

Viorel George Dumitru, Claudia Lazăr,
Alexandru Creangă, Alexandru Purcăruș

A Journey through EUROPE

Year 4

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THE STORY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Today, Europe is a land of peace, but this was not always the case in its past. Neighbouring or distant nations used to fight against each other, under the command of their leaders who aimed at ruling over more and more countries.

However, the nations on this old continent have often helped each other or they have formed alliances. For instance, Romania accomplished its Small Union between Moldova and Țara Românească, in 1859, with the help of France. Moreover, France gave us a helping hand during the First World War and also played an important role in our Big Union, in 1918. At that time the Romanians were under the leadership of Ferdinand I de Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, the son of a German prince.

Unfortunately, during the last century a few European countries had started two crucial military ordeals that spread like a wild fire over the entire world. That is why they were called the world wars. Tens of millions of people died and almost the whole planet suffered because of the wars. Everywhere there were smouldering ruins, poverty and misery.

In the aftermath, the Europeans decided that they would not accept such destruction and suffering anymore. We all live on the same continent, we all share common values and a long history, therefore we should get along together. We can all be good neighbours, live in freedom, show mutual respect, and give proper care to those in need.

It was no coincidence that a Frenchman – whose country was devastated by the two world wars – came with the idea that eventually led to the creation of the European Union. His name was Jean Monnet. He thought that if every European state was prevented from using their coal and steel industries at their own will, no wars could be started and fuelled. That is because the coal gives us energy and weapons are made from steel. If several states could impose a shared control, wars would be much difficult to start. Jean Monnet talked about his plan with his friend Robert Schuman. He was a minister in the French government at the time and welcomed the idea with great enthusiasm. He put it forward in a famous speech he made on the 9th of May 1950. A year later, France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg decided to regulate their industrial production under a centralised authority and the European Coal and Steel Community was established. It was the first step towards creating the European Union.

In 1957, the European Economic Community was set up, and some more countries joined it. The organisation had become so successful by 1992, that a decision was made to change its name into the European Union.

On the 1st of January 2007, Romania became a member of this large family that now includes 28 states.

However, there are some other European countries which are not members of the European Union, such as Turkey, Bosnia, Albania and Kosovo. Therefore, we should not mistake the continent called Europe for the European Union. Only some of the countries located on the continent belong to the club named the EU.



The history of the European Union is interesting and fascinating. On one hand, there are countries wishing to join the European Union, on the other hand, there is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the UK) that wants to leave the Union.

1. Read the text and answer the following questions:

- What country helped Moldova and Țara Românească to accomplish their Small Union?

- What happened while the two World Wars took place?

- What idea led to the creation of the European Union?

- Who are the two political figures who set off the European Union?

- Which states decided in 1951 to regulate their coal and steel industries under a centralised authority?

- What did this Union stand for at first?

- When did the present name, the European Union, come up?

- Name five member states of the EU.

- Name two countries which are not members of the EU and one country that is going to leave the EU.

2. Read the statements below and decide whether they are true or false. Mark each of them with T for True and with F for False.

- J. Monnet forwarded the proposal to impede the control of the European states over their coal and steel industries.
- Monnet's idea was welcomed by R. Schuman.
- In 1951, Romania, Italy, Germany and France decided to regulate their coal and steel industries under a centralised authority.
- In 1957, the European Economic Community was set up.
- On the 1st of January 2007, Romania joined the European Union.
- Albania, Kosovo and Turkey are not members of the EU.
- Romania has been a member of the EU for 3 years.
- The currency of the European Union is the euro.

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WANDERING AROUND EUROPE

Doru and Dinu want to go on a trip around Europe. Although they have a map and several travel guides, the two boys find it difficult to figure out the routes, the places to visit or the length of their trip. Would you like to help them?



1. Read the statements below and mark the correct answer, Yes or No.

| | YES | NO |
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| • The closest city to Bucharest is Dublin. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Rome lies south of Athens. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • In Paris there is a famous monument called the Eiffel Tower. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Santa Claus's home is located in the North of Europe. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Prague is closer to Berlin than to Lisbon. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Lisbon and Dublin are the farthest cities from Bucharest. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • We are allowed to travel without restrictions all over Europe. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Budapest is the closest capital city to Bucharest. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |