

The United States of Europe is a fine ideal

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With my research I am going to refer to the European Union (EU) from its creation until today. In the light of the information gathered, it is believed that the creation of this Union led its member states to a peaceful, united and prosperous Europe. It has undergone expansions that have taken it from 6 member states to 28.

The European Union is set up with the aim of ending the frequent and bloody wars between neighbours, which was an outcome of the Second World War. In 1950, the European Coal and Steel Community began to unite European countries politically and economically in order to promote and secure peace. The six founders and leaders are Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. After forming the Schuman plan¹, these six countries sign a treaty to run their heavy industries - coal and steel – under a common management, so that none can on its own make the weapons of war to turn against the other, as Germany did in the past.

The European Union is based on the rule of law, which is established by treaties that have been approved voluntarily and democratically by all member countries. This means that if a policy area is not cited in a treaty, the Commission cannot propose a law in that area. A treaty is a binding agreement between member states. Treaties are amended to make the EU more efficient and transparent, to prepare for new member countries and to introduce new areas of cooperation, such as the single currency. Under the treaties, institutions of the EU can adopt legislation, which the member countries then implement.

There have been signed lots of EU treaties since its creation to clarify the rights and the obligations of all member states. Some of them are:

The Treaty of Lisbon:

The Treaty of Lisbon was signed in 13 December 2007 and came into force on 1st December, 2009. Its purpose was to make EU

¹ Robert Schuman was a Luxembourg-born French statesman. He was a fervent supporter of democracy, an independent political thinker and activist. He was elected twice as Prime Minister of France and he is regarded as one of the founders of the European Union and NATO.

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more democratic, more efficient and better able to address global problems. It also clarified which powers:

- belong to the EU
- belong to EU member countries
- are shared

The Treaty of Amsterdam:

The Treaty of Amsterdam was signed on 2 October in 1997 and came into force in 1999. Its purpose was to reform the EU institutions in preparation for the arrival of future member countries.

The Treaty on European Union – Maastricht Treaty:

The Maastricht Treaty was signed on 7 February 1992 and came into force on 1 November 1993. Its purpose was to prepare for European Monetary Union and introduce elements of a political union. It also established the European Union and its goals of cooperation.

The European Union has seven institutions as its governance: The European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, The European Commission, the European Council, the European Central Bank, the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Auditors.

European Council:

The European Council gives direction to the EU and convenes at least four times a year. It comprises the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and one representative per member state; either its head of state or head of government. The European Council is to be the “supreme political authority” of the EU. It uses its leadership role to sort out disputes between member states and the institutions and to resolve political crises and disagreements over controversial issues and policies.

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European Commission:

The European Commission acts as the EU's executive arm and is responsible for initiating legislation and the day-to-day running of the EU. The commission is also seen as the motor of European integration. It operates as a cabinet government with 28 Commissioners for different areas of policy, one for each member state. The Commissioners are bound to represent the interests of the EU as a whole rather than their home state.

European Parliament:

The European Parliament forms one half of the EU's legislature. The 751 members of the European Parliament are directly elected by EU citizens every five years on the basis of proportional representation. The Parliament in cooperation with the Council of the European Union have passed legislation jointly in nearly all areas under the ordinary legislative procedure. The Commission is accountable to Parliament, requiring its approval to take office, having to report back to it and subject to motions of censure from it.

European Union has now achieved to have 28 member states which are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. These member states are meant to have equal rights and cooperate in order to promote peace, liberty and political, social and economic development, acting as one big country.

The main aim of the European Union, as stated in its preamble, was to "preserve peace and liberty and to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the people of Europe"². Calling for balanced economic growth, this was to be accomplished through the establishment of a custom union with a common external tariff, common policies for

² This aim was instituted by the Maastricht Treaty, which established the European Union and clarified its aims and goals.

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agriculture, transport and trade and enlargement of the EU to the rest of the Europe.

A questionnaire was given to a hundred people of all ages during this research. After analyzing the information gathered from all

Ages	18-24	25-34	35-44	45+
Was the creation of European Union a good choice?	90% yes 10% no	100% yes	100% yes	95% yes 5% no
Do all member states have equal rights?	70% yes 30% no	40% yes 60% no	45% yes 55% no	30% yes 70%no
Do you think member states with economic power are leaders of the EU?	100% yes	95 % yes 5% no	100% yes	90% yes 10% no
What do you think of the EU and its purposes?	Its purpose is economic growth.	Its purpose is development and cooperation.	Its purpose is the promotion of peace and liberty.	Its purpose is cooperation and economic growth.
What are the advantages for citizens of the EU?	Travelling easily around Europe.	Cooperation and team spirit.	Same laws and political decisions.	Same institutions.
Do you think that the EU would end up like a federation like the USA?	No	Maybe	Maybe	Yes
Is there something that you would change in the EU?	Same currency.	Same currency and equal rights.	Equal rights and less laws.	Less taxes and same currency.

answers I was able to come up with the statistics:

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In the light of the information gathered, it is believed that EU has been promoting peace and liberty since its establishment.

Although many national problems have been solved thanks to EU governance, there are still many to go. It is my belief that EU will come up with a solution every time a problem arises. As a citizen of a member state of the EU, I strongly support the enlargement of the EU to all around Europe, as well as the use of the euro currency by all member states in order to develop as a whole.

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