

Europe and the United Kingdom

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- 1950** The Schuman Declaration (or Schuman Plan)
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- 1951** Treaty of Paris to establish the European Coal and Steel Community (instituted in 1952) involving France, Germany, Italy, Benelux countries
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- 1957** Treaty of Rome to establish European Economic Community (EEC) and Euratom (established in 1958)
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- 1960** UK with six other states forms the rival European Free Trade Association (EFTA)
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- 1961** UK (Macmillan Conservative government) applies to join EEC (French veto by President de Gaulle terminated negotiations in 1963)
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- 1967** Second UK attempt to join EEC by Labour (ended by fresh French veto)
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- 1973** UK (Heath Conservative government), Ireland and Denmark join the EC
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- 1975** Labour government recommends 'Yes' vote in referendum on whether UK should stay in EC after renegotiation of terms. Two-thirds vote 'Yes'.
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- 1979** First direct elections for European Parliament
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- 1981** Greece joins the European Community
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- 1983** Labour Party pledged to UK withdrawal from EC without a referendum
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- 1986** Spain and Portugal join the EC
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- 1986** Single European Act signed
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- 1990** UK (Thatcher government) joins Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM)
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- 1990** After reunification of Germany, former East Germany becomes part of EC
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- 1992** Maastricht Treaty (TEU). John Major secures opt-out from Social Chapter and monetary integration. 'Black Wednesday' – UK forced out of ERM.
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- 1995** Austria, Finland and Sweden join European Union
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- 1999** The Euro becomes the official currency for 11 EU member states
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- 1999** European Commission resigns following fraud and corruption allegations
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- 2000** Nice Treaty
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- 2002** Euro notes and coins replace national currencies in 12 EU member states
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- 2004** Ten more countries join European Union
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- 2004** Blair promises a referendum on the new constitution for the EU
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- 2004** EU leaders agree start date (October 2005) for accession talks for Turkey
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- 2005** Voters in France and the Netherlands reject the proposed new European constitution. Blair scraps plans for a referendum in Britain.
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- 2007** Heads of government sign up to replacement Lisbon Treaty
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- 2007** Romania and Bulgaria join EU
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- 2008** Irish voters reject Lisbon Treaty in referendum
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- 2009** Lisbon Treaty is finally ratified after a second Irish referendum
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- 2009** Crisis in Eurozone following economic recession, e.g. Greek and Irish bailouts
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