

EXPERIENCE REPORT AFTER OUR VISIT TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

In this report, I will explain what the European Parliament is and I will tell my experience during the trip to the European Parliament.

- European Parliament

The European Parliament represents the people living in the European Union. All members are elected by direct universal suffrage, meaning people have equal voting rights. It is the only Parliament where members are elected by the people.

The European Parliament has a president, Roberta Metsola. Every 2,5 years, the president and her 14 vice presidents change. There are 705 seats in the Parliament and elections to fill these seats are held in all 27 member states every 5 years. The European Parliament consists of 705 members called MEPs (Members of the European Parliament), of which 21 are Belgium. At a meeting, members don't sit randomly, each member is in a specific political affinity. The European Parliament is located in several places. In Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg. We have been to the European Parliament in Brussels.

- Functions

The European Parliament has 3 functions. The first is legislative powers, which means it can pass or reject laws, and it can also make amendments. The second is budgetary powers, which means that the European Parliament, together with the European Commission, have to establish the annual EU budget. The last is supervisory powers, which means MEPs can oversee the work of EU institutions. They ensure the proper implementation of EU legislation and check the use of the EU budget.

I found it a pleasant experience after visiting the European Parliament. It was the first time I had been there. When we were inside the European Parliament, the staff checked our belongings. Then we were allowed to attend a meeting ourselves on these topics: a high common level of cybersecurity, agreements between the EU and Ukraine and distortive foreign subsidies. The meeting room was empty, but that was because it was a meeting on special topics where specialists were present. They told us that the meeting room was full only when members had to vote.

We were all given headphones because many members spoke a different language during the meeting. Some interpreters provided an interpretation of what the person was saying. We learned that there were two types of translators. You have interpreters who give an interpretation of a person, and a translator is someone who translates everything literally on paper. Then we got some more explanation about the European Parliament. It was a lovely day with my classmates. We learned a lot, and now I know more about the European Parliament. It is essential for Modern Languages to take such trips to learn more about politics. Through this, we also learn more about other cultures and languages, which are especially important. It was a very educational and necessary trip for modern languages. Now I know more about the European Parliament and what they do there.

