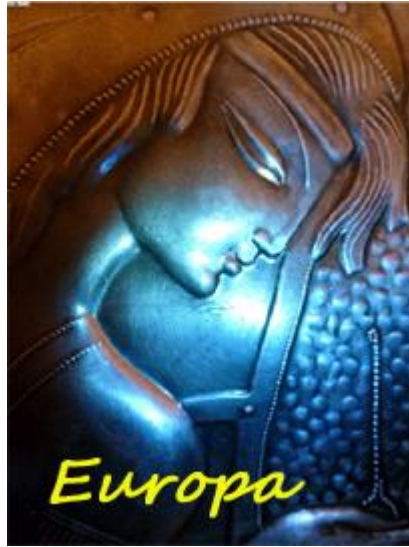


POLITICAL EUROPE ©



The above mentioned title encompasses a number of disciplines and their intramural variants. Consequently, it may be prudent to initiate a basic yet broad approach that concentrates on a set of primary aspects. Physical geography point of view Europe is one of the smaller continents, yet it maintains the third largest population globally — approximately eleven percent of the total — and remains the second most densely populated.

Realities, however, clearly reveal that, Europe's demography, within its intercontinental demarcations, cover a significantly greater expanse; as a result, inducing the reconstitution of the aforementioned parameters. In this respect, the entire geography encompassed by the European Civilisation — also referred to as the Western Civilisation — and delimited by the European Cultural Frontiers have to be taken into account. Such factors demonstrate that certain continental divisions based upon physical geography, such as the Ural Mountains or the western Caucasus, have not been barriers as far as the European Civilisation is concerned.

European Cultural Frontiers — intercontinental or maritime — with the outside world can be effectively demarcated as encompassing — with minor enclave type exceptions — nations belonging to the European Civilisation, thus consolidating a specific geography. That geography classified as Greater Europe, is a continuous landmass, plus its islands. Longitude point of view, it stretches from Gibraltar to Vladivostok, thus maintaining Atlantic and Pacific outlooks. Latitude point of view it stretches from Scandinavia to Armenia. Latter's continental frontiers are the most southerly. [Frontiers of Europe: Union of cultures within a Civilisation.](#)



Greater Europe: The Overall Geography
European Union: Integral Frontiers

The importance of the aforementioned Cultural Frontiers can be reasonably highlighted by the new global currents that have emerged since the last decade of the Twentieth Century. Civilisations — or their certain aspects — have begun to emerge as influential global factors. Consequently, the emphasis has begun to depart from the long standing and rigid physical geographic outlines, to ones based on cultural geography, with defined demarcations that separate civilisations demographically.



Population Density at the End of the Twentieth Century

Internal Cultural Frontiers of Greater Europe encompass numerous cultures as nations, inclusive of their languages and traditions. Some aspects can even highlight broader regions with certain common characteristics. Although Europe is practically always divided into its Western and Eastern sectors, yet one can also consider a southerly approach by geographically extending eastwards from Iberia to Armenia. This southern geography includes the lands of Classical Greece, the Roman Empire and the Renaissance. Thus,

encompassing routes of the historic *Grand Tour*. As far as the European Civilisation is concerned the aforementioned formative approach may have to be regenerated as a broad scholastic instrument. West European expanse can also be delimited through France extending eastwards via Germany, embracing northern regions such as the British Isles, Scandinavia and the Baltic states. The East European projection can be classified to extend from Belarus and Ukraine, through western Russia and a sparsely populated Russian Siberia; thus, finally reaching the Pacific Ocean outlook. European integration has only advanced effectively within the European Cultural Frontiers.

The European Union — EU — currently possesses twenty eight members. That is a major achievement. Despite boasting an internal market of some magnitude, however, it has maintained a deindustrialization policy causing social and financial detriment. Moreover, preferences and large funds have been lavished upon its long-standing foes and competitors. [Strategic Europe](#).

Its rivals have advanced economically and with their newly acquired funds have strengthened their geopolitical strategies militarily. On the other hand, due to their detrimental economic policies the EU states have failed to obtain the necessary funds for the enhancement of their own armed forces. Hence, the detriment suffered by the West European subsumes finance as well as defence.



Greater Europe: The West

Currently, there are also contested territorial issues that require consideration. These are frozen conflicts in Western and Eastern Europe that relate to inter-state territorial claims as well as developments relevant to self-determination or varying levels of autonomy. In the past such matters among European nations were often settled with major military upheavals, at times practically continent-wide. Due to the unifying psychology of the EU, one now expects such developments to be solved within the bounds of reasonability.

In this respect norms of international law have to be considered. Principles stipulated within the United Nations — UN — Charter includes *Territorial Integrity*, involving inviolability of frontiers. Two further UN principles — if reasonably implemented — may circumvent the above mentioned factor. Firstly, the Charter’s well known principle of *Self-determination*,

which was first included in Woodrow Wilson's internationally projected, Fourteen Points and subsequently in his Self-determination speech of 11th February 1918. [Paris Peace Conference](#). Secondly, the much later established *Humanitarian Intervention* procedure, based on the 'responsibility to protect' doctrine; it can also be pertinent for the development of self-government and take due account of the political aspiration of the peoples. This is not an unmitigated indication that a large state may invade a smaller neighbour. The principle of peaceful settlement of disputes, of course, remains an important endeavour. Further avenues such as the mediation process, the binding international inter-state arbitration procedure, sanctions, specific merits of a case, territorial plebiscite, and human rights aspects, as presented, for example, in [Rights and Values](#) can also be taken into account.



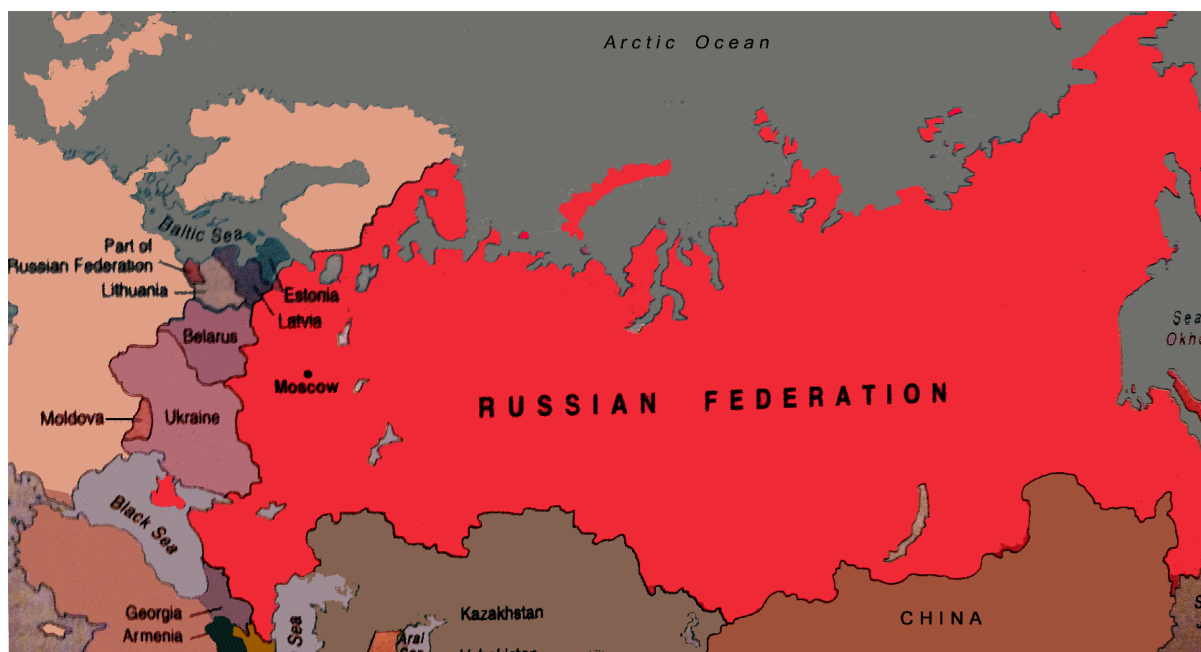
United Nations, New York, Gift of Luxemburg, 1988

A number of states possess intermixture of populations with diverging European Cultures. Consequently, relevant constitutions — with federal characteristics — providing specific national rights and liberties may be required for the security and harmony of the entire population. Smaller nations with particular national regions, yet lacking nation-state formations, may require reasonable levels of autonomy to protect their homelands from undue external influences.

Despite its federal oriented infrastructure, the EU has made no serious attempt to incorporate the enclave type exceptions that do not belong to the European Civilisation, yet remain within the European Cultural Frontiers, and are mostly adjacent to the southern frontiers of the EU. A number of states in the Balkans fall into this category. In Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation has incorporated all national regions with reasonable levels of autonomy.

Presently, there are a number of abrasive developments confronting all Europeans. Two issues stand out significantly. The first being the failure of the EU to establish an all-European military that can raise Europe to its merited global position. [European Defence Community](#). In this respect current state of affairs reveals that Greater Europe is mainly divided between its fragmented Western sector, as the EU, and a militarily unified Russian Federation in the East. Presently there is no serious project that can close the gap. Russian Federation is obliged to defend its massive land and maritime frontiers with its own resources and pursue a separate defence policy involving strategic connotations. This perennial disparity continues to create a major political chasm within the European

continent that runs significantly contrary to the EU's unifying objectives. [European Security Integration](#). At times even economic links are adversely affected. One can also add that it is unwise for the EU to remain thoroughly attached to the 'apron strings' of any major power. Undoubtedly, this paradoxical political atmosphere can ignite at any time.



Greater Europe: The East
[Greater Europe](#)

The second abrasive development involves Russia's stance regarding European ideals and the European Civilisation. An influential section of its ruling elite continue to divert Russia from its rightful European heritage. Majority of Russians traditionally do not identify themselves as Europeans, and possess the conception that their culture does not belong to the European group of nations. In the past, of course, other European nations were also inflicted similarly; especially those that had suffered long periods of non-European occupations. Currently, a number of inept Russian ideologists have claimed that their nation belongs to a different civilisation, consequently there has been an attempt to fabricate a 'Russian Civilisation' ideologically. This unrealistic attitude, in conjunction with other factors, has brought about a frosty reaction from the EU.

Russia can, of course, cocoon itself irrationally as it has done in the past, nevertheless, it has to return to realities eventually. For example, in centuries past it had failed to progress much beyond the Medieval stage of the European Civilisation. It was Peter the Great's leadership that brought in an advanced format of the Civilisation from Western Europe that had progressed significantly beyond the Medieval stage by incorporating the Renaissance as a supplementary stratum and the subsequently established Age of Reason – Enlightenment – as an additional stratum in motion. It is best to remain within the advancing flow collectively.

Currently, Russia is the most populous European nation. Furthermore, it is Europe's largest country by land area. Its projection of the Russian national identity also requires a parallel dissemination within a European credo, similar to the twenty eight nation-states of the EU. If such a policy is adopted, the Russian Federation will also progress as a European Federation, possibly in an alliance with a number of smaller European countries. Accordingly, establishing a reasonable level of compatibility with the EU, hence, helping to form the foundations of a long term peace. The final act of forging an all-European union may be more in line with an amalgamation process rather than one based entirely on integration.

Future of Europe's internal and global prospects, as well as its security, will broadly depend on the eradication of the aforementioned problems. Its long-term safety will largely depend on the successful defence of its Cultural Frontiers situated geographically in the south and in the east, maritime and territorial. [Future of European Integration](#). The inter-state European identity has progressed markedly from merely being a geographic one — as it was during the pre-war period — to one now based primarily on a European credo. The advancing European coalescence can continue to project cultural diversities predominantly, rightly so; European Civilisation, however, projects unity within the entire European demography. [Shields of Europe: A Past and a Future](#).



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