

Travelling in Europe

2004



European Union

Travelling in Europe 2004

An exciting new dimension has been added for travellers in Europe with 10 countries from central, eastern and southern Europe joining the European Union on 1 May 2004. The external borders of the EU have stretched eastwards to include the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, and southwards to embrace Malta and Cyprus. This has increased the land area by over 23% and the population by 75 million and has added a rich mixture of history and culture.

Europe's natural beauty is a great attraction for travellers, from mountain grandeur to rocky coastlines and sandy beaches, from lush green pastures to arid plains, from lakes and forests to arctic tundra.

The wealth of Europe's historic heritage is evident everywhere: prehistoric cave paintings, Greek and Roman antiquities, Viking and Moorish influences, medieval fortresses, renaissance palaces and baroque churches, and much, much more. There are winter and summer sports to be tried, vibrant modern cities to be explored, art and music to be enjoyed, all complemented by fine food, wine and beer.

Travelling around the EU has become progressively easier over the years with the removal of most passport and baggage formalities and with the introduction of the euro in 12 EU countries. This makes life much easier for travellers who can now compare prices directly and no longer have the cost and inconvenience of exchanging money within the euro zone. The expansion of the EU's single market with the arrival of the 10 new countries will bring even wider choice and lower prices for all of us.



Documents you will need

Passport or identity card

There are no longer any frontier controls at the borders between most EU countries. This is thanks to the so-called Schengen agreement which is part of EU law. The Schengen rules remove all internal border controls but put in place effective controls at the external borders of the EU and introduce a common visa policy. All the old EU countries are Schengen members, except Ireland and the United Kingdom. The new member states do not yet fully participate in Schengen. This means that you need a valid passport for travel to Ireland, the United Kingdom and the new member states, or an ID card if you are an EU national. Although they do not belong to the EU, Norway and Iceland are part of the Schengen area.

Always carry a valid passport or ID card when travelling in the EU because you may be required to prove your identity. If public order or national security so require, checks at the internal borders may be carried out for a limited period. When crossing the external borders of the EU everyone needs a valid passport.

Make sure that any children travelling with you either have their own passport or ID card or are registered on yours.

Visas

You will not need a visa for travelling within the EU if you are a citizen of an EU country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. There are many other countries whose nationals do not need a visa if visiting the EU for three months or less. These include the candidate countries Bulgaria and Romania (but not Turkey), Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. If in doubt, check with the nearest consulate of any EU country.

If you get a visa for any Schengen country, it automatically allows you to travel to all the other Schengen countries. You will need a national visa to visit the UK, Ireland and the new member states. Some new member states, however, may accept Schengen visas or residence permits of Schengen countries, so check with their consulates.

Insurance documents

Do not forget your travel, health and car insurance documents. See other sections for further details.



Money

The euro

The euro is the legal tender for the 300 million people in Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. The symbol for the euro is €.

The euro is used also in Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and Vatican City, as well as in the Azores, the Canaries, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Madeira, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion, and Saint Pierre and Miquelon, which are all part of EU countries using the euro.

The euro notes are identical in all countries but each country produces its own coins with one common side and one side displaying a distinctive national emblem. Monaco, San Marino and Vatican City also have their own euro coins. All the notes and coins can be used anywhere in the euro area.

Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom are not currently participating in the single currency. The new member states are committed to economic and monetary union but none will be ready to join the euro until at least 2006.

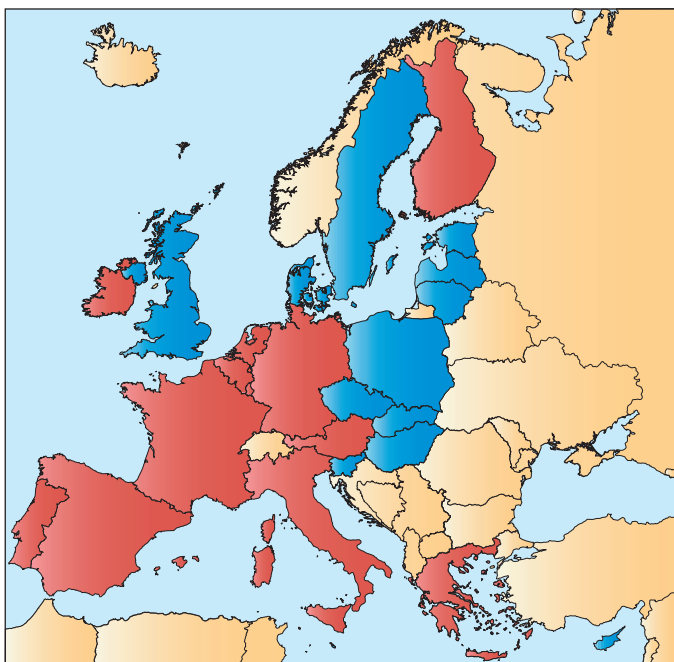
Exchange rates

Rates will vary but in January 2004 one euro buys approximately:

(CY)	Cyprus pound	0.59
(CZ)	Czech koruna	33
(DK)	Danish krone	7.44
(EST)	Estonian kroon	16
(GB)	British pound sterling	0.70
(H)	Hungarian forint	262
(LT)	Lithuanian litas	3.45
(LV)	Latvian lats	0.67
(M)	Maltese lira	0.43
(PL)	Polish zloty	4.69
(S)	Swedish krona	9.08
(SK)	Slovakian koruna	41
(SLO)	Slovenian tolar	237
(USA)	US dollar	1.25
(J)	Japanese yen	134

Some retail outlets in countries outside the euro area do accept payment in euro as well as the national currency, but they are not legally obliged to do so.





- EU countries using the euro
- EU countries not using the euro

Cross-border payments

Thanks to new EU rules, the cost of using money abroad is coming down. Withdrawing euro from a cash machine, making a card payment or a bank transfer in euro (up to €12 500) now costs the same wherever you are in the EU.

Postage stamps

Postage stamps can only be used in the country in which you buy them, even when priced in euro.



Shopping

Within the EU

There are no limits on what you can buy and take with you when you travel between EU countries, as long as it is for personal use and not for resale.

VAT and duty are included in the price you pay and, since these vary from country to country, you may want to take advantage of some interesting price differences. Shops at airports and on ships may also provide some bargains although duty-free shopping no longer exists when travelling within the EU.

Tobacco and alcohol

For guidance, goods are considered to be for your own use if you have no more than:

800 cigarettes
400 cigarillos
200 cigars
1 kg of tobacco
10 litres of spirits
20 litres of fortified wine (such as port or sherry)
90 litres of wine (of which, a maximum of 60 litres of sparkling wine)
110 litres of beer

These rules already apply to Malta and Cyprus. However, the 15 old EU countries may maintain certain limits on cigarettes and tobacco products brought in from the other new EU countries for a limited period.

Outside the EU

If you are coming into the EU from a non-EU country, you can bring with you goods free of VAT and excise duties for personal use within the limits set out below. The same applies if you come from the Canary Islands, the Channel Islands, Gibraltar or other territories where VAT and EU excise provisions do not apply.

Tobacco products

200 cigarettes or
100 cigarillos or
50 cigars or
250 grams of tobacco

Alcoholic drinks

1 litre of spirits over 22% vol. or
2 litres of fortified wine or sparkling wine
2 litres of still wine

Perfume

50 grams

Eau de toilette

250 ml

Other goods

Up to a value of €175

Within that limit, Finland allows a maximum of 16 litres of beer per person. The limit is reduced to €90 for travellers under 15 years old to all EU countries except Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.



Meat and milk products

There are no restrictions on carrying any of these products if you are travelling within the EU because of strict common veterinary standards across its territory. Temporary restrictions would only be introduced if there were an outbreak of an infectious animal disease, such as foot-and-mouth disease, which would be widely publicised in the media. Travellers arriving from Andorra, Bulgaria, Faeroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Romania, San Marino or Switzerland are also allowed to bring small consignments of meat or milk into the EU in their personal baggage.

If you are arriving in the EU from other non-EU countries, however, you are not allowed to bring with you any meat, meat products, milk or milk products without official veterinary documentation. These rules were introduced to prevent the spread of serious animal diseases. Travellers from non-EU countries can, however, bring in powdered infant milk, infant food and special foods required for medical reasons, provided that the product does not require refrigeration before consumption, it is a packaged proprietary brand product and the packaging is unbroken.

Consumer protection

Some basic laws for consumer protection apply throughout the EU, including rules on package travel, product safety, unfair contract terms and misleading advertising. If you cannot resolve a problem directly with a seller in another EU country, you can get practical information and help from a European Consumer Centre (europa.eu.int/comm/consumers/redress/compl/euroguichet/index_en.htm) or you can get advice on settling the dispute out of court through the European extra-judicial network (www.eejnet.org).

Look for the flower

Look for the flower, the EU eco-label, on everyday consumer goods to help you find greener products.

For a list of eco-labelled products, visit www.eco-label.com

You will now also be able to use the flower to find an environmentally friendly hotel, bed and breakfast or youth hostel. The flower tells you that the accommodation has reduced its energy and water consumption and has a good overall environmental performance. The scheme will soon be extended to campsites.



Staying healthy

Medicines

If you use special medicine, check that it is legal in the country you visit and carry with you your prescription or a letter from your doctor. Check with your doctor if you require prescribed medicines while abroad.

Access to healthcare

If you are an EU national and you are suddenly taken ill or have an accident during a visit to any EU country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, you can get free or reduced-cost emergency treatment. A form known as E111 can be helpful as evidence that you are entitled to these benefits. Pick one up from your local social security or sickness insurance office before you travel. A passport, however, is often enough in many countries to get medical treatment. From 1 June 2004, a European health card will start to replace the E111, making procedures much simpler and reimbursement of costs more rapid.

Only publicly funded emergency treatment is included in this scheme for the moment and each country has its own rules for public medical provision. In some, treatment is free, in some you pay part of the cost, in others you have to pay the full cost and then claim a refund. So keep all your bills, prescriptions and receipts.

Travel insurance

It is advisable to take out travel insurance as few EU countries pay the full cost of medical treatment. Illness or an accident abroad may mean extra travel, accommodation and repatriation costs, for which you would need to be insured.

Immunisation

There are in general no immunisation requirements when travelling in the EU. However, travellers must be immunised against yellow fever to go to Greece or Malta from infected countries or areas. There are also requirements or recommendations for certain of the EU's overseas territories. Check with your doctor before you go.

Bathing water

Strict standards are set for bathing water throughout the EU. Bathing water quality is regularly monitored and an annual European Commission report shows bathing water quality improving all the time.

Pets

A new pet passport which comes into force in July 2004 makes it easier to travel with pets. All cats and dogs will need one and it will be accepted across the EU as proof that a pet has received the anti-rabies vaccination. It can also contain other details of the animal's medical history.

If you want to take your pet to Ireland, Sweden or the United Kingdom, there are additional requirements for the time being, including a test after the rabies vaccination to check that it has been effective.



Driving

Driving licence

A driving licence issued in an EU country is valid throughout the EU. Remember that in most countries the minimum age for driving is 18 and if you are younger you will not be allowed to drive in those countries even if you hold a valid driving licence from another country.

In some countries, in addition to carrying a valid driving licence, you will need to have your vehicle registration document with you.

There are age limits for hiring a car: usually 20 is the minimum age.

Motor insurance

Wherever you are travelling in the EU your car insurance policy will automatically provide, at no extra cost, the minimum cover (third party liability) required by law. This also applies to Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. If you have comprehensive insurance at home, check that the cover extends to travelling in other countries. You may also want to consider vehicle breakdown insurance.

A green card is not necessary when travelling in the EU but it serves as internationally recognised proof of insurance and it makes it easier to claim compensation if you have an accident. If you do not take a green card with you, you should carry your certificate of insurance.

Your insurer can give you a European accident statement form, a standard document that makes it easier to make a declaration on the spot if you have an accident in another country.

New rules have been introduced to ensure that motorists get rapid compensation for accidents no matter where they are in the EU. They have made procedures easier and settling claims quicker, with fines being charged on late payments. This applies not only to accidents that happen in the EU but also to accidents between two EU parties in a country outside the EU but which belongs to the green card system.

Driving safely

In all EU countries, it is compulsory to wear seatbelts in both the front and back of the car.

Remember to drive on the left side of the road in Cyprus, Ireland, Malta and the United Kingdom and remember that in some countries, such as Belgium, France and the Netherlands, you normally have to give way to traffic coming from your right.

The speed limit on motorways is generally 110, 120 or 130 kph and the limit in built-up areas is 50 or 60 kph. Keep an eye on the signs to make sure of the exact limits and any special conditions that apply.

Using a mobile phone while driving increases the risk of a fatal accident by five times. It is either explicitly or implicitly forbidden in all EU countries. In some countries, the use of hands-free devices is tolerated.

The maximum permitted blood alcohol level varies between 0.2 mg/ml and 0.9 mg/ml in the majority of countries. Some countries, however, do not allow any alcohol in the blood while driving.

Tolls

There are toll roads in many countries including Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom. Visitors using Austrian motorways and 'A' roads must possess and display a toll label or vignette on their vehicle. These can be bought at all major border crossings into Austria and at larger petrol stations. The Czech Republic has a similar system of a sticker affixed to the wind-screen.



Communicating

Languages

Europe is rich in languages with about 225 spoken indigenous languages. The main language families in the EU are Germanic, Romance, Slav, Baltic and Celtic. The EU institutions now have 20 official languages.

Many Europeans speak at least one other language as well as their mother tongue but during your travels in Europe, try using at least a few phrases of the local language when talking to local people. It will add colour to your experiences.

A European Day of Languages now takes place on 26 September, every year, to celebrate and encourage language learning. The slogan for this year is *Pack an extra language in your luggage*. It is never too late to learn a language and enjoy the opportunities it opens up.

Telephone

There is just one prefix for making international telephone calls anywhere in the EU. It is 00.

The country codes are:

(A)	Austria	43
(B)	Belgium	32
(CY)	Cyprus	357
(CZ)	Czech Republic	420
(D)	Germany	49
(DK)	Denmark	45
(E)	Spain	34
(EST)	Estonia	372
(F)	France	33
(FIN)	Finland	358
(GB)	United Kingdom	44
(GR)	Greece	30
(H)	Hungary	36
(I)	Italy	39
(IRL)	Ireland	353
(L)	Luxembourg	352
(LT)	Latvia	371
(LV)	Lithuania	370
(M)	Malta	356
(NL)	Netherlands	31
(P)	Portugal	351
(PL)	Poland	48
(S)	Sweden	46
(SK)	Slovakia	421
(SLO)	Slovenia	386

The prefix 00 800 followed by an eight-digit number indicates a universal international freephone number but be aware that not all mobile phone companies and hotels recognise it and may charge.

The prefix 00 979 followed by a nine-digit number indicates a universal international premium rate number.

Mobile phones

You can use your mobile phone anywhere in Europe and in many other parts of the world thanks to the EU's GSM technical standard. Before travelling, however, contact your network provider to make sure that your phone is enabled for international roaming. Coverage will vary and the costs will depend on your provider. Don't forget that there can be charges for receiving calls abroad both for you and the caller.

Electricity

All Europe has 230-volt, 50-cycle alternating current. Cyprus, Ireland, Malta and the United Kingdom have square three-pin plugs but, in general, all other EU countries have two-pin plugs. These may vary but you should be able to use your appliances, such as hairdryers and shavers, anywhere. Adaptors can usually be bought in airports and tourist resorts.

Choosing a time to travel

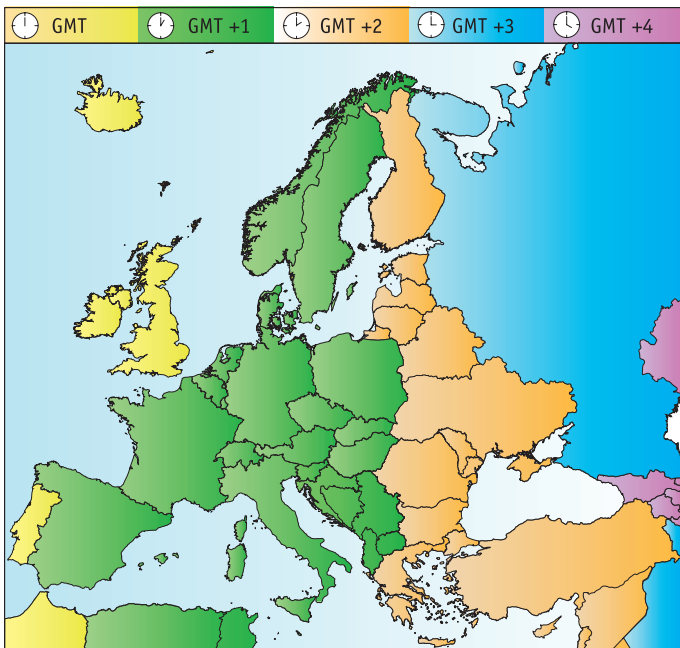
Weather

Europe's weather is generally temperate, although the coldest months in Finland and Sweden can average -16°C , while temperatures in Cyprus and Greece in the hot summer months can average in the high 30s. This table shows average temperatures in January and July in the capitals of the EU countries.

		Average min. January $^{\circ}\text{C}$	Average max. July $^{\circ}\text{C}$
(A)	Vienna	-4	25
(B)	Brussels	-1	23
(CY)	Nicosia	5	37
(CZ)	Prague	-5	23
(D)	Berlin	-3	24
(DK)	Copenhagen	-2	22
(E)	Madrid	2	31
(EST)	Tallinn	-10	20
(F)	Paris	1	25
(FIN)	Helsinki	-9	22
(GB)	London	2	22
(GR)	Athens	6	33
(H)	Budapest	-4	28
(I)	Rome	5	30
(IRL)	Dublin	1	20
(L)	Luxembourg	-1	23
(LT)	Vilnius	-11	23
(LV)	Riga	-10	22
(M)	Valletta	10	29
(NL)	Amsterdam	-1	22
(P)	Lisbon	8	27
(PL)	Warsaw	-6	24
(S)	Stockholm	-5	22
(SK)	Bratislava	-3	26
(SLO)	Ljubljana	-4	27

Check your national press for weather forecasts or contact national tourist offices for more detailed weather information.

Time zones



Summer time

Daylight saving time begins across the EU on 28 March 2004 when clocks are moved forward an hour and it ends on 31 October 2004 when clocks are put back an hour.



Cultural activities

The EU supports and contributes to many cultural projects and events taking place across Europe every year.

Cultural capitals of Europe

Genoa and Lille have been chosen as European capitals of culture for 2004. Genoa, in the north of Italy on the Ligurian sea, has a comprehensive artistic programme lined up as well as events to celebrate its position as a capital of the sea. Further information is available at www.genova-2004.it Lille, in northern France near the Belgian border, is planning a year of festivals, shows and ideas about the new art of living. Further details at www.lille2004.fr

Festivals and special events

Europe's calendar is crowded with festivals and special events in music, art, theatre, dance and film. Check with national tourist offices for details of what is on when you are travelling.

Athens, birthplace of the ancient Olympic Games and host to the first modern games in 1896, is the city chosen for the 2004 Olympic Games being held in August. You can watch over 10 500 athletes taking part in 28 different sports.

You could visit European architectural, cultural or archaeological sites that have been awarded the Europa Nostra prize for exemplary restoration. Recent winners include the restored 18th century Larchill Arcadian Gardens in Ireland, the unique Kierikki Stone Age Centre in Finland with its reconstructed Stone Age village and the Castle Theatre Collection in the Czech Republic, including stage sets and costumes preserved in their original setting (www.europanostra.org).

You could visit the tram terminus in Strasbourg, France, designed by British architect Zaha Hadid which won the 2003 EU prize for contemporary architecture. If you enjoy the cinema, see *The Magdalene Sisters* directed by Scottish Director Peter Mullan which was awarded the 2003 MEDIA prize. Catch the travelling exhibition *Art Nouveau in Progress* which will be moving from Barcelona to Nancy, Ålesund and Glasgow in 2004 and then on round the EU until 2006. Further news about EU-funded events and projects can be found at europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources_info/newsletters/newsletter_en.html



If things go wrong

Emergency number: 112

To contact the emergency services in any EU country, dial 112.

Loss or theft

Report any theft to the local police. You will need to enclose the police report when making your insurance or compensation claim. Cancel any lost or stolen credit cards immediately. If your passport has been stolen, report it to your country's consulate or embassy as well as to the police.

Air passenger rights

As an air passenger you have certain rights when it comes to information about flights and reservations, overbooking, compensation in the case of accident or difficulties with package holidays. These are set out in posters displayed in European airports.

If you have a complaint or a grievance, contact the airline or organiser of the package holiday, or your national air transport or consumer protection organisation. You can also e-mail the European Commission for information at tren-aprights@cec.eu.int

Advice on your rights

For free advice on your rights as a traveller and any other rights and where to go for help, telephone the *EUROPE DIRECT* service on 00800 6 7 8 9 10 11 from anywhere in the EU. You can also e-mail the service via europa.eu.int/europedirect



Tourist information

For further information on any EU country you are thinking of visiting, here are the websites of their official national tourist organisations.

(A) Austria
www.austria.info

(B) Belgium
www.visitflanders.com
www.opt.be

(CY) Cyprus
www.visitcyprus.org.cy

(CZ) Czech Republic
www.czechtourism.com

(D) Germany
www.germany-tourism.de

(DK) Denmark
www.visitdenmark.com

(E) Spain
www.spain.info

(EST) Estonia
www.visitestonia.com

(F) France
www.franceguide.com

(FIN) Finland
www.finland-tourism.com

(GB) United Kingdom
www.visitbritain.com

(GR) Greece
www.gnto.gr

(H) Hungary
www.hungarytourism.hu

(I) Italy
www.enit.it

(IRL) Ireland
www.ireland.ie

(L) Luxembourg
www.ont.lu

(LT) Lithuania
www.tourism.lt

(LV) Latvia
www.latviatourism.lv

(M) Malta
www.visitmalta.com

(NL) Netherlands
www.visitholland.com

(P) Portugal
www.portugalinsite.com

(PL) Poland
www.nto-poland.gov.pl

(S) Sweden
www.visit-sweden.com

(SK) Slovakia
www.slovakiatourism.sk

(SLO) Slovenia
www.slovenia-tourism.si

The abbreviations for countries are those used on nationality plates on cars.



Other information on the European Union



Information in all the official languages of the European Union is available on the Internet. You can access it through the Europa server: europa.eu.int



All over Europe there are hundreds of local EU information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at this website: europa.eu.int/comm/relays/index_en.htm

EUROPE *DIRECT* is a service which answers your



questions about the European Union. You can contact this service by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (or by payphone from outside the EU: +32-2-299 96 96), or by electronic mail via europa.eu.int/europedirect

You can also obtain information and booklets in English about the European Union from :

EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPRESENTATIONS

Representation in Ireland
18 Dawson Street, Dublin 2
Tel. (353-1) 634 11 11
Fax (353-1) 634 11 12
Internet: www.euireland.ie
E-mail: eu-ie-info-request@cec.eu.int

Representation in the United Kingdom
Jean Monnet House
8 Storey's Gate, London SW1P 3AT
Tel. (44-20) 79 73 19 92
Fax (44-20) 79 73 19 00/10
Internet: www.cec.org.uk

Representation in Wales
2 Caspian Point, Caspian Way
Cardiff CF10 4QQ
Tel. (44-29) 20 89 50 20
Fax (44-29) 20 89 50 35
Internet: www.cec.org.uk

Representation in Scotland
9 Alva Street, Edinburgh EH2 4PH
Tel. (44-131) 225 20 58
Fax (44-131) 226 41 05
Internet: www.cec.org.uk

Representation in Northern Ireland
Windsor House
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Fax (44-131) 557 49 77
Internet: www.europarl.org.uk
E-mail: epedinburgh@europarl.eu.int

There are European Commission and Parliament representations and offices in all the countries of the European Union. The European Commission also has delegations in other parts of the world.

Travelling in Europe 2004

Europe: a continent with thousands of years of history, a rich cultural heritage and some of the world's most beautiful scenery. So much for the traveller to discover! What's more, the European Union (EU) has done a lot to make travelling in Europe simpler. Within the EU, you can cross most borders without being checked and the euro makes it easier to shop around for bargains.

If you drive, your driving licence and motor insurance policy issued in an EU country are valid in the other countries, and you can use your mobile phone everywhere.

For more information, helpful tips and a map of Europe, see inside.

This *Travelling in Europe 2004* leaflet is also published on the Internet in an extended version, which provides links to more detailed information on the subjects covered: europa.eu.int/abc/travel

You can find this leaflet and other short, clear explanations about the EU online at europa.eu.int/comm/publications

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