

United in diversity:

ANTHEMS AND FLAGS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

by Pierre-Robert Cloet, Bénédicte Legué and Kerstin Martel

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The idea behind this piece of work is to highlight the meanings and context underlying the appearance of the main symbols attached to each EU member country, that are the **national anthem and the flag, by also associating the portrayal of this union**. What is expressed through these emblems varies from one country to another. To help the reader find points in common, we have avoided simple alphabetic order. Instead, we have used **typology keys** which seemed to us more relevant.

Regarding the national anthems, we have decided upon a presentation based on musical patterns and the major themes reflected through each one. These reveal the **content of the texts, the harmonies or general historic contexts**: they pay tribute to a monarchy or a homeland and a people, evoke the beauty of the country, display a battle-like tone or call for peace, freedom and justice. The flags will be classified according to the themes that influenced their creation. We will group the banners according to the main source of inspiration: regions, provinces or intra-national entities; national symbolism; colours of the monarchy; sources common to several countries such as the *Dannebrog* banner, the Slavic colours, the French Revolution. The informed reader will understand that a same flag or anthem could have been **classified in two or more categories!**

The sources that have allowed us to present these national emblems to you are numerous, various, often redundant and sometimes contradictory. We have consulted the **official websites** of the various countries, and other websites dealing with this theme. **Several specific works** deserve special attention and interested readers can consult them for their pleasure and benefit. We also indicate several useful **historical works** to understand the historic contexts that influenced the choice of nations, their people and their leaders. Through this journey in time and space we also hope to highlight what are the most precious elements within the European Union: **a common and shared history**.

Lastly, we have decided to give short presentations, of consistent size, when possible, from one country to another. There is much more to tell. The spirit of our approach is mainly that of showing when and how men and people **claimed ownership of these symbols**: symbols of nations, symbols shared by all the countries of the EU. The European flag and the national flags fly side by side on public buildings. These shared emblems are **ours**.

