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THINK

Think about all the countries in Europe, not only the countries that are members of the EU. Then try to think of reasons why European countries should cooperate. What do we have in common? How are we different? Try to think of an ideal agreement between European countries.



PAIR

With a partner discuss what you think is a perfect kind of relationship between the Czech Republic and the rest of Europe. What would be best in your view? How would it work? How do you think countries should be included or excluded?



SHARE

Share your thoughts with the rest of the class. Make a list as a class of the five most important points that should be included in a Czech agreement for cooperation.

The European Union

THE HISTORY OF THE EU

Many people think that the EU is just about money – a club for the rich countries to have a convenient trading zone. But if we think of the first purpose of the EU, we will see that it started with political origins.

It is important to look at the history of the EU in order to fully understand why the EU looks like it does.

Post-war Europe

In 1946 the former British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, suggested some kind of cooperation among the European countries. Following the Second World War everybody wanted Europe, not only to rebuild itself, but also to secure future peace.

The biggest challenge was political cooperation. If Europe would be controlled by a single organization, all of the countries would have to give away a part of their sovereignty. European countries were not ready for that in 1940's. So Churchill's idea of a "federation of European states" was put aside.

Coal and Steel

The idea of the EU came to the world through the political work of two politicians, Robert Schumann and Jean

Monet. In May 1950 they suggested that Germany and France should pool their coal and steel resources. The brilliant idea of Monet and Schumann was that if Germany and France could control each others access and use of coal and steel neither of the two countries would ever be able to produce weapons and get ready for a new war. Of course avoiding another war was on the top of the political agenda in postwar Europe, so the initial purpose of the EU can be traced to a truly political wish: PEACE.

On April 18, 1951 the Coal and Steel Community was born. Six countries signed the treaty of the coal and steel union: France, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg.





For the Teachers

George of Poděbrady (Jiří z Poděbrad)

Have your students research George of Poděbrad. Have them pretend that they are exchange students being asked about long held Czech views on cooperation. What should Australian, British or American students know about him? What should they know about Czech history? Present paragraphs to be read aloud in class. This is an exercise in translation, vocabulary, sentence creation and speaking.



Jiří z Poděbrad

During the time of religious turmoil in Europe the region was without a single leader. After some 20 years without a ruler the Hussites elected a Czech Protestant, George of Poděbrady (Jiří z Poděbrad), as the country's new king in 1458. George, also known as the "Hussite" King, was the first freely

elected Czech ruler. He was chosen as Czech King from among the country's nobility without regard to any previous agreements, hereditary claim to the throne, family connections or dynastic origin. The "Hussite king" Jiří became a beloved king in Czech history. He led a policy of peace and wished to unite the whole of Europe into one peaceful nation. In 1460 King George of Poděbrady, a medieval internationalist of sorts, called for a federation of Christian empires with a permanent secretariat that would maintain an army, impose and collect taxes and coin money. George of Poděbrady unsuccessfully proposed a European alliance against the Turks. After the reign of Jiří z Poděbrad - who is known for his appeal to other European kings to make a treaty securing peace - came the period of the Habsburg dynasty (1526-1918). In spite of the misfortunes of the last years of his reign, Poděbrad's memory has always been cherished by the Czechs. He was the only non-catholic Czech king. However even after his death, during the reign of the Polish Wladislaw and Ludwig Jagellons, Protestants and Catholics lived peacefully side by side.



Students' Corner

Schengen Visa

Do you have one? Do you need one? Since 26th March 1995 a new type of visa - the Schengen Visa - has been introduced by the member states of the European Union who are signatories of the Schengen Agreement: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden. You might be interested to know that the treaty acquired its name from the Luxembourg village of Schengen on the Moselle, bordering both France and Germany, where the Agreement was signed.

The Schengen visa issued by an Embassy or Consulate of the above countries allows the holder to move freely in all of these countries within the validity of the visa.

If you intend to visit only one Schengen country you must apply for a visa at the Embassy or Consulate of that country.

If you intend to visit several Schengen countries without having a main destination you should apply for a visa at the Embassy or Consulate of the first country that requires you to have a visa.

How would you plan your vacation?



Vocabulary

Sovereignty - svrchovanost, suverenita

Ideal - ideál, cíl, vzor

Initial - počáteční

Common - běžný, častý, obecný

Cooperation - spolupráce

Integration - zapojení, včlenění

The Rome treaty

In 1957 the six member states of the Coal and Steel Union started to regulate cooperation in agriculture, industry and trade. They were prepared to give away a limited amount of sovereignty in these areas in order to get shared power of decisions. All six signed the Rome treaty and thereby created the EEC (European Economic Community) in 1958. The duty on agricultural and industrial articles was removed among the member countries and they had a common duty on goods from countries outside the EEC.

In 1962 the countries of the EEC introduced a common policy on agriculture because they hoped to be self-sufficient with agricultural commodities. Slowly the economic integration led to a political integration as well.

The EEC grew

With time the cooperation became more extensive with more member states and with more working areas. In 1973 Denmark, Ireland and Great Britain joined the EEC. In 1981 Greece became a member state bringing the total number to ten. Then in 1986 Spain and Portugal joined. By 1990 – after the reunion of Germany – EEC had 18 million new citizens.

From community to union

In the 1990's the common areas for policy extended even further. The member states began cooperating on defense, police, control of the borders and asylum, these states also decided to create the Economic and Monetary Union (the EMU). It all happened with the Maastricht treaty in 1992. The name then also changed from the EEC to the EU – the European Union.

In 1993 the government leaders of the EU decided to work for a Europe without the old division of East and West and so the enlargement process began. In 1995 Finland, Sweden and Austria became members, and in that same year the Schengen agreement decided that all control of borders between the member states should disappear by 2001. In 1999 the Amsterdam treaty became official. This treaty includes a common policy of occupation, social services and decisions on discrimination.

The Euro

In 1999 the corporation on the EURO began between the member countries - except Denmark and Great Britain. The EURO became the new money of the cooperating E.U. countries on January 1, 2002.



The European Union consists of 15 member states. Twelve member states in the European Union have adopted the single currency.

Denmark and the UK have opt-out clauses, which imply, that they are not obliged to adopt the euro. Sweden will join the euro area as soon as it has fulfilled all of the conditions.

The euro area is composed of: Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and Finland

The conversion rates this week:

1 EUR = 33.1680 CZK
1 CZK = 0.0301495 EUR
1 EUR = 1.27440 USD
1 USD = 0.784684 EUR

Sources:

http://www.myczechrepublic.com/basics/hussite_wars.html

<http://home.student.uva.nl/zdenka.sedivcova/Characteristics/HISTORY/history.HTM>

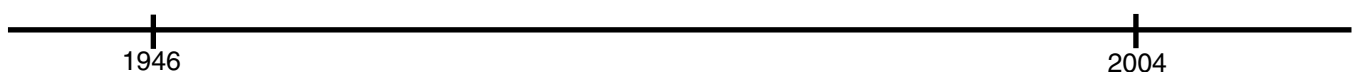
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<http://www.europe.eu>

Thank you to: Ms. Eva Svobodová and Ms. Camilla Thorgaard

ACTIVITIES

Create a timeline that includes the most important dates for the European Union.



Discussion:

How does the EU match the five principles that you have made as a class for a European cooperation?

Try to think of some ways that the EU can be moved in the direction of your ideals.

Do you think the EU is the best way to secure some kind of a corporation in the member states? What about the countries who are not members?

THE PRAGUE POST

Directions: Using the article ‘**Seeing How the Other Half Lives**’ in *The Prague Post*, January 28, 2004 (Page A3, <http://www.praguepost.com/PO3/2004/Art/0129/news6.php>) collect words that describe good things about the EU and bad things about the EU. Place the words in the right box:

Good Things About the EU

Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb

Bad Things About the EU

Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb

The E.U. was also covered in *Newspapers in Education*, Vol.: 10 Issue: 4
and *Stone Circle/Kamenný kruh*, Vol.: 4 Issue: 4.

Directions: Using *The Prague Post* from February 4, 2004, find articles that illustrate the relationship between the Czech Republic and the European Union. Classify concepts that demonstrate the advantages and disadvantages that are raised by the articles about Czech entry. Name the title of the article for each example.

	Czech Republic	Europe	Worldwide
Economic Advantages			
Economic Disadvantages			
Social Advantages			
Social Disadvantages			

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