The European Union

The European Union was started to enhance political and social cooperation and to strengthen the economies of member nations. It used to be known as the European Community or EC, but today it is known as the European Union or EU. The goal of the EU is to construct a united Europe through peaceful means.

The EU is comprised of many countries: Austria, Finland, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Italy, Greece, Ireland, France, Spain, Luxembourg, Sweden, Portugal, Northern Ireland, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Other countries are applying to be part of the EU. They are Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, and others.

The EU has had important historical events. One of them happened after World War II. This was a plan for Europe to be united put forth by French statesman, Jean Monnet. The second event was in 1950 when the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, proposed the plan that resulted in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). This was one of the first organizations that constituted the European Community. The Treaty of Paris that became effective on January 1, 1952 created the ECSC.

On January 1, 2002, the Euro dollar came out. Many countries are switching over to the Euro while a few have stayed with their own money. Denmark, Great Britain and Sweden are not using the Euro for their money.

Like many organizations and countries, the EU had to choose a symbol to represent them. After much debating and discussion, they picked their symbol. It is a “C” with two parallel lines running through the middle. The top line is a bit longer than the bottom one. The symbol was chosen because it projects a strong image for its stability.

The EU and the United States have many things in common. One is that they both have states and they are both united. They both combined their states or countries to make one strong country. The EU and the US are both against terrorism. They meet four times a year to evaluate terrorist threats. They will also organize judges and prosecutors to work on terrorism. A final way is that Europol (European police officers) and US law enforcement agencies will cooperate with each other to fight against terrorism.

The European Union is a new organization. Time will tell if it will bring the desired political and social cooperation as well as strengthen the economies of member nations.