

KEY EVENTS IN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

1949

NATO Treaty signed.

1952

European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) established.

1954

Western European Union comes into being.

1955

Warsaw Pact signed.

1958

European Economic Community (EEC) and European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) established under the Treaty of Rome.

1960

Stockholm Convention establishing European Free Trade Association (EFTA) signed.

1962

Common Agricultural Policy introduced.

1967

ECSC, EEC, and EURATOM merge to form European Community (EC).

1968

Customs Union completed 18 months early.

1973

Denmark, Ireland, and United Kingdom join the European Community.

1979

European Monetary System (EMS) becomes operative.

1981

Greece joins EC.

1986

Spain and Portugal join EC.

1987

Single European Act enters into force.

1990

Germany reunited.

1991

European Community and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) agree to form European Economic Area (EEA).

1993

European single market achieved on schedule.

European Union comes into being with the Treaty of European Union (Maastricht Treaty).

1995

Austria, Finland, and Sweden join the European Union.

Schengen Agreement on the elimination of border checks comes into force.

1997

Treaty of Amsterdam signed.

1998

The membership process begins for the 10 Central and Eastern European applicant countries and Cyprus.

European Central Bank inaugurated in Frankfurt, Germany.

1999

European Monetary Union (EMU) and euro launched in 11 EU countries. The UK, Denmark, and Sweden do not join.

2001

Greece becomes 12th EU country to join EMU.

Treaty of Nice signed.

2002

The euro becomes legal tender and permanently replaces national currencies in EMU countries.

2003

Treaty of Nice enters into force.

2004

Ten new countries, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia, become members of the European Union in its biggest enlargement ever in terms of scope and diversity.

EU heads of state and government sign the new European Constitution, which expands the EU's powers and is designed to make the Union more efficient and more democratic.

2005

Voters in France and the Netherlands reject plans to ratify the EU constitution, which has to be ratified by all 25 members.

European Union accession negotiations open with Turkey and Croatia.

The EU grants the status of candidate country to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

2006

Negotiations with Turkey on its membership in the EU stall after Turkey refuses to open its ports to trade with Cyprus.

2007

Bulgaria and Romania become new members of the EU.

Slovenia adopts the euro as its currency.

The Treaty of Lisbon, which amends previous treaties, is signed.

2008

Cyprus and Malta adopt the euro as their currency.

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