

Willy Brandt and the unification of Europe – Foreword

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Foreword

The Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe (CVCE) pays tribute to a key player and visionary in the process to build a united Europe with the publication of a research corpus on Willy Brandt. The corpus comprises some 250 multimedia documents (photos, video clips, archive documents, facsimiles, etc.), including a large selection of previously unpublished documents made available online for the very first time. Users will have access to a number of articles on the United States of Europe written by Willy Brandt in Norwegian and Swedish during his time in exile, as well as several extracts from his memoirs and even a handwritten note on the establishment of a European Reserve Fund from November 1969.

The corpus, developed with the support of the Federal Chancellor Willy Brandt Foundation and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, outlines the many aspects of Willy Brandt's commitment to European unification from his time in exile during the 1930s to the collapse of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the reunification of Germany at the end of the 1980s. Particular emphasis has been placed on the years 1966 to 1974, during which period Willy Brandt first held the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs under the CDU-SPD Grand Coalition before becoming Chancellor under a Social-Democratic/Liberal SPD-FDP coalition in 1969.

The corpus is introduced by a bibliography of works by and about Willy Brandt and the European integration process, as well as selected biographical details. The accuracy and quality of the work has been assured thanks to close cooperation between the CVCE historians and Dr Robin Allers of the University of Oslo, winner of the 2007 Willy Brandt Prize, who is also the author of the explanatory texts that introduce each themed section of the corpus. Cooperation with Professor Andreas Wilkens at Paul Verlaine University in Metz has likewise helped maintain a high level of consistency and quality throughout.