obtain a qualification valid everywhere within the EU. In my opinion, it's an opportunity not to be wasted especially for young people. Besides there is free circulation of goods, capital and especially people within the EU. This means that we don't have to go through a lot of bureaucracy as we are all bound by EU laws. We can't understand how lucky we are if we don't realize what is happening in the rest of the world.

There are so many people from different countries that meet someone, fall in love, and would like to live together but they can't because their national laws prevent it. However, if you are born in the EU you are free to marry any European citizen in any country of the EU, unlike if you are born in some of the other states in the world. In many situations people can't simply emigrate because they are bound by visa and travel restrictions and have to live their lives in their own countries except for short periods. This is only one example of

what happens in a reality that isn't so far from ours. I think that it's terrible and unjust!

We should count ourselves lucky to be born in a situation like ours where there is someone committed to developing the society in a civilized manner. It's important that we don't lose focus on this objective but on the contrary we should get more actively involved in improving it and spreading it all around the world

CLARA PUNZI 3BT

Europe House

The best thing to compare the European Union to is a big family, living in a cosy house called Europe. Six "parents" (Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland), in 1951, decided to share their trades, as well as their values. Since then, new members have been arriving, forming a sort of family tree whose branches are extending throughout Europe. The role of the parents and of the rest of the family is in welcoming the new arrivals and letting them grow up in the new place they're living in.

The feelings experienced everyday make the family strong and successful. Love, the strongest one, can be seen, in the European context, as the common wealth guaranteed in economic and social fields. Furthermore, the common values that we all share stand for the incredible unity that has been created. The first one is democracy, totally shared by each country. This value is what all states are based on and guarantees the security of each member of the whole family. Loyalty is what keeps harmony in the family: it means respect, in that one's rights are the rights of everyone. In this huge family children are carefully fed with culture. This gives them the strength they need to stand up for their identity.

All of this demonstrates how there's an appreciation instead of a rejection of all the differences belonging to each country. The variety of customs, languages and historical elements all add to the huge treasure of European culture.

The promptness of each member in advising and helping those who are facing difficulties is the treasure that characterises most the European Union as a family.

This supports all the hopes to improve the place we're living.

Finally, all the facets that make a family united and successful can be found in the different features of the European Union. Thus, we can feel we all have a sensible role to play in this whole.

Enjoy this family!

GIANFRANCO LAFRATTA 5AT

Why the EU is important to me.

Chris is a boy like everyone else. He lives in Greece in a small city near Athens not far from a large lake. Chris lives in a small house. His father has recently retired from working in a factory and his mother was unemployed. His family, like many others, was coping with the economic crisis. But Chris was always cheerful. He attended high school, was fond of Guns N 'Roses and played the guitar. However his real passion was birds. He used to spend every afternoon on the shore of the great lake gazing at the sky. One day, while he was there, he heard some noises in the bushes where he found a small stork. He thought it might have fallen from a nest nearby, so he picked her up gently and carried her into the house where he prepared a place for her to sleep in his room.

After a few months the stork had grown up and had become really beautiful. Chris put a small ring on the stork's leg with his phone number in case she got lost. When the weather was fine, the boy and the stork went near the lake so the bird soon learned to fly but always kept close to his friend. It was during one of those afternoons, that the stork flew away with a flock of birds never to return. Chris went to the lake every day to see if his friend had come back but could not find her.

A few months after, Chris got a call from a strange number:
"Hello, this is Chris, who am I speaking to?"
"This is Daniel, I think you might have lost a stork."

Chris couldn't believe what he was hearing and didn't speak for a moment. Then he picked up the phone and said:

"If this is a joke it is not funny anymore!"

"I'm calling from Copenhagen in Denmark. Today, while I was studying, this stork fell against my window. It is wounded. Then I saw the ring on its leg and I called this phone number. Does it belong to you?"

"Yes! It is mine!" he screamed, "Could you look after her until she heals, please? I'll come and get her back. Thank you!"

Chris immediately told the news to his best friend Joey. Joey was a kind imaginative boy who had dropped out of school. He loved to travel and sometimes played the drums with Chris. He listened to what his friend had to say and decided to book a flight to Copenhagen to pick up the lost animal. It was not easy to find Daniel's house. Copenhagen was much larger than the village where they lived but in the end the two friends found it. Chris climbed the stairs, opened the door and a little boy with short fair hair and blue eyes said:

"Hello! You must be the owner of the stork. I'm Daniel. It is a pleasure to meet you."

"I am Chris and this is Joey. He is a dear friend." he said, smiling.

The boys both went into Daniel's room. Chris went to collect the stork which was bandaged. I'd like to think that she recognized the boy although I'm sure that they were both really happy to see each other.

The two boys stayed at Daniel's for a while. They did many things together and became good friends even though they were very different. Meanwhile, the stork had healed and she was ready to take flight again with the others. So Daniel Chris and Joey took her to a wood. Chris placed her gently on the ground. The stork turned to them and, with elegance, opened her white wings and disappeared into the blue sky.

The three friends were happy to see her free again. It was strange to them that, despite their differences, a common cause had brought them together. They had become good friends. This is the spirit that I think a United Europe should have.

THANK YOU TEACHER CECERE.

MARTINO GENCHI 3 BL

WHY IS THE UE IMPORTANT TO ME?

My name is Mahatab Taraneh and I am 36 years old. For the past seven years I have been living in Rome, the capital city of Italy, but, before coming to live here, I used to live in Teheran, Iran.

I cannot say that I had a life there because my husband treated me like an object. I got married when I was 13 years old and, from that moment, I stopped having a life of my own. My husband was thirty years older than me and we had absolutely nothing in common. Actually, in my home country it is very unusual for a man to understand what a woman feels or thinks as no-one treats women with the respect they deserve. Not even my father did. In fact, he sold me to the man I married because his only wish was to earn money and spend it on alcohol and in paying women to spend the night with him. I am sure he has never loved me because I wasn't the son he had hoped for.

In my country, if you are a man everything is different, everything is better and you have rights! The only two people who, I think, ever loved me are my mother, whose condition is worse than mine, and my sister who is three years younger than me. When I got married I was only a child and I could not understand what living with such a pretentious and evil man meant. When my father told me that in few days I would have got married, I didn't know if I was meant to be happy: I could have been lucky to leave the house where I was regularly beaten but I was even in despair because of the life which was waiting for me! All I can say is that the years I spent with my husband were the worse of my whole life! My wedding day was full of tears and sadness. I wore a gorgeous, colourful dress. It was long and in blue silk with red, yellow and green flowers. My husband was very smart and he looked so innocent and angelic. Everyone was happy as I was marrying such a rich person and my father was proud of me, probably for the first time in his life! My family and my bridegroom decided to organize a big party and they invited about three hundred guests including relatives and friends. Everyone was happy and smiling and they all ate, danced, sang and congratulated my family. Everyone was happy except me! I still remember those moments as if they had happened only a few days ago !

Bad memories last forever; you can't forget them even if you want to! The first night with my husband was uneventful and he didn't ask me for anything. But in the following weeks he changed his personality! The quiet and kind man I had married became a pretentious and evil person and I couldn't recognize his eyes and his expression. He expected something that I didn't want to share with him. He wanted a son, but the thing he was most worried about was that the child had to be a boy, otherwise he wouldn't have accepted it! For years I've been beaten up because I haven't given him a son, because he didn't like what I cooked for lunch or dinner, because sometimes the floor wasn't as clean as he wanted, because I didn't accept his rules, because I could not say 'I don't agree, I don't want it'.

In my home country I wasn't allowed to go out alone: each time I had to buy something, he came with me and he never left me alone! Besides that, I always had to wear three or four layers of clothes, I couldn't show my legs and I had to put on a veil which hid the whole of my face. I've been suffering all this for sixteen years but one day I tried to run away and I asked the Embassy to help me. But they couldn't do anything for me. Without my husband's consent they wouldn't have allowed me to leave Iran. I spent days crying.

Finally I found the person who helped me to flee! His name is Munthna and I still keep in touch with him. He was my neighbour and he was from England. He lived there because his wife was Iranian. Whenever my husband beat me they both listened to me screaming and crying. So, when they decided to go back to England, they asked me if I wanted to escape with them. They prepared everything. They bought me a false passport, men's clothes and they also lent me money in order to get to Italy! The afternoon we had to leave, they came to my house and Munthna asked my husband if I could go with them to the main market of the city. I was allowed to go because I wasn't alone. Two women were being accompanied by a man who was very well known in the city because of his job: he was a popular doctor! He agreed and he let me go. We soon reached the airport and we boarded the plane. At last I was out of danger. The following morning we were already in England and, a few days after, my saviours booked a flight for me to Italy!

I still remember the day I arrived here: I didn't know if I could trust anyone or how to speak Italian. Fortunately at the airport I met a woman who still continues to help me: she is the third saviour I met in my life! My parents have never known anything about my flight and I've not had any contact with my family since then! I miss them but I'm happier to be here, SAFE! In these seven years I've attended a course in order to learn Italian; my Italian is not perfect but everyone understands me! I've found a job and I made friends with lots of kind and sharing people who have helped and continue to help me!

The UE is important for me because now I can speak and have a relationship with people, because I can go to buy bread or fruit without someone who always escorts me, because I can wear jeans, skirts and blouses. Now I don't wear a veil anymore and so I can breathe! Here in Europe I can say what I think and no one will beat me if I say 'I don't agree, I don't think so'. Here, now, everyone considers me like a woman and not like an object! Here no one obliges their own daughters to marry men they've never seen before the wedding day and if someone beats or hurts me, there are rights and people that protect me! The UE is important for me because here I can feel like a human and I can see that everyone helps each other even if they live in different countries! I think the UE is one of the best ways in order to share different national traditions and to feel like one big family! The UE is important because it welcomed me and continues giving me the love and the warm-heartedness I had never had before!!!

WHY IS THE EU IMPORTANT TO ME?

The economic crisis that has hit Italy is the starting point from which we shall try to understand recent events. The main question is: what are the main factors that caused the crisis? We have to consider that the present economic downturn has affected all Europe, not only our country. We should see it in a wider context. We have, indeed, come face to face with a real moral crisis.

The cause is the disappearance of those values which were typical of the western world like solidarity and co-operation. Actually, this is affirmed in the "Charter of Fundamental rights of the European Union", where these two values are at the basis of the agreement between 26 countries. The first article claims: "The Union is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity; it is based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. It places the individual at the heart of its activities, by establishing the citizenship of the Union and by creating an area of freedom, security and justice. The Union contributes to the preservation and to the development of these common values while respecting the diversity of the cultures and traditions of the peoples of Europe."

Facts, however, do not correspond to what the law declares. The only way in which we can make it real is going over the national point of view. We cannot think in a selfish way anymore. We have already done it enough. We have to think that this terrible crisis does not involve only Italy, it is a common trouble that distresses all Europe. Therefore, the only solution is to carry out some common policies which should aim at a new progression. The European Union must try to affirm itself as an element of strength, and not as an element of division. We have the moral duty to make the situation better, in order to give young people more opportunities. The purpose should be the birth of a European citizen. This does not mean to favour homologation, this means to struggle together against negative common aspects.

Only in this way will we be able to establish a solid collaboration between States. The final goal must be the creation of a new social reality, where people can grow up and assert themselves in the best way possible.

SIMONA POTENZA 4 AL

Once upon a time, a dandelion detached itself from the ground, because she was tired of a monotonous life, and decided to see the world, carried away by her friend the wind. She saw all kinds of places, people, food, customs and traditions. One day, she was picked up by a person, who took her with him. His name was Europe. He was the head of a family of a tribe. This family, or community, was composed of 27 tribes. Europe was a person sensitive to issues of all the 27 members. The dandelion was struck by the cooperation between the members of the community: if one of them was in trouble he was helped by the others. All of them had different characters, but they were ready to cooperate and even though they were different they respected each other. They could also go to the other members' houses without any problems; it was a family as solid as a rock, ready to welcome even more members if they wanted to join in.

But one day, a member broke the harmony, because he was trying to prevail over all the others. Therefore, the other members rebuked the rebellious member making him understand that the tribe would not work if one of them prevailed over the others, and it only could work well if all of them cooperated with and respected each other in the same way. Thus, the rebellious member apologized to the others and made peace. Then, all enjoyed long lives, always open to welcome other tribes, in hegemony and trying to teach respect for their rights and their duties. For what concerns the dandelion, he was old, so he decided to live forever with Europe because with all of the 27 tribes he always felt at home.

SIMONA SARDELLA 3BP

WHY IS THE EUROPEAN UNION IMPORTANT TO EACH COUNTRY?

European Union is the economic and political union of twenty seven member states which are located primarily in Europe. The European Union is a family of democratic countries, committed to working together. Countries have delivered half a century of stability, peace and prosperity.

The European Union was created in order to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its people. The aims of this union are the free movement of people, capital, goods and services. This means that it allows people, money and items to move easily from one country to another. The same stands for imports and exports. In addition, people from one country are allowed to work in another. The union offers its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers. Furthermore, it establishes the international market and it promotes scientific and technological advance.

During the decades, the European Union achieved many things such as the absence of wars between its member states and stability which gave the opportunity for progress and prosperity to those members. Also it repealed capital punishment, helps people glue to democratic institutions and respect human rights. Moreover, the boards in the united Europe have been repealed, too, in order to provide its citizens more opportunities either considering services and merchandises or money. Even though the European Union is not considered to be a federation like that of the United States, it has taken a great leap forward by implementing the euro currency. This common currency helped European's trade develop dramatically and flourish in all of its member states. Also, the use of the Euro facilitates tourism, too. All these achievements were accomplished due to the co-operation of the member states. In order to have a balanced economy and social development between all the citizens, the wealthiest states help financially the poorest ones.

On the other hand, the European Union faces some problems which have to be solved, such as the millions of unemployed and homeless people who live under poverty levels. Also, the use of non-renewable forms of energy burdens the environment and causes climatic changes.

Today, some of the European Union's priorities are the preservation of peace, the protection of consumer rights, the social solidarity, safety and justice for everyone. In addition, European Union attempts to achieve the environmental protection, the adaption to knowledge, the decision making for climatic changes, the peripheral development and the respect of cultural differences regarding language, history and traditions.

To conclude, I would like to say that I feel very contented to live in the European Community, although I would like it to be more supportive and helpful to Greece since we face many financial problems. Despite this, I am very pleased to participate in this student's exchange programme which is organized and supported by the European Union and gives students the chance to socialize and meet other cultures...

Andromache Sortikou- Greece



EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union was founded in November 1 in 1993. It consists of 27 member states and the main reason for creating the Union was to promise to European people that this union was going to bring peace to their inhabitants. As we can see, the EU has played a very important role in our lives since today and it has helped us a lot in our everyday life.

As we mentioned, the main aim of the EU was to bring peace among the countries. As we can see, this goal has successfully been achieved since there is peace between the member states. Also, the member states of the EU are expected to help and defend the other countries if in any case they are in the middle of a war. This is very helpful because the countries will know that they are not on their own and they can count on the others.

Although the initial goal of the EU was to ensure the safety between the countries, they went much further. More specifically, the most member states which are in the EU have the same currency. This is very important and very helpful for the people who live in the countries of the EU because the transactions between the different countries become very easy and really fast without facing any problems. Also, by sharing the same currency people can compare the prices of the same product and buy them cheaper from the other countries without having to turn their money into different currency.

Of course, the EU has a lot of things to offer to the people who live in the European countries. One of this is that every person who lives in the European countries has the right to live, work, study and socialize with other people in every country he chooses is the most appropriate for him.

All in all, I believe that the European Union is necessary for our lives and it has offered us a lot of things. I also believe that all those years the EU has been very important for us and I hope that it will smoothly continue without any complication.

ARISTOTLE POURPOULAKIS.

Why is the European Union important for us?

The first thing that comes to mind when people hear the word union is no other than a society formed mainly by people with the same interests or purposes. But a union can also consist of countries or states which can form an economic, political entity. Created in 1957 the European Union is today, the most famous and widely known union of different countries.

The European Union (EU henceforth) consists of twenty-seven member states, which makes it one of the largest country unions all over the world. Being part of it is undoubtedly of vital importance for all of the countries, as the benefits that are offered can provide their citizens with privileges that in other ways would be impossible even to imagine.

As the European Union can be also described as a family of countries, borders have been erased and mobility between the member states is absolutely free and can be achieved, using just your national ID card. Furthermore, citizens living within the European Union have

been given the ability to live, work and study in any country they prefer. Using the same currency in almost every country (with the exception of the UK and Switzerland), trading has become much easier and has also raised competitiveness, which can result in a better product quality for the consumers. More jobs have been, are and will be created within the European Union countries, thus giving many people the opportunity to work.

It is understandable that unfortunately not all the member states of the European Union can be equally developed financially and business-wise. Being a citizen of Greece I believe that unless my country was a member of the EU, many major construction works (such as roads, bridges and transportation facilities) would have been impossible to be constructed without the help of the European Structural Funds and based primarily on the national sources.

The European Union aims to improve underdeveloped, deprived regions that it includes and tries to reduce the high number of unemployment in those countries.

Another purpose of the EU is of course the protection of the environment and the promotion of environmental awareness. Today, the EU has some of the most progressive environmental policies of any other state in the world. Based on renewable energy such as the solar energy, wind power and water, state-of-the-art systems produce useful energy essential for heating and electricity without depleting fossil fuel resources. Consequently, pollution in every of every kind has been significantly decreased, thus providing better life standards and longer life-expectancy for the European citizens.

Europe is a magnificent continent. It is the house of many different civilizations, languages and religions. With the creation of the EU all of these cultural facts have met together, allowing people to broaden their horizons and learn about the different ways-of life that one can experience on our continent. Therefore, it is common to meet in Europe a "citizen-of-the-world", a person profoundly influenced by other people and civilizations enjoying the benefits of a well-rounded personality. Apart from that, peace has been achieved between all the member states giving them the joy of coexisting together and developing long-lasting bonds of friendship between them. In my opinion this is the most prestigious achievement of the EU and something that no matter what happens should continue to exist forever.

All in all, the well-known European Union has achieved many goals that were initially set. These can indisputably benefit not just each country, but also each and every citizen, enabling them to experience luxuries and improve their lives significantly. I hope the European remains a healthy "family" of countries and even embarks on setting wide variety of other goals that will be accomplished in the future.

George Kantiltziadis

WHAT THE EUROPEAN UNION IS FOR ME

The European Union (EU) is an international economic and political confederation of European nations. It presently consists of twenty seven member states which are democratic European countries. The European Union is able to provide all its young citizens with rights and opportunities such as studying, finding a job and travelling abroad and also provide funds to support young people's studies, student exchanges and therefore it is important for me.

To begin with, generally being a European citizen provides me with a lot of rights and opportunities. As a citizen of the European Union I have the right to live, work and study in any European country I want as long as I have the means to support myself, without the need of a Visa. In addition, all my degrees and diplomas from one European country are generally recognized within all members of the European Union. Also, I can buy everything I want in every member of the Union without having to pay tax when I bring it back to my country.

Furthermore, the European Union gives me the chance to study abroad, even if I cannot afford it myself, because the European Union provides funds to support training, work experience, exchanges and other activities of young people. Studying abroad could give me better education resulting to better job prospects. For instance, if I study in a country of the European Union that has good universities in the subject I want to study, I have the opportunity to find a job there which might help me earn more money than a job I would find in my country. Also, another country of the European Union might have more job opportunities than my country in the sector I want to work. So, generally speaking, studying abroad is very important for my future and the European Union can be of great assistance in this.

Moreover, as a student in the European Union, I am able to participate in student exchange programs such as the Comenius. Through these programs I am able to travel abroad and be hosted by locals. Therefore, I can meet new people, get to know the traditions and way of life of another nation and generally broaden my intellectual horizons.

The European Union is a union of nations but also a union of people who share the same values, ideas and perspectives. Nations that participate in the European Union become stronger and play an important role in the international scene. The European Union plays an important role in maintaining world peace and in the prosperity of nations. Also, scientists of different European countries can contribute to cutting edge research with international impact.

To conclude, the European Union provides all its citizens with very valuable rights and opportunities. Especially young citizens of the Union are very supported by it, as in the European Union it has been declared that its young citizens are its future.

Kostas Triaridis

Why is it important to you to be a European Union citizen?

Almost every country in Europe is part of the European Union, making their citizens part of the European Union as well. But, why is it so important for us to be European Union citizens?

First of all, there are a number of benefits for citizens of the European Union. Its citizens can travel freely and easily between any countries of Europe, without needing anything else apart from their ID card or passport. Second of all, its citizens have the benefit of being able to find a job very easily, as they are able to go and study or work in any country who is a member of the European Union. Also, its citizens have the right of equal access to the EU Civil Service. Furthermore, its citizens are able to vote for and stand as a candidate in the European Parliament and municipal elections freely.

Moreover, one most important benefit of those residing within the EU is the ability to be able to trade, import and export goods through any country, allowing many beneficial trade-resources to be developed.

And this concludes my thoughts on the importance of being a citizen of the EU.

By Panagiotis Chatzigeorgiou

WHY THE EUROPEAN UNION IS IMPORTANT FOR ME?

The topic of this essay is to express my opinion about the European Union (EU) and why is this important for me. In essence, I will show what the EU is and what are the aims of the EU, especially as far as education is concerned.

- What is the European Union (EU)?

The European Union is an economic and political union of 27 member states located primarily in Europe. However, the EU itself is not a state. It is rather a unique creation in which the independent member states pool their sovereignty, surrendering the right to make independent decisions in certain areas, such as fiscal, environmental or employment policy. Its capital is Brussels, the capital of Belgium.

The most important institutions of the EU include the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European Council, the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Central Bank.

- What are the aims of the EU?

The EU has 4 main aims:

- Free movement of people. Allowing people to move from one EU country to another.
- Free movement of capital. Money can be easily moved from a country to another.
- Free movement of goods. Moving items and imports between countries.
- Free movement of services. Allowing people from one country to do their job in another.

- Education

In education, the policy was mainly developed in programmes, supporting exchanges and mobility. The most visible of these has been the Erasmus Programme. It has supported international exchange opportunities for college students and has become a symbol of European student life.

As far as our school is concerned, the last programme named “Seed Science By Experiments Through European Dialogue” in which our school took part, had been recognized as one of the best Comenius programmes in the EU and it received a five star evaluation.

- *What does the EU means to me?*

In my opinion, EU is a union of high importance. I would not have had the opportunity to take part in this programme if I hadn't been allowed from the EU to travel abroad. Also, I will have to communicate with the family I am going to live with by using English instead of my mother tongue. In addition, I believe that learning new things about other cultures and people who are different to me, plays an important role in every kind of this programme.

In conclusion, I support that the EU is very important, especially for young people, since it gives them the opportunity to fulfill any of their desires and dreams. I believe that every country, which is a member state of the EU is very lucky, because the main aim of the EU is to achieve cooperation and the happiness of all people.

STELINA KAPITAGLI

Why is it important to you to be a European Union citizen?

The European Union, is a result of an effort to construct a more united Europe. The main goals of the EU are increasing economic stability in Europe and maintaining peace. In addition, the European Union set policy on its members on a variety of social and political issues. Agriculture, energy policy, anti-terrorism efforts, environmental issues, and education are among the serious areas covered by the EU but most importantly, the EU is a symbol of freedom, democracy and justice, thus having a democratic system and treating all the citizens of the Union equally granting them more rights. Personally, living in a country that belongs to the EU, I believe that being an EU citizen is of great significance for various reasons.

First of all, the EU respects and preserves the human rights and all the democratic institutions. As a EU citizen, I have the right to live , the right to own a property ,the right to

work, the freedom of education, religion and expression and the rights to liberty, vote and security and of course the equal right before the law. Being realistic, of course, this doesn't mean that all these rights mentioned above are always and everywhere respected, however the EU is trying really hard to do so.

In addition, The European Union, although made up of different countries, in many ways functions as a single entity for its citizens. The rights of all EU countries are reciprocal. This means that a citizen of any EU country can live, work, and study in any other EU country with the privileges of a citizen. For example, I live in Greece, however, I have the freedom to travel, reside and study in any of the EU countries. This is really important not only for economic reasons like being able to find a job in any EU country and promoting tourism but also for cultural reasons because by traveling abroad a person like me sees different perspectives of the world, exchanges ideas with people of different cultures and, generally speaking, learns to communicate thus learns how to think.

As a result of the freedom of traveling and working in any EU country as mentioned above, the EU has created a huge market because almost all products created by one nation are legal for trade in all of the other countries. Also, most nations belonging to the EU have adopted a common currency, the euro. These economical achievements also affect the citizens because it improves the quality of their lives by making a competitive economy and thus most of the goods being at a low price.

In conclusion, I believe that it's really important for me to be a European union citizen because having personal freedoms like religion, speech and education I can live with many opportunities and possibilities, always preserving democracy and my human rights, in other words being free to live and explore the world, something that could not have happened without the EU.

Stelios Mouslech



Why is the European Union important for me?

The European Union primarily originates back in 1951 and it was formed by the Inner Six. Since then, there have been numerous and constructive modifications in order for this union to be formed completely and become, maybe, the most significant, defining as well as the most beneficial establishment. Many people have a controversial belief about the EU, as we know it, and they underestimate its values and its advantages. Sometimes it is unwisely believed by developing countries that the EU holds a neutral and indifferent stand when it comes for those small, dependent regions and their needs. In my view this is wrong judgment! The European Union has, indeed, so many things to offer.

I would like to begin by mentioning the way of living and the professionalism abroad. It is true that buying an additional home in another country is very common nowadays, especially in southern Europe. But who really makes this feasible? The EU, and, in fact, an agreement was reached by its members allowing every European citizen to live and work in any other member state. Moreover, it was made viable to get retirement and arranged to have your pension abroad. The only thing required in order to live in a different state is a passport and good intentions. Additionally, emergency health care is also considered in the EU and under specific circumstances hospitalization may be offered in reduced cost.

A principal aspect, which has been of great importance and it has been essential concerning the EU over the last few years, is studying abroad. It is possible, of course, and thousands of young people and lecturers leave their country by taking advantage of popular university initiatives and programmes, which offer supreme opportunities. Studying abroad motivates the individual in becoming more independent, broaden his/her mind and getting acquainted with people from other countries and dissimilar cultures. It also incites students to set higher goals and standards for their life, while they form their career and quality of living.

What is more about the provisions of the EU is that it has infiltrated in the market, too, willing to enhance it. In fact, competition generated by the EU frontier-free market has driven quality to elevated levels and prices are lower. Obviously, this is surprising news for consumers. EU nationals and residents are able to purchase from a wide variety of items, which are usually cheaper, in another country without the obligation of paying extra taxes provided that these items are for their personal use, only. Furthermore, you have full consumer rights when shopping outside your own country thanks to specialized services with that specific purpose.

In conclusion, it would be appropriate to deduce that the European Union is not just an organization. It established very strong and long-lasting bonds and efficient relationships between 27 countries, thus, reducing the risk of war. It has allowed the easier movement of EU citizens from country to country and is continually working for a common factor, for laws, legislations and regulations. It is not random that more and more countries apply to be initiated in the EU. We are all part of the EU, everyone for themselves and all together as a whole and equally we consist the European Union. And, including me, we are proud...!

Vassilis Maniatis



Meeting in Stockholm Dec 9th-16th “Opportunity/Including Others”

Different Stories, Same Values



Socrates
Comenius

Bredängsskolan



eTwinning



Programmet för livslångt lärande

Internationella
PROGRAMKONTORET



Education and Culture
Lifelong Learning Programme
COMENIUS