

What is Europe's telephone number?

U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger once complained that he didn't know Europe's telephone number. What he meant was that when a crisis blew up, Americans did not know who to turn to as the authentic and immediate voice of European opinion. Instead, he had to phone each individual government.

Europe is not a real competitor for the United States when it comes to military power and global influence, but this comes from a lack of political will, not of smaller size. If we compare economic power and number of inhabitants, the USA and Europe are equally powerful. Their GNPs are nearly the same, and the European Union has some 160 million more inhabitants.

having won these wars, and of having stood alone for a certain time against Nazi tyranny. Continental Europeans tend to hate war always and in every way, and they always try to search for peaceful solution to political conflicts. The British, like the Americans, sometimes consider war a necessary evil to stop a growing threat for their security; everything which resembles an "appeasement policy" towards a security threat is considered a dangerous weakness.

It is not easy to combine these different views when it comes to the question of security, so it is possible that the Europeans will not find a common thread which creates a unified foreign policy. Nonetheless, they are trying to combine their forces by creating the office of an EU foreign minister.

Figures from 2001–02		
	USA	European Union (with new members, 2004)
GNP	11 188 Billion €	11 076 Billion €
Population	290 Million	451 Million
Percentage of Global Trade	15.4 %	20.1 %
Military Expenditures	313 Billion €	160 Billion €
Percentage of Worldwide Currency Reserves	60 %	20 %

In 1954, The French parliament refused to assist in establishing a European Army, but now it seems that this will come to pass, through ever closer military cooperation. Not only are Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Great Britain, Spain, Luxembourg, Poland, and Italy members of NATO, but they also cooperate in many defense questions on bilateral levels. On July 14, 1994, German soldiers serving in the Eurocorps took part for the first time in Bastille Day parade on the Champs-Élysées to celebrate the anniversary of the French Revolution. This was an important symbol of reconciliation between the two

Europe, however, is a giant unwilling to use its power in foreign policy. During the last year, events around the war in Iraq have shown that in foreign politics the European states do not speak with one voice. They have extremely different opinions on the question of war and peace. The victors and the vanquished of the bloodiest war in human history see the question of war and peace completely differently: after the traumatic experience of having lost two World Wars, the German population is mostly pacifist, while the British live with the tradition of

nations. This process of European military integration will accelerate.

Nevertheless, in question of foreign and security policy the Europeans are divided not only by different strategic and political interests, but, more importantly, by differences in their political culture. It is unlikely that the Europeans will achieve the unity and will too become a global power. It will probably take a long time until Europe gets its own "telephone number".