



Why European Parliament? Advanced

Workshop outline by the Y Vote Project - info@yvote.eu

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About the workshop

The European Union and the concept about how it works is a complex system that we all heard about. But we need to understand it. How else can we “feel ever closer” to the EU? How can we have a critical look at it?

This workshop will teach participants on the distribution of power within the EU and the different categories of competences between EU, the member-states and the ones the two of them share, by presentation and by exercises. It will at the end look at participants own pros and cons of the current institutional set-up, and reflections should be linked to the next European Parliament elections.

Aims

- Participants know at least one EU exclusive, one shared and one [competence](#) that belongs to the member states.
- The participants know at least three good things and 3 problems of the current set up of the European Union.

Videos: After the workshop, shoot videos of 5-10 people

Social Media: Take pictures and/or shoot a few videos of the WS for social media. Update Y Vote instagram story (feel free to include other people here like organizers, participants or Y Vote team, if you are not comfortable with this task)



Prerequisites

- Participants: 15-30
- Trainers: One
- Room: Room where participants can freely move around and form a line of some kind (can be in a half-circle), as well as the possibility for four groups to sit together (ideally: chair and a table per group)
- Time: 90 minutes
- Materials required:
 - Crepe adhesive tape
 - Flipcharts papers - 8
 - Flipchart markers - around 6 at least (no preferences in colour)
 - Pens/pencils for all participants
- Preparation time: 15 mins

Pre-knowledge of participants

- Participants know the names of at least four different EU institutions and can name key competencies of two of them.
- Participants know milestones of the history of the EU in chronological order.

Preparation

- Prepare one flipchart
 - Title “Why European Parliament” or “Y European Parliament” or “YEP - Why European Parliament”
 - Write the aims on it and hang it visible for all on the wall
- Find the “Stakeholders YEP WS” in the Attachments and print them out or write each of them on one piece of paper
- Prepare three flipcharts:
 - Titles: “Exclusive competences”, “Shared competences” and “Supporting competences”
 - Print the document “Division of competences” from the attachments, cut them competence by competence and sort them by “Exclusive”, “Shared” and “Supporting”. Alternatively you can copy the competences onto pieces of paper.
- Prepare two flipcharts: one with “Pro” and one with “Con” above it
- Put one flipchart up with the title “If I could change one thing in the EU it will be...”. Participants can leave their suggestions when they leave the workshop.

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Session

Introduction (5 min)

- Welcome the participants
- Explain the aims and goals of the workshop and the structure of today's workshop
- Ask the participants why they think we should learn about the EU?

From institutions to lawmaking (10 min)

What is this block about? A quick recap of four of the EU institutions and the decision making process. Making sure that all participants are at least at the same level

- [Find presentation here](#)

European stakeholders (20 min)

What is this block about? Participants should be aware of the institutions and stakeholders involved in the political processes on the European level, and see that politics is not made in an EU institutional vacuum.

- Participants should be divided in 6 groups and receive a [stakeholder role](#) that they will have to explain on flipchart paper with their own words without putting the name of their given role on the flipchart paper. This is very important. The other participants must not see what the other groups received as roles. The trainer should tell the pax in the beginning all of the stakeholders that are used in the activity (it's ok if the trainer decided to write it down somewhere visible for the participants). (*less than 10 mins*)
- When each group is ready they should put their explanation on a visible place in the WS room. (*around 2 mins*)
- Each group should guess the other stakeholders and leave their suggestion with a sticky note while walking around freely. (around 2-3 mins)
- Each group briefly tells which stakeholder is which. (*around 5 mins*)

Competences (15 min)

What is this block about?

The European institutions can only regulate on areas where it has competences, established in the Treaties. This block will make the participants aware of how the power is distributed, and which areas are covered under the current treaties.

Competence in this context is about everything deriving from EU law that affects what happens in the member states. That means examining all the areas where the Treaties give the EU competence to act, including the provisions in the Treaties giving the EU institutions the power to legislate, to adopt non-legislative acts, or to take any other sort of action. But it also means examining areas where the Treaties apply directly to the Member States without needing any further action by the EU institutions. The EU's competences are set out in the EU Treaties, which provide the basis for any actions the EU institutions take. The EU can only act within the limits of the competences conferred on it by the Treaties, and where the Treaties do not confer competences on the EU they remain with the Member States.

There are 3 categories of competences, defining the level of coordination:

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1. *Exclusive competences areas in which the EU alone is able to legislate and adopt binding acts. EU countries are able to do so themselves only if empowered by the EU to implement these acts.*

2. *Shared competences (Article 4 of the TFEU¹): the EU and EU countries are able to legislate and adopt legally binding acts. EU countries exercise their own competence where the EU does not exercise, or has decided not to exercise, its own competence.*

3. *Supporting competences (Article 6 of the TFEU): the EU can only intervene to support, coordinate or complement the action of EU countries. Legally binding EU acts must not require the harmonisation of EU countries' laws or regulations*

The treaties, and thus this division of competences was approved by unanimity by the EU member states, in the European Council.

- Participants have to arrange the prepared in advanced [competences](#) into the 3 categories with the help of the trainer.
 - The participants have to be separated in groups (number of groups depends on the number of the pax) that have received mixed competences and they as a group have to decide where to put the concrete competence on the prepared in advance flip chart sheets with the written down 3 division of competences. *(max 10 min - do not let them have time to google it)*
- After the participants sorted out the competences according to their opinion, the trainer briefly reads out the competences and whether it's correct or false and if needed gives explanation. *(around 3-4 mins)*

Pros & Cons of the EU (20 min)

What is this block about? *Participants now know about the institutions, how politics are not made in a vacuum, how the powers are distributed, the 3 level of competences of the Union. They must now put this into practice: They should reflect upon what they have learned, and provide the group with elements of reforms to the union, as well as highlight where the corporation works.*

- 10 mins groups activity: separating them in 2 groups and they have to discuss and make a list with suggestions about 3 good things about the EU that work and the other 3 problems that need to be changed/reformed as a result from the discussions from the groups.
- 10 mins activity in the big group: each group presents their suggestions and receive questions/feedback from the rest.

Quiz time (15 min)

Find quiz here [[Kahoot, YEP advanced](#)]: ADVANCED YEP

- Display the quiz in the screen with the projector

AEGEEYEP as username, as password **European Parliament**

- Participants must go to www.kahoot.it and insert the code that appears on the screen
- And let's play!

¹ Treaty of the functioning of the European Union

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De-briefing (5 min)

- What have you learned from the session?
- How is this relevant to the elections next year? How is this relevant to your national parliament elections (*co-legislating & shared and supporting competences gives the member state a powerful role*)?
- Do not forget to tell participants where they can get more knowledge on the EU: EP information offices in the member states, COM representations in member states,
- Wrap-up and finish → each of the participants writes down on paper on the wall "If I could change one thing in the EU it will be..."

[Debriefing Technique](#)

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