



ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΕΞΩΤΕΡΙΚΩΝ

**Ειδικός Γραπτός Διαγωνισμός για θέσεις Ακολούθου,
Εξωτερικές Υπηρεσίες της Δημοκρατίας**

Επίσημη Εφημερίδα της Δημοκρατίας
Αρ. 5314, ημερομηνίας 13 Νοεμβρίου 2020

ΕΝΟΤΗΤΑ ΣΤ: ΑΓΓΛΙΚΗ ΓΛΩΣΣΑ

Ημερομηνία: 8 Οκτωβρίου 2021
Διάρκεια: 3 ώρες (15:30-18:30)

PART 1 – ESSAY (40 points):

Write an essay of no more than 1000 words on one of the following two topics:

1. *“To restore trust, and inspire hope, we need cooperation, we need dialogue, we need understanding ... This is our time. A moment for transformation. An era to re-ignite multilateralism”*. This is a quote from the speech of the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, at the 76th UN General Assembly in September 2021.

It is claimed that international organizations in general, and the UN in particular, have never been more needed, nor under greater threat. Is in your view the United Nations still relevant today, 76 years after it was founded? Discuss.

2. In her “State of the Union” address the President of the European Commission underlined: *“If you ask most Europeans, they would agree that we should act to curb irregular migration but also act to provide a refuge for those forced to flee. They would agree that we should return those who have no right to stay. But that we should welcome those who come here legally and make such a vital contribution to our society and economy. And we should all agree that the topic of migration should never be used to divide. I am convinced that there is a way that Europe can build trust amongst us when it comes to migration”*.

Discuss, presenting also your views on the response of the European Union to the migration/refugee crisis.

PART 2 – COMPREHENSION & ANALYSIS (40 points)

A Tale of Two Realities

By Javier Solana

Published on Project Syndicate website - Apr 20, 2018

The opening line of Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* retains its universality to this day. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," Dickens writes, "it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, ... it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."

Dickens's classic novel, set in London and Paris during the French Revolution, decries both the social injustices of the despotic *ancien régime* and the excesses of the French revolutionaries. When asked his opinion of the French Revolution almost two centuries later, former Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai reportedly answered that it was "too early to say." That quip – though possibly the result of a misunderstanding – perfectly captures Dickens's own **ambivalence** about the period of which he wrote.

The Enlightenment ideals that inspired the French to rise up against Louis XVI also drove the American Revolution. And both were set against the backdrop of another sea change: the onset of industrialization. The combination of more liberal political regimes and transformational scientific advances inaugurated the most prosperous period in the history of humankind.

The late British economist Angus Maddison once estimated that whereas global *per capita* GDP did not even double between 1 AD and 1820, it increased more than tenfold between 1820 and 2008. And this spectacular growth has been accompanied by equally extraordinary improvements in a wide range of socioeconomic indicators. Global average life expectancy, for example, has risen from 31 to almost 73 years in just two centuries.

Two centuries ago, the science and medical communities had not yet accepted the germ theory of disease, and the smell of beef was commonly thought to cause obesity. Today, such beliefs seem grotesque, owing to rapid progress in our scientific understanding. Not only can we now read the human genome; we are also learning how to edit and write it.

For Harvard psychology professor Steven Pinker, such achievements are signs that "the Enlightenment is working." Moreover, Pinker argues that more moral progress has been achieved in the last few centuries than most macroeconomic measurements can reflect. For example, he points to the expansion – both geographic and substantive – of protections for individual and collective rights, as well as an overall reduction in violence.

The sheer magnitude of the Enlightenment's achievements tends to be undervalued, because we are prone to remembering and normalizing catastrophes rather than quotidian improvements. But while this bias is detrimental to decision-making, so, too, is excessive **complacency**. After all, there are plenty of reasons – many of which are secondary effects of the Enlightenment – for people to feel uneasy about the future.

In his 2013 book, *The Great Escape*, Nobel laureate economist Angus Deaton shows how progress in reducing **aggregate privation**, famine, and premature death over the past 250 years has left many social groups behind. While inequality at the global level has recently been mitigated by the economic rise of countries like China, numerous studies find that inequality *within* countries has been increasing. In countries such as the United States, broad segments of the population lack access to adequate medical treatments, and even democracy seems to be eroding.

Today's conventional wisdom links the emergence of populist movements around the world, including the election of President Donald Trump in the US, to the people who have missed out on the benefits of globalization. Yet many of Trump's policies – not least slashing taxes for the rich – are intended to perpetuate the privileges of the economic elite. Trump has done very little to address the fears of those who feel left behind, but he is attempting a classic **bait-and-switch** to disguise this fact. Accordingly, he singles out China as the source of Americans' economic woes.

The result of Trump's "America First" approach and fear mongering about all things foreign has been to undermine global cooperation. Nationalism, one of the potentially harmful legacies of the late-eighteenth-century social revolutions, has made a comeback on the heels of rising **nativist** and xenophobic fears.

Likewise, the Enlightenment's scientific and technological legacy has not been wholly positive. The theories of Albert Einstein and the discovery of fission in 1938 made nuclear power possible, but also led to the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and to the disasters at Chernobyl and Fukushima. Similarly, technological progress has left critical national infrastructure potentially vulnerable to cyberattacks. And, as the 2008 crisis revealed, financial engineering carries many risks of its own.

All of these dangers are accompanied by what is perhaps the greatest threat humanity has ever faced: climate change. The peculiarity of this threat lies in the fact that it has not manifested in the form of a single, sudden shock. Rather, it is a cumulative phenomenon, which we might still be able to **mitigate**. Just as technological advances got us into this

predicament, so might they rescue us from it. After all, technological innovation, along with an international effort to adopt the 1987 Montreal Protocol, is how the world put a stop to the erosion of the ozone layer.

Fortunately, scientific rationality is capable of creating tools to remedy its own excesses. Unfortunately, however, the state of political leadership today may mean that these tools remain unused. The world is in desperate need of leaders who are willing to maximize the benefits of science and technology through collective management and international cooperation. Without such leadership, what is quantifiably the best of times could very well become the worst.

QUESTIONS:

1. In what sense is the quote from Charles Dickens relevant with the current global challenges, according to the author? Provide examples included in the article. **(8 points)**
2. Indicate the fields described in the article, where progress has been achieved in the last two centuries, as well as relevant setbacks also identified therein. **(6 points)**
3. Why is the role of the political leadership vis-à-vis the Enlightenment's legacies of crucial importance, according to the author? **(6 points)**
4. Explain the meaning of the following 6 words/ phrases **(6 points)**:
ambivalence
complacency
aggregate privation
bait-and-switch
nativist
mitigate
5. The article was written in 2018, before the COVID-19 pandemic. Do you believe that the "new realities" created by the pandemic reinforce the arguments of the author, or not? Provide your views in no more than 200 words **(14 points)**.

PART 3 – SUMMARY (20 POINTS)

To address any social impacts that arise from the EU's policy to combat climate change, the European Commission proposes to introduce the Social Climate Fund. Prepare a short information note on this issue, including the objectives and key elements of the proposal, as presented on the fact sheet attached. The information note should not be more than 250 words.

A **SOcially** FAIR TRANSITION

Tackling the climate and biodiversity crises is **this generation's defining task**.
The green transition has to be fair and just.

All Europeans need to be able to benefit from this transition as fairly and as quickly as possible. This principle of our social market economy is also guiding our fight against climate change.

ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES THROUGH THE GREEN TRANSITION

Overall, **the economic and employment impacts of the green transition are expected to be positive**. With the right accompanying policies in place, the transition could create around **1 million jobs** in the EU by 2030; and **2 million jobs by 2050** - particularly middle-skilled, middle-paying jobs, in construction and manufacturing. However, the impact will vary across countries and sectors.

1 million

**ADDITIONAL
GREEN JOBS**

in the EU
By 2030

2 million

**ADDITIONAL
GREEN JOBS**

in the EU
By 2050



The Commission will support a fair transition, based on European solidarity.

Through emissions trading, we can raise revenues to address energy poverty and mobility challenges, spur economic growth - and create employment.



A new Social Climate Fund will provide funding to Member States to support vulnerable European citizens.

THE SOCIAL CLIMATE FUND WILL:

- **Mitigate the costs for those most exposed** to fossil fuel price increases
- **Mobilise €72.2 billion** for the period 2025-2032 to:



> **support households, transport users, and micro-enterprises** affected by the impact of the new emissions trading system for building and transport fuels



> **support investments** in energy efficiency and renovation of buildings, clean heating and cooling, and integration of renewable energy



> **provide direct income support** for vulnerable households



> **help finance zero-and low-emission mobility**



INCLUSIVE AND SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS POLICIES



- > The **Energy Taxation Directive** offers possibilities for exempting vulnerable households from higher energy taxes.
- > The **Energy Efficiency Directive** and **Renewable Energy Directive** stimulate energy savings which can alleviate energy poverty. The Energy Efficiency Directive proposal includes a specific obligation for Member States to achieve energy savings among energy poor and vulnerable households.
- > The **Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation** will ensure that charging and refuelling infrastructure for zero emission vehicles will reach all parts of Europe.

FAIRNESS AND SOLIDARITY BETWEEN MEMBER STATES

With an increased emissions reduction target, every Member State has to contribute, but different starting points and different capacities are taken into account across our proposals. These instruments aim at a **fair distribution of efforts between Member States, to leave no country and no region behind:**



Effort Sharing Regulation

- Sets emission reduction targets for Member States based on GDP per capita;
- Includes flexibilities to make reductions cost efficient.



Carbon removals from land and forests

- National targets which take into account GDP per capita;
- Includes flexibilities to facilitate removals where they are most cost-efficient.



Modernisation Fund

- Supports 12 lower income EU Member States in the clean energy transition;
- The Fund is doubled with the Commission's new proposals.



Renewable energy and energy efficiency targets

- GDP per capita is taken into account when fixing Member State targets.



Emission Trading Revenues

- Most revenues from auctioning under the Emissions Trading System go to Member States;
- Lower income Member States get more allowances to auction to increase revenues;
- Between 2018-2020, revenues amounted to €14-16 billion annually;
- Now Member States have to invest all their revenues in climate-related projects.