

Lesson Title:	US and EU Democracy
Standards:	<p>8.C&G.1.2 Compare how decisions of state and local government conform and conflict with the democratic ideals of the nation.</p> <p>8.C&G.1.3 Critique the policies, laws, and government structures of North Carolina and the nation in terms of conforming to or conflicting with American democratic ideals.</p>

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify and discuss the similarities and differences between US Democracy and EU Democracy.
- Students will identify and discuss the importance of democracy.
- Students will be able to research and write about a way they can participate and promote democracy.

Prerequisite Learning

- Students should have a basic understanding of the US Government bodies and their duties, as well as political parties in the US. (See US Government Notes in the resources section for support in this area).

Formative Assessments

- Discussion questions are built into many of the slides. Feel free to use those to discuss aloud, have students write individual answers, or exit tickets, etc.
- Review chart of the 5 EU bodies and their functions at the end of the first day.
- I would also encourage continual learning and engagement with democracy throughout the year. This could include a current events project where students research both the pros and cons of a current issue. It could be listening to clips of important speeches, hearings, or debates throughout the year. For global engagement in democracy, the EU has great social media that kids could follow on their own or teachers could share when

Summative Assessments

- The final question on the presentation asks the students what they can do to promote healthy democracy. I would have students research ways they can get involved in democracy, even before they can vote, and write a page about some different things they can do. Depending on your preference, I would also have a second part of the assignment where students have to do one of those things within the semester and turn in evidence and a reflection essay.
- Depending on your goals for the lesson, you could also have students pick one of the topics discussed in the slides and do further research on one that interests them. They could find opinions on the pros and cons

something engaging pops up. Instagram and write an essay about their thoughts after having done some research on both sides of the issue.

@eucouncil @euintheus

@europeancommission
@europeanparliament

Learning Activities

<p>Day 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Begin class with a review of US Democracy and how our government works. Be sure to review each branch and their roles. See notes on the US Government if needed. → Open up the US and EU Democracy Notes and play the video on Slide 1 → Have students take notes on slides 2-6, outlining the different bodies of the EU government. → Slide 2: Can discuss how there are examples of direct and indirect democracy within this democratic design → Slide 3: Executive branch enforces laws. Can also discuss how this branch does more work with proposing laws than our executive branch. → Slide 4: Can discuss how the Parliament is more based on representation based on population whereas the council has reps from each country who are relevant to the issues being discussed. Can discuss how it's similar and different to the House and Senate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Legislative branch makes laws. o Can discuss how some rules are made by the EU government and some are made by individual countries. Can discuss comparisons between national and state governments in the US. → Slide 5: Judicial Branch handles legal issues. → Slide 6: The European Council is made up of the heads of state, so the agenda is set by the leaders of all of the countries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Can discuss how the president and different political groups in the US have influence over this in the US. o In the EU, at least one person from each country has a say in setting the political agenda - can't necessarily say the same for the US. What do students think about this difference? → End class by having students write down all five bodies of the EU discussed today, their primary function, and an image or symbol to represent each group.
<p>Day 2 (and 3 if needed)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Start class by asking the kids to write down any issues they can remember being discussed in yesterday's video. → Begin with slide 7: discuss how this process is seen in the electoral college and Supreme Court. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Continue on with slides 8-9 either discussing questions aloud, using think-pair-share, or having students write down answers. → Transition to Slide 10: Discuss representation in each body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o European Council is the heads of State = 1 each o Council of the EU includes nationally elected ministers based on the issue at hand o Commission is 1 per country o Parliament is the only one really based on population. o Continue to slide 11 and discuss the pros and cons of representation in

	<p>the US vs EU Parliament</p> <p>→ Slide 12: Discuss how there are so many more political groups that are broadly represented in the EU Parliament vs the US Government.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Discuss how more groups might make decisions more challenging but also how it would promote more voices being heard. <p>→ Slide 13: Discuss how kids themselves feel about politics. Do they listen to the news? Where do they hear about politics? Do they ever hear anything positive about our government or is it mostly negative? How does today's news impact them as citizens and future voters?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Discuss how some older generations have seen more impacts in countries with a lack of democracy. Watch the video on slide 13 labeled #Useyourvoteo Discuss other conflicts happening in the world right now or in the recent past because there is a lack of democracy on a global scale.o Try to impress upon kids that just because our democracy may need improvements, doesn't mean that we can just ignore it. We can hope and work for better while still supporting democratic ideals. <p>→ Slide 14: This could be used as an exit ticket or, if time allows, lead into some deeper research. See summative assessments above for ideas.</p>

→ [US Government Notes](#) (prerequisite learning option)

→ [US and EU Democracy Notes](#)

US AND EU DEMOCRACY



[EU Democracy Video](#)



EU DEMOCRATIC DESIGN

Combination of:

- intergovernmental: elect national representatives who then send people to go to the EU (ministers and heads of state)
- supranational: vote for European Parliament in elections every 5 years

EU BODIES

European Commission

- enforce and monitor laws
- proposes laws



Which body of the US Federal Government enforces/makes sure laws are carried out?

EU BODIES

European Parliament and Council of the European Union

- negotiate, amend, and pass laws

Which body of the US Federal Government is in charge of making laws?



EU BODIES



European Court of Justice

- makes sure laws are applied the same in each member country
- settle legal issues between member countries and EU bodies

Which body of the US Federal Government is in charge of assessing legal issues?

EU BODIES

European Council

- sets the political agenda



What are the different groups/factors and influence the political agenda of the US Government?

INDIRECT VOTING

Citizens vote for a representative who then votes or nominates a person into another position.

EU Example: EU citizens vote for national representatives for the European Council, who then nominate people to represent their country in the European Commission. EU citizens vote for members in the European Parliament who then approve these nominations.

What are some ways we see a similar process in the US Government?

COMMISSION PROPOSES LAWS

Indirect voting for commissioners still represents the voice of the people

- Do those indirectly voted into office in the US still represent the voice of the people?

EU Council sets the political agenda, and they are directly voted in by the people.

- What impact do you think this has on the laws being passed?

Parliament now has co-legislative powers

THOUGHTS ON INDIRECT VOTING PROCESSES

EU Example:

- European Commission

What are some pros/ways things are made more efficient/fair due to indirect voting?

US Examples:

- Electoral College
- Supreme Court

What are some cons/ways things seem less efficient/fair due to indirect voting?

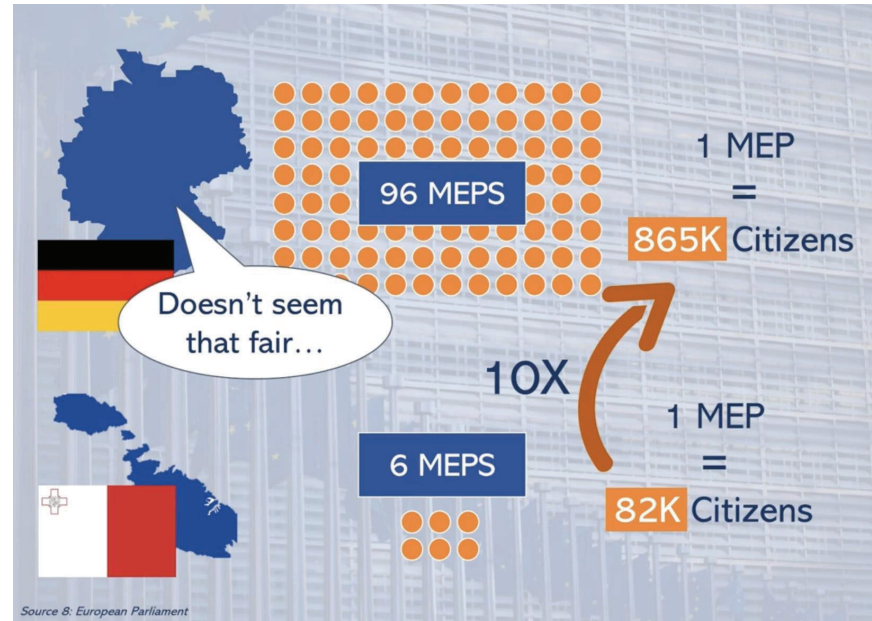
If you could change one thing with regard to indirect voting in the US, what would it be and why?

UNEQUAL PARLIAMENT REPRESENTATIVES

Equal representation in other bodies

Representation based on population*

- but with a minimum higher than 1 representative



THOUGHTS ON REPRESENTATION

US House

- Pros: Representation based on population is more accurate with lowest number of candidates set at 1
- Cons: What if there are different opinions from people in the state? Their voice may never be heard because there is only one representative

EU Parliament

- Pros: Will likely hear the voice of multiple groups since there are multiple representatives.
- Cons: Unequal representation
- Things to Consider: With such a small number of representatives, will this really make a huge impact on the larger countries that are worried about unequal representation?

EU PARLIAMENT

What do you notice about the number of political groups represented in Parliament compared to the number of groups typically represented in the US Government?

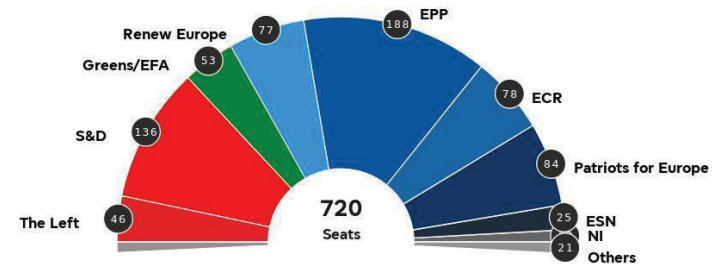
What might this diversity promote?

11/07/2024 - 08:54

All times are GMT+2

European Parliament 2024 - 2029

Provisional results



Provisional

Composition of the European Parliament based on available provisional or final national results published after voting has finished in all Member States, based on the structure of the outgoing Parliament.

According to Parliament's rules of procedure, a political group shall consist of at least 23 Members elected in at least seven Member States.

Source: Provided by Verian for the European Parliament



LOW VOTER TURNOUT

Does apathy = a lack of democracy?

Why do you think so many people today feel a sense of apathy towards politics?

Why do you think some, especially older generations, feel so strongly about politics?

[#Useyourvote](#)

DEMOCRACY MATTERS.
WHAT CAN WE DO TO
PROMOTE HEALTHY
DEMOCRACY?



US Government



Organization of the Constitution

Preamble:

- Popular sovereignty
 - Power comes from the consent of the people
 - 6 goals of the Constitution: (don't write them down, write a sentence or two summarizing the goals they set)
 - To form a more perfect union
 - To establish justice
 - To ensure domestic tranquility
 - To provide for the common defense
 - To promote the general welfare
 - To secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity
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Organization of the Constitution

Articles I-III

- Outlines the parts of government
- I: legislative branch, II: executive branch, and III: judicial branch

Articles IV-VII

- Outlines how the government works
 - IV: states relations and creating new states
 - V: process to propose, amend, and ratify the Constitution
 - VI: debts, oaths, and treaties
 - Supremacy Clause: Constitution and federal law are “Supreme law of the land”
 - VII: ratification of the Constitution
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Article I: Legislative Branch

- Bicameral Branch
 - This means the branch is split into two groups
 - 1. House of Representatives
 - 2. Senate
 - The two bodies that make up the legislative branch are often called Congress
 - Responsible for making laws
 - Elastic Clause: Congress has the power to make laws that are “necessary and proper” to carry out the other powers they are given in the Constitution.
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Congress

House of Representatives

- Representation based on population
- The more people who live in your state, the more representatives you have in the House of Representatives
- Smallest state (multiple including North Dakota) has 1 representatives
- Largest state (California) has 53 representatives
- 435 representatives total

Senate

- Equal Representation
 - Every state has 2 senators
 - 100 senators total
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Article II: Executive Branch

- Made up of 3 groups:
 - 1. President
 - 2. Vice President
 - 3. Cabinet: 15 cabinet heads
 - Responsible for carrying out the laws
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Article III: Judicial Branch

- Made up of the Supreme Court and all lower courts
 - The Constitution only establishes the Supreme Court but over the years, the government has created a lot of lower courts to help balance caseloads.
 - Responsible for interpreting the laws
 - Can declare things as unconstitutional:
 - Means that it breaks the rules set by the Constitution
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Separation of Powers

- United States has 3 branches of government
 - 1. Legislative
 - 2. Executive
 - 3. Judicial
 - Each branch has individual powers
 - Splitting up different powers of government into 3 different groups provides a separation of powers
 - No one branch of government holds all the powers
 - This helps protect the government: one person or one branch can't take control of the country and make radical changes
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Checks and Balances

Legislative Branch

- Can overrule a president's veto
- Approves appointments to the Courts
- Can remove judges from the Courts

Executive Branch

- Can veto laws passed by Congress
- Has the power to appoint judges to the courts

Judicial Branch

- Can declare acts of the president as unconstitutional
 - Can declare laws made by Congress as unconstitutional
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