

SHAPING EUROPE



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Sfinansowane przez
Unię Europejską

COPERNICUS UPPER SECONDARY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Tarnobrzeg/Poland



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Participants of Shaping EU mobility in front of the European Parliament

Shaping Europe: How EU Institutions Work in Practice

Our European Journey – Learning, Discovering and Connecting

Welcome to our e-book!

We are students who took part in an international project called “*Shaping Europe: How EU Institutions Work in Practice*”. It was an amazing opportunity to learn more about the European Union, meet students from other countries and discover how European institutions work in real life.

Our adventure combined online activities with face-to-face meetings. Before the mobility, we worked together on digital platforms such as TwinSpace and Padlet. These activities helped us get to know each other and prepare for our international experience.

During our journey, we explored some of the most important European institutions. We took part in a virtual visit to the Court of Justice of the European Union in Luxembourg, visited the European Central Bank in Frankfurt and discovered the European Quarter in Strasbourg. One of the highlights was our visit to the European Parliament, where we learned how important decisions affecting millions of European citizens are made.

However, this project was about much more than visiting institutions. We discussed the advantages and challenges of the euro, compared different national currencies and shared our opinions about European identity. We also interviewed people in the streets, asking them an important question: “*What does it mean to be European?*” Their answers helped us understand that Europe is not only about politics, laws and money. It is also about people, shared values, diversity and cooperation.

We learned by doing things together. We created posters about EU institutions using Canva, composed our own songs about the European Union with Suno and completed creative challenges while exploring European cities. Working in international teams helped us improve our English, develop our digital skills and learn how to express our opinions, listen to others and cooperate despite cultural differences.

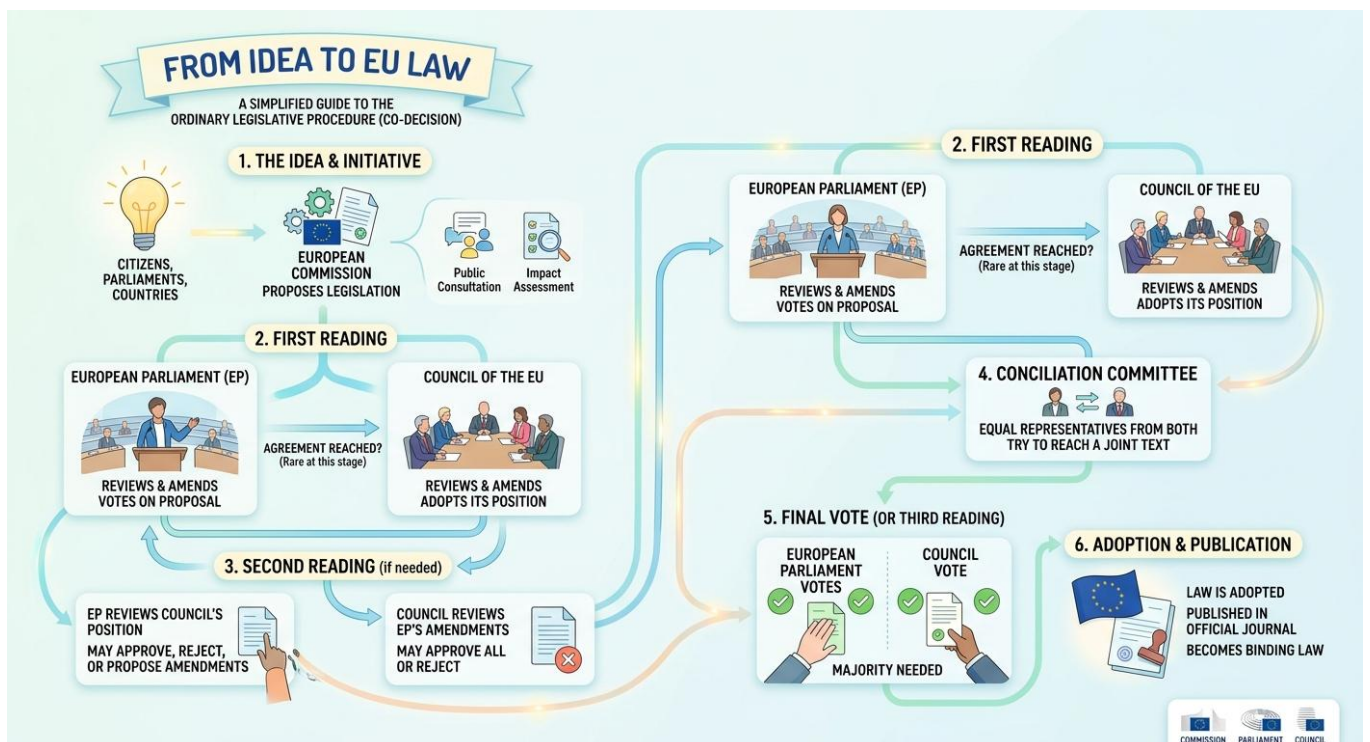
For us, this mobility was a chance to see Europe from a new perspective. We discovered that being European means having opportunities, respecting different cultures and taking responsibility for our common future.

In this e-book, we would like to share our knowledge, experiences and memories with you. We hope it will inspire you to explore the European Union, ask questions and become more interested in the world around you.

Europe is not just a place on the map. It is a community we are all part of.

Enjoy reading and discovering Europe with us!

What we learnt about institutions:



KEY EU INSTITUTIONS & THEIR LOCATIONS

1 EUROPEAN COMMISSION BRUSSELS



Proposes laws,
manages EU policies

2 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT STRASBOURG



Amends & adopts laws,
accepts/rejects budget

Brussels as
its second
meeting place

3 COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION



Represents governments,
adopts laws with Parliament

COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EU

LUXEMBOURG



Interprets EU law,
ensures equal application

EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

FRANKFURT



Manages the Euro,
ensures price stability

EUROPEAN COURT OF AUDITORS

LUXEMBOURG



Checks EU funds
are used correctly

EUROPEAN COUNCIL

BRUSSELS



Defines general political
direction and priorities

Natalia 3C

What Does It Mean to Be European?

To me, being European means being part of a community of many different nations that share common history and values. Europe is a continent with a long and sometimes difficult past, but it has learned important lessons from wars and conflicts. Today, being European means choosing cooperation instead of fighting and dialogue instead of division.

I think that being European is also about respecting diversity. In Europe we have many languages, cultures, and traditions. Every country is different, but at the same time we can travel, study, and work in other European countries thanks to the European Union. This makes us more open-minded and tolerant. We can learn from each other and understand different perspectives.

Another important aspect of being European is democracy and human rights. European countries believe that people should have freedom of speech, equal rights, and the possibility to decide about their future. These values are very important because they help create fair and safe societies.

For me, being European also means feeling responsible for the future of our continent. Young people should care about the environment, social justice, and peace. Europe is not only about the past, but also about building a better future together. That is why I am proud to be European.

What does it mean to be European?

For me being European means being part of a community that is built on both diversity and unity. Europe is not one country, one language or one culture. It is a continent full of differences, but at the same time we share many values and a

history that connects us. I think being European is about understanding these differences and still feeling that we belong together.

First of all, being European means respecting democracy, freedom and human rights. These values are very important in most European countries. People have the right to express their opinions, choose their leaders and live the way they want, as long as they respect others. Europe has experienced many difficult moments in history, such as wars and political conflicts. Because of that, peace and cooperation are especially important today. I think that remembering our past helps us avoid repeating the same mistakes.

Another important aspect of being European is cultural diversity. In Europe we have many languages, traditions and lifestyles. Every country has its own identity, but we also influence each other. For example, we listen to music from different countries, watch foreign movies and try food from all over Europe. Traveling is relatively easy, so we can experience other cultures personally. This makes us more open-minded and tolerant. In my opinion, diversity is one of the greatest strengths of Europe.

Being European also means having opportunities and responsibilities. Young people can study abroad, meet international friends and learn new perspectives. Programs like Erasmus give students a chance to grow, become more independent and improve their language skills. But being European is not only about benefits. It also means caring about important issues, such as climate change, social equality and supporting countries that need help. We should not only enjoy our rights, but also take responsibility for the future of our continent.

For me personally, being European means feeling that I can belong in more than one place. I am proud of my own country and culture, but at the same time I feel connected to other European nations. I think that being European teaches us openness, respect and curiosity about the world. It encourages us to learn foreign languages, travel and build friendships across borders.

In conclusion, being European is not just about geography. It is about shared values, history, cooperation and diversity. It means learning from the past, living peacefully in the present and working together for a better future. I believe that being European is both a privilege and a responsibility, and I am proud to be part of this community.

Martyna 2B



What Does It Mean to Be European?

To me, being European is much more than just living on a specific continent. It is a feeling of belonging to a big, diverse family, where everyone has their own story, but we all share the same values. As a young person, I see being European as a mix of being proud of where I come from and being open to everything the rest of the world has to offer.

One of the most beautiful things about Europe is the idea of "unity in diversity." We have so many different languages, traditions and styles of life, yet we manage to live together in peace. Being European means that I can appreciate the history of my own country, Poland, while also feeling a connection to a student in Spain or a musician in Sweden. It teaches me tolerance and empathy, because it shows that even if we speak different languages, we often dream about the same things: a safe future, good education and the freedom to be ourselves.

For my generation, being European is also about freedom. We are lucky to live in a time where borders are almost invisible. We can travel, learn new things and make friends from different countries without any major problems. This freedom is a great privilege, but it also comes with a responsibility. To be European means to care about human rights, democracy and equality. It means standing up for others and making sure that our continent stays a welcoming place for everyone.

Moreover, being European means looking at the future with hope. We live in a world that is changing very fast and I believe that by working together, we can face challenges like climate change or new technologies much better than if we were alone. Programs like Erasmus+ are the best proof of this, they allow us to exchange ideas and build a better future together.

In conclusion, being European is a mindset. It is about being curious, respectful and ready to learn. It is the pride of having such a rich heritage and the excitement of being part of modern, international community. For me, it is an invitation to be a global citizen while keeping my heart in Europe.

Amelia 2B



What does it mean to be European?

To me being European is not about where you live on a map. It is not about having a European passport. Being European is about the history of Europe, the things that Europe has been through the culture of Europe and the way that people in Europe think. Europe is a place where many different countries, languages and traditions all exist together. I think this diversity is what makes Europe strong. When I think about Europe I think about all the things that have happened in Europe. Europe has been home to civilizations and now it is home to many modern democracies. The history of Europe has shaped the people who live in Europe. Europe has had a lot of wars, revolutions and conflicts. It has also had scientific discoveries, philosophical ideas and artistic achievements that have influenced the whole world.

Being European today means understanding this history of Europe and learning from it. It means knowing that peace and stability are not guaranteed and that we cannot take them for granted. After two world wars many European countries decided that working together was better than fighting against each other. This decision changed the future of Europe. Now countries that used to fight against each other trade, study and work together in Europe. Being European also means respecting the differences between people in Europe. In Europe people speak different languages, follow different religions and have different political views. Despite all these differences many people in Europe believe in rights and personal

freedom. I think being means accepting that someone can live differently from you and still deserve to be treated with dignity and respect in Europe. Europe is also a place with a lot of culture. The cities in Europe are full of museums, theaters, libraries and historic buildings. Literature, music, architecture and art are all part of life in Europe. At the time Europe is a modern and innovative place. Old traditions and new technologies and ideas all mix together in Europe.

Being European means feeling connected to this heritage of Europe and also being open to things and change in Europe. It also means being critical and asking questions. People in Europe are encouraged to think for themselves and to express their opinions. I think this is a part of what it means to be European. Europe is not perfect. Europe still has problems, such as economic inequality, migration issues and political tensions in Europe. However being means not ignoring these problems in Europe but trying to solve them by talking and working together in Europe. It is about balancing your country's identity with an European identity. You can feel strongly connected to your country. Also feel like you are part of a larger European community in Europe. These two things do not have to be mutually exclusive. Being European also means taking responsibility for the future of Europe. It means caring about democracy the environment and social justice in Europe. Young people in Europe travel study abroad. Meet others from different cultures in Europe, which helps them understand each other better in Europe.

Thanks to cooperation between countries in Europe people can move freely share knowledge and build friendships across borders in Europe. This creates a sense of unity that goes beyond nationality in Europe. In the end being means sharing common values remembering the lessons of Europe's history respecting diversity in Europe and believing that working together is better than fighting in Europe. Being European means being part of a community and feeling connected, to the culture and history of Europe. It means being proud of Europe and what Europe has accomplished while also being aware of the challenges Europe still faces and being ready to contribute to the future of Europe.

Maciej 3a

What Erasmus Mobility Taught Me

Taking part in the Erasmus mobility program was one of the most valuable experiences in my life. During my trip to Frankfurt and Strasbourg, I learned much more than I expected. It was not only about traveling and visiting new places, but also about understanding different cultures, meeting new people, and seeing Europe from another perspective.

In Frankfurt, I had the opportunity to visit important European financial institutions connected with the functioning of the European Union. Seeing these places in real life helped me understand how international cooperation works and how important these institutions are for European countries. I also explored the city itself, which impressed me with its modern atmosphere and organization. What I appreciated the most, however, were the conversations with German people. Thanks to them, I could learn more about their mentality, lifestyle, and the way they look at the world. It showed me that even though we come from different countries, we often share similar values and goals.

The second part of my Erasmus experience took place in Strasbourg, where I had more time to fully experience everyday French life. I talked to many people, discovered local traditions, and observed how the French enjoy their daily routines and social life. This taught me to appreciate cultural diversity and to be more open-minded. Strasbourg also gave me the chance to visit the European Parliament and other European institutions nearby. It was inspiring to see places where important decisions for Europe are made. I realized how important communication, cooperation, and mutual respect are in international relations.

Erasmus mobility also helped me improve my social and communication skills. I became more confident speaking with people from different backgrounds and more independent while traveling and adapting to new environments. I learned that stepping outside my comfort zone can lead to unforgettable experiences and personal growth.

Overall, Erasmus taught me openness, independence, and a broader understanding of Europe and its cultures. It was an experience that changed the way I see the world and helped me grow both personally and academically.

Filip Gurdak-a participant of Shaping EU mobility/March 2026

What European Values Are Important to Me?

There are many European values, but some of them are especially important to me. First of all, I value freedom. Freedom of speech and freedom of choice allow people to express their opinions and live according to their beliefs. Without freedom, society cannot develop properly.

Another important value for me is equality. In Europe, everyone should be treated the same way, regardless of gender, religion, or background. I believe that equal opportunities in education and work are necessary to create a fair society. Discrimination should not have a place in modern Europe.

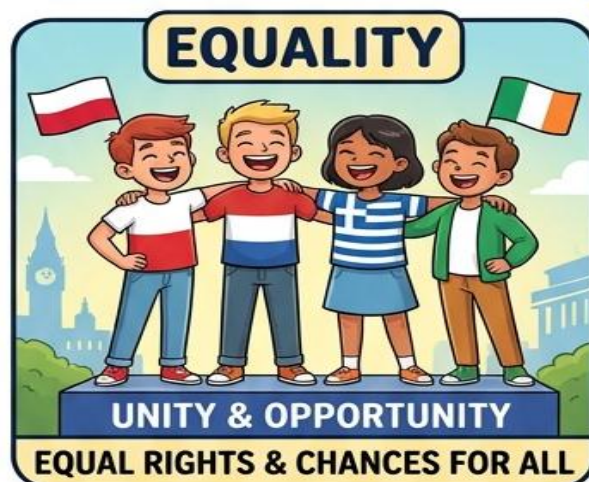
I also think that solidarity is a key European value. Countries should support each other in difficult times, for example during economic crises or natural disasters. People should also help those who are weaker or in need. This builds trust and unity.

Finally, respect for human rights is essential. Every person deserves dignity and protection. These values make Europe a safe place to live.

In my opinion, freedom, equality, solidarity, and human rights are the foundations of Europe. They are important to me because they shape the kind of society I would like to live in.

Natalia 3C

EMBRACING OUR EU VALUES



UNITED IN DIVERSITY. CORE EU VALUES.

Ksawier 3a

What European values are important to you?

For me one of the most important European values is respect for human dignity. Every person should be treated as equally valuable regardless of their origin, beliefs or social status. This idea is visible in many aspects of European life such as laws protecting individual rights and social system that try to support people in need. It creates a sense that society exist not only for the strongest but is accessible to everyone.

Another value I consider essential is freedom. This includes freedom of thought expression and choice. People should be able to share opinions, practice their culture and live according to their minds without fear. Freedom also means responsibility because individual choices affect others. In a diverse society this balance between personal liberty and respect for others becomes very important.

Mentioned earlier diversity is also something valuable in our society. Europe is rich in languages, traditions and histories and this variety should be protected rather than reduced. Diversity encourages creativity and mutual understanding. It reminds people that there are many ways to live and think. Preserving local cultures while staying open to others creates a dynamic and inclusive society.

Finally, what I believe is the most important is solidarity. People should support one another especially in difficult times. Solidarity can be seen when communities help those affected by crisis or when stronger regions support weaker ones. It builds trust and a sense of belonging. It shows that being European is not only about rights, but also about caring for others.

These values together form a vision of Europe that is humane cooperative, diverse and compassionate. They are not always perfectly realized but they remain important goals that guide how Europeans can live together with dignity and respect.

European Values

Different people – One Europe

SHARED VALUES • STRONGER TOGETHER




HUMAN DIGNITY

Every person has inherent value, respect and the right to live a free and dignified life.



FREEDOM

Freedom to think, express yourself, choose your path and build your future.



DEMOCRACY

Your voice matters. Democracy means participation, dialogue and a say in the future of our societies.



EQUALITY

Equal rights, opportunities and fair treatment for all, regardless of gender, race, religion, background or sexual orientation.



RULE OF LAW

Justice, security and protection of your rights for a safer and fairer society.



RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Everyone's rights and freedoms must be protected and upheld.



DIVERSITY

Our differences make us stronger. Diversity brings new ideas, cultures and perspectives.



SOLIDARITY

We support each other – in our communities, across borders and in times of need.



SUSTAINABILITY

A green, healthy and sustainable Europe today and for future generations.

Together we build a better Europe




European values –
our common future



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What European values are important to me?

European values are really important to me. They play a big role in shaping the way we live today. When I think about what makes Europe special I think about values like freedom, democracy, equality, tolerance and solidarity. These European values are not about politics they are also about how we live our daily lives and how we treat each other. One of the values that matters the most to me is freedom. I think freedom is really important because it gives us the chance to say what we think believe what we want and make our choices. This means we can be who we want to be and live the life we want. I believe that everyone should be able to share their thoughts and opinions without being scared. Freedom also means we can choose what we want to study what job we want to do and how we want to live. It gives us the chance to follow our dreams and take care of ourselves. Democracy is another value that I think is essential.

Democracy is important because it gives us a say in how our countries are run. We get to vote for our leaders and have a voice in what happens. This means that our leaders are responsible to us and have to listen to what we want. I like that democracy teaches us to be responsible and to stay informed about what's happening. Equality is also really important to me. I think everyone should be treated the same no matter who they are, where they come from or what they believe. We should all have the chances to learn and work. If we are not equal it can cause a lot of problems. Divide us.. If we are equal we can work together and respect each other. I believe that if we are all equal we can all do our best and be happy. I also think that tolerance and respect for diversity are important European values. Europe is made up of different cultures, languages and traditions. To live together peacefully we need to be open and understanding. I think it is really important to listen to others even if we do not agree with them. If we are tolerant and respectful we can learn from each other. Make our communities better

. Solidarity is another value that I care about. It means helping each other when we need it and working together to make things better. Whether it is helping people after a disaster supporting people who are struggling or standing up for those who are treated unfairly solidarity makes our communities stronger. I believe that when we work together we can solve problems more easily than if we work alone.

Finally I think that respect for rights is essential. Every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. We all deserve to be safe and protected by the law. Human rights are the foundation of a stable society. We should always make sure to protect these rights. In the end the European values that matter the most to me are freedom, democracy, equality, tolerance, solidarity and respect for rights. These European values help create an open society where we can all

live with dignity and respect each other. I believe that if we follow these values we can build a better future for Europe and, for the whole world.

Maciej 3a





Funded by the European Union

The project has been funded with support of European Commission within Erasmus + programme. This publication reflects only the views of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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