



Europe Day in the EU

Celebrations and symbols help create a cultural identity. Every year on May 9, people celebrate Europe Day. The day honors Europe's "birthday." It was on this day in 1950 that Robert Schuman proposed creating a more united Europe. Symbols like the EU flag add to the feeling of a shared culture.

14.5 Cultural Cooperation in the EU

In the year 2000, students across the European Union took part in a contest to create a motto for the EU. These students sent in more than 2,000 possible mottoes. After considering the students' ideas, the EU announced its choice in 2003: "United in Diversity."

The words in this motto are important. The goal of the EU is to unite Europeans to form an "ever closer union." Since the EU began, it has worked toward a common European **cultural identity**. At the same time, the EU recognizes the **diversity** of its members, and sees diversity as a strength. The word *diversity* refers to all the ways in which people are different from one another. Areas of diversity may include language, religion, ethnicity, beliefs, traditions, and values. These aspects of culture are what make each member country of the EU unique.

How the EU Promotes a European Cultural Identity A common cultural identity is a centripetal force. To help make EU countries "United in Diversity," the EU has made it a goal to encourage a common European cultural identity.

One way the EU encourages a European cultural identity is through the use of common cultural symbols. The European flag, which shows a circle of 12 yellow stars on a blue background, symbolizes unity. It was originally created by the Council of Europe, which encouraged all European institutions to adopt the symbol. When the EU formed, it also used the flag as the official emblem of European unity.

Another symbol that the EU has adopted is the European anthem, which takes its melody from Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. When used as the anthem, it is always played without words, in the "universal language of music."

Europe Day is another symbol of European unity. Europeans celebrate Europe Day on May 9, the anniversary of the date in 1950 when Robert Schuman first proposed a supranational European organization. Europe

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