

The first federalist congresses

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The first federalist congresses

In the late 1940s, federalist initiatives followed on from each other in quick succession. Several congresses (including those in Montreux, The Hague and Gstaad) gave fresh impetus to federalist ideas. Many plans were drawn up along the lines of the European Constitution devised by the federalists Alexandre Marc and Altiero Spinelli. They envisaged a Europe in which states would be represented by a senate, while a European assembly, elected by universal suffrage, would exercise legislative power and scrutinise the activities of the European government. Economic policy, currency and defence issues were among the areas of competence that they proposed to delegate to federal institutions, with health, education and the arts remaining in the hands of national, or even regional, authorities. The European Movement was created on 25 October 1948 and held its inaugural session in February 1949 in Brussels, at which it called for the adoption of a European charter of human rights and adopted the statute for a European court.