

# MADMUN XV

European Union

BACKGROUND GUIDE



**Chairs:** Noah Chan, Jack McNerney

# Table of Contents

Letter from the Chair.....	3
Committee Overview.....	4
Topic A: Settling tensions among European Countries.....	6
Topic B: Addressing Communist ideas in Eastern Europe.....	12
Works Cited.....	19

## Letter From the Chair

Dear delegates,

We are so excited to be the chairs for this committee. It is a wonderful opportunity to be able to attend such an event that is local for everyone. When Noah and I chose this committee to chair, we were told it would be a beginner committee and that there would be a lot of new people. This made me think back to my first MUN conference. I remember being a little nervous about what people would say or think about me, or if I had written my position paper correctly. I quickly realized that none of that mattered as no one else in the committee really knew what they were doing either. Sure, there were a few kids who had been to a conference before and knew a little about how things ran, but for the most part, everyone is in the same exact position as you are. If I could give some advice, I would say that you shouldn't stress too much on your position paper. As long as it meets the requirements and you are happy with the outcome of it, I think that is all you need. I feel that the main idea of the paper is to just get people to research their topic and role in the committee so that they don't come in totally unprepared. In the end, as long as you know what you are talking about and have topics to discuss, you will be more than prepared for this committee. One other piece of advice I could give is that you should come prepared to be out of your comfort zone. I hate speaking in front of people despite being told that I am good at it. Despite that, I have worked up the courage over my past few conferences to try and speak out more and give my opinion to the group so that I can participate more. I encourage everyone to try to do this. While this conference is with local schools, you probably will not see most people you meet ever again so there is nothing that should be holding you back from trying to make the most out of this event. Noah and I had such a blast researching this topic and are very excited to meet you all in November. This is our first time chairing a committee so we will be in the same boat as you as we try to figure everything out. I hope you all are as excited as we are for this event.

Your chairs,

Jack McNerney and Noah Chan

## Committee Overview:

The EU is a committee of 27 European countries formed officially in 1993. It originated from the European Coal and Steel Community and the signing of numerous treaties promoting peace and cooperation after two world wars. With three main bodies, the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of the European Union, the EU operates to suggest and discuss incorporating new legislation into a certain country, or to repeal certain domestic laws as well. In 2020, the United Kingdom officially left the EU.

The goal of the EU is to promote peace, prosperity, and unity from all the diverse cultures around the continent. They have done so by advocating for social equality through numerous worker's rights laws, creating an international economy with the Euro coinage system, and freedom of transport via the Schengen Area which voids the need for checking for international travel.

Currently, the countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine are attempting to join the EU. But, they must first abide by and implement all laws and policies established by the EU. These policies are discussed and



proposed transparently, through online websites to adhere to the EU's goal of accessible legislation and documentation. All of this can be found on their website: [https://european-union.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/index_en).

# 1 Settling tensions among European countries

## **Background**

Europe's history has a deep history of conflict and tensions. It has been home to many historic and horrific events. The most obvious source of tension can be sourced back to the World Wars. Both wars have been very influential on the development of intercountry relations and how other tensions are settled. Leading up to WWI, the power nations in Europe started to get fidgety as tensions of territory, influence, and resources started to rise. What also didn't help at this time was the Franco-Prussian War which was only poking the bear of eventual conflict. After WWI, animosity from the Germans directed towards other European countries is what sparked the creation of the Nazi regime and led to Hitler taking power. WWII ended with the beginning of the nuclear area, leading the entire world into the Cold War era. Since then, conflicts in European countries have been pretty mild.

## **Current Situation:**

### **Russia-Ukraine war**

There are a variety of current problems that the EU is dealing with right

now. A couple of these issues include a stable energy supply as well as security, both of which stem from the Russia-Ukraine War.

The Russia-Ukraine war has been a raging issue overseas for some time now. The EU provides major financial assistance to Ukraine as well as military and humanitarian assistance. Refugees from all over Ukraine are fleeing their country in order to keep from being swept away by the war. Neighboring EU countries have been gracious enough to take in these refugees but no without significant cost. It is incredibly expensive to provide food and shelter and medical attention to many new people flooding into a country. While the EU has mobilized resources in order to help countries cope with this, it is still hard on each country to keep up with new refugees that flood in every day. There has also been both lethal and nonlethal support that has been provided by EU military aid. While aid has been given in the form of weapons and other equipment, there has to be some amount of care so that there is no chance Russia perceives any action as a hostile threat. On top of equipment the EU is also providing training for Ukrainian soldiers so they can better combat chemical, and biological threats as well as perform better in combat. In addition to the military and humanitarian aid given to Ukraine, there has also

been significant financial contributions made to help Ukraine cope with the economic effects of the war. In 2023 there was a support package given that included €18 billion (~\$20 billion US dollars) in financial assistance. This aid was given to help support needs such as paying salaries, pensions, and other services such as hospitals and schools. In lue of this support, the EU has made a promise to support Ukraine financially to help with long-term reconstruction. Currently, this is estimated to require hundreds of billions of euros. The EU plans on helping to rebuild infrastructure, to revitalize industries, and supporting governance reforms in Ukraine.

On top of those three forms of aid, the EU has also placed a multitude of sanctions on Russia. Due to these sanctions placed on Russia, energy supplies and other exports were cut off, leaving some countries hanging to dry in finding new ways to source their energy from. The new lack of energy, however, is providing countries in the EU with the appropriate motivation to develop new ways to cut down on their carbon footprints. Currently, the EU was to eliminate all carbon output and become carbon neutral by the year 2050. Currently, the transition to renewable energy is proving to be quite complex and costly especially when there is already so much money going

towards financing Ukraine in its war against Russia.

The EU has been focusing on increasing its defense capabilities. The driving factor to this action is in fact the Russia-Ukraine war. There has been a push for the EU to take a stronger role in defense among European nations and to protect its allies. It is important that the EU is able to protect itself and its allies especially with Ukraine being a candidate for membership in the EU. Strengthening the EU with more countries is no bad tactic, but if they are unable to help those in need, especially those who are members of the EU, it could affect the public image, turning other candidates away.

## **The Brexit Fallout**

The Brexit fallout was when the UK decided to leave the EU in 2020. There were a variety of issues that led to this that still exist today. Trade arrangements especially involving Ireland are prominent today as disputes over the Northern Ireland Protocol exist today. The NIP has been highly controversial, especially in Northern Ireland and despite there being current attempts to adjust to protocol. While the goal is to make it more workable, tensions between the UK and the EU remain as high as ever if not increasing

from rising political instability in Northern Ireland. The issue in the disruption of the NIP has led to the trade of food and medical supplies between Britain and Ireland to decrease greatly. This disruption is fatal for both parties and has led to business on both sides to be faced with uncertainty and high tensions.

On top of this, when the UK left supply chains and movement of labor were also greatly affected. Following this fallout, many companies shifted their assets, offices, and other business operations out of the UK and into other parts of Europe. This has led to less income to the UK and has resulted in them suffering as a country financially. The Brexit fallout has had a negative impact on the UK's economic growth. The UK's Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) estimated that the long-term effects of the fallout could reduce the UK's GDP (gross domestic product) by almost 4%. While that sounds like a small amount, that is almost £32 billion lost, resulting in a major increase in civilian taxes in order to make up for the deficit.

## **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, despite there being many other issues within the EU, problems from the Russia-Ukraine war and the Brexit fallout remain the most prominent today. The war has taken a toll on Ukraine and other countries as they try to keep up with aid in order to insure victory for Ukraine while keeping as many civilian lives safe as possible. As for problems between the UK and EU, there are many things that can be done to mend the broken relationship that exists today. While both are hurting, there are ways, such as through the NIP, that the two parties can come together and form agreements that would be beneficial for both. Keeping tensions down, especially when there is so much going on outside of the EU is very important to ensure long-term peace and stability.

## **Questions to consider**

*What other forms of support could be shown to support Ukraine in the ongoing war?*

*How to expand ongoing efforts in becoming carbon neutral by 2050?*

*Is there a way to settle tensions between the EU and the UK in order to come to agreements on the NIP.*

*How can the EU better develop its defenses so that it can better defend itself and its allies?*

## 2 Addressing Communist ideas in Eastern Europe

### Background

For nearly two centuries, Communist ideologies have been placated in Eastern Europe and spread to a plethora of other countries, only for their movements to be put down and centralized in other locations around the World. Beginning in the 19th century with Karl Marx and his manifesto, Communism appealed to many in the poor working classes as they struggled to obtain rights during the brutal periods of time that led to the Great War, the Depression, and World War II. The first instance of a striving communist government began in 1917 after Lenin led the Bolshevik overthrow, creating the Soviet Union in 1922. What followed were numerous similar uprisings all around Europe that established a bloc of Communist states in Eastern Europe, namely in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. The West Allies felt this influence of the Soviet Union during what became the Cold War. Eventually, its outcome was the reformation and fall of Communism in Eastern Europe. The military presence of the West, political pressures, and mass protests led to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the first non-communist prime minister in Eastern Europe of the same



year. By 1990, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany had all been replaced by democracy, while Bulgaria and Romania had only a weak communist influence. However, a resurgence of Communist ideologies can now be seen today.



## Current Situation

Thirty years after the fall of communism, Europeans still observe the shadow of communism throughout their continent, despite the best efforts of the EU. In their "Declaration on Crimes of Communism," the EU stated that Communist ideology and communist rule contradicted their beliefs and that just as we must not accept a relativization of crimes of Communism. But, despite their strict stance against Communist ideologies, the brainchild of Karl Marx is once again making a swell in the confusion that resides within Eastern European Politics.

## The Prevalence of Communist Parties and Sympathizers

To the chagrin of Western EU governments, many of the former parties during Communism's golden age are still present in the realm of politics. Whether they have rebranded themselves like the Democratic Left Alliance, which was once the Polish United Worker's Party, or if they are blunter like the Bulgarian Socialist Party, their role in politics is not limited to their coalitions and attained government positions. Many of the leaders in these eastern countries have also achieved their positions by appealing to post-communist



schools of thought or by acknowledging those who are dissatisfied with the now capitalist society. This mainly pertains to poor workers stricken by Capitalism who wish to see a return to a Communist regime. This is

what is referred to as Communist nostalgia. This feeling reflects upon the

percentage of the populous who disapprove of the shift to the market economy and underlying democracy. According to a 2019 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, a third of Bulgaria and Ukraine and half of Russia disapproved of the shift to multi-party democracy. It also found that most East European citizens are skeptical of the level of equality granted by their government regarding jobs and the overall efficiency of their politics.

## The Legacy of Communism in Europe

Much of Europe's rich cultural history is entangled with practitioners of Communism who founded many sects of what are now massive city districts. The lasting impact of Communism on these areas is present in many parts of society, such as in the education system, where the history of Communism is taught in line with the varied political agendas of the East. The Communist Legacy is also physically seen in the thousands of still-standing monuments, public spaces, and streets with Communist names or founders. For example, around Germany, there are as many as 613 streets named after Ernst Thälmann, a communist who was executed by the Nazis in 1944. In



Bulgaria, there are museums dedicated to relics of Communism, like Cosmonaut Alley or the famous Red Army Monument, which has been vandalized and defaced several times after 1990.

Several industries and businesses remain state-owned, including subjects of welfare systems for the people and the economy. All of this preserved history serves as a warning for the government not to repeat the past. Still, inversely, it can also be viewed as admirable or inspiring to those in the younger generations. Protests to remove these relics of Communism continue all around Europe, but they become quieter the farther east towards Russia you go.

### **International Relations and the Regional Influence of Russia**

The legacy of Communism may be most observed in the ruins of the Soviet Union and its diplomatic ties to now-independent nations such as Serbia. Russia's population is the only nation whose opinions on democracy have lessened since 1990, showing how the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) garnered nearly 20% of the vote in the previous election,



second only to Putin's United Russia party. In Russia, buses are painted with the face of Stalin, and the popular holiday of Victory Day is celebrated every May 9. The festival parades tanks and Russia's military arsenal to commemorate the defeat of the Nazis. Now, Putin uses the holiday to compare his invasion of Ukraine to the Soviet Union defeating Fascism in World War II. If Putin succeeds in his quest to restore the former size of the Roman Empire, one can only wonder if he or his successors will honor their commitment to move away from Soviet ideology. or if we will see a return of a movement that was always waiting in hiding.



## Conclusion

The communist agenda is one that is starkly opposed by the EU, as shown in their 2023 “MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION on the 100 million victims of communism.” However, as Eastern Europe continues to vie over the looming threat of the Russian Federation, the EU may feel it necessary to take action against any citizens or governments that are sympathetic to the relic of Communism. They may do so by violating freedom of political expression, like in Poland, where new anti-communist laws imprison anyone who publicly promotes Communism in their land.

## Questions to Consider

*How has the country you are representing been affected by Communism in Eastern Europe?*

*What is your country's opinion on banning all Communist activities, a party which historically has advocated for worker's rights?*

*Does your country seek to criminalize Communism in Eastern Europe, resulting in the imprisonment of practitioners, such as in Poland?*

*Is your country prone to a return to Communist ideology? If so, what actions could you take to prevent this situation?*

*What are your country's feelings on taking immediate initiative to end all anti-communist laws and any actions that target Communism in Europe?*

*Are Russian sanctions likely to act as a catalyst for the resurging Communist attitudes in Eastern Europe?*

## Works Cited

### Topic 1:

"Economic Effects of Brexit." Wikipedia, 14 Aug. 2024. Wikipedia,  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Economic\\_effects\\_of\\_Brexit&oldid=1240288283](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Economic_effects_of_Brexit&oldid=1240288283).

"European Union." Wikipedia, 9 Aug. 2024. Wikipedia,  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=European\\_Union&oldid=1239468468](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=European_Union&oldid=1239468468).

"Kiel Institute Topic: Tension within the European Union." Kiel Institute,  
<https://www.ifw-kiel.de/topics/tension-within-the-european-union/>. Accessed 18 Aug. 2024.

"Russo-Ukrainian War." Wikipedia, 18 Aug. 2024. Wikipedia,  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Russo-Ukrainian\\_War&oldid=1241006445](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Russo-Ukrainian_War&oldid=1241006445).

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN11897#:~:text=The%20EU%20also%20established%20a,is%20around%20%E2%82%AC22%20billion.&text=Following%20Russia's%20invasion%20of%20Ukraine.including%20natural%20gas%E2%80%94before%202030>.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/>

EU Support for Ukraine | European Union.  
[https://european-union.europa.eu/priorities-and-actions/eu-support-ukraine\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/priorities-and-actions/eu-support-ukraine_en). Accessed 18 Aug. 2024.

"Ukraine-European Union Relations." Wikipedia, 18 Aug. 2024. Wikipedia,  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ukraine%E2%80%93European\\_Union\\_relations&oldid=1240961112](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ukraine%E2%80%93European_Union_relations&oldid=1240961112).

"Brexit's Lasting Damage Is Looking Inescapable." Bloomberg.Com, 19 Mar. 2024. www.bloomberg.com,  
<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2024-03-19/brexit-s-lasting-economic-and-financial-damage-looks-inescapable>.

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7960/>

"Brexit Meaning and Impact: The Truth About the U.K. Leaving the EU." Investopedia,  
<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/brexit.asp>. Accessed 18 Aug. 2024.

### Topic 2:

"Easy to Read – about the EU." *European Union*, european-union.europa.eu/easy-read\_en. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

"Principles, Values, Access to Information." *European Union*, european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values\_en. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

"Your Gateway to the EU, News, Highlights." *European Union*, european-union.europa.eu/index\_en. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

www.reuters.com/world/europe/why-does-russia-celebrate-victory-day-may-9-what-does-it-mean-putin-2023-05-09/. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/1990/06/1990b\_bpea\_lipton\_sachs\_summers.pdf. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 13 Aug. 2024, www.britannica.com/place/Bulgaria/Late-communist-rule. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

Marco CAMPOMENOSI, Anders VISTISEN. "MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION on the 100 Million Victims of Communism: B9-0230/2023: European Parliament." *MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION on the 100 Million Victims of Communism | B9-0230/2023 | European Parliament*, www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-9-2023-0230\_EN.html. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

An interview with Mikhail Lobanov, et al. "Russia Has a New Socialist Movement." *Jacobin*, 10 Feb. 2021, jacobin.com/2021/10/mikhail-lobanov-russia-communist-party-new-left-putin. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

*DECLARATION ON CRIMES OF COMMUNISM*, web.archive.org/web/20110720154719/www.crimesofcommunism.eu/declaration.html. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

NIKOLAOU-ALAVANOS, Lefteris. "Parliamentary Question: New Anti-Communist Law in Poland: E-000260/2023: European Parliament." *E*, www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2023-000260\_EN.html. Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.



Rfe/rl. "The Troubled History Of Bulgaria's Soviet Monument." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, RFE/RL, 28 Feb. 2023, [www.rferl.org/a/sofia-soviet-monument-vandalism-ukraine-war-protest/32290150.html](http://www.rferl.org/a/sofia-soviet-monument-vandalism-ukraine-war-protest/32290150.html). Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

Lynn. "10 Best Communist Relics in Bulgaria." *Young Pioneer Tours*, 11 May 2022, [www.youngpioneertours.com/10-best-communist-relics-bulgaria/](http://www.youngpioneertours.com/10-best-communist-relics-bulgaria/). Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

"Street Names in the GDR: Blog." *DDR Museum*, 22 Mar. 2023, [www.ddr-museum.de/en/blog/2017/street-names-in-the-gdr#:~:text=Ernst%2DTh%C3%A4lmann%2DStrasse%20\(Ernst,the%20National%20Socialists%20in%201944](http://www.ddr-museum.de/en/blog/2017/street-names-in-the-gdr#:~:text=Ernst%2DTh%C3%A4lmann%2DStrasse%20(Ernst,the%20National%20Socialists%20in%201944). Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

"German Street Names Still Echo Nazi, Communist, and Even Roman Past." *Big Think*, 19 Apr. 2022, [bigthink.com/strange-maps/german-street-names/](http://bigthink.com/strange-maps/german-street-names/). Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

Wike, Richard. "European Public Opinion Three Decades After the Fall of Communism." *Pew Research Center*, 15 Oct. 2019, [www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/10/15/european-public-opinion-three-decades-after-the-fall-of-communism/](http://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/10/15/european-public-opinion-three-decades-after-the-fall-of-communism/). Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

Biray, Kurt. "Communist Nostalgia in Eastern Europe: Longing for the Past." *openDemocracy*, 10 Nov. 2015, [www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/communist-nostalgia-in-eastern-europe-longing-for-past/](http://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/communist-nostalgia-in-eastern-europe-longing-for-past/). Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

U.S. Department of State, [history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/fall-of-communism](http://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/fall-of-communism). Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.