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Citizenship Learning in a Shifting Society

Module 2: EU Panorama



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EUROPEAN UNION



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What is the EU?

- ★ The EU was first planned as an economic cooperation with only 6 countries:
Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.
- ★ Since then, **22 more countries have joined (the UK left the EU in 2020)** and a huge 'single market' has been created.



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What is the EU?

- ★ EU developed into an organisation with many different policy areas.
- ★ For more than half a century, the EU has provided peace, stability and prosperity, helped to create a better standard of living and introduced a **European currency: the euro.**





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What is the EU?

European flag and symbol of EU

The European flag symbolises both, the European Union and, more broadly, the identity and unity of Europe. It features a circle of 12 gold stars on a blue background. They stand for the ideals of unity, solidarity and harmony among the peoples of Europe. The number of stars has nothing to do with the number of member countries, though the circle is a symbol of unity.





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The map of the EU



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The structure of the EU

The European Union is an international organisation created by agreements between states. However, its structure, functions and powers differ from the traditional international organisation in several important respects. The biggest difference is that a member state that does not comply with EU law can be sued before the Court of Justice of the European Union.

The European Union's institutions are the European Council, the European Parliament, the Commission, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Central Bank, and the Court of Auditors. Each institution acts within the limits of powers conferred on it by the Treaties.

The European Union's institutions are:

The European Council

European Parliament

Court of Justice of the EU
(CJEU)

European Central Bank
(ECB)

European Court of Auditors
(ECA)



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European Parliament

The EU Parliament was established in 1952 as Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community, 1962 as European Parliament, and it held first direct elections in 1979. It is an EU body with legislative, supervisory, and budgetary responsibilities, 705 members, and is directly elected by EU voters every 5 years. It has 20 committees and 3 subcommittees that examine proposals for legislation. The MEPs gather in Strasbourg (France), Brussels (Belgium) or Luxembourg, for the plenary sessions to give a final vote on the proposed legislation and the proposed amendments.





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The aims of the European Union

The aims of the European Union within its borders are:

- to promote peace
- offer freedom, security and justice
- promote social justice and protection
- establish an internal market
- achieve sustainable development
- protect and improve the quality of the environment
- promote scientific and technological progress
- combat social exclusion and discrimination
- enhance economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity
- respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity
- establish an economic and monetary union whose currency is **the euro**



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The aims of the European Union

The aims of the EU within the wider world are:

- to uphold and promote its values and interests
- to contribute to peace and security and the sustainable development
- to contribute to solidarity and mutual respect
- strict observance of international law





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The values of the European Union



The values of the EU are the same for all EU countries. We want a society which plays by the rules of integration, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination. These values are very important for our European way of life.



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Human dignity

Human dignity is inviolable.

It must be respected, protected and it constitutes the real basis of fundamental rights.





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Freedom

Freedom of movement gives citizens the right to travel and live freely within the Union.

Other forms of freedom, such as respect for private life, freedom of thinking, religion, gathering, expression and information are protected by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.





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Democracy

Democracy is one of the cornerstones of EU functionality.

Being an European citizen also means that you have political rights. Every adult EU citizen has the right to candidate and to vote for elections to the European Parliament and in their country of residence or in their country of origin.





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Equality

Equality is about equal rights for all citizens before the law.

The principle of equality between women and men is the basis of all European policies and of European integration. It applies in all areas.





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Rule of law

The EU is based on the rule of law.

Everything the EU does is based on agreements, voluntarily and democratically agreed by EU countries. Law and justice are carried out by an independent court. The European Court of Justice applies the highest jurisdiction, whose judgments must be respected by all.





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Human rights

Human rights are protected by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

They include the right to not be discriminated against on grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, the right to the protection of personal data and the right of access to justice.



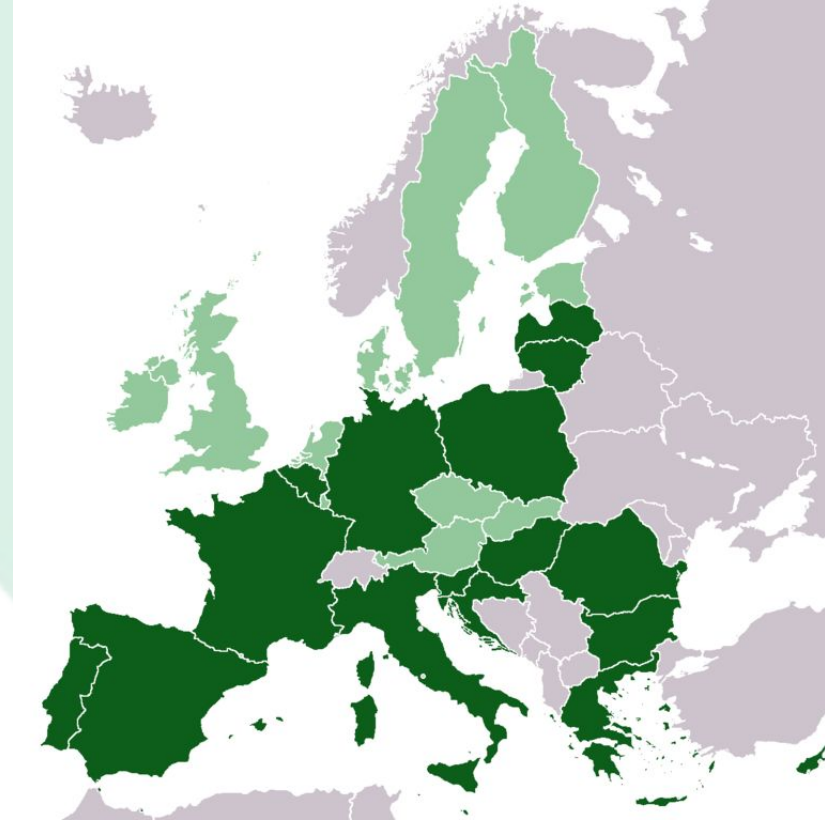


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European integration

European integration is the process of industrial, economic, political, legal, social, and cultural integration of states wholly or partially in Europe or nearby, to the EU.



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If we are talking about an **individual in a community**, or an **individual Member State in the EU**, we can draw a similar conclusion. **Integration** can be very difficult in many cases, because in a sense it means moving away from one's own culture and habits, but it **is important for the well-being of both, the community and the individual.**



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