







# What exactly is the European Union?

## The European Union and all the EU Countries

Technically speaking, Europe comprises 47 total countries, including part of western Russia and part of northwestern Turkey, and several dependencies throughout Europe. It is the sixth-largest continent on the planet. It boasts nearly 1/8th of the world population (or approximately 704,000,000 million people) and covers about 1/15th of the world land area. It is bordered by 37,887 miles of coastline (60,973 Km) with a maximum distance east to west of 4000 miles (6400 Km) and north to south of 3000 miles (4800 Km). More than one-half of its total land area is used for farming and agriculture. If you're in Brussels, Belgium take a [Tour of the European Parliament](#) building.

Europe is a continent located in the northern hemisphere of Earth. It is bordered by the Arctic Ocean to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the Mediterranean Sea to the south, and Asia to the east. Europe is the world's second-smallest continent by land area, covering approximately 10.18 million square kilometers. However, it is densely populated, making it the third-most populous continent, with over 740 million people as of my last knowledge update in September 2021.

One of the defining features of Europe is its rich cultural and historical heritage. It has been the cradle of many major civilizations, including ancient Greece and Rome, which greatly influenced the development of Western culture, philosophy, and governance. Europe has also witnessed numerous important historical events, such as the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution, which shaped modern society, science, and art. Today, Europe is a continent of diverse languages, religions, and traditions, with each country contributing to the mosaic of its cultural landscape.

Europe is known for its political diversity, consisting of around 50 sovereign nations, each with its own unique history, languages, and traditions. The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that have chosen to work closely together in areas such as trade, economic policy, and security. The euro, a common currency used by 19 EU member states, is one of the most prominent symbols of European integration. The continent is also characterized by a high standard of living, strong social welfare systems, and a commitment to human rights and democratic values. Europe's influence extends globally through its contributions to science, technology, arts, and global diplomacy, making it a key player in international affairs.

Europe, a continent rich in history, culture, and diversity, is a region that has evolved over millennia, shaped by both its geographical features and its intricate human geography. Stretching from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Ural Mountains in the east, and from the Arctic Ocean in the north to the Mediterranean Sea in the south, Europe encompasses a vast expanse of land, including various subregions such as Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, and Central Europe. The boundaries of Europe have been a subject of debate throughout history, often blurred by its proximity to Asia and its historical connections with neighboring regions. However, a combination of geographical, historical, and cultural factors has helped define what exactly constitutes Europe.

One key aspect in understanding Europe's identity is its geography. Geographically, Europe is characterized by its diverse landscapes, including mountain ranges such as the Alps and the Pyrenees, as well as its extensive river systems like the Danube and the Rhine. The continent is surrounded by bodies of water, from the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans to the west and north, to the Mediterranean and Black Seas to the south. The Ural Mountains serve as a traditional eastern boundary between Europe and Asia, although this distinction is more symbolic than absolute. The Caspian Sea, often considered the largest inland body of water in the world, lies to the southeast, further blurring the delineation between Europe and Asia.



