

The emergence of the pro-European movements

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The emergence of the pro-European movements

In 1945, at the time the United Nations (UN) was being formed, the idea of world federalism was becoming popular in America and Europe. The profound desire for peace united the peoples of the world and gave an impetus to certain national elites. The World Federalist Movement advocated the introduction of world citizenship and a union of all democratic countries. In this respect it differed from the European federalists, who were striving for the creation of a Western European regional federation, while not rejecting the world perspective in the longer term. Supporters of total federalism believed that a federation of states must also be accompanied by a radical transformation of economic, social and cultural structures. The federalists wanted to establish a structure governed by the 'principle of subsidiarity', devolving to the regions and to the federal institutions those powers that could not be exercised legitimately or more effectively at national level.

- [Interview with Jean-Pierre Gouzy: the stirrings of pro-European movements after 1945 \(Paris, 19 October 2007\)](#)

Pro-European and federalist movements campaigned ever more actively in favour of European unification. Closely associated with financial circles and demonstrating allegiance to a particular political viewpoint or, on the contrary, seeking to mobilise the general public as a whole, these movements, some of which originated in the Resistance, came together to create the Liaison Committee of the Movements for European Unity on 20 July 1947 in Paris. It comprised the Independent League for European Cooperation (ILEC), led by former Belgian Prime Minister Paul van Zeeland, the Union of European Federalists (UEF), led by Henri Brugmans of the Netherlands, and Winston Churchill's United Europe Movement (UEM). The task was soon complicated, however, by personal and ideological differences. Hence the decision taken in Paris on 10 and 11 November 1947 to replace the Liaison Committee with an International Committee of the Movements for European Unity (ICMEU), which had its headquarters in London.

- [Organisational chart showing the pro-European movements \(1948\)](#)