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2026 EU Policy Forum: EU Security and Democracy Curriculum Resource Guide for Educators

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OVERVIEW

The *European Union Democracy and Security Resource Guide* is designed to support educators in exploring the complex relationship between democratic governance, civic participation, and security within the European Union. Developed as a companion to the 2026 EU Policy Forum Educator Workshop, this guide provides a collection of curated resources, lesson materials, and contemporary case studies that examine how the European Union responds to political, social, and security challenges while upholding democratic values.

Organized into five thematic modules, the guide introduces educators to the institutions and decision-making processes that shape the European Union, the security frameworks that protect democratic societies, and the civic practices that strengthen public participation. Participants will investigate pressing issues—including cybersecurity, disinformation, geopolitical conflict, democratic resilience, human rights, media literacy, and youth engagement—through a combination of articles, videos, infographics, lesson plans, and scholarly research.

Throughout the guide, educators are encouraged to draw connections between European and American democratic systems, analyze the challenges facing diverse societies, and consider the role that institutions, communities, and individuals play in safeguarding democracy.

By engaging with these resources, educators will deepen their understanding of global citizenship and equip students with the critical thinking, media literacy, and civic engagement

skills necessary to navigate an increasingly interconnected world. This resource guide is intended to foster meaningful dialogue about democracy and security while providing practical tools that educators can adapt for classrooms across grade levels and subject areas. Through comparative analysis and real-world examples, participants will explore how democratic institutions can remain resilient in the face of emerging challenges and how informed, engaged citizens contribute to a more secure and inclusive future.

DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



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Navigating This Resource Guide



This interactive guide is designed to move educators and students from foundational understanding to meaningful, action-oriented learning. While the sections are organized to build upon one another, each can also be explored independently to meet diverse classroom needs. Throughout the guide, hyperlinked terms, images, and resources invite deeper exploration and encourage inquiry into this critical topic.

MODULE 1: Security of European Union Democratic Institutions

Section 1: EU Responses to Cyberattacks and Digital Threats

This section examines how the European Union addresses cyberattacks, disinformation, and other digital threats through coordinated policies, cybersecurity initiatives, and international partnerships.

Section 2: Russian Influence Operations and Disinformation Campaigns

This section explores the strategies used by Russia to shape public opinion and influence democratic processes in Europe, as well as the EU's efforts to combat misinformation and strengthen media literacy.

Section 3: The Arctic's Strategic Importance to Europe

This section investigates the Arctic's growing geopolitical, economic, and environmental significance and its impact on European security, trade, and international cooperation.

Section 4: NATO-EU Security Cooperation

This section analyzes the partnership between NATO and the European Union in addressing shared security challenges, including collective defense, crisis response, and regional stability.

Section 5: Protecting Elections in Democratic Societies

This section examines the measures democratic governments use to safeguard elections from foreign interference, cyber threats, and misinformation while preserving public trust and electoral integrity.

Section 6: Maritime Security and the Blue Economy

This section explores the relationship between maritime security and the blue economy, highlighting how sustainable use of ocean resources supports economic growth, environmental protection, and international cooperation.

Section 7: Emerging Security Challenges in the 21st Century

This section considers the evolving threats facing democratic societies—including cyber warfare, climate change, migration, and technological disruption—and the strategies needed to address them.

MODULE 2: European Union Democracy and Institutions

Section 1: How Laws Are Made in the EU

This section explains the European Union's legislative process, highlighting the roles of the European Commission, European Parliament, and Council of the European Union in developing and adopting policies.

Section 2: Comparison of EU and U.S. Governance Structures

This section compares the political institutions and decision-making systems of the European Union and the United States, examining how each balances power, representation, and federal authority.

Section 3: Expansion and Enlargement of the EU

This section explores the history and impact of EU enlargement, examining how the addition of new member states has shaped Europe's political, economic, and cultural landscape.

Section 4: Supranational vs. National Authority

This section investigates the balance of power between EU institutions and individual member states, highlighting ongoing debates over sovereignty and shared governance.

Section 5: Democratic Representation Within the EU

This section examines how European citizens are represented within EU institutions and considers the opportunities and challenges of democratic participation across diverse member states.

Section 6: Brexit and Institutional Change

This section analyzes the political, economic, and institutional consequences of the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union and its implications for the future of European integration.

Section 7: Current Challenges Facing European Integration

This section explores the major issues shaping the European Union today, including economic inequality, migration, geopolitical tensions, and the rise of populism.

MODULE 3: The EU Test - Security, Democracy, and Institutional Resilience

Section 1: Democratic Resilience During Crises

This section examines how democratic institutions adapt to political, economic, and social crises while preserving democratic values, public trust, and the rule of law.

Section 2: Lessons from European Responses to War and Conflict

This section explores how European nations and institutions have responded to conflict and instability, highlighting the political, humanitarian, and diplomatic lessons that continue to shape the region today.

Section 3: The Legacy of Communism in Eastern Europe

This section investigates how the political, economic, and cultural legacies of communism continue to influence democratic development and national identity in Eastern Europe.

Section 4: Culture, Identity, and Democracy

This section examines the relationship between cultural identity and democratic participation, exploring how history, tradition, and shared values shape political systems and civic life.

Section 5: Media and Public Trust

This section analyzes the role of traditional and digital media in shaping public opinion, fostering civic engagement, and influencing trust in democratic institutions.

Section 6: Human Rights Protections in Europe

This section explores the legal frameworks and institutions that safeguard human rights across Europe and examines the challenges involved in protecting fundamental freedoms in a changing political landscape.

Section 7: Resilience and Recovery Following Major Disruptions

This section considers how European societies rebuild and adapt in the aftermath of crises, focusing on the social, political, and economic factors that contribute to long-term resilience and recovery.

MODULE 4: Making European Citizens - Civic Engagement Practices in the European Union

Section 1: Youth Participation in Democratic Processes

This section explores the ways young people engage in democratic life through voting, activism, advocacy, and civic education, and examines their role in shaping Europe's future.

Section 2: Civil Society Organizations Across Europe This section examines how nongovernmental organizations, advocacy groups, and community organizations strengthen democracy by promoting civic participation, social justice, and public accountability.

Section 3: European Citizenship and Identity

This section investigates the concept of European citizenship and how shared values, cultural diversity, and national identities contribute to a sense of belonging within the European Union.

Section 4: Gender and Political Representation

This section explores the progress and ongoing challenges related to gender equality in European politics, focusing on representation, leadership, and inclusive policymaking.

Section 5: Participatory Democracy Initiatives

This section examines the mechanisms that allow citizens to participate directly in decision-making processes, including public consultations, citizens' assemblies, and grassroots movements.

Section 6: Volunteerism and Community Engagement

This section highlights the role of volunteerism and local community action in strengthening civic life, fostering social cohesion, and encouraging active citizenship across Europe.

Section 7: Inclusion and Diversity in Democratic Systems

This section explores how democratic institutions promote inclusion and representation while addressing the opportunities and challenges created by increasingly diverse societies.

MODULE 5: Staying Current on EU Democracy and Security

Section 1: Current Events in EU Democracy and Security

This section examines recent developments shaping democracy and security in the European Union, highlighting the political, economic, and geopolitical issues influencing the region today.

Section 2: The Baltic Region and European Security

This section explores the strategic importance of the Baltic states and their role in strengthening European security, regional cooperation, and collective defense efforts.

Section 3: Russia's Relationship with Europe

This section analyzes the historical and contemporary relationship between Russia and Europe, focusing on diplomacy, economic ties, security concerns, and regional tensions.

Section 4: Information Literacy and Misinformation

This section investigates how misinformation and digital media influence public opinion and democratic institutions while emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and information literacy.

Section 5: European Regional Cooperation

This section examines how European nations collaborate to address shared challenges through political, economic, and security partnerships at both regional and international levels.

Section 6: Emerging Security Trends

This section explores evolving security challenges—including cyber threats, climate change, technological innovation, and geopolitical competition—and their implications for Europe and the broader international community.

Section 7: Monitoring Contemporary Global Issues

This section encourages ongoing engagement with current events and global trends, emphasizing the importance of informed citizenship in understanding the interconnected challenges facing democratic societies.

Outlining Standards



A Note on Learning Standards Presented in this Guide

Three sets of standards have been linked to each of the learning objectives in this packet. The **Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards** and the accompanying Grade Level Requirements are the social studies standards for WA State.

The College, Career,& Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards are the standards published by the National Council for the Social Studies. Guiding the packet as a whole is the Framework for Global Learning created by the Asia Society and the Council of Chief State School Officers titled *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing Our Youth to Engage the World (2011)*.

Cross-objective standards are listed at the beginning of the packet, and content-specific standards can be found after each learning objective. The standards provided have been selected for relevance, but are not exclusive: many other standards, such as Common Core, may be applicable to the resources and learning objectives identified in this packet. The intention for this packet's organization is to provide educators with an idea of resources available and possible uses for resources. Users should feel free to create their own learning objectives and to select resources according to the specific needs of their classrooms.

WASHINGTON STATE K-12 SOCIAL STUDIES LEARNING STANDARDS

There are five EALRs in Social Studies, one for each of the discipline areas: civics, economics, geography, and history, and a fifth for social studies skills.

(1) Social Studies EALR 1: CIVICS

The student understands and applies knowledge of government, law, politics, and the nation's fundamental documents to make decisions about local, national, and international issues and to demonstrate thoughtful, participatory citizenship.

(2) Social Studies EALR 2: ECONOMICS

The student applies understanding of economic concepts and systems to analyze decision-making and the interactions between individuals, households, businesses, governments, and societies.

(3) Social Studies EALR 3: GEOGRAPHY

The student uses a spatial perspective to make reasoned decisions by applying the concepts of location, region, and movement and demonstrating knowledge of how geographic features and human cultures impact environments.

(4) Social Studies EALR 4: HISTORY

The student understands and applies knowledge of historical thinking, chronology, eras, turning points, major ideas, individuals, and themes on local, Washington State, tribal, United States, and world history in order to evaluate how history shapes the present and future.

(5) Social Studies EALR 5: SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS

The student understands and applies reasoning skills to conduct research, deliberate, and form and evaluate positions through the processes of reading, writing, and communicating.

COLLEGE, CAREER, & CIVIC LIFE C3 FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL STUDIES STATE STANDARDS

The C3 Framework is organized into the four Dimensions, which support a robust social studies program rooted in inquiry.

The four Dimensions are as follows:

- (1) Developing questions and planning inquiries;**
- (2) Applying disciplinary concepts and tools;**
- (3) Evaluating sources and using evidence;**
- (4) Communicating conclusions and taking informed action**

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRIES	DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY TOOLS AND CONCEPTS	DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE	DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION
Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries	Civics Economics Geography History	Gathering and Evaluating Sources Developing Claims and Using Evidence	Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions Taking Informed Action

1 - Dimension 2 has four disciplinary subsections: (1) Civics; (2) Economics; (3) Geography; (4) History. Each disciplinary subsection has three to four additional categories, which provide an organizing mechanism for the foundational content and skills within each discipline.

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/C3-Framework-Applying-Disciplinary-Tools-and-Concepts-Reprinted-from-The-College_fig2_333610103

CIVICS	ECONOMICS	GEOGRAPHY	HISTORY
Civic and Political Institutions	Economic Decision Making	Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World	Change, Continuity, and Context
Participation and Deliberation: Applying Civic Virtues and Democratic Principles	Exchange and Markets	Human-Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture	Perspectives
Processes, Rules, and Laws	The National Economy	Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movements	Historical Sources and Evidence
	The Global Economy	Global Interconnections: Changing Spatial Patterns	Causation and Argumentation

2 - C3 Framework Organization

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/C3-Framework-Applying-Disciplinary-Tools-and-Concepts-Reprinted-from-The-College_fig2_333610103

EDUCATING FOR GLOBAL COMPETENCE

Frameworks taken from *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing Our Youth to Engage the World* (Asia Society and the Council of Chief State School Officers 2011).

“Global competence is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.” (Chapter 2).

Globally competent students are able to perform the following four competences:

1. **Investigate the world** beyond their immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted and age-appropriate research.
2. **Recognize perspectives** others’ and their own, articulating and explaining such perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully.
3. **Communicate ideas** effectively with diverse audiences, bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers.
4. **Take action** to improve conditions, viewing themselves as players in the world and participating reflectively.



Framework for Global Competence by Mansilla and Jackson (2013)

A blue graphic for 'MODULE 1' featuring a speaker's photo in a circle, decorative dots, and arrows.

MODULE 1

Security of European Union Democratic Institutions

Lecture Overview

This session explores how the European Union protects democratic institutions from internal and external threats, including disinformation, cyberattacks, foreign interference, and geopolitical instability. It examines the relationship between democracy, security policy, and European cooperation.

SPEAKER: JOSE MIGUEL RONCERO MARTIN

Key Terms

1. [Democratic Institutions](#): “The organized bodies associated with a democratic form of governance, like freely elected legislatures.”
2. [Rule of Law](#): “The mechanism, process, institution, practice, or norm that supports the equality of all citizens before the [law](#), secures a nonarbitrary form of government, and more generally prevents the arbitrary use of power.”
3. [Foreign Interference](#): The deliberate and deceptive act carried out by another foreign government to interfere with an intended country’s domestic affairs.
4. [Cybersecurity](#): “The protection of computer systems and information from harm, theft, and unauthorized use.”
5. [Democratic Resilience](#): “The capacity of a democratic regime to absorb external challenges and internal stressors and to dynamically adapt to the changing functional conditions of democratic governance without falling into regime change and abandoning or damaging democracy’s defining principles, functions and norms.”
6. [Hybrid Threats](#): “Combine military and non-military as well as covert and overt means, including disinformation, cyber-attacks, economic pressure, deployment of irregular armed groups and use of regular forces.”

7. [Blue Economy](#): “The economic activities associated with the ocean, seas and coastal regions – that allows resource use while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.”

Learning Objectives

"I Can Statements":

1. I can explain why the European Union was created.
2. I can identify and explain basic elements of how the EU is structured (institutions, etc.).
3. I can identify and explain current and future security challenges facing the EU (and individual member states).
4. I can evaluate policy options the European Union and different member states might use to address challenges to security and democracy.
5. I can identify and analyze perspectives on democracy within and across EU member states.
6. I can identify and evaluate opportunities for civic engagement (participation) within and across the European Union.

EU Responses to Cyberattacks and Digital Threats



[CERT-EU](#)

CERT-EU is the computer emergency response team for the EU, and this resource shares its role and responsibilities in detecting and mitigate cyberattacks.

[EU Incident Response and Cyber Crisis Management](#)

This article discusses how through networks like CSIRT's Network and EU-CyCLONe, along with ENISA, the EU has created a system to detect and block cyber security acts on small and large scales, alike.

[EU Cybersecurity Act](#) *(June 22, 2026)*

"The EU Cybersecurity Act was a piece of legislation put into law to strengthen the role of the EU's existing cybersecurity agency and create one cybersecurity certification system for all digital products."

[Sanctions Against Cyber-Attacks](#) *(May 11, 2026)*

"In June 2017, the EU established a Framework for a Joint EU Diplomatic Response to Malicious Cyber Activities (the 'cyber diplomacy toolbox'). The framework allows the EU and its member states to use all measures under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), including sanctions if necessary, to prevent, discourage, deter and respond to malicious cyber activities targeting the integrity and security of the EU and its member states."

(Video) [The EU's Cyber Solidarity Act: Strengthening Cooperation Against Cyberattacks](#) *(May 29, 2023)*

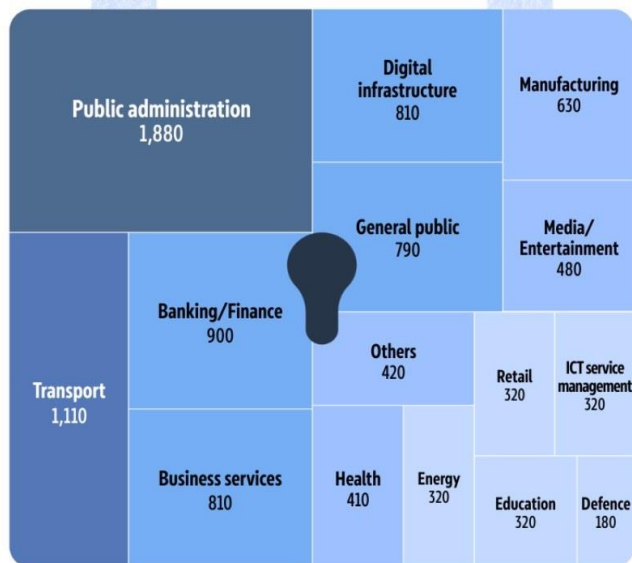
"The European's Commission's proposed Cyber Solidarity Act would increase EU wide cooperation against cyber-attacks. One of their main goals is to prevent attacks during elections."

[EU-NATO Cooperation: What Has Been Achieved So Far?](#) *(October 2021)*

This article discusses the cooperation agreements of the EU and NATO, including many agreements regarding cybersecurity and hybrid threats.

Cybersecurity threats by sector

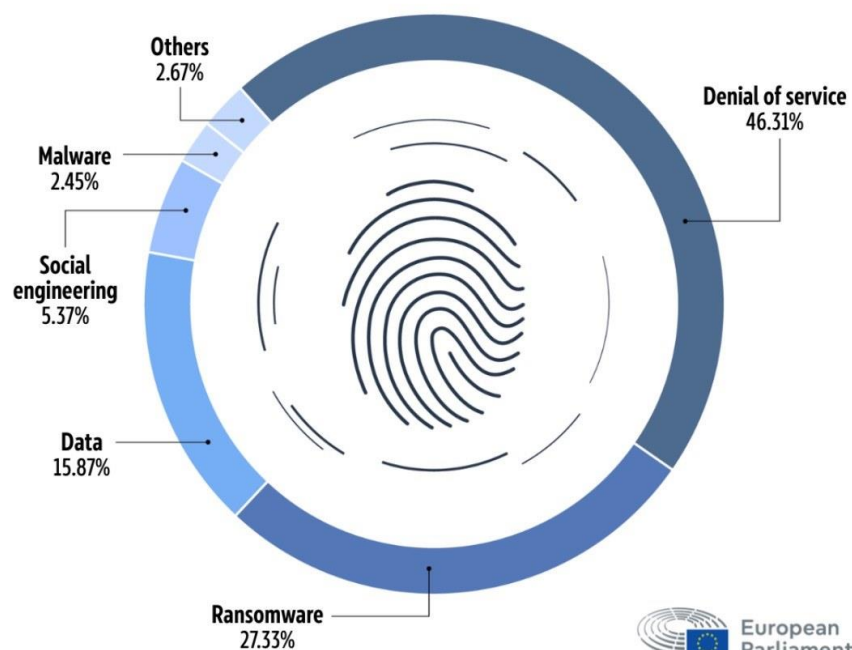
number* of incidents reported (July 2023 – June 2024)



*Numbers rounded to tens

Cybersecurity threats by type

percentage of total threats

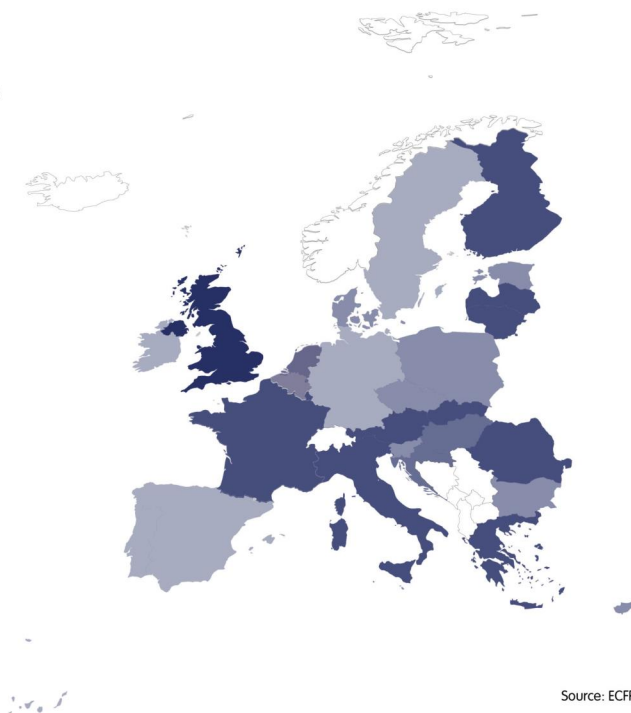


Source: ENISA Threat Landscape 2024



Perceived vulnerability to cyber attacks

- Very vulnerable
- Rather vulnerable
- Neutral
- Rather resilient
- Very resilient



Source: ECFR

Russian Influence Operations and Disinformation Campaigns



(Video) [How Russian-funded Fake News Network Aims to Disrupt Election in Europe](#) (September 22, 2025)

“In the run up to Moldova’s crucial election on Sunday 28 September, BBC Eye Investigations has been undercover in a fake news network hoping to swing the result. The BBC has established that posts from this one network - designed to erode confidence in the ruling government - have been seen over 20 million times on social media. Moldovan authorities say millions in Russian cash has flooded into the country with the aim of convincing citizens to vote out the current pro-EU government. Russia denies it is interfering with Moldova's electoral process.”

(Infographic) [How Russian Disinformation Is Reaching the U.S. Ahead of the 2024 Election](#) (October 17, 2024)

This source shares how Russia now uses elaborate resources, such as fake news websites, AI generated content, and unknowing people to spread misinformation globally. Russia uses tactics to underminedemocracy and trust in the American people while also polarizing people further about hot topic issues.

(Video) [Russia's Disinformation Campaigns to Destabilize Western Democracies](#) (October 13, 2024)

“Senator Tina Smith questions witnesses about disinformation and election interference at the Helsinki Commission Hearing: Russia's Shadow War on NATO.”

[The Fight Against Pro-Kremlin Disinformation](#) (January 20, 2023)

This article discusses the role that the EU has taken on of countering disinformation from Russia, and the implementation of the European External Action Services (EEAS). Its main goal is to “forecast, address, and respond to Russia’s disinformation campaigns affecting the European Union, its Member States, and countries in the region.”

[Fact Sheet: What We Know About Russia's Inference Operations](#) (March 3, 2019)

This fact sheet discusses the US government investigations into the interference of Russia into the 2016 election.



7 - [The Atlantic Council's strategic framework for countering Russian information influence activities.](#)



8 - "CISA's "Disinformation Stops With You" project, encouraging members of the community to recognize and combat disinformation and other forms of IIA."

The Arctic's Strategic Importance to Europe



9 - <https://discoveryalert.com.au/eu-arctic-policy-norway-barents-sea-gas-2026/>

Arctic Security (June 18, 2026)

"The Arctic is strategically important to Europe due to its location between the North Atlantic, Asia and Europe, and serving as a vital route for trades, transport, and

communications. Therefore, the Arctic is crucial to maintaining Europe's defense against other countries."

[Could Russia Hit Northern Europe If It Gained Control of Arctic's Bear Gap?](#) *(June 2, 2026)*

"In the far north of the Arctic, there is a section called the Bear Gap, and if Russia gains control of the Bear Gap, they would be much closer to Northern Europe and be able to launch missiles. As ice melts, the arctic is providing new opportunities for transportation routes around the world, and having control over regions of it is becoming increasingly important."

(Video) [Why Is the Arctic So Important for the US, China, Russia, and Europe?](#) *(January 27, 2026)*

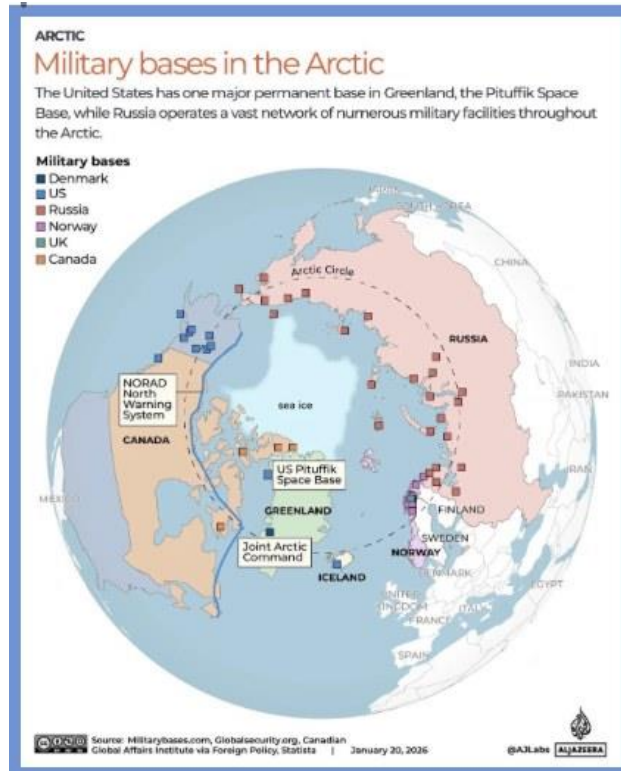
"Due to climate change and other geographical features, the Arctic is becoming increasingly important to maintain security in Europe and for Europe."

(Video) [Why the Arctic Matters Now](#) *(January 22, 2026)*

"Discusses the historical importance of the Arctic and how it is equally important now to our world."

[The EU as an Actor in the Arctic](#) *(April 25, 2023)*

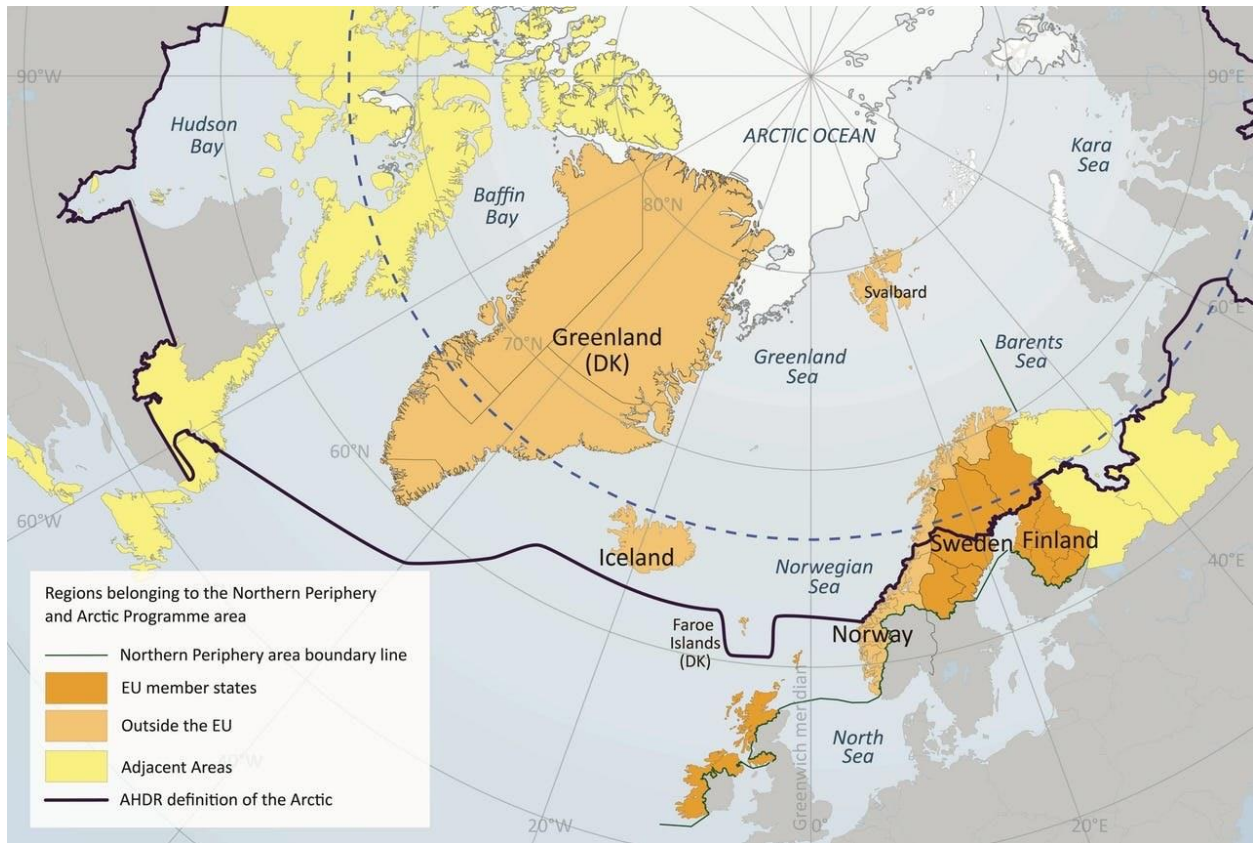
"The arctic is important to the EU due to its increasing natural resources and shipping routes, due to global warming, and growing competition among other nations for the Arctic as protection."



10 - [Map of Military Bases in the Arctic](#)



11 - [European Union Policy for the Arctic's Sustainable Development](#)



12 - [Map of the European Arctic](#)

NATO-EU Security Cooperation



(Lesson Plan) [Understanding NATO's Purpose Lesson Plan](#)

Students will discuss the role that NATO plays in a post-Cold War world and students will consider how the United States should respond to recent Russian aggressions in Ukraine.

[North Atlantic Treaty Organization \(NATO\)](#)

This article explains to kids about NATO, and all the general information needed to grasp a basic understanding about the organization.

[EU – NATO Strategic Partnership](#) (June 10, 2026)

This article explains why the EU – NATO partnership is important and how they work together.

[Relations with the European Union](#) (June 20, 2025)

“The European Union (EU) is an essential partner for NATO. The two organizations share common values, strategic interests, and a majority of member countries. They work side by side in crisis management, on capability development, in addressing hybrid threats and challenges posed by growing strategic competition, as well as in building the capacities of their common

partners in the east and south.” This article delves into how NATO and the EU work closely together and are mutually beneficial to each other.

(Video) [What is NATO? All You Need to Know](#) (June 17, 2024)

“What is NATO? Why was it formed and why does it still exist? Who pays for it and how do nations become new Allies? Find out the basics about NATO in this animation.”

[EU-NATO Cooperation: What Has Been Achieved So Far?](#) (October 2021)

This article discusses the cooperation agreements of the EU and NATO, including many agreements regarding cybersecurity and hybrid threats.



The infographic displays three columns of member states. The first column, under the NATO logo, lists 32 members. The second column, under a combined logo, lists 23 shared members. The third column, under the EU flag, lists 27 members. The shared members are those that are part of both the NATO and EU member lists.

32 NATO members	23 shared members	27 EU members
Albania	Belgium	Austria
Belgium	Bulgaria	Belgium
Bulgaria	Croatia	Bulgaria
Canada	Czechia	Croatia
Croatia	Denmark	Cyprus
Czechia	Estonia	Czechia
Denmark	Finland	Denmark
Estonia	France	Estonia
Finland	Germany	Finland
France	Greece	France
Germany	Hungary	Germany
Greece	Italy	Greece
Hungary	Latvia	Hungary
Iceland	Lithuania	Ireland
Italy	Luxembourg	Italy
Latvia	Malta	Latvia
Lithuania	Netherlands	Lithuania
Luxembourg	Poland	Luxembourg
Montenegro	Portugal	Malta
The Netherlands	Romania	The Netherlands
North Macedonia	Slovakia	Poland
Norway	Slovenia	Portugal
Poland	Spain	Romania
Portugal	Sweden	Slovakia
Romania	Turkiye	Slovenia
Slovakia	United Kingdom	Spain
Slovenia	United States	Sweden
Spain		
Sweden		
Turkiye		
United Kingdom		
United States		

13 - [Membership of the EU, NATO, and Shared Members](#)

Figure 2 – Areas of EU–NATO cooperation



14 - [EU-NATO Shared Common Agenda](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

"Since the EU and NATO share 23 member countries and are both based in Brussels, it is very common for diplomats to plan to work at NATO in the morning and the EU in the afternoon!"

<https://www.nato.int/en/what-we-do/partnerships-and-cooperation/relations-with-the-european-union>

Protecting Elections in Democratic Societies



[Why Voting Matters](#)

This page explains the importance of voting, and how voting can support global issues, and people around you.

[Why are the EU Elections So Important?](#)

This page explains how EU legislations are made, the election of the EU parliament, European Commission, and the aftermath of those elections.

[How European Elections Work](#)

This page explains how EU elections work, information about the parliament, and much more information about the importance of the elections in the EU.

(Lesson Plan) [Free and Fair Elections: Why do they Matter?](#) (November 6, 2025)

"This lesson helps students consider the importance of elections, examine what makes an election "free and fair," and learn about electoral systems in their area."

(Video) [The EU Elections Explained](#) (February 21, 2024)

"Dive into the heart of the 2024 EU Elections with our concise guide! Understand the crucial role of your vote in shaping policies and the European Parliament, where political groups like the EPP, S&D, Renew Europe, ECR, I&D, the Greens, or the Left play key roles. Learn how national votes impact EU dynamics, explore the race for the European Commission presidency, and get insights into the electoral process, including the increase to 720 MEPs."

(Video) [Elections and Voting Explained \(Primary\)](#) (October 13, 2024)

"Discover the different types of elections held in the UK and take a closer look at the General Election, exploring: our right to vote, how candidates and parties gain votes and what happens once elected."

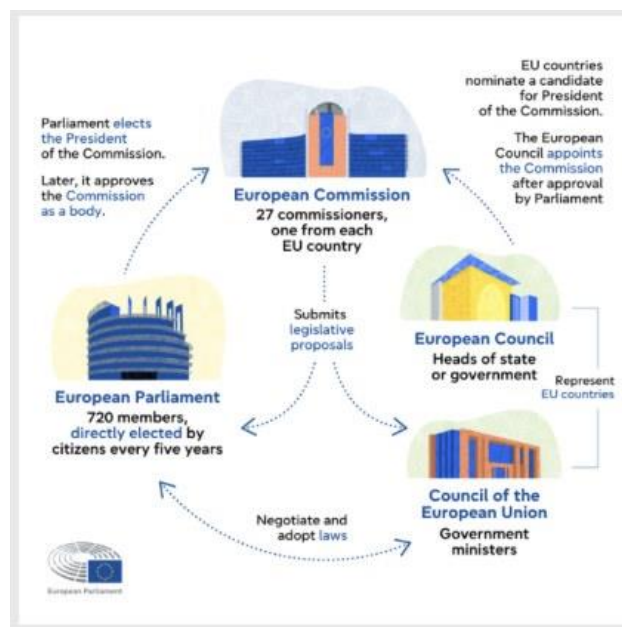
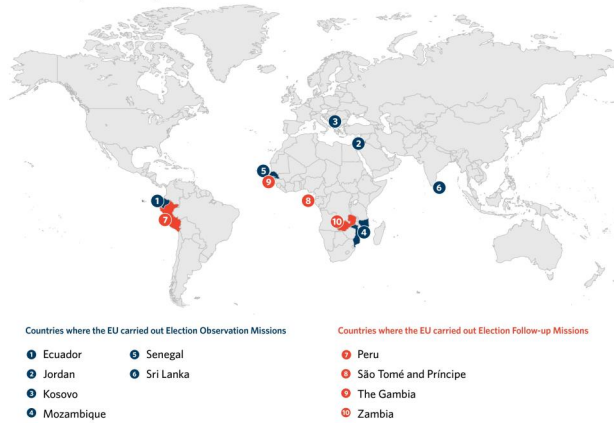


Figure 1. Overview of Election Observation Missions and Election Follow-up Missions, 2024



Source: Data available from the EU Database on Election Missions, the Election Observation and Democracy Support III Report Missions Database, and information provided via the European External Action Service Newsroom.

Note: This map is illustrative; boundaries, names, and designations used do not represent or imply any opinion on the part of Carnegie or the authors. Dotted lines represent approximate disputed boundaries. The final status has not yet been agreed upon.

16 - [Overview of Election Observation Missions and Election Follow-Up Missions](#)

Maritime Security and the Blue Economy



[Maritime Security](#)

This article discusses the role of the IMO and the things they do to protect ships and maritime security globally.

[BlueEconomyNews.Earth](#) (June 29, 2026)

"The Daily Newspaper for the Global Sustainable Blue Economy" with daily articles and news stories about news in the blue economy."

[Asymmetric Alliance Strategy: An Israeli Maritime Perspective on the Iran War](#) (June 29, 2026)

This article discusses the difference in security priorities between Israel and the United States, and how maritime security became increasingly important when Iran shut down the Strait of Hormuz, and the burden fell on the US.

[Office of Maritime Security](#) (April 3, 2026)

The Office of Maritime Security page discusses the office's main roles in protecting the maritime transportation system, and how they support the U.S. Merchant Marine and other shipment from the US.

(Podcast) [Sea Control 463 - EU Maritime Security with Giovanni Cremonini](#) (September 16, 2023)

"Giovanni Cremonini joins the program to discuss the update to the EU Maritime Security Strategy. Cremonini is the Head of the Sector for Maritime Security in the Security and Defense Policy Directorate of the European Union External Action Service."

[The Arctic Institute – European Union](#) (August 1, 2022)

The arctic is a growing asset to the EU due to up-and-coming economic development, scientific research, and resources available in the region, and this article discusses how the EU is prioritizing security and investment in the region.

(Video) [What is Maritime Security?](#) (January 22, 2021)

This video gives an overview of what maritime security is, major issues facing maritime security, and how maritime security issues and solutions are very diverse.



17 - [EU's Goals for a Sustainable Blue Economy](#)

Why do we need to act?

Ensuring safe and secure oceans is vital for the European and world economies:



Over 80%
of global trade is
seaborne



About **two-thirds**
of the world's oil and gas
supply is extracted at sea or
transported by sea



Up to 99%
of international data transfers
and communications are done
through submarine cables (over
400 submarine cables extending
over 1.3 million kilometres)

We need to deal with an increasing number of traditional and new threats:



Traditional threats (piracy,
armed robbery,
smuggling, human
trafficking, arms and
narcotics, etc.)



**Hybrid- and
cyber-attacks**
on **critical infrastructure**
(submarine cables,
pipelines, etc.)



**Climate change
and environmental
degradation** (marine
pollution, depletion of fish
stocks, loss of biodiversity)

18 - [EU Goals for Protecting the Oceans](#)

6 strategic objectives



1) Step up activities at sea:

- organising an annual naval exercise at EU level
- reinforcing existing EU naval operations
- developing further coastguard in sea basins around the EU
- expanding the Coordinated Maritime Presences concept to new maritime areas of interest



2) Cooperate with partners by:

- deepening EU-NATO cooperation
- enhancing partnerships with likeminded countries, regional and international organisations
- deploying EU liaison officers to maritime information centres in non-EU countries
- promoting dialogue and best practices through the coast guard function forums



3) Enhance maritime domain situational awareness by:

- strengthening the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) and MARSUR
- reinforcing coastal and off-shore patrol vessel surveillance



4) Manage risks and threats by:

- conducting regular live maritime exercises involving civil and military entities
- monitoring and protecting critical maritime infrastructure and ships from physical and cyber threats
- tackling unexploded ordnance and mines at sea
- developing further awareness and preparedness to tackle threats linked to climate change and environmental degradation



5) Boost capabilities by:

- developing common requirements and concepts for defence technologies in the maritime domain
- stepping up work on projects such as the European Patrol Corvette or improving anti-submarine capabilities



6) Educate and train by:

- boosting hybrid and cyber security qualifications notably on the civilian side
- conducting training and joint exercises open to non-EU partners

19 - [*Strategic Objectives for Protecting the Oceans*](#)

Emerging Security Challenges in the 21st Century



[Global Issues](#)

This page has many buttons and links to explore many of the issues facing our world today.

(Video) [Challenges of the 21st Century](#)

“This video explores the major challenges facing our world today.”

[New and Emerging Threats](#)

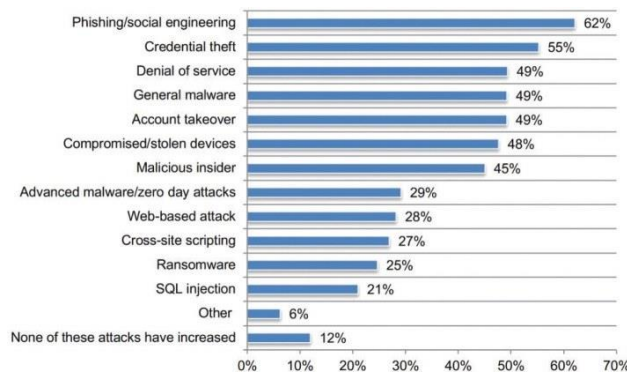
This webpage discusses the new threats of the 21st century and has buttons to explain more in depth about specific issues with AI, the climate crisis, and cybercrimes.

(Video) [Europe Is Facing Its Most Dangerous Security Environment Since WWII](#) (March 2, 2026)

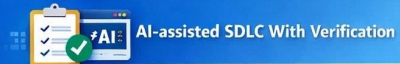
This video short discusses the new challenges that the EU is facing with security and the changes that must be made to combat these changes.

[Global Risks to the EU in 2026: What are the Main Conflict Threats for Europe?](#) (January 20, 2026)

This article discusses a survey of over 500 European security policymakers that were surveyed about what they thought the most pressing security threats facing the European Union were right now, and would be in the next year.



Top New Technology Trends in 2026



A blue graphic for 'MODULE 2' featuring a speaker photo of Travis J. Nelson in a circular frame. The background includes decorative elements like a dotted grid, a chevron, and various circles. The text is white and blue.

MODULE 2

European Union Democracy and Institutions

Lecture Overview

This session provides an overview of the EU's democratic structure, major institutions, decision-making processes, and the challenges of governing a diverse political union.

SPEAKER: TRAVIS J. NELSON

1. Key Terms

1. [European Union \(EU\)](#): “International organization comprising 27 European countries and governing common economic, social, and security policies.”
2. [European Commission](#): “An institution of the European Union (EU) and its constituent entities that makes up the organization’s executive arm.”
3. [European Parliament](#): “Legislative assembly of the European Union.”
4. [Council of the European Union](#): An organization of all ministers from the 27 EU member states to make laws, as well adopt the EU budget, coordinate policies, decide on international negotiations, and develops the EU’s foreign and security policy.
5. [European Council](#): “The European Council brings together EU leaders to set the EU's political agenda. It represents the highest level of political cooperation between EU countries.”
6. [Subsidiarity](#): “The principle that decisions should always be taken at the lowest possible level or closest to where they will have their effect, for example in a local area rather than for a whole country.”
7. [Democratic Legitimacy](#): “Refers to the validity of governance systems based on the principles of representation, accountability, transparency, effectiveness, and deliberation, ensuring that all member states and relevant non-state actors are inclusively represented in decision-making processes.”

Learning Objectives

"I Can Statements":

1. I can identify and explain basic elements of how legislation is made through EU institutions.
2. I can identify and compare similarities and differences between EU and U.S. political institutions.
3. I can explain and evaluate how power is shared between EU member states and EU institutions.
4. I can identify and analyze perspectives on democracy within and across EU member states.
5. I can explain how Brexit impacted the EU and its impact on future EU integration.

How Laws Are Made in the EU



(Lesson Plan) [Educational Toolkit for the European Parliament Role Play Game](#)

"Help players get the most out of their role play experience."

(Infographic) [How EU Laws Are Made](#)

"Explains how laws are proposed and made, the processes of putting those into action, who is involved, and if there are other ways to make law."

Law-Making Process

“On this page, you can find general information regarding the types of EU law, the ‘better regulation’ policy and the different stages through which an EU law is developed.”

About EU Legislation (February 21, 2026)

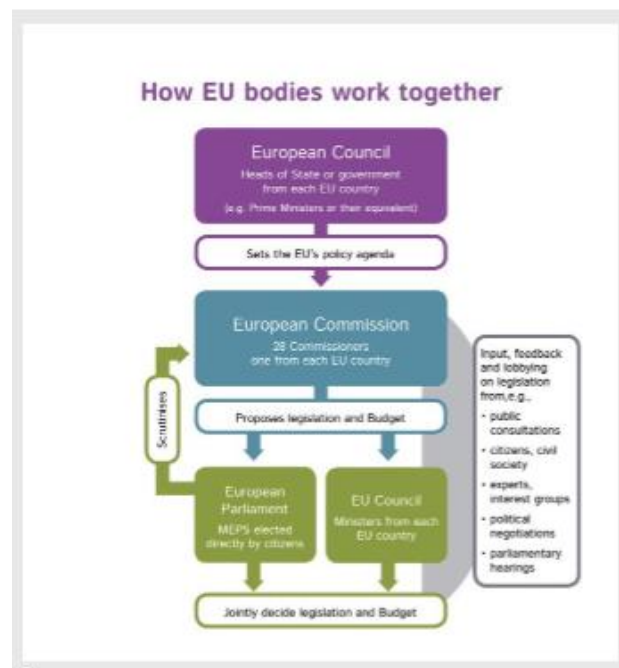
“On this page you will find basic descriptions of how various EU institutions factor into the legislative process and of types of legislation.”

(Video) How Does the EU Pass Laws? (May 24, 2023)

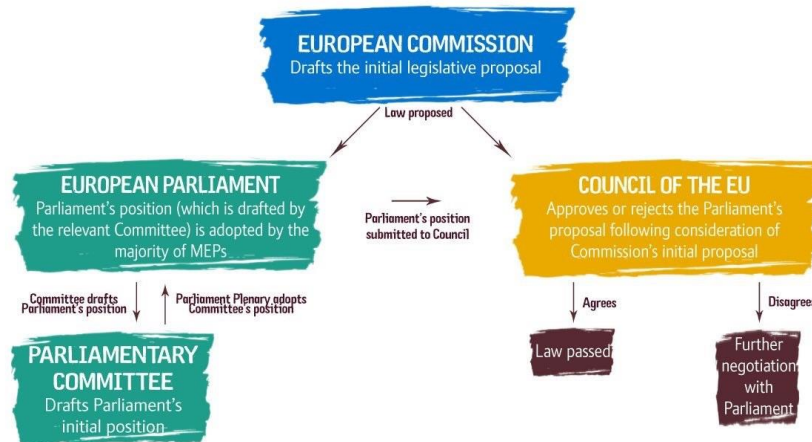
“In this video, we'll break down this complex journey, exploring the exciting world of debates, negotiations, and consensus-building.”

(Video) Law-Making in the EU (July 14, 2016)

“This video discusses the process by which laws are made in the EU and all the checks and balances that go into it.”



How laws are made



23 - [How EU Laws are Made](#)

How it works



"Since there are 24 official languages, any new laws made must be translated into 24 different languages as well!"

<https://www.kids-world-travel-guide.com/eu-facts.html>

Comparison of EU and U.S. Governance Structures



[How Does the EU work?](#)

"You often hear in the news that 'Brussels' has decided this and that. But what does that actually mean? Exactly who or what is 'Brussels'? This Chapter will provide a short overview of the structure of the EU. You will learn about the main EU institutions, what responsibilities they have and what they are allowed to do. You will also learn how you can influence their work."

[European Union – Kids](#)

This page gives a brief overview of the European Union, its structure, and history, all explained in an understandable way for kids

(Video) [Is Europe the Same as the EU?](#) (April 9, 2026)

"Think Europe and the EU are the same thing? Most people do — and the difference matters more than you think. This EU explainer breaks it all down in under 2 minutes."

(Lesson Plan) [Comparing the Structures of Government of the EU and United States](#) (2024)

“Students will be able to understand the basic structures and functions of the European Union (EU) and the United States (US) government. Students will be able to identify similarities and differences between the two governmental systems.”

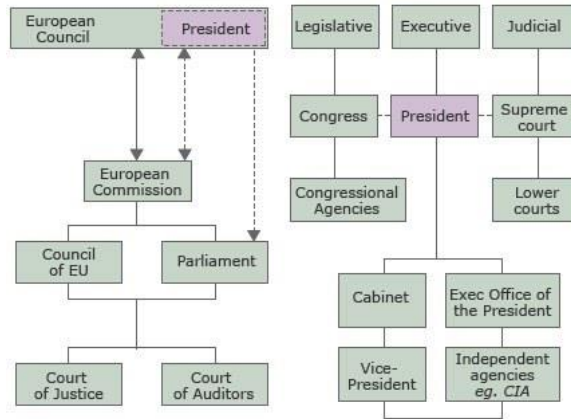
[How Do Europe & The United States Compare?](#) (June 10, 2022)

“In this video I look at a few maps and statistics that allow us to compare The United States with Europe in a few factors!”

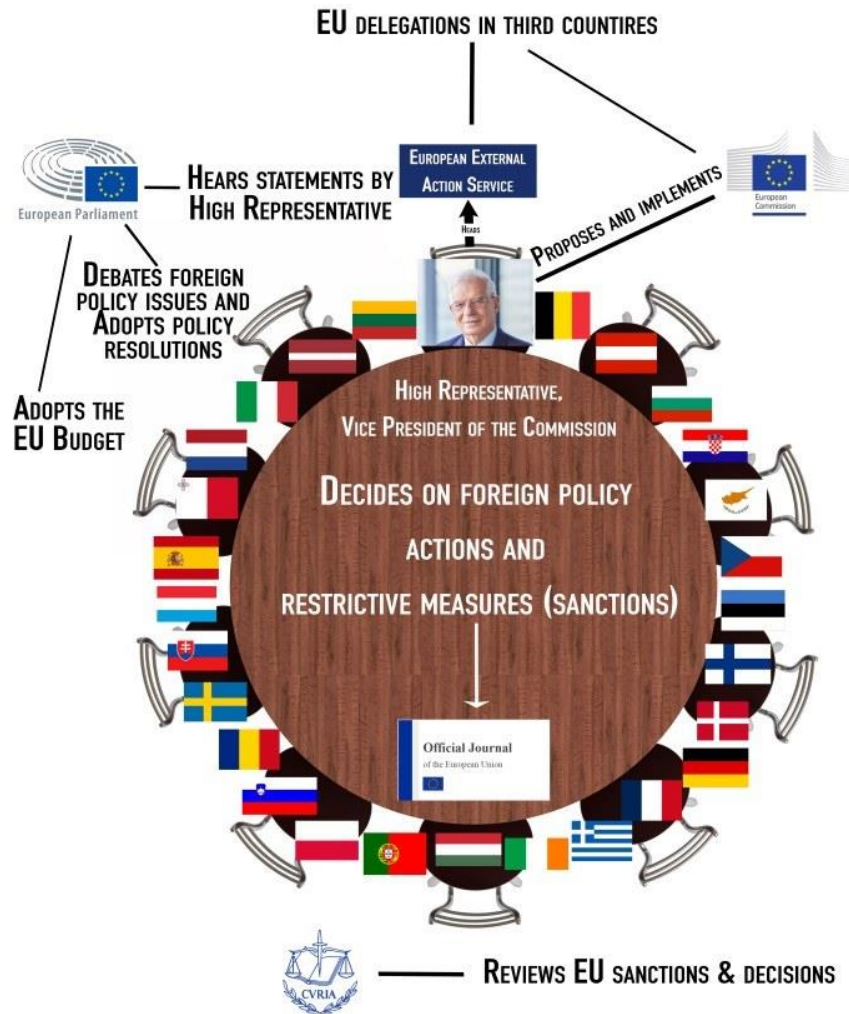
(Video) [How Does the EU Work? \(and why is it so complex\)?](#) (May 17, 2019)

“The EU is complex. Even most Europeans struggle to understand which EU institution does what, who's in charge and how EU laws get passed. DW Reporter Anne-Sophie Brändlin breaks down everything you need to know about how the EU works and why it's so complicated. Because of course, there's a reason for that.”

	EU	US
AGRICULTURAL POLICY	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: US Department of Agriculture
CULTURE & TOURISM	POWER: STATE Institutions: State institutions vary across Member States	POWER: SHARED Institutions: Department of State and Department of Commerce (federal) and equivalent state agencies
DEFENCE POLICY	POWER: STATE Institutions: Ministry of Defence or equivalent	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security
EDUCATION POLICY	POWER: STATE Institutions: Ministry of Education or equivalent	POWER: SHARED Institutions: US Department of Education (federal) and equivalent state agencies
ENERGY POLICY	POWER: SHARED Institutions: European Commission (federal level), state institutions vary across Member States	POWER: SHARED Institutions: US Department of Energy (federal) and equivalent state agencies
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY	POWER: SHARED Institutions: European Commission, European Parliament, and more (federal level), state institutions vary across Member States	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: Environmental Protection Agency
FISCAL POLICY	POWER: STATE Institutions: Independent fiscal institutions vary across Member States	POWER: SHARED Institutions: President and Congress (federal) and state Department(s) of Revenue
FOREIGN POLICY	POWER: STATE Institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs or equivalent	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: US Department of State
HEALTH POLICY	POWER: STATE Institutions: Ministry of Health or equivalent	POWER: SHARED Institutions: Department of Health and Human Services (federal) and equivalent state agencies
MONETARY POLICY	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: European Commission, European Parliament, and more	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: Federal Reserve
SOCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY	POWER: STATE Institutions: Employment, Social Policy, Health, and Consumer Affairs Council (federal), state institutions vary across Member States	POWER: SHARED Institutions: Department of Labour, Social Security Administration, and more (federal), and equivalent state agencies
TAXATION	POWER: SHARED Institutions: State institutions vary across Member States	POWER: SHARED Institutions: Department of the Treasury (federal) and state Department(s) of Revenue
TRADE POLICY	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: European Commission, European Parliament, and more	POWER: FEDERAL Institutions: Department of Commerce

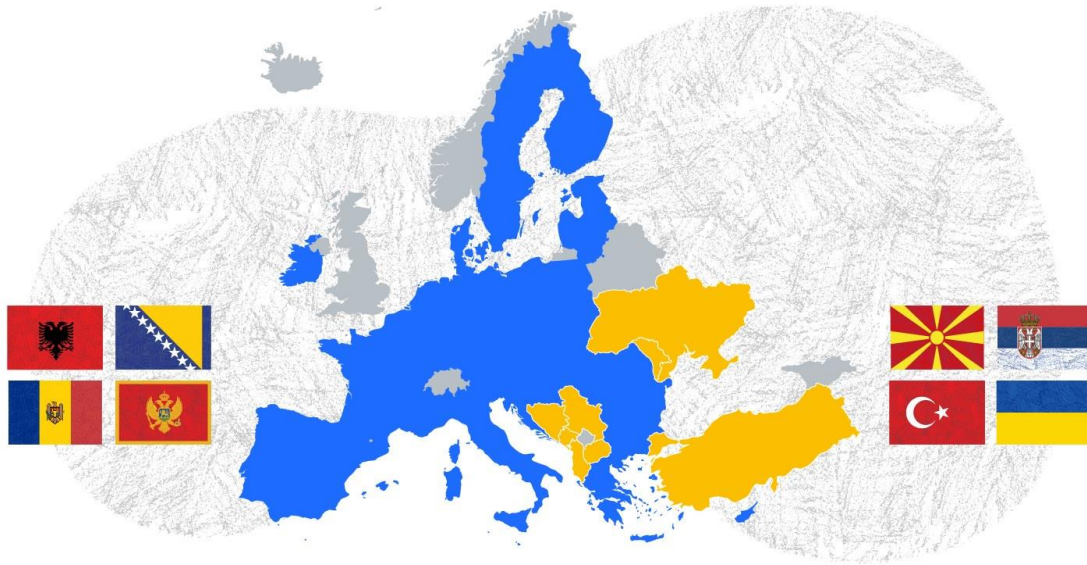


26 - [Comparing the EU and US Positions and Key Roles](#)



27 - [EU Delegations in a Nutshell](#)

Expansion and Enlargement of the EU



(Fact Sheet) [The Enlargement of the European Union](#)

"This fact sheet explains the history, procedure and future perspectives of the EU's enlargement policy."

[Steps Towards Joining – Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood](#)

This article discusses the steps towards joining the EU, membership negotiations, closing negotiations, and the unique process of the Western Balkan states joining the EU.

[EU Enlargement](#)

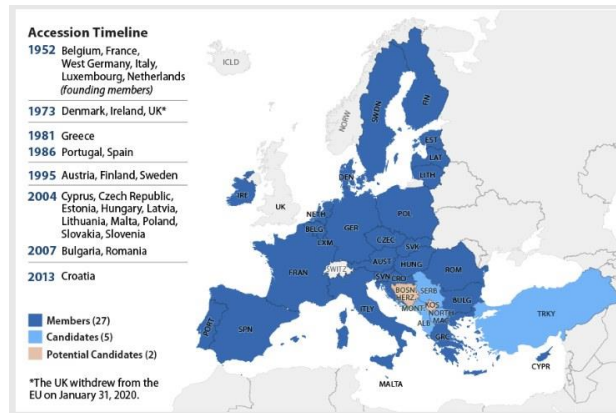
This source from the EU covers what enlargement is, benefits of joining both the countries and the EU, and how joining the EU works practically.

[History of Enlargement: From 6 to 27 Countries](#)

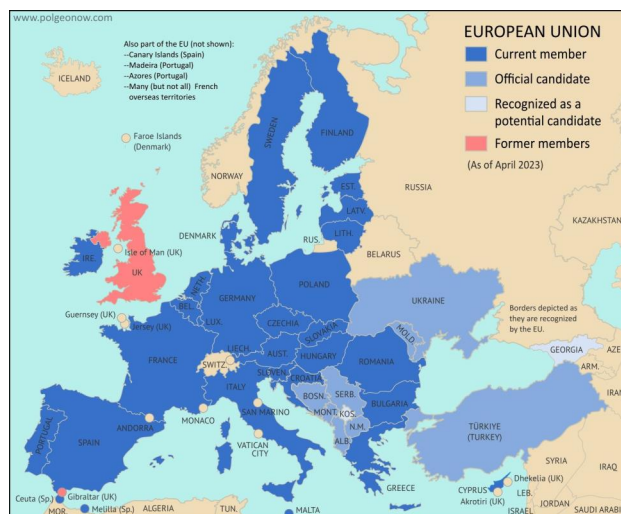
This page explains the process of how the EU grew and gained countries, and has a timeline for easy understanding

(Video) [What is the EUROPEAN UNION?](#) (February 10, 2025)

"Today, in Happy Learning, we'll explain what the European Union is, how it works, and why it is so important worldwide. Discover how 27 countries work together to improve people's lives."



28 - Map of the Timeline of the Enlargement of the EU



29 - Map of Current EU Members, Official Candidates, Potential Candidates, and Former Members

DID YOU KNOW?

"The largest single day of expansion happened on May 1, 2004 when 10 countries - Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia - joined the EU at once!"

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/panama/key-milestones-in-eu-history_en?s=249

Supranational vs. National Authority



Areas of EU Action

“The European Union can only act in those areas where its member countries have authorized it to do so, via the EU treaties. The treaties specify who can pass laws in what areas: the EU, national governments or both.”

How Does the EU Work?

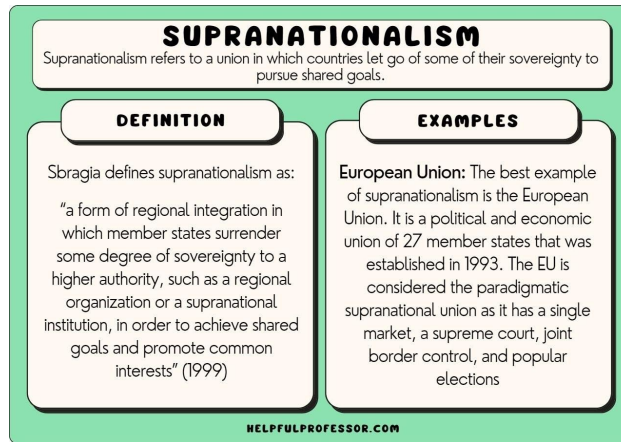
“Everything that the EU does is based on treaties that contain the rules for how the EU works. All EU countries have agreed voluntarily and democratically to these treaties.”

How Does the European Union Work? (March 11, 2022)

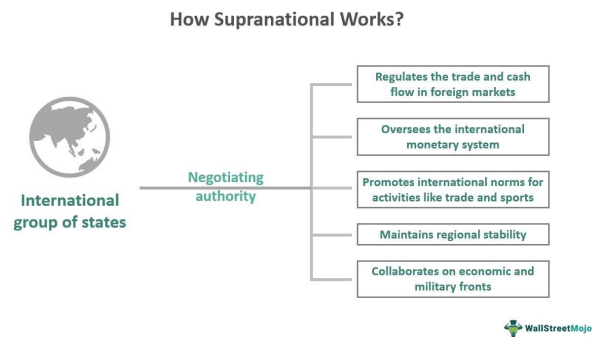
“The European Union has navigated a thicket of external and internal crises in recent years, including mass migration and Brexit. What are the union’s core institutions, and what roles do they play?”

(Video) The Competencies of the European Union (June 29, 2020)

“What is it the European Union does exactly? In what areas does it have the capacity to enact legislation? Two students answer these questions on their YouTube channel “Voices of Europe”. This video clearly explains the EU’s competencies by means of drawings.”



30 - Supranationalism Definition



31 - How Supranational Authority Works

Democratic Representation within the EU



(Lesson Plan) [Democracy Toolkit: Your Guide to Making a Difference!](#)

"The Democracy Toolkit supports teaching about civic participation and helps children to engage with democratic principles through practical, hands-on experiences. It can be used in classrooms, individually or in groups."

[How European Elections Work](#)

This page explains the process of how elections work in Europe to elect a parliament.

[EU Actions to Protect Democracy](#)

"The Commission has made the protection of democracy its priority. It has put forward strategies and legislation that protect free and fair elections, counter foreign interference, protect the freedom and pluralism of the media, as well as the safety of journalists. At the same time, it has strengthened opportunities for citizens to engage actively in democratic life, fostering participation and inclusion in decision-making."

[Youth and Democracy](#)

"In the context of the European elections on 6-9 June 2024 and as a follow-up to the European Year of Youth 2022, a survey on Youth and Democracy has been conducted targeting young people, aged 15-30."

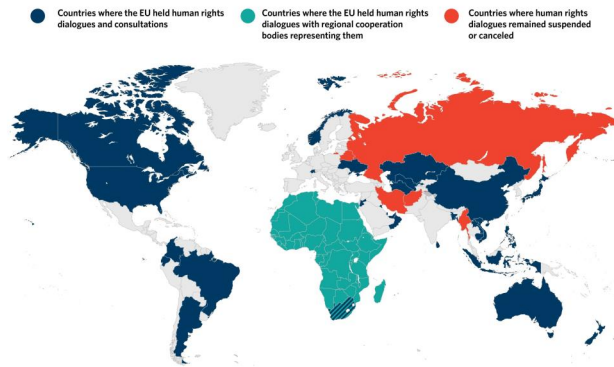
(Video) [Is The EU Democratic? Representation in the European Parliament](#) (December 19, 2023)

"In this series from the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA), Hugh Evans explores the ways democracy weaves its way in and out of the EU system."

(Video Playlist) [Teach Parliament](#) (October 3, 2014)

"A teaching resource for primary students, explaining what Parliament is and how it works. This animation is an ideal starting point for introducing Parliament to primary students."

Figure 2. EU Human Rights Dialogues and Consultations, 2024

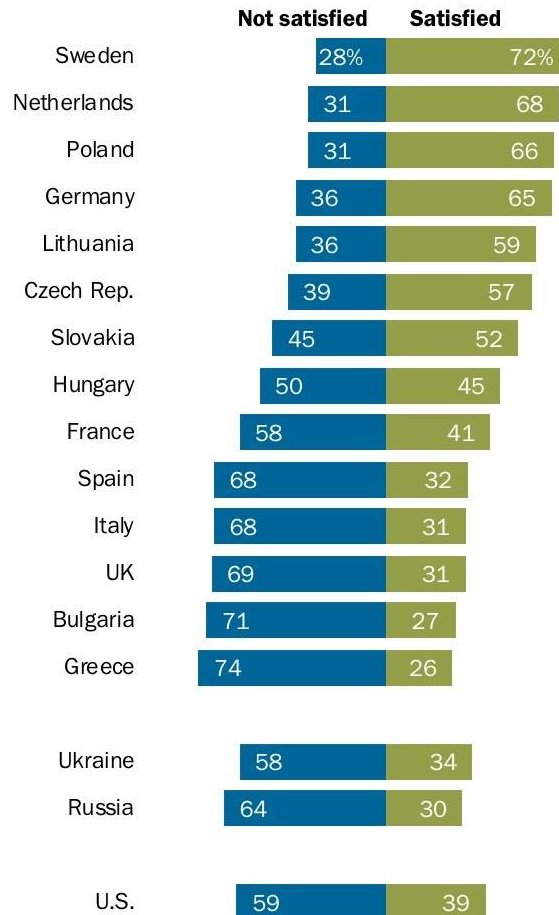


Source: An overview table shared by the European External Action Service (EEAS) with the Human Rights and Democracy Network on July 24, 2024, and information provided via the EEAS Newsroom.

Note: This map is illustrative; boundaries, names, and designations used do not represent or imply any opinion on the part of Carnegie or the authors. Dotted lines represent approximate disputed boundaries and the gray areas represent contested territory between China, India, and Pakistan. The final status has not yet been agreed upon.

Dissatisfaction with democracy is common in Europe

% who say they are ___ with the way democracy is working in their country



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q5.

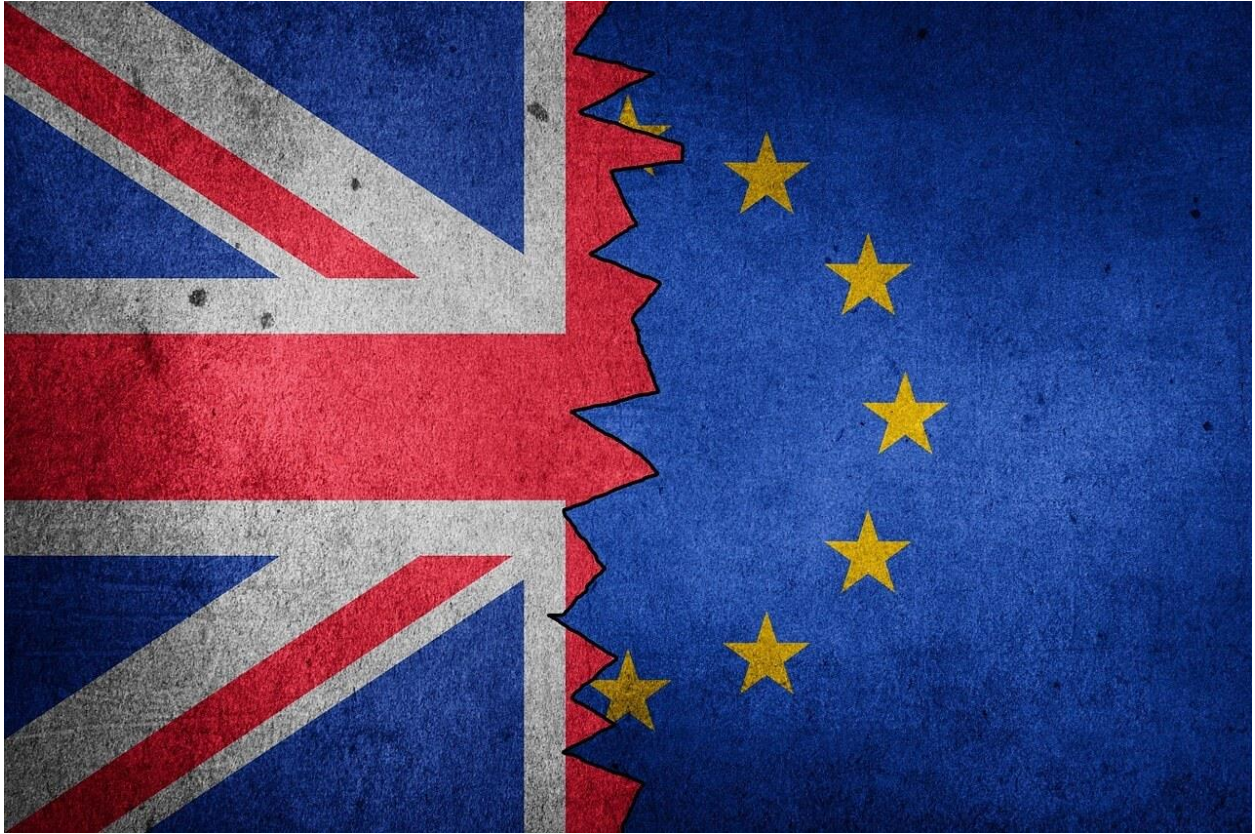
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

33 - [Dissatisfaction with Democracy in Europe](#)



34 - [Representation Score of Democracy Across Europe](#)

Brexit and Institutional Change



[The Brexit Decade – Britain, Europe and the Question of Political Identity](#) (June 18, 2026)

“What is the enduring legacy of the UK’s decision to leave the European Union? Vera Spyarakou writes that one of the great ironies of Brexit is that it has underlined Britain and Europe’s interdependence.”

(YouTube Short) [How Has Brexit Changed Britain’s Economy?](#) (June 23, 2026)

“How has Brexit changed Britain? Ten years and six prime ministers after Britain voted to leave the European Union, The Economist crunches the numbers on its economic impact.”

[Brexit: The Student Guide](#) (March 14, 2025)

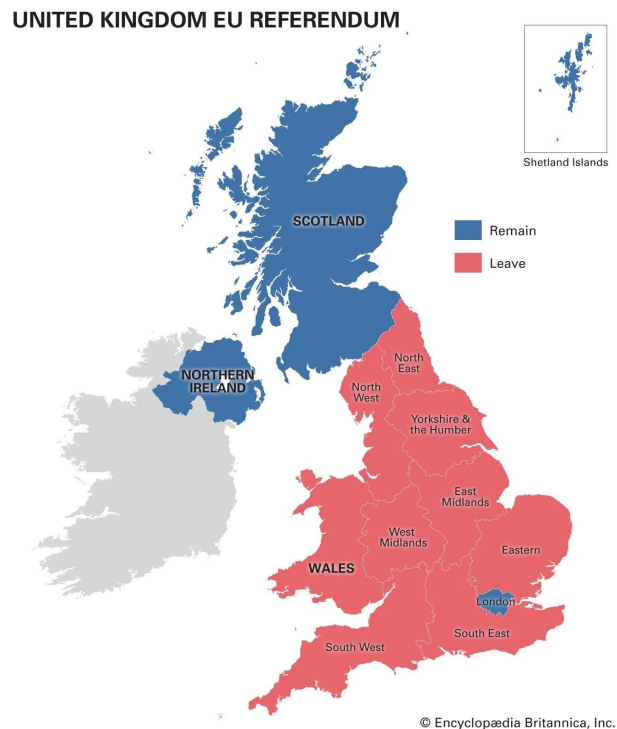
“If you’ve ever found yourself wondering what on earth a Brexit is or been left frustrated by news articles that assume an existing level of knowledge on the subject, then this is the post for you! We’ve put together the ultimate students’ guide to Brexit, covering everything from why it’s taken so long, to how it could affect students in the coming years.”

(Video) [Brexit Explained](#) (December 20, 2019)

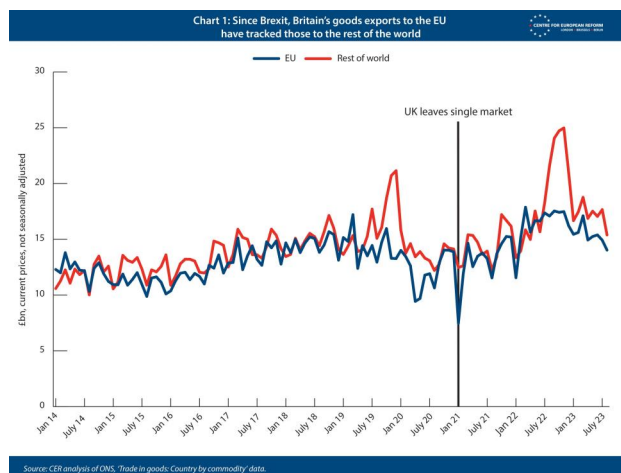
“In June 2016 the British people took a referendum, on staying or leaving the EU. A slim majority (51,9% to 49,1%) voted for the exit. More than three years later the EU and the United Kingdom were not able to agree on a deal for the exit. You want to know why that is and the actors are? Then check out this video clip.”

(Video) [Brexit Explained](#) (July 25, 2017)

“On June 23rd, 2016, an entire country headed into the unknown when 17.4 million people in the United Kingdom voted to become the first country to leave the European Union. This is the story of Brexit.”



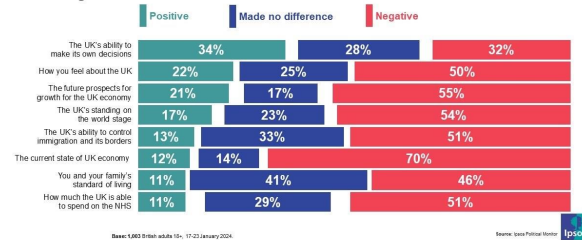
35 - [The Impact of Brexit](#)



36 - Economic Impact of Brexit

The impact of Brexit

In your opinion, compared to what would have happened if the UK stayed in the EU, has leaving the European Union had a positive or negative impact, or not made much difference, on the following?



37 - Survey of Britain's of Their Opinion on Brexit

DID YOU KNOW?

"The UK is the first and only sovereign member to ever leave the EU!"

<https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/councileu/items/663312/en>

Current Challenges Facing European Integration



[European Integration – An Overview](#)

This page gives an overview of what European Integration is and how it affects the EU.

[The Future of European Integration: A Threshold Moment of Hope](#)

This article discusses the “future of Europe.”

(Video) [Unpacking Europe: The Path to EU Enlargement](#) *(June 1, 2026)*

"On this week's Unpacking Europe podcast Zselyke Csaky sat down with Milan Nic a senior research fellow at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) to discuss the latest on EU enlargement."

[EU Challenges and Priorities](#) *(November, 2025)*

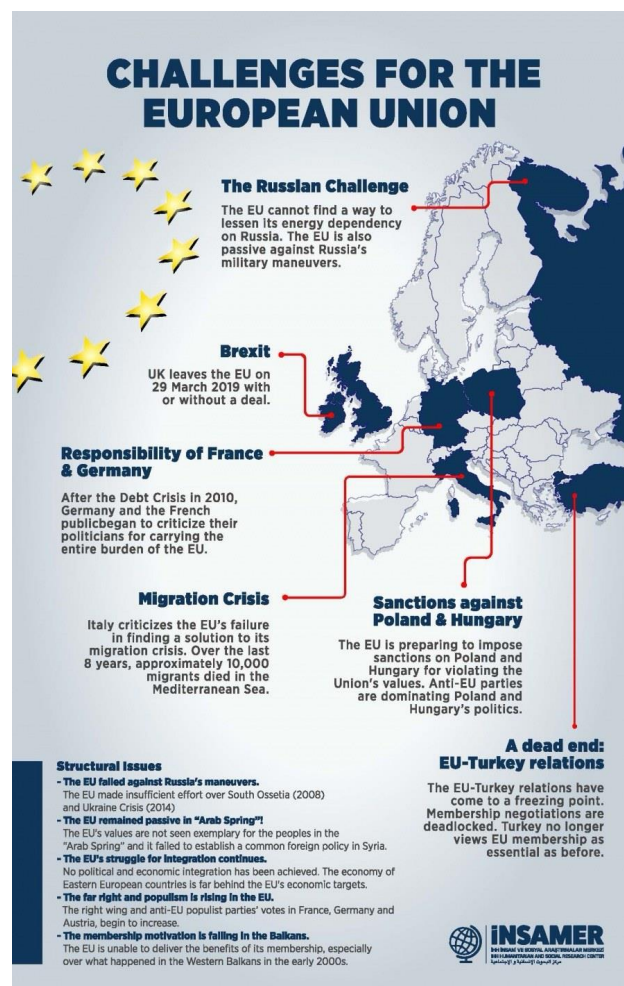
This page provides data from surveys of EU citizens about their thoughts on the current challenges and priorities of the EU.

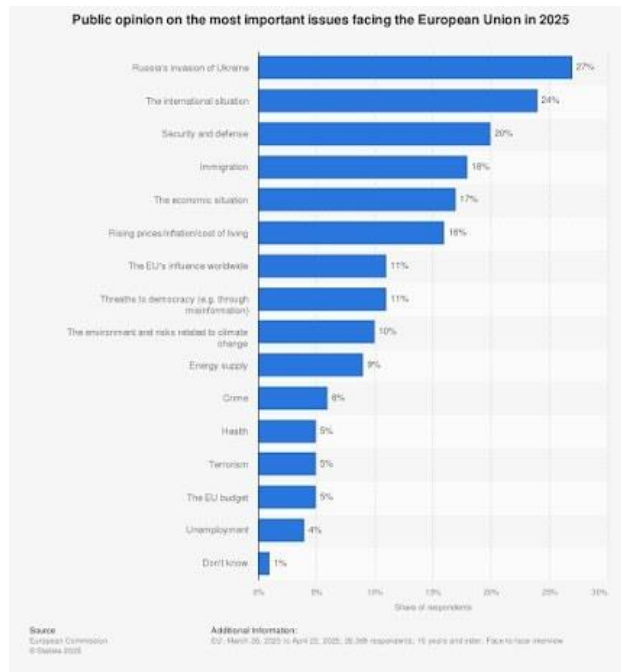
[Europe's Integration Imperative](#) *(June, 2025)*

“Europe faces the most daunting set of challenges since the Cold War. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the first major war of aggression on European soil since 1945, has forced a fundamental questioning of old certainties. Geopolitical ructions have shaken supply chains, disrupted trade, and exposed serious energy-security vulnerabilities. The transatlantic alliance, which has provided security for the past 80 years, is under pressure. Europe is committed to increasing defense spending to fend off foreign foes but must also protect the public services and welfare systems that underpin its social contract.”

(Video) [European Integration Explained](#) (November 14, 2016)

“Sebastian Mallaby, Paul A. Volcker senior fellow for international economics at the Council on Foreign Relations, describes the history, context, and current challenges of European integration for CFR Education’s “Economic Crisis in Europe” case study.”





39 - *Most Important Issues Facing the European Union in 2025*

»»»

MODULE 3

The EU Test: Security, Democracy, and Institutional Resilience

Lecture Overview

This session examines how democratic societies and institutions respond to crises, political polarization, authoritarian pressures, conflict, and societal disruption. Participants will explore resilience as a democratic principle.

SPEAKER: ILEANA MARIN



Key Terms

1. **Institutional Resilience**: “The degree to which human agency – as expressed in formal measures and informal practices – serves to enhance a community's resilience capacity and ability to remain functional when exposed to hazard.”

2. [Democratic Backsliding](#): “State-led debilitation or elimination of any of the political institutions that sustain an existing democracy.”
3. [Authoritarianism](#): “In politics and government, the blind submission to authority and the repression of individual freedom of thought and action.”
4. [Political Polarization](#): “The growing ideological divide between political groups, where individuals increasingly align with extreme positions rather than moderate viewpoints.”
5. [Collective Memory](#): “The process through which groups consolidate individual memories into a shared narrative, shaping their identity and collective experience.”
6. [Civil Society](#): “Dense network of groups, communities, networks, and ties that stand between the individual and the modern state.”

Learning Objectives

"I Can Statements":

1. I can evaluate and explain how the EU uses its democratic institutions when adapting to political, economic, and social challenges.
2. I can identify and analyze how the EU preserves democratic values, public trust, and the rule of law.
3. I can explain how modern European history has shaped the formation of the EU (values, institutions, and identity).
4. I can evaluate and explain how the EU and EU member states have responded to internal and external conflicts.
5. I can explain how former communist states in Europe have integrated and adapted to democratic institutions and values in the EU.
6. I can identify and analyze opportunities for civic engagement within and across EU member states.

Democratic Resilience During Crises



(Video) [Democratic Resilience in an Age of Crisis](#)

This video discusses the current state of the globe, and the forms of government that are involved in that, and how countries can continue to uphold democracy in times of crisis.

[There is No Europe Without Citizens](#)

“Faced with an uncertain health, economic, social and climatic context, new citizen concerns and aspirations are emerging in our European cities and metropolitan areas. These cities have considerable resources, positive forces in motion, which are being mobilized and innovated every day to meet the challenges of today and to prepare for the tomorrow of the generations to come. Our institutions, civil society and inhabitants are developing numerous initiatives, taking on new projects and experimenting with new forms of participation, expression and cooperation.”

(Podcast) [European Democracy in Decline? Solutions to a Decade of Civic Space Backtracking](#) (June 5, 2026)

"Civic space is essential for democracy, economic growth and social progress. But across Europe, freedoms of assembly, expression and participation have steadily declined over the past decade."

[European Democracy Shield and EU Strategy for Civil Society Pave the Way for Stronger and More Resilient Democracies](#) (November 11, 2025)

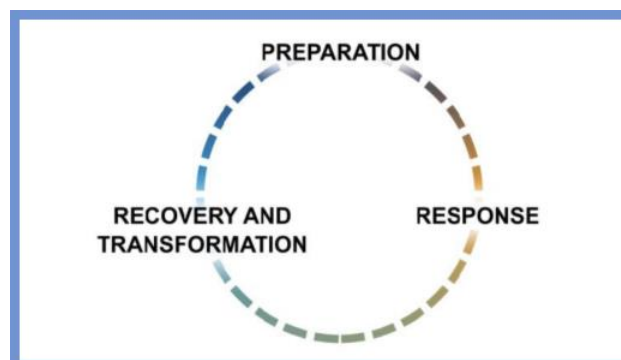
"The Commission has presented today the European Democracy Shield, setting out a series of concrete measures to empower, protect, and promote strong and resilient democracies across the EU. An open civic space is at the core of our democracies, and this is why the Commission has also put forward an EU Strategy for Civil Society, for stronger engagement, protection and support to civil society organizations who play essential roles in our societies."

[Democracy Notes Explainer: What is Democratic Resilience?](#) (October 2, 2025)

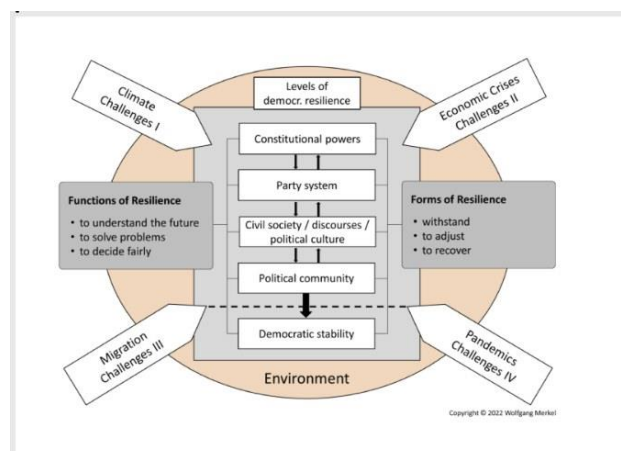
This article explains what democratic resilience is, the criticisms of the concept, and what can be done to support it.

(Video) [A Citizen's Guide to Preserving Democracy](#) (January 2, 2024)

"Interviews and real-life examples explore how American's are strengthening democracy."



40 - ["Three Part Democratic Resilience Cycle"](#)



Lessons from European Responses to War and Conflict



[The Effects of World War II on Economic and health Outcomes Across Europe](#)

“We investigate long-run effects of World War II on socio-economic status and health of older individuals in Europe. We analyze data from SHARELIFE, a retrospective survey conducted as part of SHARE in Europe in 2009. SHARELIFE provides detailed data on events in childhood during and after the war for over 20,000 individuals in 13 European countries. We construct several measures of war exposure—experience of dispossession, persecution, combat in local areas, and hunger periods. Exposure to war and more importantly to individual-level shocks caused by the war significantly predicts economic and health outcomes at older ages.”

[The Outcome of the Crimean War – Historic UK](#)

This article talks about the Crimean War and the lessons that the UK learned from it.

[Combat Lessons: What Europeans Should Learn from Ukraine](#) (June 10, 2026)

“Buying a new kit is easy. The real challenge for European militaries is to rethink how they organize themselves—and how they plan to fight.”

[Europe's Disjointed Response to the War with Iran \(March 6, 2026\)](#)

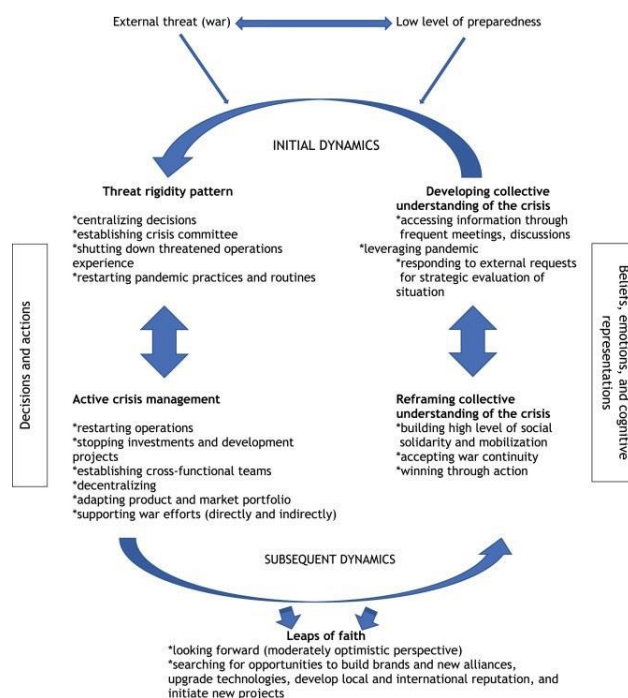
"The United States launched a major military operation with little to no consultation with its transatlantic allies. Taken together, European leaders' responses to the conflict show they remain deeply divided on questions of military intervention and the use of force."

[Lessons From the Ukraine Conflict: Modern Warfare in the Age of Autonomy, Information, and Resilience \(May 2, 2025\)](#)

"By examining the practical applications and lessons learned from this ongoing conflict, this paper provides military planners, defense policymakers, and security professionals with actionable insights for adapting force structures, doctrines, and capabilities to meet the challenges of future warfare."

(Lesson Plan) [Lesson Plan: Global Conflicts \(January 2, 2025\)](#)

"In this lesson, students will investigate the causes and consequences of twentieth-century global conflicts. Then, they'll use what they've learned to assess the impact of these conflicts on our world today."



The Legacy of Communism in Eastern Europe



[Communism – Kids](#)

This page is an overview of what communism is, who Karl Marx was, and the governments that ran under communism – all explained in a kid friendly way.

(Podcast) [Goodbye Eastern Europe: A Conversation with Author Jacob Mikanowski](#) (October 12, 2024)

"Jacob Mikanowski, a historian and author of 'Goodbye, Eastern Europe,' discusses the economic, political, and nostalgic transformations in Eastern Europe post-communism. The conversation explores themes of economic disruption, nostalgia for communist stability, and the evolving role of surveillance from the communist era to the present."

(Video) [The Fall of Communism: Crash Course European History #47](#) (July 16, 2020)

"The aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact had a huge impact on the countries of Eastern Europe. As the former satellite states turned away from communism and Soviet influence, some of them shifted toward democracy in an orderly way, and some descended into violence and bloodshed and ethnic recrimination. In many ways, this collapse is still playing out today. In this video you'll learn how countries like Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland and many others moved into the post-Soviet world."

[Public Opinion in Europe 30 Years After the Fall of Communism](#) (October 15, 2019)

"Thirty years ago, a wave of optimism swept across Europe as walls and regimes fell, and long-oppressed publics embraced open societies, open markets and a more united Europe. Three decades later, a new Pew Research Center survey finds that few people in the former Eastern

Bloc regret the monumental changes of 1989-1991. Yet, neither are they entirely content with their current political or economic circumstances.”

[Tracing Communism’s Reach, 100 Years After the Russian Revolution](#) (October 13, 2017)

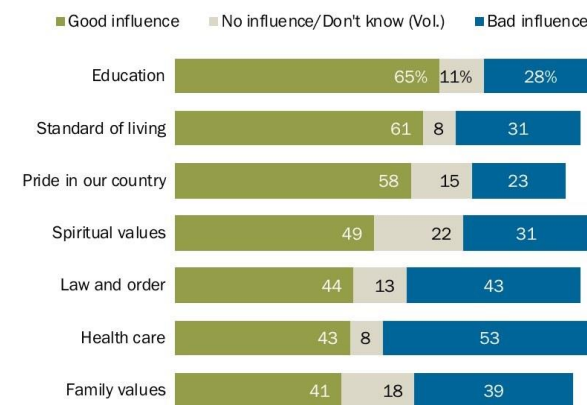
“Politics professor Joshua Tucker’s research suggests that the legacy of the Soviet Union is very much alive today.”

[1989 Twenty Years On: The End of Communism and the Fate of Eastern Europe](#) (December, 2009)

This article looks at the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the challenges that the area faces following the end of communism.

Most in Central, Eastern Europe say post-communist era has been good for education, living standards and national pride

% who say that changes since 1989/1991 have had a ___ on ...

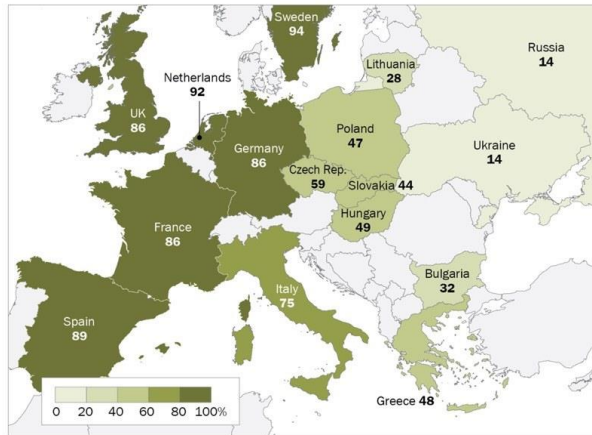


Note: Percentages are nine-country medians based on Germany, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Russia and Ukraine.
Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q21a-g.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Homosexuality more accepted in Western Europe

% who say homosexuality should be accepted by society



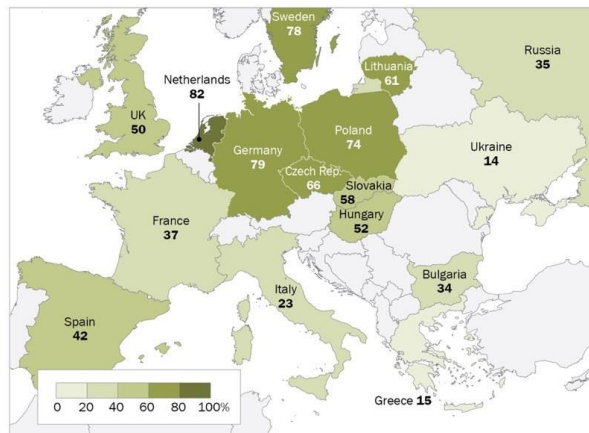
Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey, Q31.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

44 - [Homosexuality More Accepted in Europe Post Communism](#)

More positive views about the current economic situation in northern European nations

% who say the economic situation in their country is good



Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey, Q3.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

45 - [More Positive Outlook of the Economy Following Communism](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

"The game Tetris was invented during the communist period in the Soviet Union!"

https://www.comradegallery.com/journal/tetris-the-game-that-challenged-soviet-control-and-conquered-the-world?srsId=AfmBOookHNr035o_cDozjk155Bevb9YE5u5ietlyUidA29mb8ZVOhcmQ

Culture, Identity, and Democracy





46 - [Illustration of European Identity](#)

(Podcast) [The EU Backoffice](#) (October 14, 2025)

"The EU Backoffice, our new podcast series produced in cooperation with [the European Network of Cultural Centres](#), unravels how the EU cultural policy process really works, bringing you beyond the headlines and into the corridors where decisions are taken."

[Culture Evolution, Democracy, and Freedom](#) (March, 2019)

"Alison Baily reviews Ronald Inglehart's book on 'cultural evolution'. She considers the state of democracy in the world today and the impact that cultural change is playing in its emergence and survival."

[Cultural Democracy, Cultural Equity, and Cultural Policy: Perspectives from the UK and USA](#) (June 26, 2023)

"This article offers an exploratory discussion of two cultural policy concepts and traditions: cultural democracy in the UK and cultural equity in the US. We explore what the concepts share, how they have been shaped by their cultural policy traditions, and how they yield value for cultural policy makers, scholars, and activists."

(Video) [Are 'Identity Politics' Really a Threat to Democracy?](#) (November 30, 2018)

"In a special interview, we ask Francis Fukuyama, whose latest book is titled Identity: the Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment, if identity politics are really damaging democracy."

DID YOU KNOW?

"The EU has 24 official languages, and over half of all EU citizens are fluent in more than one language!"

https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/languages_en

Media and Public Trust



[How Does the Media Shape Public Perceptions of the EU?](#)

This page shares how the media shapes the public perception of people in the EU, along with analyzing data to support the findings.

[National Governments of EU Institutions: Who do European Citizens Trust the Most?](#) *(February 17, 2026)*

“A new survey of 27,000 people living across the bloc reveals profound disparities in levels of trust in local, national and EU institutions.”

[How Trust in Information from News Outlets and Social Media Sites Has Changed Over Time](#) *(October 29, 2025)*

“Americans’ trust in information from national and local news organizations has declined after a slight increase earlier this year, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. The decline has occurred in both major political parties and across all age groups.”

[Eurobarometer Shows Record High Trust in the EU, and Strong Support for the Euro and a Common Defense and Security Policy](#) *(May 27, 2025)*

“The latest Eurobarometer survey released today reveals the highest level of trust in the European Union in 18 years and the highest-ever support for the euro. In the current geopolitical context, Europeans would also like to see a stronger and more assertive EU through a common defense and security policy, while peace remains the value that best represents the EU.”

[Social Media Effects on Public Trust in the European Union](#) *(August 3, 2023)*

“This paper scrutinizes the effect of social media use on institutional trust in the European Union (EU) among European citizens.”

WHICH MEDIA DO EUROPEAN CITIZENS TRUST MOST?

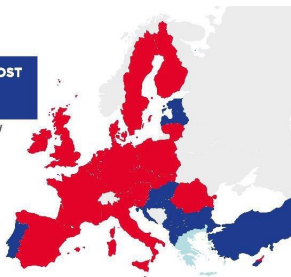


RADIO BY FAR THE MOST TRUSTED MEDIUM ACROSS EUROPE

33 countries surveyed in total

20 of 33
trust **RADIO** most

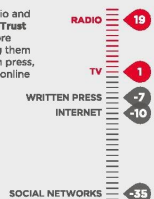
13 of 33
trust **TV** most



*In Greece, Internet is the most trusted medium
*In Cyprus, radio and TV are equally most trusted

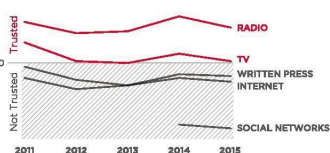
BROADCAST MEDIA LEADS THE WAY FOR CITIZENS' TRUST

At EU level, radio and TV top the **Net Trust Index***, with more citizens trusting them than the written press, the Internet, or online social networks



RADIO AND TV REMAIN MOST TRUSTED SOURCES OVER TIME

At EU level broadcast media have maintained positive **Net Trust*** scores over the past 5 years



TRUST IN RADIO AND TV HIGHEST IN NORDICS

The **Net Trust Index*** both for radio and TV is highest in the Nordics and Estonia



TOP RADIO

Sweden	74
Finland	66
Denmark	57
Estonia	46



TOP TV

Finland	57
Sweden	54
Denmark	49
Estonia	46

EBU

OPERATING EUROVISION AND EURORADIO



Download the full report:
www.ebu.ch/publications

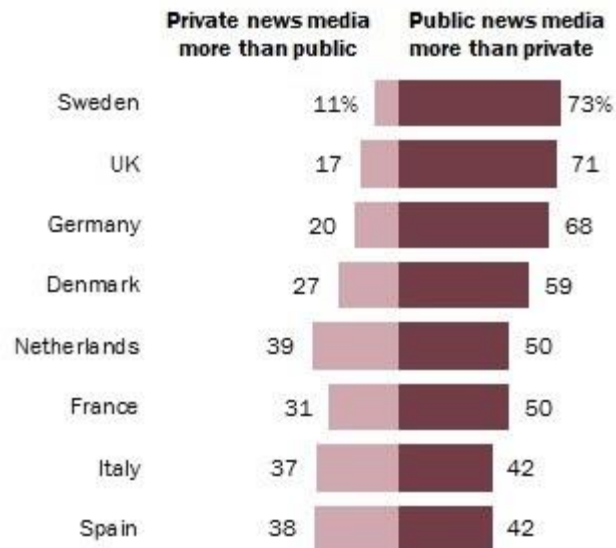
EBU Media Intelligence Service 2016

EBU based on Eurobarometer 84

*The **Net Trust Index** is defined as the difference of 'tend to trust' and 'tend not to trust' answers in the Eurobarometer survey.

Trust in public news media higher than trust in private media in eight Western European countries

% of adults in each country who trust ...



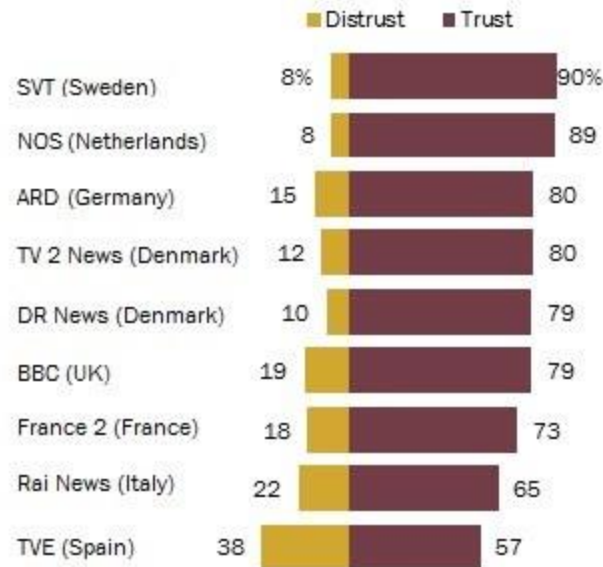
Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

"In Western Europe, Public Attitudes Toward News Media More Divided by Populist Views Than Left-Right Ideology"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Majorities in Western Europe more likely to trust public news organizations than distrust them

% of adults in each country who generally trust or distrust each news outlet



Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

"In Western Europe, Public Attitudes Toward News Media More Divided by Populist Views Than Left-Right Ideology"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Human Rights Protections in Europe



(Podcast) [Fundamentally Right Podcast](#)

"Your rights matter! The Fundamentally Right podcast is a thought-provoking series. It looks at the human rights at the heart of European society. The personal stories of people working at the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights let you know what is behind these rights. And how we can make them a reality for all. Earshot Strategies produced the series for the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights."

[Human Rights and Democracy](#)

This article discusses the work that the EU is doing to promote and support human rights.

[EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#)

"This section of the website encompasses Charterpedia, an online tool which provides easy-to-access information about the Charter and its provisions. For each Charter Article, it includes the official explanations of the Charter Articles, related European and national case law, and related provisions in national constitutional law as well as in international law."

[Your Fundamental Rights in the EU](#)

This page explains the fundamental and basic rights that all EU members are entitled to under law.

(Video) [The European Convention on Human Rights – How Does It Work?](#) (April 24, 2023)

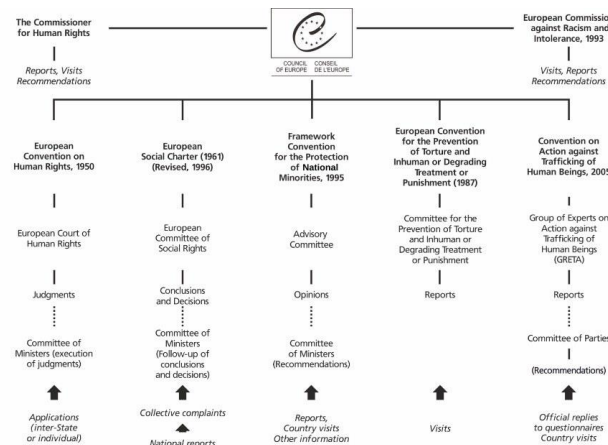
This video discusses the process of the European Convention on Human Rights and how it works.

(Video) [The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union](#) (March 1, 2021)

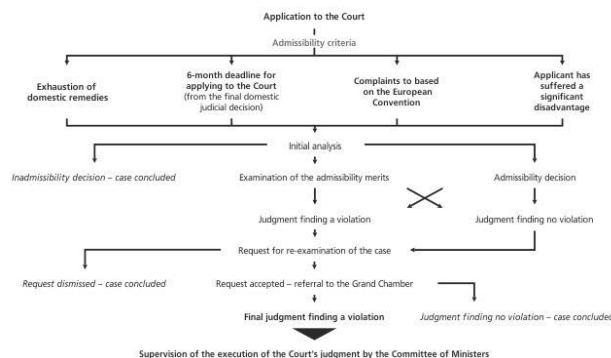
“What is the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union? This video explains the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU in words that are easy to understand.”

(Video) [Human Rights Explained in A Beautiful Two-Minute Animation](#) (October 14, 2015)

“This beautiful animation will explain why we have human rights (funded by the Legal Education Foundation).”



50 - ["Main human rights instruments and implementation mechanisms of the Council of Europe"](#)



51 - [Legal Protection of Human Rights](#)

Resilience and Recovery Following Major Disruptions



[A Recovery Plan for Europe](#)

“In the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, the EU has set out an unprecedented recovery plan, Next Generation EU, to kickstart the European economy and support the green and digital transitions, making Europe more resilient and fit for future challenges.”

[European Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)

This article explains the basic of what the European Recovery and Resilience Facility is.

[Recovery and Resilience Facility Timeline](#)

This page gives a timeline of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, and how it came into effect.

[How the EU Responds to Crises and Builds Resilience](#)

“The EU is working on various fronts to improve its ability to respond to crises and to enhance its resilience to future challenges.”

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE FACILITY

Financial support to public investments and reforms



#EUEconomyExplained #StrongerTogether



52 - [Financial Support from Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE FACILITY

Twin Transitions: Green and Digital

Each recovery and resilience plan will have to include

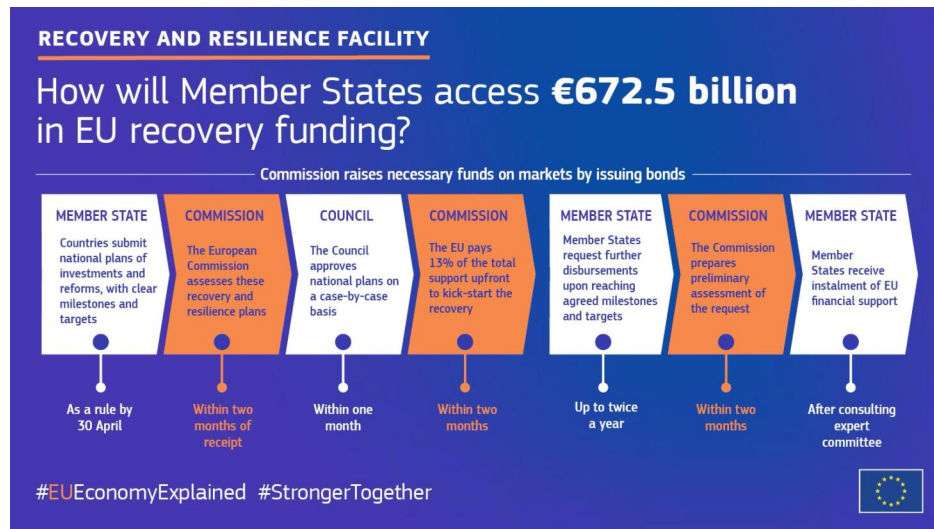


The Commission will assess national plans against these targets.

#EUEconomyExplained #StrongerTogether



53 - [Green and Digital Improvements from the Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)



54 - [How will Member States Access Funds?](#)

MODULE 4

Making European Citizens: Civic Engagement Practices in the European Union

Lecture Overview

This presentation investigates how civic participation, civil society organizations, and public engagement initiatives contribute to democratic citizenship and strengthen the European project.

SPEAKER: SABINE LANG

Key Terms

1. [Civic Engagement](#): “Individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern.”
2. [Civil Society](#): “Dense network of groups, communities, networks, and ties that stand between the individual and the modern state.”

3. [Democratic Participation](#): The active and purposeful participation of citizens in democratic processes, such as voting.
4. [Public Sphere](#): "Category of creative works that are unprotected by intellectual property law."
5. [European Citizenship](#): "European citizenship is a legal status, which is held by the nationals of the EU member state, granting certain autonomous rights to the holders."
6. [Inclusion and Diversity](#): "Diversity is the presence and acceptance of differences whereas inclusion is the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity to achieve a culture in which different people can come together to work, feel comfortable and confident to be themselves, and feel valued."
7. [Nongovernmental Organizations \(NGOs\)](#): "Voluntary group of individuals or organizations, usually not affiliated with any government, that is formed to provide services or to advocate a public policy."

Learning Objectives

"I Can Statements":

1. I can identify and analyze opportunities for civic engagement within and across EU member states. (edited)
2. I can identify and explain how youth are influencing policymaking within and across EU member states
3. I can identify and evaluate the role of civil society organizations in the EU and their impact on political, economic, and social policies
4. I can analyze and explain how the EU has attempted to create diverse representation within its shared values, leadership, and policymaking initiatives
5. I can identify and evaluate how past and current social movements have shaped the EU
6. I can interpret graphs, charts, and surveys to better understand the perspectives of people living in EU member states
7. I can identify, analyze, and explain how the EU has changed politically, economically, and socially over time. In addition, I can explain how it has responded to challenges related to changes within and across member states.

Youth Participation in Democratic Processes



(Lesson Plan) [Practical Guide EP Engagement](#)

"The primary objective of this guide is to provide a comprehensive overview of the various ways to engage with MEPs. It aims to empower young people and youth workers by offering practical strategies for interacting with MEPs, ensuring their voices are heard in the European legislative process."

[Children's Rights and Democracy](#)

This article discusses the problem, solutions, and the work that the Children's Rights International Network.

[Youth Participation](#)

This article discusses the work that the Inter-parliamentary Union is doing to progress the involvement of children in democratic institutions.

[Youth Democratic Participation – Especially at Local Level – Essential in Times of Stability and Crisis Alike](#) (March 12, 2026)

"The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has adopted today a new recommendation to member states, calling upon them to implement the European Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life."

[Youth Participation in Democratic Processes: Challenges, Opportunities, and Future Directions](#) (May 20, 2025)

"This study examines the current state of youth participation in democratic processes, identifies key barriers and facilitators, and proposes evidence-based strategies to enhance youth civic engagement."

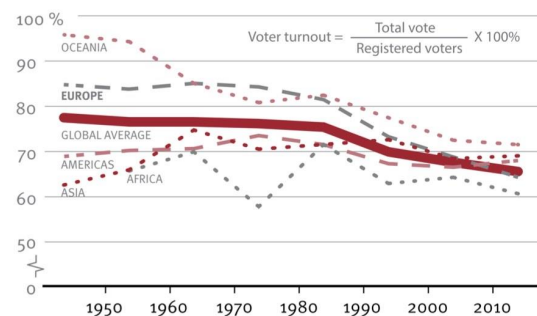
(Video) [Reflections on Participation: Do Young People Participate in Democratic Life?](#) (March 26, 2025)

“In this short video, key stakeholders from across Europe share their valuable perspectives on the barriers to youth participation and how we can enhance young people’s engagement in democratic processes.”

[Youth Participation Strategies for Building Sustainable Democracies](#) (March 19, 2024)

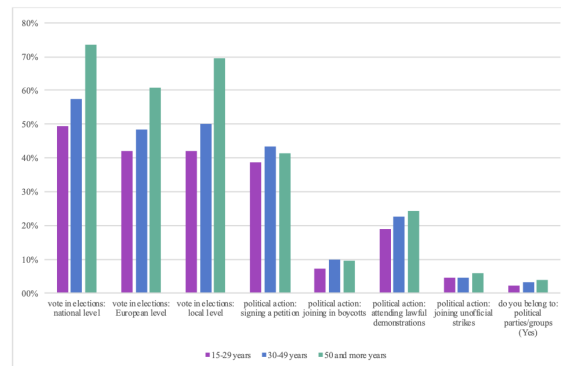
This article discusses the strategies of youth thriving in a sustainable democracy, as well as identifying strategies and finding solutions to youth integration in democracies.

Figure 1: Global voter turnout by region, 1945-2015



55 - [Global Youth Voter Turnout by Region](#)

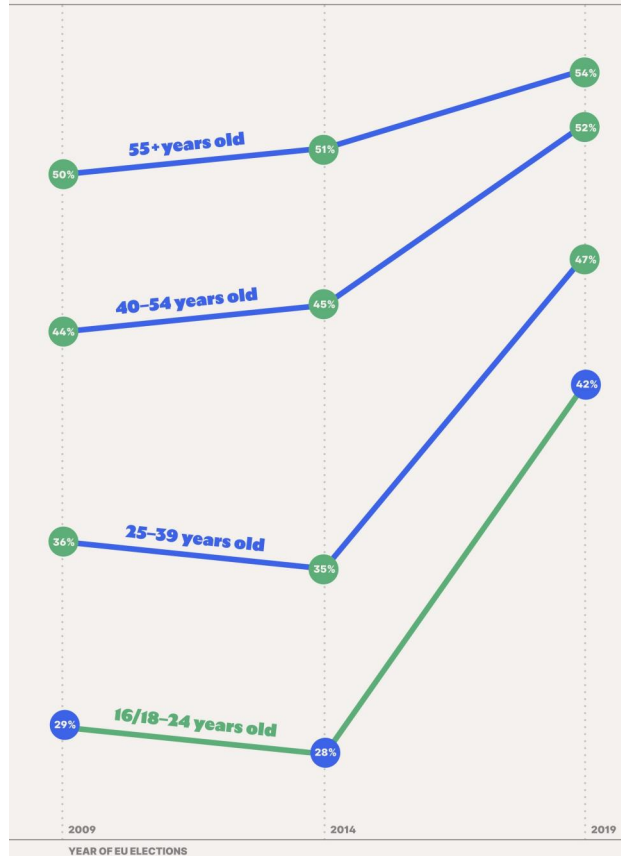
Figure 2: Political participation in Europe by age groups



56 - [Political Participation in Europe by Age Groups](#)

MORE AND MORE YOUNG PEOPLE VOTE IN EU ELECTIONS

Voting-age youths under 25 are the fastest growing demographic when it comes to participating in EU elections. The share of voters in this age group has grown by 13 percentage points in the last 10 years.



Source: Standard Eurobarometer 91 | data.europa.eu

Civil Society Organizations Across Europe



[Civil Society](#)

This article delves into what a civil society is and the relationship that the European Commission has with civil society organizations.

[Civil Society Europe](#)

This website explains and elaborates on the work of Civil Society Europe, which is the overarching “coordination of civil society organizations at the EU level.”

[The Council of Europe and Civil Society](#)

The article discusses the Council of Europe works with civil society organizations, NGOs, and citizens to increase the lives of members in those states.

[Interest Group on Civil Society in the European Parliament](#)

“The Interest Group on Civil Society brings together MEPs committed to defend and support the key role civil society plays in European societies, from promoting fundamental rights, to amplifying the voices of marginalized groups, and providing support to vulnerable communities. The Interest Group intends to act as a cross-group political space

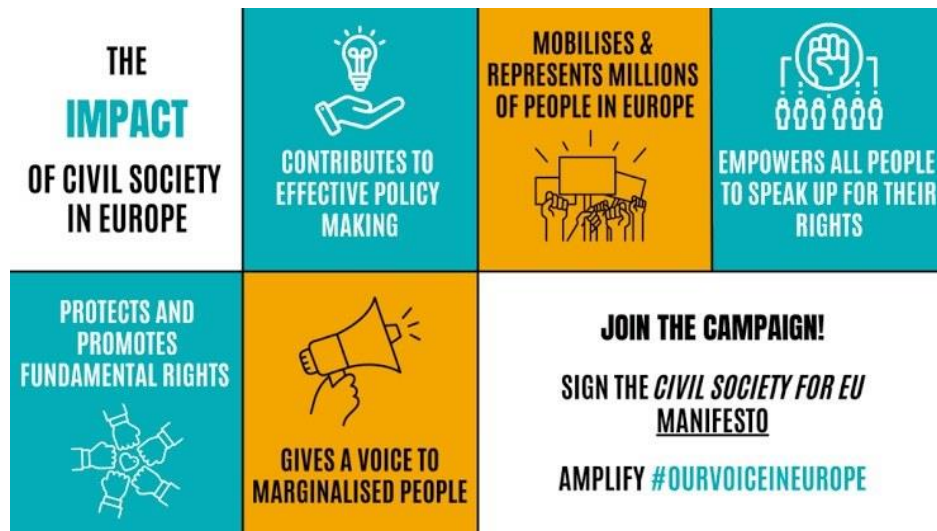
to facilitate exchanges with civil society actors, promote policies aiming to better support the civil society sector, and react against attacks on civic space.”

European Civic Forum

The “European Civic Forum (ECF) is a pan-European network of nearly 100 associations and NGOs across 30 European countries. Our members include big federations of associations deeply rooted in local constituencies, national platforms of NGOs, human rights and campaigning organizations, but also smaller groups working at the community level or engaging with the public on local issues. Check out our list of members below!”



57 - Examples of Civil Society Organizations in the EU



58 - [Impacts of Civil Society Organizations in Europe](#)

European Citizenship and Identity



[Defining European Citizenship: Its Significance and the EU's Efforts to Foster Identity Through education](#) (November 27, 2025)

“This article explores the EU’s use of educational policy as a tool for fostering a sense of “Europeanness” among its citizens. It argues that identity formation at the European level is actively promoted through educational initiatives such as Erasmus+ and the European Education Area, which aim to diffuse shared values and encourage mobility and cross-cultural exchange.”

[The European Parliament and the Development of European Citizenship](#) (June 2024)

“This briefing examines the formative phase in the development of European citizenship, from the early 1970s to the 1984 Draft Treaty establishing the European Union.”

[Othering and Belonging in a Europe In Crisis](#) (July 19, 2022)

This article examines how crises in Europe have shaped the view of people and sense of belonging that they have in Europe.

(Podcast) [European Identity and the Other](#) (October 10, 2018)

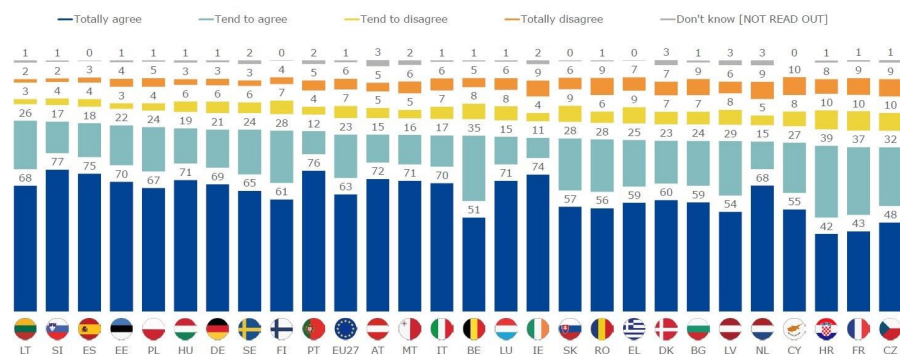
"The discussion considers the formation of European identity and thinking critically about what it means to be European, how the process of inclusion and exclusion has challenged and continues to reshape what is and is not Europe."

[Europe and the Identity Challenge: Who Are “We”?](#) (March 18, 2018)

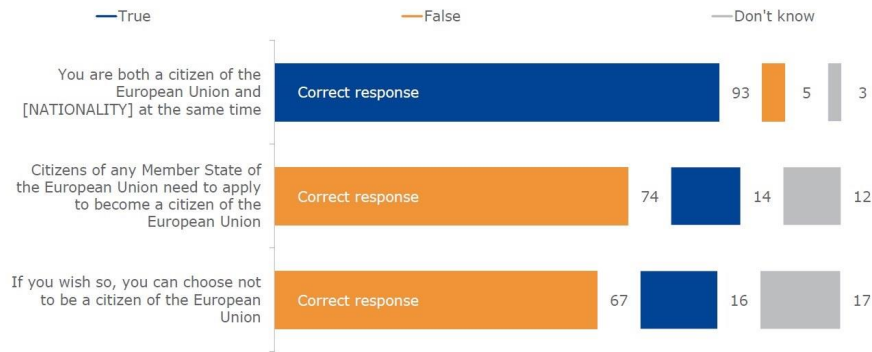
This article discusses the shared identity and values of Europe and cultural identity among people.

[EU Citizenship](#) (October, 2013)

This article discusses “The 1992 Maastricht Treaty introduced the concept of European Union citizenship. All citizens of the 28 EU member states are also EU citizens through the very fact that they are members of the EU.”

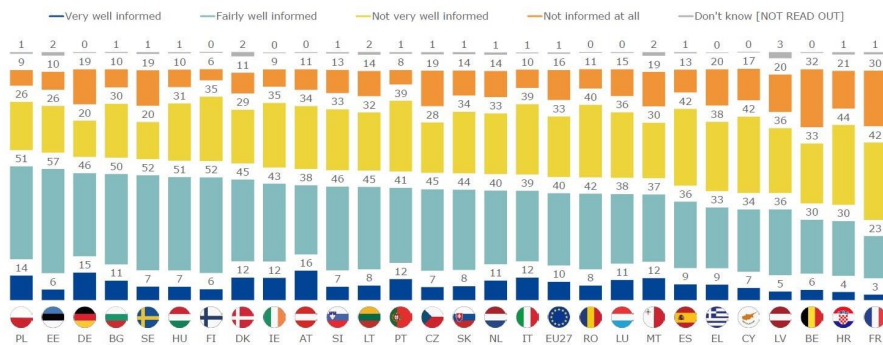


Base: all respondents (n=25 722)



Base: all respondents (n=25 722)

60 - Awareness and Understanding of EU Citizenship



Base: all respondents (n=25 722)

61 - Awareness of Rights Associated with EU Citizenship

DID YOU KNOW?

"EU citizens can vote and run for office in any country in any EU country they live in, not just their home nation!"

https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/residence/elections-abroad/european-elections/index_en.htm

Gender and Political Representation



[Achieving Gender Balance in Decision-Making](#)

This brief discusses the disparity and imbalance of women and men in decision making roles in government.

[Women in Politics: A Persistent Glass Ceiling](#) (March 15, 2026)

This article shares data about the percentage of women in political positions as well as gender stereotypes and quotas that may be impacting that percentage.

[Facts and Figures: Women's Leadership and Political Participation](#) (March 11, 2026)

"[Women's equal participation and leadership in political and public life](#) are essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. However, data show that women are underrepresented at all levels of decision-making worldwide and that achieving gender parity in political life is far off." This article discusses women's representation in multiple different levels of positions in government."

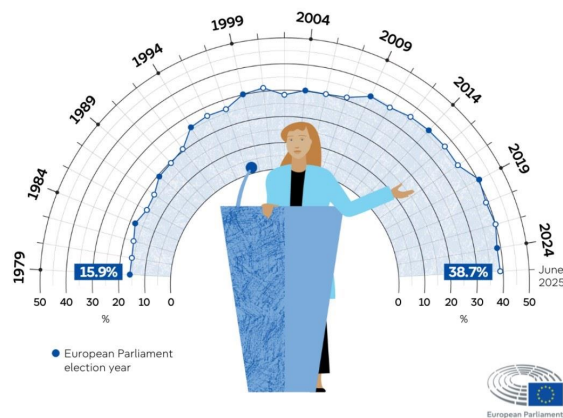
[Women in Politics in the EU](#) (February 2026)

This article discusses the involvement of women, as well as the challenges and barriers to getting more women involved.

[Gender Balance in Politics](#) (December, 2024)

“The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) regularly monitors the situation in the EU and its 27 Member States (EU-27). This brief presents EIGE’s data as of November 2024 on the representation of women and men in key political decision-making positions at the EU and national levels.”

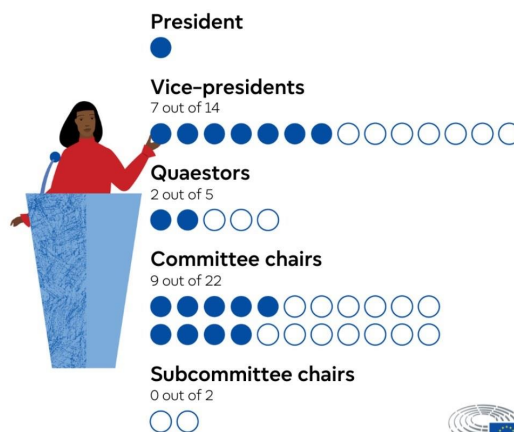
Share of **women** elected to the **European Parliament** (1979–2025)



Source: EPRS (June 2025)

62 - [More and More Young People Voting in EU Elections](#)

Women in top positions in the **European Parliament**



Source: EPRS (June 2025)

63 - [Women in Top Positions in the European Parliament](#)

Participatory Democracy Initiatives



[People Powered – Global Hub for Participatory Democracy – What We Do](#)

This webpage shares about the work that “We Are People Powered” does to shape public policy and encourage democratic participation.

[Can European Citizens’ Initiatives Push Brussels to Act and Bring Change?](#) (May 9, 2026)

This article discusses examples of the European Citizens’ Initiatives and the implication they must bring to real life change.

[A Reality Check on the European Citizen’s Initiative](#) (June 20, 2025)

“Despite its modest uptake since its inception in 2012, the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI) has become the subject of several cases before the Court of Justice of the EU. The ECI is the world’s first and only instrument of direct transnational democracy, allowing a group of at least seven European citizens from seven different EU member states to request that the Union take new action.” This article discusses the real-life implications of a unique initiative like this.”

(Podcast) [Participatory Democracy: Newsroom](#) (June 15, 2022)

"Participative democracy is one core element in active democratic processes, which enables citizens to participate in and influence decision-making processes in their communities. We witness an increasing number of participation initiatives and forms of engagement of citizens in political decision-making, especially the deliberative format."

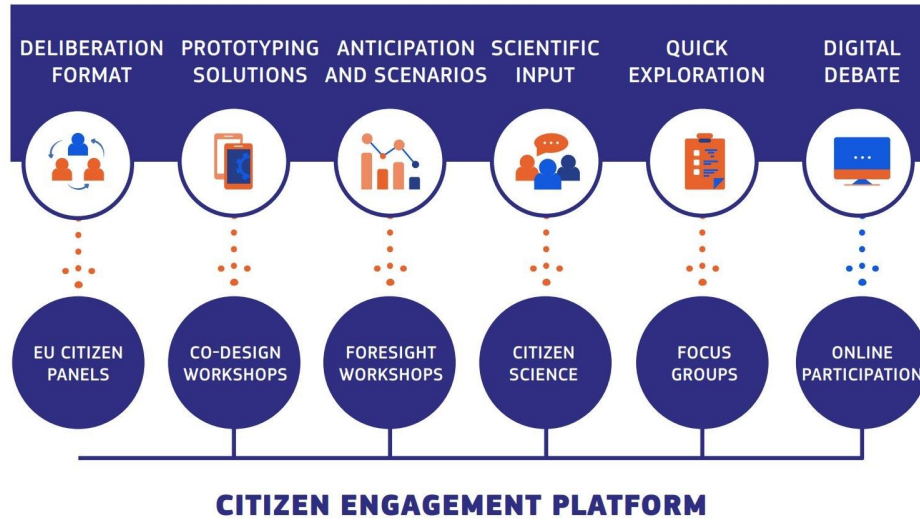
[Beyond Consultations: Reimagining EU Participatory Politics](#) (December 5, 2018)

“This article is part of the Reshaping European Democracy project, an initiative of Carnegie’s Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program and Carnegie Europe.” and shares about the work that should be done to increase democratic participation in Europe.”

(Video) [What Is the European Citizens’ Initiative? Take The Initiative](#) (February 7, 2018)

“Animation explaining what the European Citizens’ Initiative is and how it works.”





65 - [Citizen Engagement Platform](#)

Volunteerism and Community Engagement



[Humanitarian Aid Volunteering](#)

This article discusses the volunteering opportunities available to EU citizens to get involved and volunteer their time and resources.

[The Journey Through Citizens' Panels](#)

“Over three weekends, 150 randomly selected EU citizens engaged in discussions on how to tackle hatred in society. The outcome: Despite a sensitive theme and a risk of strong emotions and divisions, panelists had a constructive and respectful debate. Want to discover how their very personal insights led them to create 21 concrete recommendations for the European Commission? Watch it here!”

[EU Citizens’ Panel to Strengthen Democracy](#)

This article discusses the general duties of the EU Citizens Panel.

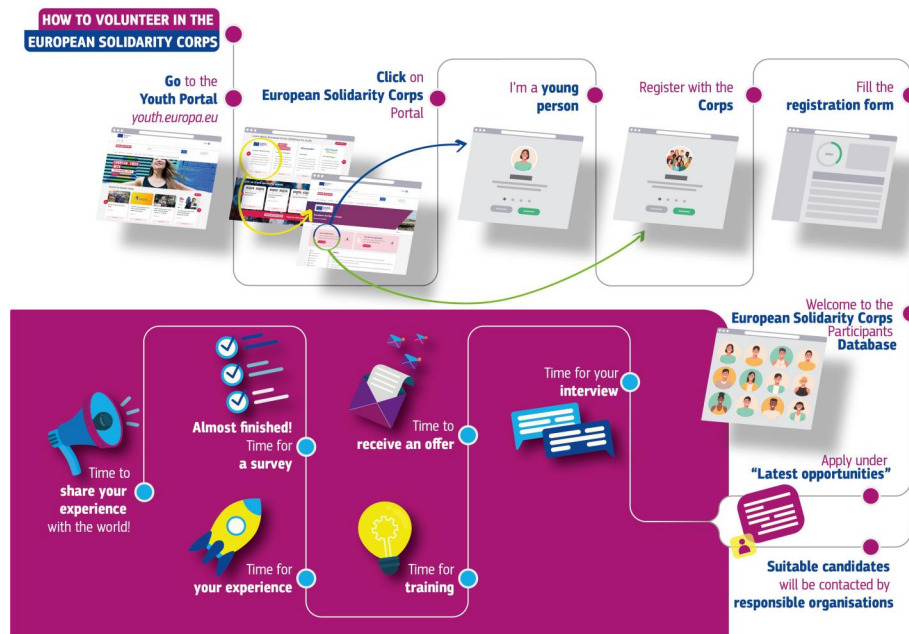
[The European Democracy Shield: An Overview](#) *(January 15, 2026)*

“The communication on the European Democracy Shield (EDS) aims to boost the protection of democracy against attacks, including foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) and disinformation. Proposed actions reflect the EU’s whole-of-society approach, with a new Centre for Democratic Resilience complementing a broad set of proposed actions across three key pillars.”

[The New European Centre for Democratic Resilience Starts Its Work](#) *(February 24, 2026)*

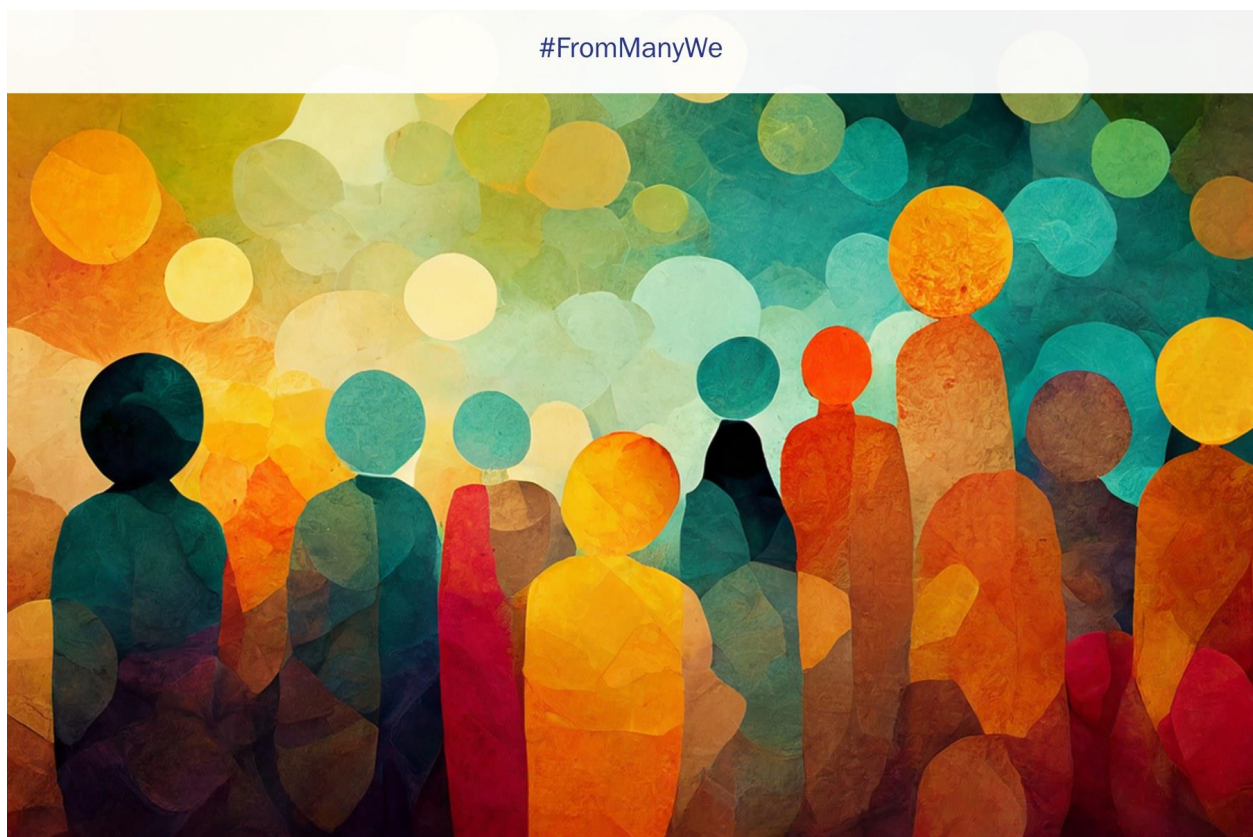
The article discusses how the “EU Ministers were invited by the Commission and the Council Presidency to mark the start of the work of the European Centre for Democratic Resilience. The aim of the Centre, a flagship initiative of the European Democracy Shield, is to facilitate a consolidated approach involving all of society to increase awareness and boost the capacity to respond to the threats faced by democracies today and build democratic resilience.”





67 - [How to Volunteer in the EU Solidarity Corps](#)

Inclusion and Diversity in Democratic Systems



[Democracy and Inclusion in an Age of Insecurity: A Spotlight on Global Democracy Under Pressure](#) *(October, 2025)*

“International Democracy Day 2025 in Brussels offered both a sobering reality check and a source of renewed inspiration. Over two days of high-level panels and lightning talks, some 400 democracy activists, organizations, academics and politicians from around the world debated how to strengthen democracy at a time of crisis. Both the powerful democratic resilience stories from across the globe and the data on deepening democratic backsliding and widening inequalities were a reminder of citizens’ resilience and their tireless fight for freedom and dignity, and the continuous need to pursue our mission of support for democracy. Inspiring stories of democratic resilience from the world.”

[Explainer: Why DEI Is Good for Democracy](#) *(April 29, 2025)*

This newsletter explains the importance of DEI in democracy as well as the history of DEI, the importance of it, and how institutions are and can be involved.

(Video) [What is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Really?](#) *(March 15, 2025)*

“Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) refers to efforts to create fair and welcoming environments for people of all backgrounds. Diversity emphasizes representation; equity ensures fair opportunities, and inclusion fosters a sense of belonging. These principles are commonly applied in workplaces, education, and social policies.”

[The Importance of Inclusivity in Government Agencies](#) *(August 9, 2024)*

This article discusses the importance of inclusion, changes that can be made in government, and support and guidance that leaders can give to foster a more inclusive society.

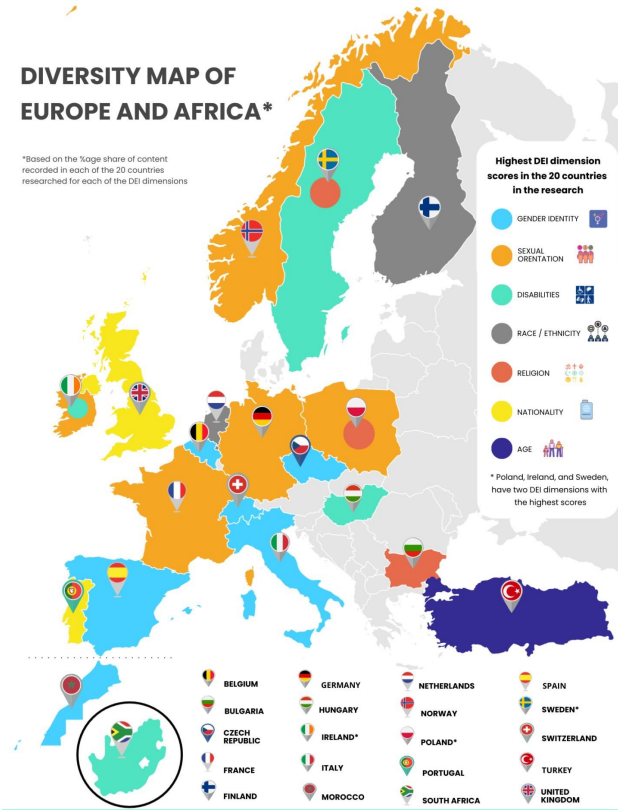
[Tackling the Barriers to Inclusion in Democracy](#) *(June 20, 2024)*

“The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) launches the Inclusion portal, a resource that compiles global information that features the provisions in national frameworks-constitutions, political party, and electoral laws on the inclusion of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, Persons with disabilities and LGBTQIA+ people.”



DIVERSITY MAP OF EUROPE AND AFRICA*

*Based on the %age share of content recorded in each of the 20 countries researched for each of the DEI dimensions



Page 2

68 - [DEI Map of Europe](#)



69 - [Diversity Image](#)

A blue graphic for Module 5. It features a grid of white dots in the top left, three white chevrons pointing right, and a circular portrait of a man with glasses and a tie. The text is in white and light blue.

MODULE 5

Staying Current on EU Democracy and Security

Lecture Overview

This session highlights emerging developments in EU democracy and security and introduces educators to ongoing opportunities for engagement through the EU Democracy and Security (EUDS) Symposia and related programs.

SPEAKER: GUNTIS ŠMIDCHENS

Key Terms

1. [Baltic States](#): "Northeastern region of Europe containing the countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea."
2. [Democratic Security](#): The idea that emphasizing and strengthening democratic institutions, human rights, and the rule of law are the primary reasons for achieving domestic and global stability.
3. [Geopolitics](#): "Analysis of the geographic influences on power relationships in international relations."
4. [Strategic Partnerships](#): "An [arrangement](#) between two [companies](#) or [organizations](#) to [help](#) each other or [work](#) together, to make it [easier](#) for each of them to [achieve](#) the things they [want](#) to [achieve](#)."
5. [European Integration](#): "the selective pooling of national sovereignty by postwar European nation-states, resulting in the formation of the European Union (EU)."
6. [Regional Cooperation](#): "A collaborative mechanism among participants that is based on equal status, voluntary conduct, and mutual benefits, aimed at eliminating barriers and fostering trust to enhance cooperation in various fields."
7. [Information Literacy](#): "A set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information."

Learning Objectives

"I Can Statements":

1. I can identify, evaluate, and explain current challenges facing the EU, including those that might impact its democracy and security.
2. I can analyze and explain the challenges faced by the EU due to the on-going Russia-Ukraine War. In addition, I can formulate possible policy solutions to address the short and long-terms consequences of the war
3. I can analyze and explain how the Baltics Region has influenced EU security (including concerns regarding the Russia-Ukraine war)
4. I can interpret graphs, charts, and surveys that explain EU citizen perspectives on individual and collective security within and across the EU
5. I can investigate and evaluate emerging EU challenges such as cyber threats, climate change, technological innovation, and geopolitical competition—and their implications for Europe and the broader international community.
6. I can identify and analyze how misinformation and disinformation within the EU may impact perspectives and policies
7. I can evaluate how regional and global partnerships may impact EU democracy and security in the future

Current Events in EU Democracy and Security



[News and Events](#)

“Browse through a selection of featured news, see a comprehensive overview of the latest EU news, or read about past and upcoming events from all EU’s institutions and bodies. All are available in all 24 EU official languages via machine translation, when clicking on the full list of corresponding content.”

[European Politics, Policy, Government News](#)

“POLITICO Europe covers the politics, policy and personalities of the European Union. Our coverage includes breaking news, opinion pieces, and features.”

[EU-US Trade: Council Gives Final Approval for the Tariff Commitments Under Joint Statement](#)

‘Today, the Council formally adopted two regulations implementing the tariff-related commitments set out in the EU-US Joint Statement of 21 August 2025. The adoption completes the legislative process and confirms the EU’s commitment to a stable, predictable and mutually beneficial transatlantic trade relationship, while preserving the necessary guardrails to protect European economic interests.”

[ENISA News](#)

This page gives all the new stories from ENISA (European Union Agency for Cybersecurity).

[Press Room](#)

The “Press Room” is a page that provides all the updated stories and information for new and upcoming stories.

Figure 3. Countries Subject to EU Sanctions on Grounds Related to Democracy and Human Rights, 2024

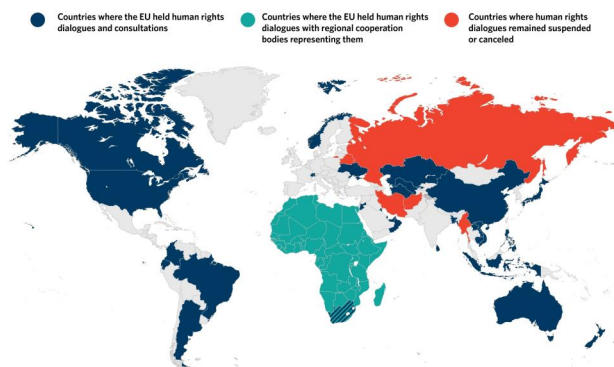


Source: EU Sanctions Map, last updated December 15, 2024, www.sanctionsmap.eu.

Note: This map is illustrative; boundaries, names, and designations used do not represent or imply any opinion on the part of Carnegie or the authors. Dotted lines represent approximate disputed boundaries. The final status has not yet been agreed upon.

70 - [Countries Subject to EU Sanctions on Grounds Related to Democracy and Human Rights](#)

Figure 2. EU Human Rights Dialogues and Consultations, 2024



Source: An overview table shared by the European External Action Service (EEAS) with the Human Rights and Democracy Network on July 24, 2024, and information provided via the EEAS Newsroom.

Note: This map is illustrative; boundaries, names, and designations used do not represent or imply any opinion on the part of Carnegie or the authors. Dotted lines represent approximate disputed boundaries and the gray areas represent contested territory between China, India, and Pakistan. The final status has not yet been agreed upon.

71 - [Human Rights Dialogues and Consultations](#)

The Baltic Region and European Security



[Baltic States](#)

This site gives an overview of what the Baltic States are, their history, and their importance to Europe all explained in an understandable way for all ages.

[Baltic Sea Region Security Initiative](#)

“The European Baltic Sea region countries have long shared close political, security, and defense ties. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022 highlighted the importance of these linkages and the necessity of building a more comprehensive approach to regional security and defense. In this context, Carnegie’s Baltic Sea Region Security Initiative brings together public and private sector representatives from every country in the region to discuss how to cooperate and overcome the most pressing challenges. In fostering greater coordination and cooperation, the Baltic Sea region can become a laboratory for other operational theaters in Europe.”

(Video) [The Baltic States Explained in 19 Minutes. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.](#) (March 20, 2026)

“Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are often talked about as a one regional unit - the Baltic states. These three countries lie in the Baltic Sea and share similar historical experiences such as soviet occupation lasting for decades. They fought together for their independence in the 1990s. And even today, they share a similar threat yet again from Russia. But how similar are these

countries? What do Baltic states have in common, and what divides them? Our video explains the history and present day of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.”

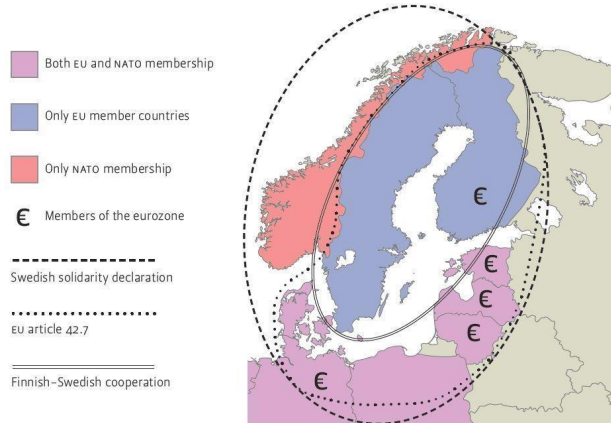
[The Rise of Nordic-Baltic States as Europe’s Security Backbone](#) (January 28, 2026)

“When US President Donald Trump escalated the Greenland crisis in early January by insisting on American ownership of the island and refusing to rule out military force, Denmark did not face the pressure alone. Nordic and Baltic capitals moved quickly to close ranks, offering political backing and diplomatic coordination. This rapid response was not improvised. It reflected how, in just a few years, the Nordic-Baltic Eight (NB8)—Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—has evolved into one of Europe’s most credible and action-oriented security groupings. In a European security environment crowded with declarations but thin on delivery, the NB8’s growing influence rests less on rhetoric than on follow-through. Unity matters, but credibility comes from execution—and this northern bloc has increasingly matched words with measurable action.”

[How the Nordic-Baltic States Became Europe’s Reliable Security Engine](#) (January 27, 2026)

This article explains how the Nordic and Baltic countries have become some of Europe’s most dependable security allies.

Political and security cooperation in the Baltic region

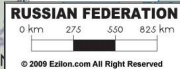


- A** Tallinn, **Minisadam Port**, Estonia. HQ of Baltic Naval Squadron.
- B** Amari Air Base, **Estonia**. Air base available for NATO missions and training exercises.
- C** Tartu, **Estonia**. Home of the Baltic Defence College.
- D** Ääzi military base, **Latvia**. HQ of the Baltic Battalion.
- E** Lielvārde Air Base, **Latvia**. Air base available for NATO missions and training exercises.
- F** Liepāja, **Latvia**. Training and Education Repair Center for the Baltic Naval Squadron.
- G** Stukalai Air Base, **Lithuania**. HQ of NATO's Baltic Air Policing Mission.
- H** Neman, **Kaliningrad**. Site of proposed Russian nuclear power plant.
- I** Karmėlava, **Lithuania**. HQ of the Baltic Air Surveillance Network.
- J** Astravets, **Belarus**. Site of proposed Belorussian nuclear power plant.



73 - Key Locations in the Baltic Region

Russia's Relationship with Europe



EU Trade Relations with Russia

“EU trade relations with Russia. Facts, figures and latest developments.”

The European Union and the Russian Federation (November 23, 2022)

“The relations between the European Union (EU) and Russia have been strained since the 2014 illegal annexation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by Russia and its destabilizing actions in eastern Ukraine. After Russia began its invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, 2022, the remaining political, cultural and scientific cooperation was suspended.”

(Video) [History of Russia in 5 Minutes](#) (July 9, 2022)

“This video presents a brief history of Russia, the largest country in the world.”

[EU-Russia Relations Under Strain: What are the Causes?](#) (February 2, 2021)

“The EU has had increasingly difficult relations with Russia in recent years due to its attacks on Ukraine and democracy and its disinformation campaigns.”

[How Russia’s Relationship with Europe Has Evolved](#) (January 5, 2016)

“Russia's relationship with the countries it calls "Europe" (the EU and the European Economic Area) has evolved significantly since the dissolution of the USSR.”

[The End of an Era in EU-Russia Relations](#) (May 30, 2013)

“Russia’s approach to the European Union (EU) has changed fundamentally over the last few years. The Kremlin is no longer drawing gradually closer to crisis-stricken Europe. Instead, Russia is entering a period of domestic uncertainty and rebalancing its foreign policy to emphasize its Eurasian neighbors and China. Europe should take note. In order to develop an effective strategic approach toward their biggest neighbor, Europeans must deepen their understanding of the changing realities in Russia.”



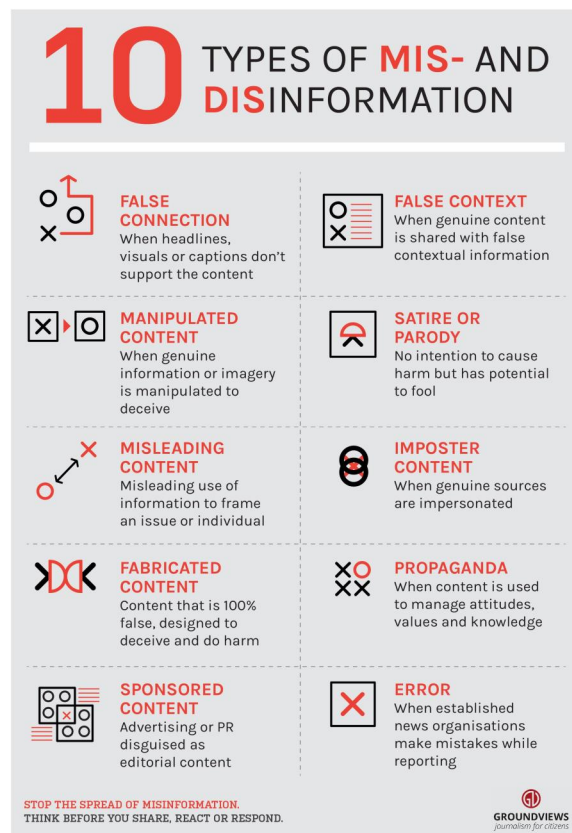
74 - [Russia's Relationship with the EU in a Map](#)

[Why Media and Information Literacy are Essential in the Age of Disinformation](#) (July 21, 2025)

“The ability to critically engage with information is more important than ever. From viral falsehoods and deepfakes to emotionally manipulative content designed to mislead or divide, the information environment has become increasingly complex and opaque. In this context, media and information literacy have emerged as a global priority, recognized not only as a key individual skill set but also a foundational pillar for safeguarding democratic discourse, social cohesion, and public trust.”

(Video) [What Is Misinformation? Let's Break it Down](#) (November 8, 2023)

“As you scroll through your feeds, you’ve probably noticed that there is so much information out there. Not everything we see may be real or totally true. Some things we see may be misinformation, which is information shared by people who don’t realize it’s not true. What types of misinformation might we see online? And why is it out there? KN contributor Aubrie Chan animated this video to help you understand the term better.”



HOW TO SPOT FALSE NEWS



READ BEYOND

Headlines can be sensational in an effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?



CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info



CHECK THE AUTHOR

Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?

CHECK THE DATE

Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events



IS IT A JOKE?

If its too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure



SUPPORTING SOURCES?

Click on any hyperlinks accompanying the story. Determine if the info given actually supports the story



CHECK YOUR BIASES

Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement

IS IT AUTHENTIC?

Use Tin Eye/Google Reverse Image Search before sharing photos to verify their original source



CHECK MAINSTREAM MEDIA
or a fact-checking site

STOP THE SPREAD OF MISINFORMATION.
THINK BEFORE YOU SHARE, REACT OR RESPOND.



GROUNDVIEWS
journalism for citizens

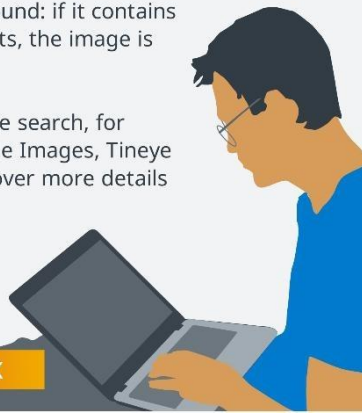
Checklist: How do I spot AI generated images?

- Look for a high-resolution version of the image. Look closely and zoom in, it's easier to spot inconsistencies
- Pay attention to body proportions. In some AI images, individual body parts such as the head or feet are disproportionately large
- AI programs have problems with certain details: Hands, glasses frames, teeth and ears often show errors, for example a deformation or a sixth finger
- Check the background: if it contains unrealistic elements, the image is probably a fake
- Do a reverse image search, for example via Google Images, TinEye or Yandex, to uncover more details about the image

Status: April 2023



FACT CHECK



European Regional Cooperation



(Lesson Plan) [Strength in Numbers? European Union Lesson Plan](#)

Students will complete a WebQuest to gain knowledge about the history and functions of the European Union. After this research, students will discuss the pros and cons of such an organization."

[Fostering Cooperation](#)

"Interreg stands for European Territorial Cooperation and is part of the European Union's Cohesion Policy, its regional policy which aims to reduce the disparities between Europe's regions and provides support to each region to foster their development."

[What is Interreg Europe?](#)

This page offers sources to explain what Interreg is, the benefits, and the work they are doing.

[Interreg EU](#)

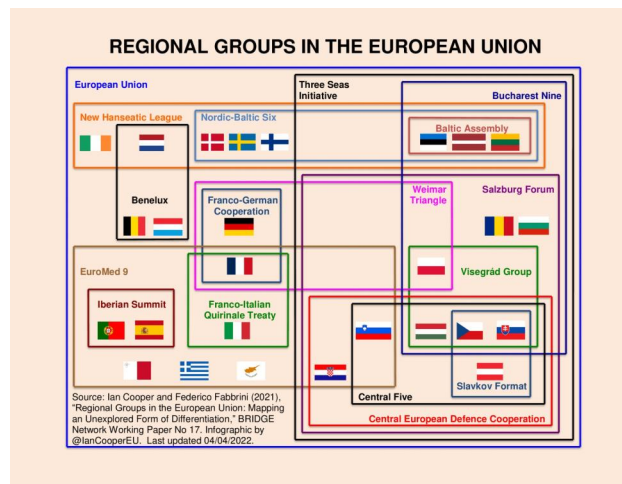
"Interreg is a series of EU funding programmes that support cooperation. By bringing together organizations from across Europe and beyond, Interreg tackles shared challenges and creates lasting connections."

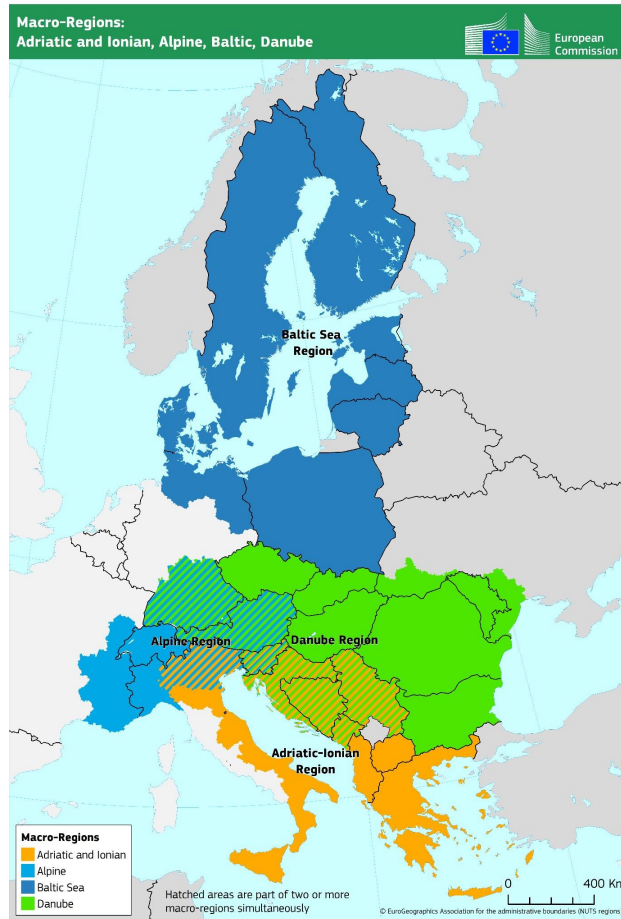
Cooperation Between Regions and Countries

“European Territorial Cooperation is central to the construction of a common European space, and a cornerstone of European integration. It has clear European added value: helping to ensure that borders are not barriers, bringing Europeans closer together, helping to solve common problems, facilitating the sharing of ideas and assets, and encouraging strategic work towards common goals. Today 86 Interreg programmes are operating across the borders, in the EU and at its external borders.”

Regional Cooperation with Eastern Partners

“Regional cooperation brings together Eastern Partnership countries in tackling shared challenges and pursuing common goals.”





80 - Macro Regions in the EU

Emerging Security Trends



[New EU Plan to Address the Risks and Opportunities of Advanced AI for Cybersecurity](#)

“The European Commission has presented a plan to address the risks and harness the opportunities of advanced artificial intelligence (AI) in cybersecurity.”

[EU Cybersecurity Policies](#)

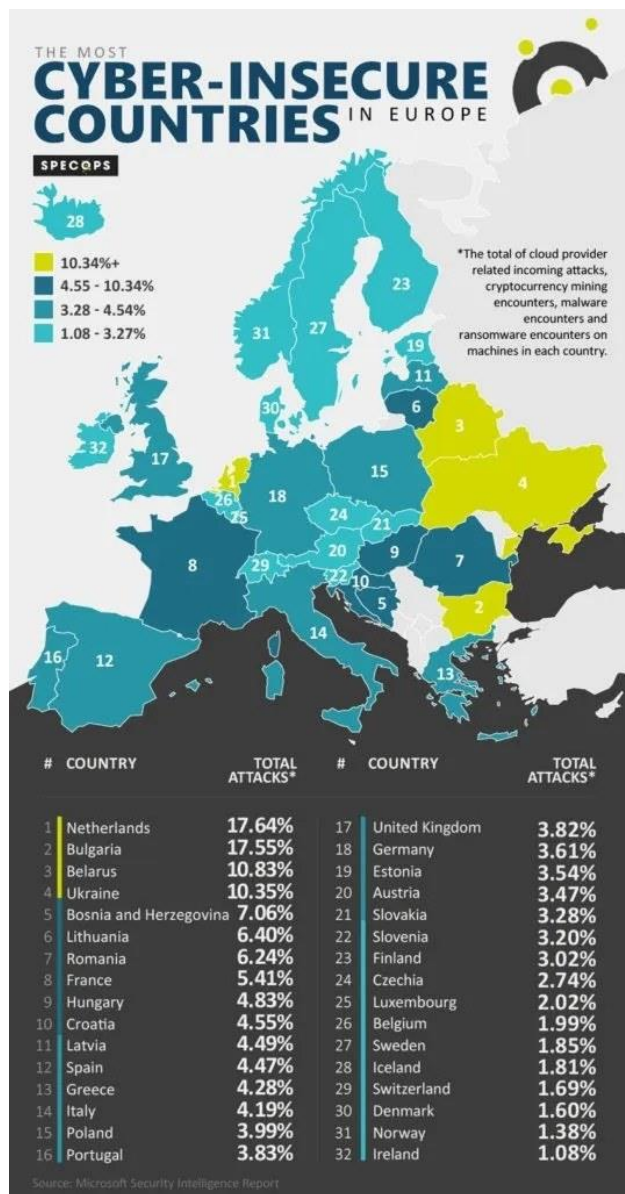
“The European Union works on various fronts to promote cyber resilience, safeguarding our communication and data and keeping online society and economy secure.”

[ENISA Threat Landscape 2025](#) *(October 1, 2025)*

“Through a more threat-centric approach and further contextual analysis, this latest edition of the ENISA Threat Landscape analyses 4875 incidents over a period spanning from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. At its core, this report provides an overview of the most prominent cybersecurity threats and trends the EU faces in the current cyber threat ecosystem.”

[Cybersecurity: Main and Emerging Threats](#) *(January 27, 2022)*

"Find out about the top cyber threats in 2024, the most affected sectors and the impact of the war in Ukraine."



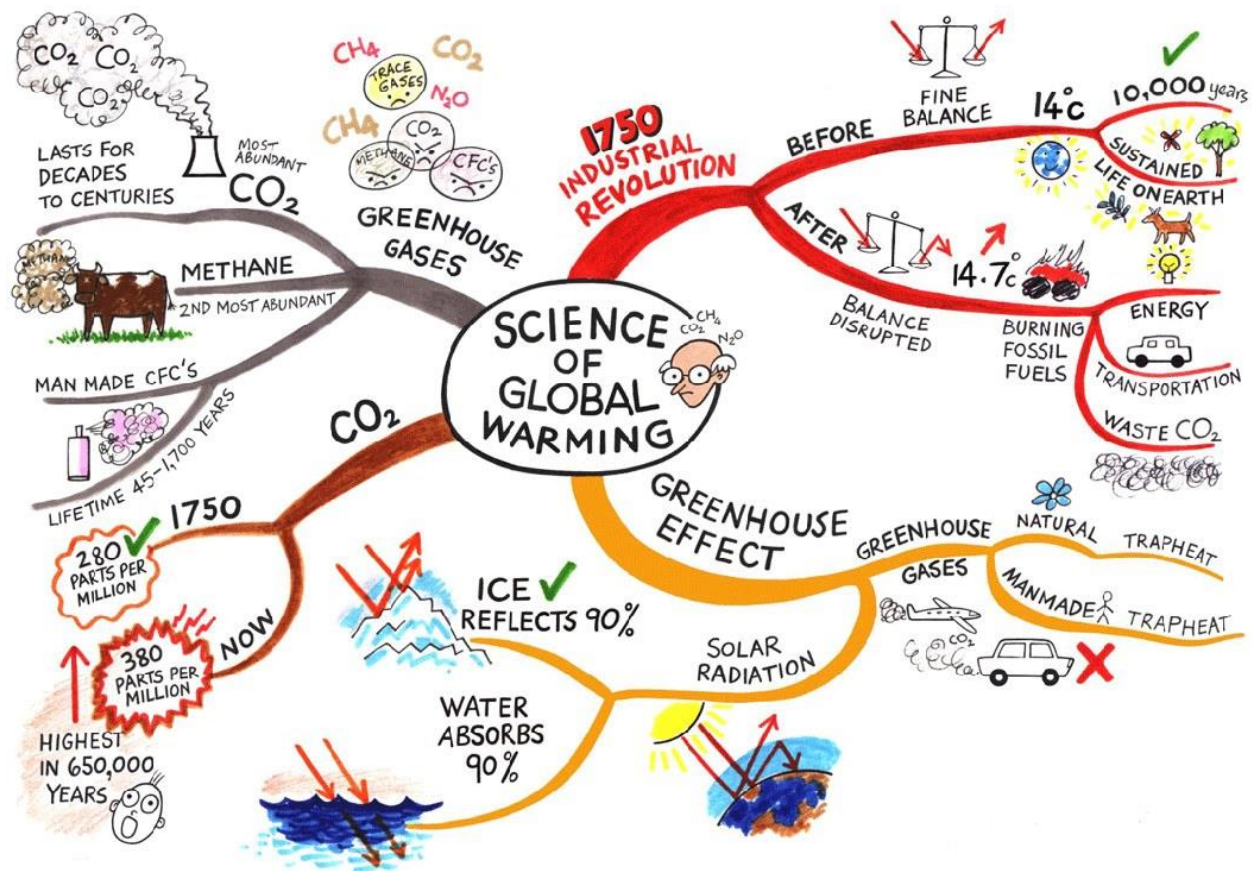
81 - [The Most Cyber Insecure Countries in the EU](#)



FIGURE 1
Major Developments in EU Foreign and Security Policy Since 2016



Monitoring Contemporary Global Issues



[Global Issues](#)

"As the world's only truly universal global organization, the United Nations has become the foremost forum to address issues that transcend national boundaries and cannot be resolved by any one country acting alone."

[World Economic Outlook](#)

"The World Economic Outlook (WEO) is a survey of prospects and policies by the IMF staff, usually published twice a year, with updates in between. It presents analyses and projections of the world economy in the near and medium term, which are integral elements of the IMF's surveillance of economic developments and policies in its member countries and of the global economic system. They consider issues affecting advanced, emerging and developing economies, and address topics of pressing current interest."

[Global Conflict Tracker](#)

"The Global Conflict Tracker is an interactive guide to ongoing conflicts around the world and is supported by the Sue and Edgar Wachenheim Foundation."

[Global Health Observatory](#)

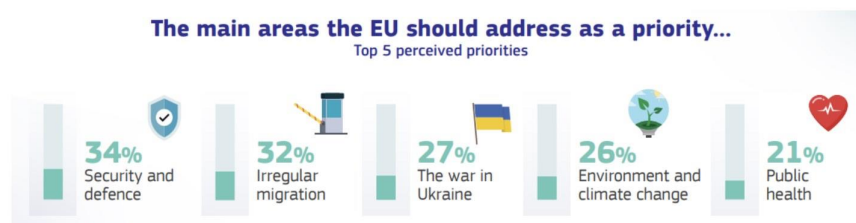
“Explore a world of health data.”

[Food Security](#)

“Current state of food security in the world. Facts and statistics about food insecurity, its causes and challenges, geographic data and further resources.”



84 - [5 Main Challenges the EU is Facing Right Now](#)



85 - [The Main Areas the EU Should Address as a Priority](#)

