

Section 4

Chronologies

UNITED KINGDOM

General elections and changes of government

- 5 July 1945* First general election after the Second World War. Unusually (to allow for votes from those doing military service overseas to be sent to the United Kingdom) the count is delayed until 26 July 1945. Labour is the largest party (47.8 per cent; majority of 147 seats). Attlee becomes Prime Minister.
- 23 February 1950* General election. Labour remains the largest party (46.1 per cent), but with a majority of only 6 seats. Attlee remains Prime Minister.
- 25 October 1951* General election. Labour remains the largest party in terms of vote-share (48.8 per cent) but the Conservative Party (48.0 per cent) has a majority of 16 seats. Churchill becomes Prime Minister.
- 6 April 1955* Following Churchill's resignation on grounds of ill-health, Eden becomes Prime Minister.
- 26 May 1955* General election. The Conservative Party has a vote-share of 49.7 per cent, and a majority of 59 seats. Eden remains Prime Minister.
- 10 January 1957* Following Eden's resignation due to ill-health and political responsibility for the Suez crisis, Macmillan is appointed Prime Minister.
- 8 October 1959* General election. The Conservatives (49.4 per cent vote-share) increase their majority to 99 seats. Macmillan remains Prime Minister.
- 18 October 1963* Home (formerly Lord Home) becomes Prime Minister following Macmillan's resignation on grounds of ill-health.
- 15 October 1964* General election. Labour becomes the largest party, having a vote-share of 44.1 per cent and a majority of 5 seats. Wilson is appointed as Prime Minister.
- 31 March 1966* General election. Labour remains the largest party, with a vote-share of 47.9 per cent and a majority of 97 seats. Wilson remains Prime Minister.
- 18 June 1970* General election. The Conservatives are the largest party. Their vote-share of 46.4 per cent gives them a majority of 31 seats. Heath is appointed as Prime Minister.
- 28 February 1974* General election. The Conservative Party has 37.9 per cent of the vote, but Labour (with only 37.1 per cent) wins the most seats, though no party has an overall majority. Wilson is appointed Prime Minister.
- 10 October 1974* General election. Labour (with 39.2 per cent of votes) has an overall majority of 4 seats. Wilson remains Prime Minister.
- 5 April 1976* Following Wilson's resignation, Callaghan becomes Prime Minister.
- 3 May 1979* General election. Conservatives obtain 43.9 per cent of the votes and have a majority of 44 seats. Thatcher is appointed Prime Minister.
- 9 June 1983* General election. Conservatives obtain 42.4 per cent of the votes and have a majority of 144 seats. Thatcher remains Prime Minister.
- 11 June 1987* General election. Conservatives obtain 43.4 per cent of the vote, giving them a majority of 102 seats. Thatcher remains Prime Minister.
- 28 November 1990* Following Thatcher's resignation (the consequence of a

- leadership election in which she failed to be re-elected on the first ballot) Major becomes Prime Minister.
- 9 April 1992 General election. Conservatives obtain 42.3 per cent of the votes and have a majority of 21 seats. Major remains Prime Minister.
- 1 May 1997 General election. Labour are the largest party: a vote-share of 43.2 per cent gives the party a majority of 179 seats. Blair becomes Prime Minister.
- 7 June 2001 General election. Labour are again the largest party, with a majority of 167 seats. Blair forms new government.
- General**
- 2 August 1945 Clement Davies elected leader of the Liberal Party following the outcome of the general election.
- 16 December 1949 Parliament Act reduces delaying power of the House of Lords from two years to one year.
- 6 February 1952 Accession of Queen Elizabeth II, following the death of her father, King George VI, that day. The coronation took place on 2 June 1953.
- 13 December 1955 Gaitskell elected leader of the Labour Party, following the resignation of Attlee. Gaitskell was re-elected in leadership elections on 3 November 1960 and 2 November 1961.
- 29 September 1956 Grimond elected leader of the Liberal Party following the resignation of Clement Davies.
- 30 April 1958 Life Peerages Act permits appointment of peers whose titles are not passed to their heirs.
- 31 July 1963 Peerage Act, permitting peers to disclaim hereditary peerage titles for life (without affecting future successors to the title) and the admission of female hereditary peers.
- 14 January 1963 de Gaulle vetoes British entry to the EEC.
- 14 February 1963 Wilson elected leader of the Labour Party, following the death of Gaitskell.
- 28 July 1965 Heath elected leader of the Conservative Party: the first time a formal election had been held.
- 8 November 1965 Race Relations Act introduced, creating the Race Relations Board to investigate unlawful discrimination on grounds of race.
- 18 January 1967 Thorpe elected leader of the Liberal Party following the resignation of Grimond.
- 19 December 1967 de Gaulle again vetoes British entry to the EEC.
- 22 January 1972 Treaty of Accession signed by which the United Kingdom joins the EEC.
- 30 January 1972 'Bloody Sunday': soldiers fire on a procession in Londonderry (Northern Ireland), killing and wounding several people.
- 31 October 1973 Publication of the Kilbrandon Report from the Royal Commission on the Constitution. It recommends a directly elected legislature for Scotland.
- 11 February 1975 Thatcher becomes Conservative leader, winning on the second ballot (having defeated Heath on the first ballot on 4 February 1975).
- 5 June 1975 Referendum on continued membership of EEC, following renegotiation of terms of membership. 67.2 per cent vote in favour of remaining a member. This is the first national referendum in British political history.
- 12 November 1975 House of Lords passes Sex Discrimination Act, which makes discrimination on grounds of gender an offence in fields such as employment, education and the provision of certain services such as banking and insurance. It also includes an amended version of the Equal Pay Act 1970, to ensure that pay scales are not differentiated on grounds of gender.
- 5 April 1976 Callaghan elected leader of the Labour Party following the resignation of Wilson.

- 7 July 1976 Steel elected leader of the Liberal Party following the resignation of Thorpe.
- 22 November 1976 New Race Relations Act makes discrimination unlawful in various fields (e.g. education and employment) and declares the promotion of racial hatred to be an offence.
- 23 March 1977 Callaghan and Steel agree on a 'Lib-Lab' pact.
- 25 May 1978 Steel announces termination of the 'Lib-Lab' pact.
- 1 March 1979 Referenda in Scotland and Wales on regional assemblies. Welsh voters reject the proposals; Scottish voters narrowly support the proposals, but on a turnout too low (67 per cent) to validate the result, so the proposals are not taken forward.
- 28 March 1979 Labour government defeated by one vote on motion of no confidence. This precipitates a general election.
- 1 October 1980 Labour Party conference votes in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament for Britain and withdrawal of the UK from the European Community.
- 10 November 1980 Foot elected leader of the Labour Party following the resignation of Callaghan.
- 25 January 1981 'Limehouse Declaration' by four senior Labour Party politicians, a prelude to their efforts to form a new social democratic party.
- 2 April 1982 Argentina invades the Falkland Islands, initiating a war with the United Kingdom.
- 2 July 1982 Jenkins elected as leader of new Social Democratic Party (SDP).
- 21 June 1983 Owen elected leader of the SDP, following resignation of Jenkins on 14 June 1983.
- 2 October 1983 Kinnock elected as leader of the Labour Party, following Foot's resignation.
- 6 March 1984 Strike by National Union of Mineworkers begins, involving picketing and confrontations with the police. It ends in March 1985, after a group of mineworkers had formed a breakaway trade union. This strike was regarded as the high point of the Thatcher government's conflict with the trade unions.
- 9 January 1986 Heseltine resigns from Thatcher cabinet, after disagreements concerning future plans for the Westland helicopter firm.
- 31 March 1986 Abolition of Greater London Council and other metropolitan local authorities in six conurbations.
- 6 August 1987 SDP agrees to pursue merger negotiations with the Liberal Party.
- 28 August 1987 Following Owen's resignation as SDP leader, MacLennan is elected as new party leader.
- 3 March 1988 Liberal Party and SDP merge formally to form Liberal Democratic Party.
- 28 July 1988 Ashdown elected leader of the Liberal Party, following the resignation of Steel.
- 20 September 1988 Thatcher makes her 'Euro-sceptical' 'Bruges speech', warning against progress towards political and economic union in Europe.
- 5 December 1989 Thatcher defeats Meyer in a ballot to elect the leader of the Conservative Party. The vote is 314-33.
- 8 October 1990 Britain joins the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM).
- 20 November 1990 Though Thatcher is ahead of Heseltine in the first round of a ballot to elect a leader of the Conservative Party, she does not secure sufficient votes to be elected, so declines to stand in the second round. Major is elected in her place, and becomes Prime Minister.
- 18 July 1992 John Smith elected as leader of the Labour Party, after Kinnock resigns in the aftermath of the general election outcome.
- 16 September 1992 Britain forced out of the ERM because of pressure on the pound.

- 21 July 1994* Blair elected as leader of the Labour Party following the death of John Smith.
- 4 July 1995* Major defeats Redwood in a ballot for the leadership of the Conservative Party, instigated by Major's decision to resign the leadership and stand in such an election in order to obtain a vote of confidence from his MPs.
- 19 June 1997* Hague elected leader of the Conservative Party, after Major resigns following the general election defeat.
- 6 May 1999* First elections held for Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly.
- 9 August 1999* Kennedy elected leader of the Liberal Party, following the resignation of Ashdown.
- 16 February 2000* Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act takes effect.
- 4 May 2000* Livingstone becomes first directly elected lord mayor of London.
- 29 January and 16 February 2001* Main provisions of the Representation of the People Act 2000 take effect.
- 8 June 2001* Hague announces his intention to resign as Conservative Party leader.
- 15 September 2001* Duncan Smith elected by party membership as new Conservative Party leader, defeating Clarke.

FRANCE

The Fourth Republic

- 9 September 1944* de Gaulle announces composition of provisional government following the liberation of France.
- 21 October 1945* In a referendum 96.4 per cent of voters reject continuation of the Third Republic. In elections to the Constituent Assembly the Communists are the largest single party, securing 26 per cent of the vote.
- 21 November 1945* Provisional government of National Unity formed with de Gaulle as President.
- 3 January 1946* Decrees establish post-war system of planning.
- 20 January 1946* de Gaulle resigns as head of provisional government.
- 26 January 1946* Gouin (Socialist) forms government.
- 5 May 1946* Referendum rejects proposed new constitution.
- 2 June 1946* Elections to renewed Constituent Assembly.
- 23 June 1946* Bidault (Popular Republican Movement) forms government.
- 13 October 1946* Fourth Republic constitution accepted in a referendum by 53 per cent of those voting (33 per cent abstain).
- 10 November 1946* First election to Parliament of Fourth Republic.
- 16 December 1946* Blum (Socialist) forms government.
- 24 December 1946* Fourth Republic constitution takes effect.
- 16 January 1947* Auriol (Socialist) elected as first President of the Fourth Republic.
- 22 January 1947* Ramadier (Socialist) forms government.
- 24 November 1947* Schuman (Popular Republican Movement) forms government.
- 26 July 1948* Marie (Radical Socialist) forms government.
- 11 September 1948* Queuille (Radical Socialist) forms government, following short-lived (two-day) government formed by Schuman.
- 28 October 1949* Bidault (Popular Republican Movement) forms government.
- 12 July 1950* Pleven (Democratic and Socialist Union of Resistance) forms government, following short-lived (two-day) government formed by Queuille.
- 10 March 1951* Queuille (Radical Socialist) forms government.
- 17 June 1951* General election: Gaullists are strongest party.

- 10 August 1951* Pleven (Democratic and Socialist Union of Resistance) forms new government.
- 20 January 1952* Faure (Radical Socialist) forms government.
- 8 March 1952* Pinay (Independent) forms government.
- 8 January 1953* Mayer (Radical Socialist) forms government.
- 20 May 1953* France signs Agreement with Saar territory to regulate future relations.
- 27 June 1953* Laniel (Conservative) forms government.
- 17 December 1953* Coty (Liberal) elected as President, but only on 13th ballot.
- 7 May 1954* Fall of French garrison at Dien Bien Phu (Indo-China).
- 19 June 1954* Mendès-France (Radical Socialist) forms government.
- 30–31 August 1954* French Parliament rejects scheme to create a European Defence Community.
- 1 November 1954* Algerian uprising commences.
- 23 February 1955* Faure (Radical Socialist) forms government.
- 2 January 1956* General election; Poujadists get 52 seats with 11.6 per cent of the vote.
- 1 February 1956* Mollet (Socialist) forms government.
- 12 June 1957* Bourgès-Maunoury (Radical Socialist) forms government.
- 5 November 1957* Gaillard (Radical Socialist) forms government.
- 14 May 1958* Pflimlin (Popular Republican Movement) forms government.

The transition to the Fifth Republic and the Algerian issue

- 2 and 20 March 1956* France recognises independence of Morocco and Tunisia.
- 13 May 1958* Creation of military-sponsored 'Committee of Public Safety' in Algiers.
- 29 May 1958* On President Coty's

initiative, de Gaulle agrees to form new government.

- 1 June 1958* National Assembly votes 339–224 to approve appointment of de Gaulle as Prime Minister with extraordinary powers.
- 28 September 1958* Referendum accepts constitution of Fifth Republic: 79 per cent vote in favour of it.
- 8 January 1961* Referendum approves self-determination for Algeria (75 per cent vote in favour).
- 22–25 April 1961* Attempted military putsch in Algeria.
- 18 March 1962* The Évian Agreement settles terms for Algerian independence.
- 28 April 1962* Referendum approves Algerian independence (91 per cent vote in favour).

The Fifth Republic: general

- 4 October 1962* National Assembly approves censure motion, forcing resignation of government (the sole instance of this device being utilised under the Fifth Republic constitution).
- 28 October 1962* Referendum approves direct election of president (62 per cent vote in favour).
- 22 January 1963* Franco-German Treaty signed.
- 1 July 1966* de Gaulle withdraws French troops from NATO command.
- 2 May 1968* Violent clashes occur between students and police in Paris.
- 17 May 1968* Protest marches of students and workers in Paris and elsewhere in France; occupation of factories by workers.
- 12 June 1968* French government prohibits demonstrations and dissolves several student organisations.
- 27 April 1969* Referendum rejects reform package affecting the Senate and the regions (53 per cent vote against).
- 9 November 1970* Death of de Gaulle.

- 27 June 1972* Socialist and Communist parties agree on a 'Common Programme for Government'.
- 21 September 1977* Socialists and Communists fail to renew 'Common Programme for Government', but agree to a pact for the general election in March 1978 whereby the parties would co-ordinate candidacies on the second ballot.
- 9 September 1981* Government announces far-reaching programme of nationalisation, affecting banks and many other businesses.
- 2 March 1982* Extensive package of measures concerning regional reform adopted (the 'Loi Deferre').
- 16 March 1986* National Assembly election held using proportional representation electoral system based on the Departments. (The two-ballot electoral system was reinstated from November 1986.) First direct elections to regional councils held.
- 20 September 1992* Referendum narrowly approves Maastricht Treaty (51 per cent vote in favour).
- 24 January 1999* National Front splits (mainly concerning strategies relating to alliances with other parties). Mégret leads splinter group: National Front – National Movement, later called the National Republican Movement.
- 24 September 2000* Referendum approves reduction in term of president from seven years to five years, but only 31 per cent participate.
- 11 and 18 March 2001* Local elections in France; a Socialist becomes mayor of Paris for the first time since 1871.
- The Fifth Republic: elections and changes of government**
- 23 and 30 November 1958* First National Assembly election under the new constitution.
- 21 December 1958* de Gaulle elected as first President of the Fifth Republic.
- 8 January 1959* Debré (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister by de Gaulle.
- 15 April 1962* Pompidou (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister. He is appointed again on 4 December 1962 and on 9 January 1966 following formation of new governments.
- 18 and 25 November 1962* National Assembly election (held early following censure motion forcing resignation of government).
- 19 December 1965* de Gaulle re-elected as President on second ballot, defeating Mitterrand.
- 5 and 12 March 1967* National Assembly election.
- 6 April 1967* Pompidou again appointed Prime Minister (and reappointed 1 June 1968).
- 23 and 30 June 1968* New National Assembly election following wave of student and left-wing protests.
- 9 July 1968* Couve de Murville (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister.
- 28 April 1969* de Gaulle resigns as President following defeat in a referendum of his Senate and regional reforms. Poher, as President of the Senate, becomes interim President that day.
- 15 June 1969* Pompidou (Gaullist) elected as President; 56 per cent voted for him in the second ballot.
- 24 June 1969* Chaban-Delmas (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister.
- 5 July 1972* Messmer (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister.
- 4 and 11 March 1973* National Assembly elections.
- 2 April 1973* Messmer re-appointed as Prime Minister; he is again re-appointed on 1 March 1974 following a government reshuffle.
- 2 April 1974* Pompidou dies; Poher again becomes interim President.
- 19 May 1974* Giscard (Independent Republican) defeats Mitterrand on second ballot of presidential election by 50.6 per cent to 49.4 per cent.
- 27 May 1974* Chirac (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister.

- 25 August 1976* Barre (UDF) appointed Prime Minister and re-appointed on 29 March 1977 following a government reshuffle.
- 12 and 19 March 1978* National Assembly elections.
- 31 March 1978* Barre re-appointed as Prime Minister.
- 10 May 1981* Mitterrand (Socialist) elected President, defeating Giscard on the second ballot.
- 21 May 1981* Mauroy (Socialist) appointed Prime Minister and re-appointed on 23 June 1981 and 22 March 1983 following government reshuffles.
- 14 and 21 June 1981* National Assembly elections.
- 17 July 1984* Fabius (Socialist) appointed Prime Minister.
- 16 March 1986* National Assembly election based on proportional representation, so only one ballot used.
- 20 March 1986* Chirac (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister (first cohabitation).
- 8 May 1988* Mitterrand again elected as president, defeating Chirac by 54 per cent–46 per cent.
- 10 May 1988* Rocard (Socialist) appointed Prime Minister and re-appointed June 1988 following National Assembly elections.
- 5 and 12 June 1988* National Assembly election.
- 15 May 1991* Cresson (Socialist) appointed as Prime Minister (the first female Prime Minister in the history of France).
- 2 April 1992* Bérégovoy (Socialist) appointed Prime Minister.
- 21 and 28 March 1993* National Assembly election.
- 29 March 1993* Balladur (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister (second cohabitation).
- 7 May 1995* Chirac defeats Jospin on second ballot of presidential election by 52.6 per cent to 47.4 per cent.
- 17 May 1995* Juppé (Gaullist) appointed Prime Minister and re-appointed

- 7 November 1995 following a government reshuffle.
- 25 May and 1 June 1997* National Assembly election: victory of the left-wing and Green alliance.
- 2 June 1997* Jospin (Socialist) appointed as Prime Minister (third cohabitation).
- 5 May 2002* Chirac re-elected as President, defeating Le Pen on second ballot by 82.2 per cent to 17.8 per cent.

GERMANY

Bundestag elections, changes of government and election of federal presidents

- 14 August 1949* Bundestag election. CDU–CSU are largest party.
- 12 September 1949* Theodor Heuss (FDP) elected as first federal President.
- 15 September 1949* Konrad Adenauer (CDU) elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of CDU–CSU, FDP and DP takes office.
- 6 September 1953* Bundestag election. CDU–CSU are largest party.
- 9 October 1953* Konrad Adenauer elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of CDU–CSU, FDP and DP continues in office.
- 17 July 1954* Theodor Heuss re-elected as federal President.
- 25 February 1956* FDP leaves the coalition, but its ministers, calling themselves the Free People's Party (FVP: Freie Volkspartei), continue in office.
- 15 September 1957* Bundestag election. CDU–CSU obtain overall majority of seats.
- 22 October 1957* Konrad Adenauer elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition consists of CDU–CSU and DP. The DP ministers later join the CDU, leaving Adenauer effectively with a single-party government.
- 1 July 1959* Heinrich Lübke (CDU) elected as federal President.

- 17 September 1961* Bundestag election. CDU-CSU are largest party.
- 7 November 1961* Konrad Adenauer elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of CDU-CSU and FDP takes office.
- 16 October 1963* Following resignation of Adenauer as federal Chancellor, Ludwig Erhard is elected as his successor. The coalition remains unchanged, though ministerial posts are redistributed.
- 1 July 1959* Heinrich Lübke re-elected as federal President.
- 19 September 1965* Bundestag election. CDU-CSU are largest party.
- 20 October 1965* Ludwig Erhard elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of CDU-CSU and FDP continues in office.
- 1 December 1966* Kurt Georg Kiesinger elected as federal Chancellor, following termination of coalition by the FDP, resignation of Erhard as federal Chancellor and the construction of a 'grand coalition' consisting of CDU-CSU and SPD.
- 5 March 1969* Gustav Heinemann (SPD) elected as federal President.
- 28 September 1969* Bundestag election. CDU-CSU are largest party.
- 21 October 1969* Election of Willy Brandt as federal Chancellor. Coalition of SPD and FDP takes office.
- 19 November 1972* Bundestag election (the first to be held following a premature dissolution of the Bundestag). SPD are largest party.
- 14 December 1972* Willy Brandt elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of SPD and FDP continues in office.
- 15 May 1974* Walter Scheel (FDP) elected as federal President.
- 16 May 1974* Helmut Schmidt elected as federal Chancellor, following resignation of Willy Brandt as federal Chancellor. Coalition of SPD and FDP continues in office.
- 3 October 1976* Bundestag election. CDU-CSU are largest party.
- 15 December 1976* Helmut Schmidt elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of SPD and FDP continues in office.
- 23 May 1979* Karl Carstens (CDU) elected as federal President.
- 5 October 1980* Bundestag election. CDU-CSU are largest party.
- 5 November 1980* Helmut Schmidt elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of SPD and FDP continues in office.
- 1 October 1980* Helmut Kohl elected as federal Chancellor by means of constructive vote of no confidence (its first successful use) following termination of the SPD-FDP coalition by the FDP. Coalition of CDU-CSU and FDP takes office.
- 6 March 1983* Bundestag election, following constructive vote of no confidence on 1 October 1982 and premature dissolution of Bundestag. CDU-CSU are largest party.
- 29 March 1983* Helmut Kohl elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of CDU-CSU and FDP continues in office.
- 23 May 1984* Richard von Weizsäcker (CDU) elected as federal President.
- 25 January 1987* Bundestag election. CDU-CSU are largest party.
- 23 May 1989* Richard von Weizsäcker (CDU) re-elected as federal President.
- 2 December 1990* Bundestag election (the first for reunified Germany). CDU-CSU largest party.
- 17 January 1991* Helmut Kohl elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of CDU-CSU and FDP continues in office.
- 23 May 1994* Rainer Herzog elected as federal President.
- 16 October 1994* Bundestag election. CDU-CSU are largest party.
- 15 November 1994* Helmut Kohl elected as federal Chancellor. Coalition of CDU-CSU and FDP continues in office.
- 27 September 1998* Bundestag election. SPD are largest party.
- 27 October 1998* Gerhard Schröder elected as federal Chancellor. SPD and Green Party coalition takes office.

- 23 May 1999* Johannes Rau (SPD) elected as federal President.
22 September 2002 Bundestag election. SPD and Greens continue as governing coalition.

The division and reunification of Germany

- 8 May 1945* Unconditional surrender of Germany ends Second World War.
5 June 1945 Berlin Declaration: occupation regime commences. Germany divided into four zones of occupation.
15 December 1947 London Conference of Foreign Ministers of Allies terminates without agreement on future of Germany being reached.
6 March 1948 London Six-Power Conference (without USSR participation) ends its first session, having decided to create a temporary West German state, pending a peace treaty.
2 June 1948 London Six-Power Conference ends its second session, having decided to require the ministers-President of the Land governments of West Germany to convene a constitutional convention to create a temporary constitution for a West German state.
20–21 June 1948 West German currency reform introduces the Deutschmark for western occupation zones.
23–28 June 1948 East German currency reform introduces Eastern Mark for the Soviet Union's zone of occupation.
1 July 1948 Western occupying powers hand to ministers-President of West German Land governments the three 'Frankfurt Documents', setting terms for the creation of a provisional West German state.
1 September 1948 Parliamentary Council of 65 delegates of Länder Parliaments begins its deliberations in Bonn.
23 May 1949 Basic Law is promulgated.
- 24 May 1949* Basic Law takes effect. Founding date of Federal Republic of Germany.
30 May 1949 East German People's Congress (delegates from political parties and other organisations, such as the trade union) adopts a constitution for an East German state.
7 October 1949 Founding of the German Democratic Republic (GDR).
10 March 1952 'Stalin Note' offers German reunification under certain conditions, including the neutrality of the German state.
17 June 1953 After strikes and protests on 15 and 16 June by building workers in East Berlin against new working conditions imposed by the GDR government, large numbers of workers strike and demonstrate throughout the GDR. The demonstration is suppressed by the Soviet military and by the GDR security services.
25 March 1954 USSR recognises full sovereignty of GDR.
5 May 1955 End of occupation rights in FRG. Federal Republic acquires full sovereignty.
23 September 1955 Announcement by government of the FRG of 'Hallstein Doctrine', whereby states offering diplomatic recognition of the GDR could not enjoy diplomatic relations with the FRG.
27 January 1956 GDR becomes a member of the Warsaw Pact defence organisation.
13 August 1961 Erection of Berlin Wall.
17 December 1963 Signing of first Berlin Visa Agreement, allowing citizens of West Berlin to visit relatives in East Berlin over the Christmas period: the first such opportunity since the erection of the Berlin Wall. Further such Agreements follow in 1964–66.
19 March 1970 Chancellor Brandt and GDR Prime Minister Stoph meet in Erfurt for talks. A second meeting in Kassel follows on 21 May 1970.

- 12 August 1970* FRG and USSR sign Moscow Treaty, which affects the policy of the FRG towards the GDR and is a main plank in the Ostpolitik of Brandt's government.
- 3 September 1971* Four-Power Agreement on Berlin regulates the situation concerning the divided city.
- 21 December 1972* Agreement signed between GDR and FRG concerning their future relations.
- 7–11 September 1987* Official visit of Honecker (leader of the GDR) to the Federal Republic.
- 15 January 1989* Demonstration in Leipzig for freedom of expression and freedom to travel, on occasion of 70th anniversary of murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.
- 2 May 1989* The Hungarian government announces it is to demolish the 'iron curtain' border apparatus between Hungary and Austria. This later enables GDR visitors to Hungary to flee easily to the West.
- 7 May 1989* Local elections in the GDR. Observation of polling stations by dissidents results in challenges to the accuracy of the official results and the turnout figures. Rejection of challenges to the result leads to monthly demonstrations.
- 19 September 1989* 'New Forum', a group of GDR dissidents wanting to foster free political discussion and reform, applies for official recognition as an association. The Interior Minister rejects the application on 21 September 1989.
- 2 October 1989* One of a regular series of Monday evening demonstrations in Leipzig of citizens demanding reform is broken up by police using violent methods.
- 7 October 1989* Fortieth anniversary celebration of founding of GDR. Gorbachev, attending as a guest, emphasises the need for reform in the GDR. A new Social Democratic party is founded in the GDR.
- 18 October 1989* Resignation of Honecker as leader of GDR on 'health grounds'. Krenz replaces him.
- 9 November 1989* Opening of the Berlin Wall following press conference where it was announced that travel restrictions for GDR citizens were to be diminished.
- 13 November 1989* Hans Modrow, known as a reformer in the GDR Communist party, becomes head of the GDR government.
- 28 November 1989* Kohl sets out a Ten-Point Plan which could lead to German reunification.
- 3 December 1989* Krenz and the Politburo of the GDR Communist party resign en bloc.
- 7 December 1989* First meeting of the GDR 'Round Table': a forum for representatives of new parties and political organisations, as well as from the Communist party and the former bloc parties and other organisations previously associated with it.
- 8 December 1989* A special congress of the GDR Communist party (continued on 9, 16 and 17 December) decides to change its organisational structure, adopt new policies and change its name from Socialist Unity Party (SED) to Socialist Unity Party–Party of Democratic Socialism (SED–PDS).
- 18 March 1990* First democratic election for the Volkskammer (the legislature of the GDR). Victory for the Christian Democratic-led 'Alliance for Germany' which favours swift reunification. Lothar de Maizière (CDU) forms a coalition government, and is elected as Prime Minister by the Volkskammer on 12 April 1990.
- 5 May 1990* First meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the four former Allied occupation powers (USA, United Kingdom, France and USSR) and of the two German states: the so-called 'Two Plus Four' talks, to regulate international aspects of the reunification of Germany. This takes place in Bonn. Other meetings take place on 22 June (East Berlin),

- 17 July (Paris) and 12 September (Moscow). At the Moscow meeting a Treaty was signed which was, in effect, a peace treaty ending the Second World War and regulating the international aspects of German reunification, including the borders of the reunified German state.
- 18 May 1990 Treaty between FRG and GDR signed, to institute an economic and currency union involving the two German states.
- 1 July 1990 Treaty of Economic, Monetary and Social Union comes into effect. The Deutschmark (the currency of the FRG) replaces the GDR Mark at rates of parity for some savings and for incomes, and at 1:2 for most other transactions.
- 31 August 1990 Signing of Treaty between GDR and FRG to unify the two German states.
- 3 October 1990 Treaty of Unification takes effect.
- 2 December 1990 First election in reunified Germany for the Bundestag.

General

- 30 April 1945 Hitler commits suicide in his Berlin bunker headquarters.
- 1 May 1945 Dönitz announces that he has been appointed successor to Hitler as German leader.
- 8 May 1945 Unconditional surrender of Germany in Berlin ends the Second World War in Europe.
- 2 August 1945 Potsdam conference of the 'Big Three' (USA, USSR and United Kingdom) which commenced on 17 July 1945 ends. Decisions made concerning the future administration of Germany, as well as other aspects of the post-war situation.
- 20 November 1945 Nuremberg international war-crimes tribunal commences (terminating on 1 October 1946). Twelve of the accused sentenced to death.
- 6 September 1946 'Stuttgart speech' of US Foreign Minister Byrnes, in which the creation of a provisional West German state was foreshadowed.
- 1 January 1947 Creation of the 'Bizone': a fusion of the US and British zones of occupation.
- 24 June 1948 Berlin blockade commences.
- 26 June 1948 Commencement of Berlin airlift to relieve shortages in Berlin.
- 10 May 1949 Parliamentary Council votes by 33–29 for Bonn, rather than Frankfurt, as the seat of government for the FRG.
- 12 May 1949 Berlin blockade formally ends.
- 23 October 1952 Socialist Reich Party banned by the Federal Constitutional Court.
- 9 May 1955 Federal Republic of Germany joins NATO.
- 23 October 1955 Plebiscite in the Saar region, which in effect supports membership of the Saar as a Land in the FRG.
- 25 February 1956 The FDP withdraws from the Adenauer coalition.
- 17 August 1956 The Communist Party (KPD) is banned by the Federal Constitutional Court.
- 1 January 1957 The Saarland joins the Federal Republic of Germany, after being under French administration since the end of the Second World War.
- 13–15 November 1959 SPD party congress at Bad Godesberg, near Bonn, accepts the Godesberg Programme, which abandons traditional aspects of the SPD's ideology and programme, making it a more open and modern party.
- 26 October 1962 Police searches of offices of the news magazine *Der Spiegel* begin what becomes known as the 'Spiegel Affair'.
- 6 November 1966 The radical right-wing National Democratic Party (founded 28 November 1964) win seats in the Hesse Land Parliament. Later in 1966 and in the period 1967–68 they win

seats in several other Land Parliaments. However, in the federal election in 1969 they only secure 4.3 per cent of the list votes, thus failing to qualify for seats in the Bundestag.

24 July 1967 Party Law comes into effect.

12–14 April 1969 German Communist Party (DKP) officially founded. This replaces the banned KPD.

12 August 1970 Treaty of Moscow signed by FRG and USSR. This establishes the basis for a series of treaties (the culmination of the Brandt government's Ostpolitik) forming the basis for improved relations between Germany and the communist bloc states.

27 April 1972 First use of the constructive vote of no confidence (Art. 67 of the Basic Law) to try to replace Chancellor Brandt by Barzel (CDU) fails by two votes.

6 May 1974 Brandt resigns as Chancellor following the arrest on 24 April of Guillaume, a GDR spy who worked on Brandt's staff. Brandt remains as SPD leader.

12–14 January 1980 Federal Green party formed at a congress in Karlsruhe.

17 September 1982 FDP ministers withdraw from Schmidt's coalition government.

1 October 1982 First successful use of the constructive vote of no confidence replaces Schmidt as Chancellor by Kohl (CDU).

20 June 1991 The Bundestag votes by 338 votes to 320 to make Berlin the seat of government, in place of Bonn. The Bundesrat votes on 5 July 1991 to remain in Bonn for the foreseeable future.

18 May 1992 Genscher (FDP) resigns as Foreign Minister, having served since 1974.

1 July 1992 A new law takes effect, speeding up the process of assessing requests for political asylum and making it more difficult to mis-use the right to political asylum.

12 July 1994 The Federal Constitutional Court decides that 'out-of-area' utilisation of German military units is constitutionally permissible, though the government must obtain prior approval by the Bundestag for such operations.

11 March 1999 Lafontaine, leader of the SPD and Minister of Finance, resigns from his party and public offices following disagreements with the decisions of Chancellor Schröder.

12 March 1999 Schröder appointed party Chairman in place of Lafontaine by SPD Executive; he is confirmed in that office by a party congress on 12 April 1999.

19 April 1999 Inaugural session of Bundestag in the Reichstag building in Berlin.

30 November 1999 Following accusations of improper and corrupt party financing involving various CDU politicians, former Chancellor Kohl admits knowledge of secret party accounts. On 29 December 1999 an announcement is made that a criminal investigation into Kohl and the CDU will be opened. Party leader Wolfgang Schäuble resigns as a result.

10 April 2000 Angela Merkel elected as CDU leader: the first female leader of a major party in Germany.

11 January 2002 Stoiber (leader of the Bavarian CSU) acknowledged as CDU-CSU Chancellor-candidate for the 2002 Bundestag elections following Merkel's announcement that she would not seek that position.

ITALY

General

25 July 1943 Mussolini deposed.

3 September 1943 Secret armistice signed by Italy with the Allies.

9 May 1946 Abdication of King Victor Emmanuel III; Umberto II succeeds as King.

2 June 1946 First post-war elections and

- referendum which rejects the monarchy in favour of a republic.
- 18 June 1946* Proclamation of the Republic following abdication of King Umberto II on 13 June 1946.
- 1 January 1948* New constitution takes effect.
- 5 October 1954* Italy and Yugoslavia agree on status of Trieste.
- 15 June 1977* 'Red Brigades' trial opens. Five terrorists are sentenced to terms of imprisonment on 23 June 1987.
- 16 March 1978* Moro kidnapped by Red Brigades terrorists.
- 9 May 1978* Moro murdered by Red Brigade kidnapers.
- 23 June 1978* Curcio, founder of Red Brigades, sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for forming an armed association and kidnapping.
- 18 February 1984* New Concordat between Italian government and Holy See.
- 29 January 1985* Parliamentary Commission to consider political reform, under chairmanship of Bozzi, concludes its work.
- 11 July 1988* Trial concludes of right-wing extremists relating to bombing at Bologna railway station. Four terrorists receive life sentences.
- 3 February 1991* Founding conference of PDS (formed by former PCI members) approves name of new party, following official disbandment of PCI that day.
- 10 February 1991* Bossi creates Northern League party, linking various regional Leagues.
- 9 June 1991* Referendum on reform of electoral system: 95.5 per cent support proposed changes.
- 23 May 1992* Assassination by Mafia of Judge Falcone.
- 19 July 1992* Assassination by Mafia of Judge Borsellino.
- 18–19 April 1993* Referendum on electoral reform: 82.7 per cent vote in favour.
- 3–4 August 1993* Approval by Parliament of new electoral system.

- 12–14 February 1998* Congress of PDS approves new name: Left Democrats (DS) to accommodate other parties which joined it in forming the DS.
- 10 December 1999* 17 Mafia members are given life sentences for the murder of Judge Borsellino in Palermo in 1992.
- 8 October 2001* Referendum approves greater powers for the regions (but turnout only 34 per cent).
- 11 October 2001* Berlusconi acquitted of corruption charges on appeal (relating to charges in 1998 of bribing tax inspectors).

Elections and changes of government

- 20 June 1945* Parri appointed Prime Minister.
- 10 December 1945* De Gasperi appointed Prime Minister.
- 1946* General election.
- 28 June 1946* de Nicola takes office as President.
- 13 July 1946* De Gasperi re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 2 February 1947* De Gasperi re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 31 May 1947* De Gasperi re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 11 May 1948* Einaudi takes office as President.
- 23 May 1948* De Gasperi re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 27 January 1950* De Gasperi re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 26 July 1951* De Gasperi re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 16 July 1953* De Gasperi re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 7 June 1953* General election.
- 17 August 1953* Pella appointed Prime Minister.
- 18 January 1954* Fanfani appointed Prime Minister.
- 10 February 1954* Scelba appointed Prime Minister.
- 11 May 1955* Gronchi takes office as President.

- 6 July 1955 Segni appointed Prime Minister.
- 19 May 1957 Zoli appointed Prime Minister.
- 25 May 1958 General election.
- 1 July 1958 Fanfani re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 15 February 1959 Segni re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 25 March 1960 Tambroni appointed Prime Minister.
- 26 July 1960 Fanfani re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 21 February 1962 Fanfani re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 6 May 1962 Segni takes office as President.
- 28–29 April 1963 General election.
- 21 June 1963 Leone appointed Prime Minister.
- 4 December 1963 Moro appointed Prime Minister.
- 22 July 1964 Moro re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 28 December 1964 Saragat takes office as President.
- 23 February 1966 Moro re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 19–20 May 1968 General election.
- 24 June 1968 Leone re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 12 December 1968 Rumor appointed Prime Minister.
- 5 June 1969 Rumor re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 27 March 1970 Rumor re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 6 August 1970 Colombo appointed Prime Minister.
- 29 December 1971 Leone takes office as President.
- 17 February 1972 Andreotti appointed Prime Minister.
- 7–8 May 1972 General election.
- 26 June 1972 Andreotti re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 7 July 1973 Rumor re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 14 March 1974 Rumor re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 23 November 1974 Moro appointed Prime Minister.
- 12 February 1976 Moro re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 20 June 1976 General election.
- 29 July 1976 Andreotti appointed Prime Minister.
- 11 March 1978 Andreotti appointed Prime Minister.
- 15 June 1978 Fanfani takes office as President.
- 8 July 1978 Pertini takes office as President.
- 20 March 1979 Andreotti re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 3 and 4 June 1979 General election.
- 4 August 1979 Cossiga appointed Prime Minister.
- 4 April 1980 Cossiga re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 18 October 1980 Forlani appointed Prime Minister.
- 28 June 1981 Spadolini appointed Prime Minister.
- 23 August 1982 Spadolini re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 1 December 1982 Fanfani appointed Prime Minister.
- 26 and 27 June 1983 General election.
- 4 August 1983 Craxi appointed Prime Minister.
- 24 June 1985 Cossiga elected President.
- 1 August 1986 Craxi re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 17 April 1987 Fanfani re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 29 July 1987 Gorla appointed Prime Minister.
- 14 and 15 June 1987 General election.
- 13 April 1988 De Mita appointed Prime Minister.
- 23 July 1989 Andreotti re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 13 April 1991 Andreotti re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 5 and 6 April 1992 General election. Northern League win 55 seats.
- 28 May 1992 Scalfaro takes office as President.
- 28 June 1992 Amato appointed Prime Minister.
- 29 April 1993 Ciampi appointed Prime Minister.

- 10 May 1994* Berlusconi appointed Prime Minister.
- 17 January 1995* Dini appointed Prime Minister.
- 21 April 1996* General election.
- 18 May 1996* Prodi appointed Prime Minister.
- 21 October 1998* D'Alema appointed Prime Minister.
- 22 December 1999* D'Alema re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 25 April 2000* Amato appointed Prime Minister.
- 13 May 2001* General election.
- 11 June 2001* Berlusconi appointed Prime Minister.

SPAIN

General

- 5 October 1966* Spain closes border with Gibraltar.
- 11 January 1980* Catalan and Basque regional governments commence rule.
- 10 April 1980* Spain re-opens border with Gibraltar.
- 9 December 1981* Spain joins NATO.
- 12 June 1985* Spain becomes member of EEC.
- 12 March 1986* Referendum accepts Spain's continued membership of NATO.

The transition to democracy

- 22 July 1969* Franco names Juan Carlos, grandson of King Alfonso XIII, as heir to the throne and successor to Franco as head of state.
- 20 November 1975* Franco dies.
- 22 November 1975* Juan Carlos proclaimed King of Spain.
- 14 July 1976* Ban on political parties lifted.
- 16 November 1976* Cortes (Spanish legislature) passes Political Reform Law to establish democratic elections and a bicameral legislature.
- 15 December 1976* Referendum

- approves Political Reform Law, allowing transition to democracy.
- 9 April 1977* Communist party legalised.
- 23 February 1981* Attempted military coup; armed officers hold Members of the Cortes hostage.
- 24 February 1981* King Juan Carlos condemns attempted coup by officers; coup collapses.

Elections and changes of government

- 5 July 1976* Suarez appointed Prime Minister.
- 15 June 1977* Election of Constituent Assembly; the first democratic general election since the civil war. Union of the Democratic Centre (UDC) has largest share of the vote (34.5 per cent).
- 1 March 1979* General election. UDC has largest share of the vote (35.1 per cent).
- 26 February 1981* Calvo appointed Prime Minister.
- 28 October 1982* General election. Socialists win largest share of the vote (48.3 per cent).
- 2 December 1982* González appointed Prime Minister.
- 22 June 1986* General election. Socialists win largest share of the vote (44.3 per cent).
- 29 October 1989* General election. Socialists win largest share of the vote (39.9 per cent).
- 1 November 1989* González re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 6 June 1993* General election. Socialists win largest share of the vote (39.1 per cent).
- 14 July 1993* González re-appointed Prime Minister.
- 3 March 1996* General election. Popular Party wins largest share of the vote (39.2 per cent).
- 4 May 1996* Aznar appointed Prime Minister.
- 12 March 2000* General election. Popular Party wins largest share of the vote (44.6 per cent).
- 27 April 2000* Aznar re-appointed Prime Minister.

SMALLER DEMOCRACIES

- 4 November 1948* Queen Juliana becomes Queen of the Netherlands, following the abdication of her mother, Queen Wilhelmina.
- 16 July 1951* Leopold III, King of the Belgians, abdicates; the following day his son, King Baudoin, succeeds to the throne.
- 5 June 1953* Greenland becomes an integral part of Denmark, having previously been a colony.
- 15 May 1955* Austrian State Treaty signed, ending condition of occupation in Austria.
- 21 April 1967* Military coup in Greece commences. Military junta takes office.
- 1 June 1973* Greek monarchy declared abolished.
- 25 April 1974* Military coup overthrows dictatorship of Salazar in Portugal.
- 23 July 1974* Military rule in Greece terminates.
- 1 August 1974* Restoration of 1952 Greek constitution.
- 13 February 1975* Turkish Cypriots proclaim an independent republic for their part of Cyprus; Denktash becomes President.
- 25 April 1976* New, democratic, constitution adopted in Portugal.
- 1 May 1980* Queen Beatrix becomes monarch of the Netherlands, following the abdication of her mother, Queen Juliana.
- 21 October 1981* Papandreou forms Greece's first ever Socialist-led government.
- 28 February 1986* Assassination of Palme, Sweden's Prime Minister.
- 8 June 1986* Kurt Waldheim elected President of Austria.
- 3 December 1990* Mary Robinson becomes first female President of the Irish Republic.
- 22 July 1991* New method of choosing president of Finland by direct election (using a two-ballot system) comes into effect.

- 30 January 1992* Haughey resigns as Ireland's Prime Minister following allegations of wire-tapping.
- 13 February 1992* Prime Minister, Bildt, announces end of Sweden's neutrality status.
- 14 July 1993* Law passed which makes Belgium a federal state.
- 31 July 1993* Albert becomes King of the Belgians on the death of King Baudoin.
- 1 February 2000* EU commences imposition of diplomatic sanctions against Austria as protest against the inclusion of the radical right-wing party: the Austrian People's Party, in a coalition government after the general election in October 1999.

EUROPE**Integration**

- 19 September 1946* Churchill makes speech in Zurich advocating European integration.
- 1 November 1947* Benelux customs union (taking effect from 1 January 1948).
- 5 May 1949* Statutes of the Council of Europe signed by ten West European states.
- 10 August 1949* First meeting of Assembly of Council of Europe in Strasbourg.
- 9 May 1950* Announcement of Schuman Plan which leads to foundation of ECSC.
- 18 April 1951* Treaty establishing ECSC signed.
- 23 July 1952* ECSC Treaty comes into effect.
- 30–31 August 1954* French Parliament rejects European Defence Community scheme, which would have provided for the rearmament of the Federal German Republic within a European defence alliance.
- 1–2 June 1955* Messina conference on the further development of European integration.

- 29 May 1956* Foreign ministers of member states of the ECSC meet in Venice and agree to proceed towards the creation of the EEC and EURATOM on the basis of decisions taken at the Messina conference (1–2 June 1955).
- 25 March 1957* Treaties of Rome signed to create EEC and EURATOM.
- 1 January 1958* Treaties of Rome come into effect.
- 20–21 July 1959* Seven countries including the United Kingdom agree to create EFTA.
- 3 May 1960* EFTA treaty comes into effect.
- 31 July, 9–10 August 1961* Applications made by the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark to join the EEC.
- 30 April 1962* Norway applies to join the EEC.
- 14 January 1963* de Gaulle in effect vetoes the British application for membership of EEC.
- 1 July 1965* The ‘empty chair crisis’: France withdraws from meetings of the Council of Ministers following disputes about the future financing of the CAP.
- 4 August 1965* Treaty signed by EEC, ECSC and EURATOM merging the executive organs of those institutions.
- 29 January 1966* The ‘Luxembourg compromise’ permitting national vetoes on certain matters means that France returns to meetings of the Council of Ministers.
- 10–11 May 1967* Renewed applications for membership of EC received from United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark.
- 1 July 1967* Executives of EC, ECSC and EURATOM merged.
- 25 July 1967* Norway renews application to become a member of the EC.
- 28 July 1967* Sweden applies for membership of EC.
- 19 December 1967* de Gaulle again rejects EC membership of United Kingdom.
- 1–2 December 1968* Summit meeting of EC leaders at the Hague at which (a) agreement is reached to open negotiations with prospective member states; (b) it is confirmed that a European Economic and Monetary Union would be created by 1980; and (c) it is agreed that a foreign policy co-operation process will be developed.
- 27 October 1970* Luxembourg Report on European Political Co-operation (EPC) issued to develop foreign policy co-operation.
- 19 November 1970* First ministerial meeting under EPC procedures.
- 16 November 1971* House of Commons votes 356–244 to accept membership of EC.
- 22 January 1972* Accession treaties for new member states of EC signed.
- 23 April 1972* Referendum in France approves EEC enlargement (68 per cent vote in favour).
- 10 May 1972* Referendum in Ireland approves EC membership: 83 per cent vote in favour.
- 24 September 1972* Norwegian voters in a referendum reject EC membership by 53.5 per cent to 46.5 per cent.
- 1 October 1972* Danish referendum on EC membership: 63 per cent approve.
- 1 January 1973* First enlargement of EC takes effect by addition of United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark as members.
- 9–10 December 1974* Paris meeting of heads of governments of EC member states agree (a) to hold such meetings (to be referred to as the ‘European council’) at regular intervals in future and (b) to permit direct elections to the European Parliament.
- 10–11 March 1975* European Council in Dublin discusses renegotiation of terms of British membership.
- 9 April 1975* British House of Commons votes in favour of EC membership: 396 in favour, 170 against.

- 5 June 1975* United Kingdom holds its first ever nationwide referendum: by 67.2 per cent to 32.8 per cent it approves continued membership of the EC on the basis of renegotiated terms.
- 13 March 1979* European Monetary System (EMS) is established.
- 28 May 1979* Agreement is reached on terms of membership of EC for Greece.
- 7–10 June 1979* First direct elections to European Parliament.
- 1 January 1981* Greece becomes the tenth member of the EC.
- 23 February 1982* Greenland voters decide in a referendum to withdraw from the EC. This takes effect from February 1985.
- 12 June 1985* A decision is taken that Spain and Portugal can become members of the EC.
- 1 January 1986* Spain and Portugal become members of the EC.
- 17 February 1986* Single European Act signed, as a comprehensive reform of the European Treaties.
- 1 July 1987* Single European Act takes effect.
- 20 September 1988* Mrs Thatcher's controversial 'Bruges speech', criticising what she perceives to be centralising trends of the EC.
- 26–27 June 1989* Delors Report on Economic and Monetary Union approved by European Council meeting in Madrid.
- 17 July 1989* Austria applies for membership of EC.
- 3 October 1990* Reunification of Germany adds large amount of territory, but not an additional member, to the EC.
- 8 October 1990* The pound sterling is included in the ERM.
- 1 July 1991* Sweden applies for EC membership.
- 9–10 December 1991* Meeting of European Council in Maastricht agrees content of Maastricht Treaty on European Union.
- 7 February 1992* Foreign and Finance Ministers sign Maastricht Treaty.
- 18 March 1992* Finland applies for EC membership.
- 3 May 1992* European Economic Area agreement signed, linking EC and EFTA.
- 2 June 1992* First referendum in Denmark on the Maastricht Treaty: 50.7 per cent vote to reject acceptance.
- 16 September 1992* 'Black Wednesday': United Kingdom and Italy leave the Exchange Rate Mechanism which links EU currency rates.
- 20 September 1992* Referendum in France approves Maastricht Treaty (but only 51 per cent vote in favour).
- 6 December 1992* Swiss voters reject Switzerland's membership of EEA.
- 18 May 1993* Second Danish referendum on Maastricht Treaty: 56.8 per cent vote for acceptance.
- 21–22 June 1993* European Council, meeting in Copenhagen, agrees criteria for acceptance of new member states.
- 2 August 1993* Currency speculation against the French franc and other currencies forces the effective suspension of the Exchange Rate Mechanism.
- 1 November 1993* Maastricht Treaty comes into effect, involving introduction of the name: European Union to apply to the structure of European integration involving the EC and other integrative procedures.
- 1 January 1994* The EEA takes effect, introducing closer economic relations between EU and EFTA states (except for Switzerland).
- 12 June 1994* Austrian voters agree to membership of EU: 67 per cent vote in favour of EU membership.
- 16 October 1994* Referendum in Finland approves EU membership: 57 per cent vote in favour.
- 13 November 1994* Swedish voters agree to EU membership by a 52 per cent–48 per cent majority.

- 28 November 1994* Referendum in Norway on EU membership: 52 per cent vote against membership.
- 1 January 1995* Austria, Finland and Sweden become member states in the EU.
- 26 March 1995* Schengen Agreement comes into force, removing most border checks and controls between signatory states.
- 2 October 1997* Treaty of Amsterdam signed, expanding upon and clarifying aspects of the Rome and Maastricht Treaties.
- 1–2 May 1998* European Council meeting in Brussels agrees that 11 members meet the convergence criteria which are conditions for qualification for membership of the single currency project. It appoints Wim Duisenberg as head of the European Central Bank, which will be located in Frankfurt.
- 1 January 1999* Eleven member states commence use of the 'euro' as the single currency, alongside national currencies, but with unchangeable fixed rates of exchange within the group of eleven states.
- 14 January 1999* Motion of censure on EU Commissioners by European Parliament, on basis of allegations of corruption and other behaviour unsuited to the office of Commissioner. The motion is rejected by 293–232.
- 16 March 1999* EU Commission resigns en bloc following publication of an independent report detailing cases of corruption and mismanagement.
- 10–13 June 1999* European Parliament elections; turnout in most member states declines.
- 28 September 2000* Danish voters reject membership of the European single currency project: 53 per cent vote against Danish membership.
- 1 January 2001* Greece joins European single currency.
- 1 January 2002* 'Euro' replaces national currencies as means of exchange.

General

- 5 June 1947* Marshall, in a speech at Harvard University, proposes what becomes the European Recovery Programme (the 'Marshall Plan').
- 4 April 1949* North Atlantic Treaty Organisation founded by treaty signed by 12 original member states.
- 5 May 1949* Statute signed to establish the Council of Europe.
- 30 September 1961* Organisation for European Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) replaces Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC).

