

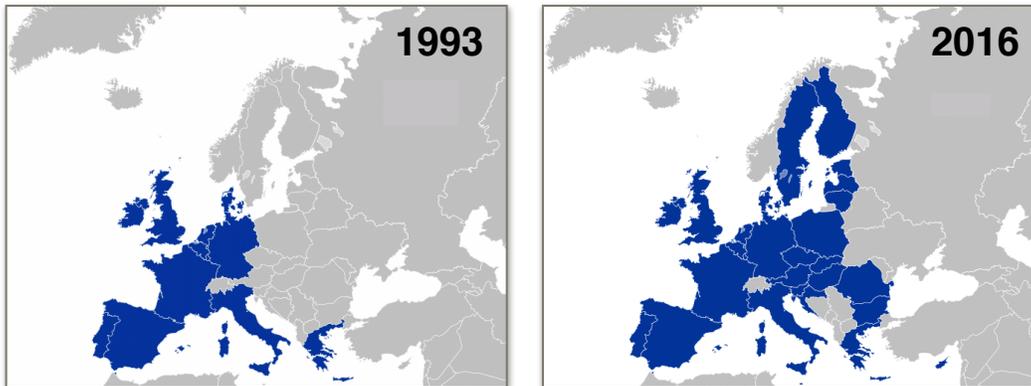
II. Preparing to Study Europe as a *Part of the World*

A. Europe as a Cardinal Culture

1. Taking the world's nearly two hundred countries and organizing them into *ten* major cultural blocks is a useful way to prepare for the study of history. It makes the world a much more manageable sum.
2. We can take it one step further, and say that some of the major cultures matter most of all. They can be called "cardinal" cultures.
3. The word "cardinal" means "of prime importance." It comes from the Latin root word "cardo," meaning "hinge."
4. Without a doubt, the *United States* is the country with the most military power, the largest economy, and the greatest cultural influence on others. It is in a leadership role in the world. The course of history hinges on America's choices and actions.
5. Europe is another cardinal culture. Europe's culture influence is the reason why European languages are the most widespread around the world, and why European forms of government are in use in countries as different as America and China.
6. Today, Europe's influence revolves around the fact that it is the one culture in the world that champions a new form of government called "supranationalism."

B. Supranationalism

1. In **1993**, a group of nations in Europe, including the largest and most important countries such as France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom, and various smaller ones, formed into the "European Union" (EU).
2. The goal of this "union" is to create a single government that will replace and cancel out their national governments.
3. Since the formation of the European Union in 1993, its membership has expanded from an original 12 members to 28 today.
4. In 2016, however, voters in Great Britain embraced the message of the "United Kingdom Independence Party" (UKIP) that the European Union had undermined their nation's independence and chose to withdraw from the European Union. If the process of withdrawal, which is long and formal, continues to fruition, it will represent the first *contraction* of the Union.
5. In 2017, French voters decided to stick with the European Union despite the challenge to supranationalism by the *National Front* party, led by Marine Le Pen, who placed second in the presidential election while running on a platform that France must withdraw from the EU.
6. What is at stake? What is the European Union exactly? And why are Europeans obviously split on whether or not continue with this experiment in government?



The European Union has expanded from 12 to 28 members since 1993.

7. The key to understanding the European Union is the concept “supranationalism.”
8. The core concept of “supranationalism” is “nation.” Often used as a synonym for “country,” the word “nation” has a more technical meaning that is important understand. The Latin root word of “nation” is “*natio*,” meaning “birth.” Nations are countries whose people were almost all born there and feel a strong attachment to a culture that is uniquely their own, including food & drink, arts & crafts, religious beliefs, traditions and history.
9. From the concept “nation,” one builds the concept “nationalism,” which is the idea of belonging to a nation.
10. European history has brought the people of the separate and distinct nations of Europe to the point of modifying the concept “nationalism” by adding the unusual prefix “*supra-*”.
11. The key to use of “supra” in the word “supranationalism” is that “supra” is similar to “super,” but very importantly different. *Supernationalism* would be an enhanced or extra powerful form of nationalism. *Supranationalism*, on the other hand, means nearly the opposite. It involves the cancelation of nationalism by placing something *over and above it*. Why would anyone invent such an idea?



The goal of the European Union is to replace the national flags (and national sentiment that these flags represent) with a single identity over and above them, symbolized by the European flag. The goal is to create a “*United States of Europe*” like the United States of America. Only Europe’s parts are not states—they are *nations*.