

# The Symbols of the European Union



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The EU is recognizable by several symbols, the most famous being the circle of yellow stars against a blue background, but what are the others?



# The European flag



The European flag symbolises both the European Union and, more broadly, the identity and unity of Europe.

It features a circle of 12 gold stars on a blue background. They stand for the ideals of unity, solidarity and harmony among the peoples of Europe.

The number of stars has nothing to do with the number of member countries, though the circle is a symbol of unity.



# History

The history of the flag goes back to 1955. The Council of Europe - which defends human rights and promotes European culture - chose the present design for its own use. In the years that followed, it encouraged the emerging European institutions to adopt the same flag.

In 1983, the European Parliament decided that the Communities' flag should be that used by the Council of Europe. In 1985, it was adopted by all EU leaders as the official emblem of the European Communities, later to become the European Union. In addition, all European institutions now have their own emblems.



# The euro



# History

The euro is the official currency for 19 of the 27 EU member countries. A long preparatory path of over 40 years led to the introduction of the euro in 2002. The European Central Bank and the European Commission are in charge of maintaining its value and stability, and for establishing the criteria required for EU countries to enter the euro area.

Tangible proof of European integration, the single currency has a specific history of design, implementation, and policies.



# The European anthem





The anthem symbolises not only the European Union but also Europe in a wider sense. The poem "Ode to Joy" expresses Schiller's idealistic vision of the human race becoming brothers - a vision Beethoven shared.

In 1972, the Council of Europe adopted Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" theme as its anthem. In 1985, it was adopted by EU leaders as the official anthem of the European Union. There are no words to the anthem; it consists of music only. In the universal language of music, this anthem expresses the European ideals of **freedom, peace and solidarity.**

