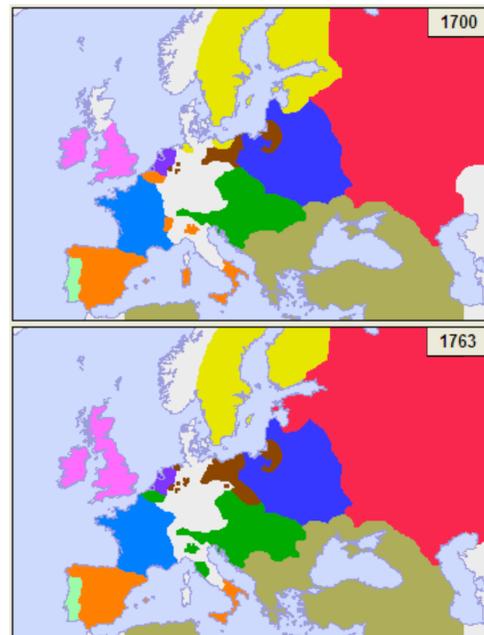


D. The Great Northern War (1700-22): Russia Joins the Europe of Nations

1. Like Spain and Portugal, and Britain, Russia is on the periphery of Europe. Unlike them, however, it is *not* a part of the European Union. Russia's history of relations with Europe has contributed to a deeply conflicted view of its neighbors to the west. On the one hand, Russia admires and envies Europe's wealth and sophistication. On the other hand, Russians have developed a distrust and fear, verging on paranoia, concerning European aggression.
2. Russian history begins back in 862 AD, with the establishment of a ruling monarchy in what was then called "Kievan Rus."
3. For centuries Russia was isolated from Europe. As the tribes of eastern Europe coalesced into nations, Russia found itself cut off from Europe by Sweden to the north, Poland in the middle, and the Muslim Ottoman Empire to the south.
4. Trade had been established by England and others via a northern route (over Scandinavia) that was accessible only in the summer, and this was enough contact to draw the attention of a young prince named Peter, who realized that Russia was far behind Europe in terms of technology and military power.
5. As Tsar (a Russian title for "Caesar," meaning "ruler"), Peter resolved to catch up to Europe by learning as much as possible for himself and leading the Westernization of Russia.
6. Peter traveled to Europe and not only visited with royalty, but also worked in shipyards and met with commoners in order to obtain any practical information he could and to hire experts to return to Russia with him. Upon his return to Russia, he implemented reforms to its military and made preparations to establish a better sea route to Europe.
7. He then embarked on a war to wrench away control of the eastern shores of the Baltic sea from Sweden (in yellow, on the map to the right).
8. This *Great Northern War (1700-22)* determined the fate of north-eastern Europe. Sweden began to contract into a minor power. Russia won access to the Baltic and joined the Europe of Nations.
9. To symbolize that Russia had joined Europe, Peter (known as "the Great") had a new capital city, St. Petersburg, constructed at the western-most extremity of Russia, on the Baltic Sea.



Europe, before and after the major wars of the early eighteenth century, including the *Great Northern War (1700-22)*. Russia in red, took over control of the eastern Baltic Sea from Sweden and thereby obtained a sea route to the rest of Europe that was navigable year-round. Peter "the Great" thus achieved his goal of injecting Russia into the Europe of Nations.