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| [Flag of Europe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Europe) | **The EU was created in its current form by a series of treaties and agreements between the founding states and the future members of the EU. The most notable ones include:** |
| **Treaty of Paris (1951).**  The treaty that was signed on 18 April 1951 between Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, France, Italy and West Germany established the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). It is traditionally regarded as the foundation of the EU because it led to political and economic stability in western Europe as well as provided the basis for the modern EU. | |
| **Treaty of Rome (1957).**  The treaty that was signed by the founders of the ECSC on 25 March 1957 led to the creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) that was formally founded on 1 January 1958. The aim of the EEC was to increase economic integration between the signatory states. | |
| **Merger Treaty (1965).**  The treaty was signed between the founding states of the ESCS and EEC on 8 April 1965 and resulted in the creation of first joint institutions. The Merger Treaty resulted in the creation of a single set of institutions for the ESCS, EEC and the European Atomic Energy Community. The later was founded with a separate treaty that was singed in Rome on the same day as the Treaty of Rome (1957). | |
| **Schengen Agreement (1985).**  The treaty that was signed on 14 June 1985 resulted in abolition of the border checks between the members of the EU. The so-called Schengen Area, however, was created only in 1995. Two states remained outside the Schengen Area – the UK and Ireland. Outside the Schengen Area also remain Romania, Bulgaria and Cyprus. On the other hand, Schengen Area includes Norway, Iceland and Switzerland which are not members of the EU. | |
| **Single European Act (1986).**  The treaty that was signed between 12 members of the EEC revised the Treaty of Rome and provided the basis for foundation of a single market. It also formalised the European Political Cooperation, the precursor of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy. | |
| **Maastricht Treaty (1992).**  The treaty which is named after the place it was signed – Maastricht, the Netherlands was signed between 12 members of the EEC on 7 February 1992. It is one of the most important EU treaties not only because it formally created the EU but also because it laid the foundation for formation of the eurozone. | |
| **Amsterdam Treaty (1997).**  Signed on 2 October 1997 by the members of the EU, the Treaty of Amsterdam defined EU citizenship and individual’s rights in terms of justice, freedom and security. It also dealt with the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the reform of the EU institutions in future enlargements but the work on the reform of the EU institutions is still ongoing. | |
| **Treaty of Lisbon (2007).** The treaty was signed by all EU member states on 13 December 2007 with an aim to complete the reform process, started by the Amsterdam Treaty. It entered into force on 1 December 2009. | |