

## The Council of Europe's member states

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As of May 2007, the Council of Europe has 47 **member states**

Ten founding states signed the Council of Europe's Statute on 5 May 1949: Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Other countries which have since signed the Statute: Greece and Turkey in 1949, Iceland in 1950, the Federal Republic of Germany in 1951, Austria in 1956, Cyprus in 1961, Switzerland in 1963 and Malta in 1965. The end of dictatorial regimes enabled Portugal to join in 1976 and Spain in 1977. Liechtenstein joined in 1978, San Marino in 1988 and Finland in 1989.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 triggered a wave of accessions involving the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and they were followed by other countries, including some former Soviet Republics.

Hungary joined in 1990, Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1991 and Bulgaria in 1992. In 1993, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic replaced the former Czechoslovakia. Estonia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia also became members in 1993. Other countries which have joined the organisation are: Albania, Andorra, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Latvia and Moldova in 1995; Croatia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine in 1996; Georgia in 1999; Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2001; Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2002; Serbia in 2003; Monaco in 2004; and Montenegro in 2007.

As an organisation for cooperation within Greater Europe, the Council of Europe took the opportunity in the 1990s to define more effectively its role in relation to Smaller Europe, i.e. the European Communities.

The historical category of **associate members** was established so as to accommodate within the organisation those *countries* which, despite having conformed to the principles of democracy and respect for human rights since World War Two, do not enjoy the status of a sovereign state.

Associate members are represented only in the Consultative Assembly. They are not represented in the Committee of Ministers.

The only associate members were the Federal Republic of Germany from 13 July 1950 to April 1951, before it became an ordinary member on 2 May 1951, and the Saar from 15 May 1950 to December 1956, prior to its being reintegrated into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) on 1 January 1957.