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European Integration Together Wins

The European Union was built with the intention of:

- rebuilding Europe physically and economically, after two world wars;
- getting rivaling nations together to avoid conflict at all costs;



Negotiation and the rule of law replaced force; integration and unity replaced division.

These aspects have led to the expansion of the EU and the wellbeing of its citizens.





The welfare state and principals of solidarity exist to compensate misfortunes and to help member states with economic difficulties.

For these reasons, the EU attracts all those looking for a better life.



Historical Dates

18th April 1951: the establishment of the **European Coal and Steel Community**.



25th March 1957: the establishment of the **European Economic Community (EEC)**.



Historical Dates

5

14th June 1985: The “Schengen Agreement” led to free circulation between the member states.



17th February 1986: The Single European Act created the ‘Single Market’.



Historical Dates

6

7th February 1992: the Maastricht Treaty led to the establishment of the EU.



1st January 1999: The euro came into existence.



Historical Dates

7

13th December 2007: The Treaty of Lisbon simplified working methods and voting rules.



23rd June 2016: Brexit Referendum.



How does the EU function and which are its governing institutions?

The EU is governed by the principle of representative democracy. Citizens are represented in the European Parliament and member states in the European Council and the Council of the EU.

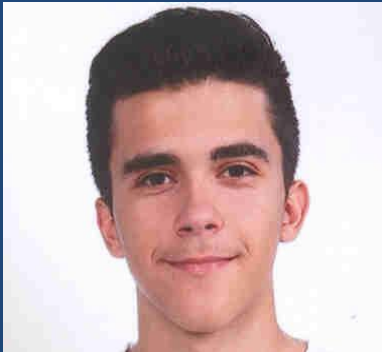


The European Commission represents the interests of the EU as a whole.

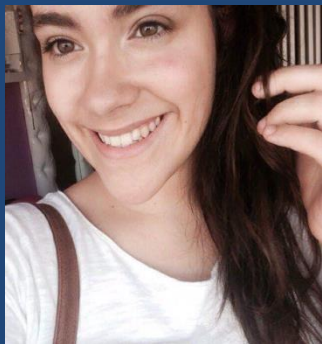
What do we think of the EU?



The EU provides mobility for all...



The EU guarantees peace...



You can be European and Portuguese at the same time...



Cultural differences enrich us ...



The EU should...

- reconnect with its citizens, so they can become more engaged and proactive;
- bring projects to individual communities and their people;
- develop grass root projects through twinning...

What are twin towns?

Twinning allows two communities to join with the aim of facing their problems and developing a closer relationship.

It brings benefits to both communities.





What can we do?

We present two projects, which we intend to implement through school and town twinning.

They focus on education and collaboration between generations...

- School Twinning Network Website
- Intergenerational Projects

SCHOOL TWINNING NETWORK WEBSITE

Create partnerships (a network) between the schools of Guimarães and the schools of twin towns.

The network operates through a website and an online virtual platform.



THE GOAL IS...

- to bring these schools closer to the EU and each other;
- to bridge cultural divides;
- to join teachers, students, and institutions that are spread out geographically on a virtual basis;
- to develop an emotional relationship between all.



STEP 1: Acquire background information

Interdisciplinary research to know more about the EU.

STEP 2: Organize team work

Research on city or municipality projects that have received EU funding.

Research on the historical, cultural, gastronomical aspects of the city.




Interview local inhabitants, looking for human interest stories.





WELCOME! THE EUROPEAN UNION TWIN TOWNS YOUR STORIES FORUM

Hello there! Welcome to People of Europe.



On this website, you can find many events near you; information about your town and other towns, that help you connect together with communities near you to bring you new experiences and opportunities. Feel free to explore, for you'll be able to share your voice on "your story" and our forum, through rich discussions on matters that not only relate to your town, but also the European community. Whether you're a student or not, satisfy your curiosity and learn more about the European Union right here on our website. Our main objective is that you feel a deeper connection to the people surrounding you and to those living in other European countries, for we believe that through sharing information and stories, we're able to create a better world, contributing to world peace.

[STORIES OF THE PAST](#)

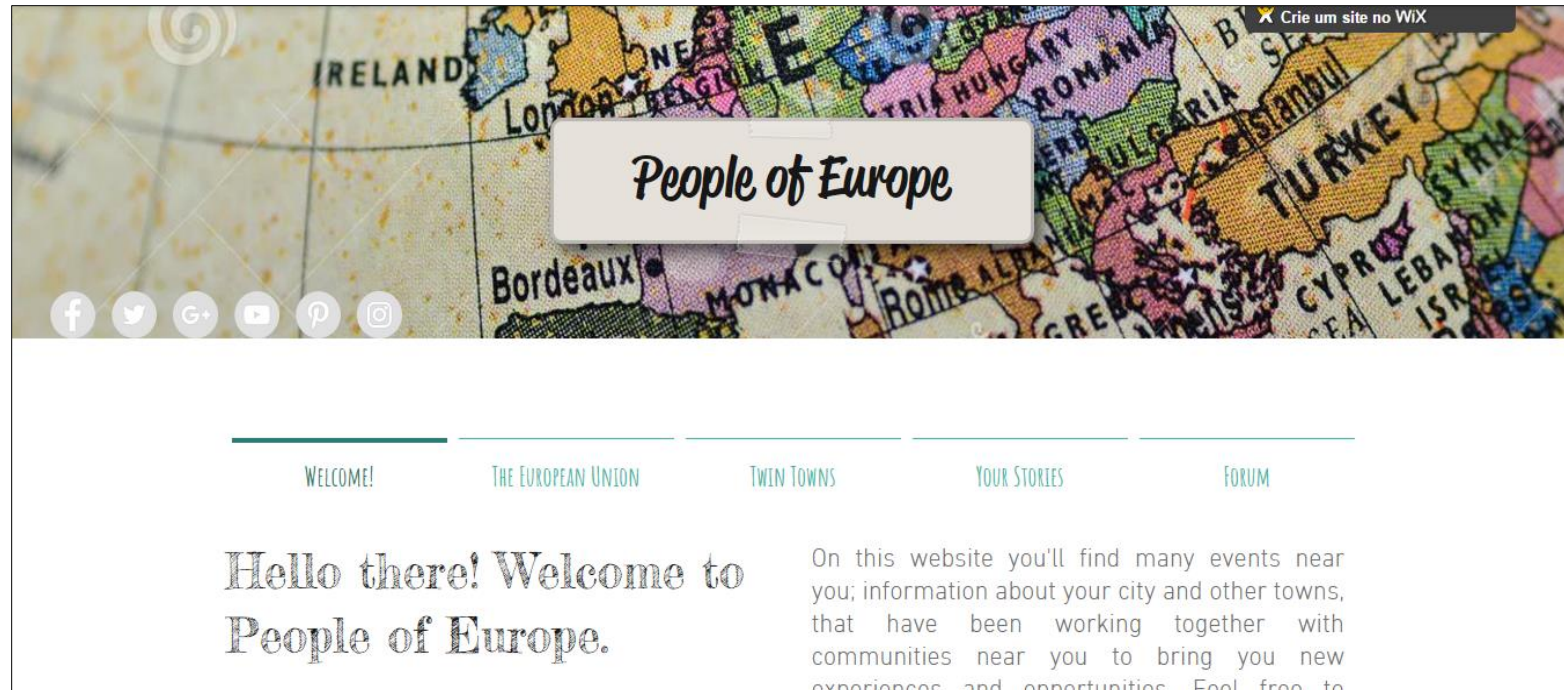
[STORIES OF THE PRESENT](#)

**“Coming together is a beginning;
keeping together is progress;
working together is success.”**

-Henry Ford

All material produced is presented on the network website.

<https://luisavillasboas.wixsite.com/peopleofeurope>



The project builds bridges between schools and is a resource for shared educational activities.

INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECTS

The population of Europe is aging and we must change how we see older people and their ability to engage with their younger peers. It is important to deepen the connection between generations.



Our projects promote citizenship and contribute to the development of a sustainable community.



The idea is to create groups of volunteers of all ages and walks of life.

Each group is to implement one or more of the activities presented.

SKILLS EXCHANGE: people of different ages get together to share a skill and learn something new.



PLANT AND EAT: create a community garden to grow fresh organic vegetables; learn about nutrition and share a meal.



ARTISTIC/SPORTING EVENTS: organize intergenerational events linked to sports or the performative arts.



INTERGENERATIONAL FORUM: Discuss local and European issues and find the connection with issues in the twin towns.

The website can also be a platform of discussion.



Each year, the group can come up with new ideas.

The aim is to foster inclusion and respect for what each generation has to offer.

CONCLUSION

The EU is facing a serious crisis. It needs new thinking and to reconstruct a sense of partnership and solidarity.

This process must include new voices (young people) and involve all elements of the community.

That can be achieved through twinning and establishing partnerships between towns, schools and people.



Our projects give young people a voice, but don't ignore the valuable input of older generations.

We can achieve more through unity and collaboration.

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