

APPENDIX IX

KEY DATES IN THE HISTORY OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION¹

1950

9 May

Robert Schuman, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, makes an important speech putting forward proposals based on the ideas of Jean Monnet. He proposes that France and the Federal Republic of Germany pool their coal and steel resources in a new organisation which other European countries can join.

Since this date can be regarded as the date of birth of the European Union, 9 May is now celebrated annually as Europe Day.

1951

18 April

In Paris, six countries — Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands — sign the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). It comes into force on 23 July 1952, for a period of 50 years.

1955

1–2 June

At a meeting in Messina, the foreign ministers of the six countries decide to extend European integration to the economy as a whole.

1957

25 March

In Rome, the six countries sign the treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). They come into force on 1 January 1958.

1960

4 January

At the instigation of the United Kingdom, the Stockholm Convention establishes the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), comprising a number of European countries that are not part of the EEC.

1963

20 July

In Yaoundé, an association agreement is signed between the EEC and 18 African countries.

1965

8 April

A treaty is signed merging the executive bodies of the three Communities (the ECSC, EEC and Euratom) and creating a single Council and a single Commission. It comes into force on 1 July 1967.

1966

29 January

The 'Luxembourg compromise'. Following a political crisis, France agrees to take part in Council meetings once again, in return for an agreement that the unanimity rule be maintained when 'vital national interests' are at stake.

¹ http://europa.eu/abc/12lessons/key_dates/index_en.htm.

1968

1 July

Customs duties between the member states on industrial goods are completely abolished, 18 months ahead of schedule, and a common external tariff is introduced.

1969

1–2 December

At the Hague Summit, the EEC's political leaders decide to move further ahead with European integration, opening the way for its first enlargement.

1970

22 April

In Luxembourg, a treaty is signed allowing the European Communities to be increasingly financed from 'own resources' and giving greater supervisory powers to the European Parliament.

1972

22 January

In Brussels, treaties of accession to the European Communities are signed with Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom.

1973

1 January

Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom join the European Communities, bringing their membership to nine. Norway stays out, following a referendum in which a majority of people voted against membership.

1974

9–10 December

At the Paris Summit, the political leaders of the nine member states decide to meet three times a year as the European Council. They also give the go-ahead for direct elections to the European Parliament, and agree to set up the European Regional Development Fund.

1975

28 February

In Lomé, a convention (Lomé I) is signed between the EEC and 46 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

22 July

A treaty is signed giving the European Parliament greater power over the budget and establishing the European Court of Auditors. It comes into force on 1 June 1977.

1979

7–10 June

The first direct elections to the 410-seat European Parliament.

1981

1 January

Greece joins the European Communities, bringing the number of members to 10.

1984

14–17 June

The second direct elections to the European Parliament.

1985

7 January

Jacques Delors becomes President of the Commission (1985–95).

14 June

The Schengen Agreement is signed with the aim of abolishing checks at the borders between member countries of the European Communities.

1986

1 January

Spain and Portugal join the European Communities, bringing their membership to 12.

17 and 28 February

The Single European Act is signed in Luxembourg and The Hague. It comes into force on 1 July 1987.

1989

15 and 18 June

The third direct elections to the European Parliament.

9 November

The fall of the Berlin Wall.

1990

3 October

German unification.

1991

9–10 December

The Maastricht European Council adopts a Treaty on European Union, laying the foundation for a common foreign and security policy, closer cooperation on justice and home affairs and the creation of an economic and monetary union, including a single currency.

1992

7 February

The Treaty on European Union is signed at Maastricht. It comes into force on 1 November 1993.

1993

1 January

The single market is created.

1994

9 and 12 June

The fourth direct elections to the European Parliament.

1995

1 January

Austria, Finland and Sweden join the EU, bringing its membership to 15. Norway stays out again following a referendum in which a majority of people voted against membership.

23 January

A new European Commission takes office with Jacques Santer as its President (1995–99).

27–28 November

The Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona launches a partnership between the EU and the countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

1997

2 October

The Amsterdam Treaty is signed. It comes into force on 1 May 1999.

1998

30 March

The accession process begins for the new candidate countries. Cyprus, Malta and 10 central and eastern European countries will be involved in this process.

1999

1 January

Start of the third stage of EMU: 11 EU countries adopt the euro, which is launched on the financial markets, replacing their currencies for non-cash transactions. The European Central Bank takes on responsibility for monetary policy. The 11 countries are joined by Greece in 2001.

10 and 13 June

The fifth direct elections to the European Parliament.

15 September

A new European Commission takes office with Romano Prodi as its President (1999–2004).

15–16 October

The Tampere European Council decides to make the EU an area of freedom, security and justice.

2000

23–24 March

The Lisbon European Council draws up a new strategy for boosting employment in the EU, modernising the economy and strengthening social cohesion in a knowledge-based Europe.

7–8 December

In Nice, the European Council reaches agreement on the text of a new Treaty changing the EU's decision-making system so that the Union will be ready for enlargement. The presidents of the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Commission solemnly proclaim the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

2001

26 February

Signing of the Treaty of Nice. It comes into force on 1 February 2003.

14–15 December

Laeken European Council. A declaration on the future of the EU is agreed. This opens the way for the forthcoming major reform of the EU and for the creation of a Convention to draft a European Constitution.

2002

1 January

Euro notes and coins are introduced in the 12 euro-area countries.

13 December

The Copenhagen European Council agrees that 10 of the candidate countries (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) can join the EU on 1 May 2004.

2003

10 July

The Convention on the Future of Europe completes its work on the draft European Constitution.

4 October

Start of the intergovernmental conference responsible for drawing up the constitutional treaty.

2004

1 May

Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia join the European Union.

10 and 13 June

The sixth direct elections to the European Parliament.

29 October

The European Constitution is adopted in Rome (subject to ratification by member states).

22 November

A new European Commission takes office with José Manuel Barroso as its President.

2005

29 May and 1 June

Voters in France reject the Constitution in a referendum, followed three days later by voters in the Netherlands.

3 October

Accession negotiations begin with Turkey and Croatia.

2007

1 January

Bulgaria and Romania are expected to join the European Union.

Slovenia adopts the euro.