20 YEARS OF EUROPE

2000

14 October: signature of the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union** by the heads of the 15 member states

2001

26 February: signature of the **Treaty of Nice** by the 15 Member States. It paves the institutional way for the enlargement of 2004.

14 May : the Letter of the Foundation is available in English

2002

1 January: the ECB prints the first **euro banknote**.

18 February: the Letter of the Foundation is available in Spanish

23 September: the Letter of the Foundation is available in German

2003

1 February: entry into force of the Nice Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights

18 July: the Convention on the Future of Europe (105 members) hands over its **draft for the Constitution of Europe** to the Italian presidency.

2004

1 May: **10 new countries** join the EU, which has now grown to 25 members. The Union has 74 million more citizens.

2005

29 May and **1 June**: the French and the Dutch **reject the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe** (TCE).

2006

13 February: the Letter of the Foundation is now available in Polish

2007

1 January: **Romania** and **Bulgaria** join the EU.

2008

Banking crisis: following the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers on September 15th, the Benelux banks Fortis and Dexia, the Italian Unicredit, the German Hypo Real Estate and 6 British banks are bailed out by the member states.

2009

1 December: entry into force of the **Lisbon Treaty**. The role of the Parliament is strengthened, the EU acquires legal personality, the Charter and the ordinary legislative procedure become binding and qualified majority voting (QMV) is extended.

2010

9 May: creation of the **European Financial Stability Facility** (EFSF), designed at providing financial assistance to Member States in economic difficulty. Ireland, Portugal and Greece will seek its assistance.

2012

26 July: ECB President Mario Draghi declares that the ECB is ready to do "**whatever it takes**" to save the single currency. Debt speculation against Italy, Spain and Greece stops overnight.

8 October: creation of the **European Stability Mechanism** (ESM), which partly replaces the EFSF.

2013

1 July: sixth and last EU enlargement; **Croatia** becomes the 28th Member State.

2014

15 April: creation of the **Banking Union**, which aims at monitoring and managing banking institutions.

23 October: the EU announces new targets of 27% of **renewable energy** and 40% of **reduction in greenhouse gas emissions** by 2030.

2015

1 January: **Lithuania** becomes the 19th Member State to adopt the euro.

22 January: the ECB begins its **Quantitative Easing (QE)** policy, which consists in the purchasing of sovereign debt bonds

5 July: the Greek reject the Troika's rescue package by referendum. On July 13th, Greece is forced to accept a similar €53 package. Early elections take place on September 20th.

31 juillet : German Chancellor Angela Merkel notoriously declares “we will make it”; Germany alone will welcome over 1 million migrants in 2015.

2016

23 juin : 51,89% of Britons vote in favour of **leaving the European Union**.

2020

31 janvier : the United Kingdom officially withdraws from the EU.

18 mai : France and Germany propose a 500 billion € recovery plan

27 mai : The European Commission proposes its 750 billion € **recovery plan for Europe**. Half of the plan are loans contracted by the Commission.