



# EU SPECTATOR

- **Joining the EU – advantages, disadvantages**
- **Future of EU and Eurozone**
- **Customs and Traditions – how strong are they**

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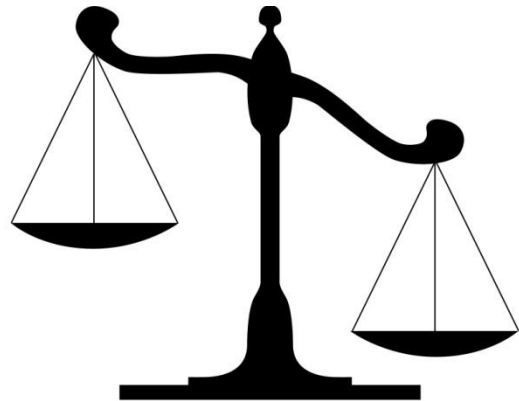
## **Joining EU. Advantages and disadvantages of EU.**

### **An interview with people from different European nations and their view on the advantages and disadvantages of EU.**

#### **CZECH**

##### **When have you joined the EU?**

After completing all EU conditions we joined the EU together with 9 other countries in 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004.



##### **Can you tell us some advantages?**

Even if we are from different countries and with different culture we are members of the same group – EU. Thanks to European funds we can travel, study and work in all European countries and go to shop whatever we want (e.g. exotic food, electronics). I think it affected our economy - positively. Thanks to better education system in Czech by EU, we have better knowledge that our parents and their parents. We have also new opportunity and motivation to learn other languages. We can make new contacts for future cooperation thanks to EU programs for young people.

##### **Can you tell us some disadvantages?**

We have a lot of restrictions and limits. For typical Czech people it was taken their privacy. I think we have lost a little of our sovereignty – we have to follow laws, fees etc. I cannot come up with another disadvantage.

##### **What about your opinion – your feeling about EU?**

I think for students it is more about advantages. We can consume all benefits that EU offer to us. On the other hand for companies (or private entrepreneurs) there are more limits and restrictions to be successful among the competition by all EU countries.

#### **SPAIN**

##### **When have you joined the EU?**

1<sup>st</sup> January 1986 together with Portugal.

##### **Can you tell us some advantages and disadvantages?**

The EU offers many advantages, such as financial aid (scholarships, pensions...), opportunity to study in any country with similar qualification and opportunity to share multicultural projects and language immersion programs (Erasmus, p.e.), or access to free health care in

any country of the Eurozone. Also, the relation between the countries is better and the dialogue is a necessary habit. So, the EU is a extraordinary system to be protected.

On the other hand, Spain is a very important country in this group, as to offer as to receive; is great.

## **CYPRUS**

### **When have you joined the EU?**

1st May 2004 with 10 other countries.

### **Can you tell us some advantages?**

For me personal great advantage – love travel. Mobility inside in EU. It is Great advantage for me because I love to reach my knowledge and develop myself. Many programs by EU are funding and promoting as Erasmus. I can learn new stuff, meet new people and exchange culture with them.

### **Can you tell us some disadvantages?**

I haven't study anything. I don't have a degree. It is harder to get a job which I am interested in. Because Cyprus has so many qualified young people that have a benefit of their degree. So for me it is a little bit harder to get a job. I think there are no more disadvantages. The competition is larger. There is a lot of people with paper qualifications.

### **What about your opinion – your feeling about EU?**

I think we need EU. We have to keep it how it is and make it better not a worse and cherish it.

## **ROMANIA**

### **When have you joined the EU?**

2007, 1<sup>st</sup> January

### **Can you tell us some advantages disadvantages?**

Romanians were very excited before being in EU because They thought that the economy will grow and we will have less poor people. But after some years being in EU they found out that they promise a lot of things that they never do, so it was like cheating and now more than half of Romanians Citizen are disappointed with our education.

The way of living now is worst than it was before getting in EU. So this is not so positive thing of Romania.

## HUNGARY

**When have you joined the EU?**

2004

**Can you tell us some advantages?**

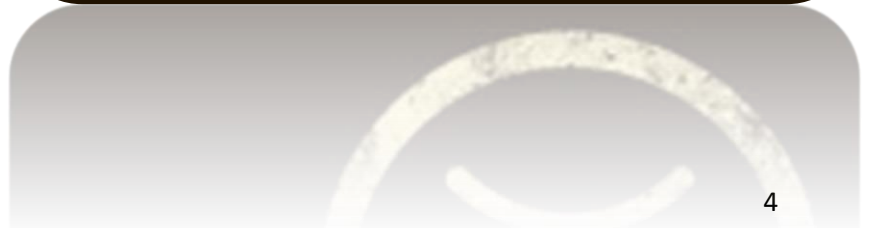
You can travel abroad without passport so that is cool. For me it is cool I can go to programs like this – Erasmus. I think EU has a very good environment politics.

**Can you tell us some disadvantages?**

It destroys our market in our country. They want to force us to do some things which we do not want to do. Some point is similar to Soviet Union. I think EU does not liberation political view, it should be more conservative.

**What about your opinion – your feeling about EU?**

Actually, the EU concept is a good thing but I think that leaders are very bad. I think for Hungary is more disadvantages in these days.



## Imagine the future of EU and Eurozone

European union safeguards the welfare of all countries that comprise it . Despite the difficulties involved, common values and principles are a great guarantee of economic and social stability. In this way the Eurozone is the surest territory. Among its many benefits they are financial / economical and such as scholarships and opportunities to study in any country with similar qualifications and opportunity's to share multicultural projects and language immersion programs such as Erasmus , you can also access free health care in any country of the Eurozone . Also the relation between the countries is better and the dialogue is a necessity

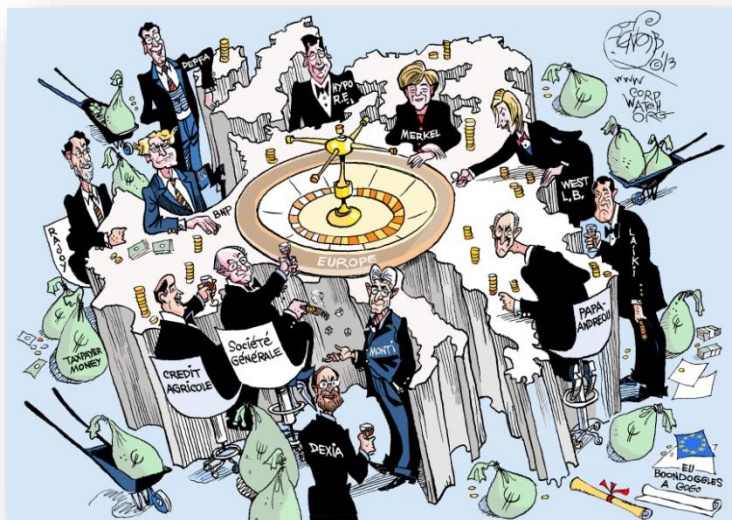
For all these reasons , the eu and the Eurozone is an extraordinary system to be a part of and live in it so we must protect it and develop it us much us we can.

So the future, how i personally se the future is bright and positive and the EU that we live in it now is going to become stronger and better many people are already growing their self and opening their minds taking advantage of all the European programs that are provided to us we the young generation are the ones who are going to make the change and we believe in the change. Fortunatly many young open minded people are supporting the change and unity and the one nation mentality so i see a bright future ahead

The Eurozone now, the economical game is the centre of attention the last 5-8 year and i am pretty sure that is going to keep happening for a long time unfortunately, of course that is not

always a bad thing because by experiencing and working on the problems we became better so I believe in the future the Eurozone will be stronger and a better place to be the Euro is going to become the largest currency and the Eurozone member countries will take lots of benefits from it i am a strong supporter of that. Many people fear the brexit but i only have one thing to say about that situation "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger".

Our views for the Future of the EU and the Eurozone are positive and they will always be positive because we believe in the power of our youth and the power that our mixed cultures are creating .



## **Customs and traditions. How strong are they?**

A tradition is a belief or behavior passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origins in the past. Common examples include holidays or impractical but socially meaningful clothes

In many countries, concerted attempts are being made to preserve traditions that are at risk of being lost. A number of factors can exacerbate the loss of tradition, including industrialization, globalization, and the assimilation or marginalization of specific cultural groups

A **custom** is a law or right which is not written and is in practice since a long time and is given by our ancestors. It is any thing which lots of people do, and have done for a long time. Usually, the people come from the same country, culture, time or religion. We decided to go and make some questions to some of our friends about their most important festivities, and almost every one of them have religious connotations.

This magazine has different topics that may be of interest to any young european, and as the workteam of this magazine is formed by a multicultural group of Czech, Romanian, Spanish and Cypriots, we thought it would be of interest to the reader to discuss the issue of some of the traditions and customs of each of these countries, thus closer to the reality in Europe today.

The value of the customs and traditions is vital because they represent what the culture is, and what it has been throughout its history. To make this article we have the cooperation of the prestigious journalist Dora, to achieve the objectives of this article, we decided to gather information and to contrast it with the opinion and testimony of prominent personalities of each chosen country, so, to make an approach to each from them.

A country is its traditions; it define to the society. We, as citizens, have to preserve our culture, that's our identity. What's the most own to humans? Definetily, you can ask everyone, and the answer always will be outright: oneness. What are we without the past? Our world is heritage of our ancestors, and at the same way, it will be it to our heirs, what is sufficient reason to preserve our heritage.

## Mike, Hungary

### Busójárás walking - Dress as monsters.

The Busójárás lasts six days, usually during the month of February. Begins a Thursday, followed by the Kisfarsang (small Farsang) Carnival Friday, the main celebration, Farsang vasárnap (Carnival Sunday) the seventh Sunday before Easter Sunday; The festivities end with the Farsangtemetés (Burial of Farsang) the following Tuesday (Shrove Tuesday or Mardi Gras).



According to popular legend, during the occupation by the Turks, the people of Mohács escaped the village and took refuge in the swamps and forests from the Ottoman troops. One night, as they talked around the fire, and old Šokac suddenly appeared and said to them: "Fear not,

soon improve your destiny and return home.

Until then, get ready for combat, manufactured weapons and carve hideous masks, and wait for a stormy night when the knight mask will pick. "And the old form disappeared as unexpectedly as it had come. The refugees heeded their tips, and some days later, during a stormy night came the gentleman.

They are ordered to put on their masks and returning Mohács, making noise as possible. The Turks felt both fear and amazement at the noise, masks, and the storm in the night, they thought they were the demons that attacked; and they fled the village before dawn. In the other story that is older, though not as popular, The divers scare the winter rather than the Turks

## David, Czech Republic

Czech Easter (Velikonoce) is one of the most important tradition of Czech Republic.

Back in the years before 1989, the meaning of Easter (Velikonoce - from Veliké noci or Great Nights) was limited to the welcoming of spring. The religious connotations of Easter were suppressed under the communist regime. Nowadays, Czechs are again aware of the strong Christian background of Easter, but Easter has not become a serious religious holiday.

Easter in the Czech Republic is a fun time. Many traditions are still observed and practiced, especially in villages. Many Czech Easter symbols are related to spring and the beginning of new life. Some of the best known are:

The hand-painted or otherwise decorated egg (*kraslice*) is the most recognizable symbol of Czech Easter. Girls decorate Easter eggs to give them to boys on Easter Monday.

#### Pussywillow and pomlázka

Young, live pussywillow twigs are thought to bring health and youth to anyone who is whipped with them. An Easter *pomlázka* (from *pomladit* or "make younger") is a braided whip made from pussywillow twigs.

Easter Monday (Pondělí velikonoční) is a day off, the day of the pomlázka.

The origin of the pomlázka tradition (pomlázka meaning both the whip and the tradition itself) dates back to pagan times. Its original purpose and symbolic meaning is to chase away illness and bad spirits and to bring health and youth for the rest of the year to everyone who is whipped with the young pussywillow twigs. Boys would whip girls lightly on the legs and possibly douse them with water, which had a similar symbolic meaning. An Easter carol, usually asking for an egg or two, would be recited by the boy while whipping. The girl would then REWARD the boy with a painted egg or candy and tie a ribbon around his pomlázka. As the boys progressed through the village, their bags filled up with eggs and their pomlázkas were adorned with more and more colorful ribbons.

This tradition is still largely upheld, especially in villages and small towns, although it may have lost its symbolism and romance and is now performed mainly for fun.

## **Mr. Big, Cyprus**

In Cyprus, we have a great example! The most celebrated tradition is the Holy week: it is the biggest celebration in the year, with processions and fireworks where Saturday's night is tradition to make a giant bonfire and burn representations of Judas. If you want to know this country, clearly, you have to visit it this week, and you will meet many generations in one visit. It's the importance of safeguard what define us. Your past explain your present.



## **Marta, Spain**

Easter week is celebrated in every city, town and village in Spain. Nevertheless, there are some fiestas that are especially well known for their uniqueness and beauty, and have received the International Tourist Interest designation.



During Easter week in Seville you'll see how the "cofradías" (religious brotherhoods) manage to withstand the colossal weight of elaborately decorated statues of the Virgin Mary as they parade through the narrow streets of the old town. Easter week in Malaga includes the ritual privilege of the freeing of a prisoner, and one of the most moving

moments of all is when the figure of Jesus Christ blesses the convict. During the Easter week celebrations in Cuenca you can also enjoy the concerts in the Religious Music Week festival, which take place in historic buildings such as the cathedral.

If you go to León in Easter week, you'll find one of the highlights is the encounter between Saint John and the Virgin Mary in the Plaza Mayor square, which marks the end of the Easter processions. During Easter week in Zamora, the sound of Gregorian chant provides an incredible atmosphere for the nocturnal processions. During the Easter week processions in Valladolid, make sure to look closely at the religious statues –they are priceless works of Baroque art. Easter week in Salamanca is spectacular on account of the backdrop formed by the city's stunning monuments.