

## Hymnus Europae

## The European Anthem

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### Carmen Latinum

Est Europa nunc unita  
et unita maneat;  
una in diversitate  
pacem mundi augeat.

Semper regant in Europa  
fides et iustitia  
et libertas populorum  
in maiore patria.

Cives, floreat Europa,  
opus magnum vocat vos.  
Stellae signa sunt in caelo  
aureae, quae iungant nos.

### Translation into English

Europe is united now  
United it may remain;  
Our unity in diversity  
May contribute to world peace.

May there forever reign in Europe  
Faith and justice  
And freedom for its people  
In a bigger motherland.

Citizens, Europe shall flourish,  
A great task calls on you.  
Golden stars in the sky are  
The symbols that shall unite us.

## ***Hymnus Europae - A brief course in Latin for those who are strangers - or almost - to this language***

Preliminary remark: Comparing the Latin and the English version of the lyrics you will notice immediately that the English language takes significantly more space to render the contents and the meaning of the Latin verse. This is partly because Latin needs no articles ever, English does (except for abstract terms, so “pax” is “peace”, but “caelo” is “the sky”). Besides, changing a single letter in a word-ending alters the meaning of the word and hence the sentence. This is why Latin is more than any other language a training for precise and logical thinking. Little wonder that the ancient Romans are regarded as the most gifted lawyers of world history.

### **Est Europa nunc unita**

### **Europe is united now**

Whereas the word order is rigid in most living languages, it is rather free in Latin; the words belonging together are identified by their endings, as illustrated in the very first verse: *Unita* (united) is in accordance with *Europa*. This flexibility of word order permits a particular emphasis on certain words by giving them a prominent place - e.g. *est* at the beginning stresses a fact, as we hope an established and - for true Europeans - positive fact. A literal translation would be: There is Europe now united...

### **et unita maneat;**

### **United it may remain;**

*Maneat* is a so-called “coniunctivus optativus” that expresses a wish. English, like many other languages, needs an auxiliary verb (“may”), where Latin needs only one additional letter - the *a* in *maneat*.

Anyway, whenever Europeans from different nations sing the verse together, they shall be aware that the shared wish for unity is one step towards its implementation...

### **una in diversitate**

### **Our unity in diversity**

The words “unity”, “united” are derived from the Latin word for one (“*unus*”) - *una*, in accordance with *Europa*. This verse embodies the official motto of the European Union; in many of the Union’s languages the translation can stay very close to the original: “United in diversity”, “Unie dans la diversité”, “Unita nella diversità”,...

**pacem mundi augeat.**

**May contribute to world peace.**

“*Pax*” - peace - is here in its accusative form, “*mundus*” - the world – is in its genitive form: the peace of the world. “*Augeat*” is again a conjunctive expressing a wish (“*augere*” means increase) - a wish that stood at the beginning of a united Europe. Armed conflicts between European nations often involved numerous other countries in wars with millions of casualties. If there are no more wars among the members of a united Europe, this will be a giant step towards a lasting peace also in the surroundings of Europe. This idea was central to the great speech that Robert Schuman held on May 9, 1950, a date that has since been celebrated as “Europe Day”, as it marked the beginnings of integration.

**Semper regant in Europa**

**May there forever reign in Europe**

“*Regant*” is the third conjunctive for a wish – “*regere*” means reign. Is Europe a wish? Our answer is: yes, but a wish that has partly become true, and will become fully true if only we believe in its reality. Let us turn away from stalwart pessimists and quote Hallstein: If you do not believe in miracles in Europe, you are not realistic.

**fides et iustitia**

**Faith and justice**

« *Fides* » means faith, belief. Many of us do not only believe in God but have true faith in him; so if you want, you can see in this a reference to God. But faith may also refer to Europe: faith in its future. “*Iustitia*” - justice is a fundamental value of Europe.

**et libertas populorum**

**And freedom for its people**

As well as “*libertas*” (liberty, freedom); “*populorum*” is the genitive of “*populus*” - people (Italian: popolo, Spanish: pueblo, French: people,...)

**in maiore patria.**

**In a bigger motherland.**

Major or mayor corresponds to the Latin word for bigger and is also a common surname (in different spellings) in some European languages. The word ending is here in accordance with “*patria*” (the land of our forefathers, our motherland).

As true Europeans we have several identities, which can be regarded as concentric circles: the inner circle is our village or town, then comes the country or nation we are proud of and last, but not least, Europe, a new and bigger motherland. We may not yet have this awareness, but it will grow when we are singing this anthem together.

**Cives, floreat Europa,**

**Citizens, Europe shall flourish,**

“*Cives*” (compare: English “civilian”) means citizens; Latin - like English - has the same ending for the male and female word. “*Floreat*” is once again a conjunctive of the word “*florere*” - flourish.

**opus magnum vocat vos.**

**A great task calls on you.**

“*Opus*” is a term used in music in our days, in Latin “*opus magnum*” simply means a great task. Using twice the same initial letter “*vocat vos*” (calls on you) gives the request for cooperation towards a common goal a special emphasis.

**Stellae signa sunt in caelo  
aureae, quae iungant nos.**

**Golden stars in the sky are  
The symbols that shall unite us.**

“*Stella*” means star, “*stellae*” stars in the plural, and “*aureae*” is the plural form for the Latin word gold, golden. These twelve golden stars in a blue sky (“*caelum*”) are the signs (“*signa*” - signs, symbols) which may unite us (“*nos*”).

So the last verse also ends in a wish. Could there be a better ending for an anthem than the shared wish, expressed in a common language, that a dream may come true; the beautiful dream of a lasting union of our countries into a bigger home country that we will all share?