The European Union is a politico-economic union of 28 member states. A first idea of Europe can be found during the fascist oppression. Two exiled Italian people (Rossi and Spinelli) wrote down the “Manifesto of Ventotene”, in which there is the idea of a political and economic union between nations; the goals of this union consisted in founding Europe again and maintaining peaceful contacts among state members. In 1952 the European Community of Coal and Steel was founded by West Germany, France, Italy and Benelux (Belgium, Netherlands and Luxemburg).

The first European treaty was the European Economic Community (E.E.C.) established with the treaty of Rome in 1957 and it is considered the first pillar of Europe together with the second and the third one: foreign policy and justice. In 1992, the treaty of Maastricht was written: it established the political rules and economical parameters to become new members of Europe.

**Treaty of Maastricht**

It was signed on the 7th of February 1993 and entered into force on 1 November 1993. The Treaty of Maastricht establishes the formation of the European Union and, by this, the European Economic Community becomes European Community (EC). Moreover, it abolishes customs restriction to support a common commercial policy and the free circulation of goods and money. The Union Citizenship is instituted and thanks to these workers it becomes possible to circulate freely in every part of Europe. The Treaty established the ratio between public debt and GDP and gave directives to non-European countries if they wanted to become part of Europe.

**Pact of Stability**

In 1997, the E.U. countries approved the Pact of Stability that fixed the requirements of adhesion to the Eurozone. The members that were interested in accepting the Pact of Stability should accept these parameters:

1. The deficit must be less than 3% of the GDP for each country;
2. The public debt must be under 60% of GDP.

If the deficit is approximately 3% of GDP, the European commission and the council of the European ministers issue an "Early Warning". A country that exceeds the 3% will have a penalty of 0.5% of GDP. Greece has the highest public debt and the highest public deficit; Italy is the second worst about public debt.
Treaty of Schengen

This treaty involves both 22 Member Countries of EU and 4 non-European countries.

Schengen treaty abolishes border controls and allows people to move from one country to another within the “Schengen Space”, which is made up of all countries who approved the treaty. At first, there were only 5 States, nowadays there are 26. Italy approved the treaty in 1997 and Portugal in 1995.

Treaty of Amsterdam

It was signed in 1997 by 15 countries of the EU and it entered into force on the 1st of March 1999.

It had different points: renumbering of articles and other treaties; formalization of “Enhanced cooperation”, which consisted in a powerful union in a political and judiciary level; incorporation of Schengen Agreement in the “First Pillar”; introduction of “Occupation” in the “First Pillar”; introduction of “Social Accord” in the “First Pillar”.

It also reiterates equality and no discrimination between men and women, allows European people to move from a country to another European one and sustains environmental policies.

Treaty of Lisbon

The treaty of Lisbon is an international agreement which amends the two treaties which form the constitutional bases of the E.U. The treaty of Lisbon was signed by the E.U. member states on 13th December 2007 and entered into force on 1st December 2009. It derives from the European Constitution, which was rejected by France and Holland in 2005.

Topics: prominent changes included the move from unanimity to qualified majority voting in at least 45 policy in the council of ministers, a change in calculating such a majority to a new double majority, a more powerful European parliament forming a bicameral legislature alongside the council of ministers under the ordinary legislative procedure, a consolidated legal personality for the E.U. and the creation of a long term president of the European Council and a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affair and Security Policy.

The treaty for the first time gave member states the explicit legal right to leave the E.U. and a procedure to do so.

The treaty also made the Union's Bill of Rights, the Charter of Fundamental Right, legally binding members.

Institutions

The European Council sets the EU’s overall political directions but has no powers to pass laws. Led by its president – currently Donald Tusk – and comprising national heads of state or
government and the president of the commission, it meets for a few days at least twice every six months.

There are three main institutions involved in EU legislation:

- The Council of the European Union, which represents the government of the individual member countries. The presidency of the Council is shared by the member states on a rotating basis but the President lasts for 2 years and a half.
- The European Parliament, which represents the EU’s citizens and is directly elected by them.
- The European Commission, which represents the interests of the Union as a whole. Its president is elected through the Parliamentary elections. The current President is Frederick Juncker, after ten years of the Portuguese José Manuel Durão Barroso's presidency.

There are other two institutions in Europe:

- Court of Justice, which interprets EU law to make sure it is applied in the same way in all EU countries. It also settles legal disputes between EU government and EU institutions.
- The European Central Bank (ECB): the main task of ECB is to preserve the purchasing power of the Euro and to ensure the maintenance of price stability in the Euro Area.

EDUCATION in Europe

In Europe, tuition fees of university vary widely from country to country; it is impossible to ask more money to foreign students because students are entitled to the same scholarships of the people born in the country.

The European Union established some programs of educational initiative to help the students that want to have an experience in a foreign university, to strengthen the European dimension of education at all levels, to improve knowledge of European languages, to promote co-operation and mobility throughout education, to encourage innovation in education, to promote equal opportunities in all sector of education.

One of these programs is Erasmus (European community action scheme for the mobility of university students) born in 1987 thanks to a student association called Aegee. It was a students’ exchange programme that involved 33 countries and 4000 higher institutions. Only students who have completed at least one year of tertiary-level study can participate to Erasmus project. The Erasmus program permits students to study in one European university from 3 to 12 months and guarantees that the period spent in this university is recognised by university when the students come home. A main part of the programme is that students don’t pay extra fees to hosting university. The same students may receive a grant for studying. Moreover there is the Erasmus
Project Successful Measures and Real Targets
A Survival Pack for Active Citizens

SMART PACK

Plus (from 2014), it is the new program of mobility of European Union that includes new fields: formation, youth, education and sports. In fact there are programs against doping and racism.

Another programme is the Comenius, this project involves primary, middle and high school of different countries. It helps young people cultures, languages and values. All the schools involved in the Comenius have to work on a topic that promote the understanding of the values of the cultural and linguistic differences.

The Comenius also includes cultural exchanges to permit the schools to work together and to open the mind to the different cultures when you live in a hosting house. The EU gives money to the participants to guarantee these activities. Since 2014, Comenius was included in the global Erasmus Plus Program, which englobes all previous initiatives (Erasmus, Comenius, Leonardo Da Vinci, Grundtvig…). However, until 2015 there are still some of the former initiatives going on, since they refer to a 2-year programs formerly approved in 2013.

Living in Europe

WORK
European citizens have the right to work in another EU country, including the public sector, for example in state-owned companies, government bodies and public authorities.

To get a job in the public sector, citizens may need official recognition of their qualifications in the country where they want to work. The procedures to access a regulated profession in another country depend on whether:
- the citizen wants to settle in the host country and practice this profession there (establishment), in this case recognition of his qualifications is needed.
- the citizen wants to temporarily provide services there, in this case he/she will only need to make a written preliminary declaration.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH-SCHOOLS
Young European citizens have the right to attend school in any EU country under the same condition as nationals of that country.

They can attend a class with their own age group, at the equivalent level to their class in the country of origin. If a citizen migrates to another EU country for work, his/her children have the right to receive free language tuition. There isn't an automatic EU-wide recognition of school certificates because the school system of the new home country may be very different from the country of origin.

MOBILITY
If a citizen moves to another country, he/she can drive there with his/her current license as long as it remains valid. Provisional license issued in the country of origin will not be recognized in other EU countries.
The citizen can have his/her license renewed only by the authorities of the country where he/she is resident.

HEALTH CARE
When you move to another EU country you can get healthcare under the same conditions as other local residents. Which countries’ health care system ultimately pays for your medical treatment will depend on your specific situation.
If you seek health care in an EU country other than the one you moved to, then the rules about who is responsible for your healthcare costs depend on both:
- your situation (for example, whether you are a pensioner or employed);
- the country you are living in (different countries apply different rules).