

The image features the European Union flag, which consists of a blue field with twelve five-pointed gold stars arranged in a circle. The flag is shown waving and is set against a light blue background. The text "European Union" is centered over the flag in a white, serif font.

European Union

# History of the European Union

- The EU began in the 1950's. It was called the European Economic Community.
- Six countries (Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Belgium) were the founding members.



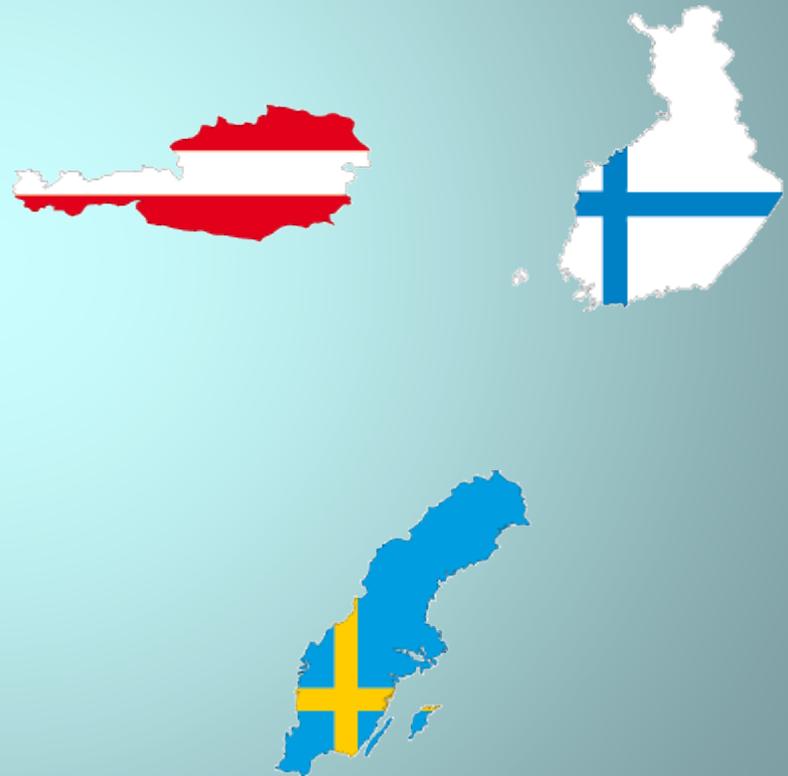
# History of the European Union

- In 1973, Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom joined.
- In 1981 Greece joined.
- Spain and Portugal joined in 1986.



# History of the European Union

- In 1992 a treaty formed the European Union as we know it today.
- Austria, Finland and Sweden all joined the EU in 1995.



# History of the European Union

The Czech Republic,  
Estonia,  
Cyprus,  
Latvia,  
Lithuania,  
Hungary,  
Malta,  
Poland,  
Slovenia  
and Slovakia  
joined in 2004.



# History of the European Union

- In 2007 Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU.
- In 2013 Croatia joined the EU.
- This makes a total of 28 countries which are EU members today.



# What does the EU do?

- The EU works hard to promote tolerance, respect and understanding of all cultures and ethnic groups.
- The EU has brought stability and economic growth to all of its member countries.



# Are all European countries part of the EU?

- Not all European countries are, or want to be EU members but the Union works with its neighbouring countries, and countries around the world, to promote peace, democracy, fair laws and respect for human rights.



## How big is the EU?

- The EU is less than half the size of the United States but its population is over 50% bigger at around 493 million people.
- It is the world's third largest population after China and India.



# What does the EU do for us?

- Because of the EU we can travel freely between member countries, food is safer, the environment is greener, we can study abroad and cheaper air travel are just some of the benefits.



# Introduction of the Euro

The Euro was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2002.

On that day the Euro replaced the currencies of 12 EU countries.

(Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Greece and Ireland).



# Why doesn't the UK use the Euro?

The UK was one of a few member countries who decided not to change their currency.

One reason is that the British Pound is a strong currency.

Another reason is that switching to the Euro gives the UK less control over things like interest rates.



# The EU Flag

The flag of Europe is 12 golden stars on a blue background. It was designed in 1955 and adopted by the EU in the 1980's.

