

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A EUROPEAN? text of presentation

Presentation on link

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EUROPEAN UNION

SYMBOLS

STRUCTURES

HISTORY

What is a European Union?

It is a unique economic and political partnership of 28 countries.

What are its aims?

Peace, well-being and freedom for 500 mln citizens in a more fair and safe world.

What results has it achieved so far?

Freedom of travel and exchange, euro currency, safety of food and environment, higher level of life in poorer regions, common actions in term of fighting terrorism and crime, cheaper communication, opportunities for education and work abroad...any many more

How does it work?

To achieve these results EU members established institutions that are in charge of it and introduce new laws. The most important are:

- European Parliament
- The Council of the European Union
- European Commission.

EU : 500 mln citizens in 28 countries

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Spain, The Netherlands, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Hungary, Great Britain, Italy

Founders

Symbols of the EU

Flag

Europe Day

Euro

Anthem

Motto: United in diversity

Anthem of the EU

It is based on "Ode to Joy" from the final movement of Beethoven's 9th Symphony composed in 1823, and is played on official occasions by both organisations. Its lyrics are based on a poem by Fryderyk Schiller.

Flag of the European Union

It is a circle which consists of twelve five-pointed yellow (or) stars on a blue (azure) field. The number of stars on the flag is fixed at twelve, representing "perfection and completeness"

The flag was designed in 1955.

The stars symbolize unity, solidarity and harmony between the members of EU.

It was first used as a flag of the Council of Europe. Later it was adopted as a symbol for the whole of Europe.

United in diversity" - the motto of the European Union

The idea behind the motto is that thanks to EU its citizens are united in efforts to achieve peace and well-being as well as the fact that the diversity of cultures, traditions and languages is one of its greatest assets.

Europe Day

It is celebrated on 9th May. On this day in 1950, Robert Schuman, a French Foreign Minister made a suggestion of creating a better organized Europe to maintain peace and economic cooperation of nations. His suggestion is known now as Schuman Declaration.

Euro - common currency

Euro was introduced as a common currency on 1st January 1999, first as accounting currency. Coins and banknotes appeared on 1st January 2002.

Euro is an official currency in 17 out of 28 European countries. Countries which adopted euro comprise so called "eurozone".

24 official languages

Enlargement of the European Union

Official candidates

Potential candidates

Application for membership is possible

Structures of the European Union

European Parliament - represents the citizens of the European Union and it is elected by them directly.

The council of the European Union - represents the governments of the EU members.

Court of Justice of the European Union - stands as a guard upholding European laws.

European Court of Auditors - checks that EU funds are collected and used correctly, and helps improve EU financial management.

European Ombudsman - investigates complaints against EU institutions, bodies, offices & agencies.

The European Council meeting

A meeting of all the heads of state or government of the EU members. It takes place at least four times a year. General guidelines for activities of the EU are discussed.