



EUROPEAN COMMISSION Audiovisual Services

The EP and the Construction of Europe: From the first European elections to the Treaty of Maastricht

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What role has the European Parliament played at some key dates in European history? This stockshot traces the milestones of European construction since the Parliament's point of view.

Part 3: From the first European elections to the Treaty of Maastricht

The first direct elections to the EP are a milestone in the European Community's history. From then on, by allowing direct participation of European citizens to the decision-making process, the European Economic Community (EEC) has a stronger democratic legitimacy. The Parliament and the Commission organise a massive publicity campaign to encourage Europeans to turn out for the vote. Electoral systems vary from one Member State to another, as the voting day also varies in accordance with national policy traditions. Finally, more than 60% of the electorate participate in the elections - a relatively low turn-out. However, it is the beginning of a new era in the relations between the European Institutions and public opinion. Encouraged by its new democratic legitimacy, the European Parliament claims to extend its role in legislative and constitutional affairs. On 17 July 1979, during the first session of the first directly-elected European Parliament, Simone Veil is elected President. She affirms that the Parliament has now a new authority, derived from the direct election, and it must exercise its democratic control over all EU matters. The European Parliament, for the first time directly elected, is eager to give its contribution to the discussion on constitutional reforms. The Assembly approves in 1984, by a large majority, a report by the Italian MEP Altiero Spinelli on a draft Treaty establishing the European Union. The report, also known as the 'Spinelli Plan', envisages the creation of a federal European Union, with enlarged powers for the Commission and the EP and the introduction of a majority voting system in the Council. Although the European Council does not take the report into consideration, the Spinelli Plan confirms the role of the EP as the conscience of the original ideal of a united Europe.



HEURE	DESCRIPTION	DUREE
00:00:00	Title	00:00:05
00:00:05	TV ad to promote the European elections of 1979	00:00:15
00:00:20	Posters of election campaigns (10 shots)	00:00:38
00:00:57	1979, the Netherlands: European elections (2 shots)	00:00:12
00:01:09	07/06/1979, the United Kingdom: European elections	00:00:07
00:01:16	10/06/1979, Luxembourg: European elections	00:00:08
00:01:24	1979, Ireland: European elections (4 shots)	00:00:24
00:01:48	10/06/1979, France: European elections (6 shots)	00:00:46
00:02:34	06/1979, Belgium: European elections (2 shots)	00:00:28

00:03:02	1979, France: First session of the directly-elected European Parliament - Election of Simon Veil as President of the EP	00:00:04
00:03:06	1979, France: Opening of the inaugural session by Louise Weiss, Member of the EP	00:00:11
00:03:17	1979, France: Votes for the Presidency of the European Parliament in presence of Jacques Chirac, President of the Rally for the Republic, and Pierre Pflimlin, Member of the EP, (5 shots)	00:00:23
00:03:40	1979, France: Election of Simone Veil, President of the European Parliament (6 shots)	00:00:51
00:04:30	13/12/1979, France: The European Parliament rejecting the 1980 Community Budget by a majority of 288 votes against 64, with one abstention (12 shots)	00:00:50
00:05:20	01/01/1981, Belgium: EEC Enlargement to Greece: Greek flag being hoisted in front of the Berlaymont in Brussels, Belgium	00:00:08
00:05:28	16/12/1983, France: Speech of Constantin Karamanlis, President of Greece, before the European Parliament in Strasbourg (8 shots)	00:00:39
00:06:08	10/02/1981, Luxembourg: Formal sitting - address by Anwar El-Sadat, President of the Republic of Egypt, (5 shots)	00:00:53
00:07:01	16/12/1981, France: Margaret Thatcher being the first President in office of the Council to present her report before the European Parliament (4 shots)	00:00:58
00:07:58	14/02/1984, France: Altiero Spinelli, Member of the EP, presenting the Committee on Constitutional Affairs' report regarding a draft Treaty establishing the European Union - Vote and adoption of the report (12 shots)	00:01:32
00:09:30	TV ad to promote the European elections of 1984 (2 shots)	00:00:10
00:09:40	14-17/06/1984: Second direct elections to the EP - posters of elections campaigns (20 shots)	00:01:05
00:10:45	07/01/1985, France: The new Commission of the European Communities, chaired by Jacques Delors, taking office - First speech of Delors before the EP as President of the EC (5 shots)	00:00:52
00:11:37	08/05/1985, France: Formal sitting in Strasbourg - address by Ronald Reagan, President of the United States, in commemoration of the anniversary of the end of World War II (7 shots)	00:00:55

00:12:32	29/05/1986, Belgium: The European flag being hoisted for the first time in front of the Berlaymont building in Brussels. Statement by Pierre Pflimlin, President of the EP, (4 shots)	00:00:45
00:13:17	01/1986, France: EEC Enlargement to Spain and Portugal - Welcome ceremony by Pierre Pflimlin, President of the EP, - Arrivals of new MEPs in Strasbourg (10 shots)	00:01:01
00:14:18	14/05/1986, France: Formal sitting - address by Juan Carlos, King of Spain, in Strasbourg (3 shots)	00:00:24
00:14:41	09/07/1986, France: Formal sitting - address by Mário Soares, President of Portugal, (3 shots)	00:00:33
00:15:14	11/10/1988, France: Formal sitting - address by Pope John-Paul II in Strasbourg (4 shots)	00:00:41
00:15:55	1988, France: The European Parliament awarding the first Sakharov Prize to Nelson Mandela, symbol of the struggle against apartheid, convicted of 'treason' and sentenced to life imprisonment, and Anatoli Marchenko, Soviet dissident, author, and human rights campaigner, - Lord Plumb, President of the EP, handing the Prize in to Mandela's grandson in Strasbourg (6 shots)	00:00:29
00:16:24	TV ad to promote the European elections of 1989	00:00:15
00:16:39	June 1989, France: Third direct elections to the EP - atmosphere in the press room of the European Parliament (4 shots)	00:00:37
00:17:16	1989-1990, East Europe: The Fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of authoritarian regimes (3 shots)	00:00:29
00:17:45	04/04/1991, Belgium: Visit of Lech Wałęsa, President of Poland, to the EP in Brussels (6 shots)	00:00:39
00:18:24	17/01/1990, France: Visit of Alexander Dubček, Slovakian dissident and Sakharov Prize winner in 1989, to the EP in Strasbourg (5 shots)	00:00:39
00:19:03	20/03/1991, France: Visit of Václav Havel, President of Czechoslovakia, to the EP in Strasbourg (5 shots)	00:00:32
00:19:36	04/1991, France: Visit of Boris Yeltsin, First President of the Russian Federation, to the EP - Meeting with Enrique Barón Crespo, President of the EP, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs, in Strasbourg (3 shots)	00:01:05

