

Mr. Aitken
World Geography

- What is the European Union, and why was it formed?

Why was the EU Created?

- Rivalries and war between European countries was common for more than 500 years.



- **World War I** (1914-1918)
 - About 10 million soldiers died, 20 million wounded; 8 million civilians died.

- **World War II** (1939-1945)
 - Deadliest war in human history.
 - More than 100 million people died.

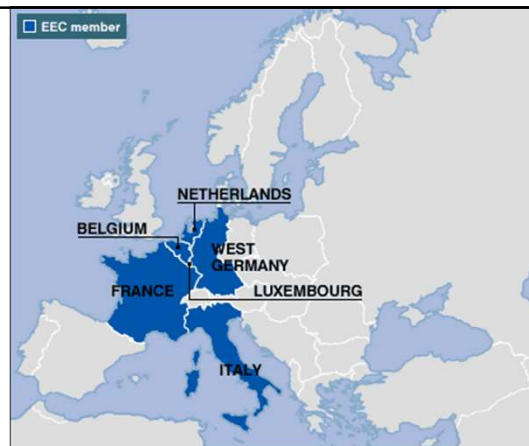


Why was the EU Created?

- European countries wanted to create economic ties to try to prevent future wars.

Step 1: Formation

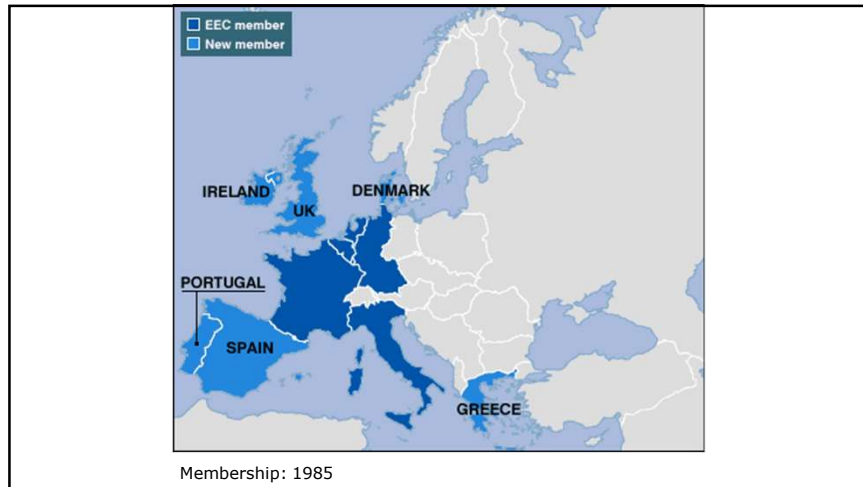
- 1952:
European Coal and Steel Community.
- Coal and steel were necessary for the machinery of war. Open trade of these products would reduce tensions.
- France, Belgium, West Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and Luxemburg.



Original Members: 1952

Step 2: Expansion through 1985

- Changed name to:
European Economic Community (EEC).
- Expanded to include most trade goods.
- Grew to 12 members (added Denmark, the UK, Ireland, Greece, Spain, and Portugal).



Collapse of the Soviet Union

- 1989-1990: Communist government of the USSR dissolves.
- Chain reaction of 13 countries declared independence from Russia.
- Warsaw Pact broke up.
- 1990: East and West Germany reunited into a single country again.



Step 3: the Euro €

- Phased in between 1999-2002.
- Common currency (money) shared by most EU countries.
- Replaced individual currencies.
- Euro can be used by any member country, and has the same value in all member countries.

Step 4: More Expansion

- 2007: name changed to ***European Union***.
- by 2013: grew to 28 countries, including several that used to be part of the USSR or Warsaw Pact.

Benefits of the EU



- Free trade (no tariffs or trade taxes).
- Freely travel between EU countries.
- Can work and live in any EU country.
- Cooperation in environmental laws.
- One common currency (the Euro)

Tensions within the EU



- Loss of cultural identity & autonomy.
- Can be challenging to get all EU country to agree on rules & laws.
- Poorer EU countries are a drain on wealthy EU countries.

Membership Today



- There are currently 5 countries in the process of joining the EU. (Turkey, Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia)
- In 2016, the UK voted to leave the EU. This is called "Brexit" (British Exit). Scheduled to be finalized in 2019.