

Prva gimnazija Maribor
February, 2023



THE ART BEAT



EDITORIAL

It seems we have once more survived another hectic but calm, rough but delightful and most definitely a unique, extraordinary year. It bore many events of diverse nature, some of which filled us with woe, and others with jubilation. We saw a devastating beginning to a brutal conflict, the biggest in Europe since the last World War, and said our last goodbyes to some famous icons, like Pelé, and world leaders, like her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Alongside these tragedies, we are witnessing a rebirth of the world economy, which was left in total shambles by many waves and declares of epidemics and quarantines of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In Slovenia, we had seen, and we, Seniors, also experienced, one of the biggest election years thus far. We've elected new mayors, a new government and a president, as well as declared our stances on three different referenda!

I'd like to finish the recap of yesteryear with a new introduction, which is of the latest issue of our dearest English newsletter - Heartbeat. Once again have we accumulated enough experiences that we, writers, were inspired to squeeze into the pages of what you will (hopefully) read and enjoy doing so.

But this year's release is unlike any before, since it is going to leave a historical footprint in the newsletter's existence. This is because it has been carefully curated to be in alignment with this school year's ongoing, massive project that our school has agreed to partake in – The European Parliament Ambassador School (EPAS)! Our writers have researched the European Union inside and out and have prepared articles which are bound to breathe life into your “political you”.

Jaša Igrec
Editor-in-Chief



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ABOUT THE
EUROPEAN
UNION

EEU (+UK)

The second world war left the world and Europe devastated and in horror. Because of the consequences the war left behind (millions dead, injured or displaced, continent destroyed), European countries were left with no choice, but to find a way to cooperate, reconcile and to do everything in their power to prevent the war from happening again.

In 1951, the European Coal and Steel Community was formed between six countries: Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Their alliance was based on common management of countries' coal and steel industries. Six years later, the founding countries expanded their collaboration to other economic sectors and they formalised the agreement by signing two treaties, creating European Economic Community (EEC), and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).

In 1958, the first meeting of the European Parliamentary Assembly was held in Strasbourg with Robert Schuman as president. Four years later the ECSC changed its name into European Parliament.



Through the years the union evolved, resulting in many countries wanting to join in. The UK's applications for joining the EEC began twelve years before entering. During those years, they faced many challenges, caused by the French President Charles de Gaulle. He distrusted Britain on a personal level, he thought they would side with the USA and was sceptic on the matter of farming differences between France and Britain. His solution was Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). After complications with Germany and de Gaulle's retirement in 1969, the UK made the third and finally successful application for membership (by then CAP, the Customs Union and the Tariff system were well established).

In 1972, the Treaty of Accession (international agreement for the accession of Ireland, UK and Denmark to the European Communities) was signed by British Prime Minister, Leader of the Conservative Party, sir Edward Heath.

During United Kingdom's 47 years in the EEC and later EU, two referendums were held; the first one in 1974 with the outcome in favour of remaining the part of the European Community and the second referendum, held in 2016 with the result 51,9% against 48,1% in favour of leaving the EU, which was formally established in 1993, when Maastricht Treaty came into force.

From 2016 to 2019, following the outcome of the referendum, the UK was engaged in negotiations with the European Union on the matter of leaving. The period was named Brexit, and was concluded on 31 of January 2020.

Brexit's biggest disadvantage is its damage to the UK's economic growth, which has slowed, the value of British pound fell and many businesses have moved their headquarters to Europe. Britain's younger workers were struck too, EU-born workers left the country, with only 5% of them remaining. Leaving the union, made things worse for trade agreements and Britain had to make new ones in order to keep industries, farming and other economic features going.

Izidor Krečič

IN VARIETATE CONCORDIA

Also known as “United in diversity” in English, it is the official motto of the European Union. It was inspired by a different version of the motto, coined by Ernesto Teodoro Moneta, that goes “In varietate unitas”.

It is one of the newest symbols of the European Union, alongside the European flag and anthem but, unlike most, it is specific to the EU rather than originating from the Council of Europe. The idea of a European Union’s very own motto was first mentioned in April 1998 by Patrick La Prairie, a French newspaper journalist for the Ovest-France newspaper. He proposed the idea of a competition for secondary-education students to compete in creating the EU’s motto.

Not even a year later, in March 1999, the contest launched its official website. It was all hosted by the project’s main sponsor – France Telecom – with this slogan: “La seule récompense sera d’avoir écrit une page d’histoire de l’Europe” (The only prize will be to write a page of Europe’s History).

The actual contest was held 7 months later, at the start of the 1999-2000 school year, where 2,575 classes of EU-15 (i.e. the 15 countries that were EU member states back then – today, this abbreviation is EU-28) competed



2,016 mottos ended up being submitted by January 15th 2000, the contest’s deadline. It revealed that the most popular terms Young Europeans used to describe the EU were: peace, unity, together, future, difference, hope, solidarity, liberty, equality (egalitarianism) and respect.

Throughout the next few months, these passed through 2 juries in charge of the European Selection, where 142 made it through and were translated into 11 of the official languages of the European Union.


In April of the same year, the European Media Jury chose 7 final mottos, which were to compete for victory in the final selection, which was hosted by the European Grand Jury in Brussels. On May 4th 2000, a gathering was held by the European Parliament and its then-President herself – Nicole Fontaine – announced the winning motto: *Unité dans la diversité*, or *Unity in diversity*

The motto holds much importance, as it signifies how Europeans have come together, in the form of the EU, to work for peace and prosperity, while at the same time being enriched by the continent's many different cultures, traditions and languages, according to the European Union's official website. It greatly represents some of its aims, such as combatting social exclusion, discrimination and other kinds of injustices, respecting the rich cultural and linguistic diversities of its member states, and values of the EU, such as human dignity, freedom, equality and human rights.

Jaša Igrec



UNITY IN DIVERSITY



Everyday life
in the EU

Cycling: Europe's Secret Weapon



If you've ever travelled outside the European Union, you've probably had to find a way to get around the foreign area. As such, one of the first things you may have noticed is the difference in transport. Europe places a much bigger emphasis on typically less conventional transport, and they aim to continue encouraging cycling in particular.

In recent years the EU has prioritized designing bicycle-friendly infrastructure to encourage the use of bicycles in everyday life. This model was adopted as a way of tackling the rising challenges of providing reliable transportation systems while taking into account their environmental impacts.

Research had shown that most car rides were used for relatively short distances, which is very wasteful. Naturally, cycling was deemed a worthy investment due to its cost-efficiency. Along with that, long-term health benefits and city liveability were considered advantageous.

Such a model has faced its fair share of challenges, as cycling requires a lot of upkeep. Priority bicycle traffic signals, as well as convenient bike parking need to be implemented for the system to work effectively. Extensive education would also be needed to comply with traffic laws and regulations. Things such as cultural and economic standing, along with climate also need to be taken into consideration, requiring plans to be adjusted to suit each city's circumstances.

As public interest and awareness of climate change grows, environmental projects are gaining more support. Interest is estimated to continue growing, and many European countries are ready to fully commit to creating a bicycle-friendly environment. In fact, many large cities, which are regarded as tourism hotspots, have already implemented dedicated pedestrian and cycling streets. On a large enough scale, these changes could cut Europe's transportation emissions by up to 90 per cent.

Since the emergence of cycling policies, many projects and campaigns have been launched to make cycling as accessible and safe as possible. One such campaign is the European Mobility Week, which raises awareness on sustainable urban transport. Its main goal is to encourage local authorities to acknowledge the environmental impact of current mobility trends and think up innovative solutions. The event takes place each September, sporting a new theme every year.

Their most ambitious activity is the "Car-Free Day", where roads are closed off to cars and instead open to pedestrians and cyclists. They greatly encourage locally organised activities that promote mobility consciousness. Ultimately, they strive to create permanent measures, which they define as a show of commitment by urban communities towards sustainable transport.

Regardless of its local impact, many people see a need for a greater and more strategic approach to promoting cycling in the EU. For such changes to be noticed, there needs to be a much larger push for the phenomenon to become continent-wide. If we are to strive towards a greener future, the phenomenon of cycling needs to become global.



Lana Tušek

How does the EU impact our daily lives?

At a first glance, the answer to this question might be quite simple: "not much" or "a little". We often think of politics as something far-away, without overarching powers and consequents – but we couldn't be further from the truth by saying that.

Much of what we often consider as granted was made available to us upon entering this continental bloc. I'm going to delve further into some of the most relevant necessities the EU has enabled for us.

Safer and easier travel:

This has been eased through the removal of national border control and the establishment of the Schengen Zone. This means you can freely travel with only your ID card to any of the 22 EU Schengen countries, which includes Slovenia, and has most recently welcomed Croatia to the bunch, on January 1st 2023 to be exact (so say goodbye to long(er) border stops when going to the summer holidays this year and forever *wink wink*), and also Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

As of right now, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland and Romania are fellow EU member states who have not yet been admitted into the Schengen. But in general, travelling in the EU as its citizen protects you 1) with a full set of passenger rights when travelling by air, rail, ship, bus or coach; 2) when buying package holidays, meaning that the company that sold them the holiday must deal with their complaint; 3) if a tour operator or airline goes bust.

Free movement of goods, services and capital

Thanks to the EU's single market, it is not only people who can move around freely in the EU but also goods, services and capital. People, goods, services and capital are sometimes referred to as the four 'pillars' of free movement in the EU. This makes it easier for EU businesses to operate in more than one country, and to compete globally. Whatever their size, companies in the EU have access to the national markets of all EU countries and around 447 million potential customers.

Common currency:

If the name doesn't kind of give it away, Euro is a monetary currency of the European Union. Its banknotes and coins were introduced back in 2002 and today, over 19 of the 28 members have changed to it. This is translated to the fact that over 340 million Europeans use Euros every day! A common currency brings many positives to the table, such as the possibility of a great, stable internal market, standardization regarding price comparisons and price stability.

Consumer rights:

This bundle of laws brings forth many layers of protection when it comes down to online shopping and shopping in general. For example: 1) you have a guarantee of at least 2 years for products bought in the EU; 2) allowance of 14 days to return goods bought at a distance, whether online or by phone; 3) prohibition of hidden charges and costs online; 4) ban of pre-ticked boxes on websites so that you do not unintentionally pay.

Product and food safety:

EU ensures we eat high-quality and safe food, as well as receive goods which pass checks, where they meet high standards. This is done through labels, such as CE marking, EU ecolabel, EU energy label, EU organic and quality logos, alongside strict safety requirements,

which manufacturers must meet to get access to a giant population of almost 500 million Europeans.

School yourself and work in a different country:

Ever wanted to visit another EU country during your schooling, or even study elsewhere? Well, the EU allows you to do just that, even under the same circumstances as the nationals of the targeted country, almost free of charge! During your study at a secondary school, that is enabled by Erasmus+, which is majorly supported and encouraged here at Prva. It is an EU Initiative that allows you to visit another country whilst you're studying, and even earn grades and complete school years abroad, thanks to a standardized European points system, which ensures just that.

Alongside these, there are many others, such as quality telecommunications, higher equality standards, additional protection of human rights, environmental protection and various EU funds, for example, 2012's fund for Maribor, when it was chosen as that year's European Capital of Culture.

Jaša Igrec

CITIES OF LEARNING

Cities of Learning is a program that aims to promote digital and entrepreneurial skills among young people in cities across Europe. The program is led by the European Commission, in partnership with local governments, businesses, and other organizations. Schools, businesses, and other organizations may also be involved in the planning and implementation of the program. The goal is to create a network of resources and support for young people, with a focus on helping them develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in school, in the workforce, and in life.



The goal is to create a network of Cities of Learning across Europe, where young people can access a wide range of learning opportunities, such as coding and programming workshops, mentoring and coaching, and other activities that promote digital and entrepreneurial skills. The program also aims to support the development of local ecosystems that foster innovation and creativity among young people, and to promote the use of digital technologies in education.

Cities of Learning is a program that aims to create opportunities for young people to learn and grow in their communities. The program typically focuses on providing educational and enrichment activities for children and teenagers outside of traditional school hours. These activities are designed to be fun and engaging, and often include hands-on learning experiences that are aligned with the interests and passions of the young people participating.

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As part of the project, 11 young people from 7 Slovenian youth organizations participated in a youth seminar (Spain, April 2022) and a youth forum (Germany, July 2022), where together with more than 100 young people from 8 EU countries.

We stuck to our values throughout the entire project. Values behind the program are:

Inclusiveness – we strive to create opportunities for diverse learners and learning providers

Openness – we promote open experience sharing and collaboration between partners locally and internationally

Diversity in learning – we encourage various learning activities ranging from public and informal spaces to non-formal or formal learning as well as learning online.

Open Recognition – we value various achievements and education acquired through life. We use open badges allowing us to recognise and value diverse learning.

Democracy and respect for human rights – our platform and learning opportunities provided should be in line with the main principles of democracy and demonstrate respect for human rights.

Innovation – we strive to make use of the internet and the newest technologies to respond to the emerging challenges and opportunities in the 21st century.

Unfortunately, I couldn't participate in a youth seminar in Spain, but I did participate in a forum in German city Magdeburg. This forum was held in July of last year (2022). We researched advocacy and formed political recommendations on selected topics: informal learning, mental health, sustainability, participation and inclusion.

Each country chose one area to focus on. We had a non-formal learning area and we also held debates here. Among other things, we also presented policy recommendations to a handful of German members of the parliament in the European Union. They also helped us finish and reformulate them in a constructive conversation so that they have the greatest possible chance of being approved.

The forum was a great experience, I am very happy and grateful that I was able to participate. In just five days, I made a lot of new acquaintances and friends from all over Europe, with whom we are still in contact. The memories will stay with me forever and I can say that the amount of memories is not small.

Lara Mavrič



Erasmus+ and studying abroad

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. The general objective is to support the educational, professional and personal development of people in education, training, youth and sport through lifelong learning, in Europe and beyond, thereby contributing to sustainable growth, quality jobs and social cohesion, to driving innovation, and to strengthen European identity and active citizenship. This project has been long established in our school as well to the point that it has been almost embedded into it. For those reasons, alongside its rapid increase in popularity, I've decided to execute an interview with one of our school's Senior students, who is one of the more involved participants in Erasmus+ projects at the school level.



The Interview:

Q1: Briefly introduce yourself and describe your participation in Erasmus+.

A1: Firstly, I would like to thank you for this opportunity you have given me to share my ERASMUS+ experiences.

My name is Jakob Žebeljan and currently I am in the last year of High school but my ERASMUS+ era was mostly during my previous school year, so during the 3rd year of my schooling here. I have participated in 2 different ERASMUS+ projects, the first one was called SoMBet and it was centred around Social Media Behaviours of Teenagers but there were many topics that were analysed (for example: internet security, face filters, e-commerce etc.). This ERASMUS+ was already planned for the school year of 2020/21 but COVID-19 changed our plans. There were many schools that were included in the project, including schools from Lithuania, Turkey, Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia and Italy.

First school that hosted the project was a school from Lithuania, the second one from Turkey, then from Italy and the last one from Latvia. Our school is up next this March and in May we go to Portugal.

The second ERASMUS was called STEM3 and it was focused around biology and chemistry where we analysed the quality of water and air in Slovenia (Maribor), Croatia (Zagreb) and the Czech Republic (České Budějovice). This project was also halted because of the epidemic but then successfully finished last year.

I was mostly wanted on these projects because of my knowledge about the media, photography and creative skills but I was also able to show my knowledge of different natural sciences.

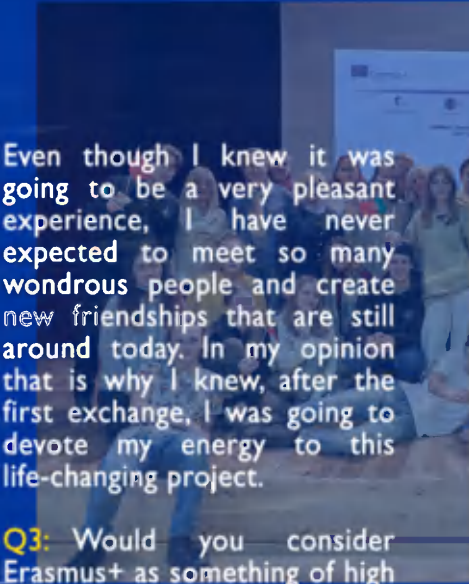
Q2: Why have you chosen to take part in Erasmus+ and devote yourself to the programme?

A2: It all started when I was approached by my IT professor, in the 2nd year, with an idea and invitation to participate in the ERASMUS+ project SoMBet because of my social media and photography knowledge. A year later I was invited to another ERASMUS+ by my biology and chemistry teachers. All of a sudden, I was wrapped in 2 projects that were going to happen in the same school year and I have to admit – I was very excited. but nervous at the same time.

The main two reasons for my participation were my lack of travelling experience because of COVID-19 and my ever so growing wish to meet other people from different countries and experience their culture.



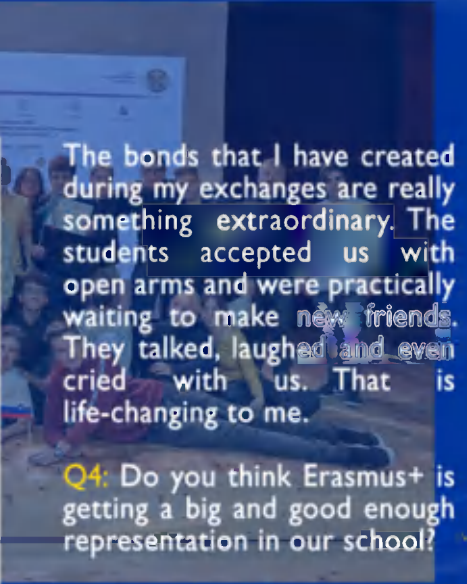
SoMBet



Even though I knew it was going to be a very pleasant experience, I have never expected to meet so many wondrous people and create new friendships that are still around today. In my opinion that is why I knew, after the first exchange, I was going to devote my energy to this life-changing project.

Q3: Would you consider Erasmus+ as something of high quality, positive, worthwhile, even life-changing? Why, or why not?

A3: Yes, as I previously mentioned, this project has a variety of positive effects. In my opinion the EU takes great care of its students and when picking out schools which are to be included in this project, they pick the highest quality ones. That can be seen in the programmes that every hosting school creates and by the students that are chosen for this task. This is a huge opportunity to listen and learn about foreign cultures that will really make it worthwhile.



The bonds that I have created during my exchanges are really something extraordinary. The students accepted us with open arms and were practically waiting to make new friends. They talked, laughed and even cried with us. That is life-changing to me.

Q4: Do you think Erasmus+ is getting a big and good enough representation in our school?

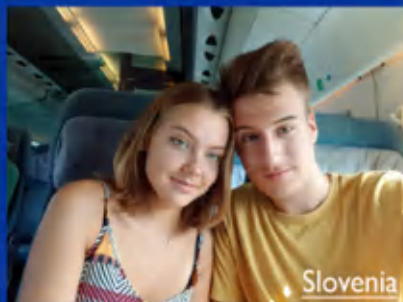
A4: Since I was approached by my teacher for ERASMUS+, I think it is well-presented, because even the teachers are encouraging the students to join in.

I also helped with promoting the project over our school's Instagram account, the school internet website with various videos, photos and presentations for the students and teachers. I would even dare to say that ever since I joined our school's ERASMUS+ team, it has been more known and popular in our school, which is felt by the skyrocketing numbers of new interested students in the programme.

Q5: Describe one of the experiences from an Erasmus+ excursion which stuck in your memory the most.

A5: Hah, where can I start? On the first ERASMUS+ excursion to Kaunas, Lithuania I met a girl named Nida and at first, we didn't talk a lot, maybe a few conversations here and there, but on the last day we really connected. We even walked in front of the whole group so we were able to talk alone.

After almost 7 months we were able to see each other once more and for the first time as a couple. Since then, we visited each other, she travelled to Slovenia during summer and I returned the visit in December last year for the New Year holidays.



We continued our talks over social media and we started to develop feelings for each other. In March 2022 we got together and started a long-distance relationship. We met again on my 3rd ERASMUS+ excursion, which was in May, on Sicily.

This is the most cherished experience from the whole ERASMUS+ journey thus far, and even though it can be hard and daunting for the both of us, at the end, our love prevails.

Q6: In 2021, EU had set aside a budget of 2.9B EUR for Erasmus+. It spanned across 19.000 projects in 71.000 organisations, amassing almost 650.000 participants in mobility activities, while there were around 17.9M secondary-education and 1.4M tertiary-education students in all EU member states combined. Is the EU doing enough to spread Erasmus+?

A6: I can see that the EU is trying its best with promoting ERASMUS+, since in my projects, there were schools from every corner of Europe – south to north, east to west. That really shows that the EU is not only concentrating on selected parts of Europe but rather on the entirety of the Union.

But I also believe it still significantly matters how schools choose to promote the project to their students. We must not forget that for a school to be able to participate in the project, they need to meet certain requirements, which can sometimes be very challenging.

Q7: Have you thought about going on another Erasmus+ project when you finish education here?

A7: Yes, I did, most likely to Lithuania as well. Not only because of Nida, even though she is a big part, but because I fell in love with their culture, people and the city of Kaunas. I encourage everyone to at least try and visit Lithuania so you will be able to see and experience all the amazing things I did. But, please, don't forget to bring a very warm winter coat.

Q8: To conclude and come back to the topic at main interest, should, in your opinion, studying abroad be encouraged?

A8: As previously said, the bonds you create, the experiences you endure and the new people you meet, all that has the potential to change one's life – and all of that whilst you continue your regular studies. If you're scared of the new environment or of not being accepted, trust me, I felt the same. But it is only when you truly relax and embrace the atmosphere of the new unknown, you're going to really start enjoying it all.

Jaša Igrec (Interviewer) and
Jakob Žebeljan (Interviewee)

EPAS - EYE VZ Event Review

On Friday, 25 November 2022, 5 students and 3 teachers from our school went to Varaždin, where we took part in the project **EYE Varaždin** (European Youth Event Varaždin) as part of the grander **EPAS** (European Parliament Ambassador School) project of the European Union.

On the first day we participated in various events. In the smaller sessions, we debated the conduct of the European Parliament's sittings and the inclusion and treatment of various minorities. In the larger events, the panels, we talked about the future of accommodation options, about the rapid increase in prices while decreasing availability. The Mayor of Varaždin, the Bulgarian UN Youth Delegate, the President of the Slovenian National Youth Council and the Chairman of the Board of the Croatian Youth Network were the main speakers in this debate.

We then took part in a panel discussion on the European Year of Youth. A member of the Advisory Board of the Youth Council of the Council of Europe, a Croatian MEP (Member of European Parliament), the Vice-President of Youth of the European National Communities and a Croatian youth activist discussed the progress of young people in the countries of the European Union, their rights and their future. Together they agreed on the idea of letting young people decide about themselves.

On the following day, Saturday, November 26, 2022, we participated in two more panel discussions. The first dealt with the integration of the countries of SEE (South-East Europe) into the European Union. A member of the National Youth Congress of Albania, a Croatian MEP and the Vice-President of the European Youth Council discussed the fight against corruption and other important problems of the countries of the region, young people and the process of raising awareness about democracy, which they felt should be better developed and supported in the educational institutions of the country.



EYE

VARAŽDIN

25.-26.11.2022.

In the second panel, we took part in a debate on law, the upcoming year of 2024 – the year of the European elections – and the rule of law. The panellists discussed the development of countries in relation to the extent of corruption and democracy, as well as electoral trends in general. They jointly recommended that as many people as possible should take part in these elections so that the European Union, as an important continental organisation, can remain as democratic as possible.

After this panel discussion, we attended our last small event where we learned about the problems of young people in the Balkans, in this case in particular in the non-EU republics of the former Yugoslavia.



The programme managers showed us the problems of these countries and discussed their ideas for solving them. They mentioned the poor infrastructure, the “brain drain”, the high level of corruption and the politicisation of the media.



I enjoyed the whole event very much as it was very informative and expanded my knowledge, especially about the EU politics focused on young people.

Jaša Igrec



HOW THE WAR IN UKRAINE AFFECTS THE EUROPEAN UNION?

The conflict began in February 2014 after the Revolution of Dignity and has centred on the status of Crimea and parts of the Donbas, which are internationally recognised as part of Ukraine. The conflict includes Russia's annexation of Crimea (2014), the war in Donbas (2014 - present), maritime incidents, cyber warfare and political tensions. Since 2014, Russia has deliberately concealed its involvement and militarily supported separatists in the Donbas. Russia established a large military presence on the border in late 2021 and launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, which is still ongoing.

In the last year, some 42,000 people have died in this invasion, thousands are missing and millions are homeless. The material damage is more than 300 billion dollars.

This invasion is having a major impact on the members of the European Union.

Food has become more expensive and deliveries more difficult. Gas and oil have also become more expensive.

GAS FROM RUSSIA

It all started with the EU phasing out its dependence on Russian fossil fuels.

On 30 and 31 May 2022, the European Council agreed to ban almost 90% of all Russian oil imports by the end of 2022 with a temporary exception for crude oil delivered through pipelines.

EU leaders called for accelerating the deployment of renewable energy, further improving energy efficiency, and improving the interconnection of gas and electricity networks.

On 27 June 2022, the Council adopted a new regulation on gas storage, which was presented by the European Commission in March of the same year.

These rules are designed to ensure that gas storage in the EU Member States is filled before the winter season and can be shared with those Member States that do not have their own storage facilities.

HIGH PRICES

On 19 December 2022, EU Energy Ministers agreed on new rules to establish a market correction mechanism aimed at protecting citizens and the economy from excessive prices. The Regulation aims to limit episodes of excessive gas prices in the EU that do not reflect world market prices, while ensuring security of energy supply and stability of financial markets.

However, gas prices remain high and are not falling.

It is not just gas prices that are high, but also food prices, which are rising and rising at an alarming rate.

Ukraine is a major exporter of maize, wheat, flour, rapeseed and sunflower oil. Russia has threatened its exports of these products. Some ports have been blockaded, leaving around 20 million tonnes of grain.



And in May 2022, the European Commission presented an Action Plan to establish solidarity belts between the EU and Ukraine. The aim was to create alternative land routes to which Ukraine could redirect its agricultural exports.

Since the start of operations in May 2022, more than 18 million tonnes of Ukrainian cereals, oilseeds and other products have been exported through the solidarity belts.

Even if we are now receiving all this produce, the Russian invasion has had an impact on prices, and prices are rising, leaving many people without food.

The invasion left many people homeless, and migration began. People started fleeing and moving to neighbouring countries and other EU countries.

Every war is a serious one and the countries of the European Union are doing their best to help these people, and rightly so, because everyone deserves a peaceful life, a home and food.

Lia Švajgl

DUALITY IN THE EUROPEAN ACCEPTANCE OF REFUGEES

On February 24, 2022, Russian forces stormed Ukraine, carrying out attacks in the north and south-eastern parts of the country. As a result, two significant effects ensued; on one hand, they stepped up an all-out military offensive in a supposedly post-conflict continent. And yet, this was accompanied by strong rhetoric of “war returning to Europe” after World War II. On the other hand, this crisis led to millions of Ukrainians fleeing their homeland and seeking refuge in Europe.

Immediately following the invasion, around 150 000 Ukrainian refugees were crossing borders daily to flee the war. However, due to the general estimation that there are closer to 4 million refugees in total, the European Union (EU) has taken notice and responded with a strategy to deal with the situation.

According to an official website of the European Union, the EU has activated the never-before-used Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) of 2001 which is “an exceptional measure to provide immediate and temporary protection in the event of a mass influx [...] of displaced persons from non-EU countries who are unable to return to their country of origin”. That means that the policy gives refugees the right to live, work and access public services in EU countries for three years.

The treatment given to Ukrainians is unmatched. Some claim that this is because of the war's similarities to the Cold War, specifically the fact that the conflict brings back the memories from the past. They do, however, also think that most refugees were welcomed because they are white and Christian. In other words, Europe appears to be sending a message that they have the ability and want to welcome refugees, but only if those refugees appear “European.” This indicates that not all refugees are treated the same and that bigotry toward people from third world countries is common.



There is a significant difference between how this crisis has been handled compared to the prior ones. Firstly, other regions of the world, such as the Middle East and Africa, had not experienced the inclusiveness of humanitarian measures and support demonstrated for Ukraine. It furthers the idea that solidarity has no universal definition, but it builds on cultural and ethnical closeness. Secondly, there is a noticeable contrast in refugee understanding. While other asylum seekers are viewed as parasites and welfare dependents, Ukrainians are valued as a source of labour and enhanced productivity. This explains exactly why a refugee's value in society has affected the level of support. Unfortunately, data found by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development supports this, indicating that arrivals from Ukraine will have a net impact on the labour market that will be double of the one between 2014 and 2017.



Lastly, assistance for refugees continues to be an incredibly sensitive political issue. For example, the earlier wave of refugees were mainly Muslim Arabs and Asians from Syria, Iraq, North Africa, and Afghanistan, and they arrived at a time when European worries of Islamic extremism were high. The underlying xenophobia has maintained in this migration wave and third-country nationals are still being handled unequally at the border.

Naja Ledinek

Banana Dispute: World Trade Organization vs. European Union

BANANA TRADE WAR



The banana dispute between the United States, the European Union and the Latin American countries was a result of disagreements on importation of bananas into the EU. In 1993, the European Union implemented a trade policy aimed at regulating importation of bananas within the market that it controlled. The policy gave preferential treatment to banana imports from certain regions and those from former EU colonies. However, bananas import from Latin American countries and the United States were restricted entry into the EU market.

The main reason the dispute affected Latin American countries and EU member countries can be explained by the forces of demand and supply. Latin American countries are the biggest producer of bananas and on the other hand EU is one of the largest markets for bananas in the world.

Prior the establishment of the single market, most members of the European Union had their practice with regard to importation of bananas. One of the main factors that led to emergence of the disagreement are the tariffs that were imposed on import by the EU. Latin American countries were assigned an import of 2.2 million tons. EU was also discriminative in its issuance of licenses to banana distributors from Latin America.



In June 1993, a panel that was established by a number of Latin American countries argues that the import quotas and tariffs were unfair and that they were in breach of the free trade regulations that were put out by World Trade Organization (WTO).

In an effort to resolve the dispute, WTO ruled that the EU import regime was illegal and discriminative. In response, EU introduced a new import regime on 1 January 1999 and established a new set of rules. In April of the same year, WTO ruled that the new import regime was not in line with WTO - EU trade obligations. WTO granted the United States and a number of Latin American countries permission to impose sanctions on EU imports up to a certain limit. On its part, the US established an import tariff of 100 per cent on all imports into the US originating from the EU member countries. However, the tariff was only applicable to non-agricultural products.

On 1 January 2001, the US government made a decision to suspend the imposed sanction on EU imports. This would only happen if the EU ceased to end the tariff-quota system and adopt the tariff-only system.

The banana dispute between the EU and WTO was finally resolved in July 2001 after 8 years. The EU agreed to stick by the trade stipulations laid out by the WTO. But what would happen if the countries continued arguing? Most immediately, bananas are crucial to the Caribbean economy. Half the population of the Caribbean rely on the banana industry to supply their basic needs such as food, shelter and education. If the EU's preferential treatment was whipped away without giving enough time the farmers to develop other ways of using the land, the Caribbean economy could collapse. So even though we can do very little if the dispute comes back, we can hope it stays the same so we will continue seeing bananas on the shelves of our home grocery shops.

Ana Stolec

Does an average Slovenian statistically live better than an average citizen of the EU?

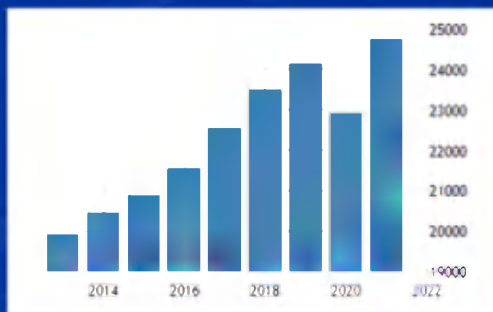
I'm sure many of us have sometimes, maybe even often, found ourselves contemplating whether or not we live in a "good" country, whether or not Slovenia is statistically better than other countries, in the European Union, for example, our most relevant international organization. Let's put that to the test.

We are going to compare Slovenia against the EU average, specifically EU-27's, in the following 10 categories: GDP Per Capita, GDP Per Capita on PPP, Income Inequality, Corruption Perception Index, Democracy Index and Human Development Index.

1) GDP per Capita

GDP, or Gross Domestic Product, is the total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific timeframe – so everything a country makes in a year is that country's yearly GDP. But here, we are looking at GDP per Capita, which is all GDP of a country divided by its populace count.

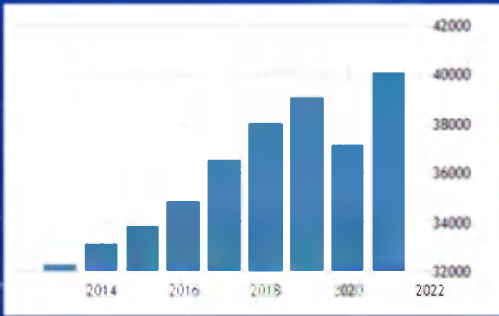
This indicator shows us how much would an individual would produce on average. Slovenia's GDP per Capita in the year of 2021 was \$24,744,84, while EU-27's a \$38,411,10, which means Slovenia is on the lower end of other (major) economies of the EU.



2) GDP per Capita PPP

This indicator shows exactly the same as the previous one, but the GDP values here are converted to international dollars using purchasing power parity rates (PPP). Purchasing power parity is a measurement of the price of specific goods in different countries and is used to compare the absolute purchasing power of the countries' currencies – it is a finer indicator than the previous one to the lesser developed and developing countries.

GDP per Capita PPP of Slovenia was, as of December 2021, \$40.036, while EU's was \$44.138, which shows lesser difference in economic powers of bigger economies compared to Slovenia.



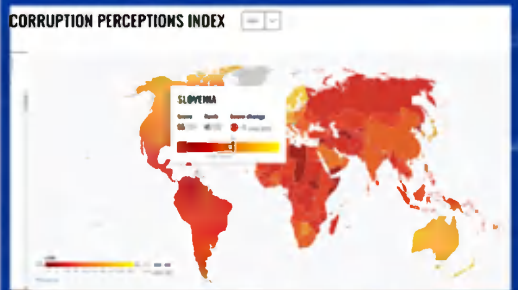
3) Income Inequality

This index is measure of the distribution of income across a population – the greater it is, the more unequal. Slovenia's lastly measured 23.5%, and EU's was 30.8%, which means our incomes are more equally distributed than in an average EU country. Interestingly enough, this date marks us as the 2nd most egalitarian society in Europe, only behind the Slovaks.



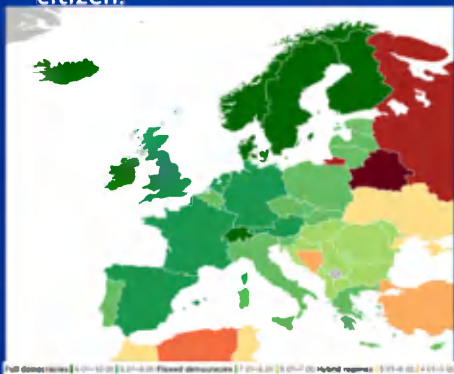
4) Corruption Perceptions Index

This index measures all kinds of corruption in the public sector. Slovenia scored 56, while the EU-average is 66, out of 100, which means we are more prone to corruption in Slovenia compared to an average EU citizen.



5) Democracy Index

DI measures how democratic a country is. This index is based on indicators such as electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of government and others. It is widely known EU is a bloc which stands on democratic values and is also one of the major advocates for this political system. This is surprising as an average EU country would score 7.61 out of 10, while Slovenia scores 7.75, which means an average Slovenian lives under a more democratic leadership than an average European Union citizen.

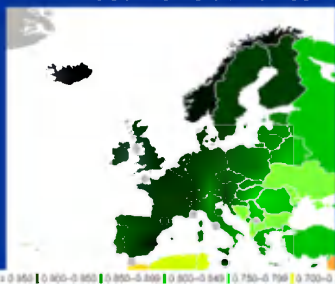


6) Human Development Index

HDI is a statistic composite index of life expectancy, education, and per capita income indicators, which is used to rank countries into

four tiers of human development

– low, medium, high and very high development. HDI is mainly formed by indicators from the GNI (Gross National Income is the total amount of money earned by a nation's people and businesses) Index, Education Index, which is comprised of literacy rates and school system analyses, and Life Expectancy Index. HDI of Slovenia was 0.918 in 2021, while an average EU country would have scored 0.864 out of 1, showing our societal focuses have borne much better results than in most EU Countries.



With that, we can draw conclusions on the fact that the statistics show a very close match-up, where Slovenia wins on the quality of life statistics, but is still mildly lacking in terms of economic development, which will naturally with improve over time, judging statistics.

Jaša Igrec



Issues Throughout Existence



Artemisia Gentileschi

Female empowerment in the artistic mythos

"I will show Your Illustrious Lordship what a woman can do."

A gifted young painter growing up in the birthplace of the Renaissance, Artemisia was born on July 8 1593, the eldest of five children and the only daughter of Orazio Gentileschi, under whom she trained.

Gentileschi's artistic journey began when she was just a child, when her father noticed her gift. By her teenage years, she was reproducing works of great technique, artistry and emotion and her style embodied the essence of the Baroque artistic tradition. Her art was already beginning to be infused with a distinctly feminist pathos that set her works apart from her inspirations, such as Caravaggio.



Her world was torn apart, however, when another one of her father's friends, Agostino Tassi, sexually assaulted her. Although Agostino was an influential and dangerous, Orazio and Artemisia sued the man in Florence court, and, thanks to misogynistic laws concerning a woman's virginity, they won the case. Florence was so taken with the scandal that Artemisia Gentileschi was propelled into artistic stardom, and her artworks, depicting feminist retellings on biblical stories, became wildly popular.

"Susanna and the Elders" is the earliest signed and dated painting, painted by Gentileschi at the age of 17 in 1610. A frightened Susanna twists away from the men in clear distress as they leer over her, attempting to force her into sex. Susanna's form is painted with detail and naturalism that reflects Gentileschi's own skill and focus on rendering the body accurately, and the vibrant colours and shadows practically leap off of the canvas. The work is a triumph of Baroque art and an early example of Gentileschi's skill in communicating feminist theme to the viewers clearly and powerfully.

After her tragic rape and highly publicized trial, Gentileschi married and set up her own personal studio in Florence, which gave her the freedom to create the art she wanted. Her work often featured scenes of strong and empowered women taking down male villains, and were laden with double meanings in the context of her own trauma.

Artemisia Gentileschi was much cleverer than the art historians give her credit for. As a self-made, self-supporting female artist she had to fight hard to survive the male-dominated world. A common theme that would she play all throughout her works is building upon her narrative as an empowered woman seeking to express the anger of her injustice through her art and fulfilling the demands of a market of eager patrons.

As I was thinking about her words "I will show Your Illustrious Lordship what a woman can do" I acknowledged that it is very important to recognize such brilliant women artists in our world. Art is the most powerful tool of expression throughout human history, and by looking at the stories of these talented and creative women, we celebrate the determination of the female spirit.

Gentileschi's tale is an inspiration to us all, and her courage, cleverness, and creativity have paved the way for the women artists and visionaries of the modern world.

Artemisia Gentileschi proved that as long as she lives she will have control over her being.



Ana Stolec

THE INHUMAN AGE OF AMERICA - SLAVERY

WHAT WENT WRONG?

It all began in 1619, when the English privateer ship *The White Lion*, that had about 20 African slaves aboard, reached the shores of Virginia, which was at the time part of the colonies England was having a hard time to establish.



At first the slaves worked with Native Americans and Europeans on tobacco, rice and cotton plantations, but land owners soon started taking advantage of the African slaves, that presented the majority of work force. In the mid-17th century slave trade began, hence that implied slaves, believe it or not, became a property. That also led to new laws being established, taking away the human rights of Africans and for an instance in 1661 interracial marriage was banned.

In the following decades hundreds of thousands of Africans were sent to the land of present-day United States.

The Declaration of Independence in 1776 stated that "all men are created equal", however that right was not the case for the slaves, Africans or African Americans.

In 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected president and the civil war began between the Northern and the Southern states soon after as the Southern states seceded to preserve slavery.



According to Abraham Lincoln, initially the civil war was fought to keep America whole, and not to end slavery, but the war turned out to be fought for the freedom of slaves, as Lincoln worried the British would support the south's separation. The Northern states, also known as the Union, won the war against the Southern states, so called Confederates, in the spring of 1865, after 5 bloody years of fighting.

IT'S BEEN 160 YEARS

On January 1, 1863, Lincoln released the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring the end of slavery in every state. That, however was not the case, as the slavery was truly abolished only in some states, therefore Lincoln recognized that the Emancipation Proclamation would have to be followed by amendment in order to guarantee the abolishment of slavery. Hence the, so called 13th Amendment, ultimately abolished the slavery in the United States on 6 December, 1865.



HERE ARE MY TOP 3 MOVIES ABOUT THE AMERICAN SLAVERY YOU SHOULD CHECK OUT



12 years a slave



Free state of Jones



Harriet

IS SLAVERY STILL PRESENT TODAY?

Although you might think, that slavery no longer exists, unfortunately it does. It's called modern slavery, a problem still occurring in nearly every country worldwide. Slavery especially prevails in countries such as India, China, North Korea, Nigeria, Russia, ... It's hard to imagine how 50 million people in the world still live their lives as slaves, committed to their fate. Much of the food we buy, such as rice, is probably produced by slaves, as well as jewellery and clothing, implying it is likely that your brand new sweater from Zara was made by slaves. Many families ended up getting tricked, or forced into slavery, experiencing violence, being threatened with deportation or inevitable debt, which on a large scale, is a result of poverty. Most common type of slavery today is human trafficking, where people get exploited for prostitution, forced labour, marriage, organ removal, ...

In conclusion, slavery is, unbeknownst to many people, as it is hidden, still present today and is fatal to millions of people that are being controlled by it.

Jakob Vezjak



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Modern-day slavery takes the form of human trafficking. Women, men, and children are tracked or obtained in this exceptional example of labour exploitation, and they are then intimidated, deceived, or otherwise forced to work against their will. Victims of trafficking are sometimes lured by unfulfilled promises of respectable jobs and better lives. Women are especially prone to trafficking because of the international inequalities in status and opportunities that exist for them.



Federal law defines “severe forms of trafficking in persons” as 1) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under 18;

or 2) the recruitment, harbouring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labour or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion, for the purpose of subjecting that person to involuntary servitude, forced labour, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

Many trafficking victims are forced to perform other sorts of labour, such as domestic servitude, manual labour, or agricultural work, while some are forced to participate in the sex trade. Victims of trafficking frequently suffer physical and psychological torture, including beatings, sexual abuse, restriction of food and sleep, threats towards them and their loved ones, and exclusion from the outside world.



The victims of trafficking are predominantly women and children everywhere. Women are disproportionately impacted by poverty, gender discrimination, illiteracy, low levels of education, regional conflicts, and a lack of job prospects. Such circumstances push women to migrate and make them especially sensitive to human trafficking, which is when unethical recruiters or employers place women in positions to which they did not consent and from which they are unable to voluntarily emancipate from.

The real number of victims of forced labour and human trafficking is highly difficult to determine, however there are some estimates. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), at least 12.3 million individuals are forced to perform labour at any given time, of whom 2.4 million do so as a result of human trafficking. Between 14,500 and 17,500 immigrants are reportedly trafficked into the US every year, according to the US Department of State. These statistics do not, however, reflect the large number of people who are trafficked within American borders.

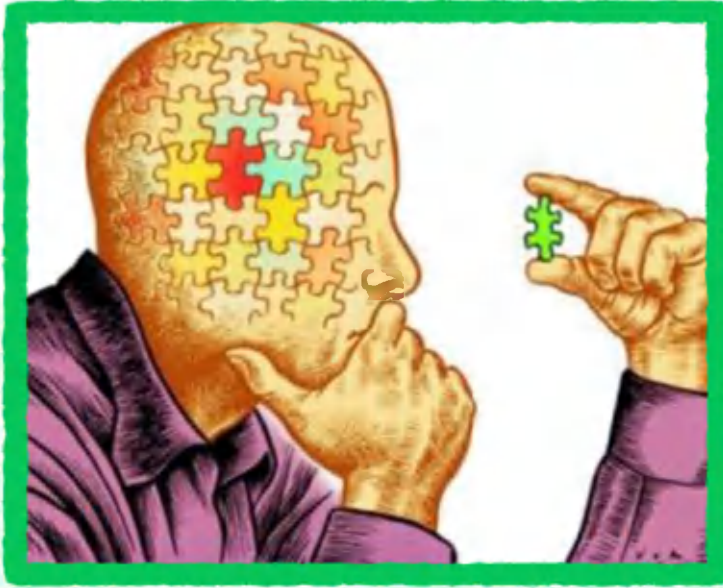


In the US, human trafficking victims are entitled to certain benefits. Survivors are entitled to the same services and benefits as refugees under the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), including financial assistance, food stamps, healthcare, and SSI. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) must certify that a person is a victim of trafficking for them to be qualified for these services and benefits. Additionally, the victims of trafficking can access various government-funded programs and services, such as crisis counselling, temporary housing aid, and the mental health assistance they need for their safety.

Although the topic is fairly well known, it is not talked about enough. Due to the complex nature of the crime, traffickers often operate under the radar, and the victims of trafficking are unlikely to identify as victims and often blame themselves for their situation. This makes it more difficult to identify the crime, as victims rarely report their situation. There should be more measures introduced to identify and protect victims.

Naja Ledinek





Self-Improvement



LET'S OPEN HANDS TO LIFE

Everything has its meaning. Every action we take, every person around us, every path we travel, every cell of our body, every breath we take have their own meaning. Our life is made up of our thoughts, feelings and actions, and it seems to us that everything in our life flows by itself. But that's not so true. Only we are masters of ourselves. We are the only ones who manage the three parts of our life that unite into a complete whole - body, soul and mind. In order to grow internally, we need to feed each of them. We give the body strengthening food and drink that we enjoy. We strengthen the soul through meditation or prayer, and we give the best to the mind when we surrender to the flow of life, but at the same time control it.



The book entitled You Can Heal Your Life by Louise Hay clearly explains the functioning of this 'puzzle'. She explains the functioning of the universe in which we exist - in one of the countless galaxies, on Mother Earth, and in it we are among the billions of people. We, who live in this world. With our body. With our soul. With our mind. It is amazing that we are the rulers of ourselves. We are the ones who choose our thoughts. We are the ones who control our words and actions. "But in order for this to happen, we must first change the inside of us". A goal in our heads is not enough for a change. Even a plan is not enough. Engagement is required. If all the people in this world only dreamed or planned, but did not actually do something, we would surely live in caves with stones in our hands. But we must realize "That what we do not want to change is the area where change is most needed."

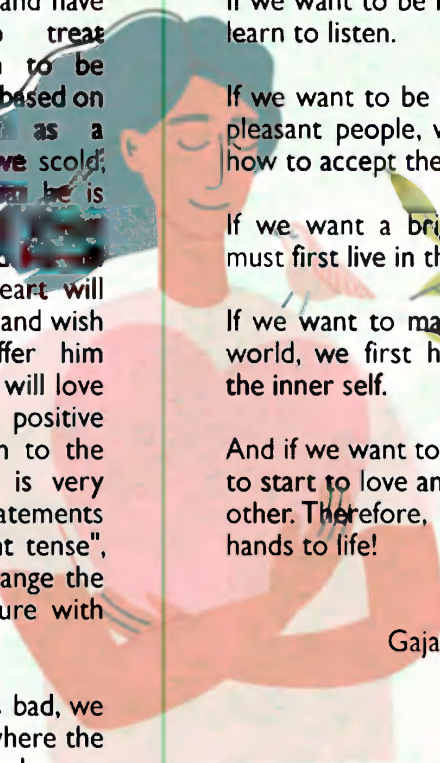


We have the power. But this power can quickly fail us. With power comes the feeling that we are on top of the world, which should not get into our heads too quickly. Nevertheless, it is necessary to "do things spontaneously and with ease". There is no need to beat yourself up for mistakes or scold yourself for failed attempts. Watch out: Attempts! Life gives us many opportunities that we can take advantage of. Sometimes we stumble over an obstacle. But it's important to get up and move on. This is how we grow our inner strength in life.



At the same time, we can be aware of ourselves. As a human. As a living thing. As the one and only. In the book, Louise describes her new daily routines, which we should all have, even if we can sometimes be overcome by fear when doing them. Fear of knowing yourself. Fear of the words: "I appreciate myself. I am unique. I am priceless. I am worthy. I am me." And the changes should start happening by themselves. We will no longer suffer from diseases that we would not otherwise have, we will no longer complain about things that are not worth it. Because we are like mirrors... "What we attract always reflects our qualities or our beliefs."





At the same time, people find it difficult to face the past, but "what happened is the past. We now live in the present and have the opportunity to treat ourselves as we wish to be treated." Louise's idea is based on the idea of herself as a three-year-old child. If we scold, oppose and tell him that he is ugly or worthless and that he is wrong, he will be crushed. He will start to cry and his heart will break. But if we hug him and wish him the best and offer him everything he wants, he will love us. Warm words and positive affirmations will lift him to the top of the world. "It is very important that our statements are made in the present tense", because "We cannot change the past. We shape our future with our present thinking."

And if our social side is bad, we can first ask ourselves where the problem is. We attract what we believe in. "If people do not behave towards us as we would like, then there is a pattern in us that attracts such behavior". "We can only change others in one way - by first changing ourselves."

If we want to be loved, we must first learn to love.

If we want to be heard, we must learn to listen.

If we want to be in the circle of pleasant people, we must know how to accept them.

If we want a bright future, we must first live in the present.

If we want to master the outer world, we first have to master the inner self.

And if we want to be us, we have to start to love and respect each other. Therefore, let's open our hands to life!

Gaja Semprimožnik

HOW TO LEVEL UP THIS YEAR

We all know that new year means new opportunities. Every single one of us probably said this famous line at least once in their lifetime: »new year, new me«. But did you actually fulfil it? I assume not, because this is a very onerous and challenging task to accomplish. You might have had that strong drive of creating a better version of yourself at the beginning, but then as the months went on, you forgot about it or it just wasn't your top priority anymore. And there is nothing wrong with that, because every year doesn't have to be your best. I mean we have an entire lifetime given to us, to reach at least one year for which we can proudly say, that it was truly ours. But even that doesn't necessarily mean, that you have to be happy and positive every single day out of 365. It is practically impossible, because there are many obstacles we are facing on a daily basis. From having to do a lot of schoolwork to being short on money, it is all a part of our life, but we have to make it work. If not to please those surrounding you, do it for yourself.

At the end of the day, we are basically stuck with ourselves until the day we die, so one might as well be the person enjoyable to be around.

Now, let's get to the strategy of becoming the best version of yourself in the year of 2023. First, you have to take care of your mental health. In order to look good on the outside, you must be likewise on the inside. We reflect our inner condition and state of mind out into the world. Of course you can »fake it till you make it« and present yourself to people as confident but you won't fool anyone unless you really are self-assured. So, one of the many steps of establishing a healthy mindset is to surround yourself with loving and supportive people. You won't feel good or positive in a circle of people that bring you down and only lower your energy levels. Distance yourself from people around whom you don't feel appreciated or wanted. Instead surround yourself with those who make your days a little less grey and filled with a lot more joy and happiness. Leave those energy-sucking people in the past and give opportunity to new, stable relationships.

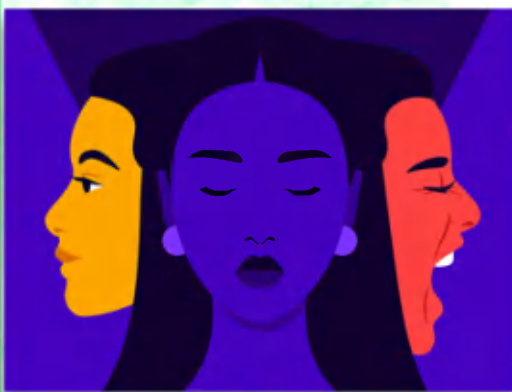
Learning something new and different can also contribute to your well-being. Try a new sport, join cooking classes, improve your art skills or even study a new language.

Do anything that will give you motivation and invigoration for the future. However, don't get too overworked, because you will feel drained and burnt-out. Stop glorifying being busy and get some sleep.

You won't be energised enough to complete other important tasks, if you feel tired all the time. Hence, set up a good and consistent sleeping schedule that will enable your body to rest well.

If you want to calm down your thoughts, try meditation and mindfulness. It's as easy as clicking on a five-minute meditation video rather than watching your favourite influencer. You will feel more grounded and connected to yourself right away, now imagine how balanced you can become in one year. In order to be in harmony with your life, you should give yourself permission to have a bad day. It's okay to feel sad and melancholic when something is not going as you planned.

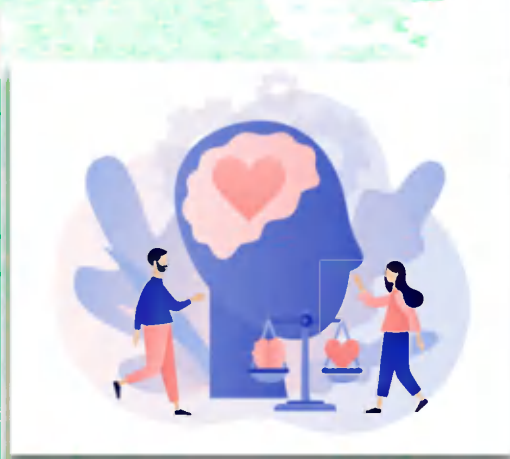
Cry, show your emotions but I always say, that the thing that made you feel so, doesn't deserve more than ten minutes of tears. Be that emotional wreck and let the tears rain but only for the amount of time that is really needed. Then get yourself back together and continue to bring out the best of every situation. Try to be a better human being not only to yourself but to people surrounding you. It can be hard to be a nice person when you're consumed by negative thoughts. When you find yourself criticizing someone, try to adopt a more positive mindset.



Be polite even when people are abrupt or rude to you, be the one to change the direction of the interaction. In everyday conversations, simple words like "please" and "thank you" can go a long way in showing someone you appreciate them. Try to be affectionate and humble and people will be so in return. Of course there are many ways you can be kind to others, but you need to be kind to yourself as well. You won't be able to spread love, if you don't love yourself first. So be thankful for how far you've come and trust that you have the power to make your dreams come true. Remember to stay true to yourself along the way and everything else will work out for you naturally.

So will the year 2023 be your best year yet? It's all up to YOU!

Nina Čeh





Your Inner You

PERSONALITY PATTERNS

Have you ever walked around a town and wondered about the world we live in? About the nature that surrounds us? About the people who cross the road of our lives? What are these people like? The charm of humanity is that no one is the same as someone else. But on the other hand we are similar to each other in many ways - we strive for life, a happy and healthy life path, but that does not displace the fact that we are different. Not only in skin color, hair length, leg size and body shape, but also in character color.

According to his words, it is not necessary that a person is characterized by only one color - there can be a combination of several, we most often identify the color green, while we are least surrounded by blue. But what really defines us as a color? What makes us like this? Why are we the way we are? According to Erikson, "It is a combination of heredity and environment. Even before our birth, the foundations for the behavioral patterns that we will show in adulthood are laid."

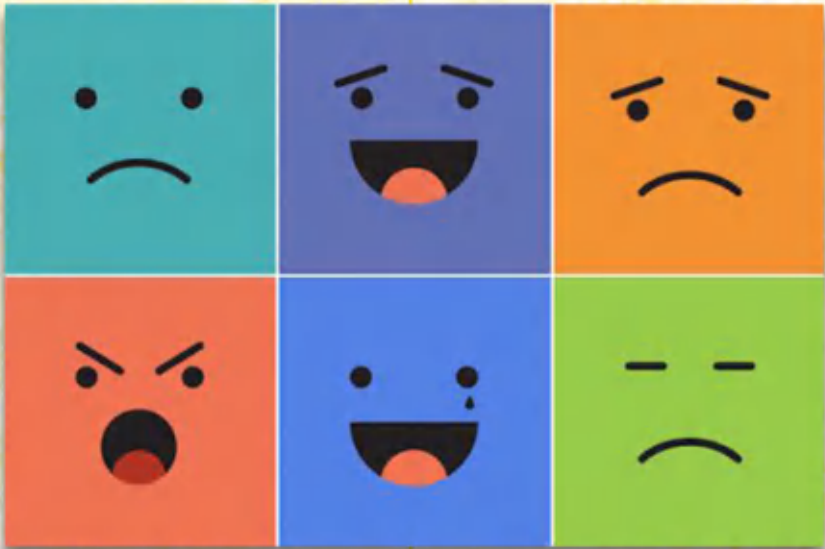


According to the studies of Thomas Erikson, there are 4 colors that can be assigned to people: red, yellow, green and blue.

The colors are based on the DISA system (dominance, initiative, stability and analytical). Although the system belongs to the modern era, people were already 'assessed' in the same way by the ancient Greeks,

2. In contrast to red, yellow is a real entertainer. It is synonymous to laughter. His biggest weakness is listening, although he will try to deny it, because he usually takes the role of the main speaker. If you meet a yellow one, show no signs of sadness around him, because he will avoid you. He is an all-day optimist, and making friends is like breathing for him – so don't look at them strangely if he finds a friend right on the street (or as the yellow would say: Strangers are friends who don't know me yet). What about work? He does what he's told, even if maybe not on time. They cannot stay at one place all the time – they want changes and innovations.

3. What about green? Greens are famous for their sensuality. They don't like to be in the center of attention, although this seems strange to us, because they are the most common. They feel uncomfortable in public, so don't put them in it, because they will resent you at the same moment. They mostly just listen (even if they have a useful idea) and they are introverted. Also they don't put themselves in the foreground, so don't get angry during a phone call if there is silence on their side most of the time. In case of changes, they need some time for themselves and are not fans of surprises.





4. Like the green ones, the blue ones can also be described as good listeners, but they will tell their useful idea. With them, everything is precise and planned. Their rules are very specific, everything has to be put in its place, and they don't leave home without double checking if they have their keys. They say 'yes' to their work right away, and most likely they will ask you for additional material, and by the way, they will make an Excel table or even a presentation. Blue people don't look for shortcuts - "It doesn't matter if it's easier, it's important that it's right." In three words: they are precise, calculated and disciplined.

What color did you recognize yourself in? Or maybe someone else? Only on the basis of the DISA system we realize how different we really are. So different, but so similar. And there is nothing wrong with that, because differences must be respected!



Gaja Semprimožnik

DOES LIFE GET ANY EASIER?

Life is hard. We all know that. We all agree with that. We all say that to ourselves at some point of our lives. But how is it possible that some people live their lives as it will leave them the next moment?

"Life is only one" they told us. But if we ask ourselves: How many of us really live like this? How many of us wake up in the morning with a smile on our face, then set out to live this day as it is our last? Why isn't this number very high? Why do some people get rich and fill their wallets with unbearable sums of money and maybe (even literally?) bathe in money, while someone on the other side of the world, maybe even on the other end of the street, weighs every banknote and wonders whether they should pay bills or buy some food?



Why does everyone love some person so much the first moment they shake hands, and the other person feels left out and doesn't know what they have to do for love? Why does someone fit into society so quickly, while someone can barely fit in a circle of people and would prefer to sink into the ground when they receive too much attention? Why does someone love their body and offer it the best, while the other would like to remove every dot on their body, change every detail on their face and change everything that can be changed? Why are we so different? Where does this wealth of humanity come from?

Simply: there is no right answer!

Humans are independent beings. Happy, content, sad, disappointed, upset, sentient beings. Everything in moderation. But we have something in common: the desire to live. No matter how much we feel a certain feeling, we are always guided by the idea that we do not want to disappear from Mother Earth. We are driven by the desire to live our lives.

Despite all the obstacles that life puts up for us - it sets them for us with a purpose. That we will jump over them or even better overcome them, then pick ourselves up and do a march forward on the path of life.

Life does not expect us to be perfect. It doesn't expect us to be the best at everything, or to always be satisfied, or to satisfy it with the best of everything. Then why do we expect all this from life? Then why do we expect this from ourselves?

The fact is, we live in a world where 'being perfect' is not unfamiliar. We are reaching for unreachable ideals. We cling to our safe zone. We hide behind masks. We don't allow ourselves to live. We strive for perfectionism and perfection. But at the same time this sentence hangs in the air like puppets on a string: "Perfect means not to be perfect. That's another level of perfection."

We all want to be loved. Heard. Happy. But for that we have to love. To listen. To make happiness. First to ourselves. **Every single day. In every situation.**

Let's give a hand to a fellow human being. Let's admit our mistakes. Let's share our thoughts. Let's trust each other.

And yes, life can only be easier if we commit to it. Together we can succeed. We can be the change. Not tomorrow, not the next time. Today. Today we can be the change. If not us, who? If not now, when then?

Gaja Semprimožnik



What your ringtone says about your personality

Imagine this. You're at a church and suddenly someone's phone starts blasting out a pop song as a ringtone. What would you think of them? As someone who's immature and belligerent or rather amusing and cool? You might not think about it that often, but it says a lot about someone's personality.

The beginning of ringtones started around the 1870s with the first telephone ever invented. Through the decades the ringtone started to change roughly. In the 1990s a guy called Ralph Simon thought it would be a great idea to use pop songs as ringtones. Therefore, people still use popular songs for that purpose.



Today we have a lot of different ringtones to choose from. From classical music to recordings, movie themes and the list goes on and on.

So, why would a person pick that direct ringtone? The most common assumption is that it is probably the default ringtone, which might sound basic or boring, but people have different opinions about them. You are very likely to be unbothered and easy-going, since picking a ringtone isn't a deal-breaker for you. Then we have rap and hip-hop songs as ringtones. In this case you are definitely a social butterfly and a big partygoer.



Opinions of others don't really get to your heart. You are living your life to the fullest. But it does depend what kind of a rap song it is. If it's full of vulgar words, you of course will come off as an aggressive or even bad person. Some will probably think that you're out of your mind, not to mention how embarrassing it would be if you were in public and your phone just started blasting out a rap song full of inappropriate words.

Then there are the jazz ringtones. Okay, stop, literally everyone knows you listen to jazz, wow! All jokes aside though, because jazz lovers are usually the smart and hard-working ones. They love all the unique sounds mixed together so much they make it as their ringtone. Be careful because they are quick to judge, if you say something that doesn't match their opinion. Apparently recordings of your own voice can also be used as a ringtone.

It sounds a bit psychotic, because just why would you want to hear your own voice every time your phone rings? But the worst of them all, are people who have their phones on silent mode the whole time. I mean the ones that aren't even busy, but are just too lazy to answer your calls. Either you're aloof and don't want to socialize with others or you just don't have time to be on your phone. You know what would be diverting?

If you were in public and someone's phone started playing a movie or a show theme song and the nostalgia suddenly hits you. Others might see you as childish or even annoying, but you are just healing your inner child.

As the last example there are rock music ringtones. Now, there are many different types of rock genres. If your ringtone is a classic rock song you are probably a middle-aged man. Especially if that song is Hotel California by Eagles, or Sweet Child o' Mine by Guns N' Roses. On the other hand, there is alternative rock. I bet you just started going to high school and got into rock music and made it your whole personality. But you are aware that your music taste is incredible. Those are just my assumptions though. Of course a ringtone can't possibly define your whole personality, but it can make an impression on how others view you. I hope I didn't make you change your mind about your ringtone or make you care what others might think of it.

Hana Vezjak

Ms. 276
24

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Sdraviza
ob novini leta 1844.

Spet, terte sorodile,
Prijatli, vinze nam slacko,
Tie nam osh'oljn shile,
Serze radjafni in oko.
Tie otopi
Tie skerb!

POEMS

Napili bomo krog in krog?
Slovenzoo paradniza,
Deshilo nasho shisi bog,
Brate ope
Tiar nas je
Sincov slavenfke matere!

HOME

I want you to see a home in me

like I do in you.

I want you to come to me after a tough day,

everytime when skies are gray.

I want to be a place that makes you feel
safe.

A home.

As messed up as I am,

I want to be your home.

A home can be messy too, right?

So why can't I be it?

Žana Hočevar

COMPLETELY, PLATONICALLY

As the leaves turn brown
and the snow falls down,

you and I begin to drown.

Cause' it was just a summer fling,
owning love was not our thing.

Now, I wonder if it was even there.

It doesn't matter anymore.

Cause' nothing will ever be as it were,
so our hearts shall die or soar.

As they say you never forget your first ...

True love that is.

But our minds are full of thirst,
so every fling is either hit or miss.

Oh, our souls just merely touched

but for me it was enough.

A part of you is forever me,
even if I is not a part of you.

But in my eyes I hope you see,
that you are the reason I finally flee.

Nina Čeh

A STORM

Most people love to fall asleep in the
storm.

I get the idea, I like it too.

It seems silent but it's very loud;

it's calming although in reality, it's not.

It's nice when it's outside, but in my head,
not quite so;

because my mind is a chaotic storm, that
you'll never get to know.

The rain rains, the lightning glows, the wind
blows;

and yet, nobody knows.

Žana Hočevar

*Per aspera ad
astra*

*In varietate
concordia*

PRVA CIHNAZIJA
MARIBOR

