



evropský  
sociální  
fond v ČR



EVROPSKÁ UNIE



MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,  
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY



OP Vzdělávání  
pro konkurenceschopnost



INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

## European Union – Worksheet

### 1.1 Reading

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EU

The European Union is a political and economic organization established to encourage trade and friendly relations between its member countries. It is a supranational and intergovernmental union of 27 independent countries. The EU represents a single market with a common trade policy, a common agricultural, fishing and regional policy. All members remain sovereign and independent, although they do have to abide by collective regulations of the union.

#### HISTORY OF THE EU

1951 Treaty of Paris – formation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)

1957 Treaty of Rome – the first full customs union – the European Economic Community (EEC)

1992 The Maastricht Treaty – Treaty of the European Union

#### EU MEMBER STATES

The founder states are: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Germany. In 1973 Denmark, Ireland and the UK joined in. Between 1981-1995, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Finland and Sweden were accepted. In 2004 came Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Since then, the EU has been joined by Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia. Since 31 January 2020 the UK is no longer a member. The country reached the decision to leave the union after a referendum held in 2016 (the process is called Brexit – “British exit”).

#### EU FLAG, ANTHEM AND CURRENCY

The number of stars has nothing to do with the number of Member States. There are twelve stars because the number twelve is traditionally a symbol of perfection, completeness and unity. The European Union anthem is Ode to Joy (Ludwig van Beethoven music, Friedrich Schiller lyrics). In 1992 the Euro (€) became a single European currency in 12 countries. The coins and banknotes differ in only a few motives which show something specific of the country they are used in.

#### POLICIES OF THE EU

- Agriculture and fishing
- Sustainable development
- EU foreign policy
- Justice and home affairs
- Economic and social affairs
- EU enlargement

#### GOVERNING BODIES

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT – it is composed of officials (MEPs = Members of the European Parliament) directly elected by the citizens of the EU Member States, it meets in both Brussels and Strasbourg.

THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL – it is based in Brussels and it brings together EU leaders to set the political agenda in the EU

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION – together with the Parliament it is the main deciding-making body of the EU, it is composed of national ministers, it is the legislative branch of the institution, located in Brussels

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION – it is the main institution which deals with daily agendas of the EU

THE COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EU (CJEU) – it ensures that EU law is interpreted and applied the same in every Member State, it is situated in Luxembourg

THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK – it is an independent institution of the economic and monetary union, its main responsibility is to maintain monetary stability of the currency, it is located in Frankfurt am Main

### 1.2 Answer the following questions.

- 1 How long has the Czech Republic been the member of the EU?
- 2 What changes has the membership brought (positive, negative)? Have you personally experienced any benefit from it?
- 3 What do you think about the Euro currency? Should the Czech Republic accept it too or not?
- 4 Should economically weak countries be supported by other members of the EU? How?
- 5 What do you think about the administrative apparatus and money spent on its offices, employees and meetings?
- 6 What do you think about the restrictions which every EU state has to accept? (food, product names, quotas, etc.)

source of reading: Kaftan M.: New English in Economics, Karolinum, Praha 2010, [www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org), [www.cs.wikipedia.org](http://www.cs.wikipedia.org)  
<https://op.europa.eu>

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