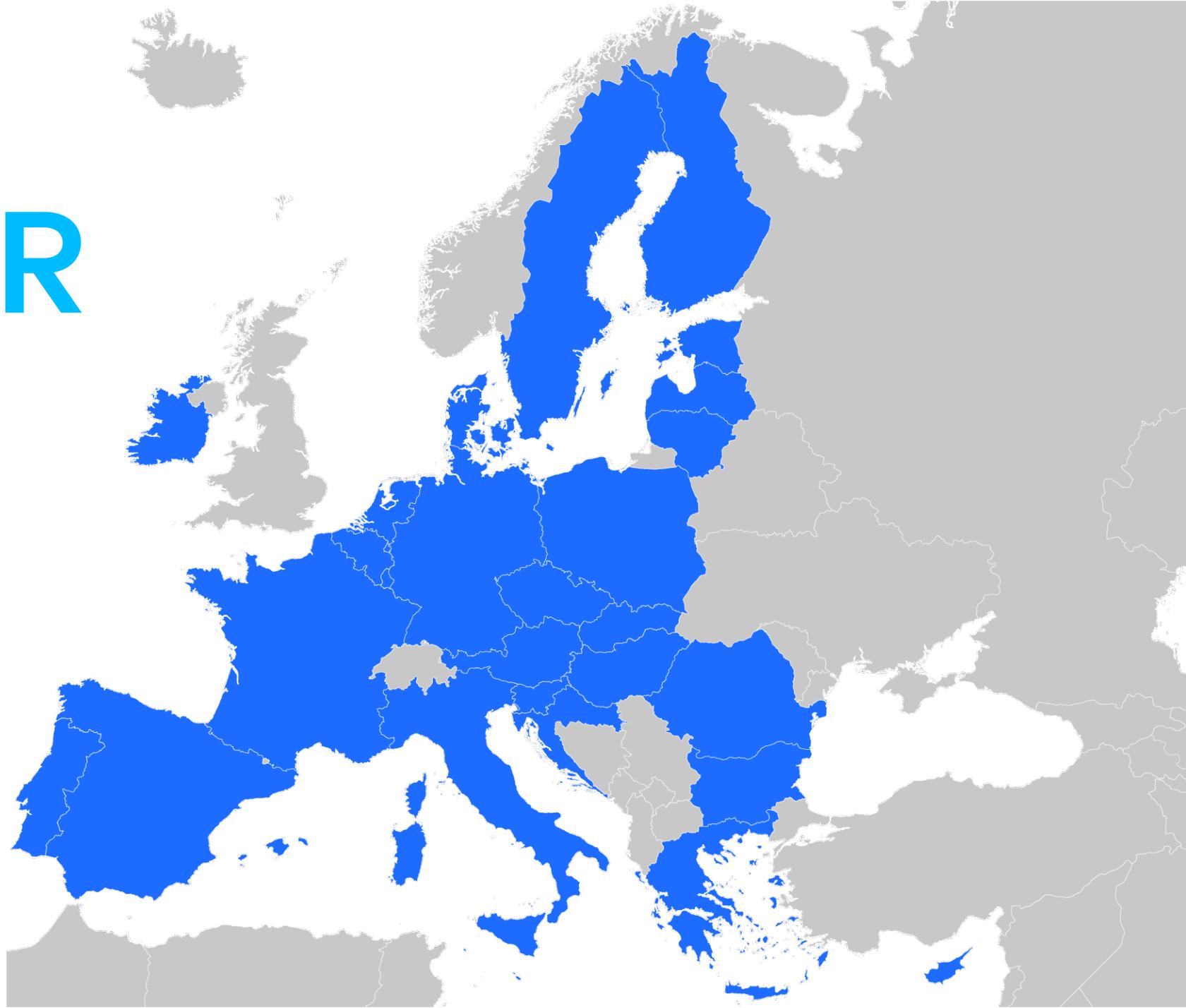
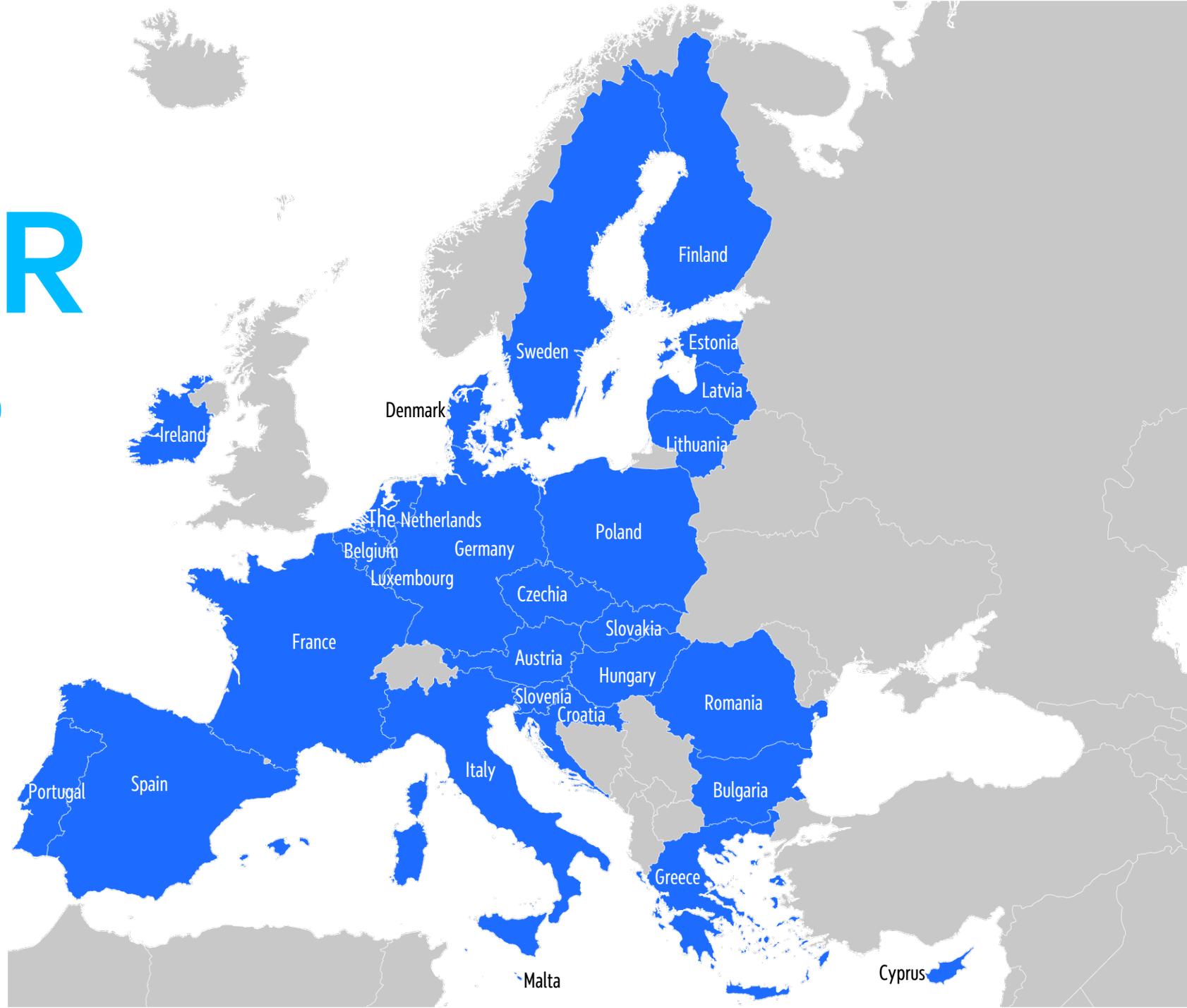


THE EU MEMBER STATES

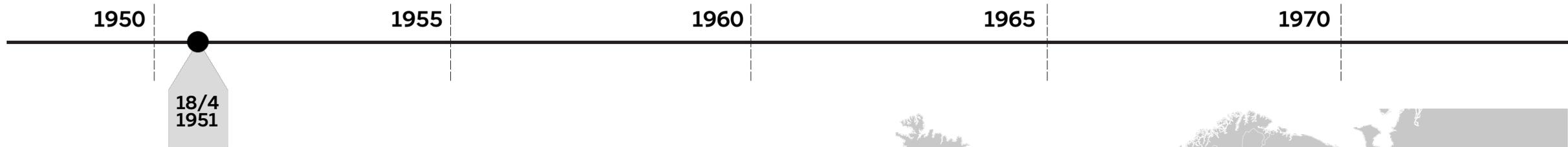


European
Parliament

THE EU MEMBER STATES



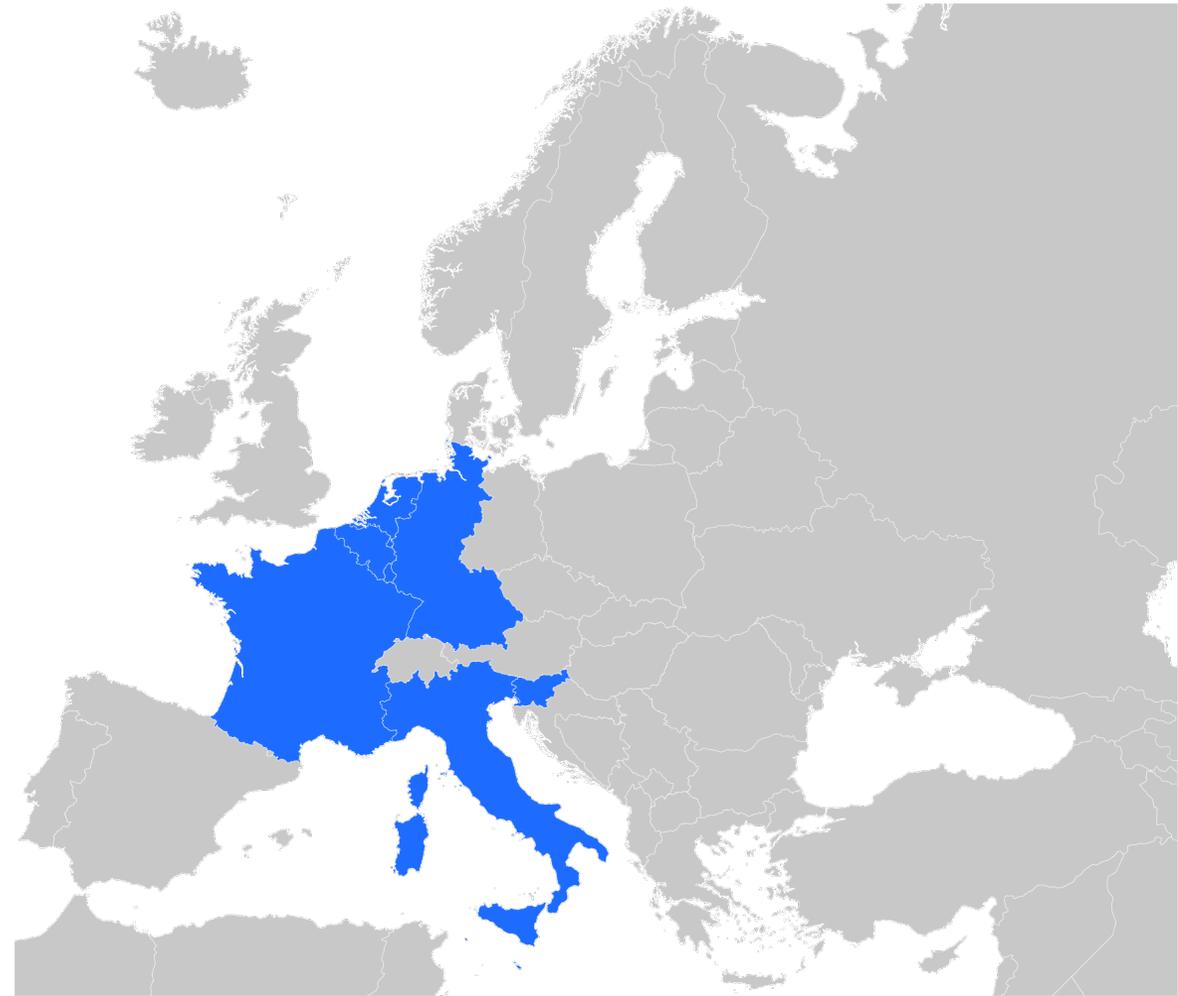
FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES



THE FIRST SIX

Six countries founded the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and later, in 1957, the European Economic Community and Euratom:

France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

1970

1975

1980

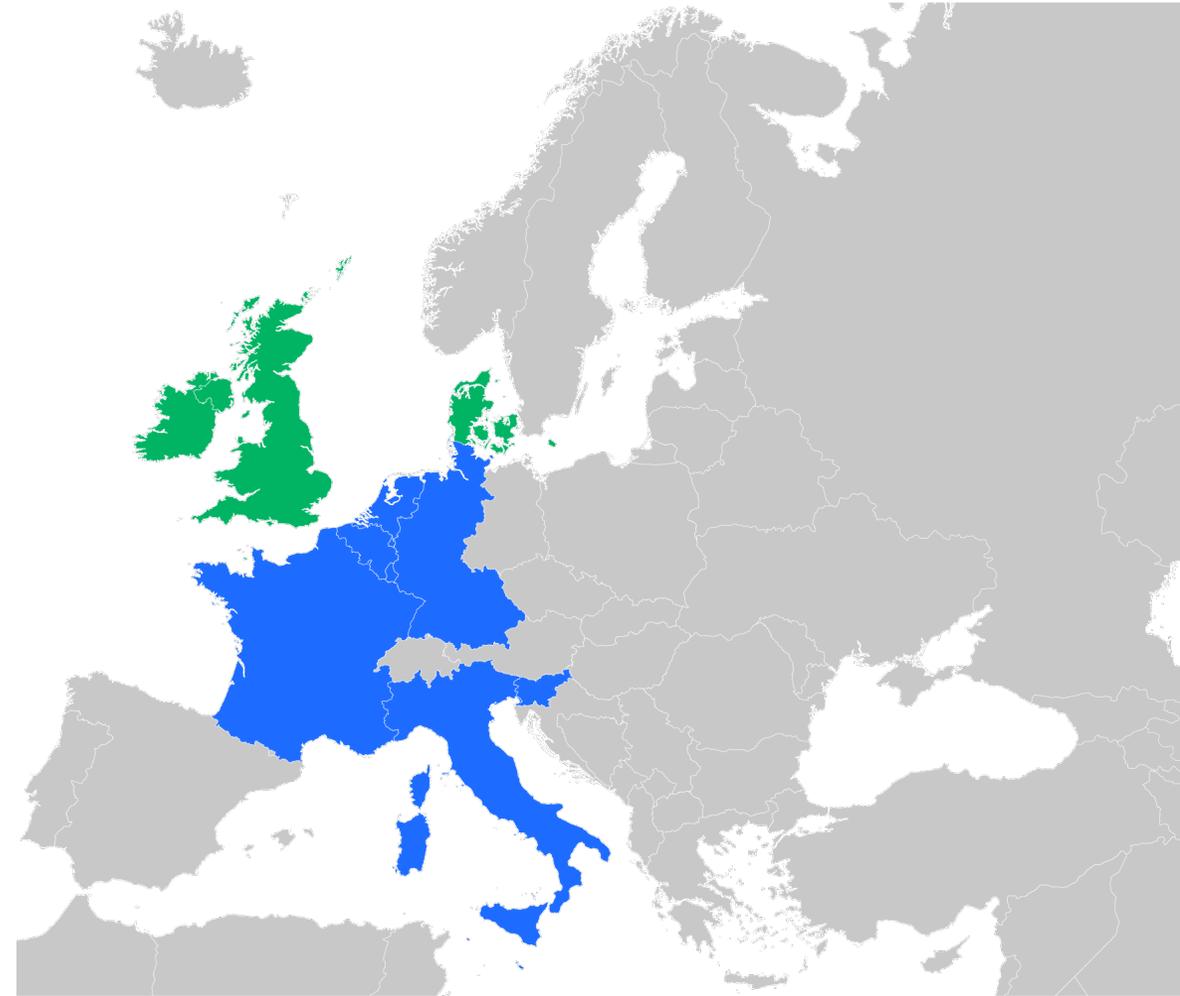
1985

1990

1/1
1973

ACCESSION OF DENMARK, IRELAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

The success of the European Economic Community attracted other European countries. Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom joined in 1973. There were also ongoing negotiations with Norway at the time, but the Norwegian people voted against membership in a referendum.



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

1970

1975

1980

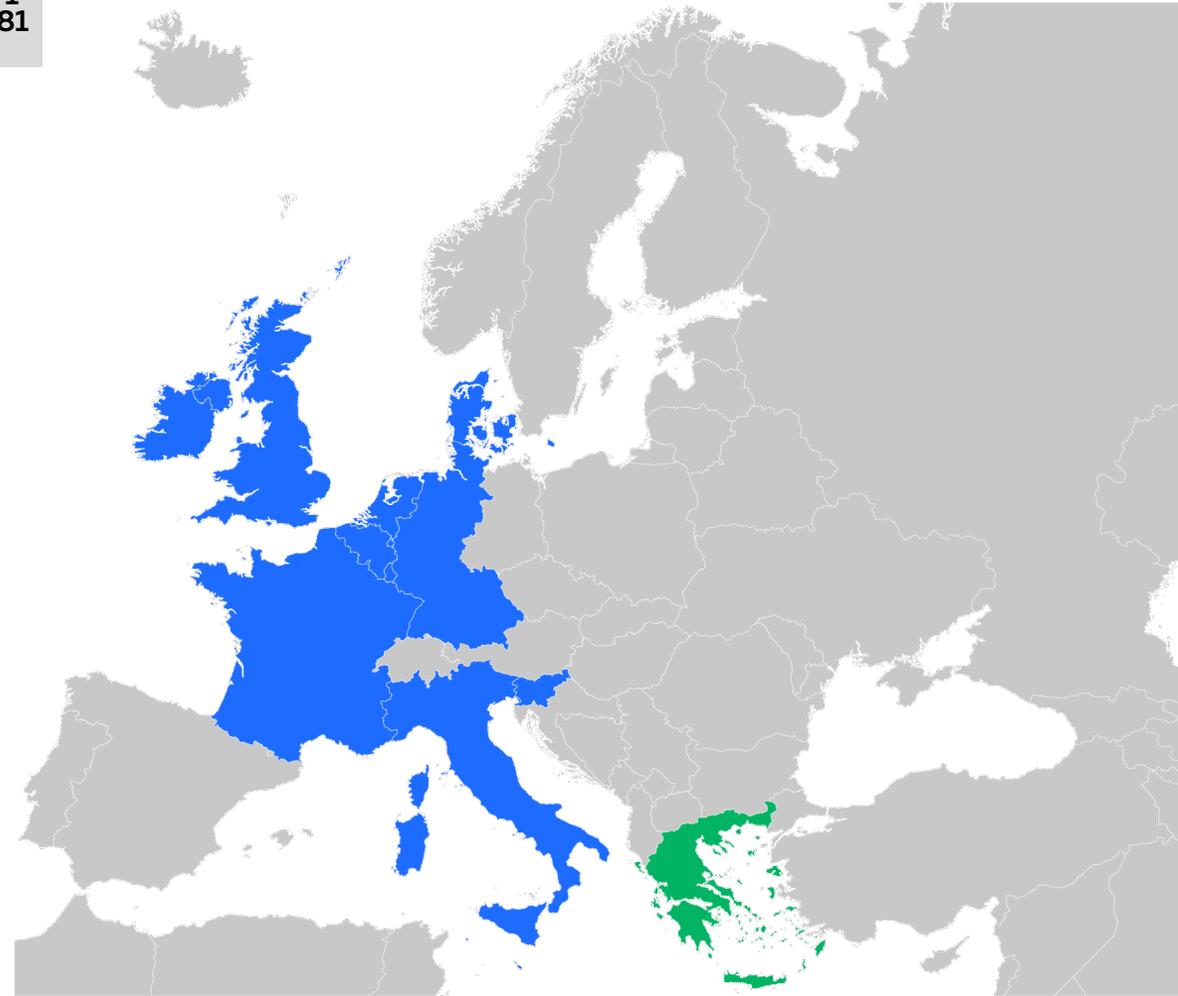
1985

1990

1/1
1981

ACCESSION OF GREECE

Greece had recently shaken off a military dictatorship. With the accession of Greece, the then-Member States wanted to support the newly-installed democracy. Economic arguments were in play as well: Greece was an interesting new market.



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

1970

1975

1980

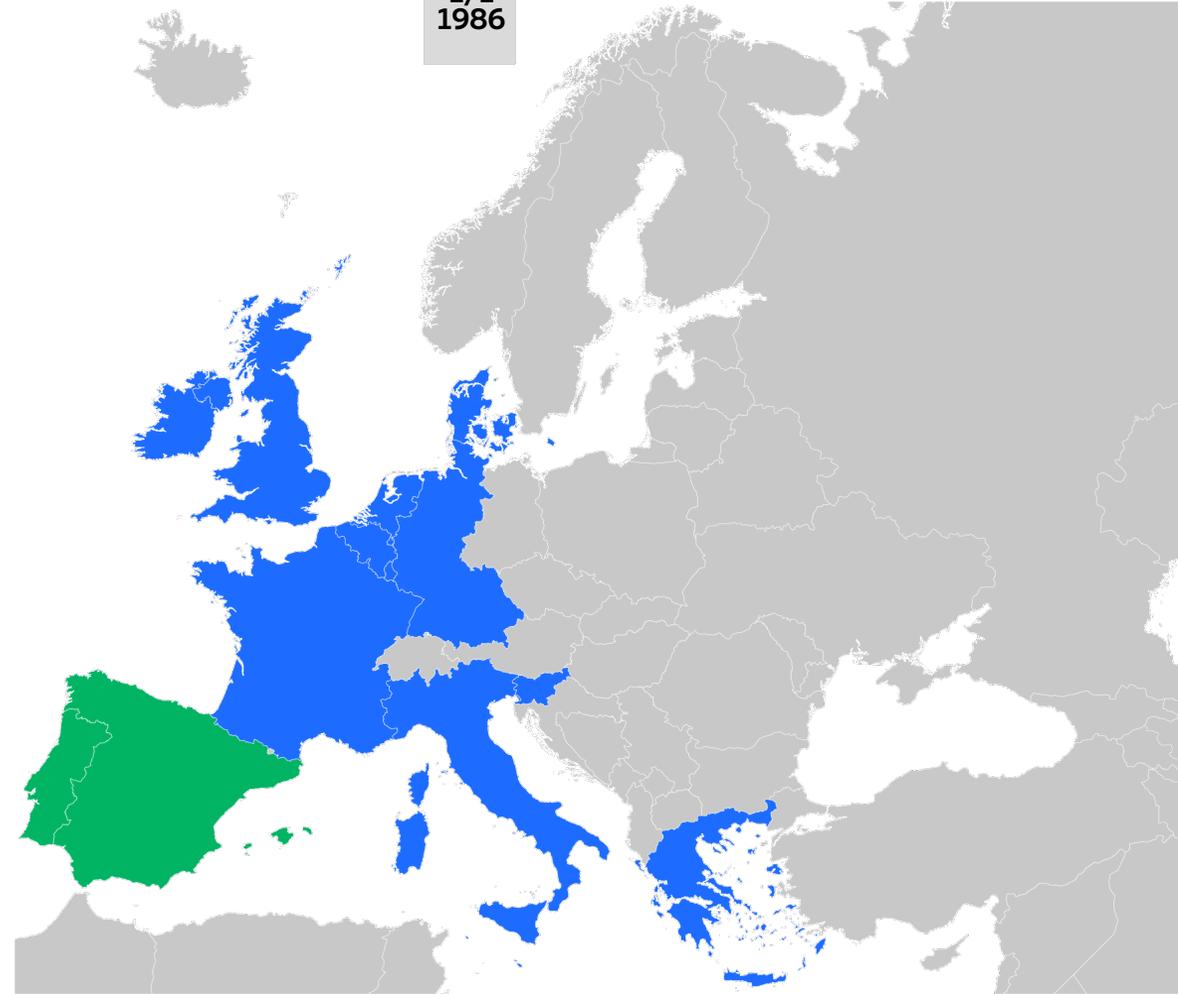
1985

1990

1/1
1986

ACCESSION OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

Support for democracy and economic motives also played an important role in the accession of Spain and Portugal. Spain had just rid itself of the dictator Franco, and Portugal had also put an end to the dictatorship of Salazar.



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

1970

1975

1980

1985

9/11
1989

1990

FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL

On 9 November 1989 the Berlin Wall fell. "This historical event is one of the major milestones marking the end of the division between West and east Europe".

There was now the possibility for newly-emerging democracies in Eastern Europe to join the European cooperation. Therefore, in 1993, the member states determined the conditions to be met by new countries in order to qualify for accession:

- Be a 'European' country (geographically or historically)
- Respect the rule of law
- Have a well-functioning market economy
- Be a stable democracy
- Respect human rights
- Implement all existing EU rules and regulations, the so-called 'acquis communautaire'



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

1970

1975

1980

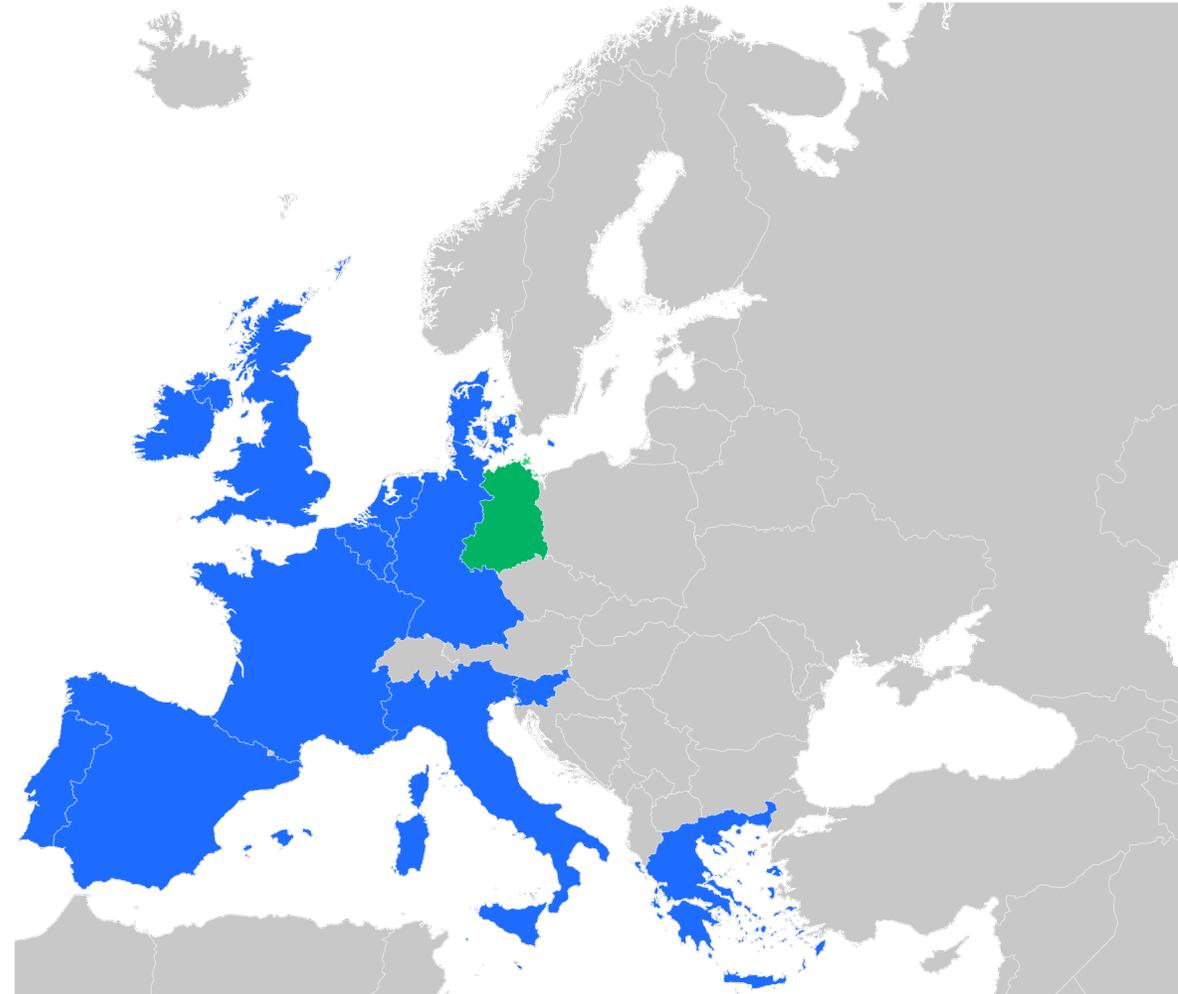
1985

1990

3/10
1990

UNIFICATION OF GERMANY

Germany wanted to be reunified as a country. The other member countries agreed to a unification, on the condition that Germany was thoroughly embedded in the European cooperation, both economically and politically.



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

1990

1995

2000

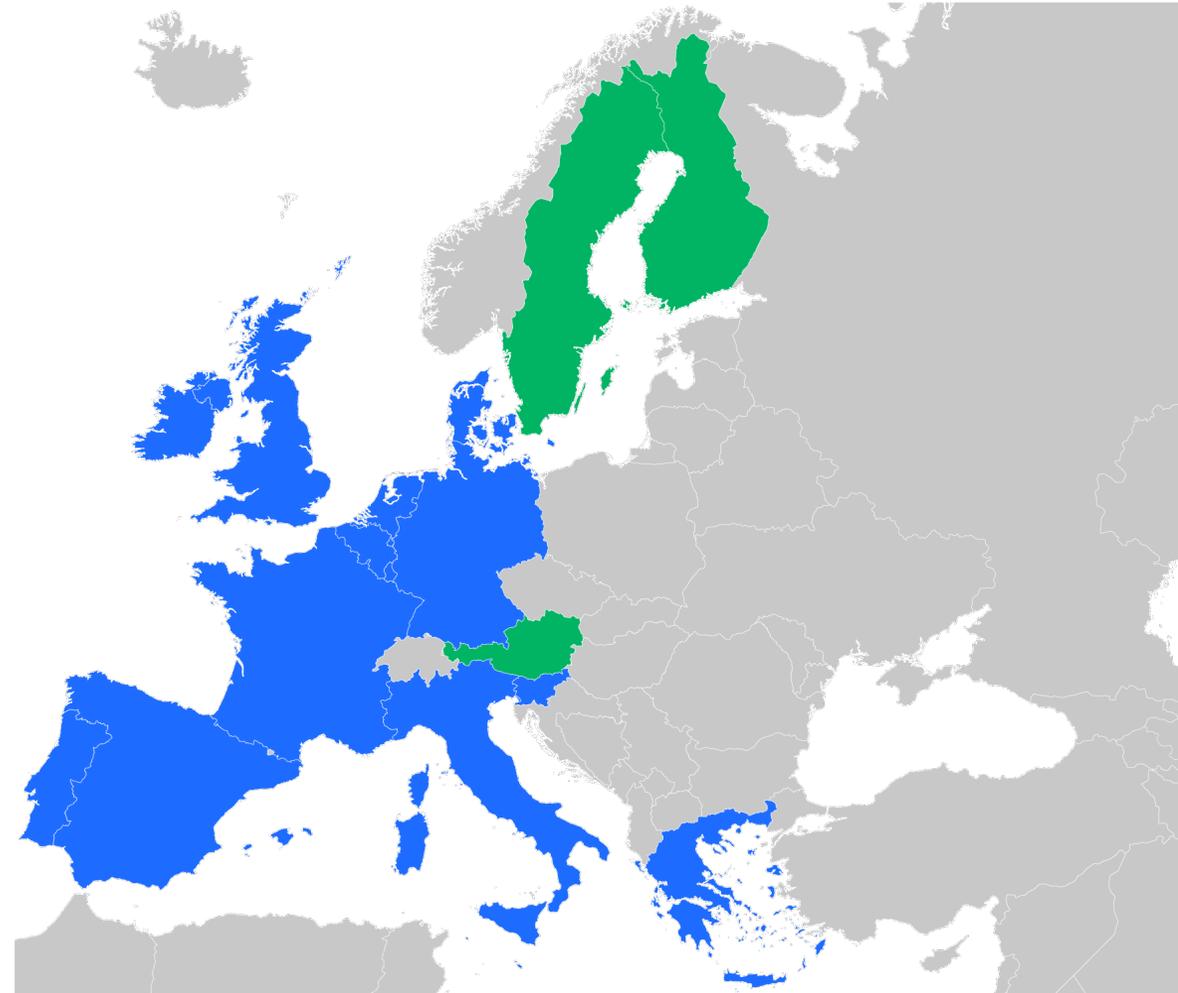
2005

2010

1/1
1995

ACCESSION OF SWEDEN, FINLAND AND AUSTRIA

With the accession of Sweden, Finland and Austria, the EU now had 15 Member States. Norway made a second attempt at accession, but again the Norwegian people voted against this in a referendum.



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

1990

1995

2000

1/5
2004

2005

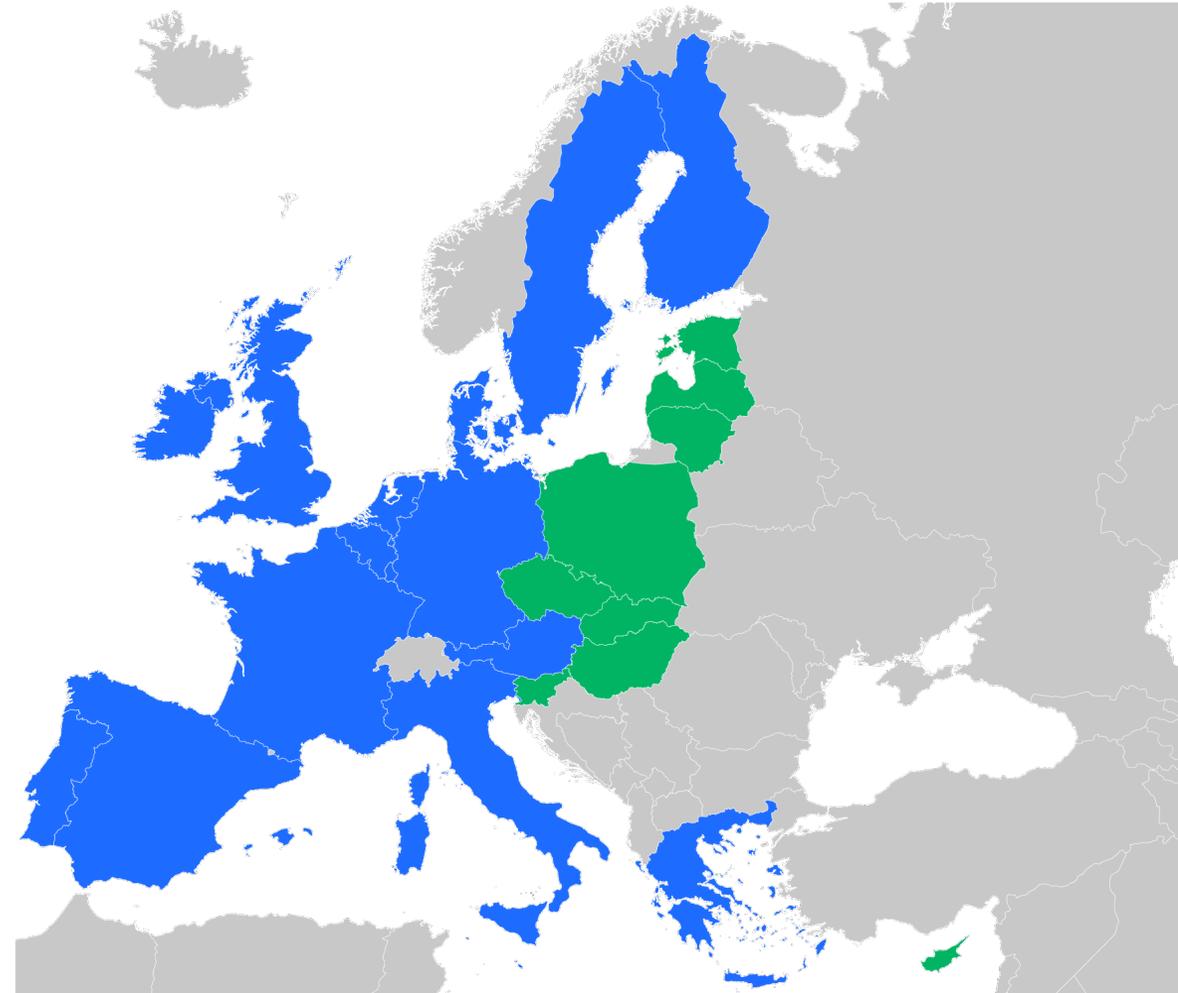
2010

ACCESSION OF CYPRUS, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA, HUNGARY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, MALTA, POLAND, SLOVAKIA, AND SLOVENIA

On 1 May 2004, 10 new Member States joined the EU. This brought the total number of member countries up to 25.



Official enlargement ceremony on 1 May 2004 © European Communities, 2004



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

1990

1995

2000

2005

2010

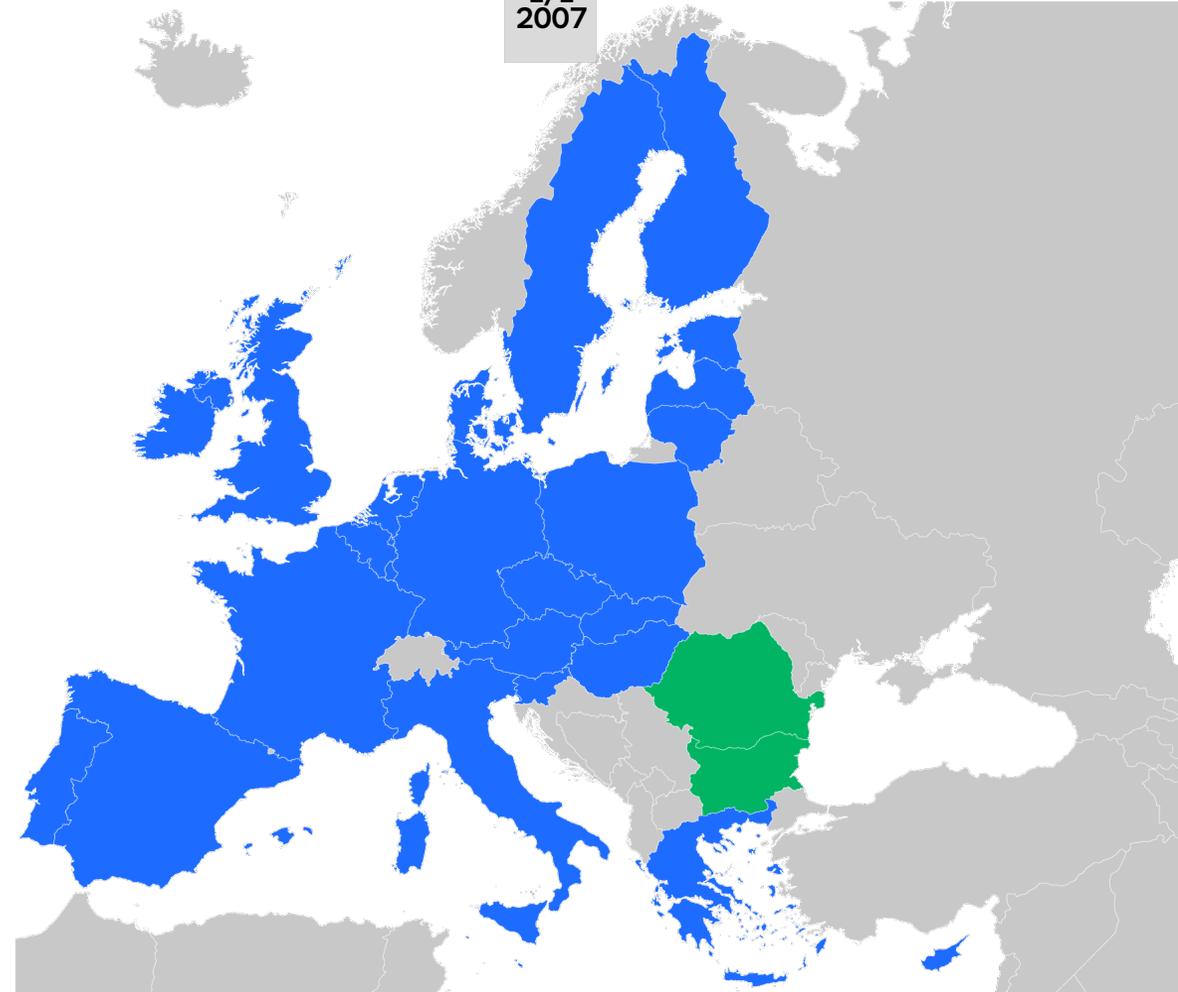
1/1
2007

ACCESSION OF ROMANIA AND BULGARIA

Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007. Their accession increased the number of Member States to 27.



The Berlaymont building with a banner reading "Welcome Bulgaria Romania to the European Union" © European Communities, 2007



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

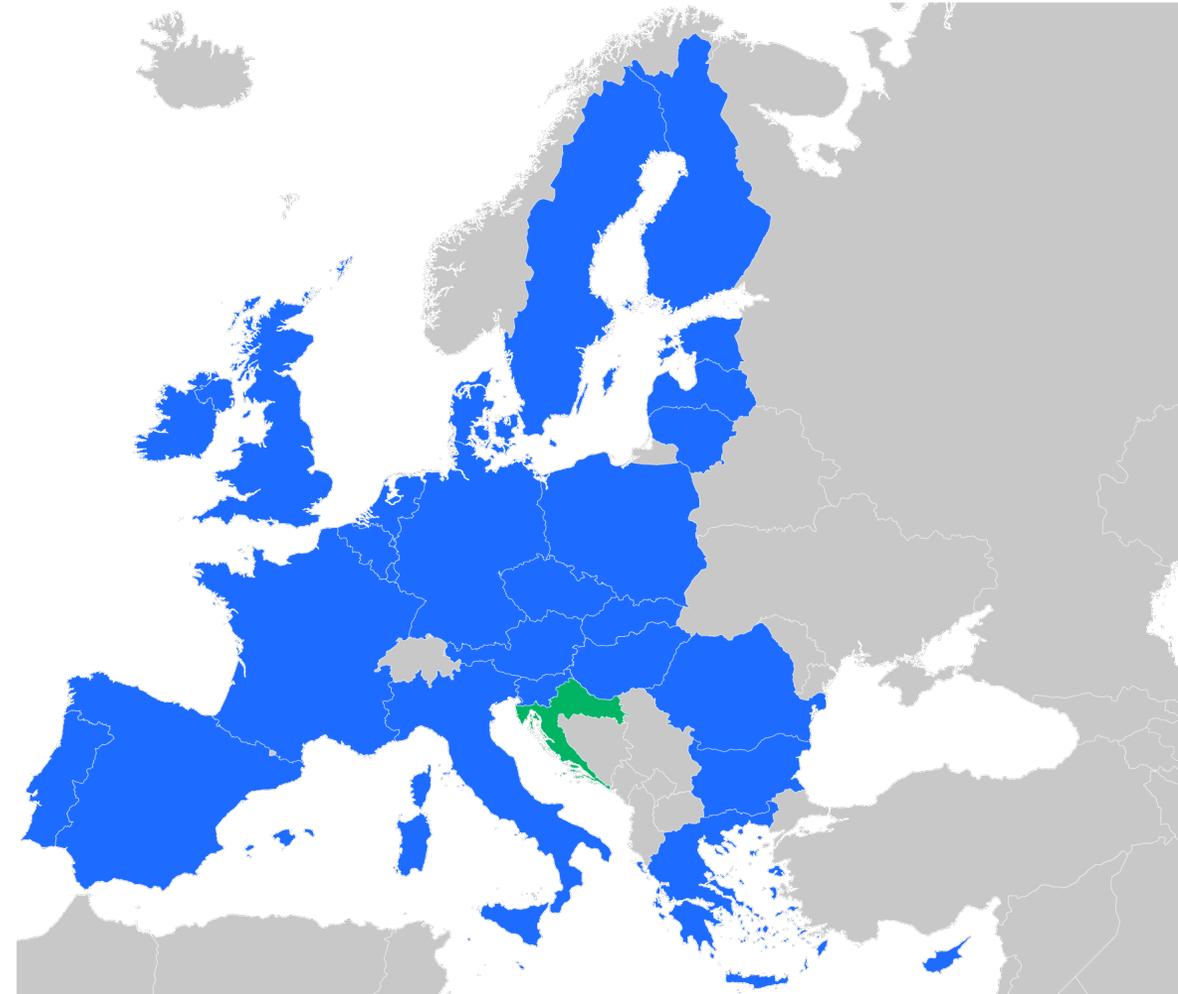


ACCESSION OF CROATIA

On 1 July 2013 Croatia entered the EU. Croatia joined as the 28th Member State of the European Union.



The European flag being hoisted in Zagreb, on 1 July 2013. © European Union 2013.



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

2010

2015

2020

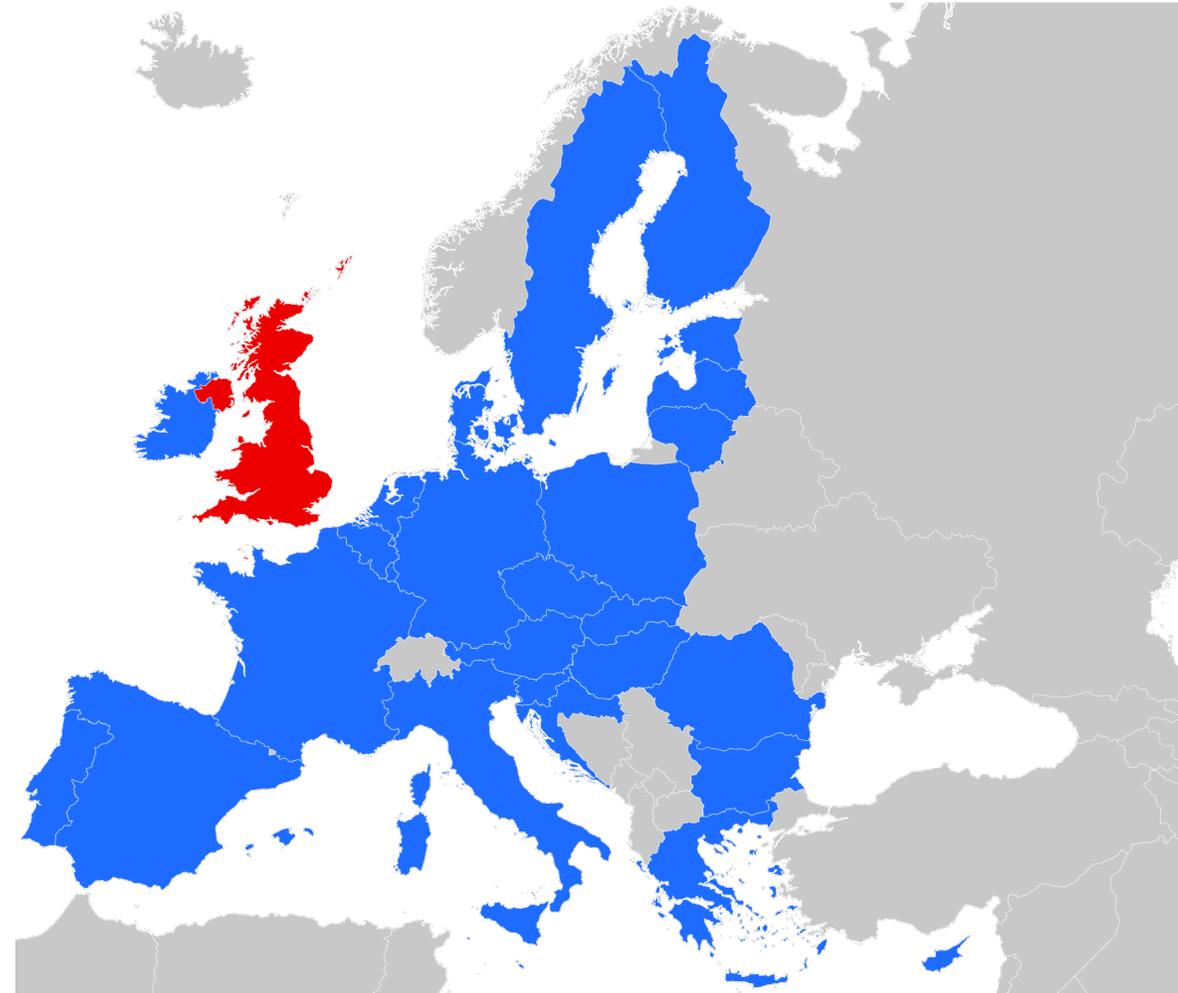
31/1
2020

THE UNITED KINGDOM LEAVES THE EU

The UK officially left the European Union on 31 January 2020, after three years of negotiations. It was the first country to withdraw from the EU. Since then, there have been 27 Member States.



Vote on Brexit in the European Parliament on 27 January 2020. © European Union 2020 EP.



FROM 6 TO 27 MEMBER STATES

2010

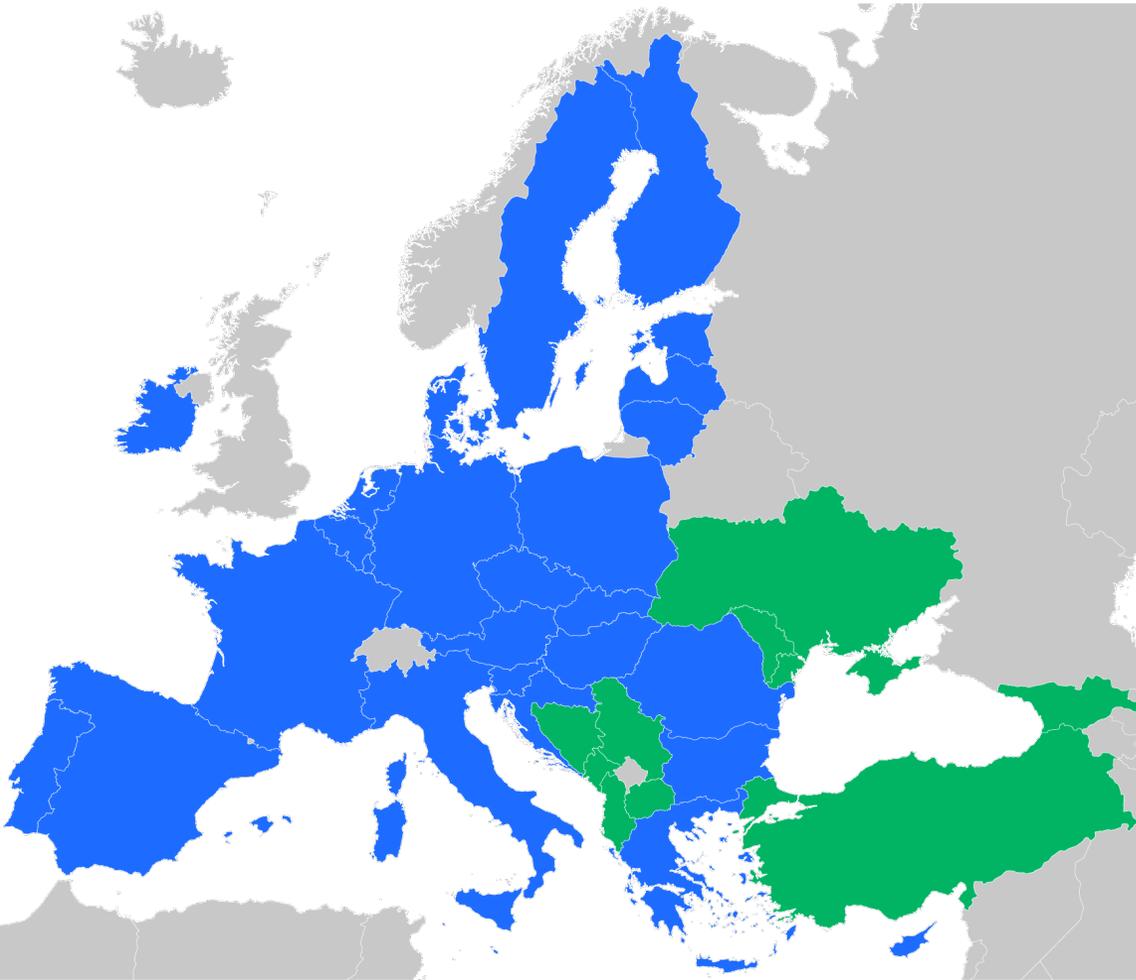
2015

2020

2025

2030

Future



CANDIDATE AND POTENTIAL MEMBER STATES

There are currently nine official candidate countries to the EU. These countries are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. A candidate country is a country that has officially applied to join the EU and has been granted candidate status. The candidates are supported financially, administratively and technically during their preparations for future membership.

Kosovo* is a potential candidate for EU membership but has not yet been granted official candidate status. This means it has expressed its intention to join the EU, but formal negotiations have not yet begun.

* This name does not affect the positions on the status of Kosovo, and is in accordance with Resolution 1244/1999 of the UN Security Council and the advice of the International Court about the independence declaration of Kosovo.

THE EU MEMBER STATES