

Europe



Quick summary

Europe is a continent, the western part of a larger landmass called Eurasia. It is not part of Asia, even though it is joined to it, because of a boundary that includes the Ural Mountains in Russia and the Bosphorus river in Turkey. There are over 50 countries in Europe. The continent of Europe is located completely in the northern hemisphere and mainly in the eastern hemisphere. Europe borders the Arctic Ocean in the north, the Atlantic Ocean in the west and the Mediterranean Sea in the south. Reykjavik in Iceland is Europe's and the world's most northern capital city.



The **Volga** is the longest river in Europe, stretching 2,294 miles (3,691 km) across Russia. It flows from its source in the remote Valdai Hills to the Caspian Sea, and half of Russia's river cargo is transported along the river. The **Danube**, at 1,780 miles (2,865 km) long, is the second longest river in Europe. The river stretches through ten countries: Germany, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, Austria, Slovakia, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine and Bulgaria. It flows through several cities, such as Vienna and Budapest, and drains into its delta in the Black Sea. It is the most important commercial waterway in Europe. The **Rhine** flows 766 miles (1,233 km) from its source in the Swiss Alps. It flows northwest from the mountains into the lowlands, crossing Germany, France, the Netherlands and Liechtenstein before coming to an end in the North Sea. The **Elbe** has its source in the Czech Republic and flows through towns such as Prague. It then flows northwest through Germany to the North Sea. It is 724 miles (1,165 km) in length. The **Loire** runs north from its source in the the Massif Central (a highland region in the middle of southern France) to Orleans and then west to the Atlantic Ocean. It is 629 miles (1,012 km) long. The Loire Valley is famous for its wines and historic towns.

Some of Europe's major mountain ranges are:

- **Urals** – form the boundary between Europe and Asia and run approximately from north to south through Russia, from the coast of the Arctic Ocean to the Ural River
- **Caucasus Mountains** – separate Europe and Asia between the Black Sea and Caspian Sea
- **Carpathian Mountains** – a semi-circular mountain range in eastern Europe
- **Alps** – in central western Europe (Switzerland, Italy and France)
- **Apennines** – run for about 870 miles (1,400 km) through Italy (often referred to as the backbone of Italy due to its shape)
- **Pyrenees** – the border between France and Spain that extends for about 270 miles (435 km)
- **Cantabrian Mountains** – run across northern Spain
- **Scandinavian Mountains** – run through Scandinavia
- **Dinaric Alps** – a mountain range in the Balkans
- **Balkan Mountains** – a mountain range in the central Balkans
- **Scottish Highlands** – in the United Kingdom.



Location



Physical features



Human features

The Vatican City is the smallest country in Europe and in the world. It is called a city-state, and is an enclave within Italy. It is the smallest country both in terms of size and population. Hum in Croatia is the smallest town both in Europe and the world. The town has only 21 inhabitants. The most populated city in Europe is Istanbul, the biggest city in Turkey. It is located on two continents: the western part is in the continent of Europe and the eastern part is in the continent of Asia. Istanbul has a population of about 15 million people.



Vocabulary

landmass: a large continuous area of land, as opposed to seas or islands
remote: far away from towns and cities
commercial: the buying and selling of goods
boundary: a line that separates two countries
city-state: a country that is made up entirely of one city
enclave: a country entirely surrounded by another country



Location



Physical features



Human features



Diversity



Physical processes



Human processes



Techniques

