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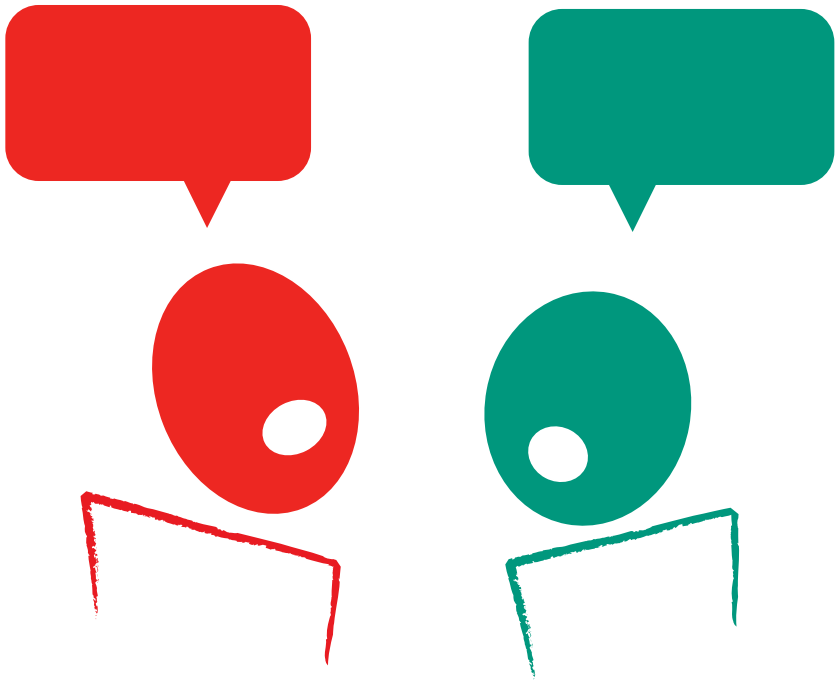
YOUNG EUROPE

METHODICAL GUIDE FOR ACADEMIC DEBATES IN WS FORMAT



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Young Europe Debates

Young Europe Debates is a project run from 2017 to 2019 under the Erasmus + Strategic Partnership Program. It brought together the efforts of four European high schools: *Srednja Skola Gracac*, Croatia, *Erich-Gutenberg-Berufskolleg* from Bünde, Germany, *Agrupamento de Escolas de Aveiro*, from Portugal and *Colegiul Naţional* from Iaşi, Romania, as a coordinator of the project.

The project aims were to contribute to the improvement of pupils' basic skills such as literacy and social skills. All these competences are formed and supported by the innovative method of academic debates. Throughout the project we also pursued the development of communication skills in English, for the use of IT tools, both for pupils and for teachers. Through the themes of debate proposed in the 4 international competitions of interest for European society (contemporary migration, youth rights, education, political situation and international relations), we wanted the creation of an informed, active European citizen who has a reasoned o pinion and which can publicly support it.

Debates started in Ancient Greece where citizens were called to express their views on the main issues of the city. During the Middle Ages, debates disappeared from the public area and reappeared in the 19th century US, the best known being the presidential debates. In the contemporary society, academic debates used to train young people in order to express a well–founded and argumented opinion on current issues. If in the Anglo-Saxon countries there is a tradition of academic debates, in the other European states, and especially in the ex-communist ones, they are still at the beginning.

Academic debates represent a non-formal and innovative method in which competitions for students were organized in all the four partner schools. The debates followed the World Schools Style format which is at present one of the most widespread debate format.

The “Young Europe Debate” project resulted into two project outcomes: the first outcome, Young Europe Debates – is the present brochure that also aims to be a methodological guide for using academic debates as an innovative learning method, comprising the students’ debates and the second one is a virtual space where the students and teachers involved in academic debates trained for the debate competitions to take place within the project (the project virtual space https://twinspace.etwinning.net/60842/forum).

Each partner school organized/reinforced the academic debate clubs helping endow the students with essential skills for the 21st century (critical thinking, tolerance,

fair-play, civil spirit, the capacity to do research). For the participants, English language skills were developed through both the on-line debates and the competitions themselves, which were English-based. Depending on the debate topics, they also acquired the technical terminology specific to this activity. IT skills improved during the research phase which students undertook in order to prepare their arguments for and against each statement. Another important aspect is related to social skills, enhanced through things such as debating style, tone, posture and fair-play, tolerance towards a diverse array of opinions, argumentative logic, all of them building towards a democratic sense of active citizenship among the young participants.

The four planned Learning Activities in our Erasmus project consisted in international competitions of teams coming from the four partner schools and represented a method to test the manner in which each club had trained and prepared for the academic debates competitions. They were international competitions in which young people had the opportunity to express their views on the contemporary world: youth rights and education, international affairs, contemporary migration, civil rights.

Challenged by the idea of the competition, students were directly involved in the learning process, searched for information in different ways including the use of IT instruments, arguments and counter-arguments, thus developing literacy competences and critical, synthetic, analytical thinking competences. By participating in the debates, they also developed their fair-play and tolerance spirit, since the rules insisted on not interrupting the speaker and accepting the debate as a confrontation of ideas.

The debates were carried in English, in front of a public, which means that the students were valorized and developed English speaking skills and built up their confidence. The whole academic debate activity, through the topics which were discussed, the effort to get informed and form an attitude towards important societal issues, determined the development of the civic spirit among young people and their ability to take a stand regarding different problems. They have become resource people, leaders of opinion of the civil society that may generate key elements of a democratic system in a united Europe.

These international academic debate competitions brought together more than 24 young people of the same age, but of different religions (orthodox, protestant, catholic, Muslim) and nationalities who looked for arguments and counter-arguments regarding

global issues of the society we live in and whose solutions require the contribution of different nations. Making young people aware of this represents, probably, the most important added value of the project Young Europe Debates, from the perspective of a united Europe in which young people are more involved in the life of the community and the democratic act. By taking part in the Learning Activities, students and teachers acquired knowledge about the way in which academic debates are organized following the World School Style format, how to formulate arguments, motions, and other specific elements correctly.

An important aspect was the judging process, since teachers were required to be judges during the training debates and debate competitions which took place during the project. There were also opportunities for teachers to be trained in this non-formal teaching method - the academic debate. In Romania, there are non-governmental associations, such as ARDOR, that offer teachers the possibility to train in the field of academic debate but the training sessions are quite occasional and insufficient in order to support the vast spreading of this method. By participating in the transnational Learning Activities, teachers accumulated valuable experience which will later be used in their debate clubs and in their lessons, where the non-formal method of the academic debate can support the teaching-learning process by making it more dynamic.

Impact of YED

The impact of the Young Europe Debate project has many aspects, due to the specific blend between the theoretical activities (e.g. documentation and collecting information about topics of interest to the contemporary European society) and practical ones (e.g. training, debating and bringing arguments within an organized framework).

The pupils (160) and the teachers (40) who took part in the activities of the debate clubs in each partner school acquired skills, abilities and competences on intellectual, social and professional levels, such as thinking and its operational methods, the spirit of observation, imagination and memory through extending the quantity of information about the contemporary world issues, procedural knowledge about the argumentation and counter argumentation art.

The action plan has been highlighted by creating some practical skills: of documenting and informing themselves about a given topic, of adequately using IT tools, of communicating in English in specific, applied situations, of making a plan, of

building arguments and dismantling a counter argument, of paying attention to and readjusting their speech in new situations. Socially, we developed active citizenship competences to allow pupils to act and take part in the social life through investigation and critical analysis of the European society issues, to work in teams together with other peers, of other nationalities included, to develop skills of positive interaction, such as empathy and tolerance to opinions different from theirs, fair play spirit, active listening, assertive communication, leadership, friendship. The previously mentioned competences are a foundation for lifelong learning and they will have a positive impact professionally, regardless of their future career.

Moreover, the teachers, by training and coordinating pupils in the academic debates, and getting involved in other project activities (e.g. drafting the final outcome – a booklet comprising the students' debates, the virtual debate space, monitoring the activities, taking part in the competitions, etc.) developed other competences, such as planning and organizing, leadership, motivating the participants, problem and conflict solving, taking decisions, applying and making full use of the non-formal method of the academic debate in various curricular areas (Human being and Society, Communication, Science). This makes and will continue to make the teaching process more attractive and interactive.

We consider that we have reached the following results:

- Creating a network of teachers (the teachers involved in the academic debate Club multiply and will continue to multiply their experience - research, training students for competitions, judging the debates and so on -, transferring it to other teachers, from their own or other schools, interested in debates) and pupils interested in improving the learning-teaching process, and also in promoting an active and professional involvement in society problems, by making use of the experience specific to each partner from all four countries, premises for the unity and coherence at European level, and for future collaborations on similar topics.

- Making the educational act more appealing and adapting it to the democratic exercise from the European countries through the use of the non-formal method of academic debate;

- Raising visibility of the educational institutions and their services, transforming them in promoters for good practices and innovation of the services they offer locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Impact on the target group

The dissemination activities and the demonstrative debate and competition ones in particular (at least one/ year at each partner school level) carried out by the pupils from the debate clubs of each partner school was an intervention and behavior model in the social area for the rest of the pupils, teachers and parents from those schools and communities.

The impact of the project is visible on multiple levels:

- Students are better informed; more involved in the life of the community, acquiring competences that support lifelong learning;

- Teachers have become resources, supporting the teaching process through the debate clubs;

- The partner institutions benefited from the educational know-how and will have an active role in the community;

- The open educational resources of the project are available to all the ones interested, being published in English on the Twin Space.

The partner schools from Croatia, Germany, Portugal and Romania consider that the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership between schools, "Young Europe Debates", has achieved our goals and our experience accumulated by running the four international academic debates competitions in the WS format is an example of good practice.

We consider that the long-term main benefit of implementing the project is the support given to young people in their becoming as well-informed, active and responsible European citizens.

I hope that you will find this publication useful and you will decide to organize a debate club and a debate competition ☺

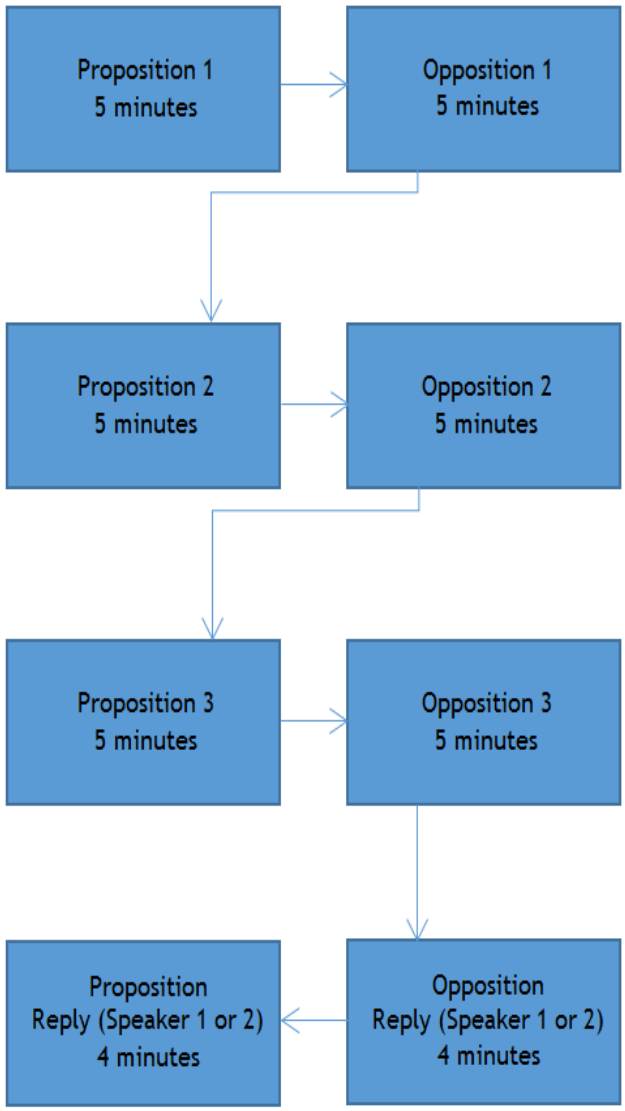
Mihaela Ţurcanaşu (coordinator of YED Erasmus+ project)

Introduction to WSDC Format

Speaking order

In World Schools format a team comprises of three to five people who prepare together, of which three speak in any given debate (though they can cycle who is speaking between debates). After the debate has begun only the three team members speaking in that debate may communicate with each other. Each team is allocated to either "proposition" or "opposition" on a motion that will be given to them (see below for details). They are then required to either provide reasons for or against the motion according to the side they have been allocated.

The first three speeches from each team are **eight minutes** in length and alternate between proposition and opposition starting with the proposition, but we use **a format with 5 minutes (beginner format)**. At the end of these initial speeches, each team then delivers a "reply". Speech (see below for details) of four minutes in length. This is delivered by either the first or the second speaker on their team. The "reply" speakers reverse order and begin with the opposition first.



During the first three main speeches of each team, speakers from the opposing team may offer a "Point of Information" (POI) between the first and seventh minute of the speech (these timings will be indicated by an audible signal from the judging table, normally a soft bang on the table or a clap). A POI is a short (up to 15 seconds) interjection in which, one of the three members of the opposing team speaking in that debate can ask a question or make an objection to the person currently delivering their main speech – it is up to the speaker to accept or decline a POI that is

offered, but speakers are expected to accept two in their speech.

Speaker Roles

Each speaker in the debate has a different role. These rules are intended to facilitate as fair a debate as possible, both by ensuring that clarity in the topic up for debate is established and to ensure that both teams have a reasonable chance to engage with the other side's arguments. The key thing to remember is that the speaker roles are intended to enrich the debate not to limit what a team can do.

First Speakers

The first speaker of proposition is responsible for:

- defining the motion (see below),
- outlining the arguments that proposition will bring (their team's *case*), explaining which speakers will present which of those arguments, presenting part of the case for their side.

Similarly the first speaker of the opposition is responsible for:

- challenging the definition and providing a new one (but only if they think that definition is unfair, see below),
- outlining the arguments that proposition will bring (their team's *case*), explaining which speakers will present which of those arguments,
- responding to the arguments of first proposition (this is called *rebuttal),*
- presenting part of that case for their side.

Defining the motion is about giving a clear explanation of what the motion means to ensure that all speakers and judges are clear on the topic being debated. If the two teams argue about very different things, then it becomes hard to pin down what exactly the disagreements between the teams are.

This House would allow corporal punishment in schools

The definition for this motions should include:

Who will deliver the punishment?

Will it be the school nurse, a head of discipline, any given teacher **Who** can issue the punishment?

Will it be only senior staff/ all staff? **What** is the punishment?

Caning/slapping/ pinching

What can the punishment be given for?

Serious breaches of behavior such as violence/ repeated ignoring of the uniform policy or can it be issued at a teachers' discretion?

Teams should think about a few things when defining the motion:

a) **What would a reasonable intelligent person think this debate is about?**
If a motion has an obvious meaning then it should be pursued.

(E.g.) This House would teach Intelligent Design in schools

This motion is about teaching students about the belief that life was designed by an intelligent creator, not a motion about thinking intelligently about your art projects whilst students are designing them.

b) **The debate should not be place or time set unless that is specified by the words of the motion.**

(E.g.) This House would legalise the sale and consumption of recreational drugs

This is a debate about modern day nations. It would not be fair to define it as 1960's America prior to the war on drugs regardless of whether you believed it would make it easier for your side.
Whilst examples can be useful to give clarity to your definition (e.g. "*we would allow their sale and consumption within private homes and cafés specifically set up for them, similar to the Dutch model for cannabis")* they should not restrict a reasonable discussion of the topic.

c) What do the important words in the motion mean and are the specifics obvious?

This House believes that the United Nations has failed

In this debate specific criteria for failure should be given.

Do you want the criteria to be preventing war, ignoring human rights abuses or inefficient decision making procedures?

If as an opposition speaker you believe the definition is unfair (you cannot reasonably be expected to have interpreted the debate in a similar way) or reduced to a tautology then you are entitled to challenge the definition. You must explain why it is unfair and provide an alternative definition that your side believes reasonable given the above parameters. It should be noted that this is quite rare and will often lead to a very messy debate when it does happen, it is often best to simply accept the

definition in front of you and debate the topic on its merits if at all possible.

Second Speakers

The second speakers in the debate are responsible for:

- continuing to defend their definition (if required)
- continuing the argumentation presented by their team. This will include defending their previous speaker's points from the rebuttal the other team has made
- offering rebuttal to the other team's case
- making new arguments to support your case

The emphasis of these speeches should be on the new material presented, rather than the responses. As a rough guideline proposition should spend 2-3 minutes responding, whilst opposition should spend 3-4 minutes responding to the other team with the rest of the speech dedicated to new substantive material building on the case.

Third Speakers

The third speaker's role is to respond to the other team. The bulk of the speech should be dedicated to defeating the arguments brought by the other team in detail, whilst also defending the case that your team-mates have brought from the attacks that the other team has already made (think of this as rebutting their rebuttal!). It is technically permissible to dedicate1-2 minutes of time to additional arguments in support of your case, however this must be flagged in the first speech and the emphasis should still be placed on rebuttal.

Reply Speeches

The reply speech must be delivered by either the first or second speaker of your team; it cannot be delivered by the same person that delivered the third speech. It is also worth remembering that the order switches after the first three speeches of each team, so the opposition reply speaker gives their speech straight after the opposition third speaker and the proposition reply speech is the final one of the debate (see "*Speaking Order*" above). Both of these speeches are four minutes in length as opposed to the eight of all other speeches in the debate and no POIs can be offered during them.

The reply speech is intended to explain why their side has already won the debate. They do this by boiling the debate down to the two or three overarching points of contention (often called the *clashes* of the debate) and presenting why their team's side won those points. They are not expected (and will not have time) to go into detail in explaining why they won each individual argument and point made or deal with every example brought up in the debate. They are instead a high level explanation of why the judges should vote for their side. It is often helpful to think of these as a biased adjudication or a biased news reporter giving an account of what happened in the debate from their side's perspective.

Motions & Preparation Time

Prepared vs. impromptu (un-prepared)

In Worlds' Schools' format you can either receive a prepared or impromptu (un-prepared) motion.

A prepared motion is one in which you have been given the motion and side you are debating on in advance of the day. These will

typically be released several weeks in advance of the tournament in order to allow time for competitors to research the topics and prepare their ideas on the important issues within the debate. The side of the debate you are on is released after the motion is in order to encourage wider thinking about both sides of the debate.

An impromptu (un-prepared) motion is a motion that you receive prior to the round at the same time as you are given the side of the debate. In this instance you will only have your preparation time to think of arguments and examples for your side.

In impromptu debates you will have one hour to prepare for the debate once the motion has been released. Whilst only three speak in each debate, all five members of the team can contribute in the preparation time with ideas and development of argumentation for their team-mates.

Each team is entitled to bring an English Language dictionary, a bilingual dictionary, and a single-volume encyclopedia or almanac per team – they are not allowed to bring any other printed materials or electronic devices with them to prepare.

Finals - The Break

Near the end of a tournament, after the rounds in which all teams compete (*in-rounds*) have been finished, the top teams proceed to knock-out rounds (*out-rounds*) to declare a winner. The teams that make it to the knock-out rounds are referred to as "*The Break"*.

The exact size of the break depends on the size of the tournament (for instance WSDC typically breaks to octo-finals and 16 teams) but the top teams are normally calculated by the number of debates each team has won. In the event that two teams are tied for this then the number of judges that voted for them across the tournament acts as a tie-break, if again equal then the total of all the individual scores each team got will decide which team ranks higher.

Once through to the knock-out rounds each debate won will allow you to progress to the next regardless of your original position in the break, a lost debate means elimination. The winner of the tournament is the team that wins the final and all prior knock-out rounds as applicable.

By Oana Păsărică

Adjudication in the *World Schools* Format

1. Qualities of an adjudicator

- The Adjudicator is the individual who decides which team wins the debate match.

- As in all the processes of adjudication in academic debates, the adjudicator must be objective, he does not make the decision depending on his or her preferences or options of motion. In the World Schools debate format, as the starting point, the adjudicator is supposed to have no opinion about the motion debated. An adjudicator is depicted as an educated person without specific knowledge and with no opinion about the motion under discussion. He or she evaluates strictly which team was the one best "lawyer" of his case in that round. In short, The Adjudicator must be as objective as possible in his reasoning and must adopt the attitude of an average citizen.

- Being an average citizen means that the Adjudicator must let go of his superior knowledge and judge based on the general knowledge of a normal person. The adjudicator is not allowed to take into account the specialized information he/she acquired. It is important that debaters should be convincing regarding what is important and relevant. An argument can be strong but irrelevant for the motion, while a weaker argument, but presented as very relevant to the motion / discussion can be more important.

- The adjudicator should know very well the format of the debate and the roles of the members of the two teams:

Role	Duration	Contribution to the match
First Proposition (P1)	5 minutes	Introduces the motion, defines the key terms, sets what both teams have to
First Opposition (O1)	5 minutes	Introduces the motion, defines the key terms, sets what both teams have to
Second		

Proposition (P2)	5 minutes	Introduces the motion, defines the key terms, sets what both teams have to
Second Opposition (O2)	5 minutes	Introduces the motion, defines the key terms, sets what both teams have to
Third Proposition (P3)	5 minutes	Introduces the motion, defines the key terms, sets what both teams have to
Third Opposition (O3)	5 minutes	Introduces the motion, defines the key terms, sets what both teams have to
Reply Opposition (RO)	3 minutes	Introduces the motion, defines the key terms, sets what both teams have to

2. During the Match

- At the beginning of the match, the Adjudicator welcomes both teams.
- The Adjudicator also reads the motion out loud and asks for any logistical questions.
- Before every speech, the Adjudicator has to invite the speaker in order to ensure that there is enough time for the Adjudicator to complete his/her notes.
- The teams will not be given any preparation time between the speeches.
- The Adjudicator must never intervene during the debate match.
- After the match is over, the adjudicator invites the teams to cross the floor and shake their hands. Then, the teams must exit the room for the adjudicator to reach a decision.
- After the adjudicator reaches a decision, he/she invites both teams back in the room, offers them the decision and its reasoning.
- After this, individual feedback can be given to the team separately.

3. Awarding Points

- We can generally operate with a range of 65-75. Of course, every adjudicator can go below (60-64) or above (76-80) this range in unique situations.

- Every adjudicator must award points to each of the categories (Style, Content, and Strategy) and add them in order to obtain the individual speaker points for every speaker. At the end of the debate, the adjudicator adds all the speaker points in order to obtain the team points.

- In order to award points, we can start off with a score of 70 (28 Style, 28 Content, 14 Strategy). During the Speech, we subtract or add the points from these categories if the speakers goes below or above average in these categories.

  Example: The speaker has had an extremely good style (+2), but satisfactory content (-1), and average strategy (0). We obtain the scores 30, 27, and 14. We add them to obtain a score of 71.

STANDARD	OVERALL (/100)	STYLE (/40)	CONTENT (/40)	STRATEGY (/20)
Exceptional	80	32	32	16
Excellent	76-79	31	31	15-16
Extremely Good	74-75	30	30	15
Very Good	71-73	29	29	14-15
Good	70	28	28	14
Satisfactory	67-69	27	27	13-14
Competent	65-66	26	26	13
Pass	61-64	25	25	12-13
Improvement Needed	60	24	24	12

4. What should the Adjudicator take into consideration when judging the debate?

- The Adjudicator should choose the winner of de debate based on who has debated better. In order to give a verdict, the adjudicator or the panel of adjudicators follow the round and write down the ideas and the argument presented by the dabaters.

- In order to establish these, the adjudicator uses the following set of criteria: Style, Content, and Strategy:
  - **Style** is the way the speech is delivered –it regards body language, intonation, speed, and tone. It also regards how the speaker portrays the debate –how persuasive he/she is overall. It represents 40% of the speech. So STYLE is the ability to deliver your arguments persuasively. There is no one particular style that will be appropriate for all speakers and all debaters just as there is no one set of arguments that will win all debates. It does however encompass a number of general elements that improve the impact of a speech. These including how a speaker uses their voice, their use of gestures, their use of rhetorical techniques and their engagement with the audience. What is being considered is the extent to which these things are used to augment or hinder the persuasiveness of the speaker.

    From the point of view of style, the adjudicators will penalize:
    -extensive reading in the presentation of the discourse;
    -syncope that significantly affects fluency of the argumentations;
    -the despicable attitude;
    -use of inappropriate vocabulary.
  - **Content** regards the quality of the argumentation brought by the speaker –this can be substantive points or rebuttal points. It also represents 40% of the speech. CONTENT is the strength of the argumentation presented. This also covers the quality of the rebuttal and ability to defeat opposing arguments. It marks the extent to which the strength of the arguments compels you to support or oppose the motion. A speaker with a high content mark will present arguments that are highly relevant, with clear explanations and logic, and be succinct in flagging the impacts of their arguments. They will be consistent and thorough in their explanation of why their set of beliefs are the strongest arguments in the debate.

    From the point of view of content, the adjudicators will penalize:
    -the use of obvious truism or sophistry in argumentation;
    -arguments that are too abstract or equivoque.

- **Strategy** regard how well the team has prioritized its argumentation, how interactive it has been and how much it has engaged with the other team's points. It represents the rest of 20%. Strategy encompasses two things: the first is their structure and timing, the second is their understanding of the issues of the debate. Structure and timing means a speaker who fills their time and does not under or over speak. It also means having a clear progression of points within the speech which shows a clear sense of priorities in their argumentation. Understanding the issues of the debate follows on from this clear sense of understanding what the key issues in any given debate are. They will be able to understand which arguments and parts of an argument they must respond to in their speeches (even if their responses are not strong); they will understand what the important things to prove within their arguments are (even if this is not always successful). Thus, if a speaker is clearly attempting to do the correct things in terms of argumentation but not proving the things they set out, they may receive a high strategy mark and a lower content mark.

- The Adjudicator also offers each constructive speech between 60 and 80 points and each reply speech between 30 and 40 points. In total, a team can have between 210 and 280 points. The team with the most points wins.

- An Adjudicator cannot give more points to the losing team.

By Antonina Bliorţ (teacher) and Moroşanu Smaranda, Iliescu Ioana (students)

How we organize the competition?

In order to organize the competitions of YED project, we chose a simplified version of World Schools Style for the beginner debaters. We recommend this version to everyone who wants to be initiated in the art of debates - students or teachers, but not only.

The competitions lasted two days, but it can also be extended within three days. Each national team competes in preliminary debates. The first two debates are already prepared by the speakers (we announced the first two motions with some weeks ago before the competitions) and the other one is an impromptu debate (for which teams have one hour to prepare). Once the three preliminary rounds have been finished, the first four best teams compete in the semifinals, followed by the grand final. For each debate there are three judges or more. Their duty is to grant a score to each player considering the player's style, content and strategy.

Before the start of the competition we will randomly choose the order that the motions will be played. We used an tabulation programme (TAB programme) for distributing judges, ranking the speakers and alternating team's positions between proposition and opposition. This programme automatically selects the team and the judges, without incompatibilities. But if we have a tournament with a small number of teams, this programme is not recommended, we recommend a manual TAB. What you do need for a manual TAB are the TAB room with a large table and a computer with a printer/copy machine.

Each match contains a total of eight speeches delivered by each member of a team made by three debaters (the Proposition and the Opposition). Each speaker delivered a five-minute speech; then both teams delivered a "reply speech" lasting three minutes, with

the last word being reserved for the Proposition. Between the end of the first and the beginning of the last minute of a speech, the opposite side might offer "points of information". The speaker may refuse these but should take at least one or two points during his or her speech.

In our first two meetings we saw that both, teachers and students, were not pleased with the idea that they would compete against each other. We had overcome this obstacle by focusing on on a better appropriation of speech structure elements and a better knowledge of the WS format.

In competitions, teams compete against each other and the winner is chosen by a list of criteria that is usually based around the concepts of content, style and strategy.

on a better appropriation of speech structure elements and a better knowledge of the WS format. Competition between national teams led to the emergence of a too competitive atmosphere between the project partners. With the experience gained, the quality of the speeches has grown so that after the mobility in Germany, we decided to organize a mixed competition with teams of students belonging to different countries - international teams.

After they all began to work together to prepare the motions, the teams became much stronger and there appeared lasting friendships. At the same time, cultural and linguistic barriers have disappeared. Within the teams, the students communicated peer to peer, while exchanges of experience led to an improvement in the speeches and in the performance in debates.

That is why we recommend that such mixed competitions should take place especially in the Erasmus+ projects. In these project students can connect more easily by working together in mixed teams because they have the opportunity to get acquainted with other students from a different cultural space with whom they share only the age, English language skills and knowledge about the European Union.

The semifinals and the finals became a big point of interest for all of the participants - now, it wasn't about which country team was going to win the tournament, but what team had the best arguments.

The finalists were honestly congratulated by all the participants, students and judges. All participants of the project YED won the competition: they all became motivated to develop the debate movement in their schools and communities. In the WS debates, in fact, all the participants win: they make a constructive exchange of pertinent arguments and develop their critical thinking and ability to communicate assertively.

By Camelia Chiharoi

The debate competition in Iasi, Romania:

- January 2018 –

Motion: THB that higher education should be free

Proposition	Opposition
Portugal: Do you know what the main cause for students to drop out college is? Financial causes. Nowadays, students have engage themselves in part-time and take out loans, while also being involved in their studies to pay for tuition fees. Is that enough to pay for college? I don't believe so. To begin with, college should be looking at student's merit and their skills in a professional situation rather than their financial ability, however this is not the case, since we live in a society based on the power of money, which means, if you don't have financial problemsthese butprivileged person and you can pursue your studies in college and prepare your future, even if you have lower results than a student with excellent marks , however, due to his economic situation he can't afford to get educated and will more likely not be accepted in a university. Unfortunately, that's how education works nowadays.	**Romania**: The first argument of the opposition is related to prioritizing the state's needs. The state doesn't force the youth to go to university, it's their choice. There is a large range of jobs that don't require a higher education. Therefore, we can say that it's not a basic need, but a right that a person has and a decision whether to use it or not. Moreover, in states like Romania, there are many drawbacks in the secondary school system among others fields: we have many problems in the health system and in politics; we don't have good conditions in hospitals, people die not only from health issues they had before entering the hospital but by illnesses they make contact with inside them too. The state will take care of the funds and costs of the colleges. We do have this thing already but students paying the taxes means contributing in a 85-90% to the university's funds. Now, all the money the universities get would come from the state. What does this mean? It means a huge hole in the state's budget which obviously wouldn't be suitable world-wide.
Croatia: A more educated population would have economic and social benefits for its country. If a country offers free higher education then it would increase its productivity and Gross domestic product because the higher-educated people would find higher-paid jobs. Education is good not just for the person who becomes educated, but also for everyone around her. When citizens are more productive, they are able to contribute to the economy in ways that benefit others far beyond the salaries that they receive. They also become much less likely to need welfare services, commit criminal acts, and so on. An analysis of data on almost 15,000 higher education institutions in 78 countries over six decades, revealed that doubling the number of universities in a region results in a 4.7% increase	**Croatia**: 1. It's expensive for a country to maintain free education so it would have to impose taxes on its citizens. It's expensive for a country to maintain free education so it would have to impose taxes on its citizens. Nowadays, people are already pressured by a lot of unnecessary taxes, so another one would impose an even bigger burden on them. People would be more dissatisfied, especially in the countries which already have a low standard of living. In our opinion, it would be better to have that amount of money transferred to a better cause, like building more hospitals, shelters for the homeless, etc. For example, Croatia is investing in medicine but doctors and nurses go abroad when they get some experience. Because of that it is better to invest in something that will help citizens

in GDP in that region within five years on average. Educated workers are able to carry out tasks that require literacy and critical thinking much more efficiently. Workers with better education are more productive than less educated ones. Although financing universities is certainly expensive, having just basic literacy programs can still add up to economic growth.

for sure. What is more, it would also be unfair for those who don't have children attending universities to pay for someone else's school fees or those who don't attend a university themselves. Is it really fair to ask the taxpayers who don't benefit from higher education to pay for those who do? That situation could lead to the country's instability and cause citizens to protest and feel divided because of their opposing beliefs.

Germany: Education is definitely a right of every human. The notion that you have to pay for education for a certain price is disgusting. If every person could study, without paying for it, the state would have much more educated people and would be better off competing against other countries. Another mentioned, important reason for us was that people who are studying for free cannot be blamed. The best example is the USA, many people are in debt so that their children can study later. From this, our third aspect can be concluded. Students who do not have to worry about financing have less pressure and can concentrate more on their studies, this has a huge impact on the successful completion of their studies. So you can clearly see, that we think, that nobody should pay for education.

Portugal: It is a fact that education is essential in any developed and all people must be given the possibility to attend school and be educated by proper, specialized institutions with skilled and well-prepared educators and as far as primary and secondary school is concerned, it must be compulsory and free of charge.
However, to make higher education free for everyone who wants to attend University is not only an utopic ideal, which must not be pursued, but also an overall disadvantage to a fair, modern and civilized society who wants hard-working, responsible and conscious citizens.
If higher education becomes free, everyone will presuppose that they will have to undertake a superior course in order to be recognized by society, with almost no effort. There will be no more excuses. People with no appetence of what so ever will enroll and will completely discredit higher education courses. Equal access for everyone would actually mean more discrimination in terms of differentiating people with a degree or with no degree.. The matter of merit would tend to be left aside since government subsidies would be encouraging inefficiency, rather than productivity.

Romania: Through passing the motion and through better specialized people that would follow, even if we'd have a short period of disadvantaged in the beginning, in the long run we'd have more to win because of 2 reasons:
- People would work in foreign countries and then bring money in their countries, filling the gaps left by underdeveloped people. As a result, in less than 5 years we'd have millions of dollars that would contribute to the country's economy.
- Because we'd have a small number of people specialized in a work-field, we could attract more easily investors from foreign countries that would place their companies in ours because they wouldn't have to fight for a small group of people prepared for their work-field which would mean an economical raise.

Germany: So a paid degree has many advantages. It is a matter of course to mention that people who have to pay for their studies also attach more importance to it. If it were free, you wouldn't really take it seriously and in the worst case even waste the time, you'll get paid for that fun too.
Another aspect that my partner had already mentioned was that students who pay for their studies also make a contribution to their university where they study. Thus, the university can afford the contributions, which are paid new computers or other new equipment and make learning in general more pleasant and modern.
It was also very important to do every person a favor if everyone would pay for their studies. Thus, the cashier would not have to pay for the study of her boss's daughter. She herself would have little of it.

So these are the reasons, why we think, that everybody should pay for higher education

Motion: volunteering should be recognized as work experience by employers

Proposition

Portugal: Volunteering should be recognized as experience by employers. Volunteering is a powerful tool that builds leadership among youth, helping to develop compassionate agents of change active In the present and working for a better future. It is off course undertaken freely and by choice, without any concern for financial gain. It benefits both the community and the people doing it; it is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate actively in the activities of their community addressing human, environmental and social needs as well as respecting the rights, dignity and culture of others, always with the goals of promoting human rights and equality. If volunteering is such an important experience in one's life and brings so many benefits not only to individuals but also to society as a whole, why shouldn't it be included in one's CV? It must! This way, people´s engagement will be even more striking for sure. They will be even

Opposition

Romania: The act of volunteering is a tiebreaker criteria that doesn't prove who's more suitable for the workplace and here we make a difference between volunteering and any previous activity. It would be wrong and against the interest of the company not to hire a well-prepared student with no work experience rather than hiring a less-prepared person that has participated in multiple volunteering activities. Volunteering is much too general, it doesn't offer you specific abilities in a certain field, while internships and courses of specialization do such a thing. We'd rather have people choose those alternatives that actually help you get used to your future work-field than taking the risk of considering it a good thing for the company, because if people would be encouraged to show interest in something general, they'd forget the specific requirements that are actually essential in

more motivated to help while gaining practical experience and improving their skills on areas of their own interest .Their role in volunteering will make them better citizens - less self-centered, more helpful, conscious and responsible people. And social responsibility must be valued by everyone.

doing their job. The impact we have is regarding the disadvantages brought to the company and the workplace, because of an eventual lack of abilities in the field

Romania: in societies in which volunteering isn't as popular, the main reason for this is that people are hesitant in doing it not only because they either don't get paid, don't see the point in wasting the time and so on but because it doesn't mean anything or they just can't see the essential purpose of these activities. If we'd implement the motion, we'd win in 2 ways. Firstly, people would do it because they'd have a bonus point when applying for a job. When they'd actually try it out, they'd probably like it because it makes them feel useful and the fact that they'd make a change in the world around them, big or small, would give them satisfaction and would make them proud. Therefore, more people would contribute to the state of the environment and the world surrounding them. Secondly, you would get rid of some issues that wouldn't be solved otherwise. For example, there is a huge problem with littering and recycling or even caring for old people and they all could be minimized and even eliminated. As we speak, many projects organized by institutions such as the Red Cross can't become reality because of the lack of volunteers. With a larger number, we could efficiently solve these issues, a large mass of people making up for the state's inability to take action.

Portugal: We believe that it being recognized as experience by employers would not only defeat the core idea of volunteer work, but also corrupt the people involved in volunteer work, making it close to pointless. I´ll explain: Volunteering is a complete act of kindness and uncorrupted good, since people engage in multiple selfness deeds, putting others' happiness above their own helping to build towards a fair world. The type of people we want doing this type of work are people who don't seek any compensation, people who only in mind a common-good and a fair world. Who's to say that if volunteer work gets recognized on one's CV those motives won´t be corrupted and what once was an uninterested act of kindness wouldn't become something formal, cold or even just an obligation?! This would, in the long term, completely destroy the main purpose of volunteer work or even its essence.Not only that but urge to get "volunteer work on their CV's to get the edge can leave multiple disastrous consequences. They can join causes that don't match their skills set on personality, harming their experience, personal growth and the project itself.

Croatia: Young people are usually not given the opportunity to work if they don't have previous experience. This could help them resolve that problem. In most companies, young people are often turned down because they don't have enough experience. This is unfair because they are not given opportunities to gain that experience. Volunteering can help build skills and confidence as a person. It would help young people to

Germany: Community service is all about giving back. If you are only doing it to get something out of it, you are missing the main point, which is solidarity out of any interest. Volunteering cannot be recognized as experience by employers, because the risk is too high. If volunteering is taken into consideration and does become a selection criteria for employers, everyone will feel

imagine themselves in new situations and meet all kinds of new people.

Germany: A recent study by LinkedIn found that 41% of hiring managers consider volunteer experience equally valuable as paid work. It also concluded that 89% of professionals had volunteer experience, nevertheless only 45% included it on their resume. Why is this so if volunteering is such an important experience in one's life and brings so many benefits not only to individuals, but also to society as whole? And we do have so many examples to illustrate this. When a person decides to be a volunteer, he or she is leaving his or her comfort zone in order to do something greater such as helping communities and / or the less fortunate. This is really a noble thing to do, since it is an altruistic ethical action and as so it should be just as valuable in a CV as any paid work experience. One will become a more skilled worker when dealing with stressful and unpredictable situations that are likely to occur while doing volunteer work, thus contributing to becoming more competent and well-prepared professionals. Indeed, this should be given great value by any employer.

obliged to participate in volunteering activities – it will be a must instead of a will - which will completely distort the original and real spirit of the act of volunteering. To be a volunteer, you need to have some specific characteristics such as a great deal of compassion, tolerance, social responsibility, commitment, and not everyone possesses these features. It doesn´t mean they are bad people or they will be less-qualified and less-skilled employees, they are just not cut out to be in any type of activity which requires all of this. Should they be forced into volunteering because it will be a requisite in the world of work?!

Croatia: Certain jobs should be done by professionals, not by volunteers who might not be qualified.

Another reason for why volunteering shouldn't be recognized as work experience is that some experience must be gained through proper education and qualification, not just by volunteering. Simply doing volunteer work can't mean that you are as capable as someone who went to school for a certain job. It would also be unfair to have volunteers get jobs instead of someone who is qualified for that.

Some ways of volunteering cannot be applied to work experience in certain areas.Not all ways of volunteering can be recognized as work experience. For example, you can do volunteering in an animal shelter, but that doesn't mean that it could help you get any other job simply because you volunteered. Sometimes it's also not simple to find a way to volunteer for certain jobs. For example, there are limited numbers of positions for volunteering as a doctor or a teacher.

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The debate competition in Gracac and Split, Croatia:

-June 2018-

Motion 1: Parliamentary immunity should be eliminated

Proposition

Romania: There are two main forms of parliamentary immunity, non-accountability and inviolability.

Non-accountability (also referred to as 'freedom of speech in parliament') is usually an absolute immunity that shields members of parliament from all legal action relating to utterances in parliament or in the exercise of the parliamentary mandate, and to the parliamentary vote. In most systems, parliamentary non-accountability applies perpetually and cannot be lifted or renounced. *Inviolability*, on the other hand, is a form of immunity which – depending on the particular system – may protect members of parliament from legal action, sometimes including measures of detention, prosecution, and investigation, for acts and utterances outside the scope of non-accountability – thus outside the exercise of the parliamentary mandate. The concept of parliamentary "inviolability" covers all rules that in one way or the other protect parliamentarians from legal consequences following from alleged breaches of the law. In general, it protects members of parliament from all forms of arrest and prosecution unless parliament consents. Let's start with the concept of law. The law represents a set if rules that bind every citizen to behave in a certain way. The concept of parliamentary immunity can, unfortunately, be seen as a form of avoiding the law. Therefore, if some people, in this case the members of parliament, are above the law and consequences apply differently for them, the chance of committing a crime increases dramatically. This is also encouraged by the fact that a lot of countries do not have specific rules regarding this important matter.

Croatia: Immunity for politicians is an unjust double standard.

Every victim deserves to have the criminal answer for their misdeeds. It is unjust that certain offenders can avoid justice and that certain

Opposition

Portugal: This house defends Parliamentary Immunity. Over the years we have come to realize that members of the Parliament tend to misinterpret what parliamentary immunity is and have many times confused the term immunity with the term impunity. This way, many abuses have been committed and have gone by with no punishment for those who commit them. Parliamentary immunity is as so seen as an advantage, a leverage, which is actually a form of illicit power, and has been used not so much as it was meant to initially be in the public's best interest, but as a way to avoid being punished; this had indeed led to too many situations of corruption and abuse of power. Immunity is thus very important, since immunity always presupposes a very important principle- the principle of responsibility above everything. In this respect, we have to call to your attention that Members of Parliament have undeniably major responsibilities; and these major responsibilities are responsibilities to three main groups; their constituents, Parliament itself and their political party, by which they have been chosen to represent the people. They do have freedom however, freedom does not come alone, freedom must always be combined with responsibility. Immunity is not a synonym of absolute freedom in their action, rather an equivalent to maximum responsibility for everything they choose to do.

Romania: This form of immunity is essential in all the ways that the non-liability is necessary. Since the members of parliament are public figures, they are definitely more exposed to potential trials. Therefore, we need

victims can't see their offenders put to trial simply because they have an immunity. All individuals should be treated alike, no matter what their function is. In today's democratic political systems, the idea is that there should be fair standards and equality for all. The privilege of immunity sometimes gives the impression that politicians can do as they please, which can result in acts against the public good. If a government official is protected by immunity and accepts a bribe for a contract, they have little fear of the justice system, even if they are found out to be guilty. After getting away with it once, the instinct is to do it again and again until someone finally says 'stop'. But all over the world, little is being done in order to actually stop it. There are some organizations that work at stopping people and corporations from getting away with criminal activity or bending the law in their own favour like Transparency International, but it often feels that such a problem is impossible to solve for good. It's a fact that not punishing politicians for their misdeeds leads to the abuse of public resources or the manipulation of laws for politicians' personal gain. Political immunity, therefore, must always be justified. It should be clear and rightful that all people, regardless of their position, class, race or gender are treated equally by the law of that same state, and held to the same standards by legal tools. However, as nice as this idea may sound, it's obvious that this is still just an ideal that requires some serious work.

to make sure that unless a serious crime has been committed, the course of governance will not be interrupted by meaningless and false accusations. Moreover, where there are rules on parliamentary inviolability, there are almost always also rules regulating how this can be lifted. The only exceptions to this are countries where the scope of inviolability is very limited, and for example only applies to freedom from arrest on the way to and from parliament, such as in Malta, Norway and Ireland. But in countries where the substantive scope of inviolability is wider it is always possible to lift it. What does this mean? That even though certain figures are protected in some way this is only done when necessary and if a crime is being committed, immunity cannot help you.

Germany: Once regarded as an important part of the European tradition and a protector of democracy, nowadays, the concept of 'parliamentary immunity' faces hard criticism for failing to reach its main purposes, facilitating abuses and protecting corruption.

Although democracy is the form of government in which an elected representative exercises political power but in democracy, it is normal that every person is equal before the court, there are no exceptions, everyone is only a human and nothing more. We as the proposition cannot see this -

Croatia: In the event of major abuses of power, it should be the public that holds politicians to account.

The obvious benefit to prosecuting politicians is that it punishes corruption by politicians. Although this kind of act could have a positive effect on the perception of politicians and their work in public, this benefit can be achieved through other means as well. Firstly, many western liberal democratic societies have certain forms of removing a politician from the office in the midst of their term, such as impeachment in the American system or a vote

actually normal - system of democracy in our governmental image, because this immunity of the politicians that makes them look like something different than any other human in a country. But I will return to this point later. This immunity protects the politicians from investigations - what if I say that I want something like that? of course, I do not get attributed to something like this immunity, after all, I am not something as "special" as our politicians. Ideally, they are deprived of immunity so the police may investigate them, because if they are not deprived of their immunity, they cannot be investigated. That's how it is in many European countries. But what do you do against corruption? Politicians who know they cannot get investigated because of their immunity are more interested in committing crimes. In an anonymous survey on the streets of Berlin, out of 500 interviewed, around 300 people said they would more likely commit a crime if they enjoyed immunity - like the politicians in parliament. Politicians could easily steal donations, get bribed or commit other crimes, which for they cannot get arrested so quickly. So what do you do against those thieves and corrupt politicians? You take the wind out of their sails. You simply take their immunity away, because once a person has found favor with something, the person gets used to it very quickly and wants more and more.

of no confidence against the government in the Westminster system. While defenders of granted political immunity oppose prosecution claiming it is contrary to the basic principles of politician's job, especially because of the effect that it may have on political duties, this is an option that remains in cases of huge and proven malversation. If the political will to remove a sitting politician simply cannot be put in motion, they are held accountable by the electorate to whom they must answer in the next election, and who will punish misuse of political power. Even if the individual politician has reached a limit on their term of office, they are still held responsible for the damage that will be done to their party in the event of major misconduct on their part. Finally, most politicians are concerned about their legacy, which is stained by corruption even if they are never held legally responsible for it. One of the best examples that is still remembered today is present in USA political history: while Nixon received a full pardon from his successor, his name has become synonymous with criminality and scandal: a fate which most politicians wish to avoid.

Motion 2: THB that voting should be mandatory

Definition: Mandatory voting=laws which require eligible citizens to register and vote in national and/or local elections. Effective compulsory voting imposes penalties on citizens or constituents who fail to cast a vote in an official election and actively pursues eligible citizens who fail to register as voters as required by law.

Proposition

Romania: As of August 2013, 11 democracies — about 5% of all United Nations members — enforce compulsory voting out of 26 countries listed worldwide as having a compulsory voting system: *Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Ecuador, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, North Korea, Nauru, Peru, Singapore, Uruguay, Scaffhausen.* Political choices are, by nature, amongst the most subjective choices around, and anyone suggesting that compelling people to vote could not prevent bad choices from being made must be ready to face a counter-assertion. Britain's departure from the EU, however, is a recent example of a political decision that, as the months go on, appears increasingly and unequivocally to have been a bad one. Political choices are, by nature, amongst the most subjective choices around, and anyone suggesting that compelling people to vote could not prevent bad choices from being made must be ready to face a counter-assertion. Britain's departure from the EU, however, is a recent example of a political decision that, as the months go on, appears increasingly and unequivocally to have been a bad one. The fallout from the referendum has been cross-party political meltdown, a currency crash, and a shock loss of market confidence that will most likely see the mass exodus of UK businesses to the mainland. There are now more people who would prefer that the UK remains in Europe than leaves, meaning that if the referendum were to be held again today the remain side would win. Crucial in swinging the vote would be the youth vote –

Opposition

Croatia: Persuasion is more effective than pressure.

Rather than forcing people to vote, more should be done to engage the public in political life. The government should find out the flaws of the voting system, how it influences low voter turnout and how it can be improved. Instead of trying to engage people by force, how about introducing political education in schools and encouraging political conversation? How about educating the public on how politics affects them, educating the youth about the need to actively participate in creating a better future and a more tolerant society that will not try to impose an act on its citizens by punishing them? Also, citizenship classes should be taught to students who are approaching voting age, as it would teach the importance of the electoral process and point out to them how much people fought in the history to get the right to vote. Finally, the government should be trying to engage people by other means, but compulsory voting is definitely not one of them. Compulsory voting may improve low turnout but will not affect the root of the problem - what people actually think about politics.

deemed most likely to vote remain, not least because of the more tangible benefits they had from membership of the EU: freedom of movement and work around the Eurozone being one of them.

Portugal: We believe that the introduction of mandatory voting would signify greater civic engagement. If people are more aware of their country's policies, they will for sure be more engaged in giving their contribution towards improving their state and their society wellbeing, thus, their life. Citizens would for sure become more directly involved in the political process, this allowing them to be active contributors rather than passive receptors for the society they live in. Promoting greater civic engagement and investing in the capacity of citizens to engage with civic information and one another to solve public problems is a priority for any modern, democratic society and this definitely will contribute to a healthier democracy.

Croatia: Mandatory voting increases the representation of disadvantaged groups. By making the most marginalized vote, the major political parties would be forced to take notice of them and this would reduce political polarization. An

Romania: The median voter is incompetent at politics. The citizens who abstain are, on average, even more incompetent. If we force everyone to vote, the electorate will become even more irrational and misinformed. The result: not only will the worse candidate on the ballot get a better shot at winning, but the candidates who make it on the ballot in the first place will be worse. Most people believe that more voting causes better government. This is an article of faith, not fact. Social scientists have shown that higher quality government tends to cause higher turnout. But higher turnout does not cause higher quality government. We believe that making vote mandatory would infringe several rights and thus encourage a totalistic form instead of democratic: For example, most Christadelphians believe that they should not participate in political events. Forcing them to vote ostensibly denies them their freedom of religious practice. Jehovah's Witnesses view voting as a personal decision to be made based on each one's conscience and understanding of their responsibility to God and to the State. Witnesses do not vote, while taking care to preserve neutrality and not compromise their faith Therefore, citizens have the right to choose whether they want to vote. Compulsion is part of a slippery slope to totalitarianism. Finally, even though Australia is considered a top society of political knowledgeable citizens at a first sight, the reality is opposite. Specifically, political knowledge refers to is measured by how many correct answers a survey respondent gives to three factual knowledge questions asked in the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project. Data come from 133 election studies, held in 47 countries between 1996 and 2013.

Portugal: By making vote mandatory, the government would be taking away people's righ to express - or not - their opinion and, therefore it would be de priving them of this basic human right. People cannot be deprived from

example of this is in the UK where the Labor party abandoned its core supporters to pursue 'middle England'. Political parties are drawn towards those groups to whom favorable policies will be rewarded in the form of vote. Politically inactive citizens do not promote their interests as effectively as others do and therefore, they become invisible in the political process. As a consequence, politicians are more likely to pay attention to the concerns and policy demands of the active groups within the population. Low turnout rates will have an impact on the ideology of political parties, which have no reason to consider the needs and political preferences of those who do not bother to vote at all. So perhaps mandatory voting may not have an immediate effect on the results of elections, but low turnout rates definitely change the political preferences of the population at large. Mandatory voting would ensure that all participants in society are proportionally considered in governmental policy. According to a U.S. survey of both registered and unregistered eligible voters who did not cast a vote in 2008, disapproval of candidate choices, busyness, illness, transportation, and registration problems were the leading causes of not voting. The same survey estimates that between 1 and 3 million votes were lost that year. By not participating in voting, they give their votes to the majority who in the end shapes what politicians hear about political needs, concerns, and preferences. If voting was made mandatory, then people belonging to disadvantaged groups would have to choose someone on the elections. They would inform themselves about the potential candidates who could offer them some possible solutions to their problems.

Germany: At the moment, the interest of the youth and of the young adults in politics is not so high. This law is designed to counteract the lack of interest in politics, because they now have to form an opinion in order to be able to vote for any parties. Many people don't vote for someone because they don't know what any parties do or promote. The general interest for politics is missing and with this law we could change this point. If you go through the city past the coffees you can hear the people talk

manifesting and expresing their dissatisfaction, their unhappiness, their sadness and their disappointment towards any aspect of their life. They also have to be free to choose if they want to vote or not and the only way for this to be possible is not to make vote mandatory. By making this into a law, those who are not honestly interested in politics will also be forced to vote. What consequences will there be? Unlike many people think, these citizens will choose to stay in ignorance rather than leaving their comfort zone and choosing to learn about politics, meaning that if vote becomes mandatory, some of these citizens will prefer to vote randomly or even cast a blank vote. A great part of these citizens will definitely be manipulated or choose candidates randomly forfeiting the purpose of an election, which is to place deserving, honest, hard-working, social engaged people in key positions. In other words, votes and consequently the budget spent for the polls will go to waste. Another important aspect that we think everyone will agree with is that it is wrong to punish those who refuse to vote. This would be a clear violation of a fundamental right — the right to choose. If vote becomes mandatory, it becomes a law, and if one breaks

Germany: The introduction of compulsory voting is an invasion of privacy and violated the rights of people. No one wants their privacy to be invaded. So why should the state be allowed to do it? I think that every human has to decide for themselves. I mean do we live in a democratic state or not? The obligation to vote does not correspond to democracy, because you should decide freely whether you want to vote or not. If you are forced to choose, a free decision is no

but not about politics only about other stuff. Ten years ago, all of them talked about how the politic is if it's bad or not. And why the youth don't talk about the politics? Because they don't know anything about it and that is the mistake from the state. The youth have to learn about the politics in school with a teacher only with this way they develop the interest for this topic. This also promotes the general education which is very good for all of us.

longer given. For example, if I had to go vote I would probably choose any party or abstain because I have no motivation to read about the parties and that would not be a result in an accurate representation of opinion. In a secret ballot the votes maybe filled incorrectly or made invalid, that means an abstention is not checked. And abstentions would be a violation of the law. That would fake the result of the election and lead to an inaccurate representation of the people.

The debate competition in Bunde, Germany:

- October 2018 -

Motion 1: EU should offer financial support to countries that accept immigrants.

Proposition	Opposition
Romania: The term "immigrant" is used by the European Commission to describe a person from a non-EU country establishing his or her usual residence in the territory of an EU country for a period that is, or is expected to be, at least twelve months. Immigration is the international movement of people into a destination country of which they are not natives or where they do not possess citizenship in order to settle or reside there, especially as permanent residents or naturalized citizens, or to take up employment as a migrant worker or temporarily as a foreign worker. Considering the European migrant crisis, countries that would accept immigrants should receive financial support because this things would decrease the chances of another crisis to happen and would bring balance and stability.	**Portugal:** Giving financial support to countries now, 3 years after the crisis has peaked, the EU would be attracting a new and possibly even greater wave of migrants, hence a new crisis similar to the one financial support (with these funds) was meant to help solve. Europe cannot either economically nor socially cope now or in a near future with having to spend millions of euros to help migrants that are already here and coming in everyday an at the same time attract more migrants by facilitating the economical side of the question.
Croatia: It is the EU's duty to help out the countries that receive migrants. We strongly believe that it is only fair to help the countries that accept migrants because most of them are financially not able to do it on their own. The first country that comes to mind is certainly Greece. More than 60,000 migrants are trapped there because they cannot pass the so-called Balkan route. We think that countries that accept migrants should be helped because countries like Greece had already had issues inside the country, before the migration crisis even started. It is simply unfair to let them take all the responsibility themselves if there are ways to help them. After all, we are all part of the European Union. By definition, the EU is an association of countries formed for the purpose of political and economic integration. Therefore, every member should take responsibility and, if not accept migrants, then at least provide some help to Union's members that provide for the migrants. If	**Germany:** The very first argument that I have to clarify is that a European refugee fund already exists. The European refugee fund supports EU countries' efforts in receiving refugees and displaced persons and in guaranteeing access to consistent, fair and effective asylum procedures. The Fund also supports resettlement programs and actions related to the integration of persons whose stay is of a lasting and stable nature. It would be very difficult to explain people from other countries that they have to pay financial support. According to a study of the University of Kent the majority of public in middle European and eastern European countries do not even support the integration of refugees completely so how do you want to tell the people that they should pay? In other words: we need EU Member States to take more of the people who are already in Europe, as well as future arrivals. So, we do need a permanent system in the EU because the frontline states such as for example Greece or

the EU's motto 'United in diversity' still stands, then the member countries should reflect on that a bit and not refuse to help out the other member countries. We should do our best in order to put some balance between the responsibility of the wealthier, northern destination states and the frontline southern states, but also deal with governments such as Hungary or Poland which continue to refuse to help.

Italy simply cannot handle the processing, registration, care, and the granting of asylum to all those who enter through the external borders of the EU. To sum up my part of this debate the main problem of this issue is, that we don't need financial support for countries that accept migrants, instead of that we need a transfer of the migrants to help the frontline countries and that is something that every country can do. It's the cohesion that holds us side to side and that's also the only way how we can function as a union all in all.

Germany: Now I would like to start to mention my first argument according to the topic if the European Union should offer financial support to countries that accept migrants.

The very first argument that I have to clarify is that Migrants are very good for the economy. Migrants are a wide range of educational levels and skill levels, from unlearned work to highly skilled workers. In various ways migrant workers have become important parts of economic growth and development all around the world. It is clear that well-managed immigration can contribute to economic growth, generate jobs and innovation, increase competitiveness and help to counteract the effects of aging and population decline. In other words, more and more countries need immigration. But less are ready to admit it. The reason therefore is, that a lot of governments are scared to accept migrants because they cannot even think about how to finance all that. And that is the point when it is time to introduce financial support for countries that accept migrants. You cannot even think about how many costs are connected to the acceptation of migrants in a country. Let me just list a few for you: Check their ID; Get translators; Organize security guides during the process with asylum seekers; Build refugee centers; Transportation costs. These are the costs for the acceptation of migrants but there is also a morally important reason why the European Union should offer financial support to countries that accept migrants. With that offer of

Croatia: Financing countries that accept migrants would lead to an economic crisis in the EU.

EU already has a great burden on its own, so this would make the situation even worse. Usually, migrants are not in a good financial situation, and quite often they come to a new country illegally. Unfortunately, they are a big burden for the countries that receive them. They make heavy use of social welfare, and often overload public education systems. For example, illegal immigrants alone have already cost the United States billions of taxpayer-funded dollars for medical services. In addition, half a billion dollars each year are spent to keep illegal immigrant criminals in American prisons. The money spent to build and maintain schools for immigrant children, and to teach them, takes away from the education of current schools, existing students, and taxpayers. This is unfair. Increasing social and economic protections and rights for migrants means increasing migration and increasing benefits that migrants receive from societies. This could be a burden that a state's welfare system is not capable of handling. Increasing migration leads to dissatisfaction among the population in receiving countries. Increasing protections of migrant rights has the general effect of increasing migration. Indeed, one policy goal of many migrant rights activists is for open borders and free and unrestricted migration across them. A

financial support maybe the European Union could reach the target, that other countries that actually don't accept migrants will change their opinion and they will maybe accept migrants from that day on because they would not have to pay all the costs for the acceptation by themselves. This could lead to a strengthening of the solidarity in-between European countries and in the end that is what holds us together. To sum up my part of this debate the main problem according to the topic of this debate is that too many countries don't want to accept migrants because they are afraid of the costs of the integration procedure and in that point the financial support would be a great idea to encourage those countries to think about accepting migrants once again. We think it's a good idea to offer financial support, that's what we stand for.

Portugal: Financial support is necessary to countries that receive migrants so that the tax burden on its population is not as big.

Hosting migrants, especially with the great number of refugees that have come into Europe in the past few years, requires a lot of money. Without financial support, if countries were to host migrants in an economically sustainable way, they would have to get funds somehow. And of course, as we all know, the main channel of money to the state within a country is through taxes. This of course means the middle class would be overcharged with increased taxes, like in an economic crisis. The problem is that more than a few European countries are already facing hard financial situations and their right to family reunification would also increase migration. This can be problematic in many countries. It may worsen overpopulation problems, increase tensions between ethnic and/or religious groups, and raise unemployment rates. The economies of many receiving countries are barely managing to fight unemployment. If migrants receive further protection, they will take more jobs, making it harder for citizens to find employment. Everybody should have the opportunity to work in his home country, but the economic protection of migrants overcrowds receiving countries, driving up unemployment. In America, for example, between 40 and 50 percent of wage-loss among low-skilled workers is caused by immigration, and almost two million American workers lose their jobs every year because of immigration. In addition to unemployment problems, overcrowding can have a variety of negative consequences affecting air pollution, traffic, sanitation, and quality of life. So, why are migrants deserving of "protection"? It should be the other way around: the national workers of a state deserve protection from migrant workers and the jobs they are taking.

Romania: 1. Immigrants who are going to a country illegally or without a good and favorable purpose for the country should not be helped if they do not bring a certain positive aspect, including work.

2. No reward should be given if those who come in a country do not own a citizenship or do not involve themselves in the way a country is conducted.

3. Giving financial support will mean an increase in the number of people who come to European and that might result in another European refugee

implications which include, of course, much heavier taxes. It's neither sustainable nor balanced for these countries to have the increased financial effort of hosting refugees and it is definitely not sustainable for the average citizen to bear the tax burden. This is why financial support is necessary. It relieves the population of the heavy taxes that would have to be implemented while also providing countries with the financial means to host the migrants and supply them with the best conditions possible to settle and thrive in a new, unknown world, contributing to a better and easier integration.

crisis, this presenting a risk for overpopulation and loss of culture.

4. It is unfair to give financial support to those who come from another places in contrast to helping those who are living there and are giving a real benefit to their country.

Motion 2: Member states of the European Union should add more border control.

Definition: Border controls are measures taken by a country or a bloc of countries to monitor its borders in order to regulate the movement of people, animals and goods.

Proposition	Opposition
Croatia: It is crucial to keep track of all the migrants who have entered the country in order to ensure that once the situation in their home country gets peacefully resolved they return there safely. To begin with, the system of monitoring and keeping records of migrant movements in an EU country could be done much easier if border control was added; it would mean getting more precise data on the data and number of migrants	**Romania:** The main issue we are talking here is the fact that further border control and regulations are very demanding in terms of human as well as economic resources. Some countries, say for example Hungary or Slovenia, that are primarily targeted by this policy, simply do not have enough police trained and ready to take this task; which would take some few thousand trained men and women to be done.

who have crossed the border. This would vice versa mean that legislative bodies of an EU country could easily follow their path: e.g. where they have settled, if they have been successfully integrated into the society and employed, accepted the country's rules, customs and laws. Not only that, but since a great number of migrants arrives from other continents, bringing diseases and conditions that Europe has dealt with long ago, monitoring migrants would prevent spreading of such diseases into EU countries and offer them better healthcare and healing.

The problem goes on because if, let's say, Hungary starts the training of enough personnel to man the whole border, it would still take them a few years until all of them will finish training and will be able to start their work. It is therefore clear that when it comes to the issue of such an unprecedented increase in funding, not all of the EU countries are financially or economically stabile enough to endure such a huge proposed budget, which would definitely lead to destabilization of less prosperous member states that have been hit by a recent economic crisis. The proposed budget would increase to €34.9 billion, up from €13 billion in the current period.

Romania: More countries within EU and Schengen Area could also cooperate in order this goal; for example, a joint team of French and Italian personnel could work on diverting some of the overwhelming numbers of immigrants coming to Italy via the Mediterranean Sea to some ports in France, for example Marseille, or any port that has had an easy time receiving and hosting immigrants in comparison to some ports in Italy that have received overwhelming amounts of immigrants, such as Genova, Taranto, Palermo or Livorno.

Croatia: Adding more border control would mean huge yet unnecessary amount of money that all EU countries would have to give out in order for the harsher control to be carried out.
To begin with, as an example of such an act, Hungary's right-wing prime minister Viktor Orbán, last year called on the EU to co-finance fences along its shared borders with Serbia and Croatia. A commission statement said its funding was "aimed at ensuring proper control of borders, not closing them. The commission has never financed fences and will not do so under the new EU budget either." This only goes to prove that in the 21st century, we should be opening and not closing the borders in the face of migrants fleeing from war, hunger or human rights abuse.

Germany:- Over the past decade, the migratory crisis and the terrorist attacks in several member states have highlighted the need to reinforce the EU's external borders. Especially, the 13 November Paris attacks, which killed 130 people and prompted an urgent rethink of the Schengen agreement.
The Schengen agreement was established between some European
countries and made it possible for the inhabitants of those countries, wich signed it, to move freely around Europe. It also permitted goods to be transported between different European countries without significant border control and without

Portugal:
Europe cannot either economically nor socially cope now or in a near future with having to spend millions of euros to help migrants that are already here and coming in everyday an at the same time attract more migrants by facilitating the economical side of the question.

taxes Schengen is often critized by nationalists and Eurosceptic who say it is an open door for illegal migrants and criminals. And, after all, aren't t they right?

Portugal: Open internal borders can potentially pose a security risk if information is not sufficiently shared. Existing tools such as the Schengen Information System should be more intensively used and improved, and this should be an integral part of the plans to restore the Schengen agreement. Investment in security is strongly needed and Member States must improve the sharing of information and put in place co-operation channels based on mutual trust. One way of achieving that is through the creation of an EU information sharing agency and add more border controls that can protect
and restrict access to those who can cause harm to the countries and to those who use the frontiers for illegal traffic. Furthermore, existing agencies should receive a strong task as well as the means and resources to act effectively. However, citizens' privacy and rights must be safeguarded in all measures taken.

Germany: Also anyone who advocates border controls at the European unions internal borders must also demand them at the borders of the federal states and provinces / regions within the larger EU states such as Germany, France or Italy. The idea that more border controls could keep away more crime in a country is simply wrong because a much bigger part of the committed crimes in a country is committed by someone who lives in the same country so more border patrol would not keep away crime automatically. As public security cameras has already shown, controlling postpones crime, but does not fix it. People will find other ways and nobody can control every everything.
Slovenia, that are primarily targeted by this policy, simply do not have enough police trained and ready to take this task; which would take some few thousand trained men and women to be done.

The debate competition in Aveiro, Portugal

- April 2019 -

Motion 1: THB that globalization threatens national identity

Proposition	Opposition
Romania: National identity is defined through culture. People need objects that are palpable to assert their belonging to a certain. Products that belong to a certain culture facilitate this process. But, Cultural products are consumed because of their popularity and their accessibility, not necessarily because of their origins. Because of this, through globalization, that implies accesibiltiy to information from other cultures, the population starts consuming the majority of	**Croatia:** Globalization has enabled the increase in information, which in turn has become available to billions of people around the world. Without globalization, it would have been difficult to find out about certain ideas or texts, for example. Now, with globalization, people have access to movies, music, and sports from different countries and cultures. Also, globalization has allowed collaborations at high levels; people from around the world can

products from other countries. This is happening for a couple of reasons. Firstly, some more developed countries used their funds to develop their entertainment industry which monopolize other countries' developing markets by advertisements. Secondly, there are countries that are dominating at an international level, and this domination is generated by their positive image and their accessibility of their culture. A good example would be the import of cultural goods from the USA in East Europe, after the Cold War.

connect to create art, or start up an organization, for example. Globalization provides greater levels of mobility, increased interaction with other cultures within multicultural urban settings, more globally aware educational programs in schools and universities, and so on. It may provide the resources necessary to shape attitudes of cultural openness and tolerance, pluralism, empathy and responsibility. Globalization broadens the range of cultural experiences that we can have. Before globalization, we were only able to participate in our own culture. As globalization has continued, we have come to be able to enjoy aspects of many other cultures. Because of globalization, we can have a much richer cultural life.

Germany: For less developed countries in particular, globalization poses quite different dangers: For while the development state is more of sales market for the industrialized nations, domestic economies can suffer greatly from the consequences of their influence. An example that has caused a stir in recent years is the export of food to Africa. In the EU too much fruit and vegetables are produced – because the laws of the market don't work. Because, in order to spare agriculture, the EU pays subsides to businesses that are linked to the amount of food produced – whether it is needed or not, much of this overgrown tomato and cucumber is simply destroyed. However, many things also end up on the world market and are shipped especially to Africa. Despite the low wages, it is impossible for local farmers to compete with low prices – which are also a fault of low productivity. This makes it impossible to build up a functioning African agriculture.

Portugal: Globalization is an opportunity to promote cultures. With the increase in social and mass-media popularity, we can now communicate easier and with more people than ever. Therefore, many people seized the opportunity and made the best of it by promoting their own cultural products. For example many Romanian artists created clothing collections starring the Romanian national blouse (ia) which became world-wide known. Every single day, we get the opportunity to choose freely what we want to wear to feel the best. Firstly, it is wrong to assume that because someone doesn't like his national clothing, he is disrespecting his culture, as it isn't limited to this, and it also goes against that person's personal choice. Second of all, if someone chooses to wear a Hawaiian shirt it doesn't mean he identifies with that culture, nor that for the national day he won't wear traditional clothing. For example, now many countries benefit from tourism, due to people finding out about their art, culture and practices.

Croatia: Globalization inevitably leads to not only disparate places in the world becoming "the same" but also them being "Westernized" as part of massive global movement. At the national and local levels this convergence has been manifested for example in the striking

Romania: Humans' subjectivity protects national identity regardless of globalization. Globalization is not simply homogenization, but quite on the contrary. People are not mere objects of cultural influence, but subjects who reject or integrate culture. The sense of

uniformity of administrative structures and practices, social policy and educational practices. Such absorptive tendencies are especially notable among the youth who are highly attuned to popular cultural trends and massively exposed to foreign-based media. Consequently, one must notice that the more a given region is exposed to globalization, the more intense the absorption of Western culture tends to be especially among younger generation. A good example of such a threat brought to the society by globalization processes are tradition-oriented countries, where the trends of globalization result in creating young elites who can afford to reproduce Western advertising, fashion, film.

togetherness brought by globalization is not in conflict with diversity. People become much more concerned about their own culture. Since we construct our identities based on our own culture, we will ultimately defend it. Culture is not only what we wear or eat, but mainly how we relate to one another, how we behave, how we are educated, social practices. For example, regardless of what we wear or eat, in Romania we will still take off our shoes when entering a house, and the Portuguese and French will still kiss each other when they greet.

Romania: Globalization reduces the impact of national culture. People nowadays are becoming more skeptical thus resulting in a need of real, empirical arguments to define their belonging to a certain nation, relating better to something visual. Stuart Hall said that "National heritage is the material embodiment of the spirit of nation". This national heritage is on the verge of being lost due to the threat that globalization represents. People, after being exposed to other cultures, may diminish their interest in their own culture or may take it for granted. This happens in two ways: Evolved countries promoted it trying to achieve cultural monopole or they achieve a dominant status generated by their universal character of culture which appeals to others. A good example is represented by the import of traditions and values from USA such as Halloween and Christmas which is not anymore about the birth of Jesus but about presents and Santa Claus. And this import erodes the traditional values and indigenous cultural identity, being it laic, social or religious. Taken in consideration all that said, the amalgamation of culture brought by globalization represents a corruption and a threat to our sense of belonging and therefore to our national identity.

Germany: Our first argument against the statement is that without globalization we would not be as diverse as we are now. This globalization has enabled several countries to agree on peace. As a "victim" of globalization, I am glad that this is the case, because without it I would not be standing here. Through globalization my family would never have dared to take the step to Germany. Without globalization the exchange between the countries would not have been possible at all. For example, we would not be able to speak many languages internally and would therefore not be able to communicate with each other. That would be quite fatal for the world, because this is where the exchange comes into play again. We would be missing important things such as some food, for example. If we could not communicate, we would not even get to food. After all, no country is growing anything.

Motion 2: THB that the European Union should have a unitary external policy

Proposition

Croatia: It would enable EU to act as a single and fierce unitary actor in the international arena
Currently there are 28 member states forming the EU, all of which possess diverse external policy approaches, preferences and positions. Having a unitary policy would empower EU's role as a multilevel and semi-supranational policy to carry out dialogues and generate common approaches internationally. What's more, instead of individual member states having their representatives in crucial institutions such as NATO, a unitary external policy would mean a "seat" for the EU per se and it would give it the possibility to speak with a single voice in external security matters, especially as it is a well-known fact that EU is not considered an equal partner, as the rest of actors, by the United Nations. Even today most observers analyze Europe as 28 separate countries — even though doing so generates geopolitical nonsense. To see why, consider one recent example: Russia's foreign-policy options after its invasion of Ukraine triggered Western sanctions. Many predicted that China's rising economic weight meant the Kremlin would surely turn to Beijing. In July 2015, leading newspapers across Eurasia ran the same story reporting that "China has emerged as Russia's largest trading partner as Moscow turns east, seeking markets in Asia in the face of Western sanctions."
Although the Lisbon Treaty has introduced certain institutional changes in foreign policy to provide EU with one voice, it still requires the continued support of member states' national action to effectively implement EU foreign policy which obstructs the closure of the capabilities-expectations gap as the EU does not have the capabilities to be an equal partner due to its *sui generis* statute. A good example of the need for EU to have a unitary external policy is without doubt the current migration crisis in Syria and other countries which border the Mediterranean , the reason being its lack of a

Opposition

Germany: Whoever picks the advantages of the EU, but at the same time does not want to abide by the rules, cannot have a future in such an alliance like a common foreign policy. This applies to Great Britain as well as to Poland and Hungary, who do not even abide by the democratic principles. How do you want to build up a common foreign policy with countries that have their own decisions and are willing to realize them as they would like to do, those are countries with absolutely different economic standards and opinions concerning foreign policy, if there would be an instance which would try to make decisions for 28 other countries, we as the opposition side are clearly sure that this is not going to work, citizens of those countries will start to feel worthless and there will be a higher level of dissatisfaction than you could even think about.
What the government tries to do is not the first step into this direction, it is the second step
But before you start to think about the question if something like a common foreign policy for the European union is realizable you should first of all start to think about the question if something like that is realizable in general! Every country is likely to have their own culture, own opinions concerning different motions and own way of acting– the way that the government tries to go is absolutely the wrong one so please do not vote for this motion!

coherent response and coordination efforts as well as divisions about migration, which have not met the international expectations of a unitary response, thus preventing the closure of the CEG. As mentioned earlier, coherence in foreign policy is one of the criticisms to the EU which prevents it from closing the CEG in this realm as without having unitary policies, going in the same direction , the European Union cannot respond as a global actor and influence others internationally.

Romania: Having a unitary external policy would lead to an equalization in the statute of every member country. This will give the nations the same starting point when negotiating their foreign affairs. This would be a benefit to economy, protection and social relations, meaning a greater market, better defined army service and simpler communication. Moreover, all countries will have a say when external laws are developed and may shape them to be in their favor. In this way small or underdeveloped countries will have the opportunity to grow and shape their future. For instance, as Woodrow T. Wilson said "We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.", unity is encouraged due to the support the big economies would bring to the lesser members. Additionally, a unitary external policy would result in a stronger bond between the member countries of the EU which leads to the well-being of both the states and the Union, which gains more power in the field of international politics. Considering all that said, the EU should support this matter as it would be in their best interest.

Croatia: Members of the EU are often not equal when it comes to making decisions.
The member states that have recently joined the EU don't have the same power as those who have been members for a long time. The goals of a unitary external policy state a free and fair trade, solidarity and mutual respect between people of the EU. However, that cannot be achieved if the rich members don't encourage and support the less developed ones. All the EU states have an obligation to share their opinions on the external policy, but that obligation is not defined anywhere in the official documents. Therefore, the policy cannot be achieved if some prior obligations are not respected. Also, when it comes to some important issues, "more important" member states fail to ask other states their opinion; they simply deal with it among themselves, ignoring the rights of others.

Croatia: All EU members would have the same rights and obligations, which would contribute to unity of the EU.
If the EU continues to work towards a unitary external policy, it would make the member states grow closer. While they are trying to achieve a single goal, which is equally important to all member states, politicians would work together more closely. Also, the European Union has a responsibility to create the necessary conditions (political, social, etc.) for preventing a war. It can't be prevented unless the EU states work

Romania: The EU considered itself the vanguard of an emerging liberal international order, n which multilateral diplomacy creates elaborate rule-based regimes regulating all dimensions of globalized exchanges and cooperation. A common external policy is overly optimistic and a focus on threats and interests.
This policy means disadvantages' for small countries or the ones that don't have such a preeminent role on EU[a]s political scene, because in real life size truly matters. The

together for a perfect common security policy. A political union like the EU cannot allow its member states to face the challenges on their respective borders alone. In order to make a foreign policy that is truly common to all members, the states must work together to identify the risks they face and combine their individual perspectives to come up with possible solutions.

fundamental rationale for moving toward a stronger common policy is obvious; given the inevitable long-term distribution of economic and political weight away from Europe, individual member states, especially the larger ones, find it increasingly different to protect their interests of their own. For example, an interesting fact is Emanuel Macron's speech, the president of France. In 2017, he set out an ambitious version for the future of the European Union with proposals just about every aspect of European integration, but he had nothing to say about making European diplomacy more effective.

For all the students and teachers, parents, representatives of local and central authorities, ACORD Association who have been actively involved in

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