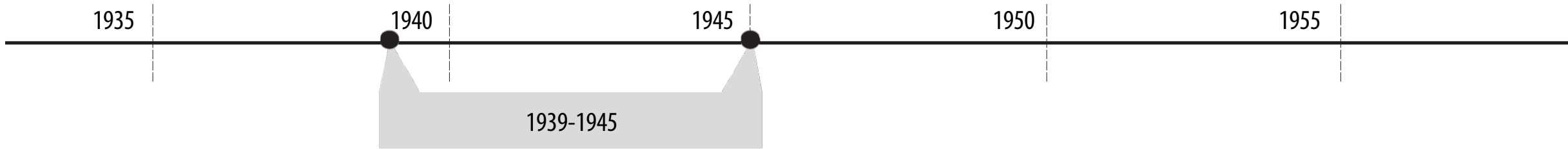


A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EU



FROM COAL AND STEEL TO A COMMON EURO AND BEYOND



WORLD WAR II

Europe was in ruins after World War II. The war had destroyed cities, roads and much of Europe's industry. Europe's economy was in shambles. The war had also been devastating on a human scale: 55 million people worldwide were killed, 35 million people were injured and 190 million people had fled their homes. The cry for peace was louder than ever before.



FROM COAL AND STEEL TO A COMMON EURO AND BEYOND

1950

9/5
1950

1955

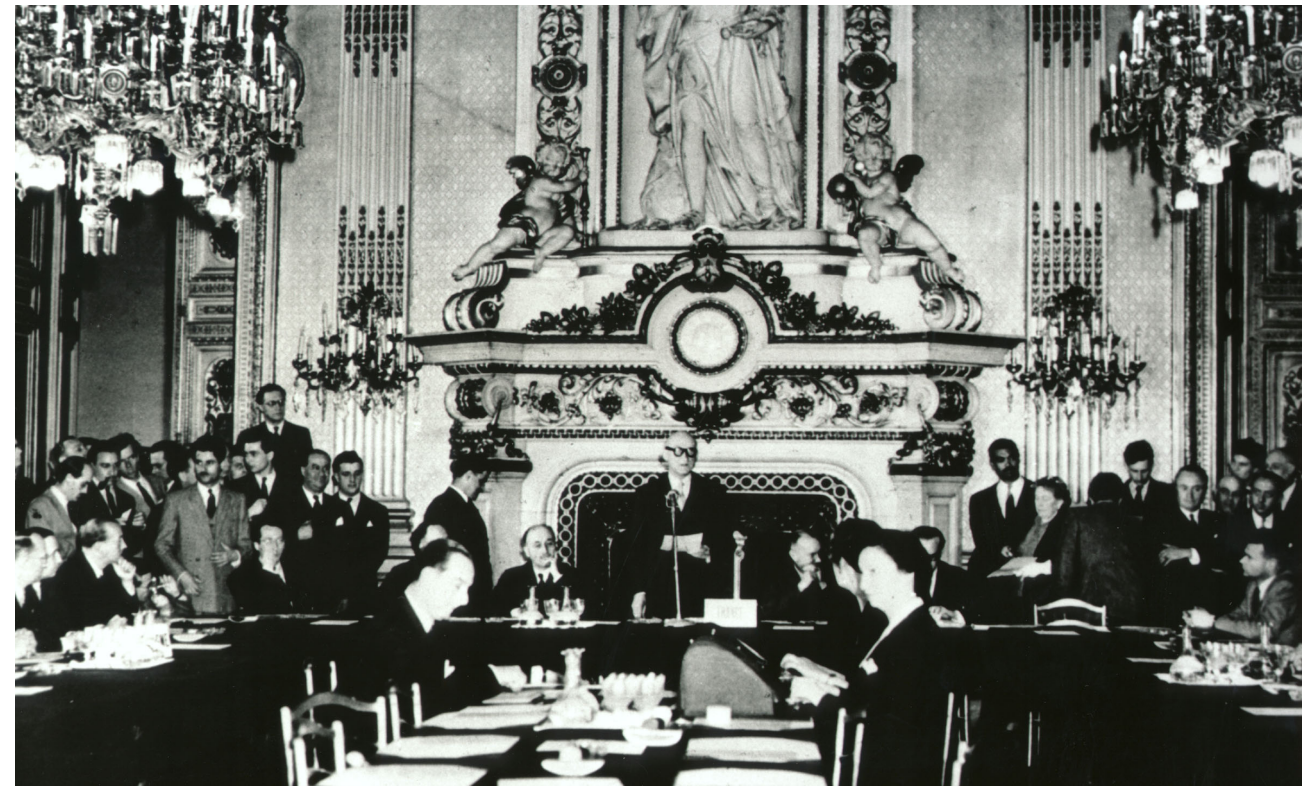
1960

1965

1970

1950: SCHUMAN DECLARATION

On 9 May 1950 the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Robert Schuman, held a press conference. He called upon other European countries to pool coal and steel resources. As coal and steel are necessary components for arms production, he hoped this cooperation would render future war impossible. On top of that, coal and steel were also very important in rebuilding the continent after the war.



Schuman declaration © European Communities, 1950

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1950

1955

1960

1965

1970

1951

1951: TREATY ESTABLISHING THE EUROPEAN COAL AND STEEL COMMUNITY

France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg reacted positively to Robert Schuman's declaration. These six countries signed the Treaty of Paris in 1951. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) entered into force in 1952.



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1950

1955

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1965

1970

1957

1957: TREATIES OF ROME: EEC AND EURATOM TREATIES

The first six countries wanted an even stronger economic integration. Therefore they signed two new treaties in 1957: the EEC treaty and Euratom, also known as the Rome Treaties.

- **European Economic Community (EEC):** The countries agreed to gradually turn their separate economies into a common market, starting with a customs union. This treaty marked the beginning of the cooperation in agriculture, fisheries, harbour policy and transport policy.
- **Euratom:** This cooperation in nuclear energy aimed at joint research into the possible civilian applications of nuclear energy.

The Rome Treaties entered into force in 1958.



Signing of the Rome Treaties © AP 1957 – Source EC Audiovisual Service

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1975

1980

1985

1990

1995

1979

1979: FIRST DIRECT ELECTIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The citizens of the European Communities directly elected their representatives in the European Parliament for the first time in June 1979. At the time there were nine countries, electing 410 Members of Parliament for the period of 1979 – 1984.



Polling office in the European elections, Belgium © European Communities, 1979

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1975

1980

1985

1990

1995

1986

1993

1986: THE SINGLE EUROPEAN ACT

Thirty years after the countries had decided to establish a common market (the Rome Treaties), it was still not in effect. With the Single European Act the Member States decided that all obstacles to trade and free movement had to be removed (it was signed in 1986 and came into force in 1987).

1993: OPEN BORDERS

On 1 January 1993 the internal borders of the Member States of the European Union “disappeared”: The Single Market with free movement of persons, goods, services and capital came into effect.



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1975

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1992

1992: TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION - MAASTRICHT TREATY

The Maastricht Treaty marked the actual beginning of cooperation on a **political** level, alongside the existing economic integration. A new name was given to the former European Communities: the **European Union**.

The 'new' European Union consisted of three main pillars:

1. **Economic integration:** The Member States decided to enhance economic integration and to establish a common **European currency: the euro**.
2. Cooperation on **foreign and security policy**.
3. Cooperation on **home/domestic affairs** and justice.

This treaty was signed in 1992 and entered into force in 1993.



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2000

2005

2010

2015

2020

2002

2002: INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO

The euro was introduced into the banking system in 1999. But people only started using euro coins and notes on 1 January 2002.



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1997: TREATY OF AMSTERDAM

With the prospect of EU enlargement towards Eastern Europe, the EU needed to be ready for a significant rise in the number of Member States. A reform of the decision-making process was needed: fewer decisions based on unanimity and more on majority voting.

The first attempt to change this was with the Amsterdam Treaty (signed in 1997, into force in 1999). The treaty however did not live up to this expectation.

2001: TREATY OF NICE

With the accession date of the new countries coming closer, a second attempt to reform the European Union was made in Nice (signed in 2001, into force in 2003). It also failed to make the EU decision making easier.

2004-2005: THE EUROPEAN CONSTITUTION

A third attempt was made with the European Constitution in June 2004. Because of the importance of the European Constitution and also the fact that the word “constitution” was used, some countries decided to organise a referendum.

The population of France and the Netherlands voted against this new “Constitution for Europe”. “Since every new EU Treaty has to be approved by every single Member State, the Constitution couldn't be adopted”.



Posters for the referendum about the European constitution in France © European Communities, 2005

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2000

2005

2007

2010

2015

2020

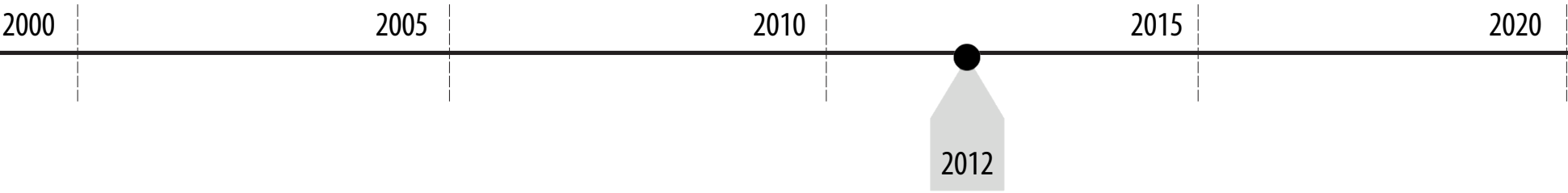
2007: LISBON TREATY

The Lisbon Treaty succeeded in changing the functioning of the EU institutions. Making decisions at EU level became easier. The new rules entered into force in December 2009 and still determine how the EU functions today.



Heads of state in Lisbon, for the signing of the Treaty. © European Communities 2007

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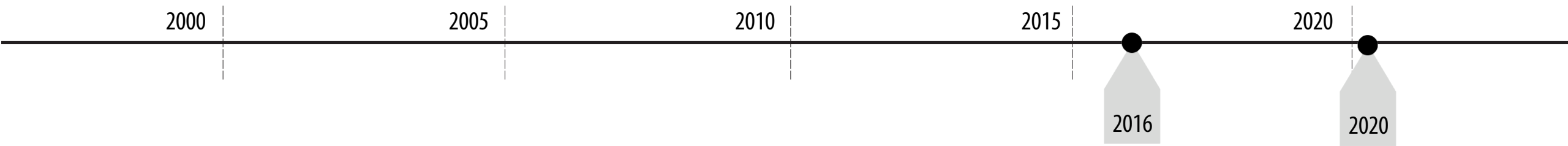
2012: THE EU WINS THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

This prize was awarded to recognise European efforts towards peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights.



© European Union, 2012

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2016: UK REFERENDUM ON LEAVING THE EU

On 23 June 2016, most British citizens and some other UK residents were asked this question: ‘Should the UK remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?’ 51.9 % voted to leave and 48.1 % voted to remain, triggering negotiations on the UK’s exit from the European Union and making it the first country ever to leave.

2020: THE UK OFFICIALLY WITHDRAWS FROM THE EU

The UK officially left the European Union on 31 January 2020, after three years of negotiations.

Referendum on the United Kingdom’s membership of the European Union	
Vote only once by putting a cross <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in the box next to your choice	
Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?	
Remain a member of the European Union	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leave the European Union	<input type="checkbox"/>

Voting ballot of the Brexit referendum of 23 June 2016.

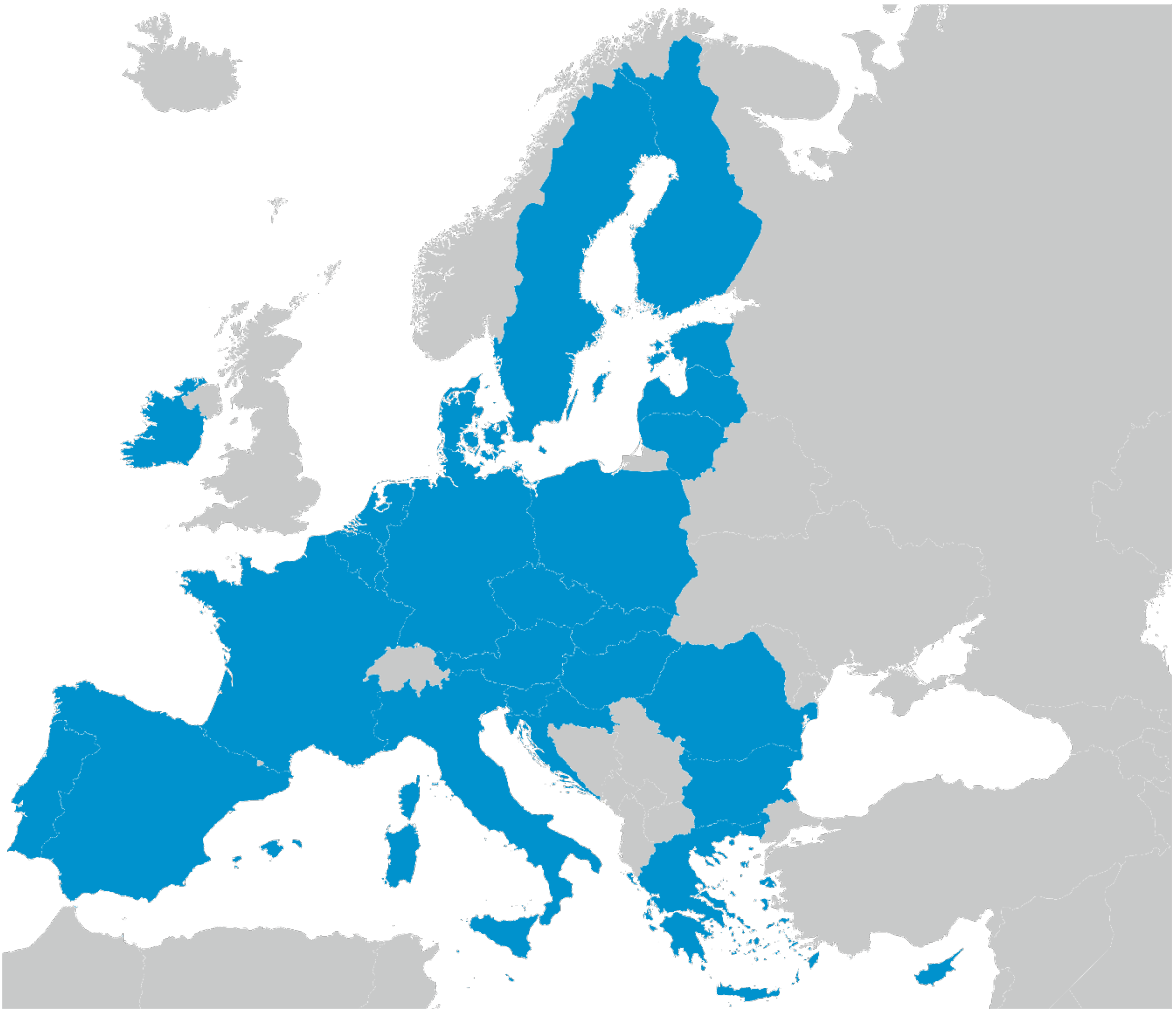
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2010

2015

2020

Future?



Meeting of the European Council © European Union, 2020

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