GOVERNMENT & POLITICS IN EUROPE
For much of recorded history, the powers of Europe have exerted disproportionate control over the rest of the world. As that world has evolved, and geopolitical lines have been drawn and redrawn, the region has remained an epicenter of international governance.

Get a first-hand look at the cities, bodies and organizations that keep order in today’s globalized times. See where things go quiet inside NATO and EU headquarters in bustling Brussels. Hear from experts at The Hague’s international courts, where some of humanity’s worst offenders have stood trial. Read from the Magna Carta and follow its evolution down the street to Westminster Palace, where you’ll “toe the line” like so many before you. Through a rare and knowing lens, the complexities of large-scale politics will come into focus—and so will the amazing cities that host them.
Day 1: Fly to Great Britain
Meet your group and travel on an overnight flight to London.

Day 2: London
Arrive in London: Welcome to the cosmopolitan city of London. Depending on your arrival time, you may have free time to settle in and explore on your own.

Explore London: Stretch your legs and set out through Trafalgar Square, Covent Garden, The Strand and Leicester Square on a walking tour of the city. Then, get to know your group as you share a local dinner this evening.

Day 3: London
Sightseeing tour of London: From Big Ben to the Houses of Parliament, Great Britain's royal tradition and rich history greet you at every turn. Admire architectural marvels like St. Paul's Cathedral, and check out the five-way intersection at Piccadilly Circus. You may even get a chance to witness the ceremonial Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace.

Day 4: London
Guided visit of the British Library: At the world's largest research library, see the burnt copy of the Magna Carta and learn about the history of the library. The enormous building holds more than 150 million items, with a collection that includes about 25 million books as well as manuscripts and historical items dating back to 300 B.C.

Houses of Parliament: Get a glimpse into British government at the Houses of Parliament, also known as Westminster Palace. The House of Commons and the House of Lords have met in the Palace of Westminster since the 16th century.

Day 5: London
Lecture: UK politics at the local level: Attend a presentation by a speaker involved in local London politics. The visit may include a tour of the council chamber, the mayor's parlor and councilors' rooms.

Cross the English Channel: Board the overnight Harwich-Hoek ferry across the English Channel to the Netherlands.

Day 6: The Hague
Sightseeing tour of The Hague: The Hague is the third-largest city in the Netherlands, but is better known for being an epicenter of world governance. Home to foreign embassies and more than 150 international organizations, the city's impressive architecture—both old and new—recalls a history of truly global significance. Charming canals and renowned art museums fill out the experience here.

Visit either the International Court of Justice or the International Criminal Court: Learn about the history, workings and activities of the esteemed International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organization of the United Nations located at the Peace Palace. Established in June 1945 by the charter of the United Nations, the court settles legal disputes in accordance with international law and offers advisory opinions on legal questions referred by United Nations organizations and specialized agencies. Or you could choose to attend a lecture about the mandate, structure and activities of the International Criminal Court. The ICC is responsible for trying those accused of the most serious crimes of international concern, including genocide and war crimes.

Day 7: Amsterdam
Sightseeing tour of Amsterdam: A local guide will show you the Westerkerk (West Church), where Rembrandt is buried. Pass by the flower markets—Amsterdam is known for its colorful tulips. See the Koninklijk Paleis (Royal Palace), once the home of the Dutch Royal Family before continuing to Rembrandtplein, a bustling square that comes alive at night.

Anne Frank House: See where young Anne Frank hid with her family from 1942 to 1944. This is also the site where she penned her poignant diary, which has been translated into dozens of languages worldwide.

Day 8: Brussels
Sightseeing tour of Brussels: As the headquarters for NATO and the European Union, Brussels is a prominent center of international politics. On your tour, you’ll pass by the European Union buildings, encircled by a row of colorful flags representing the member countries. Continue into the heart of medieval Brussels to see why Victor Hugo dubbed the Grand’Place “the most beautiful square in the world.” Walk by the ornate façades of the eclectic Guild Houses, a row of tiered buildings that stand shoulder-to-shoulder. Ask your Tour Director about the legends surrounding Brussels’ oldest citizen, the bronze statue of the Manneken Pis.

European Commission: Representing the general interest of the European Union, the commission is the driving force in proposing legislation to Parliament and the Council. It also administers and implements EU policies and enforces EU law with the Court of Justice.

Day 9: Brussels
Free time in Brussels: The biggest city in Belgium is yours to explore. Stop by the Grand Palace, whose intricate Gothic architecture is truly worthy of its UNESCO World Heritage title. If you’re feeling a little peckish, stop into a brasserie and choose from a bounty of local delicacies—from their famous waffles, savory french fries or the green sprouts that bear the city’s name.

Bruges: Embark on an optional excursion to Bruges, a quintessential Belgian town with cobblestone streets, ancient churches, winding canals and medieval homes. Bruges is the perfect place to sample some delicious Belgian beer as you tour a local brewery. Cap off this exciting excursion with a traditional Flemish dinner.

Day 10: Depart for home

Day 11: 3-DAY TOUR EXTENSION

Days 10-12: Paris
Sightseeing tour of Paris: Ride down the famous Champs-Élysées, pass the Place de la Concorde and the Arc de Triomphe and strike a pose in front of the Eiffel Tower. Your guide shares insight into Parisian culture and stories of the city’s military history when you continue past Les Invalides.

Explore Paris: On your walking tour, head to the Latin Quarter, named because the language was once commonly spoken by the Sorbonne students that populate the area.

Notre Dame Cathedral: Admire Notre Dame’s sculptured façade, stained-glass rose windows and seemingly weightless vaulted ceilings. Later, enjoy dinner in the Latin Quarter.

Louvre: The Louvre’s massive halls are home to more than 35,000 objects; among them is Leonardo da Vinci’s masterpiece, the Mona Lisa.


Day 13: Depart for home
the easiest ways to

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