

Austria and the European integration process — Chronology 1945-2006

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Austria and the European integration process from 1945 to 2006: a chronology

8–9 May 1945:

Capitulation of the German Wehrmacht in Reims, France, and in Karlshorst (in the Lichtenberg borough of Berlin), Germany.

5 September 1946:

Signing of the Gruber–De Gasperi Agreement, named after the Austrian Foreign Minister, Karl Gruber, and the Italian Foreign Minister, Alcide De Gasperi. Also known as the Paris Agreement, it becomes part of the Italian Peace Treaty, inserted in its Annex IV, and is intended to guarantee the German-speaking population of South Tyrol certain rights; according to Article 85 of the Peace Treaty, the Annexes are an integral part of the Treaty.

19 September 1946:

Winston Churchill gives his Zurich speech in which he calls for the establishment of the United States of Europe and a Council of Europe.

10 February 1947:

Although the Gruber–De Gasperi Agreement, devised as a ‘European solution’, is enshrined in Annex IV of the Italian Peace Treaty, it is subsequently implemented only to a very limited extent.

4 March 1947:

The Treaty of Dunkirk is concluded between the United Kingdom and France for a period of 50 years as a Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance in the event of any renewal of German aggression; the Treaty is the precursor of the 1948 Brussels Treaty.

5 June 1947:

At Harvard University, the US Secretary of State, George C. Marshall, announces a European Recovery Program (ERP).

16 July 1947:

The Committee of European Economic Cooperation (CEEC) is established; Austria seeks financial assistance to the tune of \$660 million in 1948.

22 September 1947:

The CEEC introduces a package of measures for economic cooperation in Europe in response to the speech given by George C. Marshall on 5 June 1947.

30 October 1947:

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is signed by 23 countries in Geneva (removal of ‘preferential customs duties’; 19 % tariff reduction on industrial products).

8 November 1947:

Austria becomes a Member of UNESCO.

2 January 1948:

An Interim Agreement relating to relief assistance is concluded between Austria and the United States of America.

17 March 1948:

The Brussels Treaty is signed by the Benelux countries (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands), France and the United Kingdom: it involves military, economic, social and cultural cooperation.

16 April 1948:

The OEEC (Organisation for European Economic Cooperation, whose predecessor was the Committee of

European Economic Cooperation (CEEC) founded in July 1947) is established by 16 European countries (including the European neutrals: Austria, Sweden, Switzerland and Ireland) with headquarters in Paris: its objectives include the coordination of the ERP (European Recovery Program) and a reduction of trade barriers and exchange controls.

8–10 May 1948:

The Joint International Committee of the Movements for European Unity convenes a Congress of Europe in The Hague whose Resolutions call for a united and democratic Europe and the establishment of a Council of Europe. The 'European Movement' is established soon afterwards.

2 July 1948:

Austria signs the ERP (European Recovery Program) Agreement with the USA (valid until 30 June 1953).

10 July 1948:

Austria signs the OEEC Treaty.

27 August 1948:

Austria becomes a member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

16 October 1948:

The Agreement for Intra-European Payments and Compensations (clearing and drawing rights) is signed.

25 January 1949:

The Agreement establishing a Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) is signed in Moscow by Albania, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the Mongolian People's Republic, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Zone of Occupation/German Democratic Republic and the USSR.

3 April 1949:

The Austrian Foreign Minister, Karl Gruber, is elected as 'Vice President', or Deputy Secretary-General, of the OEEC (speech broadcast on the 'Red-White-Red' radio network).

4 April 1949:

The North Atlantic Treaty is signed in Washington; it enters into force on 24 August 1949.

5 May 1949:

The Treaty of London establishing the Council of Europe is signed by Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom; it enters into force on 3 August 1949.

9 May 1950:

Robert Schuman proposes the pooling of European coal and steel production (Monnet Plan).

25 June 1950:

Start of the Korean War.

18 August 1950:

The OEEC Council adopts a liberalisation programme; until 1955, there is a 90 % liberalisation of intra-European trade in industrial goods (exemption from export restrictions).

19 September 1950:

The European Payments Union (EPU) is established under the auspices of the OEEC — its establishment is effective retroactively from 1 July 1950; the OEEC countries set up a multilateral clearing system through the EPU (long-term objective being full currency convertibility in Europe); from the outset, the European neutrals are full or associated members of the EPU.

26 September 1950:

Communist-inspired violent demonstrations and attempted strikes take place in eastern Austria (Upper Austria, Lower Austria and Vienna).

24 October 1950:

The French Prime Minister, René Pleven, proposes the creation of an integrated European army.

4 November 1950:

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is signed in Rome.

18 April 1951:

The Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) is signed by Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands; the Treaty is concluded for a period of 50 years. The ECSC High Authority has its seat in Luxembourg; the European neutrals seek observer status and negotiate separately with the High Authority.

19 June 1951:

The lower house of the Austrian Parliament (Nationalrat) approves the accession of Austria to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

19 October 1951:

Austria becomes a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (unconditional 'most-favoured-nation clause').

24 November 1951:

Austria is granted observer status at the Council of Europe (permanent observer delegation in Strasbourg: the right to speak in the General Assembly, but no right to vote).

27 May 1952:

The Treaty establishing the European Defence Community (EDC) is signed by Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

23 July 1952:

The Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) enters into force.

10 March 1953:

The Ad Hoc Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) adopts the draft Treaty establishing the European Political Community (EPC) (draft Treaty embodying the Statute of the European Community).

14 April 1953:

The Austrian Federal Government appoints an Austrian observer to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

1 May 1953:

Opening of the ECSC common market for coal and steel.

19 May 1953:

The Austrian Federal Government refers to the establishment of a permanent observer delegation to the High Authority as the 'bounds of possibility'.

1 July 1953:

Austria becomes a full member of the European Payments Union (EPU).

27 July 1953:

Armistice in Korea.

30 August 1954:

The French National Assembly removes the European Defence Community (EDC) from the agenda: the plan has failed.

23 October 1954:

Western European Union (WEU) is established: the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy accede to the Brussels Treaty.

23 October 1954:

The Paris Agreements are signed: the Federal Republic of Germany accedes to NATO after the failure of the European Defence Community (EDC).

14 December 1954:

The Austrian Federal Government decides not to resume negotiations with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

24 March 1955:

The Federal Republic of Germany gives its consent to the Paris Agreements.

15 May 1955:

The Austrian State Treaty is signed (by Austria, France, the United Kingdom, the USA and the USSR); the Treaty enters into force on 27 July 1955.

20 May 1955:

The Benelux memorandum proposes the establishment of a common market.

1–2 June 1955:

The Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) hold a conference in Messina, Sicily.

26 October 1955:

The lower house of the Austrian Parliament (Nationalrat) passes the Federal Constitutional Law establishing Austria's permanent neutrality.

14 December 1955:

Austria becomes a member of the United Nations (UN).

21 February 1956:

The Austrian Federal Government approves the accession of Austria to the Council of Europe (approved by the lower house of the Austrian Parliament (Nationalrat) on 1 March 1956).

16 April 1956:

Austria accedes to the Council of Europe.

21 April 1956:

The Spaak Report proposes the establishment of a common market; the Report serves as the basis for the negotiations on the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC).

8 May 1956:

Austria signs a customs agreement with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

19 May 1956:

The Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) hold a conference in Venice at which they decide to begin negotiations with a view to establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom).

18 July 1956:

The Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) proposes the establishment of a large free-trade area.

23 October 1956:

The Austrian Foreign Minister, Leopold Figl, announces that the Austrian Federal Government is considering the possibility of accession to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

29 January 1957:

The Austrian Federal Government calls for participation in the proposed European free-trade area.

12 February 1957:

The Austrian Foreign Minister, Leopold Figl, submits to the OEEC Council of Ministers Austria's proposals for the free-trade area.

25 March 1957:

The Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) are signed by Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands in Rome; the Treaties are concluded for an unlimited duration (Rome Treaties).

1 January 1958:

The EEC and Euratom Treaties enter into force.

4 January 1960:

The Stockholm Convention establishing the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is signed by Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

3 May 1960:

The Stockholm Convention establishing the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) enters into force.

14 December 1960:

The Paris Convention establishing the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is signed; the OECD is the successor to the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC).

1 January 1961:

Part alignment of the national customs tariffs of the Member States of the European Economic Community (EEC).

10 February 1961:

The Heads of State or Government of the EEC Member States agree on closer economic and political cooperation. Christian Fouchet heads an Intergovernmental Committee entrusted with the task of drawing up a plan.

31 July 1961:

Ireland formally applies to join the European Communities.

9 August 1961:

The United Kingdom formally applies to join the European Communities.

10 August 1961:

Denmark formally applies to join the European Communities.

19 October 1961:

Austria, Sweden and Switzerland decide to seek association with the EEC.

15 December 1961:

Austria, Sweden and Switzerland formally apply for association with the EEC (pursuant to Article 238 of the EEC Treaty).

17 April 1962:

The negotiations on European Political Union are broken off because no consensus can be reached on the proposals put forward by the Fouchet Committee.

30 April 1962:

Norway formally applies to join the European Communities.

4 July 1962:

During a visit to Moscow made by the Austrian Federal Chancellor, Alfons Gorbach, Khrushchev refers to the EEC as an instrument of NATO.

28 July 1962:

In the presence of the Austrian Minister for Trade and Reconstruction, Fritz Bock, the Austrian Foreign Minister, Bruno Kreisky, outlines to the EEC Council of Ministers Austria's application for association with the European Economic Community (EEC).

14 January 1963:

The French President, Charles de Gaulle, vetoes British accession to the EEC.

22 January 1963:

The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation is signed in Paris between France and the Federal Republic of Germany (known as the 'Elysée Treaty').

29 January 1963:

The accession negotiations between the EEC and the United Kingdom are suspended.

26 February 1963:

In contrast to the applicant countries and the countries seeking association (Switzerland and Sweden), Austria explicitly renews its desire to reach a speedy arrangement with the EEC. However, the Austrian Government subsequently seeks not association but to reach agreement on a 'special arrangement' with the European Communities.

28 February 1963:

The Soviet news agency TASS warns Austria against association with the EEC.

2 March 1963:

Austria rejects the TASS statement.

20 July 1963:

The Yaoundé Convention, an Association Agreement valid for 5 years, is signed between the EEC and 17 African States and Madagascar in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

10 July 1964:

The Soviet newspaper *Pravda* criticises the talks between Austria and the EEC.

19 March 1965:

Beginning of Austria's first negotiating mandate with the EEC (until February 1966).

8 April 1965:

The Treaty merging the executive bodies of the three European Communities (ECSC, EEC and Euratom), known as the Merger Treaty, is signed in Brussels.

30 June 1965:

The negotiations on the financing of a common agricultural policy break down in the EEC. France breaks off the negotiations and operates an 'empty chair' policy.

29 January 1966:

The 'Luxembourg Compromise' is reached, involving the de facto abandonment of the transition from unanimous voting to qualified-majority voting as provided for in the Treaty of Rome.

7 December 1966:

The EEC approves the second negotiating mandate with Austria (until February 1967).

16 March 1967:

The Austrian Federal Chancellor, Josef Klaus, responds to Soviet condemnations of an arrangement between Austria and the EEC.

10 May 1967:

The United Kingdom re-applies to join the European Communities, followed by Ireland and Denmark on 11 May 1967.

1 July 1967:

Italy uses its veto to block any further agreements between Austria and the EEC. The Merger Treaty of 8 April 1965 enters into force. Jean Rey succeeds Walter Hallstein as President of the Commission of the European Communities.

1 July 1968:

The Customs Union enters into force before the scheduled date of 31 December 1969 and a common external tariff (CET) is introduced.

1–2 December 1969:

The Heads of State or Government of the Member States of the EEC meet in The Hague to discuss greater integration, the gradual introduction of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) by 1980 and European Political Cooperation (EPC). The Six decide to open accession negotiations with Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom.

8–9 December 1969:

After the conclusion of the South Tyrol Package and the withdrawal of the Italian veto, the European Communities express their interest in renewing talks with Austria.

18 December 1969:

Austria sets out its views on an interim economic arrangement (preferential agreement on tariffs and trade).

1 January 1970:

Responsibility for foreign trade policy is transferred from the Member States to the European Communities.

30 June 1970:

The second round of negotiations on the accession of Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom is opened in Luxembourg.

8 October 1970:

The Luxembourg Prime Minister, Pierre Werner, submits his 'Report on the realisation by stages of economic and monetary union', also known as the Werner Plan.

27 October 1970:

The Foreign Ministers of the Six, meeting in Luxembourg, submit to the Heads of State or Government the Davignon Report on European Political Cooperation (EPC).

9 February 1971:

The Council of Ministers of the European Communities meeting in Brussels reaches agreement on Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

22 January 1972:

Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom sign the Treaties of Accession to the European Communities.

21 March 1972:

The Council of Ministers of the European Communities agrees to establish the European 'currency snake', which limits the margin of fluctuation between European currencies to 2.25 %.

10 May 1972:

In a referendum, the Irish vote in favour of accession to the European Communities.

22 July 1972:

The European Communities sign bilateral free trade agreements with the remaining EFTA States: Austria, Iceland, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland; the agreements enter into force in 1973.

18 August 1972:

In an aide-mémoire, the USSR reminds the Austrian Federal Government that the free trade agreements could and should in no way alter the obligations undertaken by Austria in 1955 (Austrian State Treaty). The Soviet Union calls on Austria to provide official confirmation of this in due and proper form.

20 September 1972:

In an aide-mémoire, the Austrian Federal Government responds to the Soviet request and states its willingness to confirm officially to the Soviet Union its position that the agreements with the European Communities can and will in no way amend the scope of the rights and obligations of the countries signatory to the Austrian State Treaty or the commitments arising from the Neutrality Law.

25 September 1972:

In a referendum, the Norwegians vote against the accession of their country to the European Communities.

2 October 1972:

In a referendum, the Danes vote in favour of the accession of their country to the European Communities.

20 October 1972:

The Heads of State or Government of the enlarged European Communities meeting in Paris agree on the transformation of the European Communities into the European Union and set a timetable for the establishment of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

1 January 1973:

The European Communities are formally enlarged to nine Members States with the accession of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

11–12 March 1973:

Ireland, Italy and the United Kingdom leave the 'currency snake'.

14 May 1973:

A Free Trade Agreement is signed between the European Economic Community (EEC) and Norway.

5 October 1973:

A Free Trade Agreement is signed between the European Economic Community (EEC) and Finland.

10 December 1974:

The Heads of State or Government of the European Communities meeting in Paris decide to hold meetings as the 'European Council'.

28 February 1975:

The first Convention (Lomé I) establishing financial, technical and trade cooperation between the European Economic Community (EEC) and 46 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries is signed in Lomé, Togo.

10–11 March 1975:

The European Council holds its first meeting in Dublin, Ireland.

30 May 1975:

Austria and the USSR sign an Agreement concerning trade and payments.

5 June 1975:

In a referendum, the British people vote in favour of the United Kingdom's continued membership of the European Communities.

29 December 1975:

The Tindemans Report on European Union proposes a 'two-speed' approach to the development of European integration where necessary.

13 May 1977:

A summit meeting of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is held in Vienna on the initiative of the Austrian Chancellor, Bruno Kreisky.

1 July 1977:

Customs duties between the nine EC Member States are completely removed.

8 April 1978:

The Copenhagen European Council reaches an agreement on direct elections to the European Parliament.

7 July 1978:

The Bremen European Council reaches an agreement on the setting up of a European Monetary System (EMS) and the creation of a European Currency Unit (ECU).

5 December 1978:

The Brussels European Council reaches an agreement on the establishment of the European Monetary System (EMS) as from 1 January 1979 with the European Currency Unit (ECU) as its central element.

28 May 1979:

The Act of Accession of Greece to the European Communities is signed in Athens.

7–10 June 1979:

The first general and direct elections to the European Parliament are held.

31 October 1979:

The second Lomé Convention (Lomé II) between the European Economic Community (EEC) and 58 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries is signed.

11 January 1980:

Through European Political Cooperation (EPC), EC members condemn the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

1 January 1981:

Greece becomes the 10th Member State of the European Communities.

6–20 January 1981:

The German Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, and his Italian counterpart, Emilio Colombo, call for closer European Political Cooperation (EPC).

4 January 1982:

EC Foreign Ministers condemn the imposition of martial law in Poland.

6 April 1982:

The European Communities offer their support to the United Kingdom in a declaration on 'Community Solidarity in the Falklands Conflict'.

16 April 1982:

EC import embargo is imposed against Argentina.

19 June 1983:

The Stuttgart European Council signs the 'Solemn Declaration on European Union'.

14 February 1984:

The draft Treaty establishing the European Union (the 'Spinelli draft'), drawn up by the Institutional Affairs Committee chaired by Altiero Spinelli, is adopted by the European Parliament.

9 April 1984:

The 'Luxembourg Declaration' is adopted by the Ministers of all EC Member States and EFTA States with a view to closer cooperation between these two organisations and the establishment of a single European economic space.

14–17 June 1984:

The second direct elections to European Parliament are held.

8 December 1984:

The third Lomé Convention (Lomé III) between the European Economic Community (EEC) and 65 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries is signed.

7 January 1985:

Jacques Delors is elected President of the Commission of the European Communities.

12 June 1985:

The Acts of Accession of Spain and Portugal to the European Communities are signed.

3 December 1985:

The European Council reaches an agreement in principle on the Single European Act (SEA) to strengthen the European Communities in line with the 'Solemn Declaration' of 19 June 1983.

1 January 1986:

Spain and Portugal accede to the European Communities. Finland becomes a full member of the European

Free Trade Association (EFTA).

17–28 February 1986:

The Single European Act (SEA) is signed in Luxembourg and The Hague.

14 April 1987:

Turkey submits its application for accession to the European Communities.

1 July 1987:

The Single European Act (SEA) enters into force; European Political Cooperation (EPC) is introduced on a formal basis.

29 March 1988:

The EC Commission publishes the results of 'Europe 1992 — The overall challenge', a study carried out at its request by a group of independent experts to assess the advantages of the single market ('Cecchini Report').

25 June 1988:

The Joint Declaration on the establishment of official relations between the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA or Comecon) is signed.

26 September 1988:

An Agreement on Trade and Commercial and Economic Cooperation is signed between the European Economic Community (EEC) and Hungary.

17 January 1989:

Jacques Delors, President of the Commission of the European Communities, proposes to the European Parliament the establishment of a European Economic Space (EES) between the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

27 January 1989:

The Federation of Austrian Industrialists (Vereinigung Österreichischer Industrieller — VÖI) is sceptical in its assessment of the proposals put forward by the President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, on 17 January 1989 on the redefining of relations between the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

14–15 March 1989:

At a meeting in Oslo, the EFTA Heads of Government welcome the Delors proposal to establish a European Economic Space (EES).

15–18 June 1989:

Elections to the European Parliament are held.

17 July 1989:

In Brussels, Alois Mock, Austrian Foreign Minister, presents Austria's application for accession to the European Communities to Roland Dumas, French Foreign Minister and President-in-Office of the Council of the European Communities; the explicit reservation on grounds of neutrality (*Neutralitätsvorbehalt*) made in the application causes confusion and aggravation, especially among the Belgians.

10 August 1989:

Aide-mémoire from the Soviet Union on Austria's application for accession to the European Communities.

9 November 1989:

The fall of the Berlin Wall.

15 December 1989:

The fourth Lomé Convention (Lomé IV) is signed between the European Economic Community (EEC) and 69 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries (multilateral development agreement).

19 December 1989:

Negotiations begin between the Member States of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) on enhanced cooperation and the establishment of a European Economic Space (EES), subsequently known as the European Economic Area (EEA).

19 June 1990:

The Schengen Agreement on the elimination of border checks is signed by Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

25–26 June 1990:

The Dublin European Council agrees on the convening of an Intergovernmental Conference on the implementation of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and a second Intergovernmental Conference on Political Union.

1 July 1990:

The German Economic and Monetary Union (customs union between the EEC and the German Democratic Republic) enters into force; the first stage of European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) is launched.

17 July 1990:

European Parliament Resolution on the implications of German unification for the European Community.

3 October 1990:

German reunification is completed.

8 October 1990:

The United Kingdom joins the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) of the European Monetary System (EMS); however, it is forced to withdraw from the ERM in September 1992.

14 January 1991:

The Austrian Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Wolfgang Schüssel, considers that the European Economic Area (EEA) is ‘currently the fastest train to Brussels’.

1 April 1991:

The Warsaw Pact military alliance is dissolved.

4 April 1991:

The Federal Party Chairman of the Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP), Josef Riegler, states that no referendum on the European Economic Area (EEA) is required.

15 April 1991:

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is established.

1 July 1991:

Sweden submits its application for accession to the European Communities (with no reservation on grounds of neutrality).

1 August 1991:

The Commission of the European Communities adopts its Opinion on Austria’s application for membership: the Commission recommends that the Council open accession negotiations with Austria.

1 September 1991:

Liechtenstein becomes a full member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

5–12 October 1991:

Transit negotiations are held between the Commission of the European Communities and both Austria and Switzerland.

21 October 1991:

The political negotiations on the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) between the European Community and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) are concluded in Luxembourg.

9–11 December 1991:

The Heads of State or Government of the EC Member States meeting in Maastricht reach agreement on a Treaty on European Union (Economic and Monetary Union, Political Union and common foreign and security policy).

14 December 1991:

The European Court of Justice objects to the establishment of an EEA Court of Justice provided for in the EEA Agreement.

16 December 1991:

Association Agreements ('Europe Agreements') are signed with Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

7 February 1992:

The Treaty on European Union is signed in Maastricht.

18 March 1992:

Finland submits its application for accession to the European Communities (with no reservation on grounds of neutrality).

2 May 1992:

The EEA Agreement is signed in Oporto; a Transit Agreement is signed between the European Economic Community (EEC) and Austria.

20 May 1992:

Switzerland submits its application for accession to the European Communities (with no reservation on grounds of neutrality).

2 June 1992:

In a referendum, the Danes reject the Treaty of Maastricht by 50.7 % to 49.3 %.

18 June 1992:

In a referendum, an overwhelming majority of Irish people approve the Treaty of Maastricht: 68.7 % vote in favour!

9 July 1992:

The Transit Agreement is approved by the lower house of the Austrian Parliament (Nationalrat) as an amending and complementary international agreement; the Agreement subsequently proves to be ineffective in curbing heavy traffic and reducing the emission of hazardous substances.

20 September 1992:

In a referendum, the French approve the Treaty of Maastricht by 51.05 % to 48.95 %.

22 September 1992:

After more than 8 hours of debate, the lower house of the Austrian Parliament (Nationalrat) ratifies the EEA Agreement with the votes of the governing parties; the Austrian Green Party files a censure motion against

the Austrian Government.

25 November 1992:

Norway formally applies to join the European Communities.

6 December 1992:

In a referendum, the Swiss vote by a narrow majority against their country's membership of the European Economic Area (EEA): 50.3 % vote against and 49.7 % vote in favour of postponing the establishment of the EEA by one year.

11–12 December 1992:

At the Edinburgh European Council, the Heads of State or Government of the EC Member States grant Denmark a number of exemptions from the Treaty of Maastricht.

13 December 1992:

In a referendum, the citizens of Liechtenstein vote in favour of their country's membership of the European Economic Area (EEA).

1 January 1993:

The Single European Market enters into force: full implementation of the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons; the entry into force of the EEA Agreement is postponed.

12 January 1993:

Iceland ratifies the EEA Agreement; except for Switzerland, all EFTA States have now ratified the Agreement.

1 February 1993:

EC accession negotiations begin with Austria, Sweden and Finland.

17 March 1993:

The EC Member States and the EFTA States adopt the Protocol adjusting the Agreement on the European Economic Area, allowing the EEA Agreement to enter into force following the withdrawal of Switzerland.

5 April 1993:

EC accession negotiations begin with Norway.

18 May 1993:

In a second referendum, the Danes approve the Treaty of Maastricht by 56.8 % following the revision of certain provisions at the 1992 Edinburgh European Council.

1 January 1994:

The Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) enters into force: as a result, 372 million citizens enjoy the benefits of the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons; the second stage of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) begins: the European Monetary Institute (EMI) is established in Frankfurt am Main with a view to meeting the convergence criteria set out by the Maastricht Treaty; Alexandre Lamfalussy becomes the first President of the EMI.

16 March 1994:

Norway concludes its accession negotiations with the European Union after Austria, Finland and Sweden.

30 March 1994:

Negotiations on the accession of Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden to the European Union are officially concluded in Brussels.

4 May 1994:

The European Parliament votes by a very large majority (374 in favour, 24 against and 61 abstentions) in favour of the accession of the European neutrals to the EU.

12 June 1994:

In a referendum, the Austrians vote by a 66.6 % majority in favour of EU accession.

24 June 1994:

The Acts of Accession of Austria, Finland, Sweden and Norway are signed at the Corfu European Council.

16 October 1994:

In a referendum, the Finns vote by a 57 % majority in favour of EU accession.

13 November 1994:

In a referendum, the Swedes vote by a 52.2 % majority in favour of EU accession.

27–28 November 1994:

In a referendum, the Norwegians reject EU accession by 52.2 %.

1 January 1995:

Austria, Finland and Sweden become members of the European Union — all these countries withdraw from the European Free Trade Association (EFTA); Austria participates in the European Monetary System (EMS) and is granted observer status at Western European Union (WEU).

9 January 1995:

Austria joins the European Monetary System (EMS).

24 January 1995:

The Partnership for Peace programme is adopted by NATO.

26 March 1995:

The Schengen Agreement enters into force.

28 April 1995:

Austria signs the Act of Accession to the 1990 Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement.

13 October 1996:

The first direct elections to the European Parliament are held in Austria.

1 April 1997:

The Schengen Agreement with Italy enters into force; customs checks are abolished at the Brenner Pass on the border between Italy and Austria.

1 July 1997:

Austria takes over the Presidency of the Schengen group of countries.

2 October 1997:

The Treaty of Amsterdam is signed.

7 October 1997:

The Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement enters into force in Austria.

1 December 1997:

The 'schilling' or 'anti-euro referendum' called for by the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) is held in Austria.

1 April 1998:

The 'options report' on the future security policy of the Austrian Federal Government fails; border checks for land transport between Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy are abolished.

1 July 1998:

Austria takes over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

21 July 1998:

Austria ratifies the Amsterdam Treaty.

24–25 October 1998:

An informal European Council is held in Pörtlach, Austria.

11–12 December 1998:

The Vienna European Council is held.

31 December 1998:

The Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union ends.

1 May 1999:

The Treaty of Amsterdam enters into force.

13 June 1999:

The second direct elections to the European Parliament are held in Austria.

10–11 December 1999:

The Helsinki European Council decides to open accession negotiations with Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia in early 2000. Turkey is granted candidate status, effectively recognising its wish to join the EU and its willingness to negotiate. The European Council also agrees that the Member States must be able, by 2003, to deploy the European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) with a view to conducting EU-led military operations. The Council further decides to convene an Intergovernmental Conference on institutional reform in February 2000 with a view to discussing the necessary amendments to the Treaties.

15 January 2000:

Accession negotiations are opened in Brussels with Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania and Slovakia.

31 January 2000:

The European Council issues a Declaration on behalf of 14 EU Member States concerning the sanctions to be imposed in the event of a coalition government being formed with Austria's far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ).

1–2 February 2000:

During its second plenary session, the body responsible for drawing up a charter of fundamental rights gives itself the name 'Convention'.

2–3 February 2000:

The Fourth Ministerial Conference on EU–African, Caribbean, Pacific (ACP) negotiations aimed at a partnership for development is held in Brussels, Belgium. The EU and the ACP countries agree on a 'plan of action' that is to be implemented after the fourth Lomé Convention expires at the end of February.

4 February 2000:

A coalition government between the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) and the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ — led by Jörg Haider) is sworn in by the Austrian Federal President, Thomas Klestil, amid massive domestic and international protests; the announced sanctions are implemented by the 14 EU Member States.

14 February 2000:

The Intergovernmental Conference is officially opened with the objective of laying the foundations for institutional reform by December 2000. Whilst Vienna is excluded from the Portuguese Presidency's 'tour of the capitals' (visit to all EU capitals in order to exchange views with the individual EU Member States), the Austrian representatives, especially those of the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), are subjected to acts of bullying that are hitherto unprecedented in the EU Member States.

19–20 June 2000:

The Santa Maria da Feira European Council confirms the principle of differentiation, according to which it is possible for candidates to catch up with those which started their negotiations earlier, and emphasises the importance of sound administrative structures for the implementation of the *acquis communautaire*. EU institutional reform, the subject of the Intergovernmental Conference which has been under way since February, is heavily influenced by EU enlargement. The Commission and Parliament are to be reduced in size in order to preserve the EU's ability to act. On a proposal from the Commission, after enlargement, the number of Commissioners should not exceed 20.

23 June 2000:

The EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries sign, in Cotonou, Benin, an agreement to replace those signed in Lomé: the Cotonou Agreement.

13 September 2000:

Under the French Presidency of the EU, the bilateral sanctions imposed by 14 EU Member States against Austria are lifted after the Three Wise Men submit their report recommending an immediate end to the boycott campaign.

28 September 2000:

In a referendum, the majority of Danes vote against joining the euro zone.

6–11 December 2000:

The EU Summit in Nice, France, provides for comprehensive changes in the institutional arrangements (such as weighting of votes and majority voting), as well as a future EU with 27 Member States. A treaty reform is proposed for 2004. The Nice European Council takes the agreement reached by the Intergovernmental Conference on institutional reform as the institutional basis for enlargement. The enlargement strategy proposed by the Commission is approved; the main component of that strategy is a road map for conducting the accession negotiations.

7 December 2000:

The draft Charter of Fundamental Rights is officially 'welcomed' and proclaimed at the EU Summit in Nice but does not yet have any legal effect.

1 January 2001:

On a proposal made by the EU Commission on 3 May 2000, Greece becomes the 12th member of the euro zone but without complying fully with the membership conditions.

26 February 2001:

The Treaty of Nice amending the Treaty on European Union, the Treaties establishing the European Communities and certain related acts is signed; the Treaty will not enter into force until 2003.

23–24 March 2001:

The Stockholm European Council takes practical decisions on the implementation of economic reforms, on the objectives of employment and education policy as well as on electronic commerce.

7 June 2001:

In a referendum, with a turnout of 32.9%, the Irish reject the Treaty of Nice. A second referendum held in

October 2002 after intensive debate reverses this decision, removing any obstacles to ratification of the Treaty.

15–16 June 2001:

The Gothenburg European Council is held amid mass protests by anti-EU and anti-globalisation campaigners. The Heads of State or Government declare that the enlargement process is ‘irreversible’ and, for the first time, set 2004 as a target date for accession. The European Council reaffirms the ‘road map’ as the framework for the successful completion of the negotiations. Provided that progress towards meeting the accession criteria continues at an unabated pace, the road map should make it possible to complete negotiations by the end of 2002 for those candidate countries that are ready. The objective is that they should participate in the European Parliament elections of 2004 as new Member States.

25 June 2001:

The EU and Egypt sign an Association Agreement.

11 September 2001:

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and on the Pentagon in Washington using passenger planes hijacked by Islamist fundamentalists of the terrorist group al-Qaeda led by Osama Bin Laden provoke worldwide consternation and solidarity with the USA. The Bush Administration steps up its political and military efforts against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan by continuing to support the ‘Northern Alliance’ and by intensifying the preparations that have already been started for war against Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq.

15 December 2001:

The Laeken European Council officially convenes a ‘Convention on the Future of the European Union’ which is to be responsible for drawing up proposals on the future shape of the EU.

1 January 2002:

The first euro banknotes enter into circulation. The European single currency becomes legal tender.

28 February 2002:

The majority of the national currencies of the euro-zone countries cease to be legal tender. The opening session of the ‘Convention on the Future of the European Union’ is held at the European Parliament in Brussels; it gives itself the name ‘Constitutional Convention on the Future of the European Union’.

1 March 2002:

Payments may be made only in euros.

1 April 2002:

The exchange of ‘legacy currencies’ of the euro countries is possible only at the national banks of the respective countries.

17 September 2002:

The US President, George Bush, speaks of the United States’ right to a conventional or nuclear first strike (‘preemptive strike’) against ‘rogue states’ and the ‘axis of evil’ in the world, thereby signalling a paradigm shift in US world politics.

28 October 2002:

The President of the Constitutional Convention, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, presents to the European Parliament a draft, ‘the skeleton of a future Constitution for Europe’, 8 months after the start of the work of the Convention on EU reform. Consensus is reached regarding approval of a ‘Constitutional Treaty’, incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the legal personality of the EU and ‘dual citizenship’.

13 December 2002:

The historic Copenhagen European Council paves the way for the enlargement of the EU to include 10 new

Member States. Their accession is to take place on 1 May 2004. The economic problems and institutional challenges of enlargement, however, are not sufficiently taken into account, despite there being no lack of criticism and warnings. The underlying factor is that the Member States and accession countries do not form an integrated whole, neither structurally nor in terms of objectives. Enlargement is a political decision and will continue to be followed through consistently.

1 March 2003:

The Treaty of Nice enters into force.

8 March 2003:

In a referendum held in Malta, the majority (53 %) vote in favour of EU accession.

20 March 2003:

The Anglo-American war of aggression against Iraq — which is being conducted without a UN mandate from the UN Security Council, constitutes a breach of international law and is therefore illegal — deepens the divisions already existing among EU countries regarding the issue of intervention and, consequently, in the area of EU foreign and security policy, raising doubts as to whether the date for the completion of the Convention's work will be met.

23 March 2003:

In a referendum held in Slovenia, the majority (approx. 90 %) vote in favour of EU accession.

1 April 2003:

With a view to the deliberations of the European Convention, the smaller EU Member States convene, in Luxembourg, a mini-summit of 'like-minded' Member States after both Germany and France's Foreign Ministers, Joschka Fischer and Dominique Villepin, call for dual leadership, proposing that, alongside the President of the Commission, there should also be an EU President.

12 April 2003:

In a referendum held in Hungary, the majority (approx. 85 %) vote in favour of EU accession.

16 April 2003:

The Treaties of Accession of the 10 new EU Member States are signed in Athens, Greece.

9 May 2003:

Events are held in all EU Member States to celebrate Europe Day.

10–11 May 2003:

In a referendum held in Lithuania, the majority vote in favour of EU accession.

16–17 May 2003:

In a referendum held in Slovakia, the majority vote in favour of EU accession.

7–8 June 2003:

In a referendum held in Poland, the majority vote in favour of EU accession.

12 June 2003:

A plenary session of the Constitutional Convention is held in Brussels.

15–16 June 2003:

In a referendum held in the Czech Republic, the majority vote in favour of EU accession.

20 June 2003:

At the Thessaloniki European Council, the President of the European Convention, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, submits to the Greek Prime Minister and President-in-Office of the European Council, Costas Simitis, the

draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. It is divided into four Parts: Part I covers the organisational structure of the EU: definition and objectives of the EU, Union competences and the Union's institutions and bodies; Part II incorporates the Charter of Fundamental Rights; Part III consists of a revision of the individual provisions of the Treaty establishing the European Community [TEC] and the Treaty on European Union [TEU]; and Part IV includes some general and final provisions such as the ratification and revision procedures.

14 September 2003:

In a referendum held in Estonia, the majority vote in favour of EU accession.

20 September 2003:

In a referendum held in Latvia, the majority vote in favour of EU accession.

4–5 October 2003:

At the Intergovernmental Conference held in Rome, Member States call for a large number of amendments to the 'draft EU Constitution' proposed by the European Convention. The question of the renegotiation of the 'Constitutional Treaty' divides the Member States: unlike with the issue of intervention in Iraq, the dividing line is now drawn principally between the founding and the new Member States.

12–13 December 2003:

At the Brussels European Council, the Heads of State or Government of the EU Member States fail to reach overall agreement on the draft EU Constitutional Treaty which has been drafted by the European Convention under the Presidency of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and whose adoption has been debated and called for over a period of some months. On the surface, it appears that the strong position taken by Spain (represented by José María Aznar) and Poland (represented by Lezek Miller) in favour of the weighting of votes in the Council as defined in Nice in 2000 (27 votes as opposed to 29 for France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom) is primarily responsible for the failure. However, the reasons underlying this temporary failure are more complex.

11 March 2004:

A devastating terrorist attack takes place in Madrid; Islamist fundamentalists from Morocco under the leadership of al-Qaeda claim responsibility for the attack. Several bombings occur on board four commuter trains travelling on the same line in the direction of Atocha train station, leaving some 200 people dead. Shortly afterwards, José María Aznar's centre-right Government is voted out as a result of the public perception that official bodies have deliberately withheld information on the perpetrators of the attacks (the Government has given misleading information placing the blame on ETA). The new Socialist Government, led by José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, immediately approves the European Convention's draft Constitution as it stands; with Poland's position weakened as a result, Polish resistance subsequently breaks down.

1 May 2004:

The European Union is enlarged to include 10 new Member States: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. It is the biggest enlargement in the history of the European Communities and signifies both the political unification of the continent and a formal means of overcoming the division of Europe brought about during the Cold War. Negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania are still under way.

13 June 2004:

European Parliament elections are held with a low voter turnout.

17–18 June 2004:

After several months of difficult negotiations, the EU Heads of State or Government meeting as the European Council in Brussels reach agreement on the new EU Constitution thanks to the excellent preparatory work carried out by the Irish Presidency led by Bertie Ahern; the new Constitution is intended to make an enlarged Europe more democratic and transparent. Although key elements of the Convention draft have been amended, critics claim that the draft is nothing more than a watered-down version.

29 October 2004:

The Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe is signed in Rome. The Austrian Federal Chancellor, Wolfgang Schüssel, and his new Foreign Minister, Ursula Plassnik, sign the Constitutional Treaty on behalf of Austria.

12 January 2005:

The European Parliament votes by a large majority in favour of the EU Constitution. Of the 732 MEPs, 677 were present for the vote. The results of the European Parliament vote are 500 (almost 74 %) in favour, 137 against and 40 abstentions.

11 May 2005:

The lower house of the Austrian Parliament (Nationalrat) ratifies the EU Constitutional Treaty with 1 vote against.

25 May 2005:

The upper house of the Austrian Parliament (Bundesrat) votes in favour of ratification.

29 May 2005:

In a referendum held in France, 54.87 % of voters reject the EU Constitutional Treaty; the EU now finds itself in the middle of a ratification crisis.

1 June 2005:

In a referendum held in the Netherlands, 61.6 % of voters reject the EU Constitutional Treaty; EU leaders call for a period of reflection and discussion on the Constitutional Treaty; the EU faces one of its worst crises since the failure of the European Defence Community (EDC) (30 August 1954) and the empty chair policy pursued by Charles de Gaulle in 1965/66.

14 June 2005:

Following the signing of the EU Constitutional Treaty by the Austrian Federal President, Heinz Fischer, the instrument of ratification will be deposited on 17 June 2005 in Rome.

3 October 2005:

Accession negotiations are officially opened with Turkey after Austria gives up its resistance which has delayed the start of the talks in exchange for a concession made with regard to fair burden sharing in financing the imminent EU enlargements; EU accession negotiations are opened with Croatia.

1 January 2006:

Austria takes over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

30 June 2006:

The Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union ends.