

WE ARE ALL EUROPEAN CITIZENS, WITH OUT SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES.

WHAT UNITES US? THE COMMON PATH IN THE BUILDING OF EUROPE

WHAT DISTINGUISHES US? LET'S SEE SOME STEREOTYPES AND COMMON PLACES, ACCORDING TO A SURVEY MADE BY "THE GUARDIAN", A BRITISH NEWSPAPER.

Finland

Depressed and emotionless vodka drinkers?

Europeans tend to have few stereotypes about Finland. Maybe the most common stereotype about Finnish people is the one depicting them as rude, introverted and emotionless. The most important part of Finnish culture is "Don't exaggerate". Many other cultures are more verbal and have small talk, which Finns are not interested in, which is then interpreted as being rude. The normal intonation and phrasing of the Finnish language seems to be sad or rude in many other languages. Some say that Finns sound like they swear all the time. Another picture is the one of Finns being hard vodka-drinkers, with an old-fashioned mustache, bad fashion sense and an abusive wife, who lives in the woods and splits his time between hitting himself with birch branches in the sauna and hunting bears. Others suggest that Finnish people are very depressed, live in their parents' basement, listen to black metal and play online role-playing games all day. In the best stereotypes, Finland is regarded as a wealthy and progressive society with great welfare system.

Germany

Car lovers and humorless hardworkers?

Contrary to popular belief, not all German men wander around the place in Lederhosen (leather trousers). But this popular image remains in Europeans' mind. According to [The Guardian](#), Germans are regarded as hardworking who love their cars more than anything, efficient and disciplined, but also stiff and humorless. Seemingly, Germans don't think it is a laughing matter when it comes to their politicians – at least not outside of satirical programs or Carnival. If Germans do have a sense of humor perhaps it has to be clearly noted in the calendar." Other common stereotype is on the language, seen as harsh and unromantic.

Poland

Hard-drinking, Catholic zealots?

According to [The Guardian](#), Europeans have few compelling stereotypes about Poland. One of the most significant is related to religion, with Poles being mostly regarded as convinced Catholics. It can be noted that this stereotype is rather true, as a survey carried out in November 2011 showed that 95% of Poles declare themselves Catholic although only 92% say they believe in God. But according to a Polish journalist, Poles are Catholic but not really bothered by what the church says. Another stereotype is related to alcohol: Poles are depicted as hard drinkers. If it is true that on average Poles drink 13.3 litres of alcohol per citizens per year and are de facto drinking slightly more than Germans (12.8 litres), they however drink almost the same as the English (13.4 litres), and less than the Irish (14.4 litres). This may be a consequence of the rough and turbulent reputation of vodka...

Italy

Football addict and talkative fashionists?

According to [The Guardian](#), Europeans say Italians are chatterboxes, and bad listeners interested only in the sound of their own voices. It is also said that Italians are good-looking, Latin lovers, crazy about fashion, football addicts who never pay taxes. Other common pictures include the image that Italians have an incredible coffee culture, love pizza and pasta with spaghetti and pasta being almost sacred. It is also commonly stated that Italian people often say: “mamma mia!” or “va fan culo!” and that Italian Mamma rule the roost.

Romania

Roma and vampires speaking Russian?

For many foreigners, Romania is the equivalent of a series of common misconceptions. The first common picture associated with Romania is considering the country as the land of vampires. There are no vampires in Transylvania. Also, there’s nothing creepy about it and people living there don’t have that funny accent you’ve heard in Hollywood films. Another common misperception is thinking that Romanian speak Russian. Romanian is however a Romance language. People were forced to learn Russian during communism but this was not the case since 1990. Then Europeans tend to think that all Romanian are Roma people. But Roma people make up only 2.5% of Romania’s over 22 million people. A surprising number of people seem to think Romanians are the minority. Which is not to say that Roma are not Romanians. And last, a common stereotype is confusing Bucharest, Romania’s capital city, with Budapest which is actually Hungary’s. This is something that many people get wrong.

Bulgaria

Macho, misogynistic goat cheese eaters?

Europeans do not have a clear peception of Bulgarians, they are mostly considered to be slavic and orthodox. According to a popular blogger: “Whilst most men would agree that Bulgarian women have a reputation for being sexy, strangely not many women say similar things about East European men. Somewhat unfairly, this is probably due to the stereotypical Balkan male being portrayed as misogynistic, macho, aggressive, built like a truck, and about as sensitive as the average brick.” and continues “Like many East European men, Bulgarian guys can be possessive and jealous, but they can also be sensitive, good natured, and loyal.” Bulgarians are also said to survive only on tomatoes, cucumber and goat cheese. They are said to have colorful traditions.

Greece

Hairy, gossipers, tight on money?

Following the 2008 crisis, Europeans developed lots of stereotypes on Greece related to their economic situation. Now the first stereotype that may be mentioned by Europeans on Greeks would be that they are tight on money. Economic problems aside, there used to be even before the crisis a certain number of stereotypes associated to Greeks, the first one may be depicting Greeks as hairy. Greek may not be more hairy than any other nation, but this is like that with stereotypes, they are vivid and sometimes unexplainable. Other stereotypes depict Greeks as loud, care free, gossipers and smokers. And when it comes to family, Greek people are sometimes described as mamma’s boys and daddy’s girls.

STEREOTYPES ABOUT EUROPEANS

ITALIAN SKETCHES

<u>Countries</u>		<u>Stereotypes</u>
1	ITALY	Italians always exclaim “mamma mia!” because Italian Mums rule the roost
2	ROMANIA	In Romania there might be vampires
	GERMANY	Germans always drink beer
3	FINLAND	Finnish are usually depressed
4	GREECE /ITALY	Greeks, like the Italians from Genoa, are mean and too concerned with saving money
5	POLAND	Polish people are vodka hard drinkers
6	BULGARIA	Bulgarians love dancing more than anything else