European Commission

YOUrope FOR Youth

#EUnarrative

DEBATING EUROPE FOR 19-25 AND 26-34 YEAR OLDS

WHAT IS IT AND WHO IS IT FOR?

This note contains guidance for organising and running debates among 19-25 and 26-34 year olds on topics related to the European Union and its future. The activity is for youngsters wanting to discuss the EU's role in their lives and in the world, explore paths to achieve the future they want and develop ways to get involved.

WHY?

Holding a debate allows young people to discuss the future of Europe in a structured way. Research shows that young people want to contribute their thoughts and opinions on the future of Europe. Debates allow them to have conversations that matter, develop critical thinking and make their voices heard on an EU level, thus shaping the future of Europe itself.

WHAT ABOUT SUBJECTS TO DISCUSS?

For 19-25 year olds who are creating their own identity and critical mind, the aim is to stimulate reflection on questions such as how can the EU change the world? What are the solutions? How can I help?

For the 26-34 year olds freshly starting a professional career, the focus is more on making a difference and being able to contribute, so it considers issues such as what can we do to make a difference? How can we contribute to the future of Europe? How can I make my voice – as a group and a citizen – heard?

For both age groups, focusing on specific topics of interest is perhaps more appropriate rather than pondering general questions on why Europe matters. During the first phase of New Narrative for Europe, four areas emerged as being of particular interest to the youngsters questioned, then developed into 12 ideas for the future of Europe. The table below outlines some aspects of key future policy areas that specifically affect the 19-25 and 26-34 age groups or are of interest to them, with ideas for debate subjects, to be formulated into a debate question[1].

1 For more information and background, see the infographics on 12 ideas for the future of Europe, the animated clip on the European story and the backgrounders on the four main topics.

MOBILITY AND EMPLOYMENT

19-25 year olds

- The EU should offer wider opportunities for young people beyond Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps etc.
- Tackle the lack of relevant practical experience during university studies to enhance employability.
- Provide easy access to information for youngsters who want to move and work abroad to encourage youth employment.

26-34 year olds

- Better prepare youngsters to enable them to move abroad (e.g. language support, recognition of qualifications and skills).
- The EU should ban all unpaid internships.
- Improve the image of young people in the workplace.

MIGRATION, FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

19-25 year olds

- What can the EU do to promote peace and stability outside of the EU?
- What more can be done to tackle the migration crisis? How can the EU better support refugees and their integration?
- The EU should act as a role model of tolerance, diversity and openness.

26-34 year olds

- Should the EU have stronger military engagement worldwide?
- How can we help communities deal with the pressures of large scale population movements?

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

19-25 year olds

- Do more to get young people to participate in elections and to engage people living in smaller, rural and remote communities.
- Promote the EU and its values through volunteering.
- Develop creative, experiential, immersive learning experiences and cultural and arts events to enable young people to discuss policy issues that affect them and develop solutions.
- Promote critical thinking and research skills to combat fake news and extremism through citizen education.

26-34 year olds

- Provide central information resources for and with young people to promote knowledge about the EU.
- Overcome the gap between young people and EU institutions that feel distant and detached.
- Find a champion and role model who promotes youth rights but also understands how young people mobilise and engage.

ENVIRONMENT

19-25 year olds

- What is the best way to inform young people about climate change issues?
- Support recycling and positive environmental actions more widely.
- Develop apps that foster behaviour change.

26-34 year olds

- The EU should take a much stronger stance globally in promoting environmental protection.
- Make information about sustainable transport options across borders more easily accessible.
- The EU should go beyond recycling to also act to reduce waste and reuse materials.

SAMPLE RUNDOWN FOR A 75 MINUTES DEBATE[2] IN THE 'LINCOLN–DOUGLAS' FORMAT		
Timing (hh:mm)	**Action**	**Notes**
00:00 > 00:05	> Moderator introduction (5')	> Introducing New Narrative for Europe > Introducing this event > Explaining how it works > Housekeeping (e.g. cell phones off) > Introducing the topic > Conducting initial vote
00:05 > 00:15	> Team A (in favour) presents arguments (10') > Moderator introduces speakers and reminds them of their timings	> Team A Speaker 1
00:15 > 00:20	> Cross examination of Team A by Team B (5')	> Team B Speaker 2
00:20 > 00:25	> Team B (against) presents arguments (10')	> Team B Speaker 1
00:25 > 00:35	> Cross examination of Team B by Team A (5')	> Team A Speaker 2
00:35 > 00:40	> Moderator poll (5')	> Gives teams time to discuss rebuttals.
00:40 > 00:50	> Moderator handles questions from the floor (10')	> Could take three questions at a time to include more interventions > Teams give brief replies
00:50 > 00:55	> Concluding rebuttal Team A (5')	> Team A Speaker 3
00:55 > 01:03	> Concluding rebuttal and final statement Team B (8')	> Team B Speaker 3
01:03 > 01:06	> Final statement Team A (3')	> Team A Speaker 1
01:06 > 01.11	> Moderator conducts final vote and debriefs on changes from initial vote result (5')	> Compare results from first vote and final vote; > Questions participants who changed their minds – why did they do that? What argument made the difference?
01:11 > 01.15	> Moderator concludes and announces what happens next (4')	> Brief summary of debate > Thank speakers/teams, organisers and audience > Announce upcoming initiatives > End with a big round of applause

HOW DO YOU ORGANISE AND RUN A DEBATE?

For both these age groups, a suitable format is where one side presents its arguments and is then crossed examined by the other team. The roles are reversed, where the second team presents its arguments and is cross examined by the first, with the chance for both teams to present rebuttals before final conclusions. This format is generally referred to as a 'Lincoln-Douglas' debate.

For a 75-minute timeslot, the debate could be for teams of **two or three people**. For the older age group (26-34), which is probably more confident about speaking in public, you could even consider **just one person** representing each side of the argument. Other alternatives include asking external people to speak on each side (e.g. university professors, New Narrative for Europe ambassadors, local politicians).

2 This format can be lengthened to 90 minutes by inserting further rounds of presentation and or rebuttals, in which case team size could also be increased.

LOGISTICS

When fixing the date, avoid university exams or vacation time and give enough time for the participants to prepare content and rehearse. Consider the room and any special furniture and technical equipment needed (*e.g. desks and chairs, area for moderator, microphones, water for speakers, lectern, team badges, name badges for desks, recording the debate for later reference/use/sharing – note if you do this you will most likely have to obtain written consent from everyone featured in the video*). Make contingency plans (*e.g. backups in case a speaker is sick*).

HELPING TEAMS PREPARE

They may require space for team discussions, internet access for research, guidance on content, format and approach. There are many online resources available[3] to help preparations.

CHOOSING A MODERATOR

You will need someone to chair or moderate the event. Their presence is key to motivate and inspire the audience and encourage the speakers and manage the debate. They should be fully briefed[4] beforehand on the debate format and topic as well as the speakers and so forth, to be expanded with their own research. The moderator usually turns this information into an *event 'script'* of bullet points with timings, the introduction, the list of poll questions, the general conclusions and details on follow up activities. *Timekeeping* is a key part of moderating, ensuring all speakers keep to time for a smooth running event.

INVOLVING EVERYONE

To make your debate more interactive, prepare some poll questions in advance to put to the audience, also as a way to give teams time to refer on their rebuttals. Using yes/no questions will simplify voting. A show of hands will do or you could use more high-tech methods like polling apps. At the start of the debate, the audience could vote on the topic to be discussed, with these results later compared with the final vote as a kind of debrief. Time should be set aside for questions from the audience.

LOOKING BEYOND THE DEBATE

In the preparation phase, consider further activities to run afterwards, building on the momentum created by the debate. Options include:

- Preparing a report and/or video on the debate to share among participants and even wider (e.g. on YouTube or via social media accounts/pages).
- Pass on references to age-appropriate participants and other EU resources for further reading and research.
- Encourage youngsters to monitor and get involved in other initiatives on the future of Europe, civic participation and reaching out to their peers.
- Plan the next debate!

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3 For more information and background, check out the resources page on New Narratives for Europe website, including the 'Tips and tricks for debaters' PowerPoint.

4 The New Narratives for Europe resource centre contains a PowerPoint of 'Tips and tricks for moderators'.

ONLINE EU RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING AND RESEARCH

- *European Youth Portal New Narrative for Europe:* http://europa.eu/youth/nnfe
- *European Youth Flash Eurobarometer 455:* http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82294
- *Eurobarometer Infographic expressing solidarity:* https://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/2018_youth-02_eurobaro_infographic_expressing_solidarity.jpg
- *Eurobarometer Infographic priorities for EU actions:* https://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/2018_youth-02_eurobaro_infographic_priorities_for_eu_actions-ok2-05.jpg
- *Eurobarometer Infographic Voluntary Activities:* https://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/2018_youth-02_eurobaro_infographic_voluntary_activities-ok2-02.jpg
- *Eurobarometer Ideas for the future of EU:* https://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/2018_youth-02_eurobaro_infographic_ideas_for_the_future_eu.jpg
- *Eurobarometer Youth participation:* https://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/2018_youth-02_eurobaro_infographic_youth_participation.jpg
- *EU standard barometer June 2018:* http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/2180
- *Twelve ideas for the future of Europe:* https://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/12_ideas_for_the_future_of_europe.pdf
- *YOUrope for Youth Resource Centre – Tips and tricks for debaters*
- *YOUrope for Youth Resource Centre – Tips and tricks for moderators*
- *Erasmus+ programme:* http://erasmusprogramme.com/
- *European Solidarity Corps:* https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en
- *Eures – The European Job Mobility Portal:* https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/en/homepage
- *Youthwiki – Europe's online encyclopaedia in the area of national youth policies:* https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/youthwiki
- *European Youth Goals – views of young people from all over Europe:* http://youthgoals.eu
- *Europe 1957-2017: 60 years of peace, democracy, solidarity:* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqm9dda23YA
- *The European Story: 60 Years of Shared Progress:* http://ec.europa.eu/assets/epsc/files/the-european-story_epsc_web.pdf
- *Discover the European Union:* https://europa.eu/teachers-corner/quiz