

# Chronology 1945–2011

## 1940s

**February 4–11, 1945:** Yalta Conference.

**July 17–August 12, 1945:** Potsdam Conference.

**September 19, 1946:** Churchill's Zurich speech.

**March 12, 1947:** Truman Doctrine.

**June 5, 1947:** George C. Marshall's Harvard address. Beginning of European Recovery Program.

**March 17, 1948:** Treaty on Western Union (Brussels Pact) signed. Belgium, Britain, France, Luxembourg, and Netherlands form an alliance for mutual defense and economic cooperation.

**May 7–11, 1948:** Congress of Europe at The Hague.

**June 24, 1948:** Berlin blockade begins (ends May 12, 1949).

**May 5, 1949:** Treaty of St. James establishing the Council of Europe.

**September 15, 1949:** Konrad Adenauer becomes first chancellor of West Germany.

## 1950s

**May 9, 1950:** Schuman Plan announced.

**October 24, 1950:** Announcement of Pleven Plan.

**November 4, 1950:** Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed in Rome by thirteen European countries. Greece and Sweden sign on November 28.

**April 18, 1951:** ECSC treaty signed in Paris by Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and West Germany.

**May 27, 1952:** EDC treaty signed in Paris by the same countries.

**March 10, 1953:** EPC proposals presented to the government of The Six by the ECSC Assembly.

**August 30, 1954:** French Parliament rejects the EDC treaty.

**October 23, 1954:** WEU treaty signed in Paris.

**June 1–2, 1955:** Messina conference of The Six delegates to an intergovernmental committee headed by Paul-Henri Spaak the task of drawing up plans for an economic community and a community to govern atomic energy.

**October 13, 1955:** Jean Monnet forms his Action Committee for a United Europe.

**May 29, 1956:** Spaak committee presents its report to foreign ministers of The Six in Venice.

**October 30–November 6, 1956:** Suez Crisis.

**March 25, 1957:** Treaties of Rome instituting Euratom and the EEC signed by The Six.

**January 7, 1958:** Walter Hallstein (Germany) becomes the first president of the EEC

Commission, which begins operations.

**November 14, 1958:** French government blocks the British idea of a free trade area encompassing all OEEC countries.

## 1960s

**May 3, 1960:** EFTA formed by Austria, Denmark, Great Britain, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland.

**July–August 1961:** Britain, Denmark, and Ireland apply for EEC membership.

**November 2, 1961:** Plan for an “indissoluble Union of States” presented by the French government.

**January 14, 1962:** Agreement on CAP reached. Second stage of EEC begins.

**January 14, 1963:** De Gaulle’s press conference opposing British membership.

**January 22, 1963:** Franco-German pact of friendship signed in Paris.

**January 28, 1963:** France vetoes British membership.

**July 20, 1963:** Association agreement signed with eighteen African states at Yaoundé (Cameroon).

**March 31, 1965:** The Commission presents its proposals regarding the EEC’s “own resources” and the budget question.

**April 8, 1965:** Merger treaty signed. ECSC, EEC, and Euratom are fused into the EC.

**July 6, 1965:** Empty Chair Crisis begins. France boycotts the Community.

**September 9, 1965:** De Gaulle casts doubt on future of EEC if national veto not preserved.

**January 28–29, 1966:** Luxembourg compromise agreed. France retakes her place at the table.

**May 1, 1967:** Wilson government formally applies for British membership.

**June 30, 1967:** The Commission signs the Kennedy Round trade deal on behalf of The Six.

**July 6, 1967:** Jean Rey (Belgium) becomes second president of the EC Commission.

**November 27, 1967:** De Gaulle blocks British membership.

**July 1, 1968:** Customs union begins, eighteen months ahead of the schedule anticipated in the EEC treaty.

**December 1–2, 1969:** Hague summit of EC leaders.

## 1970s

**July 2, 1970:** Franco Maria Malfatti (Italy) becomes third president of the EC Commission.

**October 7–8, 1970:** Werner Report on monetary union adopted.

**October 27, 1970:** Luxembourg Report on political cooperation adopted.

**August 15, 1971:** United States ends dollar convertibility with gold.

**January 22, 1972:** Britain, Denmark, Ireland, and Norway sign accession treaties. Norway rejects membership in a referendum on September 25.

**March 22, 1972:** Sicco Mansholt (Netherlands) becomes fourth president of the EC Commission following Malfatti’s resignation.

**October 19–21, 1972:** At Paris, EC Nine commit themselves to creating a European Union by

1980.

**January 1, 1973:** Britain, Denmark, and Ireland join the EC.

**January 6, 1973:** François-Xavier Ortoli (France) becomes fifth president of EC Commission.

**April 23, 1973:** Kissinger announces the “Year of Europe.”

**December 9–10, 1974:** Paris summit of EC leaders establishes European Council.

**January 7, 1976:** Publication of Tindemans Report.

**September 20, 1976:** Treaty authorizing direct elections to the European Assembly.

**January 6, 1977:** Roy Jenkins (Great Britain) becomes sixth president of the EC Commission.

**October 27, 1977:** Jenkins appeals for monetary union in a speech at the European University Institute.

**December 4–5, 1978:** Brussels European Council decides to introduce the EMS.

**March 13, 1979:** EMS enters into operation.

**March 16, 1979:** Death of Jean Monnet.

**June 7–10, 1979:** First direct elections to the European Parliament.

**November 29–30, 1979:** British budgetary question explodes at Dublin European Council.

## 1980s

**January 1, 1981:** Greece becomes tenth member state of the EC.

**January 6, 1981:** Gaston Thorn (Luxembourg) becomes seventh president of the EC Commission.

**May 10, 1981:** François Mitterrand becomes president of France.

**October 4, 1981:** French franc devalued within the EMS. Further adjustments follow in February and June 1982 and March 1983.

**November 19, 1981:** Italian foreign minister Emilio Colombo and his German counterpart, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, explain their proposals for a European Act to the European Parliament.

**June 17–19, 1983:** Stuttgart European Council ends the Genscher–Colombo process by signing the “Solemn Declaration” on European Union.

**February 14, 1984:** The European Parliament adopts a proposal for a treaty on European Union.

**June 14–17, 1984:** Second elections to the European Parliament.

**June 25–26, 1984:** Fontainebleau European Council. British budgetary problem resolved amid euphoria. Dooge Committee on institutional reform launched.

**January 7, 1985:** Jacques Delors (France) becomes eighth president of the EC Commission.

**June 12, 1985:** Portugal and Spain sign their accession treaties. They enter the Community on January 1, 1986.

**June 14, 1985:** The Commission submits its white paper, *Completing the Internal Market*.

**June 28–29, 1985:** Milan European Council calls an intergovernmental conference to decide amendments to the EEC treaty.

**February 17 and 28, 1986:** Single European Act (SEA) signed in Brussels.

**May 23, 1986:** Death of Altiero Spinelli.

**May 29, 1986:** The flag of the European Community (twelve gold stars arranged in a circle on a light blue background) is flown for the first time.

**February 18, 1987:** “Delors Package” proposing big increases in regional development funding presented to European Parliament.

**July 1, 1987:** SEA becomes law after all twelve member states complete ratification.

**June 27–28, 1988:** Hanover European Council renews Delors’s presidency of the Commission.

**September 20, 1988:** Bruges speech: Margaret Thatcher warns of a European “super-state.”

**October 24, 1988:** Court of First Instance instituted.

**April 12, 1989:** Presentation of the Delors Report.

**June 15–18, 1989:** Third elections to the European Parliament.

**November 10, 1989:** Fall of the Berlin Wall.

**December 8–9, 1989:** Strasbourg European Council launches IGC on monetary union and decides to set up a European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to provide loans for the countries of Eastern Europe.

## 1990s

**April 28, 1990:** Dublin European Council welcomes German reunification. A second Dublin summit on June 25–26 decides to call a parallel IGC on political union and fixes the date that the two IGCs will begin.

**June 19, 1990:** Schengen Treaty signed.

**October 3, 1990:** Reunification of Germany.

**October 27–28, 1990:** Rome I European Council reveals a deep breach between Britain and the rest of EU.

**December 14–15, 1990:** Rome II summit launches the two IGCs.

**April 14, 1991:** The EBRD starts work.

**September 7, 1991:** Hague peace conference on Yugoslavia begins.

**December 9–10, 1991:** Maastricht European Council negotiates the Treaty on European Union. Treaty is signed on February 7, 1992.

**June 2, 1992:** Danes vote against the Maastricht Treaty.

**September 20, 1992:** French narrowly approve Maastricht Treaty. Vote is preceded by chaos on the financial markets and the elimination of the pound sterling and the lira from the EMS.

**December 11–12, 1992:** Edinburgh European Council allows Denmark various opt-outs from the EU treaty and gives it a second chance to hold a referendum. “Delors II” regional development package is approved.

**May 18, 1993:** Danes vote “yes” to Maastricht.

**June 21–22, 1993:** Copenhagen European Council lays down general principles of entry for would-be members of the EU.

**July 28–29, 1993:** Final collapse of EMS after speculative attacks on the French franc.

**November 1, 1993:** Treaty on European Union becomes law.

**December 15, 1993:** Uruguay Round ends with major accord on liberalization of trade and

agreement to establish the World Trade Organization (WTO).

**March 30, 1994:** Austria, Finland, Norway, and Sweden conclude negotiations for membership. Norway rejects the treaty of accession on November 28; the others ratify and join the EU on January 1, 1995. Membership is now fifteen.

**June 9–12, 1994:** Fourth elections to the European Parliament.

**June 24–25, 1994:** Corfu European Council dominated by wrangling over the successor to Jacques Delors. On July 15, Jacques Santer (Luxembourg) is chosen at a special European Council meeting in Brussels.

**January 18, 1995:** Santer is approved as ninth president of the European Commission by the European Parliament.

**March 26, 1995:** Passport-free zone between Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal.

**July 26, 1995:** Europol Convention signed. Begins work in October 1998.

**December 15–16, 1995:** Madrid European Council decides the name of the single currency: the Euro will enter into operation on January 1, 1999, and will be available in note form from January 1, 2002.

**March 29, 1996:** IGC on institutional reform begins.

**December 13–14, 1996:** Stability and Growth Pact agreed by Dublin European Council.

**June 16–17, 1997:** Amsterdam European Council concludes IGC on institutional reform with a set of amendments, but no great structural alterations, to the Treaty on European Union.

**July 16, 1997:** The Commission presents Agenda 2000, its opinion on the accession of the ten new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe.

**October 2, 1997:** Treaty of Amsterdam signed.

**March 25, 1998:** The Commission gives a passing grade to eleven states for membership of the Euro. Britain and Denmark opt out. European Council confirms decision on May 3.

**March 30–31, 1998:** Accession negotiations with Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia begin.

**June 1, 1998:** European Central Bank instituted.

**September 27, 1998:** Helmut Kohl's sixteen-year leadership of Germany is ended when Gerhard Schröder's SPD win control of the Bundestag.

**January 1, 1999:** Participant currencies in the Euro fix their exchange rates.

**March 15, 1999:** European Commission resigns following the publication of a report on fraud, wasteful management, and cronyism. Several commissioners, including Edith Cresson, a former prime minister of France, are criticized by name.

**March 24–25, 1999:** Extraordinary European Council in Berlin names Romano Prodi (Italy) as its choice to be the tenth president of the Commission. He is approved by the EP on May 5.

**May 1, 1999:** The Amsterdam Treaty comes into force.

**June 3–5, 1999:** Javier Solana (Spain) nominated as first EU high representative for foreign policy.

**June 10–13, 1999:** Fifth elections to the European Parliament. Turnout, at 49 percent, is a record low.

**October 15–16, 1999:** Tampere European Council in Finland is the first to give most of its time to justice and home affairs.

## 2000s

**January 15, 2000:** Accession negotiations begin with Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, and Slovakia. IGC on institutional amendments to EU treaty begin in February.

**May 12, 2000:** Joschka Fischer, German foreign minister, argues in Berlin for a federal European state or else the possibility of a group of states pressing ahead to more advanced forms of integration.

**September 28, 2000:** Danes vote against joining Euro.

**December 7–10, 2000:** Nice European Council makes further cosmetic changes to the EU's institutional structures and welcomes a Charter of Fundamental Human Rights without incorporating it into the treaty.

**February 26, 2001:** Treaty of Nice signed in Brussels.

**June 7, 2001:** Irish voters reject the Treaty of Nice. They later approve it in a second referendum on October 19, 2002.

**September 11, 2001:** Destruction of World Trade Center. EU begins work on a draft of antiterrorism measures and proposes the introduction of a “European arrest warrant” to eliminate lengthy extradition procedures.

**December 14–15, 2001:** Laeken European Council institutes a “Convention,” chaired by a former French president, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, on the EU’s institutional and political future.

**January 1, 2002:** Euro notes and coins begin to circulate throughout most of the Union.

**February 28, 2002:** The Convention begins work.

**December 12–13, 2002:** Copenhagen European Council recommends entry of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Malta, and Cyprus in 2004.

**April 16, 2003:** Accession treaties signed with Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia in Athens.

**July 18, 2003:** Convention on the Future of Europe presents the Draft Constitutional Treaty.

**October 4, 2003:** Constitutional Treaty IGC begins.

**May 1, 2004:** Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia join the EU. The EU’s membership is now twenty-five.

**June 10–13, 2004:** European Parliament elections are held.

**June 18, 2004:** IGC ends with an agreement on Constitutional Treaty.

**July 22, 2004:** The European Parliament approves the appointment of José Manuel Barroso (Portugal) as the Commission’s new president.

**October 29, 2004:** The EU member states sign the treaty establishing a Constitution of Europe in Rome.

**April 25, 2005:** Accession treaties signed with Bulgaria and Romania in Luxembourg. Actual accessions are scheduled to take place in 2007.

**May 29, 2005:** French “no” to the Constitutional Treaty.

**June 1, 2005:** Dutch “nee” to the Constitutional Treaty. European Council begins a “period of reflection” on European Constitution.

**October 3, 2005:** Accession negotiations with Turkey and Croatia begin.

**January 1, 2007:** The accession of Bulgaria and Romania completes the fifth enlargement of the EU.

**July 23, 2007:** Member states’ representatives meet in Brussels for an IGC on a draft reform treaty to amend the EU treaties.

**December 13, 2007:** The Treaty of Lisbon is signed at Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, in Lisbon.

**December 21, 2007:** The Schengen area is enlarged to include Estonia, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

**January 1, 2008:** Cyprus and Malta adopt the Euro.

**June 12, 2008:** Ireland rejects the Treaty of Lisbon in a referendum.

**September 1, 2008:** The EU leaders meet at a summit to discuss the fighting in Georgia and condemn Russia’s “disproportionate reaction.”

**December 12, 2008:** The European Council adopts the Economic Recovery Plan.

**January 1, 2009:** Slovakia adopts the Euro.

**June 4–7, 2009:** European Parliament elections are held.

**July 23, 2009:** Iceland applies for EU membership.

**September 16, 2009:** The European Parliament approves the nomination of José Manuel Barroso for a second five-year term as president of the European Commission.

**October 3, 2009:** Ireland approves the Lisbon Treaty in a second referendum.

**November 20, 2009:** The European Council appoints Herman Van Rompuy (Belgium) as the first permanent president of the EU Council. Catherine Ashton (UK) becomes High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

**December 1, 2009:** The Lisbon Treaty comes into effect.

## 2010

**February 9:** The European Parliament approves the Barroso II Commission.

**May 7:** Together with the IMF, EU leaders approve emergency funding, worth up to €750 billion, to bail out members of the Eurozone unable to finance their national debt.

**June 17:** The European Council decides to open accession negotiations with Iceland. European Council adopts Europe 2020 strategy for “smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.”

**November 28:** The EU agrees to support the Irish economy to help safeguard the stability of the Euro.

## 2011

**January 1:** Estonia adopts the Euro, the seventeenth state to do so.

**March 25:** “Euro Plus” pact adopted by European Council.

**May 28:** ECB chief Jean-Claude Trichet (France) calls for EU supervision of national finances.

**August 16:** Chancellor Angela Merkel (Germany) and President Nicolas Sarkozy (France) call for additional biannual meetings of the European Council to provide “true economic government” for the EU.



# European Union

