The EU in a nutshell
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What is Europe?
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The Basics

What is Europe?

Europe:
- 1 of 7 continents
- 44 countries
- Over 700 million people

EU:
- 27 countries
- 447 million people
European culture and diversity have been shaped by:

- Ancient Greece and Rome
- Reformation and Enlightenment
- Parliamentarism and social rights
Over the centuries, new styles of music, architecture and literature have inspired artists throughout Europe.

For example:

1. Pablo Picasso
2. Ludwig van Beethoven
3. Alfons Mucha
4. Hilma af Klint
5. Stefan Zweig
6. Wisława Szymborska
7. Simone de Beauvoir
8. Magda Szabó
European Values

1. Human dignity
2. Freedom
3. Democracy
4. Equality
5. Rule of law
6. Human rights
24 Official EU Languages
EU Language Families

<table>
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<th>Germanic</th>
<th>Romance</th>
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WHAT IS EUROPE?
The European Project
Which countries created the EU and why?
From war to peace

1914

1918

1939

1945
From war to peace

Peace was one of the aims that led to the creation of the European Union

The EU received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012
The creation of the European Union

1945 End of WWII

1950 Schuman Declaration

1951 European Coal and Steel Community

1957 Rome Treaty

1958 Treaty of Rome

1992 Maastricht Treaty

1993 Single Market

1995 Schengen Agreement

1996 Annex

1999 Euro currency

2002 Eastern enlargement

2004 Eastern enlargement

2007 Lisbon Treaty

2008 Euro currency

2020 NextGeneration EU
EU Countries

1951: Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands
1973: Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom (the UK left the EU in 2020)
1981: Greece
1986: Spain, Portugal
1995: Austria, Finland, Sweden
2004: Czechia, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia
2007: Bulgaria, Romania
2013: Croatia
Did you know?
You can travel freely between the 27 countries of the Schengen area without showing your passport.
20 EU countries now use the euro as their official currency.
What does the EU do?
What do you think the EU does for you?
Study, Work and Volunteering

- Youth Guarantee Scheme
- EURES
- ERASMUS+
- European Solidarity Corps
Travel

Discover EU
Free roaming
Healthcare assistance
Passenger rights
Access to digital subscriptions
...and much more!

- Participation
- Environmental protection
- Consumer rights and safety
- EU-funded projects
- EU in the world
EU Priorities

- Green Deal
- NextGenerationEU
- Digitalisation
- Equality
Continuing EU Solidarity with Ukraine

#StandWithUkraine
Which topics do you think should be prioritised by the European Institutions?
How does the EU work?
### The European Commission

- Represents the EU common interests
- Is made up of one President and a Commissioner from each EU country responsible for a specific topic
- Proposes new laws and programmes
- Is elected by the European Parliament for five years
- Manages the EU policies and budget
- Is the guardian of the EU Treaties
- Is located in Brussels and Luxembourg
The European Council

- brings together the heads of state or government of each EU country
- sets the EU’s main priorities and policy directions
- does not adopt EU laws
- meets at least four times a year in Brussels (Belgium) or Luxembourg (Luxembourg) for European Summits
The Council of the EU

represents the governments of the EU countries

brings together ministers of EU countries who meet to discuss EU matters (agriculture, foreign affairs, justice, etc.)

takes decisions and passes laws together with the European Parliament

has a rotating Presidency – every six months another EU country takes the lead

meets in Brussels or Luxembourg
The European Parliament

is the voice of European citizens

has Members from all EU countries directly elected by citizens every five years

discusses new laws proposed by the European Commission

modifies (if necessary) and decides these laws together with the Council

elects the President of the European Commission

approves the EU budget

holds at least six sessions per year in Brussels (Belgium) and 12 in Strasbourg (France)
EU Laws: who does what?

European Commission
- Proposes a law

European Parliament
- Adopt, amend or reject the proposed law

Council of the European Union
- If agreed

New EU Law
The European Court of Justice

- keeps track of EU laws
- makes sure that EU countries respect EU laws
- advises national courts on the interpretation of these laws
- fines countries if they do not respect EU laws
- checks if the laws respect fundamental rights (e.g. freedom of speech, freedom of the press)
- consists of one judge per EU country
- is located in Luxembourg
The European Court of Auditors

- checks whether the EU’s budget has been correctly spent
- reports fraud, corruption or other illegal activity
- advises EU policymakers on how to best spend the budget
- has Members appointed by the Council for six-year terms
The European Central Bank

- leads EU economic and monetary policy
- manages the European currency – the ‘euro’
- is responsible for keeping the euro and prices stable
- fixes interest rates for the euro area
- works with the national central banks of EU countries
- has six Members appointed by the Council for an eight-year term that cannot be renewed
- is located in Frankfurt (Germany)
How YOU can shape Europe
How you can shape Europe

- Citizen's Initiatives
- European Youth Week
- European Youth Event (EYE)
- Your Europe, Your Say (YEYS)
The next European elections will take place 6–9 June 2024. Save the date!

Voting age: 16-18 years old (depending on your country).
Why vote?

The members of the European Parliament are elected by European citizens.

Vote to make sure your views are represented.
Why vote?

Because you can choose who takes decisions on important issues that concern you – like climate change, jobs and the protection of your rights and freedoms.
Learn more about the EU

**Europa website**
[europa.eu](http://europa.eu)

**Learning Corner website**
[europa.eu/learning-corner](http://europa.eu/learning-corner)

**Learning Corner newsletter**
[ec.europa.eu/newsroom/comm/user-subscriptions/1595/create](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/comm/user-subscriptions/1595/create)

**What Europe does for me**
[what-europe does-for-me.eu](http://what-europe does-for-me.eu)

**Publications Office**
[publications.europa.eu](http://publications.europa.eu)
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Use the search tool to find the EU’s social media accounts.

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Thank you!

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