

## 7. Teaching the EU: Globalization and the European Union (EU)



Applicable course in new B.C. curriculum: Political Studies 11

(also has application for 20<sup>th</sup> Century World History 11 and Economics 12)

**DESCRIPTION:** This purpose of this lesson plan is to introduce students to the varied definitions and components of ‘globalization’, and to situate the EU within the context of globalization. An overview of the process of European integration is contained within this lesson as a form of regional integration. More specifically, if globalization generally refers to interdependence and among countries, markets, and peoples, then is the EU more a form of globalization, or a protective response to global processes?

### Big Idea

- The rapid development and proliferation of communication and transportation technologies in the 20th century led to profound changes in personal and national identities.

### Curricular Competencies

- Analyze interrelationships between objectives and intended or unintended results (interrelationships, objectives, and results)
- Assess how prevailing conditions and the actions of individuals or groups affect events, decisions, and developments (cause and consequence)
- Assess how historical conditions influenced the development of economic approaches and theories (cause and consequence)

### Content

- Interdependence and international co-operation
- Issues in global politics, such as security, trade, conflict management, development, and sustainability

[What is the EU?](#)

[Globalization and the EU economy](#)

[Europe and Globalization: the dangers and the assets](#)

[Regional integration around the world](#)

[Canada in a globalized world](#)

**Procedure:**

Have students pre-read material above. In small groups, have them complete 'Globalization: Key Terms'.

Discussion of different understandings, and examples, of globalization. Also, discussion of the strengths and weaknesses inherent in international cooperation and interdependence.

In small groups, have students complete the scenario ('European integration as war avoidance'). Discuss and debrief.

**Globalization Key Terms. In small groups, define the following terms:**

Globalization: \_\_\_\_\_

Trade: \_\_\_\_\_

Sovereignty: \_\_\_\_\_

Globalism: \_\_\_\_\_

Regionalism: \_\_\_\_\_

Interdependence: \_\_\_\_\_

European Integration: \_\_\_\_\_

International Law: \_\_\_\_\_

Protectionism: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Globalization Key Terms – Answer Sheet**

### **Key Ideas**

Globalization: A process involving a shift in the spatial scale of human social organizations that links distant places and expands the reach of trade, technology, and power relations across regions and continents. It is also a term that is sometimes used to refer to the idea of a single world economy.

Trade: The exchange of goods, services, and capital across different countries, regions, and continents.

Sovereignty: The idea that the state government is the highest authority over everything within a country's borders, and that outside these borders the state recognizes no higher authority.

Globalism: A political and economic ideology that favours an open market and limited government interference in capital and trade flows.

Regionalism: Growing interdependence between countries in the same continent, as a feature of the international system.

Interdependence: A condition where states, or peoples, are affected by the decisions taken by others. Interdependence can be symmetrical (where all actors are equally affected) or asymmetrical (where the impact of interdependence varies between actors).

European Integration: The process of deepening interdependence between European states. This process began in 1951 with the integration of coal and steel among six European countries, and has progressed to the integration of many economic, monetary, social and legal policies among 28 European countries. The European Union (EU) is an unprecedented example of regionalism in modern international affairs.

International Law: The formal rules of conduct that states acknowledge of contract between themselves.

Protectionism: The theory or practice of a country protecting its own domestic industries by limiting trade with non-domestic entities, either through tariffs, quotas, or regulations.

## European Integration: War Avoidance, or Economic Profit?

In 1951, the Treaty of Paris bound the countries of Belgium, France, Germany (then West Germany), Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands together in the European Coal and Steel Community. The logic of the time, stemming from French officials Jean Monnet and Robert Schumann, was that countries that have to depend on each other for basic necessities are less likely to go to war with each other. Coal and steel were selected because not only were they major resources, but they also comprised two of the biggest resources necessary for weapon-building. In this manner, the seed of modern European integration was born.

Since then, the early European Coal and Steel Community has grown into a much larger European Union (EU). The EU is now a single legal entity representing 28 countries, and is responsible for numerous areas of economic and political interdependence. Some of the major achievements of the EU include, but are not limited to, the Single Market (where all goods are considered to be EU goods, rather than domestic products), the euro currency (a shared monetary currency adopted by 19 European countries), and a EU citizenship (where legal citizens of an EU country can move freely between other EU countries for work, study, or pleasure).

As the EU has grown, the EU institutions have continued to provide the logic of European integration being a necessary requirement for peace on the European continent. This idea is becoming frequently challenged; the vote on Brexit – or the UK voting to leave the EU – provides a key example. There is also a strong economic foundation to European integration, where the central purpose of the EU is to create a single, powerful economy. The logic to the economic foundations of the EU is that EU countries can together better compete with other major world economies than they could if they were not integrated into the EU. In this sense, the EU exists to protect European countries from global economic forces.

Which logic is stronger in explaining the EU today? Does it continue to exist more for reasons of peace-keeping, or more for reasons of economic power? Should it continue to exist – why or why not?

Things to keep in mind:

1. What is the Single Market? How does this benefit EU countries?
  2. How might you imagine some EU countries do *not* benefit from European integration?
  3. Is the EU just another example of regionalism – similar to NAFTA, or ASEAN?
  4. Is the EU just another example of an international organization – similar to the UN, or the WTO?
  5. What are the historical factors at work for the EU logic of peace-keeping in Europe?
  6. Is the EU a small example of globalization at work because of its deep interdependence among member states? Or is it more an example of regional protectionism within a global economy?
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council\\_of\\_the\\_European\\_Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_the_European_Union)

