

European Stereotypes

Warm up:

- What do you think is the stereotype of your country? Do you think there is some truth to it?
- What kind of stereotypes are there about your demographic (age, gender, profession etc?)
- Are there any stereotypes that you think are usually true?
- Where do you think stereotypes come from?

1. With a partner, look at the pictures below. Where do you think these people come from and why?



English stereotype



French stereotype



German stereotype



Russian stereotype



Italian stereotype



2. Read the conversation and match the underlined adverbs to their definitions below

Nathan: Ok, I've got a hard question for you. If you could live anywhere, where would you live?

Sue: Actually that's a pretty easy question. My husband and I went to France last year and it was amazing. It's definitely my favourite country, I just fell in love with it.

Nathan: Really? I read an article about travelling in France, and apparently a lot of French people are really rude if you don't speak French.



Sue: I've heard that before too, but honestly I think it's just a stereotype. I actually had the opposite experience.

Nathan: So everyone was nice to you?

Sue: Not exactly everyone, some people were rude, but obviously every country has some people who are rude. That's just life. What about you, where would you live?

Nathan: I think in India. I went a few years ago and had a great time.

Sue: I had a friend who went to Mumbai, and apparently they constantly beep their horns when they drive there. That would drive me crazy.

Nathan: It depends where you are, obviously India is a big country, but basically if you're in a big city, you're going to have to deal with a lot of beeping. You get used to it though.

Sue: I'm not sure I ever would. But I know you like a lot of hustle and bustle, so India would definitely suit you.

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|------------------------|---|
| a) Actually 3 | 1. This is very clear, anyone can see or understand it. |
| b) Obviously 1 | 2. Very certainly, without a doubt. |
| c) Apparently 6 | 3. This may be surprising to you. |
| d) Basically 5 | 4. Continuous or very often. |
| e) Constantly 4 | 5. In simple terms, without details. |
| f) Definitely 2 | 6. I do not know this information first-hand, I heard or read it. |



3. Read the description of the adverbs and make your own sentences about countries with each adverb.

“Actually” is very useful to talk about common misconceptions. E.g. *“A lot of people think Finnish people are rude, but they are actually just very shy.”*

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“Basically” is good for making generalized statements about complex things. E.g. *“English politics are very complicated, but basically the South is more right-wing than the North.”*

.....

“Apparently” is a good way of saying “I heard this somewhere else; I am not responsible if this information is wrong.” E.g. *“My friend lived in Italy for 3 years, and apparently the people are lovely but the government is bad.”*

.....

“Obviously” is good for things that are very clear or well-known. E.g. *“Obviously China is a lot bigger than Thailand.”*

.....

“Definitely” is useful to emphasize that we are sure about something. E.g. *“I definitely preferred Hamburg to Berlin. Berlin was way too busy.”*

.....



4. Read your sentences to your partner and discuss them.



5. Use the adverbs from exercise 2 to complete the sentences.

a) A lot of people think that all Australians are tanned and blonde, but **actually** most of them have pale skin.


b) I had a nice time in Egypt, but people on the street were **constantly** asking me for money. I got a bit tired of it after a while.

c) **Obviously** there are a lot of different cultures in Europe, so you can't really have one stereotype for the whole continent.

d) I've never been to Spain, but I watched a documentary about it and **apparently** the people in the Basque region are very different culturally to the rest of Spain.


e) It's a bit of a generalisation, but **basically** South Germans are a little friendlier and more welcoming than North Germans.

f) I haven't really planned my trip to France yet, but I'll **definitely** visit Paris, I've dreamed about going there since I was young.

 **6. Pairwork: decide which adjectives you associate with which European country. There are no right or wrong answers, it's more about what your perception of the country is. Feel free to add your own adjectives.**

posh	bitter	reserved	reliable	intellectual	laid-back
tough	snobby	carefree	passionate	fun-loving	uptight
rude	flirtatious	cultured	lazy	macho	classy

France	England	Germany	Spain

 **7. Present what you and your partner decided for the exercise above, and give reasons.**
 Eg. *"I haven't met many Spanish people, but apparently they can be quite flirtatious."*

 **8. You are going to watch a video which contains the words and phrases below. Match them to their definitions.**

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|--|--|
| a) Bland 3 | 1. Experimental and new art. |
| b) Avant-garde 1 | 2. Whistling at someone to show attraction. |
| c) Take it with a grain of salt 6 | 3. Without taste, boring. |
| d) Stew 8 | 4. To discuss other people while they are not there. |
| e) Wolf-whistling 2 | 5. Disrespectful or hurtful. |
| f) To gossip 4 | 6. To not completely believe what you are told. |
| g) Poverty 9 | 7. A deep sadness. |
| h) Melancholy 7 | 8. A thick soup. |
| i) Insulting 5 | 9. The state of being poor. |

 9. Before you watch the video, try to guess with a partner which stereotype goes with which nationality.

The Netherlands	England	Spain	Denmark	Belgium
Italy	Germany	Greece	France	Finland

1. Tall people who love riding bikes. *The Netherlands*
2. Love vodka, the outdoors, and saunas, very reserved and anti-social. *Finland*
3. Everyone has money, everyone is sad, lots of motorbike gangs. *Denmark*
4. Very loud, love talking, arguing, and food. *Italy*
5. Drink a lot of wine, hate the British, love avant-garde movies and books. *France*
6. Very reliable, bad food, good at engineering. *Germany*
7. The people are very hairy and love to gossip. *Greece*
8. Love French fries and chocolate, speak many languages. *Belgium*
9. Love football and flirting, stay up late, love to party. *Spain*
10. Love pies and football, get sunburnt easily, drink a lot of tea. *England*



10. Watch the [video](#)¹ and answer the questions.

- a) What do Austrians like to drink? *Beer.*
- b) In your own words, what is the stereotype of Cyprus? *Sunny, very religious, relaxed and welcoming people, not very rich.*
- c) Why are so many Danish people depressed? *The country is flat and the weather is bad.*
- d) What are Germans not good at? *Food and cooking.*
- e) What two things are the Irish good at? *Boxing and Poetry.*
- f) What are the “3 F’s” that the Italians enjoy? *Food, football, fashion.*
- g) Who do the Portuguese not like being mistaken for? *Spanish.*
- h) How many stereotypes in exercise 9 did you correctly predict?



¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dZQ-G7b8nY>