

A world player

The European Union's external relations



Contents

The EU's global role	3
How the EU conducts its external relations	5
Common foreign and security policy	8
Trade benefits for all	11
Eradicating poverty through sustainable development	13
Humanitarian aid	15
Our partners around the world	17
Further reading	22

The EU's global role

The European Union is a world player.

It has a population of 450 million – more than the United States and Russia combined. It is the world's biggest trader and generates one quarter of global wealth. It gives more aid to poor countries than any other donor. Its currency, the euro, comes second only to the US dollar in international financial markets.

The EU did not set out to become a world power. Born in the aftermath of World War II, its first concern was bringing together the nations and peoples

of Europe. But as the Union expanded and took on more responsibilities, it had to define its relationships with the rest of the world. Just as it has worked to remove trade barriers, develop poorer regions and promote peaceful cooperation within its frontiers, so the Union works with other countries and international organisations to bring everyone the benefits of open markets, economic growth and stability in an increasingly interdependent world. At the same time, the EU defends its legitimate economic and commercial interests in the international arena.



© Royalty Free / Van Parys Media

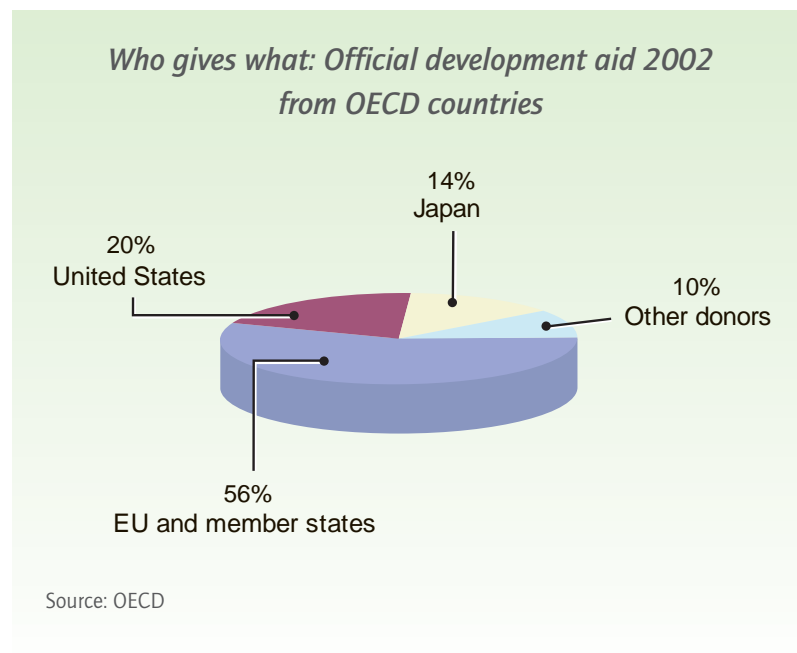
The European Union works with other countries and international bodies, like the United Nations, to spread peace and prosperity.

A major challenge now is to spread peace and security beyond the European Union's borders. To meet this challenge, the EU is developing a common foreign and security policy so that it can act as a force for stability, cooperation and understanding in the wider world.

For more than 40 years, the Cold War divided much of the world into two camps. Its ending led to a more complex and fragile world order, requiring greater EU involvement in preventing conflicts, keeping the peace and combating terrorism. The EU helps pay for the UN civil administration in Kosovo, provides ongoing financial support for

the Palestinian Authority and is contributing one billion euro to reconstruction in Afghanistan. In the western Balkans and central Africa in 2003, the EU embarked on the first missions under its new European defence and security policy. More will follow. By helping to create security and stability in the wider world, the EU also helps to make life safer within its own borders.

Finally, the European Union shows how countries can successfully pool economic and political resources in the common interest. It serves as a model for integration between countries in other regions of the world.



How the EU conducts its external relations

Since its birth in the 1950s, the European Union has been developing relations with the rest of the world through a common policy on trade, development assistance and formal trade and cooperation agreements with individual countries or regional groups.

The EU began providing humanitarian aid to those in need around the world in the 1970s. Since 1993, under the Maastricht Treaty, it has been developing a common foreign and security policy (CFSP) to enable it to take joint action when the interests of the Union as a whole are at stake. Defence is becoming an important aspect of the CFSP as the EU seeks to promote and maintain stability around the world. As it deals with terror, international crime, drug trafficking, illegal immigration and global issues like the environment, the Union also works closely with other countries and international organisations.

The EU's common trade policy operates at two levels. Firstly, within the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the European Union is actively involved in setting the rules for the multilateral system of global trade. Secondly, the EU negotiates its own bilateral trade agreements with countries or regions.

The EU is committed to helping developing countries export more.



Development assistance and cooperation, originally concentrated in Africa, was extended to Asia, Latin America and the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries in the mid-1970s. The underlying purpose is always to support sustainable growth and development in the partner countries, so that they have the resources to tackle and eradicate poverty. The Union has every interest in supporting its partners and encouraging them to be successful and prosperous.

More than trade and aid

The EU's agreements with its partners around the globe cover not only trade and traditional financial and technical assistance but also economic and other reforms as well as support for infrastructure and health and education pro-

grammes. They also provide a framework for political dialogue and contain a clause which enables the Union to suspend or cancel trade or aid if the partner country violates human rights. Moreover, in 2003, the EU decided that all new agreements must include a clause in which its partners commit themselves to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The EU has to make sure that the different aspects of its external policies are consistent with each other and convey a clear overall message. To help achieve this, it appointed a High Representative for foreign and security policy in 1999. In June 2004, EU leaders agreed in principle to create the post of EU foreign minister. This is one of the new arrangements laid down in the EU Constitutional Treaty.

Promoting human rights

The European Union promotes respect for human rights at home and abroad. It focuses on civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. It also seeks to promote the rights of women and children as well as of minorities and displaced persons.

Human rights feature in the EU's trade and cooperation agreements with its partners and are a prerequisite for countries seeking to join the Union itself. The EU has maintained a human rights dialogue in recent years with countries like China and Iran. It has imposed sanctions for human rights breaches on several countries including Serbia, Burma/Myanmar and Zimbabwe.

The EU also helps pay for a range of activities that defend human rights, such as the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights which spends around €100 million a year on:

- strengthening democracy, good government and the rule of law;
- support for the worldwide abolition of the death penalty;
- combating torture and impunity and supporting international tribunals and criminal courts;
- combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination against minorities and indigenous peoples.

In addition, the EU offers lower tariffs on imports from countries which respect the basic working conditions and labour standards laid down by the International Labour Organisation.



Human rights are for everyone.

Common foreign and security policy

The idea that a strong Europe should act as one on the world stage has encouraged member countries to work together to achieve a coherent approach to foreign policy. Progress over the years has been slow, but steady.

The first step was an ambitious but unsuccessful attempt in the early 1950s to create a European Defence Community among the six founding members of the European Union. Then came a process called 'European political cooperation', launched in 1970, which sought to coordinate the positions of member states on foreign policy issues of the day. EU countries produced joint statements whenever they could. But on particularly sensitive issues, it was not always possible to reach the required unanimous decision.

In the last 15 years, the Union has intensified efforts to play an international political and security role more in line with its economic status. The conflicts that erupted in Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 convinced EU leaders of the need for effective joint action. More recently, the fight against international terrorism has strengthened this conviction.

The lessons of the Balkans

The principle of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was formalised in 1992 in the Treaty of Maastricht. Only a few months later, war broke out in former Yugoslavia. The European Union tried unsuccessfully to broker a political solution to the crisis. As the EU had no military force of its own, its member countries could only intervene as part of UN and Nato forces which were later sent to the region.

Action against landmines

In December 1997, in the Canadian capital of Ottawa, 122 nations signed the Mine Ban Treaty. It bans the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of antipersonnel landmines and became binding international law on 1 March 1999.

International anti-mine action helps to promote global peace and stability and lessen human suffering in mine-affected regions. It continues to be a top priority for the European Union which contributed €40 million to this effort in the years 2000-2002 alone.

The lessons of this experience were not lost. In the light of the Balkan wars, and of conflicts in Africa in the 1990s, the EU has created a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) within the overall framework of the CFSP.

Under the ESDP, military or police forces can be sent to areas of crisis to carry out humanitarian operations, peacekeeping, crisis management and even peacemaking. Military action is carried out by an EU rapid reaction force, separate from Nato but with access to Nato resources.

The first missions carried out under the ESDP were in former Yugoslavia, the scene of earlier EU frustrations. An EU police mission replaced a taskforce of UN police officers in Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 2003, while an EU military force took over from Nato in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia three months later.

Attempts have been made over the years to streamline the way CFSP decisions are taken. But key decisions still require a unanimous vote – hard when there were 15 EU members, and now



The EU now has the capacity to deploy military peacekeepers.

even more difficult with 25. Despite their commitment to the CFSP, member governments sometimes find it hard to change their own national policy in the name of EU solidarity. Just how difficult this can be was illustrated by the deep divisions among EU member states in spring 2003 over whether the UN Security Council should authorise the US-led war against Iraq.

At a summit meeting in December 2003, EU leaders adopted a European security strategy. This recognises that citizens in Europe and elsewhere face potential threats from terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction and illegal immigration. Each kind of threat needs an appropriate response, often requiring international cooperation.

Prevention is better than cure

Violent conflicts take an unacceptable toll in terms of human suffering, destruction and wasted resources. During the 1990s, seven violent conflicts around the globe cost the international community €200 billion that could otherwise have been used for peaceful purposes. This is why the European Union is determined to act more effectively to prevent conflicts from happening in the first place.

The EU already uses a wide range of traditional tools, including technical and financial assistance to developing countries, economic cooperation and trade relations, humanitarian aid, social and environmental policies as well as diplomatic instruments like political dialogue and mediation. But it also employs new tools provided by the ESDP such as gathering information and monitoring international agreements to anticipate potential conflicts.

In a world where power no longer necessarily means security, the EU must be able to respond swiftly to specific situations as they arise – and with the right mix of instruments.

Trade benefits for all

The European Union is the world's biggest trader, accounting for 20% of global imports and exports. Open trade among its members underpinned the launch of the EU nearly 50 years ago and has brought growing prosperity to all its member states. The Union therefore takes a lead in efforts to open up world trade for the benefit of rich and poor countries alike.

Increased trade is likely to boost world growth to everybody's advantage. It brings consumers a wider range of products to choose from. Competition between imports and local products lowers prices and raises quality. The EU believes that globalisation can bring

economic benefits to all, including the developing countries, provided appropriate rules are adopted at the multilateral level and efforts are made to integrate developing countries in world trade.

That is why the European Union is negotiating with its partners to open up trade in both goods and services. The EU seeks to help developing countries by giving them better access to its market in the short term, while allowing them more time to open their own markets to European products. At the same time, the EU is reforming its agricultural policy - and this too will benefit developing countries.

African, Caribbean and Pacific countries have a special relationship with the European Union.



© WSHNETSKY

A team player

A team sport needs a level playing field, rules that all teams accept and a referee to ensure fair play. This is why the EU is a firm supporter of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which lays down a set of rules to help open up global trade and ensure fair treatment for all participants. Despite a perceived need for improvement, this system offers a degree of legal certainty and transparency in the conduct of international trade. The WTO also provides a dispute settlement procedure when direct disputes arise between two or more trading partners.

The EU has become a key player in the successive rounds of multilateral negotiations aimed at opening up world trade. It attaches particular importance to the current round, known as the 'Doha development round', which was launched in 2001. The aim is to remove obstacles to open trade, particularly to benefit developing countries.

More to trade than Doha

Trade rules are multilateral, but trade itself is bilateral – between buyers and sellers, exporters and importers. This is why the European Union has developed a network of bilateral trade

agreements with individual countries and regions across the world. The enlargement of the EU from 15 to 25 members in 2004 gives it added weight as a trading partner, particularly with its neighbours in eastern Europe and the Mediterranean basin.

The EU's trade policy is closely linked to its development policy. The two come together as the Union assumes its share of responsibility to help developing countries fight poverty and integrate into the global economy.

It has long recognised that trade can boost the economic growth and productive capacities of poor nations. As early as 1971, under its 'generalised system of preferences' (GSP), the EU began reducing or removing tariffs and quotas on its imports from developing countries. Furthermore, through its 'Everything but arms' initiative launched in 2001, the Union grants the 49 least-developed countries free access to the EU market for all their products, except weapons.

The special trade and aid relationship between the Union and its 78 partners in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (the ACP group) dates from 1975 and is considered a model for how rich countries can help poorer ones.

Eradicating poverty through sustainable development

About half the money spent to help poor countries comes from the European Union or its individual member states, making the EU the world's biggest aid donor. But development assistance is not just about providing clean water and surfaced roads, important though those are. It is also about helping the developing countries improve their trade performance by giving them better access to the EU market. This should enable them to

develop and strengthen their external trade and so take advantage of globalisation.

Not all have succeeded in doing this. Although the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries have a special relationship with the European Union, their share of EU markets has continued to fall, and they have become increasingly marginalised in world trade.

Water for life

Access to water and a fair sharing of trans-frontier water resources are major issues in all regions of the world and will be among the biggest development challenges of the 21st century. The EU's Water for Life initiative, launched in 2002, seeks to bring safe water and sanitation to the world's poorest regions, particularly in Africa but also in the Caucasus and central Asia, the Mediterranean and Latin America. The European Union has made one billion euro available to finance this initiative.



Access to water is a worldwide challenge.

This is why the EU's development strategy also focuses on helping poor countries improve their infrastructures, develop their productive potential and make their public administration and institutions more efficient. With this support, some will be able to grasp trade opportunities and secure more inward investment to broaden their economic base. This is essential in enabling countries to integrate into the global economy and achieve sustainable growth and development.

More specifically, the Union is combining trade and aid in a new way in the next generation of 'economic partnership agreements', currently being negotiated with the ACP countries and due to be in place by 2008. The idea is to help the ACP countries integrate with their regional neighbours as a step towards global integration, and to help them build institutional capacities and apply principles of good governance. At the same time, the EU will continue to open its markets to products from the ACP group, and other developing countries.

Deep pockets

The European Union and its member countries pay out more than €30 billion a year in official aid to developing countries, of which about €6 billion is

channelled through the EU institutions. The Union has committed itself to raising the annual total to €39 billion by 2006. Although EU members, like other industrialised countries, have accepted a target of spending 0.7% of their GNP on aid each year, only Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden have reached this target. The others have pledged to catch up. The average for the EU as a whole is 0.34%, higher than the United States or Japan.

The ultimate objective of EU policy is to give people in less advanced countries control over their own development. This is why EU priorities are to attack the sources of their vulnerability: ensuring better food and clean water; improving access to education, healthcare, employment, land and social services; providing better infrastructure and a better environment. EU initiatives also aim at eradicating diseases and providing access to cheap medicines to combat scourges like HIV/AIDS. The EU also seeks to cut the debt burden on poor countries.

Recognising that peace is a basic condition for sustainable development, the Union agreed in 2004 to set up a €250 million fund called the 'Peace facility', to support African peacekeeping and conflict prevention operations.

Humanitarian aid



Disaster victims in need of shelter receive emergency aid from the EU.

Virtually every week, images of natural or man-made disasters fill our television screens and newspaper front-pages. The European Union is at the centre of a network whose role is to alleviate the human suffering caused by these disasters. EU humanitarian aid is unconditional; the aim is to get help to victims as quickly as possible irrespective of race, religion or the political convictions of their government.

The EU is active in all trouble spots including Iraq, Afghanistan, the Palestinian Territories, and several parts of Africa. Its relief work is global, often taking place in "forgotten" crisis areas ignored by the cameras of the world media. These have included the northern Caucasus (especially Chechnya),

Tajikistan in central Asia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Central America.

The Union also draws on its experience to help people prepare for possible disasters in high-risk countries and regions prone to earthquakes, hurricanes, floods or drought.

The EU channels its relief funding through its Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO). Since it was set up in 1992, ECHO has confronted serious crises in more than 100 countries around the world, getting essential equipment and emergency supplies to the victims as quickly as possible. From its budget of more than €500 million a year, ECHO also funds medical teams, mine-clearance experts, transport and logistical support.

ECHO does not have the resources to do all this work itself. It therefore works closely with humanitarian partners – non-governmental organisations, UN specialised agencies and the Red

Cross/Red Crescent movement – to deliver food and equipment, provide rescue teams, set up emergency field hospitals and install temporary communications systems.

Acting together in the world

Humanitarian aid is just one area where the EU works closely with international organisations such as the UN, the WTO, Nato, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe and regional organisations in Africa, America, Asia and the Pacific.

The European Union believes in seeking multilateral solutions to global problems. It therefore attaches great importance to effective multilateralism, with a strong United Nations at its heart. The UN, with its universal mandate and legitimacy, is uniquely placed to respond to our common challenges.

EU member states strongly endorse the millennium development goals adopted by the United Nations in September 2000:

- to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- to achieve universal primary education
- to promote gender equality and empower women
- to reduce child mortality
- to improve national healthcare
- to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- to ensure environmental sustainability
- to develop a global partnership on development.

The EU as an organisation seeks to support these goals by focusing on six priority areas where it can use its special expertise. They are:

- trade and development
- regional cooperation
- poverty-reduction policies to support health and education
- transport infrastructure
- food security and sustainable rural development
- institutional capacity-building, good governance and the rule of law.

Our partners around the world

The European Union has a network of association, cooperation and trade agreements which criss-cross the globe, from its nearest neighbours in Europe to its most distant partners in Asia and the Pacific. To manage these relationships, the EU holds regular summit meetings or ministerial gatherings with its major partners.

The EU's most intensive relations are with four western European neighbours: Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. They are all members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) who have aligned themselves with large parts of the EU's internal market legislation and follow the EU in other policy areas. All except Switzerland participate, alongside the EU, in the European Economic Area (EEA).

Preparing for future enlargements

Four countries in south-eastern Europe are candidates for European Union membership. Bulgaria and Romania are expected to join the Union in 2007. The timing of Turkey's entry is less clear. Turkey is one of the EU's oldest trading partners with an association agreement dating from 1963, which now includes a customs union. It applied to join the EU in 1987. The fourth country, Croatia, was accepted as a candidate by the EU in June 2004. Its entry date will depend on the speed of its membership negotiations.

Another western Balkan country, the Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia submitted an application

in March 2004. Applying is the first step towards being accepted as a candidate country.

The European Union and the Western Balkan countries have together created a 'stabilisation and association process' which – in addition to Croatia and the FYR of Macedonia – covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, plus Serbia and Montenegro. While the ultimate goal is future EU membership, these countries have been given free access to the EU market and receive EU support for domestic reform programmes.

Turkey is a leading candidate for EU membership.





© WICHAESKY

Russia is the EU's biggest next-door neighbour.

As the next step, they may negotiate 'stabilisation and association agreements' with the Union, just as Croatia and the FYR of Macedonia had done, before they eventually apply for EU membership.

A friendly neighbourhood

The European Union is determined to ensure that the 2004 enlargement – and any subsequent enlargements – will not create new barriers between the expanded Union and its neighbours. This is why the EU is preparing to forge closer ties with its neighbours to the east (Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and eventually Belarus) – and to the south (the Mediterranean countries).

As part of its 'European Neighbourhood Policy' the EU plans to extend to

these countries many of the benefits of its internal market, to offer them additional trade concessions and financial assistance. In exchange, the EU's neighbours would make greater commitments to democratic reform and the market economy, and pay greater respect to human rights. As enlargement brings the EU into direct contact with neighbours marked by political and social instability, its response is to share with them its prosperity and stability, thus consolidating its own security.

Since the neighbours are transit points for illegal immigrants and traffickers in drugs and human beings, the EU is helping a number of them to strengthen their border management and immigration procedures.

Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and most countries in the south Caucasus and central Asia have agreements with the EU which cover trade, political cooperation, environmental protection and collaboration in scientific and cultural matters. With its biggest neighbour, Russia, the EU is developing a whole scheme for cooperation in a broad range of areas

These countries also benefit from the EU's TACIS assistance programme which is worth €3.14 billion in the period 2000-2006. It funds projects on institutional reform, infrastructure networks, private sector development, environmental protection and the rural economy.

As part of the 'Barcelona Process', the EU is committed to setting up a free trade area with its Mediterranean neighbours by 2010. This would include the Arab countries around the southern and eastern Mediterranean plus Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Trade is being opened up between the Union and each of its partners, and the latter are taking steps to trade more amongst themselves. For example, in 2004, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan

and Tunisia signed the 'Agadir Agreement' – a free trade agreement between them.

In the Middle East proper, the EU has been negotiating a free trade agreement with the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates). The EU is also supporting reconstruction efforts in Iraq.

Transatlantic ties

The transatlantic partnership with the United States is central to the EU's external relations. Trade and investment flow across the Atlantic at a rate of nearly one billion euro a day. Washington has long supported European integration. The EU and US share many common values and common interests, even though there are sometimes differences of emphasis and approach between them.

Given the size of their bilateral trade (the US takes 25% of EU exports and supplies 20% of its imports), it is not surprising that disputes break out between the two from time to time. Although these disputes make the headlines, they represent less than 2% of total transatlantic trade. The way the EU and the US have handled joint issues involving competition law or the recognition of each other's technical standards has served as a model for the Union's relationships with others, including Japan and Canada.

With Canada, the EU launched two ground-breaking initiatives in 2004 to deepen relations. One is to create an EU-Canada partnership agenda for cooperation on global issues. The other is to negotiate a new agreement for enhancing trade and investment between them.

Singapore: a gateway to business in Asia.



Asia moves closer

Although China and Japan are its biggest trading partners in Asia, the EU's longest-standing relationship is with the seven-member Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). This relationship began in 1972 and was formalised in a cooperation agreement in 1980. ASEAN took the initiative to expand relations with the EU into the process known as ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) in which Japan, China and South Korea also participate. ASEM holds a summit meeting every two years.

In recent years the EU has intensified its relations with Japan. An EU-Japan action plan, adopted in 2001, expands the range of bilateral cooperation beyond trade and investment to include political and cultural affairs. Europe has become the major source of foreign direct investment to Japan

and the largest recipient of Japanese foreign investment, surpassing the United States and China.

In line with the increasing importance of both the EU and China as global political actors, their relationship has grown dynamically in recent years, with greater emphasis on political dialogue, sectoral agreements and institutional exchanges. On the commercial front, China is now the EU's second biggest trading partner outside Europe - after the United States and ahead of Japan. The EU is one of the principal sources of foreign investment in China.

The EU is India's biggest trading partner and provider of foreign investment. Since they held their first summit meeting in June 2000, relations between them have blossomed and now embrace not only trade but also political dialogue, business summits, cultural cooperation and joint research projects.

Latin American links

The European Union is Latin America's second most important trading partner, its most important source of foreign direct investment and the leading donor of development aid for the region.

Every two years, the EU and all Latin American and Caribbean countries hold bi-regional summit meetings that cover a wide range of issues – political,

economic, educational, scientific, technological, cultural and social. All Latin American countries, in groups or individually, are now linked to the Union by association, cooperation or trade agreements.

The EU has been negotiating an association agreement with Mercosur (Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay), including the creation of a free trade area between the two groups.

China and India join Galileo

China and India have decided to participate in Galileo, the EU's satellite navigation system. This is a sign of Asian countries' desire to move beyond mere trade relations with the European Union.

The Galileo system, to be operational in 2008, will provide a more accurate alternative to the US network of global positioning satellites (GPS). Galileo will primarily be used for the geographic positioning of vehicles and other transport modes, as well as for scientific research, land management and disaster monitoring. It will also have government applications accessible only to EU member states.

Galileo girdles the globe.



© ESA

At the end of 2003, the EU concluded two separate political dialogue and cooperation agreements, one with the Andean Community and the other with Central America. The next step will be to negotiate association agreements with both regions. The European Union already has association agreements (including free trade arrangements) with Mexico and Chile, which were signed in 1997 and 2002 respectively.

Partnership with Africa

In addition to its traditional links to African countries via the Mediter-

ranean agreements or the ACP relationship, the EU has begun a new dialogue with the African Union (AU).

This includes conflict prevention and resolution and EU support for AU and United Nations peace-keeping efforts on the continent.

The EU-Africa partnership also covers regional economic cooperation and integration, trade, the fight against drought and desertification, action against HIV/AIDS and communicable diseases, food security, human rights and democracy and the war on terror.

Further reading



For more information on the different aspects of the European Union's external relations, visit europa.eu.int/comm/world/. Here you can find out about foreign policy issues, enlargement, external trade, development policy, humanitarian assistance and human rights.

For information on the Common Foreign and Security Policy go to ue.eu.int/pesc

European Commission

A world player
The European Union's external relations

Europe on the move series

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

2004 - pp. - 16.2 x 22.9 cm

ISBN 92-894-7414-9

The sheer size of the European Union in economic, trade and financial terms makes it a world player. It has a web of agreements with most countries and regions of the globe. The biggest international trader and home to the euro – the world's second currency – the EU spends €500 million a month on assistance projects in all five continents.

The European Union is putting in place a common foreign and security policy so that its members can act together on the world stage as a united force for stability, cooperation and understanding. At the same time, the EU is developing a defence capability and has undertaken its first peacekeeping missions. It is also engaged in fighting terrorism.

By helping build security and stability in the wider world, the EU is also helping to make life safer for people within its own borders.

The EU is particularly active in promoting the human aspects of international relations, such as solidarity, human rights and democracy.

Other information on the European Union



Information in all the official languages of the European Union is available on the Internet. You can access it through the Europa server: europa.eu.int



All over Europe there are hundreds of local EU information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at this website: europa.eu.int/comm/relays/index_en.htm



EUROPE *DIRECT* is a service which answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service by freephone: **00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11** (or by payphone from outside the EU: 32-2-299 96 96), or by electronic mail via europa.eu.int/europedirect

You can also obtain information and booklets in English about the European Union from:

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
REPRESENTATIONS

Representation in Ireland

18 Dawson Street
Dublin 2
Tel. (353-1) 634 11 11
Fax (353-1) 634 11 12
Internet: www.euireland.ie
E-mail: eu-ie-info-request@cec.eu.int

Representation in the United Kingdom

Jean Monnet House
8 Storey's Gate
London SW1P 3AT
Tel. (44-20) 79 73 19 92
Fax (44-20) 79 73 19 00/10
Internet: www.cec.org.uk

Representation in Wales

2 Caspian Point, Caspian Way
Cardiff CF10 4QQ
Tel. (44-29) 20 89 50 20
Fax (44-29) 20 89 50 35
Internet: www.cec.org.uk

Representation in Scotland

9 Alva Street
Edinburgh EH2 4PH
Tel. (44-131) 225 20 58
Fax (44-131) 226 41 05
Internet: www.cec.org.uk

Representation in Northern Ireland

Windsor House
9/15 Bedford Street
Belfast BT2 7EG
Tel. (44-28) 90 24 07 08
Fax (44-28) 90 24 82 41
Internet: www.cec.org.uk

Information services in the United States

2300 M Street, NW – 3rd floor
Washington DC 20037
Tel. (202) 862 95 00
Fax (202) 429 17 66
Internet: www.eurunion.org
3 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza
305 East 47th Street
New York, NY 10017
Tel. (212) 371 38 04
Fax (212) 688 10 13
Internet: www.eurunion.org

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT OFFICES

Office in Ireland

European Union House
43 Molesworth Street
Dublin 2
Tel. (353-1) 605 79 00
Fax (353-1) 605 79 99
Internet: www.europarl.ie
E-mail: epdublin@europarl.eu.int

United Kingdom Office

2 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AA
Tel. (44-20) 72 27 43 00
Fax (44-20) 72 27 43 02
Internet: www.europarl.org.uk
E-mail: eplondon@europarl.eu.int

Office in Scotland

The Tun, 4 Jackson's Entry
Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8PJ
Tel. (44-131) 557 78 66
Fax (44-131) 557 49 77
Internet: www.europarl.org.uk
E-mail: epedinburgh@europarl.eu.int

There are European Commission and Parliament representations and offices in all the countries of the European Union. The European Commission also has delegations in other parts of the world.

The European Union

You can find this booklet and other short, clear explanations about the EU online at europa.eu.int/comm/publications

European Commission
Directorate-General for Press and Communication
Publications
B-1049 Brussels

Manuscript finalised in July 2004

Cover illustration: M&S

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication.

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2004

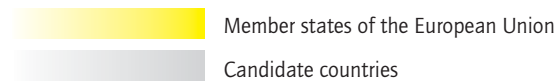
ISBN 92-894-7414-9

© European Communities, 2004

Reproduction is authorised

Printed in Belgium

PRINTED ON WHITE CHLORINE-FREE PAPER



EN



The sheer size of the European Union in economic, trade and financial terms makes it a world player. It has a web of agreements with most countries and regions of the globe. The biggest international trader and home to the euro – the world's second currency – the EU spends €500 million a month on assistance projects in all five continents.

The European Union is putting in place a common foreign and security policy so that its members can act together on the world stage as a united force for stability, cooperation and understanding. At the same time, the EU is developing a defence capability and has undertaken its first peacekeeping missions. It is also engaged in fighting terrorism.

By helping build security and stability in the wider world, the EU is also helping to make life safer for people within its own borders.

The EU is particularly active in promoting the human aspects of international relations, such as solidarity, human rights and democracy.

6

16

NA-59-04-548-EN-C

ISSN 1022-8233

A world player

The European Union's external relations

