



# REPERES



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CENTRE VIRTUEL DE LA  
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## PARTENARIAT ÉDUCATIF GRUNDTVIG 2009-2011

### EUROPEAN TERRITORIES

*(These explanatory notes are associated with the presentation of the same title)*

#### 1.- DEFINITIONS OF THE TERM « TERRITORY »:

- ✿ Area where a state's sovereignty is exercised, we talk about national territory : example : France ;
- ✿ Area having a competent authority : example : Region of Aquitaine ;
- ✿ Area considered as collective property by a group of people: example: French Basque Country.

In reality, territories fit into each other: the Basque Country belongs to the department of the Pyrénées Atlantiques that belongs to France that is a member of European Union, of the Council of Europe, etc.

#### 2.- THE DEFINITION OF THE LIMITS OF EUROPE IS SURROUNDED BY CONTROVERSY

The physical geography does not give immediate limits of European territory. In fact, European continent does not exist as a physical unit: it shares one tectonic plate with Asia and together they form a supercontinent called Eurasia. The borders of Europe are therefore conventional.

Borders are often draw artificially, not only according to the geological but also cultural, political and religious criteria. Even the geological criteria change over the time.

According to the convention accepted by today's geographers, Europe's limits are defined by Ural and Caucasus mountains in the east, by the Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, straits of Bosphorus, Dardanelles and Gibraltar in the south, and by the Atlantic Ocean in the west.



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### **3.- GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPT**

Traditionally, all the landmass of the Earth is divided into six parts of the World (Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Oceania and Antarctica) that are often called, for convenience and historical tradition, continents. Some of these parts are divided only by a land boundary, what makes them technically only one continent. This is the case of Europe and Asia, considered by the scientists as one continent, Eurasia. Therefore, the boundary between Europe and Asia is more the matter of historical and cultural context than of geographical or geological facts.

Different borders were proposed by different geographers and historians. On the whole, the Arctic Ocean in the north, the Atlantic Ocean in the west and the Mediterranean Sea in the south are considered as coastal borders of Europe.

Since the 19th century, the eastern geographical limit between Europe and Asia is defined by the Ural Mountains, the Ural River, the Caucasus Mountains, the Black Sea, the straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and by the Aegean Sea. These limits are generally accepted, but the ones between the Ural and the Caspian Sea and around the Caucasus tend to vary depending on the author.

Nevertheless, the geographers recognize the conventional character of the land border of the Ural. The peaks of the Ural Mountains are easy to cross and they have never formed any political or cultural frontier. The Ural River is also easy to cross and doesn't have any particular but conventional signification.

### **4.- ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONCEPT**

From the anthropological point of view, Europe goes far beyond the sea borders, the Caucasus and the Russian steppes to embrace all the humankind: racially, Europe is where the colour of people's skin is white.

### **5.- THE HISTORICAL LIMITS OF EUROPE**

Despite the Greek myths, it seems that the word « Europe » has its origins in the ancient Semitic word (Ereb) meaning « to go down, set ». Besides, the Phoenician princess, kidnapped by Zeus, left to the west.

Originally, the terms Europe/Asia were used to refer to the two coasts of the sea where the Greek lived. For Greeks, the Aegean Sea was the inland sea and hence Europe corresponds to the Western Greece. The word Asia designed, at first, only Asia Minor (today's Anatolia). So the divide between Europe and Asia was originally a distinction between the west and the east parts of Greece: Asia and Europe were the two big regions forming Greece.

## **6.- EUROPE HAS BEEN FORMED PROGRESSIVELY THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY.**

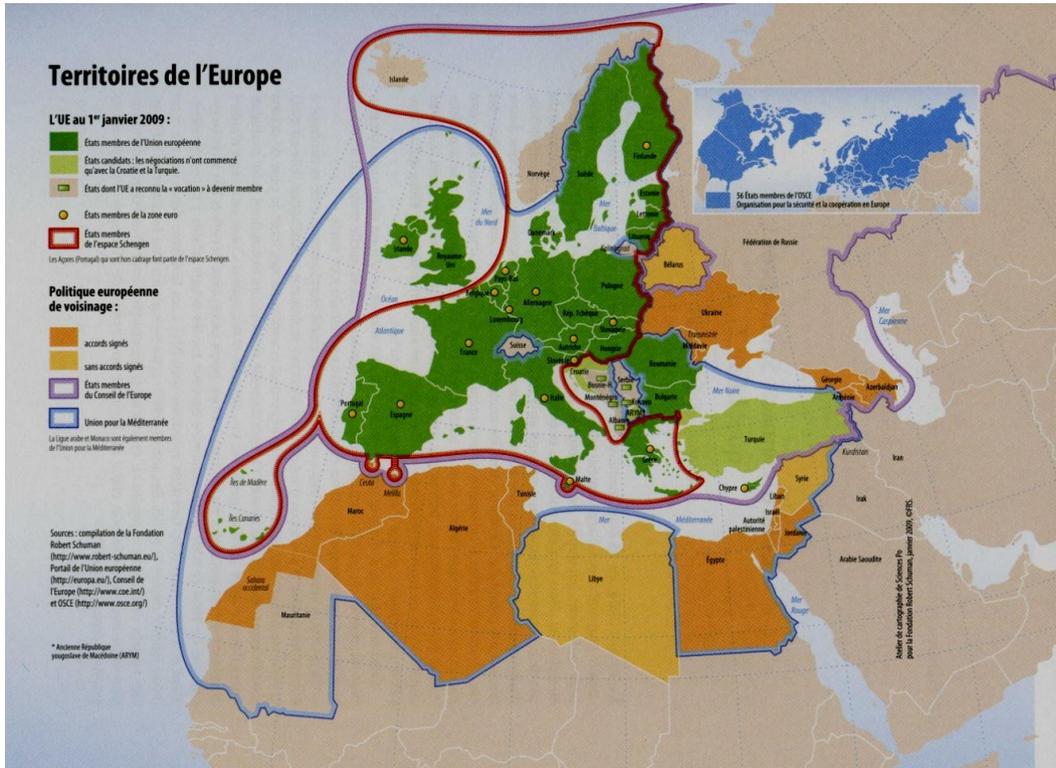
Historically, Europe was founded on the heritage of one part of the Roman Empire. However, despite the fact that its centre, Rome, is today situated in Europe, the Roman Empire is not actually at the origin of Europe. It was a Mediterranean empire and its European part never particularly individualized.

It is in the description of the battle of Poitiers (732) that we find the first historical reference to Europe as a social community, when the historian describes that the European troops discover Muslim tents. The first political Europe was created soon after by Charlemagne, who united one part of Latin Europe and a major part of Germanic Europe. This political unit did not survived for a long time, but the idea of a social European community has its origin here. Different European components were progressively attached to it throughout the history.

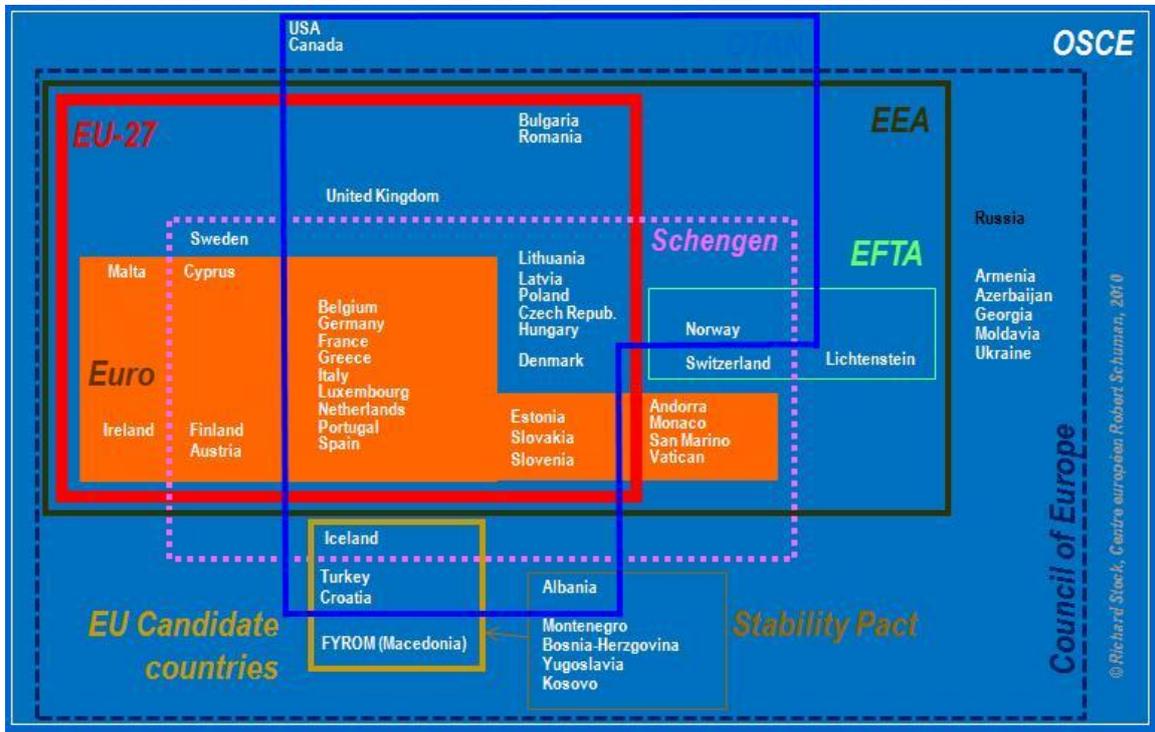
## **7.- THE LIMITS OF LEGAL EUROPE**

The diversity of institutions is so wide that sometimes we say that different Europes are being formed: political, economic and social Europe (European Union), political Europe of human rights (the Council of Europe), Europe of free movement (Schengen Area), the beginning of a diplomatic Europe (the Council of the European Union) or Europe of security and defence (NATO).

It is thus suggested to look for links between different European institutions: members, functions and connections.



## 8.- TERRITORIES ACCORDING TO EUROPEAN COUNTRIES MEMBERSHIP:



## 9.- BRIEF PRESENTATION OF EUROPEAN ORGANISATIONS:

9.1.- The **COUNCIL OF EUROPE** brings together, with its 47 members, almost all European countries. Its headquarters is situated in Strasbourg (France). Created on 5 May 1949 by ten founding countries, the Council of Europe's aim is to promote common standards of democracy and rule of law, based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other texts of reference concerning the protection of individuals.

9.2.- The **EUROPEAN UNION** is made up of 27 countries who, by passing it a part of their sovereignty, enable it to take democratic decisions on questions of common interest on European level. Until now, every country that joined the European Union was before a member of the Council of Europe. The first step of the European integration was the Schuman Declaration of 9 May (Schuman Plan) that founded the first European Community: the one of coal and steel.

9.3.- The Stockholm Convention, initiated by the United Kingdom and signed on 20th November 1959 by British, Norwegian, Danish, Swiss, Portuguese, Swedish and Austrian ministers established **EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION (EFTA)**. Its objective was to create a zone of free trade for the countries non-members of the European Economic Community (EEC) and to counterbalance the latter by bringing together countries not willing to join the EEC. Little by little, many members of the EFTA joined the EEC (for example the UK in 1973, Sweden in 1995, etc.). Three EFTA members (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and the European Union created in 1994 the **EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA (EEA)** and this way expanded the remit of the EFTA.

9.4.- In order to avoid emergence of any new dividing barriers between the enlarged European Union and its neighbours and to strengthen everyone's prosperity, stability and security, in 2004 the EU developed the **EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY (ENP)**. In this sense, it also addresses the strategic goals outlined in European Security Strategy defined in 2003. The EU offers its neighbours a privileged relationship based on mutual commitment to common values (democracy and human rights, rule of law, good governance, principles of market economy and sustainable development). The ENP goes beyond the existing relationships and offers deeper political relationship and

economic integration. In spite of remaining distinct from the enlargement process, the ENP does not prejudge the future development of their relationships with the Union, in accordance with the Treaty. The ENP applies to immediate Union's neighbours, by land as well as by sea: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldavia, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Despite Russia being as well a neighbour of the EU, our relationship is based on a strategic partnership comprising four « common areas ». The ENP has still not been « activated » for Belarus, Libya and Syria, since the specific agreements with the respective countries are not ratified yet.

9.5.- The goal of the **STABILITY PACT FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE** (in particular with the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia countries) is to reinforce the peace and security in South Eastern Europe, restore stability and avoid conflicts. It focuses on the democratization process, respect of human rights, economic reconstruction, cooperation, development and security. The Stability Pact, launched in 1999 by the European Union and the involved countries, in partnership with international organisations, is built on shared objectives and commitment to encourage the stability and economic growth.

9.6.- THE **UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN (UfM)**, officially called « Barcelona process: Union for the Mediterranean » is an international intergovernmental organisation with a regional focus. It was founded on the initiative of French Republic on 13th of July 2008 under the French presidency of the European Union. The UfM brings together countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea and all the EU members. There are 43 member countries: the 27 EU members, Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, Turkey and the League of Arab States. This organisation is a part of the Barcelona process, a pact connecting Europe and the countries bordering the Mediterranean launched in 1995. The main goals of this organisation concern environmental and energetic topics: water, energy (especially solar energy), environment (especially purification of the Mediterranean), sea highway, etc. Conversely, less consensual topics such as immigration, the nature of political regimes of member states, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, are not discussed. The headquarters is situated in Barcelona.

9.7.- The **NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION (NATO)**: military organisation of mutual assistance in case of an assault involving several Western countries. Formed in April 1949, it had for several years the Warsaw Pact as an adversary.

The founding countries of NATO are Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, The United Kingdom and the United States. Greece and Turkey joined the organisation in 1952, then Germany (western part) in 1955. In December 1966, France left the integrated military command to rejoin it in 2009.

In the beginning of the 90s, it is generally assumed in Europe as well as in North America, that the moment had come to balance the relationships on the both sides of the Atlantic and to see European members of the organisation to take the major part of the responsibility for their common security and defence. The first step is represented by the title V of the Treaty of Maastricht that established the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

From the beginning, the relationship between the EU and NATO was dominated by the opposing fears of overlap and divergence between the two institutions: the » 3 D's » namely the risk of decoupling (of the EU and NATO actions), of double use (in terms of the capacities) and of discrimination (of the NATO countries not integrated in the EU).

In December 2002, NATO and the EU published a joint declaration on the European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that paves the way for closer political and military cooperation between the two organisations. It sets out the political principles of the cooperation and guarantees the EU the access to the NATO's logistic and planning tools for the EU's own military operations.

In 2003, the European Union led its first two military operations of crisis management in Macedonia (operation Concordia) and in Democratic Republic of Congo (operation Artemis), the first one with NATO's means and capacities; the second one, independent EU operation initiated by France and then endorsed by the EU with France keeping the role of the leader nation, without demand for NATO support.

Another milestone was reached with the transfer of the responsibility of peacekeeping actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina from NATO to the EU. In December 2004, the European Union set up a justice and police mission in Kosovo called EULEX-Kosovo intended to work in cooperation with the KFOR, the NATO Kosovo Force formed in 1999 in order to provide a secure environment in a province where the Force is still deployed.

NATO plays the key role in the engagement of the international community in Afghanistan where it helps the Afghan authorities to establish the security and stability in order to enable the reconstruction process and effective management. NATO acts on three fronts:

1. It runs, under the UNO mandate, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)
2. A senior civilian representative, responsible for advancing the political-military engagement of the Alliance in the country
3. An extensive programme of cooperation with Afghanistan concerning the reforms of the defence, establishment of institutions of defence and military aspects of the defence sector reform.

9.8.- The **COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY (CSDP)** completes the spectrum of means of the European Union in the field of CFSP and foreign affairs in general. It is stated in the Treaty of Amsterdam (which came into force on the 1st of May 1999) that the common foreign policy includes « Petersburg missions » and thus the foundations for a defence policy were laid. The CSDP is a part of CFSP and it provides the European Union with the possibility of using the military and civilian means in order to prevent conflicts and to manage international crises.

In April 1999 the main principles of the cooperation between NATO and the EU were laid down:

1. NATO and the EU establish a relationship based on « consultation, cooperation and effective transparency
2. European countries take the steps that are necessary to reinforce their capacities of defence for new missions avoiding the « unnecessary double uses »
3. European allies of the EU (who are not members of the Union) will be able to take part in crisis response operations led by the European Union.

9.9.- **ORGANISATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)**, until 1995 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is an organisation whose aim is to promote the dialogue between the East and the West. The OSCE is the only European organisation that brings together all the countries of the European continent, even some non-European countries formed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It offers the possibility of maintaining a permanent political dialogue between Europe and its immediate neighbours. Two other non-European countries, the United States and Canada, have the status of associates.

9.10.- The Convention of Schengen created borderless area among the signatory countries. This territory is commonly called « **SCHENGEN AREA** » and it was named after the Luxemburgish village of Schengen, a border point between Germany, Luxembourg and France situated by the river Moselle, where the agreement was signed between the five countries concerned on the 14th of June 1985.

The Schengen Area was institutionalised at the European level by the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997. The Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force by the end of 2009, alters the legal rules concerning the Schengen Area and strengthens the notion of the « **AREA OF LIBERTY, SECURITY AND JUSTICE** ».

This involves more police and juridical cooperation and pooling visa policies, asylum and immigration policies; especially it aims at replacing the intergovernmental method by the community method. Now, foreign citizens who obtained long-term visa in one of the member states of the EU can move freely within the area.

9.11.- The euro zone (or the **ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION - EMU**) is a union of 17 member countries of the European Union that adopted euro as their national currency. Several criteria must be met in order to join the euro zone: these are the convergence criteria defined by the Treaty of Maastricht.

The euro zone was created in 1999 by 11 out of 15 members of the European Union at the time. Greece joined the euro area in 2001, Slovenia in 2007, Cyprus and Malta in 2008, Slovakia in 2009 and Estonia in 2011. Sweden and Denmark decided in the referendums not to adopt euro for the moment; the United Kingdom does not participate in the single currency.

The euro zone currently consists of 17 members: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

In Africa, **CFA franc** is the name of a monetary and economic area. This zone consists of states and territories derived from the former French colonial empire, states that were not French colonies like Cameroon (formerly German), Guinea Equatorial and Guinea-Bissau. After gaining their independence, the majority of these countries have chosen to remain in this homogenous monetary zone. Its institutional framework has been renovated and structured by a common exchange rate system. Negative values of their currencies are pegged to euro, whose value has been guaranteed by the Treaty of Maastricht.



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