

FINAL PROJECT:

**PRODEMOS AND EDUCATION ON THE
EUROPEAN UNION**



Joey P. Vermue

Student nr. 08030634

Class ES4-4B

Final Project supervisor: Mr R. Rawal

ProDemos mentor: Ms I. Faas

Date of completion: May 20, 2012

The Hague School of European Studies

The Hague University of Applied Sciences

Joey Pieter Vermue
Rijswijkseplein 258
2516 LH The Hague, The Netherlands
+31(0)6 5122 1354
j.p.vermue@student.hhs.nl
www.linkedin.com/in/joeyvermue



ProDemos: Huis voor Democratie en Rechtsstaat
Hofweg 1H
2511 AA The Hague, The Netherlands
+31(0)70 331 1777
info@prodemos.nl
www.prodemos.nl



The Hague University of Applied Sciences
Johanna Westerdijkplein 75
2500 BW The Hague, The Netherlands
+31(0)70 445 8600
escm-receptie@hhs.nl
www.thehagueuniversity.com

Executive Summary

This final project has been assigned by ProDemos *Huis voor Democratie en Rechtsstaat* (House for Democracy and Rule of Law). This final project is a graduation paper for the bachelor degree European Studies from The Hague University of Applied Sciences.

This benchmark research paper compares ProDemos with other organisations in The Netherlands that provide European Union (EU) educational activities. All the discussed organisations in this paper are divided in chapters. The first chapter explores all the EU activities of ProDemos, mainly the EU day programme, but also the Rule of Law and Politics day programme and the European simulation elections. The second chapter is devoted to different layers of government and different government aligned institutions that provide EU education (like the Representation of the European Commission in The Netherlands, the European Parliament Information Office and the Visitor Centre of the European Parliament Visitor Centre). One of the revealing items is that the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science does not oblige schools to include the European Union as a topic in class. Moreover, the Ministry dissolved a fund for educational EU activities. This proves the relevance of the NGOs, like ProDemos, that carry out educational EU activities. Chapter 3 focuses on activities exercised by NGOs. The non-governmental organisations discussed in chapter 3: the Montesquieu Institute, Asser Institute, EuroDesk Netherlands, Europa Decentraal etc. In chapter four all the activities are compared in a matrix.

The last chapter is the recommendations and conclusion section. The central question of this benchmark research paper is: "How can ProDemos improve its approach with regards to the European level of Democracy and Rule of Law?" The answer to this central question takes the form of the different recommendations. The recommendations include suggestions that would improve ProDemos's approach 'with regards to the European level of Democracy and Rule of Law' cultivated on the basis of the benchmark research conducted for this paper. A selection of the most important findings and recommendations:

- Developing two competitive advantages. Firstly, to implement *Le Congrès de La Haye* in the EU day programme of ProDemos. In order to develop to second

competitive advantage, ProDemos should persuade The House of Europe for the further development of the 'European Public Space', so ProDemos can bring its students along The House of Europe during the EU day programme. This would make the day programme more dynamic and attractive for students.

- Not to exercise EU themed activities for civil servants.
- To search collaboration with other organisations in order to expand the EU activities ProDemos exercises, for example with NECE allied organisations in order to organise *Europese Scholieren Verkiezingen* through the entire EU.

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
PREFACE	6
INTRODUCTION	7
CENTRAL QUESTION	7
MOTIVATION OF RESEARCH.....	7
RESEARCH METHODS.....	8
DOCUMENT STRUCTURE	8
1. CHAPTER 1: EDUCATION ON THE EUROPEAN UNION FROM PRODEMOS	9
1.1. PRODEMOS IN GENERAL.....	9
1.2. EUROPEAN UNION FOR SECONDARY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.....	12
1.2.1. <i>European Union day programme</i>	12
1.2.2. <i>Financing</i>	13
1.2.3. <i>Day programmes</i>	14
1.2.4. <i>Europese Scholieren Verkiezing</i>	15
1.3. EUROPEAN UNION FOR OTHER TARGET GROUPS	15
1.4. CHAPTER SUMMARY	15
2. CHAPTER 2: EDUCATION ON THE EUROPEAN UNION FROM GOVERNMENTS	17
2.1. INTRODUCTION	17
2.2. THE REPRESENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN THE NETHERLANDS (EC)	18
2.2.1. <i>Europe Direct Information Centres (EDIC)</i>	18
2.2.2. <i>EU back to School</i>	20
2.2.3. <i>Europe House Lecture</i>	20
2.2.4. <i>Team Europa</i>	21
2.2.5. <i>Other projects</i>	21
2.3. EUROPEES PARLEMENT BUREAU NEDERLAND (EP)	22
2.3.1. <i>Euroscola</i>	22
2.3.2. <i>Een 10 voor Europa</i>	22
2.3.3. <i>Other projects</i>	23
2.4. PARLAMENTARIUM INFORMATION CENTRE IN BRUSSELS	23
2.4.1. <i>Exhibition</i>	24

2.4.2. <i>European Parliament Role Game</i>	25
2.5. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VISITOR CENTRE IN BRUSSELS AND STRASBOURG.....	25
2.5.1. <i>European Parliament in Brussels</i>	25
2.5.2. <i>European Parliament in Strasbourg</i>	26
2.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY	26
3. CHAPTER 3: EDUCATION ON THE EUROPEAN UNION FROM NGOS	28
3.1. INTRODUCTION	28
3.2. MONTESQUIEU INSTITUTE	28
3.3. EUROPA DECENTRAAL.....	29
3.4. EURODESK NEDERLAND	29
3.5. EUROPESE BEWEGING NEDERLAND	30
3.6. NEDERLANDSE JONGEREN RAAD.....	30
3.7. EUROPEES PLATFORM	30
3.9. OTHER PROJECTS	31
3.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY	31
4. CHAPTER 4: ACTIVITIES COMPARED.....	32
4.1. INTRODUCTION	32
4.2. MATRIX.....	32
4.3. OBSERVATIONS	33
5. CONCLUSIONS	35
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	36
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS	39
BIBLIOGRAPHY	40
APPENDIX I: STRUCTURE OF THE PRODEMOS WEBSITE	44
APPENDIX II: MATRIX I	45
APPENDIX III: MATRIX II	46
APPENDIX IV: MATRIX III.....	47

Preface

I profoundly believe in European cooperation. In order to make European cooperation a success, all European citizens should understand, at least on a superficial level, how the European Union works and be familiar with the motives of its establishment. Although I am positive about the existence of the European Union, this benchmark research is carried out in the most critical manner possible, as well as in an enthusiastic way.

This investigation covers all the organisations that contribute to European Union education in the Netherlands. European cooperation itself is a complex, but vital, part of contemporary politics. The same must be said of the organisations that provide this kind of education, as they equally even share the same goal: raising understanding of the European Union. In order to reach this goal, abandoning the organisation's own interest and acting in favour of the collective benefit may be required. Collective benefit is to be understood as organised and quality education on the European Union.

This benchmark research will contribute to a better positioning of ProDemos between all the institutions that contribute to European Union education in The Netherlands. Moreover, I hope that this benchmark research will contribute to the improvement and optimization of European Union education as a whole.

I would like to thank ProDemos, Ms Faas and the direction, and the House of Europe for providing me with data for my research, connecting me with organisations and giving me advice on the outline of my research.

Lastly I would like to highlight that I am grateful for being able to live, work and study in one of the most developed parts of the world. However this may be viewed as self-evident. Indeed, I am very privileged.

Joey Vermue

The Hague, May 2012

Introduction

The name of this final project paper is ‘ProDemos and Education on the European Union’. It is a benchmark research assignment for ProDemos, a political non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in The Hague, The Netherlands. Chapter 1 will outline a profile of ProDemos. Because it is a benchmark research on European Union (EU) education, all the organisations that contribute to EU education in The Netherlands will be discussed in the sections following chapter 1.

Central question

The central question of this benchmark research paper is “How can ProDemos improve its approach with regards to the European level of Democracy and Rule of Law?”. ProDemos is the house of democracy and rule of law for Dutch citizens and the current democracy and rule of law that applies to Dutch citizens goes beyond our national borders, namely, in the EU.

Motivation of Research

Before this paper there was not yet extensive research carried out concerning all the organisations that contribute to EU education in the Netherlands. ProDemos is one of the organisations that provides EU education with their EU day programme. In order to position ProDemos between all organisations that provide EU education, an inventory had to be made, followed by a critical comparison of activities and different segments of society they serve. All of this, in order to prevent undertaking activities that other organisations already engage in.

Another additional circumstance was the upcoming EU topicality. In other words, the Euro crises made the EU more tangible for Dutch citizens and more important for Dutch politicians. ProDemos is one of the leading institutions in the Netherlands that contribute to citizen participation, teaching and informing citizens on politics. The question is if ProDemos provides enough and where interesting partnerships could be created is also a relevant consideration.

Research methods

The following research methods are applied for this benchmark research:

- Interviews with the European Parliament Information Office and the Representation of the European Commission in The Netherlands.
- Personal e-mails and interviews with ProDemos employees.
- Visit to the Brussels based stakeholders, these were extensively analyzed.
- Researcher's personal work experience whilst working for ProDemos
- Researcher's internship at the City of The Hague, where he is responsible for the Europe Direct Centre – The Hague.
- Online desk research to organisations that provide education about the EU in The Netherlands.

Document structure

Image 1 illustrates the different categories of analyzed parties during this research.

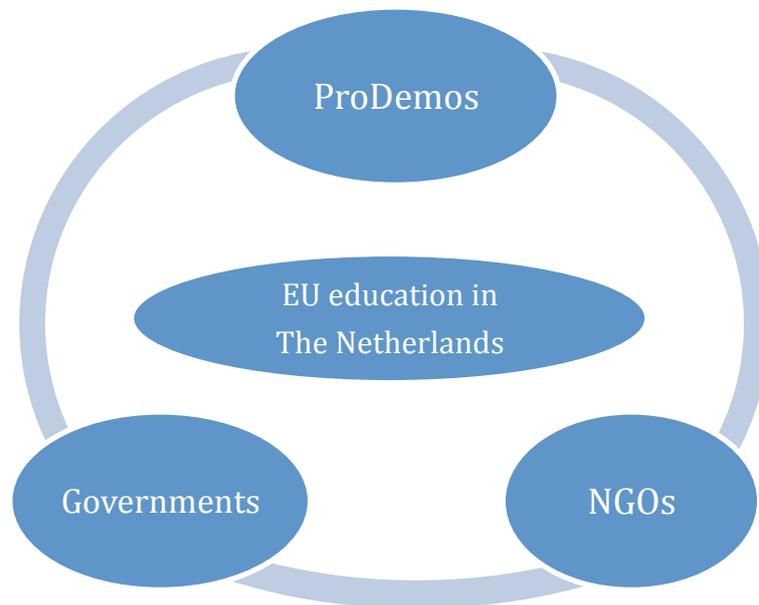


Image 1: Categorisation of analyzed parties

Chapter 1 explores the EU educational activities of ProDemos, chapter 2 defines likewise activities performed by governments and chapter 3 focuses on activities exercised by NGOs. In chapter four all the activities are compared in a matrix. The last chapter is the 'recommendations & conclusion' section.

1. Chapter 1: Education on the European Union from ProDemos

In this chapter the EU themed activities of ProDemos are described per target group. As an introduction of ProDemos this chapter will also briefly outline their general activities. The research question of this chapter is: “What does ProDemos do to educate their publics on the European Union?”

1.1. ProDemos in general

ProDemos is a result of a merger between two different organisations; Binnenhof Visitor Centre and the *Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek* (IPP) (Institute for Citizen Participation). After the merge in November 2010 it was known only as *Het Huis voor Democratie en Rechtsstaat* (The House of Democracy and Rule of Law). On 15 September 2011 the official name was given to this new organisation during their opening ceremony, ProDemos: Huis voor Democratie en Rechtsstaat (ProDemos, 2011).

ProDemos is located in Amsterdam and in The Hague. The Amsterdam location is the former office of the IPP. The Hague (or *Hofweg* location) is located in the former De Haagse Tribune building and also uses the former Binnenhof Visitor Centre in the cellar below the Ridderzaal. In June 2012 the Amsterdam staff will move to The Hague.

ProDemos sees itself as the bridge between the public and the political power; it is created by the Dutch society itself (as the IPP initially was), or in other words: they belong

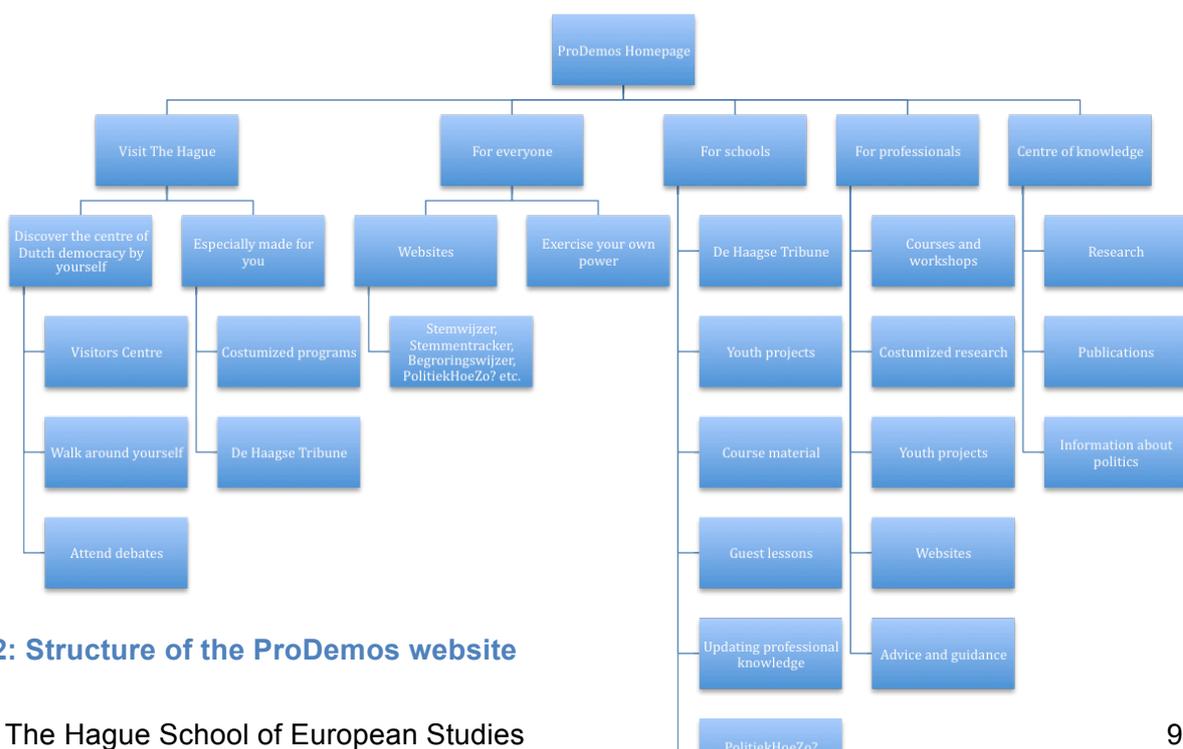


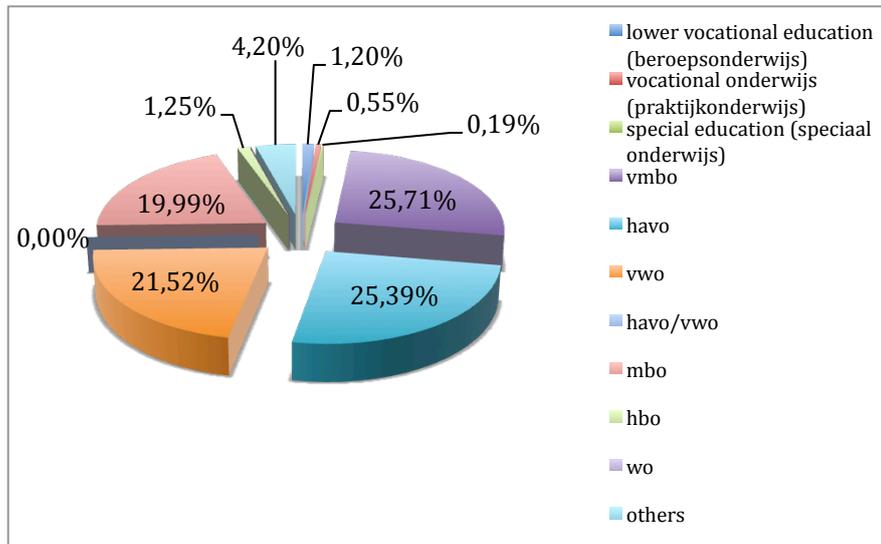
Image 2: Structure of the ProDemos website

to the civil society. That means that they do not belong to any political party or government, which makes them independent. ProDemos serves different target groups, it suggests four categories or target groups in the upper panel of the website's homepage: 'visit The Hague', 'for everyone', 'for schools' and 'for professionals'. In image 2 the structure of the ProDemos website shown in a diagram, displaying the main activities of the organisation (Vermue, 2011).

Activities of ProDemos vary from educational programmes for students, developing informative websites (such as *Stemwijzer*), organising lectures, guiding tourists through the government buildings, organising city tours, etc. One of the education projects of ProDemos is *De Haagse Tribune* (DHT). The project offers six different educational programmes for students from secondary education and vocational education (mbo, *Middelbaar Beroeps Onderwijs*). These six tours always leave from the Hofweg location.

- *Europese Unie* (European Union)
- *Rechtstaat* (Rule of Law)
- *Politiek* (Politics)
- *Media*
- *Politiek Den Haag in vogelvlucht* (Political The Hague at a glance)
- *Geschiedenis: Republiek of Koninkrijk* (History: Republic or Kingdom) (ProDemos, 2011)

Providing educational programmes is a key activity of ProDemos. The same branch allows for a special programme for primary schools too; *Ontdek het Binnenhof voor basischolen* (Discover the Binnenhof for primary schools) (ProDemos, 2011). De Haagse Tribune also offers 'classes' at location, mainly for mbo schools (vocational education) because ProDemos receives financial aid from the national government in order to organise these classes at location. In 2010 about 24.000 students visited De Haagse Tribune project (Huis voor democratie en rechtsstaat, 2011).

Image 3: Bookings school year 2010/2011 by type of education

Another branch of ProDemos is the Visitor Centre. The Visitor Centre offers tours to the Ridderzaal, the House of Representatives, the Senate and different city tours. In 2010 the Visitor Centre received 45.147 visitors (Huis voor democratie en rechtsstaat, 2011).

Another fundamental activity of ProDemos is the (political) websites they develop and maintain. The best example is probably the *Stemwijzer*, the online questionnaire of 40 political statements. At the end of this questionnaire, the website shows which political party corresponds the most with your political ideology. There are a variety of other similar sites, for instance a version that compares your opinion with previous made political decisions by different political parties (www.stemmentracker.nl). *Stemwijzer* has been exported to numerous countries in cooperation with, amongst others, *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam* and *Radio Nederland Wereldomroep*. Some of the most recent exportations include, Egypt (that was going to organise its first democratic elections since the time of the pharaohs), Morocco and Tunisia (Radio Nederland Wereldomroep, 2011). Other websites by ProDemos are, for example: - <http://www.grondwetpad.nl/> The constitution walk, a city tour through The Hague about the history and daily application of the Dutch Constitution. - <http://www.politiekhoezo.nl/> An informative website about politics for secondary education students where they can select in advance what they expect of the website and what they think about politics. After this the website adjusts to the particular student.

Given that ProDemos has the self-assigned task of informing citizens about politics, it is very active as an organisation in online social media. At the time of writing, ProDemos released about 200 tweets from their Twitter account (ProDemos on Twitter, 2012) in two

months time, which is about 3 or 4 tweets a day. This number is indicative of a neat selection of important items on behalf of ProDemos and no 'information-bombing'. Through social media ProDemos continues instructing people about politics. The website also has a live stream of news bulletins of *Politiek 24*. Online social media help ProDemos in achieving their goals, e.g. to announce events, to search for cooperation, to encourage participation etc.

1.2. European Union for Secondary and Vocational Education

1.2.1. European Union day programme

De Haagse Tribune offers a EU themed programme to secondary education students and to vocational education students. This programme is available on Tuesday and Thursday mornings during regular weeks, which brings a capacity of 80 classes each year. The programme starts around 10.30 in the morning and ends around 16.30 in the afternoon. Essentially it consists of informative parts that are mainly followed by an interactive part. The basis of the interactivity lies in the fact that students will be asked questions during the day programme and the student who answers the most questions right will be rewarded with a prize at the end of the day. The exact content of the programme varies for vmbo students and havo/vwo students. For example, the cases are different and the suggested questions for the quizzes are different too (De Haagse Tribune, 2011).

The learning goal for participants of the EU programme: "Goal of the day programme 'European Union' is that students learn that Dutch politics and the EU influence each other. Students learn that people [politicians and political parties to be specific] think differently on (the amount of) European collaboration and students should be able to shape their own opinion about the EU." (De Haagse Tribune, 2011)

The programme is relatively flexible and is adjustable to the students' knowledge about the EU. The DHT instructor asks in advance to the accompanying teachers what kind of knowledge the students already possess about the EU from subjects like *Maatschappijleer* (sociology), Economics or History (De Haagse Tribune, 2011).

As mentioned before, the day programmes have a high interactivity level with the students. The interactive part is vital for maintaining the attention of the students for a day programme of 6 hours. Not to mention that during the whole day students are taught only about one specific topic, which is different to a normal school day. Notably including a fun factor generates more enthusiasm from the participants.

The programme starts with receiving the students at the Hofweg location from ProDemos. They are brought to the classroom where they receive a short introduction from De Haagse Tribune instructor about how the day programme will take place. The first activity is that students are asked to fill in a *Krachtenveld* (Power field, revealing the flow of power between institutions, the people and governments) of the EU.

Subsequently, the Dutch political parties are analysed and the question of the levels on which these political parties can be found is formulated. This leads up to the EU perspective of political parties. Vmbo students and possible first or second year havo/vwo students are shown an educational film about the EU to give them some basic information about the EU or to refresh their knowledge. A clip from *Nieuwsuur* is shown to havo/vwo students to introduce them to what European politics have in stake in Dutch politics (De Haagse Tribune, 2011).

The European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament are discussed and are compared to the (Dutch) national government and parliament. One of the differences that is discussed is that the European Parliament does not have the power to propose laws itself in contrast to the national parliament(s).

Other activities that follow are *Opiniepeiling* (Exit Polls, a class simulation of exit polls for the EU), *Botsende belangen* (Opposing Interests, a class simulation game) and European Bingo (A quiz about the EU). There is always a trip to the Dutch House of Representatives included during the EU programme (De Haagse Tribune, 2011).

The development of this programme is done in cooperation with the Representation of the European Commission in The Hague and the development is also partly financed by the European Commission (N. Van Dijk, personal e-mail, January 11, 2011).

From a status quo of January 2012 1208 of the booked day programmes in 2012, only 25 were the EU day programme; that means that around 2% of the booked day programmes is the EU day programme. Historically of 4465 booked day programmes (starting from the year 2006), 54 were EU day programmes, which is about 1,2% (DHT, 2012).

1.2.2. Financing

De Haagse Tribune day tours are free of charge (ProDemos receives annual subsidies from the Ministry of Interior Affairs and Kingdom Relations (ProDemos, 2011). Teachers need a password and a user name in order to enrol classes in the online agenda. There is the possibility of booking supplementary activities, such as visiting the Ridderzaal. For these activities an additional fee is charged (ProDemos, 2011).

1.2.3. Day programmes

Of the six day programmes ProDemos offers to secondary education students (mentioned in the previous paragraph), one of such programmes is completely about the EU and two others allow for more integration of EU topics. These two programmes are not specifically about the EU, but they do include some subjects that are Europe-related (for example the European courts in the Rule of Law day programme). The other day programme is the *Politiek* (general Politics) day programme. Again, the exact content of the programme varies between vmbo students and havo/vwo students.

- *Rechtsstaat* (Rule of Law): This day programme is held at the same times each week as the EU programme. Students are received at the Hofweg location and De Haagse Tribune instructor gives an introduction about ProDemos and about the day programme *Rechtsstaat*. The instructor explains what is meant by Rule of Law and what the separation of powers implies for the rule of law. Some fundamental rights are specified and compared with the rights of other countries with the help of case studies. The different kinds of law are also explained, e.g. civil law, administrative law and criminal law. The differences and different applications are elaborated. In the remaining time, the courts of the Dutch legal system are mentioned: *Rechtbank* (Court), *Gerechtshof* (Higher Court), *Hoge Raad* (Higher Council) and on the map on the wall the European courts are pointed out (Strasbourg and Ville du Luxembourg) (De Haagse Tribune, 2011). Also included is a visit of a judge from possibly any court, a lawyer or a public prosecutor. He or she comes to tell something about their profession and students have the chance to ask questions to this professional. Also the *Rechtsstaat* day programme includes a trip to the Dutch Parliament and afterwards students will play a lawsuit simulation game in which roles are taken as lawyers, judges, victims, suspects, witnesses and public prosecutors. The day ends with handing out the day price for the student who answered the most questions right (De Haagse Tribune, 2011).

- *Politiek* (Politics): Teachers are able to book this day programme more frequently than the *Rechtsstaat* and EU programme. The flexibility of this programme has its roots in the fact that it is possible to run the programme with several classes on the same day. It makes use of many visual resources to introduce and teach the students about politics in such a way that they are able to implement their knowledge when visiting the House of Representatives for example. The programme discusses the levels of municipality, province and national democracy and to a smaller extent the European level of democracy. Another part of the programme is a meet-and-greet with a politician. Visiting the Senate and/or the Ridderzaal is optional (De Haagse Tribune, 2011).

1.2.4. Europese Scholieren Verkiezing

The IPP organised a simulation election, *Europese Scholieren Verkiezing* (European Students Elections), for the European Parliament for secondary education students twice, in 2004 and in 2009 (Europa NU , 2009). It is very likely that ProDemos will continue organising simulation elections for different levels of democracy in upcoming elections. The next simulation election for the European Parliament would be held in 2014. The simulation elections for the European Parliament are only held amongst Dutch students. In the past, a comparison has not been made with other EU member countries in order to portray a realistic result of the overall European parliamentary elections (B. Banning, personal e-mail, November 28, 2011).

1.3. European Union for other target groups

ProDemos does not yet offer other European themed activities for other target groups in specific. The organisation is involved in the NECE network (Networking European Citizenship Education). The NECE has as a priority objective to exchange methods of political education. Similar organisations to ProDemos join in congresses and workshops to exchange ideas on how to promote citizen participation (Huis voor democratie en rechtsstaat, 2011). The participation in the NECE network is not related to any external activity for a specific target group. It does help to improve the organisation through knowledge exchange and it helps the organisation to establish potentially useful contacts throughout Europe.

1.4. Chapter summary

The research question of this chapter was: "What does ProDemos do to educate its publics on the EU?". ProDemos makes possible many activities, but only a relatively low share of the activities has something to do with the European level of Democracy and Rule of Law. The activities concerning the EU are actually only aimed at students from secondary education and possibly vocational education. The other target groups of ProDemos are not 'instructed' or knowledgeable about the EU, e.g. civil servants, professionals and/or university students, etc. ProDemos does tend to create public awareness (as it instructs secondary education students, a phase that any Dutch citizen

passes) for the level of European Democracy but not for the level of European Rule of Law. This is something which ProDemos actually should do because it is the House of Democracy and Rule of Law and nowadays Rule of Law also goes beyond our borders.

One of the most valuable findings of this chapter is the relatively low proportion of booked EU day programmes in relation to all the booked day programmes in total. It is reflective of the fact that schools have little interest for participating in the EU day programme. ProDemos should think of ways to attract more participants for the EU day programme.

It must be noted that the EU programme is still a bit weak in EU content, notably it could contain more European aspects. A good example is The Hague Conference of May 1948 in the Ridderzaal on the Binnenhof, where Winston Churchill initiated the negotiations of a united Europe. The Audiovisual services databank of the European Commission includes a video of this event (Audiovisual Services European Commission , 1998). One can download this video and edit it to make it more attractive for a specific target group. Inserting the above-discussed video into the EU day programme makes the history of the EU more accessible and dynamic, especially when certain icons such as Winston Churchill, H.R.H. Wilhelmina, Konrad Adenauer and François Mitterand (all present at the Hague Congress) can be added to the story. Seeing this video and visiting the actual venue itself, increases the 'European Experience' in the EU programme. After all, the Hague Congress was a milestone for The Netherlands as well as for Europe (Audiovisual Services European Commission , 1998).

2. Chapter 2: Education on the European Union from governments

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the question “What does Brussels do to explain the functioning of the EU?” will be discussed. In other words, what does Brussels itself do to teach its citizens about the functioning of the EU. In this chapter four institutions will be discussed: the representation of the European Commission in the Netherlands, the representation of the European Parliament in the Netherlands, the Brussels based information centre ‘Parlamentarium’ and the Brussels and Strasbourg based visitor centre of the European Parliament.

Teaching about the EU is not made obligatory by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for primary, nor secondary schools in The Netherlands. Some Dutch textbooks do include a chapter about the EU (mostly only about its history), however, for the teachers it is not obligatory to pay attention to this subject (I. Faas, personal interview, November 15, 2011).

The representation of the European Commission in the Netherlands (EC) and the representation of the European Parliament in the Netherlands (EP) form together the ‘European Public Space’, commonly known as the ‘House of Europe’. European Public Space is a pilot project that until now only started in a few EU member states, for example Great Britain and Sweden. Since the ‘European Public Space’ is in a very preliminary phase the EC and the EP will be discussed separately in this chapter.

The new information centre, Parlamentarium and the European Parliament Visitors Centre (which organises the actual tours to the Parliament itself) will also be discussed as relevant organisations for the ‘instruction on the EU’ to Dutch citizens because they carry this broad EU responsibility and because of the short geographical distance to The Netherlands.

2.2. The Representation of the European Commission in the Netherlands (EC)

In each EU member state and many non-EU member states a Representation of the European Commission (EC) exists. The EC organises activities and projects in order to raise public awareness about the functioning of the EU. The EC has made it a long-term goal to organise fewer but greater events than the EC did before (M. Infeldt, personal interview, December 12, 2011). Prior to this decision, only a small group of people participated in the relatively small events organised by the EC. By organising bigger and more magnified events, the EC hopes to attract new kinds of target groups and more ample segments of society. The EC tries to reach its goal mainly through (new) partnerships. A good example is the Youth on the Move event, held in October 2011. This might be a good example of 'working together', although attendance was very poor (R. Rawal, personal e-mail, May 8, 2012). Working together should also generate possibilities of bigger marketing campaigns for events. The EC also views the European Dreams festival as a good example of partnership (organised by Europe Direct Centre The Hague, Humanity House and NJR [see sub-paragraph 2.2.1 and chapter 3]), held November 2011 (M. Infeldt, personal interview, December 12, 2011).

2.2.1. Europe Direct Information Centres (EDIC)

Europe Direct is a network of regional information centres, focused on the EU as a whole, spread across the European Union. The EDICs have the mission of communicating in an informal manner with EU citizens on European topics, which should make the EU a more easily understandable topic. The Representation of the European Commission in each EU member state regulates the functioning of the EDICs within the member state. The nine EDICs in The Netherlands are monitored by the EC in The Hague. Each year, the EDICs have to hand in a financial plan for the next year in October at the EC in The Hague. Moreover, every year around April the EDICs have to hand in an annual report with all the activities and balance of all the costs they have made. If the EDIC spend less than the budget they requested one and a half years before, they have to pay back the deficit to the EC.

Currently there are nine EDICs located in the Netherlands:

- Europe Direct Utrecht (in the city's library)
- Europe Direct Maastricht (in the city's library and community centre, called *Centre Céramique*)
- Europe Direct Rotterdam (in the city's library)

- Europe Direct Amsterdam (in the city's library)
- Europe Direct Zwolle / Drachten (*Land- en Tuinbouw Organisatie Noord* [Federation of Agriculture and Horticulture North])
- Europe Direct Almere (in the city's library)
- Europe Direct Groningen (in the city's library)
- Europe Direct Middelburg (in the city's library)
- Europe Direct The Hague (in the city hall) (Europe Direct, 2012)

In comparison with other organisations, the Europe Direct network represents a truly decentralised concept. Europe Direct operates regionally and locally, contrary to the similar organisations that only conduct activities in The Hague area and perhaps Amsterdam (universities excluded).

The EC indicates that it wishes to expand the Dutch Europe Direct Network. Preferably, each province should have its own EDIC. In conclusion, the EC would support the establishment of three more EDICs, preferably in the provinces of Brabant, Drenthe and Overijssel. The activities of the EDICs range from lectures and debates to activities for children and cultural markets. The EDICs all gather three or four times a year to discuss the plans they have for upcoming activities and to exchange ideas. Besides organising events, the EDICs all have a physical location where people can read about the EU and where they can find leaflets about current topics of the European Union. The aim is to present this information not solely in an informative way, but also in an attractive and appealing way. The EC appoints annually several communication priorities that the EDICs have to address throughout the whole year. In 2011, the two main topics were 'economic recovery' and 'Europe 2020' (five goals for the EU to meet in the year 2020). How these topics are communicated is up to the EDICs (M. Infeldt, personal interview, December 12, 2011).

According to Ms Infeldt, EC, (M. Infeldt, personal interview, December 12, 2011) the Europe Direct Centre in The Hague is one of the most active and successful EDICs in The Netherlands. In April 2012, the Europe Direct Centre and ProDemos collaborated intensively in the co-production of the *Europese Bijsluiter* (European package leaflet). The *Europese Bijsluiter* is a small carton box which contains a brief instruction with info graphics about how the EU functions. In the physical location of Europe Direct The Hague (Municipality's City Hall) there is a screen that displays informative and entertaining films about Europe, the EU and the relation between the EU and The Hague. Furthermore, there is a touch screen table, where visitors can scroll over a map of the The Hague area

with indicating all the European organisations in The Hague and the different projects in The Hague that are financially aided by the European Union.

Each EDIC has one or two *Europa leskoffers* (Europe instruction suitcase) that primary schools can borrow for free from the EDICs. The *Europa leskoffer* is developed by the EC and is filled with interactive learning methods about the European Union. Through the *leskoffers*, primary school teachers are not dependent on the activities that EDICs organise and are able to teach about the EU at any. Some EDICs personalised their *Europa leskoffer* to their region (e.g. the *Europa leskoffer* of Europe Direct The Hague includes some information about European organisations located in their region) (A. Eekhout, personal interview, November 30, 2011).

On the ground floor of the House of Europe, a similar information centre will be started in the progress of 2012. Starting their joint information centre is a true ambition of the EC as well as of the EP. The EC and the EP would like to see that school classes, that are taking for example the EU day programme at ProDemos, visit this joint information centre during their day programme. They would like to arrange the information centre with 'new style communication tools', e.g. touch screens, an interactive wall, Internet terminals etc. (A. Eekhout, personal interview, November 30, 2011). These visits of students can, of course, only be realised when the EC and the EP have the actual physical information centre ready.

2.2.2. EU back to School

The 'EU back to School' programme is jointly organised by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission for civil servants from the Dutch ministries. This programme aims to inform civil servants about the latest legal EU developments and new EU laws that, directly and indirectly, affect the work of the invited persons and should be taken into consideration by them when being active at their ministries (A. Eekhout, personal interview, November 30, 2011).

2.2.3. Europe House Lecture

The EC organises annually, under the name of the House of Europe, a lecture destined to university students. The lecture is about important and topical European themes and is given by leading individuals. For the lecture of 2012, for example, Mr Olli Rehn (vice-president of the European Commission and responsible for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Euro) and Mr Wouter Bos (Dutch ex-minister of Finances) are the guest

speakers of the lecture, in which they will address the currently ongoing financial crisis. One could argue that the House of Europe lecture of 2012 is of high standard compared to other organisations, because of the invited guests (member of the European Commission and the ex-minister of Finances) (Europe House Lecture 2012). A similar event is organised annually by the EC and the magazine 'Elsevier', called the '*Europalezing*'. Former speakers were chairman of the European Council, Mr Van Rompuy, and (at that time) Prime Minister Balkenende (EuropaNu c, 2010). This last lecture was held in the *Nieuwe Kerk* in Den Haag.

2.2.4. Team Europa

Team Europa is a group of speakers that gives lectures on different European topics and possibly anywhere in The Netherlands. The different speakers indicate on the website of the EC what their possible lecture topics are and indicate how often they can. The speaker does not charge anything but sometimes he/she wishes to reimburse their travelling expenses (European Commission b, 2011).

2.2.5. Other projects

The EC and ProDemos already collaborated in the past. The EC financially aided the development of the day programme EU and helped more or less to outline the content of this day programme (N. van Dijk, personal e-mail, December 9, 2011).

The EC facilitates bringing people in contact with the Visitor Centre of the European Parliament and is able to arrange custom made visits to the European Parliament as well as to the European Commission. One of the employees at the EC is responsible for arranging these affairs. However, the EC never organises the actual visits themselves (M. Infeldt, personal interview, December 12, 2011).

The EC always had a fund, from where initiatives by third parties for 'European' events were co-financed for 50%. However, 2010 was the last year for requests out of this fund. This fund was similar to the *Europafonds* of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is equally dissolved in May 2011 (EuropaNu b, 2012). The EC does continue to partly finance Nuffic (M. Infeldt, personal interview, December 12, 2011), an organisation that promotes international cooperation in higher education.

They also facilitate trainings for trainees from different levels of government. The training includes usually a workshop of how, for example, the EU chocolate directive is made. This same EU chocolate directive 'simulation' is used during lectures at professional education institutions and universities (European Commission a, 2012).

2.3. Europees Parlement Bureau Nederland (EP)

Europees Parlement Bureau Nederland (European Parliament Information Office) is the representation of the European Parliament in The Netherlands. The EP is under the responsibility of the Directorate General of Communication of the European Commission. The EP is obliged to report all their activities to the Directorate General of Communication in Brussels (A. Eekhout, personal interview, November 30, 2011). 'Euroscola' and '*Een 10 voor Europa*' belong to the most intensive and relevant activities concerning education carried out by the EP. Because of this, this paragraph will discuss these two activities extensively.

2.3.1. Euroscola

Euroscola is a long-time held simulation parliament in the plenary hall of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Schools from secondary education in the entire EU are able to participate in this event. The enrolment of Dutch schools is done by the EP. Before that, schools from across The Netherlands could just sign in at the EP in order to participate in Euroscola. Nevertheless, the EP aspires to organise a certain competition amongst schools to become a candidate of Euroscola 2012. The EP indicated they would like to collaborate with ProDemos because of their familiarity of and amongst schools in The Netherlands in order to set up this competition. The EP is responsible for all the expenses made during the Euroscola trip (A. Eekhout, personal interview, November 30, 2011).

2.3.2. Een 10 voor Europa

'Een 10 voor Europa' is the education programme of the EP. It is aimed at first year, second year and third year students of vmbo, havo and vwo. The plans for 2012 are to initiate the same education programme for mbo schools and for universities of applied sciences (with revised and adjusted information material). The goal of the EP is not to provide only educational material, but to really involve the students in a continuous programme. In order to assure that the programme has a structural and continuous character, the school or university should establish a permanent EU information point on their premises and appoint junior (motivated students) and senior (teachers) 'European Parliament ambassadors' within the school. Another condition is that the programme should comprise interactivity and two-way communication between the teacher and the students. All these conditions are put to the programme in exchange for the free delivery of materials to the schools, a subsidised trip to Brussels and so on. After a certain period, when the school or university meets all the conditions, the school or university can be

proclaimed as a 'European Parliament Ambassador School'. Before, the teachers that have to become senior 'European Parliament ambassadors' within their school, receive a training at the EP in The Hague. To show the current success they have, the EP has had twelve requests from schools only in the month of January of 2012 (A. Eekhout, personal interview, November 30, 2011). In April 2012, already thirty-five secondary education and two primary education institutions have participated in the 'Een 10 voor Europa' programme (Europees Parlement Bureau Nederland, 2012).

2.3.3. Other projects

Besides the two projects named above, the EP organises from time to time temporary projects. For example, in January 2012, EP staff visited two mbo schools and explained how EU citizens can execute power in the EU decision-making process (e.g. voting and the upcoming citizens initiative). Small projects like this have the aim to motivate schools and universities to join the 'Een 10 voor Europa' programme.

The EP also organises small informative gatherings aimed at three specific segments of society (appointed by the Directorate General of Communication), namely: the elderly, women and young voters.

In 2010, the EP organised two master classes for civil servants from Dutch ministries about the Lisbon Treaty and the impact it will have on their work.

The EP does not organise visits to Brussels, they can only redirect schools to the Visitor Centre of the European Parliament and the Parliamentarium.

Under the name of House of Europe, the EP and the EC offer organisations the possibility of hiring space for lectures and activities in their building without any costs, however, only with the condition that the lecture contains an EU related topic (A. Eekhout, personal interview, November 30, 2011).

2.4. Parliamentarium Information Centre in Brussels

Parlamentarium is the new visitors centre of the European Parliament. The visitor centre is composed of an exhibition, simulation parliament, restaurant and other standard guest facilities. Entrance to the building is for free and the building is open seven days a week. It is located in one of the buildings of the European Parliament and is about 200 meters from the actual parliament building. All areas are accessible to visitors with special needs (personal visit to the Parliamentarium, January 5, 2012).

2.4.1. Exhibition

Before entering the permanent exhibition, each visitor receives a 'media guide'. An electronic device (which looks like an iPhone) guides the visitor through the exhibition by audio and virtual support. Usage of the electronic device is for free and anonymous. When an organisation wants to visit the Parliamentarium with a group of more than 100 people, they should make a reservation through the website, so the Parliamentarium can ensure that enough media guides are available for the whole group. The media guide is available in the 23 current official languages of the European Parliament.

After receiving the media guides, visitors enter the first area that displays different campaign posters from different member states and three scale models of the official locations of the European Parliament (Brussels, Ville du Luxembourg and Strasbourg). At each different object, the visitor can swipe his media guide over a symbol, which makes the media guide explain what the visitor sees. The next part of the exhibition leads the visitors through a tunnel in which they hear the many languages of the European Union. The second tunnel is devoted to the history of Europe, important events that led up to the establishment of the EU and actual changes in the 'shape' of the EU (new member states and the way EU institutions work). The next part of the exhibition is about the current European Parliament. All the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are displayed on a wall with a photo and visitors can browse through their profiles on computers located near the wall. The computers even allow visitors to send e-mails with questions to the MEPs. In the same area, there is a big map of Europe on the floor. Visitors can move with a mobile monitor over the map, and when standing still on a certain spot, the monitor shows a video on how European legislation influences that particular area on the map and other parts of Europe as well.

The exhibition is very interactive because of the touch screens and games. Nevertheless, the exhibition only uses 'push' information and does not apply 'pull' information, e.g. the exhibition does not have any quizzes or does not question the knowledge of the visitor. The exhibition does provide a special route for young children; they swipe their media guides on other symbols and they will get an explanation or interaction with the object in a more understandable way for their age (personal visit to the Parliamentarium, January 5, 2012).

2.4.2. European Parliament Role Game

Besides the tour that leads through a partly digital exhibition, Parlamentarium also offers a virtual simulation of the European Parliament. The simulation includes more than 400 actors from all 27 EU member states that appear virtually in the simulation parliament. The role game consists of 250 pages of script that are translated into the 23 official languages from the EU member states. The Parlamentarium visitor centre is the biggest one in the world after the one in Washington D.C., the project costs about 21 million euro's for a developed area of almost 5 400 m². The company that developed the Parlamentarium role game is Media Fram from Norway, they are known for similar and very successful cases for the Norwegian parliament, the Danish parliament and the Swedish parliament. The target group is students aged between 14 and 16 years old. The possible number of students participating is between 16 and a maximum of 32 students. During a regular week the role game is available for up to 11 groups. The complete role game in the simulation parliament takes about 2,5 hours and is, like the visitor centre itself, free of charge. Schools from all over the EU have to make a reservation for using the simulation game at Parlamentarium, reservations can be made through the Parlamentarium website. Reservations should be made at least one month in advance (personal visit to the Parlamentarium, January 5, 2012).

2.5. European Parliament Visitor Centre in Brussels and Strasbourg

Besides the new visitor centre Parlamentarium in Brussels, people can visit the plenary halls of the European Parliament itself.

2.5.1. European Parliament in Brussels

The visits are always free of charge, but the number of places is limited. Special group reservations can be made through their website, with a minimum of 20 people and a maximum of 45. On request larger groups are equally welcome. It is possible to make a group visit to the plenary hall even if there are debates taking place, contrary to individual visits which cannot take place (because they are unaccompanied and use a media guide as tour guide). A group visit takes about one to two hours and includes an introduction by a representative about the roll and the activities of the European Parliament. Sometimes a short Q&A session with a MEP can be included. The minimal age of the visitors should be 14 years for admittance to the group visit (European Parliament b, 2012).

2.5.2. European Parliament in Strasbourg

Equal to the European Parliament in Brussels, admittance to the European Parliament in Strasbourg is free of charge and the number of people admitted is the same too. Again here, for groups, it is possible to visit the parliament when it is in session and when it is not in session. The only difference is that when the parliament is visited whilst it is not in session, the available tour languages are German, French and English. One is advised to book a trip at least two or three months in advance (European Parliament b, 2012).

2.6. Chapter summary

Between the EDICs and ProDemos one unique similarity can be identified, namely that they are one of the most decentralised organisations of the organisations discussed in chapter 1 and chapter 2. Their aim is to operate regionally and locally. This is a strength compared to other organisations that focus their activities mainly on the *Randstad* region.

None of the institutions discussed above, appoint the topic European rule of law. In The Netherlands, the European Council and The Council of the EU are represented by the national government, the European Parliament is represented by the *Europees Parlement Bureau Nederland* (EP) and the European Commission is represented by the Representation of the European Commission (EC). Which means that the last European institution, the European Court of Justice, is not represented in the Netherlands and does not carry out education about their institution. Neither the EC nor the EP is responsible for informing EU citizens about the European Court of Justice (A. Eekhout, personal interview, November 30, 2011). Possibly, there lies a role here for ProDemos.

The 'Een 10 voor Europa' programme is a very ambitious goal of the EP that would reach many schools and could establish a constant education about the EU for students of all ages (which currently does not exist because of the lack of rules by the Dutch ministry of Education, Culture and Science). A certain point of criticism would be that a EU institution executes this programme. This phenomenon, especially in the eyes of critics, could be viewed as a light form of propaganda. ProDemos, for instance, as an independent, unbiased and non-governmental organisation would be a better candidate to carry out this function. It must be noted that ProDemos is not obliged to formulate certain opinions and students would have more space to question 'why things are as they are'. Nevertheless, the existence of the EU is inevitable and possible demolition is useless to discuss. Although, the amount of political power that we be delegated to Brussels will be

long-lasting discussion that will preoccupy the future generations of the EU member states.

One of the other valuable findings in this chapter is that working together (e.g. partnerships between organisations) should also generate possibilities of bigger marketing campaigns for events in order to attract more people for EU themed events.

3. Chapter 3: Education on the European Union from NGOs

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the question 'What do NGOs do to explain the functioning of the European Union?' will be answered. This section will discuss non-governmental organisations that help raise public awareness on the democracy and rule of law of the EU amongst Dutch citizens.

The educational activities of the organisations will be discussed. Of course, where necessary, the general focus of the organisation will be outlined.

3.2. Montesquieu Institute

Montesquieu Institute is a collaboration between the University of Leyden, University of Groningen, Radboud University Nijmegen and Maastricht University. The institute considers itself as a centre of expertise in the areas of law, comparative politics and parliamentary history. The institute offers different courses and organises interesting activities (e.g. lectures and debates).

Since its establishment in 2008, the institute has organised each year European themed master classes with a different topic. The masterclass of 2012 is called 'Crisis in Europe'. This programme started in January 2012 and consists of weekly three-hour lectures. The programme also includes a two-day study trip to Brussels and a certification ceremony at the Dutch senate. The one who writes the best paper at the end of the programme wins a conference trip to Madrid.

The Montesquieu Institute also provides EU courses for civil servants from any background (also non-Dutch civil servants), including special courses for civil servants that already possess some basic or in-depth knowledge of the EU (Montesquieu Institute, 2012).

To summarise, the Montesquieu Institute offers a wide collection of activities for university students, civil servants, highly educated individuals and other professionals (Montesquieu Institute, 2012).

3.3. Europa Decentraal

Europa Decentraal is a knowledge institute for European law and policy for decentralised governments (e.g. provinces, municipalities and the so called '*waterschappen*' [water boards]). The aim of Europa Decentraal is to expand the knowledge and expertise on European Law among decentralised governments, whilst also ensuring a correct application of such law by these governments. All civil servants of the decentralised governments are able to request freely information and advice on European affairs at Europa Decentraal (including the employees of the umbrella organisations of these local governments). Furthermore, Europa Decentraal aims to raise more public awareness of the EU in the decentralised governments and amongst their populations (Europa Decentraal, 2012).

3.4. EuroDesk Nederland

Eurodesk is a European information network for youngsters between the age of 15 and 25, and for people that work with this target group. Eurodesk sees itself as the first point of contact for information about education, internships, university exchanges, voluntary work, (holiday)jobs, and living and working in Europe. Furthermore, Eurodesk informs about financial aid programmes for European projects and about European policy for youngsters. Eurodesk is a project of the Education and Culture Directorate General of the European Commission and, because of this, is partly financed by the European Commission. This project has been established in cooperation with the *Nederlands Jeugd Instituut* (Dutch Juvenile Institute). EuroDesk is located in Utrecht and actively participates in social media and events and brings out several publications. One of their well-known publications is 'Go Europe', an informative brochure for young people about travelling, working, and doing exchanges and internships in Europe. 'Youth in Action' is another communication priority of Eurodesk; the 'Youth in Action' programme is one that offers financial aid and support for European projects aimed at youngsters (Eurodesk, 2012).

3.5. Europese Beweging Nederland

Europese Beweging Nederland (Netherlands European Movement) (EBN) is an NGO that is based in each EU-member state and even has pan-European organisation. This movement is established for everyone in the Netherlands that would like to join a network with people that are pro-Europe and/or work with EU-themed subjects on daily bases. EBN actually only offers an information platform (Europese Beweging Nederland, 2012).

3.6. Nederlandse Jongeren Raad

The *Nederlandse Jongeren Raad* (Dutch Youth Council) (NJR) is an umbrella organisation of different youth organisations in the Netherlands. About 30 persons are working at NJR at media campaigns for people between 12 and 30 years. The media campaigns mainly focus on social and political issues. One of the EU themed events they organised is the European Dreams Festival (see paragraph 2.2.). Besides that, the NJR was intensively involved in giving EU courses at schools. Moreover, the NJR advises governments and many other organisations on youth policy and even has its own EU-affairs representative (NJR, 2012).

3.7. Europees Platform

The *Europees Platform* (European Platform) is a forum for the internationalisation of education in The Netherlands. The *Europees Platform* offers information and publications for professionals in education. From time to time it organises informative meetings (Europees Platform, 2012).

3.8. Asser Institute

The Asser Institute was founded 1965 by different law faculties of Dutch universities, like the Montesquieu Institute (back then by the faculties of political science of the same universities). The Asser Institute functions as an inter-academic centre for international and European law and offers lectures, organises mootcourts, debates and summer

programmes for persons that currently study or have a university degree in law or a similar field of research (Asser Institute , 2012).

3.9. Other projects

In the first half of 2012 the 'XXL College Tour' was launched by Hope XXL. The XXL College Tour is organised by young people and consists of 'college tour'-lectures with, amongst others, Frans Timmermans (ex-deputy minister of European Affairs and currently member of parliament for the social-democrat party) at schools and other public areas. It is co-financed by the *V-fonds* and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (HOPE XXL, 2011).

Model European Parliament (MEP) is a simulation parliament similar to Euroscola (see sub-paragraph 2.3.1.). However, MEP is held twice a year in Brussels. Around 2000 students participate each year during the MEP. This project is sponsored by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Montesquieu Institute and the *V-fonds* (Model European Parliament, 2012).

3.10. Chapter summary

The research question of this chapter was 'What do NGOs do to explain the functioning of the European Union?'. To summarise their activities, one could argue that the activities do not exercised on large-scale and aim at very specific segments of society. For example, the Asser Institute and the Montesquieu Institute both aim at students of higher education institutions. Although, through collaboration they could develop their activities towards more ample segments of society. Upcoming projects like HOPE XXL could be interesting for ProDemos because it is something quite new and dynamic and is not one of the 'established institutions'.

It must be noted that the difference between MEP and Euroscola (see sub-paragraph 2.3.1.) is that the MEP is held in Brussels and the Euroscola is held in Strasbourg. MEP counts about 2000 students and is held two times a year and Euroscola counts about 500 students and is held about five times a year.

4. Chapter 4: Activities compared

4.1. Introduction

The essence of this chapter is a matrix in which all the organisations from the previous three chapters are compared. In this matrix the different organisations are brought into contrast to the different target groups they serve and the different activities they offer. The matrix helps to discover 'blind spots'; publics that do not have 'access' and/or are brought actively into contact with the European Union.

4.2. Matrix

The complete matrix is to be found in the appendix. Different symbols show the different activities by organisations and publics. The next symbols are used to define the different European-themed activities organisations provide:

- Courses at a fixed location
Courses given at the organisation itself, or at a rented location.
- ◆ Courses delivered at location
The organisation visits for example schools to give their courses at location.
- + Debates
Debates on European topics, possibly on different location.
- ❖ Lectures
Lectures given on European topics by academics, professionals etc.
- (Online) Course Material
For example interactive websites, textbooks, EU games etc.
- ◆ Role plays
Simulation parliaments etc.
- + EU themed activities
Activities of EDICs and other activities that should be fun and EU informative too.
- ❖ Research
Research on EU-related themes.
- Exhibition
Exhibition of the EU or EU-related topics.

- ◆ Knowledge Centre and Information Point
A place where people can ask questions about the EU.
- + Tours to European Institutions
Visits to buildings of the EU.
- + Special attention to European Law
- (x) Planned

The target groups are a rough segmentation of the Dutch society. Moreover, ProDemos handles these target groups to set their own communication priorities. The different target groups are:

Students

- Primary school (7 to 12 years)
- Secondary school (12 to 18 years)
- Vocational education
- Higher education

Professionals

- Civil servants
- Business people
- Professionals in education

Other groups

- Tourists
- Immigrants / 'New Dutch'
- Households
- Expats

4.3. Observations

- One of the first 'gaps' in the matrix that is noticeable is in the category 'other groups' (tourists, immigrants / 'new Dutch', households and expats). Only in the category government (the Parliamentarium and the Visitor Centre) they are included. For the European Commission the publics 'new immigrants' and 'households' count as priority target groups (Infeldt, 2011), because these target groups usually do not come in contact with European topics that easily or frequently.

- The matrix shows that civil servants are served already by two organisations.
- As already supposed in the conclusion of chapter 3, the NGOs mainly focus on specific target groups. Besides that, the EC and the EP continuously aim at different segments of society.
- As the matrix shows, there are plenty activities for the category 'professionals', especially provided by the NGOs.
- *EuroDesk Nederland* and NJR are the only two NGOs that actively serve students from secondary education and students from vocational education.

5. Conclusions

The research question of chapter 1 was: “What does ProDemos do to educate its publics on the EU?”. ProDemos makes possible many activities, but only a relatively low share of the activities has something to do with the European level of Democracy and Rule of Law. The activities concerning the EU are actually only aimed at students from secondary education and possibly vocational education.

One of the most valuable findings of chapter 1 is the relatively low proportion of booked EU day programmes in relation to all the booked day programmes in total. It is reflective of the fact that schools have little interest for participating in the EU day programme. ProDemos should think of ways to attract more participants for the EU day programme.

In chapter 2, the research question “What does Brussels do to explain the functioning of the EU?” is answered in the running text of this chapter. Additionally, one of the revealing findings in chapter 2 is that the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science does not oblige schools to include the European Union as a topic in class. Moreover, the Ministry dissolved a fund for educational EU activities. This proves the relevance of the NGOs, like ProDemos, that carry out educational EU activities.

The research question of chapter 3 was ‘What do NGOs do to explain the functioning of the European Union?’. When summarising their activities and looking to the matrix of chapter 4, one could argue that the activities do not exercised on large-scale and aim at very specific segments of society. For example, the Asser Institute and the Montesquieu Institute both aim at students of higher education institutions. Although, through collaboration they could develop their activities towards more ample segments of society. Upcoming projects like HOPE XXL could be interesting for ProDemos because it is something quite new and dynamic and is not one of the ‘established institutions’. In Chapter 4 the matrix is discussed. One of the first ‘gaps’ in the matrix that is noticeable is in the category ‘other groups’ (tourists, immigrants / ‘new Dutch’, households and expats). Only in the category government (the Parliamentarium and the Visitor Centre) they are included.

The answer to this central question takes the form of the different recommendations stated in the next section.

6. Recommendations

In this chapter recommendations will be given based on the results of the matrix and of the conclusions of each chapter. The central question of this benchmark research paper is: “How can ProDemos improve its approach with regards to the European level of Democracy and Rule of Law?”. The answer to this central question takes the form of the different recommendations stated below. The recommendations include suggestions that would improve ProDemos’s approach ‘with regards to the European level of Democracy and Rule of Law’ cultivated on the basis of the benchmark research conducted for this paper.

ProDemos’s competitive advantage as compared to other educational NGOs is that their educational programmes include visits to the House of Representatives, the Senate and/or the Ridderzaal. Just outside the Binnenhof there is located the House of Europe, and inside, the representation of the European Commission and the European Parliament. Bringing students to the House of Europe, especially during an EU day programme, really makes the European Union, and thus the learning objective of the day programme, more tangible. Of course the current stance and decision of ProDemos of not taking their students to the House of Europe is understood, because until now there is not much to experience there. Putting this point of recommendation to practice would demand the further development of the ‘European Public Space’. Perhaps the House of Europe could take example from what ProDemos did: hanging screens on which live debates from the House of Representatives are broadcasted throughout their building. For debates of the European Parliament there is an online streaming available, with live translation in all the official EU-languages (plenary and in commission) (European Parliament a, 2008). In conclusion, this investment would be relatively cheap because it only requires the purchase of the screens. If this relatively small investment still is not possible (the further development of the House of Europe is put on hold due to financial cutbacks in the European Union) maybe other ways have to found to finance the purchase of the screens. ProDemos should persuade The House of Europe to take action concerning the development of the European Public Space, because the indirect result would be a quality increase in ProDemos’s EU day programme.

In line with the previous point of recommendation, of adding more tangible items to the ProDemos’s EU day programme, it would be a wise decision for ProDemos to do

something actively with the *Congrès de La Haye* that is held in The Hague in May, since 1948. During this congress the British Prime Minister Churchill spoke about plans of one united Europe. This congress contributed to the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community, the predecessor of the EU (EPM - Le magazine de l'Européen , 2012) (as discussed in paragraph 1.4.). An idea could be that the video clip of Churchill's speech is shown on a mobile screen on the balcony where the students are seated when they visit the Ridderzaal. ProDemos could develop this item into another of its competitive advantages, because ProDemos benefits from the possibility of leading school groups through the Ridderzaal on the Binnenhof. This would distinguish ProDemos from other organisations that offer courses and/or education about the European Union. Adding this item to the EU day programme truly would optimize the 'experience' factor for students. In other words, a more attractive and entertaining day programme.

The last two recommendations also would make the Europe Union day programme more attractive, which would effectively respond to the problem of the low share of EU day programme bookings seen in chapter 1.

Europa Decentraal and the Asser Institute provide EU education for civil servants. Although civil servants count as a target group for ProDemos, ProDemos should not equally invest valuable time and money into this target group. In paragraph 3.3. and 3.8. it comes clear that the services provided for civil servants are sufficient. What ProDemos could do is connecting them through and helping to distribute publications of the two above named NGOs amongst their network of civil servants.

As discussed in chapter 1, the website of ProDemos displays different buttons on the homepage. If ProDemos is to profile itself as a true 'centre of expertise' also in EU matters, they should at least add the button 'Europe' to their homepage. This page on their website could function as a portal to all the organisations discussed in this research.

If ProDemos truly wants to portray the profile of a 'knowledge and information centre' of EU topics too, they should actively connect schools and other organisations to other EU education organisations. ProDemos has a great network amongst teachers in secondary education in The Netherlands and other organisations have a great offer of educational programmes. Through partnerships or basic collaborations organisations can join forces.

Like the EC is aiming to do, ProDemos should likewise invest in bigger events in order to generate more public awareness. Perhaps with the help of partnerships with other organisations. Equally, through these partnerships one should be able to generate higher attendance during events through broader marketing campaigns (see paragraph 2.3.) and

even hire larger with venues that offer more capacity (a problem during the *Europalezing* was that many more people wanted to attend the lecture than there was capacity for them).

When ProDemos would consider to establish partnerships and/or organise events in collaboration with other organisations, bringing the *Europa Scholieren Verkiezing* into full EU-wide practice would be an excellent idea. ProDemos could use its contacts through the NECE network in order to collaborate with similar organisations in other EU-member countries. Organising an EU students 'shadow' parliamentary elections would generate a lot of (national and European) media attention.

One of ProDemos's key action points is to prevent that their activities only take place in The Hague and ensure that they maintain a truly decentralised character. A characteristic that reflects with the EDIC concept, perhaps ProDemos could consider to execute their activities through the EDIC network in order to maintain the decentralised character.

List of Abbreviations and Definitions

- Binnenhof, the heart of the Dutch democracy, where the parliament and several government buildings are located in the historical city centre of The Hague.
- EC, Representation of the European Commission to The Netherlands
- EDICs, European Direct Information Centres, they form the Europe Direct network, Europe Direct is an initiative by the European Commission.
- EU, European Union
- Europa leskoffer, Europe instruction suitcase. An educational tool of the EDICs.
- EP, *Europees Parlement Bureau Nederland*, Representation of the European Parliament in The Netherlands
- DHT, *De Haagse Tribune*, an educational project of ProDemos
- Havo, *Hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs*, Higher General Secondary Education.
- IPP, *Instituut for Publiek en Politiek*, Institute for Citizen Participation (one of the two predecessors of ProDemos).
- MEP, Member of European Parliament
- NGO, Non-Governmental Organisation
- NJR, *Nederlandse Jongeren Raad*, Dutch Youth Council
- Radio Nederland Wereldomroep, Radio Netherlands World frequency
- Randstad, the *Randstad* is the urban agglomeration in the centre of The Netherlands.
- Stemwijzer, Vote director, one of the online services of ProDemos
- Parlementarium, the new visitor centre of the European Parliament. It includes an interactive exhibition and an electronic roll play of the parliament.
- ProDemos, ProDemos: House for Democracy and Rule of Law. The merger of *Instituut voor Politiek en Publiek* (Institute of Citizen Participation) and the Binnenhof Visitors Centre.
- Vmbo; *Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroeps Onderwijs*, Preparatory Secondary Vocational Education
- Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, University Amsterdam
- Vwo, *Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs*, Preparatory Scientific Education

Bibliography

Asser Institute. (2012, May 17). *Education, Training and Events*. Retrieved on May 17, 2012, van Asser Institute:

http://www.asser.nl/Default.aspx?site_id=1&level1=13692

Audiovisual Services European Commission. (1998, March 30). *50th Anniversary of The Hague Congress*. Retrieved on April 17, 2012 from Audiovisual Services European Commission :

<http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I023774>

De Haagse Tribune a. (2011). *EU instructie augustus 2011*. Den Haag: ProDemos.

De Haagse Tribune b. (2011). *Politiek Instructie Augustus 2011*. Den Haag: ProDemos.

De Haagse Tribune c. (2011). *Rechtsstaat: Dagprogramma voortgezet onderwijs*. Den Haag: ProDemos.

DHT. (2012). *DHT2006-2011basisstatistiek*. Den Haag: ProDemos.

EPM - Le magazine de l'Européen . (2012). *Congrès de La Haye mai 1948*. Retrieved on May 12, 2012 from EPM - Le magazine de l'Européen :

<http://www.erm.lu/epm/id232.htm>

Eurodesk. (2012, May 7). *Over Eurodesk*. Retrieved on May 7, 2012 from Eurodesk:

<http://www.go-europe.nl/eCache/DEF/1/06/431.html>

Europa Decentraal. (2012, April 24). *Europa Decentraal*. Retrieved on April 24, 2012 from Europa Decentraal:

http://www.europadecentraal.nl/menu/458/Europa_decentraal.html

EuropaNu a. (2009, June 2). *Scholieren Verkiezing Europees Parlment*. Retrieved on December 1, 2011 from Europa NU voor Journalisten: <http://media.europa-nu.nl/9353000/1/j9vvhjsfpncqnhs/vi1pao8llrqz?ctx=vhsekoua5hz4>

EuropaNu b. (2012, April 15). *Europafonds*. Retrieved on April 15, 2012 from Europa Nu:

<http://www.europa-nu.nl/id/vhahmi9n1dra/europafonds>

EuropaNu c. (2010, April 20). *Herman van Rompuy houdt Europalezing*. Retrieved on May 18, 2012, from http://www.europa-nu.nl/id/vieikkzv7cyt/nieuws/herman_van_rompuy_houdt_europalezing?ctx=vh6ukzb3nnt0

Europe Direct. (2012, April 15). *Europe Direct: Bij ons in de buurt*. Retrieved on April 15, 2012 from http://europa.eu/europedirect/meet_us/directory/index_nl.htm

Europe House Lecture 2012. (n.d.). *Europe House Lecture 2012*. Retrieved on January 18, 2012 from Europe House Lecture 2012: <http://www.bkb-aanmelden.nl/Extranet/Extranet.php?ID=165&Key=1324460508&Form=Aanmeldingsformulier>

European Commission a. (2012, February 16). *Europa in de les voor docenten*. Retrieved on April 15, 2012 from Vertegenwoordiging van de Europese Commissie in Nederland: http://ec.europa.eu/nederland/youth/teachers/index_nl.htm

European Commission b. (2011, August 19). *Team Europa Sprekerspanel*. Retrieved on April 15, 2012 from Vertegenwoordiging van de Europese Commissie in Nederland: http://ec.europa.eu/nederland/services/team_europe_speakers/index_nl.htm

European Parliament a. (2008, September 1). *Launch of EuroparITV*. Retrieved on May 12, 2012 from European Parliament: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdfs/news/expert/background/20080901BKG35904/20080901BKG35904_en.pdf

European Parliament b. (2012, April 15). *Rondleidingen in de vergaderzaal en toespraken voor groepen*. Retrieved on April 15, 2012 from Europees Parlement / Bezoeken: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/visiting/nl/chamber-tour-for-groups.html>

Europees Parlement Bureau Nederland. (2012, April 14). *Een 10 voor Europa*. Retrieved on April 14, 2012 from [europeesparlement.nl](http://www.europeesparlement.nl): http://www.europeesparlement.nl/view/nl/jong_europa/Een10voorEuropa/Deelnemendescholen.html

Europees Platform. (2012, May 17). *Europees Platform*. Retrieved on May 17, 2012, from <http://www.europeesplatform.nl/>

- Europese Beweging Nederland. (2012, May 17). *Projecten en Activiteiten EBN*. Retrieved on May 17, 2012, from Europese Beweging Nederland: <http://www.europesebeweging.nl/9353000/1/j9vvi4rdx7gnwzt/vi64g4wvwmnl>
- HOPE XXL. (2011). *About HOPE XXL*. Retrieved on May 12, 2012 from HOPE XXL: <http://www.hope-xxl.com//en/>
- Huis voor democratie en rechtsstaat a. (2011). *Het Binnenhof*. Den Haag: ProDemos.
- Huis voor democratie en rechtsstaat b. (2011). *Jaarverslag 2010*. Den Haag: Huis voor democratie en rechtsstaat.
- Model European Parliament. (2012, May 17). *Model European Parliament*. Retrieved on May 17, 2012, from <http://www.mepnederland.nl/>
- Montesquieu Institute. (2012, April 22). *Education*. Retrieved on April 22, 2012 from Montesquieu Institute : <http://www.montesquieu-institute.eu/9353000/1/j9vvhfxcd6p0lcl/vhljc32cfxtm>
- NJR. (2012, May 17). *Wij zijn wij?* Retrieved on May 17, 2012, from NJR.nl: <http://www.njr.nl/Navigatie/WIE-ZIJN-WIJ.html>
- ProDemos a. (2011, December 30). *De Haagse Tribune*. Retrieved on December 2, 2011 From ProDemos.nl: <http://www.prodemos.nl/Bezoek-Den-Haag/De-Haagse-Tribune>
- ProDemos b. (2011). *Lesmateriaal EU*. Retrieved on December 2, 2011 from ProDemos.nl: <http://www.prodemos.nl/Voor-scholen/Lesmateriaal/Lesmateriaal-EU>
- ProDemos c. (2011). *De Haagse Tribune*. Retrieved on November 17, 2011 from ProDemos.nl: <http://prodemos.nl/Voor-scholen/Jongerenprojecten/De-Haagse-Tribune>
- ProDemos d. (2011). *Verdiepingscolleges*. Retrieved on November 17, 2011 from ProDemos.nl: <http://prodemos.nl/Kenniscentrum/Debatten-lezingen-colleges/Verdiepingscolleges>

ProDemos e. (2011, September 21). *Verslag opening ProDemos*. Retrieved on November 18, 2011 from ProDemos.nl: [http://prodemos.nl/Nieuws/Verslag-opening-ProDemos/\(language\)/dut-NL](http://prodemos.nl/Nieuws/Verslag-opening-ProDemos/(language)/dut-NL)

ProDemos on Twitter. (2011, November 22). *Twitter* . Retrieved on November 22, 2011 from ProDemos on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/ProDemos>

Appendix I: Structure of the ProDemos website



Appendix II: Matrix I

	ProDemos	EC	EP	Parliamentarium	Visitor Centre
Target groups					
Students					
Primary school (7 to 12 years)	■	■	■	■	+
Secondary school (12 to 18 years)	■ ■ ■	+	■ ◆	■ ◆	+
Vocational education	■ ■ ■ ◆	+	(■)	■	+
Higher education		+	(■)	■	+
Professionals					
Civil servants		◆ ■ ◆		■	+
Business people		◆		■	+
Professionals in education		■ ◆			
Other groups					
Tourists				■	+
Immigrants / 'New Dutch'				■	+
Households		+		■	+
Expats				■	+

- Courses at a fixed location
- ◆ Courses delivered at location
- ⊕ Debates
- ⊖ Lectures
- (Online) Course Material
- ◆ Role plays
- ⊕ EU themed events
- ⊖ Research
- Exhibition
- ◆ Knowledge Centre and Information point
- ⊕ Tours to European Institutions
- ◆ Special attention to European Law
- (X) Planned activity

Appendix III: Matrix II

Target groups	Montesquie Institute	Europa Decentraal	EuroDesk Nederland	Europese Beweging
Students				
Primary school (7 to 12 years)			◆ ✦	
Secondary school (12 to 18 years)			◆ ✦	
Vocational education			◆ ✦	
Higher education	■ ◆ ✦		◆ ✦	
Professionals				
Civil servants	■ ◆ ✦	■ ✦ ✦		✦ +
Business people				✦ +
Professionals in education			◆	✦ ◆
Other groups				
Tourists				
Immigrants / 'New Dutch'				
Households				
Expats				

- Courses at a fixed location
- ◆ Courses delivered at location
- + Debates
- ✦ Lectures
- (Online) Course Material
- ◆ Role plays
- + EU themed events
- ✦ Research
- Exhibition
- ◆ Knowledge Centre and Information point
- + Tours to European Institutions
- ✦ Special attention to European Law
- (X) Planned activity

Appendix IV: Matrix III

Target groups	NJR	Europees Platform	Asser Instituut	XXL HOPE / MEP
Students				
Primary school (7 to 12 years) Secondary school (12 to 18 years) Vocational education Higher education	+ + +		+ ♦ + ■	♦ ♦ + ♦ +
Professionals Civil servants Business people Professionals in education		♦	♦ +	
Other groups Tourists Immigrants / 'New Dutch' Households Expats		♦		

- Courses at a fixed location
- ◆ Courses delivered at location
- + Debates
- ⊕ Lectures
- (Online) Course Material
- ◆ Role plays
- + EU themed events
- ⊕ Research
- Exhibition
- ◆ Knowledge Centre and Information point
- + Tours to European Institutions
- ⊕ Special attention to European Law
- (X) Planned activity