

Geography of Europe

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Europe

Geography of Europe



Several of the oldest cities of Northwestern Europe are highlighted in this astronaut's photograph from 00:25 GMT on 10 August 2011



Area	10,180,000 km ² (3,930,000 sq mi) ^[n] (6th)
Population	742,452,000 ^[n] (2013; 3rd)
Population density	72.9/km ² (188/sq mi) (2nd)
Demonym	European
Countries	50 sovereign states 5 with limited recognition
Dependencies	4 dependencies
Languages	~225 languages ^[1]
Time zones	UTC−1 to UTC+5

Europe is traditionally defined as one of seven continents. Physiographically, it is the northwestern peninsula of the larger landmass known as Eurasia (or the larger Afro-Eurasia); Asia occupies the eastern bulk of this continuous landmass and all share a common continental shelf. Europe's eastern frontier is delineated by the Ural Mountains in Russia. The southeast boundary with Asia is not universally defined, but the modern definition is generally the Ural River or, less commonly, the Emba River. The boundary continues to the Caspian Sea, the crest of the Caucasus Mountains (or, less commonly, the river Kura in the Caucasus), and on to the Black Sea. The Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles conclude the Asian boundary. The Mediterranean Sea to the south separates Europe from Africa. The western boundary is the Atlantic Ocean. Iceland, though on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and nearer to Greenland (North America) than mainland Europe, is generally included in Europe for cultural reasons and because it is over twice as close to mainland Europe than to mainland North America. There is ongoing debate on where the geographical centre of Europe falls.



This video was taken by the crew of Expedition 30 on board the ISS on a pass over Europe. The two videos were shot simultaneously using different cameras: one pointing toward the northeast, and one pointing toward the east.



Contents

- 1 Overview
 - 1.1 Peninsula of peninsulas
- 2 Geology
- 3 Population
- 4 Rivers
- 5 Lakes and inland seas
- 6 Major islands
- 7 Plains and lowlands
- 8 Mountain ranges
- 9 Temperature and precipitation
- 10 Landlocked countries
- 11 Countries consisting solely of islands or parts of islands
- 12 Countries bordering or spanning another continent
- 13 Countries that share a name with their capital
- 14 Countries whose capital is not the most populous
- 15 List of countries by the number of other countries they border
- 16 See also
- 17 Notes
- 18 External links

[Overview](#)[\[edit\]](#)



Satellite image of Europe by night

Some geographical texts refer to a Eurasian continent given that Europe is not surrounded by sea and its southeastern border has always been variously defined for centuries.

In terms of shape, Europe is a collection of connected peninsulas and nearby islands. The two largest peninsulas are mainland Europe and Scandinavia to the north, divided from each other by the Baltic Sea. Three smaller peninsulas—Iberia, Italy and the Balkans—emerge from the southern margin of the mainland. The Balkan peninsula is separated from Asia by the Black and Aegean Seas. Italy is separated from the Balkans by the Adriatic Sea, and from Iberia by the Mediterranean Sea, which also separates Europe from Africa. Eastward, mainland Europe widens much like the mouth of a funnel, until the boundary with Asia is reached at the Ural Mountains and Ural River, the Caspian Sea and Caucasus Mountains.

Land relief in Europe shows great variation within relatively small areas. The southern regions are mountainous, while moving north the terrain descends from the high Alps, Pyrenees and Carpathians, through hilly uplands, into broad, low northern plains, which are vast in the east. An arc of uplands also exists along the northwestern seaboard, beginning in southwestern Ireland, continuing across through western and northern Great Britain, and up along the mountainous, fjord-cut spine of Norway.

This description is simplified. Sub-regions such as Iberia and Italy contain their own complex features, as does mainland Europe itself, where the relief contains many plateaus, river valleys and basins that complicate the general trend. Iceland and the British Isles are special cases. The former is of North Atlantic volcanic formation, while the latter consist of upland areas once joined to the mainland until cut off by rising sea levels.

Peninsula of peninsulas[edit]

Europe is sometimes called a "peninsula of peninsulas", to draw attention to the fact that Europe is a relatively small, elongated appendage to Asia, and that a large part of Europe is made up of peninsulas.^[2]

Partial list of European peninsulas

- Absheron peninsula
- Balkan peninsula
- Cotentin Peninsula
- Crimea
- Fennoscandian Peninsula
 - Kola Peninsula
 - Scandinavian Peninsula
- Iberian Peninsula
- Italian Peninsula
- Jutland
- Kanin Peninsula

Geology[edit]

Main article: Geology of Europe



The coast of Europe is heavily indented with bays and gulfs, as here in Greece.

Europe's most significant geological feature is the dichotomy between the highlands and mountains of Southern Europe and a vast, partially underwater, northern plain ranging from Great Britain in the west to the Ural Mountains in the east.^[*citation needed*] These two halves are separated by the mountain chains of the Pyrenees and the Alps/Carpathians. The northern plains are delimited in the west by the Scandinavian mountains and the mountainous parts of the British Isles. The major shallow water bodies submerging parts of the northern plains are the Celtic Sea, the North Sea, the Baltic Sea complex, and the Barents Sea.

The northern plain contains the old geological continent of Baltica, and so may be regarded as the "main continent", while peripheral highlands and mountainous regions in south and west constitute fragments from various other geological continents.

The geology of Europe is hugely varied and complex, and gives rise to the wide variety of landscapes found across the continent, from the Scottish Highlands to the rolling plains of Hungary.



This section **needs expansion**. You can help by adding to it. (*March 2011*)

Population[edit]

Figures for the population of Europe vary according to which definition of European boundaries is used. The population within the standard physical geographical boundaries was 701 million in 2005 according to the United Nations. In 2000 the population was 857 million, using a definition which includes the whole of the transcontinental countries of Russia and Turkey. Population growth is comparatively slow, and median age comparatively high in relation to the world's other continents.

Rivers[edit]



The Volga, the longest river in Europe, near Kazan, Russia.



The Danube, Europe's second-longest river, in Budapest, Hungary.

Main article: List of rivers of Europe

The longest rivers in Europe with their approximate lengths:^{[3][4]}

1. Volga - 3,690 km (2,290 mi)
2. Danube - 2,860 km (1,780 mi)
3. Ural - 2,428 km (1,509 mi)
4. Dnieper - 2,290 km (1,420 mi)
5. Don - 1,950 km (1,210 mi)
6. Pechora - 1,809 km (1,124 mi)
7. Kama - 1,805 km (1,122 mi)
8. Oka - 1,500 km (930 mi)
9. Belaya - 1,430 km (890 mi)
10. Tisza - 1,358 km (844 mi)
11. Dniester - 1,352 km (840 mi)
12. Rhine - 1,236 km (768 mi)
13. Elbe - 1,091 km (678 mi)

14. Vistula - 1,047 km (651 mi)
15. Tagus - 1,038 km (645 mi)
16. Daugava - 1,020 km (630 mi)
17. Loire - 1,012 km (629 mi)
18. Ebro - 960 km (600 mi)
19. Neman - 937 km (582 mi)
20. Sava - 933 km (580 mi)
21. Meuse - 925 km (575 mi)
22. Douro - 897 km (557 mi)
23. Oder - 854 km (531 mi)
24. Guadiana - 829 km (515 mi)
25. Rhône - 815 km (506 mi)
26. Seine - 776 km (482 mi)
27. Mureş - 761 km (473 mi)
28. Prut - 742 km (461 mi)
29. Po - 682 km (424 mi)
30. Guadalquivir - 657 km (408 mi)
31. Olt - 615 km (382 mi)
32. Glomma - 604 km (375 mi)
33. Garonne - 602 km (374 mi)
34. Siret - 559 km (347 mi)
35. Neris - 510 km (320 mi)
36. Maritsa - 480 km (300 mi)
37. Gauja - 452 km (281 mi)
38. Vltava - 430 km (270 mi)
39. Ialomița - 417 km (259 mi)
40. Vah - 406 km (252 mi)
41. Vardar - 388 km (241 mi)
42. Shannon - 386 km (240 mi)
43. Someş - 376 km (234 mi)
44. Morava - 353 km (219 mi)
45. Thames - 346 km (215 mi)
46. Drin 335 km - 335 km (208 mi)
47. Torne - 324 km (201 mi)

Lakes and inland seas[edit]

Main article: List of lakes § Europe

Major islands[edit]

Iceland, Faroe Islands, Great Britain, Ireland, Balearic Islands, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Malta, Cyprus, Ionian Islands, Crete, Aegean Islands, Åland Islands, Gotland, Saaremaa, Svalbard, Hinnøya, Senja, Zealand, Fyn and North Jutlandic Island.

See also List of European islands by area and List of European islands by population

Plains and lowlands[edit]

- East European Plain, the largest landscape feature of Europe

- Northern European Lowlands
- Pannonian Plain
- Meseta Central is a high plain (plateau) in central Spain (occupies roughly 40% of the country)
- Po Valley, also known as Padan Plain, between Alps and Apennines

Mountain ranges[edit]



Elbrus, the highest mountain in Europe, seen from Georgia.



Mount Olympus, legendary abode of the Greek gods.



Maja Jezercë in Albania at 2,694m high is the highest peak of the Dinaric Alps.

Main article: List of mountain ranges § Europe

Some of Europe's major mountain ranges are:

- Ural Mountains, which form the boundary between Europe and Asia
- Caucasus Mountains, which also separate Europe and Asia, and are the namesake of the Caucasian race
- Carpathian Mountains, a major mountain range in Central and Southern Europe
- Alps, in Central Western Europe
- Apennines, which run through Italy
- Pyrenees, the natural border between France and Spain
- Cantabrian Mountains, which run across northern Spain
- Scandinavian Mountains, a mountain range which runs through the Scandinavian Peninsula, includes the Kjølén mountains
- Dinaric Alps, a mountain range in the Balkans

- Balkan Mountains, a mountain range in central Balkans
- Scottish Highlands (including the Cairngorms) in the United Kingdom.

Land area in different classes of European mountainous terrain (classification from UNEP-WCMC):

Altitude	Area (km ²)	% Area
≥4500m	1	0.00%
3500-4500m	225	0.00%
2500-3500m	497,886	4.89%
1500-2500m & slope ≥2°	145,838	1.43%
1000-1500m & slope ≥5° or local elevation range >300m	345,255	3.39%
300-1000m and local elevation range >300m	1,222,104	12.00%
Mountainous TOTAL	2,211,308	21.72%
Europe TOTAL	10,180,000	100.00%

Temperature and precipitation[edit]

The high mountainous areas of Europe are colder and have higher precipitation than lower areas, as is true of mountainous areas in general. Europe has less precipitation in the east than in central and western Europe. The temperature difference between summer and winter gradually increases from coastal northwest Europe to southeast inland Europe, ranging from Ireland, with a temperature difference of only 10 °C from the warmest to the coldest month, to the area north of the Caspian Sea, with a temperature difference of 40 °C. January average range from 13 °C in southern Spain and southern Greek islands to -20 °C in the northeastern part of European Russia. Desert climates are found in the European portion of Kazakhstan and South Eastern Spain.

Western Europe and parts of Central Europe generally fall into the temperate maritime climate (Cfb), the southern part is mostly a Mediterranean climate (mostly Csa, smaller area with Csb), the north-central part and east into central Russia is mostly a humid continental climate (Dfb) and the northern part of the continent is a subarctic climate (Dfc). In the extreme northern part (northernmost Russia; Svalbard), bordering the Arctic Ocean, is tundra climate (Et). Mountain ranges, such as the Alps and the Carpathian mountains, have a highland climate with large variations according to altitude and latitude.

Landlocked countries[edit]

The landlocked countries in Europe are: Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Liechtenstein (which is doubly landlocked), Luxembourg, Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Vatican. In addition, the two partly recognized frozen conflict zones of Artsakh and Transnistria are also landlocked.

Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, and Macedonia constitute a contiguous landlocked agglomeration of eight countries in Central Europe and the Balkans, stretching from Geneva all the way to Skopje. The other landlocked countries are "standalone" landlocked, not bordering any other such *European* one (the emphasis is necessary, since Kazakhstan borders Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, thus forming a vast landlocked expanse in Central Asia)

Countries consisting solely of islands or parts of islands[edit]

- Cyprus
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Malta
- United Kingdom

Countries bordering or spanning another continent[edit]

Eurasia	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Republic of Cyprus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkey, Greece (some Aegean islands and Kastelorizo island in southeastern Mediterranean)
Europe-Africa	Malta, Spain (Ceuta, Melilla and Canary Islands), Italy (Lampedusa and Lampione), Portugal (Madeira), ^[5] France (Réunion and Mayotte)

Europe-South America	France (French Guiana)
Europe-North America	France (Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St. Pierre et Miquelon), Denmark (Greenland), Netherlands (Bonaire, Saba, and St. Eustatius), Portugal (Corvo Island, Flores Island)

Countries that share a name with their capital[edit]

- Luxembourg
- Monaco
- San Marino
- Vatican City
- Andorra

Countries whose capital is not the most populous[edit]

Country	Capital	Largest city or municipality
 Liechtenstein	Vaduz	Schaan
 Malta	Valletta	Birkirkara
 San Marino	San Marino	Serravalle
 Switzerland	Bern	Zurich
 Turkey	Ankara	Istanbul

Note: Italy's capital, Rome, is the country's largest city if only the municipality (*comune*) is considered. Greater Milan is the largest Metropolitan Area in Italy.

Brussels is considered to be the largest city of Belgium, according to the population of the Brussels-Capital Region. The population of the City of Brussels is ~175,000. Antwerp is the biggest city of the country.

List of countries by the number of other countries they border[edit]



Map of European countries by number of neighbouring countries.

14	Russia (Including Kaliningrad)
11	France (Including overseas departments and territories)
9	Germany
8	Austria, Serbia, Turkey
7	Hungary, Poland, Ukraine

6	Italy
5	Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Romania, Macedonia, Slovakia, Spain (Including Ceuta and Melilla), Switzerland
4	Albania, Armenia, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Slovenia
3	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Netherlands (Including Sint Maarten), Norway, Luxembourg
2	Andorra, Estonia, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Sweden
1	Denmark, Ireland, Monaco, Portugal, San Marino, United Kingdom, Vatican City
0	Iceland, Cyprus, Malta