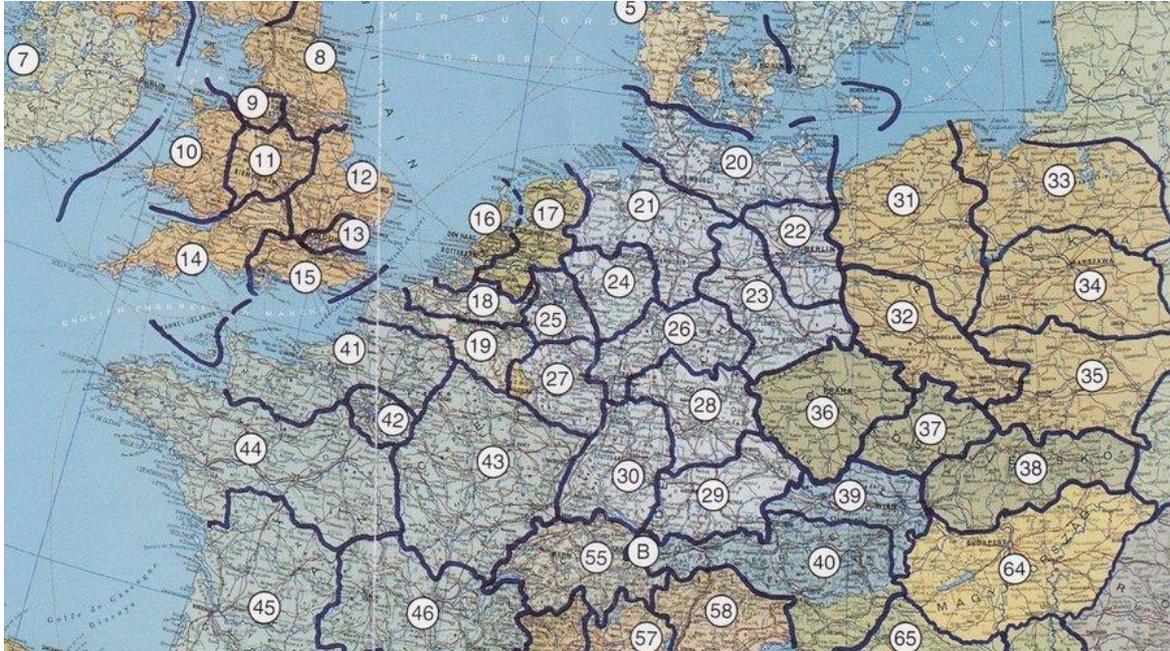


My Kingdom for a Beer? Heineken's Eurotopia

- Over a year ago

by [Frank Jacobs](#)



Freddy Heineken (1923-2002), the Dutch tycoon who made his beer into a global brand, also was a dedicated Europhile. Towards the end of his life, he proposed reshuffling Europe's national borders to strengthen the supranational project whose stated goal is an "ever closer union".

Heineken collaborated with two historians to produce a booklet entitled "The United States of Europe, A Eurotopia?" The idea was timely, for two reasons. Eastern Europe was experiencing a period of turmoil, following the collapse of communism. The resulting wave of nationalism led to the re-emergence of several nation-states (i.e. the Baltics) and the break-up of several others (Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia). And in 1992, the Maastricht Treaty would transform an initially mainly economic "European Community" into a more political "European Union".



Heineken's proposal would lead to the creation of dozens of new European states, which would have a comparably small population size (mostly between 5 and 10 million), some basis in history, and for the most part would be ethnically homogenous.

The theory behind Heineken's idea is that a larger number of smaller member-states would be easier to govern within a single European framework than a combination of larger states competing for dominance. Heineken might have been inspired by the work of Leopold Kohr, whose similar proposal was discussed earlier on this blog (#18).

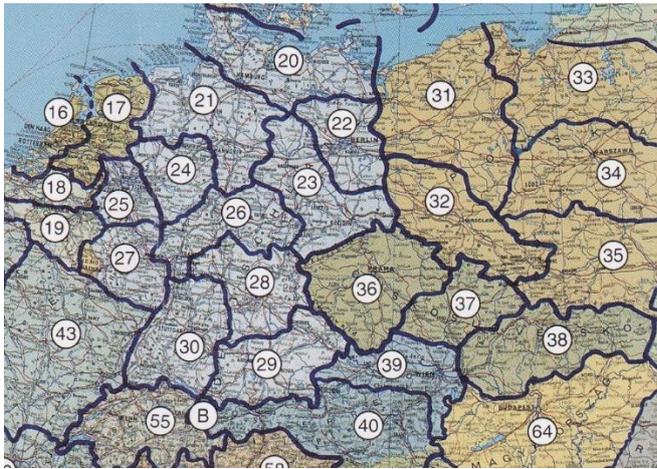
Here is a list of countries proposed in the "Eurotopia" detailed by Heineken e.a., with their capital cities and population figures. Numbers correspond to the ones on the map:



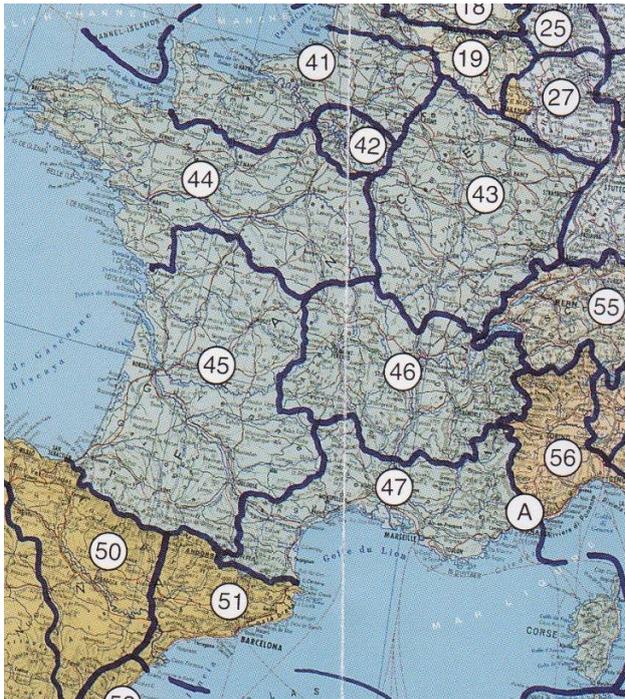
Scandinavia	1	Iceland	<i>Reykjavik</i>	252,000
	2	Norway	<i>Oslo</i>	4,200,000
	3	Sweden	<i>Stockholm</i>	8,500,000
	4	Finland	<i>Helsinki</i>	4,900,000
	5	Denmark	<i>Copenhagen</i>	5,100,000



British Isles	6	Scotland	<i>Edinburgh</i>	5,100,000
	7	Ireland	<i>Dublin</i>	5,100,000
	8	Northumbria	<i>York</i>	8,000,000
	9	Lancaster	<i>Manchester</i>	5,400,000
	10	Wales	<i>Cardiff</i>	2,900,000
	11	Mercia	<i>Birmingham</i>	7,400,000
	12	East Anglia	<i>Cambridge</i>	5,300,000
	13	Essex	<i>London</i>	8,300,000
	14	Wessex	<i>Plymouth</i>	5,900,000
	15	Kent	<i>Southampton</i>	5,400,000



Low Countries, Germany and Central Europe	16	Holland-Zeeland	<i>The Hague</i>	6,500,000
	17	Ysselland	<i>Amhem</i>	6,000,000
	18	Flanders	<i>Brussels</i>	7,800,000
	19	Hainaut	<i>Lille/Rijsse</i>	7,100,000
	20	Schleswig-Holstein	<i>Hamburg</i>	6,100,000
	21	Hanover	<i>Bremen</i>	7,900,000
	22	Brandenburg	<i>Berlin</i>	6,000,000
	23	Saxony	<i>Dresden</i>	7,900,000
	24	Westphalia	<i>Münster</i>	7,900,000
	25	Northern Rhineland	<i>Düsseldorf</i>	9,200,000
	26	Thuringia	<i>Erfurt</i>	8,300,000
	27	Rhine-Moselland	<i>Mainz</i>	5,100,000
	28	Franconia	<i>Nürnberg</i>	5,100,000
	29	Bavaria	<i>Munich</i>	6,000,000
	30	Baden-Württemberg	<i>Stuttgart</i>	9,600,000
	31	Poznan	<i>Poznan</i>	6,200,000
	32	Silesia	<i>Wroclaw</i>	8,200,000
	33	Gdansk	<i>Gdansk</i>	5,500,000
	34	Warsaw	<i>Warsaw</i>	7,600,000
	35	Galicja	<i>Krakow</i>	7,400,000
	36	Bohemia	<i>Prague</i>	6,300,000
	37	Moravia	<i>Bmo</i>	4,000,000
	38	Slovakia	<i>Bratislava</i>	5,300,000
	39	Austria	<i>Vienna</i>	4,500,000
	40	Noricum	<i>Graz</i>	5,000,000



France	41	Picardy-Normandy	<i>Rouen</i>	4,900,000
	42	Ile-de-France	<i>Paris</i>	10,300,000
	43	Burgundy	<i>Nancy</i>	8,000,000
	44	Neustria	<i>Nantes</i>	8,200,000
	45	Aquitania	<i>Bordeaux</i>	7,400,000
	46	Auvergne	<i>Lyon</i>	6,500,000
	47	Provence	<i>Marseille</i>	6,500,000



Iberia	48	Galicia-Asturias	<i>Santiago</i>	4,400,000
	49	Castile	<i>Madrid</i>	9,100,000
	50	Navarre-Aragon	<i>Bilbao</i>	4,100,000
	51	Catalonia	<i>Barcelona</i>	6,000,000
	52	Valencia	<i>Valencia</i>	5,500,000
	53	Andalusia	<i>Sevilla</i>	8,000,000
	54	Portugal	<i>Lisbon</i>	10,300,000



Switzerland and Italy	55	Switzerland	<i>Bern</i>	6,600,000
	56	Piedmont	<i>Torino</i>	6,200,000
	57	Lombardy	<i>Milan</i>	8,900,000
	58	Venice	<i>Venice</i>	6,500,000
	59	Tuscany	<i>Bologna</i>	7,500,000
	60	Umbria	<i>Rome</i>	7,400,000
	61	Apulia	<i>Bari</i>	5,700,000
	62	Naples	<i>Naples</i>	8,600,000
	63	Sicily	<i>Palermo</i>	7,100,000



Balkans and Greece	64	Hungary	<i>Budapest</i>	10,600,000
	65	Croatia	<i>Zagreb</i>	4,600,000
	66	Bosnia-Herzegovina	<i>Sarajevo</i>	4,100,000
	67	Serbia	<i>Belgrade</i>	8,500,000
	68	Albania	<i>Tirana</i>	5,000,000
	69	Transylvania	<i>Cluj-Napoca</i>	7,500,000
	70	Moldavia	<i>Bacau</i>	5,000,000
	71	Wallachia	<i>Bucharest</i>	9,000,000
	72	Bulgaria	<i>Sofia</i>	8,900,000
	73	Skopje	<i>Skopje</i>	1,900,000
	74	Greece	<i>Athens</i>	10,300,000
75	Cyprus	<i>Nicosia</i>	688,000	

While an interesting conversation piece, Mr Heineken’s proposal is wildly improbable, especially after Brexit, as no EU member-state is eager to be dismembered or dissolved for the greater good. The Dutchman died in the year his “Eurotopia” plan was published. The European Union has since continued to expand eastwards, becoming ever more unwieldy as the number of member states increased. Whether chopping up larger states into smaller ones with less historical baggage would make the decision-making process within the EU easier or more difficult, will probably remain a purely academic question.