

# Europe

This article is about the continent. For other uses, see Europe (disambiguation).

Europe is a continent located entirely in the Northern Hemisphere and mostly in the Eastern Hemisphere. It is bordered by the Arctic Ocean to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the Mediterranean Sea to the south, and Asia to the east. Europe shares the landmass of Eurasia with Asia, and of Afro-Eurasia with both Asia and Africa.[10][11] Europe is commonly considered to be separated from Asia by the watershed of the Ural Mountains, the Ural River, the Caspian Sea, the Greater Caucasus, the Black Sea, and the waterways of the Turkish Straits.

Europe covers about 10.18 million km<sup>2</sup> (3.93 million sq mi), or 2% of Earth's surface (6.8% of land area), making it the second-smallest continent (using the seven-continent model). Politically, Europe is divided into about fifty sovereign states, of which Russia is the largest and most populous, spanning 39% of the continent and comprising 15% of its population. Europe had a total population of about 745 million (about 10% of the world population) in 2024; the third-largest, after Asia and Africa.[2][3] The European climate is largely affected by warm Atlantic currents that temper winters and summers on much of the continent, even at latitudes along which the climate in Asia and North America is severe. Further from the sea, seasonal differences are more noticeable than close to the coast.

European culture is the root of Western civilisation, which traces its lineage back to ancient Greece and ancient Rome.[13][14] The fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 CE, and the related Migration Period marked the end of Europe's ancient history, and the beginning of the Middle Ages. The Italian Renaissance began in Florence and spread to the rest of the continent, bringing a renewed interest in humanism, exploration, art, and science which contributed to the beginning of the modern era. Since the Age of Discovery, led by Spain, and Portugal, Europe played a predominant role in global affairs with multiple explorations and conquests around the world. Between the 16th and 20th centuries, European powers colonised at various times the Americas, almost all of Africa and Oceania, and the majority of Asia.

The Age of Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the Napoleonic Wars shaped the continent culturally, politically and economically, from the end of the 17th century until the first half of the 19th century. The Industrial Revolution, which began in Great Britain at the end of the 18th century, gave rise to radical economic, cultural and social change in Western Europe and eventually