What does Europe mean to us?

Europe – geographically

It stretches from the Arctic Ocean in the north

Europe is one of the world's continents.

and from the Atlantic Ocean in the west

500 million of them in the European Union.

to the Ural Mountains in the east.

More than 700 million people live in Europe,

to the Mediterra-nean Sea in the south

Europe – historically

We Europeans do not only share a continent, we share a common history.

New ways of living, thinking and believing have always spread throughout Europe. They have shaped the way we feel and behave to this day.

Ancient Greece and Rome, for example, have strongly influenced European culture.

The church of the Madeleine in Paris,
inspired by a Roman temple,
designed as a temple to the glory of Napoleon's army,
seen here from the Place de la Concorde, where
the guillotine was erected during the French Revolution.

Languages

Our languages reflect that: many words in European languages have common roots in ancient Greek and Latin.

For example:

- Europe and democracy (Greek) or
- Union (Latin).

The Athena Fountain in front of the Austrian Parliament Building in Vienna.

Religion

Over the centuries, **religion in Europe has been a major influence on European art**, **culture**, **philosophy** **and law**

 The largest religion in Europe is Christianity, with 76.2% of Europeans considering themselves Christians, including Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and various Protestant denominations

Arts and culture

Over the centuries, new styles of music, architecture and literature have inspired artists all over Europe.

For example:

- gothic churches in France, Spain, Poland or Slovakia, or

- classical music written by German, Italian or British composers

- Literature written by Norwegian, Bulgarian and Austrian Writers

The Mozart family (Wolfgang Amadeus with his father Leopold and his sister Nannerl) toured Europe several times.

European wars

Sadly, the story of Europe is not all about great achievements of which we can be proud.

Throughout history, European nations have fought terrible wars against each other.

In the 20th century, two wars that started on this continent spread and involved countries all over the world.

This cemetery contains the remains of more than 140,000 soldiers who died during the Battle of Verdun (France) in the First World War.

European wars

At the end of the Second World War, some critical people in Europe asked themselves:

"Can anything be done to stop these terrible things from happening again?"

"Will Europeans ever learn to work together instead of fighting each other?"

They decided to act...

Almost all the buildings in Warsaw had been destroyed by the end of the Second World War.
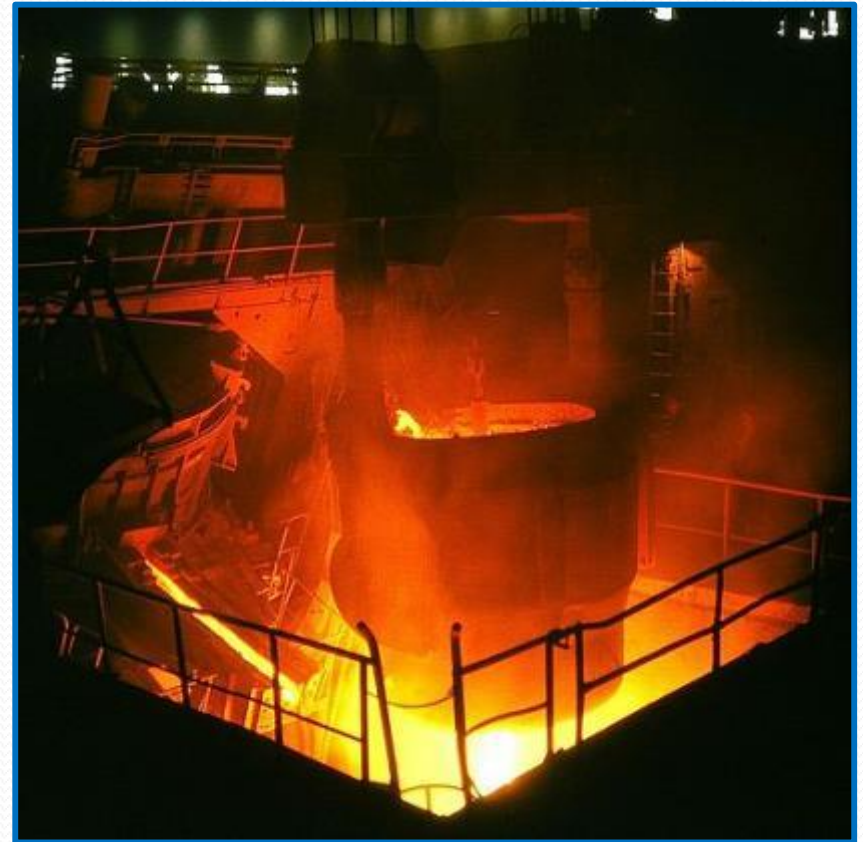
Founding of the European Union

based on the following reflections:

If you want to prevent war, you have to **work together**.

A first step is to control jointly the things needed for war:

- **steel** for weapons and
- **energy** for factories and transport…

European Coal and Steel Community

… That's why six European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) agreed to unite their coal and steel industries.

They set up the European Coal and Steel Community.

The Treaty on the European Coal and Steel Community was signed in Paris in 1951.

European Economic Community

The six countries got on so well that they decided to go a step further and to set up the European Economic Community (EEC).

The main idea was to create a 'common market'. That means getting rid of all national obstacles to free trade, such as border checks and customs duties, as if Europe were one country.

The European flag was adopted by the European Economic Community in 1985.

Not just economics…

Over the years, more and more countries joined the EEC.
They started working together in many more areas, for example,

- to protect the environment and
- to build better roads and railways across Europe.

That's why the EEC decided to change its name to the **'European Union'**.

The Øresund Bridge, completed in 1999, links Sweden and Denmark.

Fall of the Iron Curtain

In 1989, countries from central and eastern Europe broke free from Communist rule. The unnatural separation between the eastern and western parts of Europe, the 'Iron Curtain', ceased to exist.

The countries that had regained their freedom reformed their laws and economies and a lot of them joined the EU. The EU now has 28 member countries.

Remains of the Iron Curtain in the Czech Republic

Enlargement: from six to 28 countries

Year	Countries
1952	Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands
1973	Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom
1981	Greece
1986	Portugal, Spain
1995	Austria, Finland, Sweden
2004	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia
2007	Bulgaria, Romania
2013	Croatia



1952 1973 1981 1986 1995 2004 2007 2013

Member States of the European Union

These are the 28 Member States of the European Union in 2017.

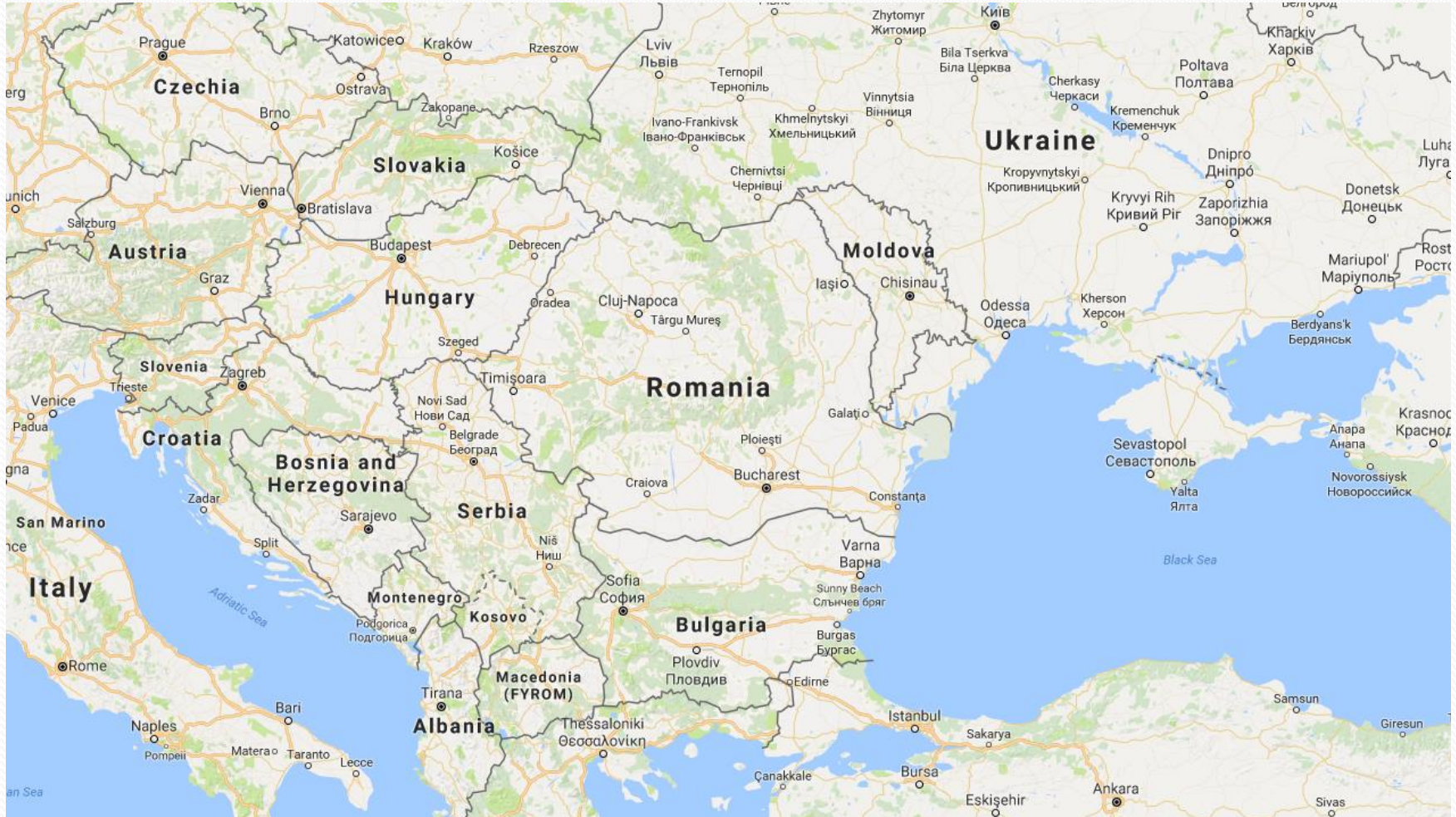By the vote for Brexit in 2016 Great Britain will leave the EU

Member States of the European Union

Candidate countries and potential candidates

508 million people in the EU countries in 2015, but different numbers of inhabitants...
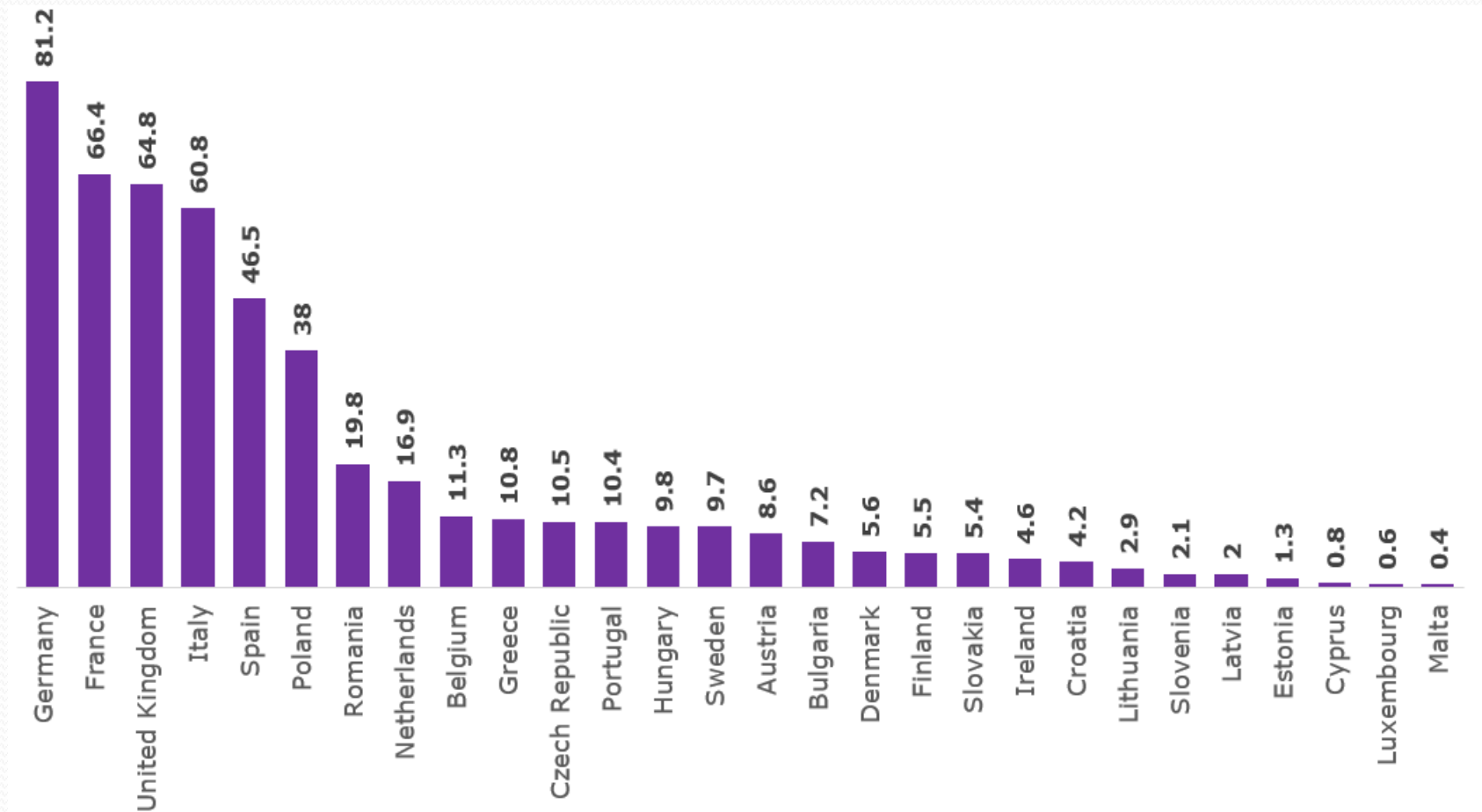
…and surface area (x 1000 km²)
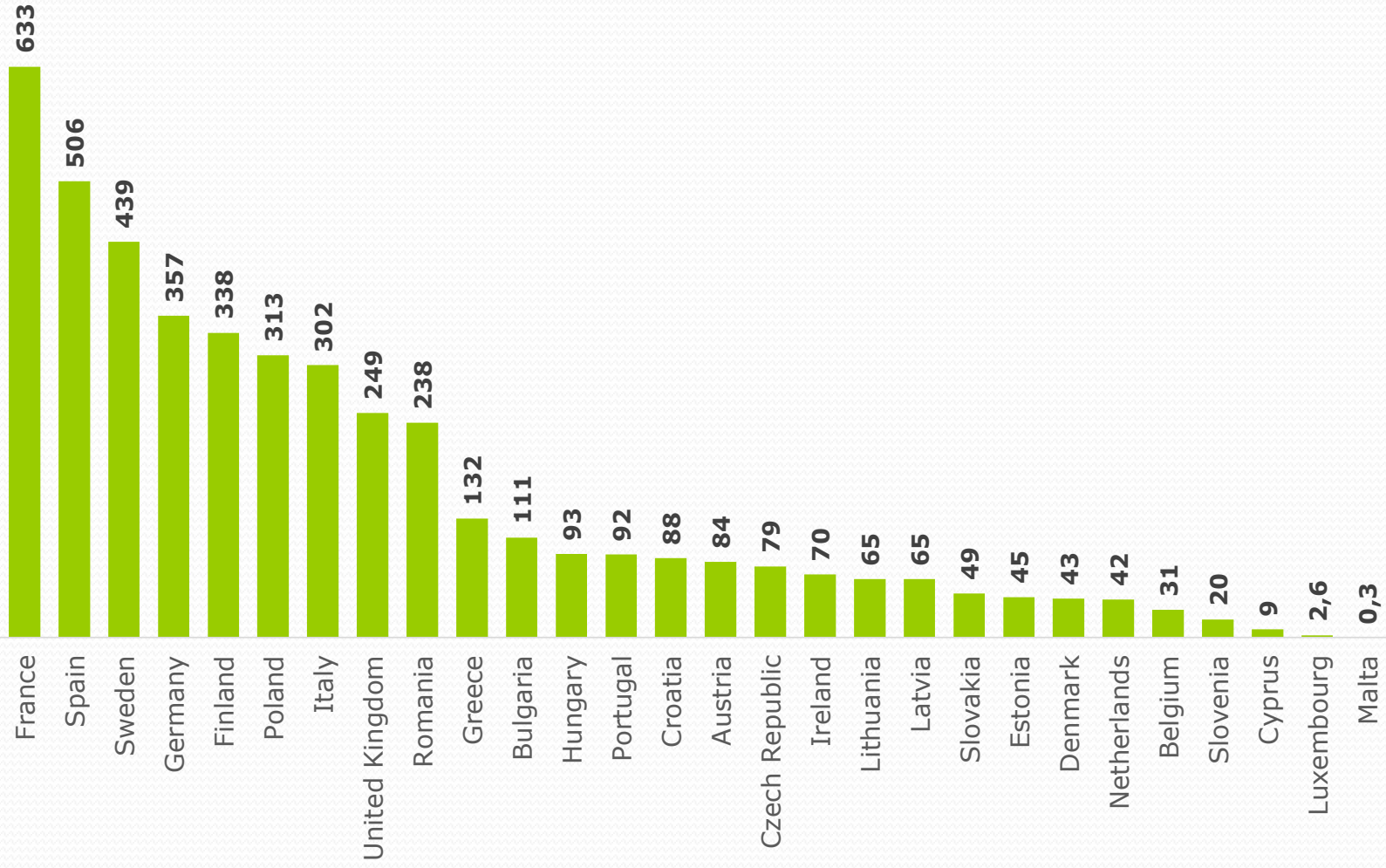
What about the Danube countries?

Fundamental values of the EU:

Respect for Human Dignity	
Freedom	
Democracy	
Equality	
Rule of Law	
Protection of Human Rights (including the Rights of Minorities)	

These values must be common to all Member States that are characterized by

- Pluralism
- Non-Discrimination
- Tolerance
- Justice
- Solidarity and
- Equality of Women and Men

EU symbols –
The motto since 2000: United in diversity
which means to work together for peace and prosperity, being enriched by the many different European cultures, traditions and languages

Bulgare : Единни в многообразието

Tchèque : Jednota v rozmanitosti

Danois : Forenet i mangfoldighed

Néerlandais : Eenheid in verscheidenheid

Anglais : United in diversity

Estonien : Ühinenud mitmekesisuses

Finnois : Moninaisuudessaan yhtenäinen

Français : Unie dans la diversité

Allemand : In Vielfalt geeint

Grec : Ενότητα στην πολυμορφία

Hongrois : Egység a sokféleségben

Irlandais : Aontaithe san éagsúlacht7

Italien : Uniti nella diversità

Latin : In varietate concordia

Letton : Vienotība dažādībā

Lituanien : Vienybė įvairiškume

Luxembourgeois : A Villfalt gëeent

Maltais : Magħqudin fit-tibjin

Polonais : Jedność w różnorodności

Portugais : Unidos na diversidade

Roumain : Unitate în diversitate

Slovaque : Jednota v rozmanitosti

Slovène : Združeni v raznolikosti

Espagnol : Unidos en la diversidad

Suédois : Förenade i mångfalden

EU symbols –
European anthem, the Euro, the European flag, the European Day the 9th of May

Achievements of EU: internationalized education - by mobility

Erasmus +

Every year, more than 400000 young people study or pursue personal development in other European countries with the support of the EU's Erasmus+ programme for education, training, youth and sport.

**Erasmus + must be enlarged for older adults!**

Achievements:
Freedom to move – Schengen agreement

- No police or customs checks at borders between most EU countries

- Controls strengthened at the EU's external borders

- More cooperation between police from different EU countries

- Buy and bring back any goods for personal use when you travel between EU countries

Achievements: common currency in many countries
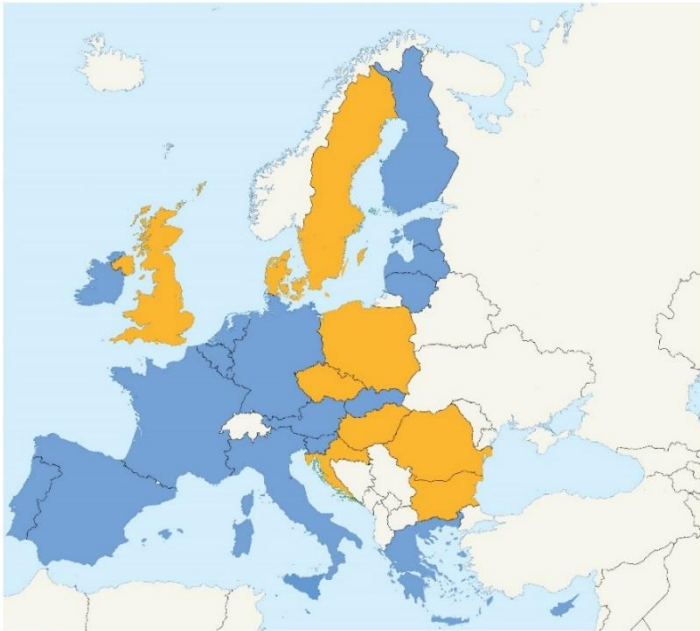
- No fluctuation risk and foreign exchange cost

- More choice and stable prices for consumers

- Closer economic cooperation between EU countries

Achievements:

Freedom for employees
EU citizens may live and work in any EU country of their choice.

Climate action
In international negotiations on climate change, the European Union speaks with one voice.

What the European Union does today

Helping poorer regions

Some areas in Europe need money to build new roads and railways; in other places many people are looking for a job. The EU provides funding for specific projects that address these needs.

Wastewater treatment plant in Croatia, financed with the help of EU funds

Helping neighbouring countries

The EU helps other countries improve schools, hospitals and social protection. Lida and Alina from Moldova have benefited from this.

Problems and challenges

Ensuring the food we eat is safe

Integration of migrants

Protecting the environ-ment

Fighting against poverty

and

lots,

lots

more!

What is going wrong?

- In all countries we have a lot of populisme.

- More and more people don't believe in a common European strategy.

- For a long time people had been neglected.

What is needed?

- People must be more seen and involved in European policies.

- More European awareness and European identity of the citizenz are needed.

- More civil participation is a chance to overcome barriers.

What about you?

Which proposal you have to connect European people?

What does Europe mean to you?

What do you like to learn more about the other countries?

What do you like best about Europe?

Were you or your grandparents born in another European country?

Sources

https://europa.eu/teachers-corner/sites/teacherscorner/files/files/europe_nutshell_en.pdf

https://europa.eu/european-union/documents-publications/slide-presentations_en