



Dear Praying Friends in Europe,

The European Union from Conception to Today

As I start to write this article, Europe is commemorating the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz following the Holocaust. One of the greatest privileges of my life was to visit Auschwitz - yes I call it a privilege. Yet it was also the most horrific experience of my life. Until you have had the opportunity to visit such a place, you cannot imagine the inhumanity with which man can treat fellow men. If it was for that reason alone that it is so important to pray for our continent, that would be enough, but we know that there are so many more reasons.

As Europe emerged from the horrors of the Second World War and, not wanting to repeat the same mistakes that followed the First World War, brave men of faith started to dream of a different future.

In December 2024 I highlighted the little-understood institution of the Council of Europe, and this time I would like us to look at the European Union (EU). Having spent many years seeking to serve Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in and through prayer, and also trying to understand more of the workings of the EU, I would like to share some insights.

To understand the EU today, it is important to take into account the events that led to its creation and see how that relates to where we are in Europe today. It would be easy to say that the EU is cumbersome, too bureaucratic, too political or even too powerful but that would, I believe, miss the point. The EU was born out of a desire to find a way to avoid the mistakes of the past that have led to wars, by putting the elements needed to wage war into common ownership, namely by forging the Coal and Steel agreement in 1951. This then developed into a wider trade agreement, the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958, then becoming the European Union (EU) in 1993. It is true that these trade agreements continued to expand the EU and its influence into an increasing number of areas of political life in its member nations. This should not, however, detract from the overwhelming desire for a union of nations who are willing, through discussion, negotiations and consensus, to seek a more equitable and peaceful Europe. The question today is, are these aims still relevant, desirable or even attainable?



70+ years on, the world is a different place, trade is more global and different players have emerged; initially Japan followed by countries like South Korea, China, India and others. These were countries with large workforces that were either willing or forced to work for lower wages and were/are less regulated. All this time the EU continued to seek to improve the standard of living of Europeans by what has become more regulation and safeguards. At the same time, it broadened the scope of its influence in Europe by enlargement, particularly after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the fall of communism in Europe. This was not just an ideological decision but came at a cost, which has become less and less sustainable in the light of the new global realities. This is only part of the current position and I'm sure we can all think of other consequences. The fact is that Europe has become less competitive in the global market of 2025.

The problem we face in Europe particularly is the rise once again of nationalism. This is no longer confined to a few powerful nations but is more global. It seems every nation is increasingly becoming less willing to work for the common good of a continent, let alone the world. Will the EU be able to survive?

It seems more and more that the general perception of any political authority is not primarily shaped by truth but by populist voices, whether they are well informed or not. Increasingly we seem to be willing to form our opinions on the basis of personal or even nationalistic selfish perceptions. Increasingly also, we

see national leaders who are willing to exploit these desires, ultimately for personal gain whether economic or simply the acquisition of power.

Sadly, these aims and trends are the complete opposite of those worked for by the founding fathers of the Council of Europe and the European Union and are definitely the opposite of what Jesus teaches us. For example when he underlines the second commandment to “love your neighbour as yourself.” Matt 22:39

So, have the EU’s ideals changed from the early days? Undoubtedly yes. But, as I have mentioned earlier, in seeking to understand the workings of the EU today, I have found that a good percentage of those elected to these institutions genuinely seek to serve. It is our duty to uphold these men and women in prayer.

I’m sure that as you receive this edition of the Canopy you might be thinking, what on earth is happening to our world as we hear news of not only wars and military action, but also trade tariffs and trade wars. The important thing to remember is that God is the authority above all authorities but He also wants us to play our part in His plans.

Perhaps a good place to start is by finding out the names of those Members of the European Parliament who represent your local area and to pray for them by name.

I will end by reminding us of the verses I used to start my first article on these institutions.

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NIV)

Let us pray

- Let us pray for our leaders in the EU as they face difficult decisions about trading.
- Let us pray for those Members of the Parliament who represent us locally.
- Let us pray for the Heads of State across the European Union that they might remember the courage and faith of those who sought a better way forward for our continent.

Draft bill for a new abortion regulation in Germany
On 14 November 2024, an application was made in the German Bundestag for a change in the abortion regulations that would essentially make abortions legal up to 12 weeks after conception. In the view of many doctors and the German Society of Gynecology and Obstetrics, this draft law jeopardises the freedom of conscience of medical staff. According to the draft bill, ‘coercion to refrain from terminating a pregnancy’ is to be punishable by law. In individual cases, medical counselling such as pointing out negative consequences or explaining reasons for refusing an abortion could be interpreted as ‘coercion’. The legal uncertainties associated with this could unsettle doctors and restrict their freedom in a matter of conscience. More than 240 doctors have written an open letter to the members of the German Bundestag pointing out these dangers. Please pray that this concern will be heard and that the draft law will not be passed in the Bundestag before the general election on 23 February 2025.

Further Prayer:-

1. Pray for the people of Orebro, Sweden as they seek answers regarding the shooting of 10 people in a school. Pray particularly for the immigrant population who are fearful for their future.
2. Pray for the elections in Germany on 23rd February, the results of which will be important for Germany and for Europe too. Pray that voters will base their decisions on sound facts, not disinformation spread on social media.



Why not press the button and visit our facebook page to get the latest items for prayer.

TO DONATE: Hebron Europe e.V.,
IBAN DE53 6129 0120 0488 0210 06
BIC GENODES1NUE
giving your name and address. Thank you!

Donate