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Getting to know the European Union: member states in focus

Boston University Institute for Human Sciences

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Boston University
This project – *Getting to Know the European Union: Member States in Focus* – brings knowledge of the European Union, its policies, and institutions as they function on individual country level to a broader public. The debates with European Ambassadors will center on the question: “What does it mean, in practice, to be a member of the European Union?” While many of our previous activities, including lectures by European Commissioners and policy experts, have addressed this question from the vantage point of Brussels, these debates – in an effort to engage ordinary citizens and to highlight local economic, social, and cultural connections to Europe – will bring individual member state perspectives into focus.

The enlargement of the European Union has been a tremendous political success, securing peace and prosperity in the old member countries, and galvanizing and stabilizing politics in new and aspiring members. But how does every day life change when a country joins the European Union? Do the social, economic, legal and institutional frameworks of the EU reflect a common set of beliefs and ideas on the part of its citizens? How flexible are those frameworks and how much diversity can they absorb?

The project envisions the emergence of a global culture with a revitalized transatlantic partnership at its core. In this regard, it furthers the Institute’s mission of improving transatlantic relations and increasing understanding across the Atlantic.

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The Institute for Human Sciences at Boston University serves as a forum for new, non-partisan debate, research, and education in the matters of international (especially transatlantic) relations, introducing European insights and experiences into American debates on major social and political issues, and bringing American perspectives to bear on European discussions. It is affiliated with the Vienna-based *Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen (IWM)*, an independent, interdisciplinary center for advanced study in the humanities and social sciences.

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