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[S]upranational [C]ooperation in the [E]uropean Union

[1]4.1 Introduction

[H]ave you ever traveled from the United States to another country? If so, [y]ou know that crossing international borders isn't as easy as crossing state [b]orders within the U.S. You probably had to stop and show identification. [Y]ou might have had to trade your U.S. dollars for a different type of money.

Now imagine that you're in Europe, crossing the border from France to Germany. You don't have to stop to show your passport. You use the same money in both countries. The main difference you notice after crossing the border is a change in language—people here are speaking German instead of French.

People today travel easily between many European countries because of the **European Union,** or EU. The EU is a *supranational* organization. In 2009, it had 27 member countries. *Supra* is a Latin prefix that means "above" or "over." The government of the European Union stands above the governments of its members. Because it is supranational, the EU has been able to remove barriers that once made travel between European nations complicated. In addition to having "open" borders with each other, many EU nations use a common form of money.

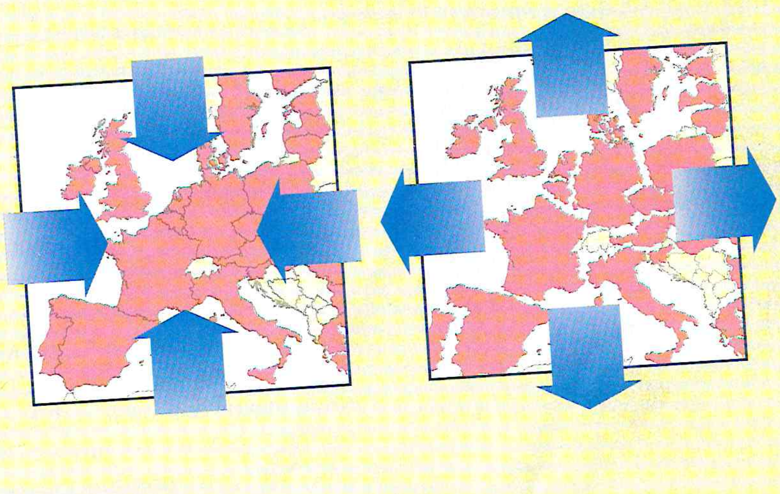
While EU countries use **supranational cooperation** to work toward shared goals, they remain separate countries. These countries are united in certain ways, but divided in others. In this chapter, you will learn about the forces that work for and against supranational cooperation in the EU.

Essential Question

What forces work for and against supranational cooperation among nations?

These two maps show Europe. The highlighted countries are members of the European Union. The map on the left represents things that unite EU countries. The map on the right represents things that pull EU countries apart. Keep these maps in mind as you try to answer the Essential Question.

Graphic Organizer



◀ European Union flag flying over a city in the Czech Republic