

Journal of Contemporary European Research

Volume 8, Issue 4 (2012)

40 Years of EU Membership: The UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Introduction

It is 40 years since the UK formally joined the European Community on 1 January 1973. To mark the anniversary, the *European Parliament Information Office in the United Kingdom* commissioned a number of experts on European integration to summarise the key events leading up to and since accession. Each has prepared a chronology and an accompanying narrative.

This anniversary comes at a time when the relationship between all facets of British society and Europe is at a crossroad. The likelihood of an in/out referendum in the years to come continues to rise, the debate on alternatives to membership and the current exercise of reviewing the balance of competences between the EU and Britain dominate the political debate and media coverage of EU affairs.

Helen Wallace has provided an overview from the British perspective. David Phinnemore, Lee McGowan, Cathal McCall and Peter McLoughlin have written about the perspective from Northern Ireland. Jo Shaw has presented the Scottish experience whilst Richard Wyn Jones and Rebecca Rumbul have summarised the key events relevant to Wales.

Citation

Various (2012). '40 Years of EU Membership: The UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland', *Journal of Contemporary European Research*. 8 (4), pp. 530-570.

Published in: www.jcer.net

Journal of Contemporary European Research

Volume 8, Issue 4 (2012)

The UK: 40 Years of EU Membership

Helen Wallace *London School of Economics and Political Science*

This chronology was commissioned by the *European Parliament Information Office in the United Kingdom* and has been published here with their kind permission and that of the author.

Professor Helen Wallace DBE, FBA is an Emeritus Professor in the European Institute at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Citation

Wallace, H. (2012). 'The UK: 40 Years of EU Membership', *Journal of Contemporary European Research*. 8 (4), pp. 531-546.

Published in: www.jcer.net

KEY DATES

A chronology of significant events in British history, including the years leading up to accession on 1 January 1973.

19 Sep 1948	Winston Churchill: Zurich speech calling for a United States of Europe
7 May 1948	The Hague Conference, leading to Council of Europe, 140 British among the 800 participants
1950-1	Schuman Plan leading to European Coal and Steel Community: UK rejected invitation to join
1955	Messina Conference of the Six (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands) agrees to develop a common market and atomic cooperation via the Spaak Committee, which Russell Bretherton joined until withdrawn by UK government
1957-8	UK seeks to negotiate wider free trade area through the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, but negotiations fail
Jan 1960	Founding of EFTA (UK along with Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland)
1961-3	First UK application for membership of European Communities, negotiations led by Edward Heath
14 Jan 1963	First de Gaulle veto of UK accession
Oct 1964	Election of Labour Government (majority of 4) with Harold Wilson as Prime Minister, re-elected in March 1966 with larger majority, but divisions in cabinet and party over Europe
2 May 1967	Second UK application for membership of EC
27 Nov 1967	Second de Gaulle veto of UK accession
June 1970	Election of Conservative Government with Edward Heath as Prime Minister
1970-72	Successful accession negotiations (UK, Denmark, Ireland and Norway)
Jul 1972	European Communities' Act passed to incorporate European law in the UK, after stormy passage in Commons
1 Jan 1973	UK accession
1973-6	First two Commissioners from UK: Christopher Soames and George Thomson
1974	Election of minority Labour Government (-33 MPS) in February with Harold Wilson as Prime Minister, re-elected in October 1974 with tiny majority of 3, and persistent divisions on Europe

1974-5	UK renegotiation of terms of accession (including a flawed mechanism to limit budget contributions) completed at Dublin European Council of March 1975. Terms agreed in Cabinet with several ministers voting against, and in Commons with Conservative support but a much divided Labour Parliamentary Party. Collective cabinet responsibility suspended for the subsequent referendum
30 Nov 1974	Helmut Schmidt's speech to Labour Party Conference strengthens pro-European opinion
Feb 1975	Lomé Convention brings former British colonies into aid and trade relationship with EC
5 Jun 1975	UK Referendum on question: Do you think the UK should stay inside the European Community (Common Market)? Cross-party campaigns on each side. Turnout: 64.5%; Yes: 67.2%; No: 32.8 %; two regions of Scotland had 'no' majorities.
Jan-Jun 1977	1st British Presidency of EC Council
1977-81	Roy Jenkins as President of European Commission and Christopher Tugendhat as second Commissioner from UK
27 Oct 1977	Roy Jenkins' speech in Florence supporting EMU May 1979 Election of Conservative Government with Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister
1979	EP elections: turnout 31.6%; Conservatives 60 MEPs; Labour: 17; one each SNP, DUP, SDLP, and OUU
Feb 1979	Cassis de Dijon case before European Court of Justice which argues that mutual recognition of standards is legally correct, key prelude to single market
Mar 1979	Exchange-rate-mechanism of European Monetary System established – UK does not join till later
Dec 1979	Dublin European Council at which Margaret Thatcher asks for her 'money back'
Jan 1981	Greece joins EC
25 Jan 1981	Limehouse Declaration by Gang of Four (including Roy Jenkins) who leave Labour Party to found Social Democrat party, partly because staunch pro-Europeans
1981-4	Christopher Tugendhat continues as Commissioner and joined by Ivor Richard
Jul-Dec 1981	2nd British Presidency of EC Council, which includes London Declaration aiming to strengthen European foreign policy cooperation
1982	Falklands War between UK and Argentina. UK backed by EC economic sanctions on Argentina
Apr 1982	UK tries unsuccessfully to invoke Luxembourg Compromise in order to veto agricultural price package in Agriculture Council

Jun 1983	Re-election of Conservative Government with Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister; Labour Party campaigned for withdrawal from EC
Jun 1984	EP elections: turnout 32.57%; Conservatives 45 MEPs; Labour 32; one each SNP, DUP, SDLP, and OUU
Jun 1984	Fontainebleau European Council agrees rebate mechanism for UK on budget payments and Margaret Thatcher presents paper on 'Europe – the Future'
1985-8	Jacques Delors becomes President of the European Commission, with Stanley Clinton Davis and Lord (Arthur) Cockfield as Commissioners from UK
Jun 1985	Single Market White Paper calling for its completion by 1992 presented by Lord Cockfield; Milan European Council endorses with strong UK support, but also calls for treaty revision against the protest of Margaret Thatcher 1985/6 Negotiation of Single European Act, which comes into force July 1987, promoting single market, and extending use of qualified majority voting and powers of European Parliament
1985	Greenland holds referendum on EC membership and withdraws though retains connections as result of its status within the Danish Realm
Jan 1986	Portugal and Spain join EC
Jul-Dec 1986	1986 3rd British Presidency of EC Council
Jun 1987	Re-election of Conservative Government with Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister
1987-89	Henry Plumb as President of the European Parliament
1987-97	David Williamson as Secretary-General of Commission
Apr 1988	Labour Party recommits to EC membership
Jun 1988	Delors-1 budget package agreed after tough negotiations which retain UK rebate
8 Sep 1988	Jacques Delors' speech to TUC at Bournemouth
20 Sep 1988	Margaret Thatcher delivers her Bruges speech, which sets out her core view of Europe (including openness to eastern Europe and stronger role for collective European defence, as well as criticising the excessive and intrusive zeal of the Commission)
1989-95	Leon Brittan and Bruce Millan as Commissioners from UK
Jun 1989	EP elections: turnout: 36.2%; Labour 45 MEPs; Conservatives 32; one each SNP, DUP, SDLP, and OUU; Greens score 14.5%
Oct 1989	Nigel Lawson resigns as Chancellor of the Exchequer, partly because of disagreements over European policy
9 Nov 1989	Fall of Berlin Wall

1990-1	1st Gulf War, with UK and France with the US as major protagonists in a coalition including several other European countries
1990	Two plus Four negotiations over the future of the German Democratic Republic, during which Margaret Thatcher makes clear her preference for avoiding early unification
3 Oct 1990	German unification
6 Oct 1990	Sterling joins exchange-rate-mechanism of EMS
Oct 1990	Rome European Council at which Margaret Thatcher declares that UK will never join a single currency
13 Nov 1990	Sir Geoffrey Howe delivers resignation speech as Deputy Prime Minister with fierce criticism of Margaret Thatcher's European policy
22 Nov 1990	Resignation of Margaret Thatcher, who is succeeded by John Major, who commits to put UK 'at the heart of Europe'
1991-2	Negotiation of Treaty of Maastricht, which provides for economic and monetary union – with an opt-out provision for the UK, develops the 'three pillars' for EU policies, extended the powers of the European Parliament and exempts the UK from some employment provisions through a Social Protocol.
Apr 1992	Re-election of Conservative Government with John Major as Prime Minister
Jul-Dec 1992	4th British Presidency of EC Council
1992-5	UN-sanctioned peace-keeping operations in Croatia and then Bosnia Herzegovina, including the UK and many other European countries
Apr 1992	Conservative Party joins European Peoples' Party group in European Parliament in period of its rejuvenation as main centre-right group
Jun 1992	Danish 'no' vote on Maastricht in referendum, reversed after special decision of Edinburgh European Council of Dec 1992 by a second referendum in May 1993
17 Sep 1992	Black Wednesday – UK withdrawal from ERM (David Cameron an adviser to Norman Lamont, then Chancellor of the Exchequer)
Dec 1992	Edinburgh Council endorses Delors-2 budget package, which retains UK rebate. Also confirmed agreement that European Parliament work among three locations in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg.
1995-1999	Leon Brittan continues as Commissioner and joined by Neil Kinnock
1993	Foundation of Eurosceptical United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)

20 May 1993	Maastricht ratification in the UK contentious at several stages, with some Conservative rebels on the treaty as a whole, and Labour and Liberal Democrat criticism of the UK opt-outs, forcing the Government into a confidence vote to complete ratification. Many calls for a referendum and emergence of vocabulary of repatriation
Jun 1993	Copenhagen European Council endorses process leading to eastern enlargement with strong UK support
1 Nov 1993	Maastricht enters into force
Mar 1994	UK presses for modification of Council voting practice to maintain scope for 'blocking minorities' after enlargement and the Ioannina compromise is formulated.
Jun 1994	UK vetoes choice of Jean-Luc Dehaene as next President of Commission and Jacques Santer chosen instead
Apr 1994	WTO Marrakesh Agreement signed, key role of Leon Brittan as Trade Commissioner
Jun 1994	EP elections: turnout 36%; Labour 62 MEPs; Conservatives 18; Liberal Democrats 2; SNP 2; one each DUP, SDLP, OUV; Greens drop back to 3%
1994	Schäuble-Lamers (German Christian Democrats) paper calling for hard-core EU
1995	EFTA enlargement with UK support
1995	BSE problem flares up as other EU countries impose ban on imports of UK beef
Jun 1995	Joint (Anglo-French) Air Defence Group created
1995	As treaty reform is mooted, John Major under pressure from Eurosceptics colleagues resigns to fight leadership and is re-elected
1996	Continued blocking of UK beef exports to rest of EU after asserted link of BSE to a human variant, leading to a UK policy of 'non-cooperation' in Council on all issues subject to unanimity rule, eventually resolved at Florence European Council
12 Nov 1996	ECJ judgement that the Working Time Directive was correctly based on health and safety provisions and hence applies to UK
1997-2007	Julian Priestley as Secretary General of the European Parliament
May 1997	Election of Labour Government with Tony Blair as Prime Minister UK election (Lab 419; Con 165; Lib Dem 46; others 29; Referendum Party 3% of vote)
May 1997	Treaty of Amsterdam: incoming UK government reverses social protocol; extension of justice and home affairs and incorporation of Schengen Agreements, with opt-out provision for UK and Ireland allowing later opt-in subject to unanimity of other member states; 'flexibility' provisions included to enable certain decisions by reduced number of member states faced with reluctance of others. Comes into force October 1997

17 Jul 1997	Gordon Brown announces 5 economic tests for UK membership of EMU
Jan-Jun 1988	5th British presidency of EU Council
1998-9	Kosovo intervention by Nato including UK and various other European countries
1998	UK signs up for positive EU agenda on environmental issues and plays active part in Kyoto Convention discussions
Jan-Jun 1998	5th UK Presidency of Council and in this period Labour Government of Tony Blair pursues strategic review of UK European policy, including strengthening of bilateral relations with other member states and of foreign and security policy
4 Dec 1998	St Malo agreement between UK and France to press forward with European defence cooperation
1998-99	Agenda 2000 EU negotiations linking budget and enlargement reach agreement at Berlin European Council in March 1999, again retaining UK rebate, and showing emergence of 'net contributors' club' of member states
1999	Softening of UK position on JHA and Schengen, but continued arguments over EMU with hardening of organised opposition partly via 'Business for Sterling' and creation of 'Britain in Europe' as cross-party pro-EMU platform
Mar 1999	Resignation of Santer Commission in response to claims of wasteful expenditure and fraud
Jun 1999	EP elections: turnout 23%; Conservatives 36 MEPs; Labour 29; Liberal Democrats 10; UKIP 3; SNP 2; Plaid Cymru 2; Greens 2; NI parties 3. NB first significant results by UKIP. First EP elections in UK under proportional representation system
1999-2004	Neil Kinnock continues as Commissioner and joined by Chris Patten
Oct 1999	George Robertson becomes Secretary General of Nato: period of closer cooperation between Nato and EU
Dec 1999	Helsinki European Council further endorses enlargement and sets headline goal of developing European Rapid Reaction Force
Mar 2000	European Council adopts Lisbon Strategy (for economic growth) with keen UK support
6 Oct 2000	Tony Blair's speech in Warsaw calling for stronger Europe as 'union of states' able to play more effective role in the world and strong transatlantic relationship (one of a series of strongly pro-European speeches)
7 Dec 2000	EU institutions 'proclaim' Charter of Fundamental Rights, drafted by a European 'Convention', a procedural innovation. UK has reservations about giving it legal status, though this was accorded under the Treaty of Lisbon

Feb 2001	Treaty of Nice agrees limited institutional adaptations for further enlargement, especially voting rules in Council and proposal to reduce number of Commissioners. Irish referendum in June 2001 rejected the Treaty, but a second referendum in Oct 2002 was positive. Treaty comes into force on 1 Feb 2003
Jun 2001	Re-election of Labour Government with Tony Blair as Prime Minister
Dec 2001	European Convention established, with membership from across EU institutions as well as member governments and national parliaments, and produced in July 2003 a draft Constitution for Europe, with wide-ranging proposals for institutional and legal changes. Text finalised in June 2004.
Oct 2001-	Nato-led intervention in Afghanistan with contributions from every EU member state except Cyprus and Malta as well as other European countries
1 Jan 2002	Eurozone comes into existence as euro replaces currencies of participating countries
Mar 2003-	Intervention in Iraq, led by US and UK with support from many other European countries, but strong opposition from France and Germany
2004 and 2007	Eastern enlargement of EU with strong UK support
20 Apr 2004	Tony Blair commits to a UK referendum to ratify the Constitution for Europe.
Jun 2004	EP elections: turnout 37.6%; Conservatives 27 MEPs; Labour 19; UKIP 12; Liberal Democrats 12; Greens 2; SNP 2; one each DUP, Sinn Féin (replacing SDLP), OUU
Jun 2004	Tony Blair successfully proposes Jose-Manuel Barroso as President of Commission against Franco-German preference for Guy Verhofstadt
2004-2009	Under revised rules Peter Mandelson is the single Commissioner from UK, serving until Oct 2008, when replaced by Catherine Ashton
May 2005	Re-election of Labour Government with Tony Blair as Prime Minister
May-Jun 2005	French and Dutch referendums reject Constitution for Europe
23 Jun 2005	Tony Blair's speech to European Parliament calling for a renewal of EU policies to meet new circumstances, including importance of economic growth agenda and enhanced defence capability
Jul-Dec 2005	6th British Presidency of EU Council
Dec 2005	European Council agrees Financial Perspective 2007-11 budget deal, retaining UK rebate
Jun 2007	European Council abandons Constitution for Europe and proceeds instead by IGC to negotiate more limited treaty amendments

Dec 2007	Treaty of Lisbon signed focusing on institutional adaptations, including: incorporation of Charter of Fundamental Rights; more powers for European Parliament; some powers for national parliaments to show an orange light to Commission proposals; appointment of a full-time President of the European Council; expanded role for the High Representative of the Union for foreign and security policy (based also in Commission and with creation of European External Action Service); and jurisdiction given to European Court of Justice after 5 years' transition over justice and home affairs issues, on which UK has to decide whether or not to opt-in or to opt-out completely, with residual option to opt-in on individual measures.
12 Jun 2008	Irish referendum rejects Treaty of Lisbon
Jul 2008	UK parliament ratifies Treaty of Lisbon after failed legal challenge to demand a referendum. David Cameron and Conservative Party favoured a referendum on Lisbon, though in 2009 stated that only practicable if ratification process by other member states incomplete
Autumn 2008-	Banking and then eurozone crises
Dec 2008-	EU Operation Atalanta by EU Navfor, with operational HQ at Northwood, UK and a British commander and cooperation with naval forces from some non-EU countries
Jun 2009	EP elections: turnout 34%; Conservatives 25 MEPS; UKIP 13 (second place in terms of votes); Labour 13; Liberal Democrats 11; Greens 2; BNP 2; SNP 2; one each DUP, SDLP, OUU; Conservative MEPs withdraw from European Peoples' Party to found European Conservatives and Reformists
2009-	Catherine Ashton as Commissioner from UK becomes High Representative for foreign and security policy. British MEPS, Sharon Bowles and Malcolm Harbour, chair key EP committees on economic and single market issues
2 Oct 2009	Second Irish referendum accepts Treaty of Lisbon
1 Dec 2009	Treaty of Lisbon comes into force, but nb constitutional court challenges in the Czech Republic and Germany
May 2010	UK election produces hung parliament after which the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition was formed, including commitment on Europe to play 'leading role', but no further transfer of powers without referendum, amendment of European Communities Act, review of balance of competences, and stay outside Euro
Nov 2010	Lancaster House Treaties between UK and France on security and defence
Mar 2011	Intervention in Libya, with key roles of France and UK and involvement of several other European countries

- Jul 2011 European Union Act passed by UK parliament which: requires referenda to endorse significant amendments of EU treaties; requires primary legislation to implement certain EU provisions, especially those involving the passerelle procedure; and restates UK parliamentary sovereignty
- Dec 2011 European Council to discuss eurozone crisis resolution at which David Cameron blocks proposal to resolve through new arrangements under EU treaties
- Jul 2012 Government announcement of the Review of the Balance of Competences, to assess the impact on the UK of EU policy powers across the range of government responsibilities, and to be completed in autumn 2014

THE NARRATIVE

An overview

The relationship between the UK and the European integration process is complex. The European Community (EC), later European Union (EU)¹, emerged as a continental project which has developed into a process of deeper and deeper integration across the years. Successive British governments, backed by British public opinion, have generally supported a shallower version of economic and political integration. However, in several areas the UK has been among the leading proponents of more far-reaching collective action by the EU. British policy has strongly favoured greater trade liberalisation both within Europe and internationally. The UK has repeatedly supported the enlargement of the EU to enable other European countries to benefit from EU policies and to stabilise the security of the continent. Over the past decade the UK has been among the firmest proponents of measures to protect the environment and to combat climate change. The UK has consistently led the way in pressing Europeans to take more seriously their foreign and defence policy responsibilities. New integration initiatives however have generally come from others, leaving the UK to engage reactively rather than proactively. The UK chose not to join the eurozone or to enter the Schengen Agreements. There has been repeated British criticism of some EU policies, such as those for agriculture, fisheries and employment measures, as well as the budgetary arrangements. Overall the UK has found it difficult to settle into a steady pattern of engagement within the EU.

A liberal economy

The extent of British economic interdependence with other European countries became pronounced from the mid-1950s onwards as the patterns of international trade evolved. Broadly the trend has been for some 50% or so of British exports and imports to be traded with other EU countries, with some variations year on year, including the effects of exchange rates and of economic circumstances in both EU and non-EU countries. British policy has promoted free trade and open markets in Europe and in the broader international economy. The UK has firmly supported trade liberalisation within the GATT and the WTO and the role of the EU in pressing for this. Trade Commissioners from the UK, notably Leon Brittan and Peter Mandelson, played important parts in this process.

British policy-makers and industrialists were among the first to press for the deepening of free trade within the EU and in particular for the creation of the Single European Market (SEM) by 1992. Lord Cockfield designed in detail and piloted the 1992 project for the Delors Commission in 1985-88. The Kangaroo Group in the European Parliament, led by Basil de Ferranti MEP, gave keen support. British expertise and experience played an

enormously important part in underpinning this process, with Mrs Thatcher as Prime Minister an influential advocate. During the 1990s proactive British policy served to ensure that the SEM would include the countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) through the European Economic Area (EEA) and that the emerging democracies of central and eastern Europe could achieve full integration within the SEM. Leon Brittan, as the responsible Commissioner from the UK, played a central role in operating the complementary rules of competition which aim to ensure a level-playing field in the SEM. The SEM has generated well-evidenced benefits for the EU and for the economic interests of the UK. The SEM remains incomplete, as new issues arise and new service and industrial sectors emerge. British policy remains firmly committed to strengthening the SEM.

Successive British governments have supported collective EU efforts to promote growth-inducing initiatives, including the shift of EU expenditure to areas such as the research and development programmes. However, a defining feature of UK economic policy during the 1980s was the move to make the labour market much more flexible. This put the UK at odds with plans within the EU to develop a version of 'social Europe' that involved more extensive regulation of labour markets. Hence the Conservative Government voted against a series of measures such as the Working Time Directive (first version 1993), from which it secured a partial opt-out, and also insisted on the Social Protocol of the Treaty of Maastricht to exempt the UK from plans to reinforce the social dimension. In 1997 the incoming Labour Government reversed the Social Protocol in order to opt in to the Employment Chapter. The issue of EU employment legislation remains, however, among the most contentious for the UK and is at the top of the Conservative Party's targets for repatriation.

The creation of an economic and monetary union (EMU) proved a step too far for the British. Proposals for EMU had been discussed since the Werner Report of 1970. Roy Jenkins, as President of the European Commission, helped drive the project forward, through his Florence speech of 1979. The UK had, however, declined to join the exchange-rate-mechanism in March 1979 and did not join until October 1990, only to withdraw under severe currency market pressures in September 1992. In the negotiation of the Treaty of Maastricht (1991/2) the UK government secured an opt-out from the EMU provisions and the creation of the eurozone. Some British objections consisted of root-and-branch opposition to the proposal – this included a significant section of opinion within the Conservative Party. For others, notably in the Labour Party, the issue was the divergence between the UK and the continental business cycles, which led Gordon Brown to set out five economic tests to be met for the UK to enter the eurozone. In the 1997 election Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat manifestoes promised a referendum to approve any recommendation for EMU membership. Since then no UK government has wished to recommend this, and the eurozone crisis has made any such move even more improbable.

The budgetary issues

By the time of UK accession in 1973 the basic arrangements for the EU budget were in place, with spending overwhelmingly concentrated on agricultural price support and a revenue system of 'own resources', the net effect of which was that the UK was from the outset destined to be a net contributor. Transitional measures to soften the impact were agreed but wound down during the 1970s. The renegotiation exercise of 1974/5 produced palliative measures which failed to correct the underlying problem. The outgoing Labour Government and the incoming Conservative Government in 1979 made it crystal clear that UK would seek a more durable solution. There followed a period of acrimonious negotiations, resolved at the Fontainebleau European Council of 1984, which established a durable UK abatement mechanism (the rebate) to reduce significantly the UK net contribution.

The UK has supported efforts to change the focus of EU spending programmes. In 1975 George Thomson, as Commissioner, piloted the Regional Development Fund, to stand alongside the Social Fund, which evolved into a package of structural and cohesion funds, destined for the less affluent regions of mainly less affluent member states. The UK has advocated reforms to the common agricultural policy, which now takes a much lower proportion of the EU budget. The UK has supported programmes to reinforce the EU's responsibilities for external action, including vis-à-vis its neighbourhood. Enlarged EU membership and shifts in revenue and expenditure have altered the pattern of the EU budget's distribution among countries. The UK remains a net contributor, with the continuing rebate alleviating the burden; other net contributor countries have become more active in seeking to moderate expenditure; and the number of poorer member states, the 'cohesion' countries, has increased.

In the 1980s the EU moved from a process of annual budgetary wrangles to periodic negotiations over a multi-annual financial framework, agreed by unanimity among the member states. At each such negotiation UK governments have tenaciously defended the rebate against critics who have sought to remove or to dilute it, but latterly with allies among the other net contributor countries. UK policy has sought continued changes to the pattern of expenditure within a constrained overall settlement. This approach carries strong support from across the political spectrum within the UK, where the debate is not about whether the UK should take a tough stance, but rather on how tough that stance should be.

Europe and its neighbourhood

UK policy has consistently recognised that enlargement of EU membership is the keystone of EU policy towards its neighbouring countries, in the 1970s and 1980s as southern European countries escaped from dictatorship and from 1989 onwards as the Soviet imperium crumbled. UK governments have been at the forefront of the EU debate in arguing the case for full membership of candidates, subject to sensible conditionality. Commissioners from the UK, notably Leon Brittan, helped to steer this forward with the proposals adopted at the Copenhagen European Council of 1996 which led to the 2004 enlargement in the teeth of French opposition. UK policy has also favoured maintaining membership as a realistic prospect for Turkey.

The UK, like other member states, was tested by the outbreak of the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s. The EU as a whole was slow to agree on a collective approach. The eventual military intervention in 1995 was through the Nato framework, with UK forces actively engaged and the UK government much involved in the Dayton Agreement. Thereafter UK gave active support to the subsequent EU contribution to peace-making and peace-keeping. Paddy Ashdown served as the EU High Representative for Bosnia Herzegovina from 2002-2006. In response to the Kosovo War, Tony Blair was a leading proponent of the 'humanitarian intervention' which took place in 1999, again coordinated by Nato. Subsequently the UK within the EU has supported the process of stabilisation and the prospect of EU membership for the countries of the Western Balkans, as and when the necessary conditions can be met.

As regards the Mediterranean neighbourhood, historically the UK has been concerned rather with the Middle East than with North Africa. During the 'Arab Spring' in 2011, the UK became actively engaged. In the absence of a wider EU approach, notably as regards Libya, the British and the French played leading parts in the intervention by a 'coalition of the willing' to prevent the crushing of the anti-Gaddafi movement.

As regards JHA, despite remaining outside the Schengen Area, the UK has engaged with EU efforts to combat cross-border crime, terrorism and so forth, with active involvement in Eurojust (recent President Aled Williams from the UK) and Europol (current Director

Rob Wainwright from the UK). Under the Treaty of Lisbon the UK has to decide by 31 May 2014 whether to opt-in or to opt-out of provisions relating to police and criminal justice measures, in the latter case with the possibility of opting-in to individual measures. This question has become controversial, with the current coalition partners not yet agreed on how to proceed.

Wider international issues

The UK from the late 1970s actively promoted moves to develop European Political Cooperation, drafting the London Declaration of 1981, agreed during the UK presidency of the EU Council. UK governments have supported subsequent efforts to reinforce the Common Foreign and Security Policy. This chimes with the persistently active involvement of the UK in international action from the soft power end of the spectrum to the hard power end. As Commissioner Chris Patten improved the working relationship between the EU and Nato, as well as generally seeking more effective EU external action. UK governments have lent support to a series of EU coordinated actions to deal with security issues in Africa, currently including the Atalanta anti-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia which is coordinated from the UK military headquarters at Northwood. Catherine Ashton has continued to develop this role as High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The British have been more circumspect about the role of the EU in the defence field. The questions for the British have repeatedly been: when and whether the EU as a whole would prove capable of action; what should be the division of labour between the EU and Nato; and when action would depend on a coalition of the willing, often involving the US. On the one hand, British governments have made efforts to develop European defence cooperation, as even Mrs Thatcher was prepared to entertain in the late 1980s (see her 1988 Bruges speech). More substantively Tony Blair worked to achieve the British-French St Malo Agreement of December 1998 to strengthen bilateral cooperation and to press for wider European cooperation on defence. This British-French approach was echoed in November 2010 in the Lancaster House Treaties committing to practical measures to strengthen military interoperability. On the other hand, there has been repeated British frustration as to the limits of collective European action and an enduring preference for working whenever possible through Nato. In the First Gulf War, in the Afghanistan intervention, and most contentiously in the military intervention in Iraq, UK governments were proactive in the operations, in all cases working closely with the US. In all of these operations a number of other European countries were involved in 'coalitions of the willing'.

As regards EU action to combat climate change and to address the wider international agenda on environmental issues the British position shifted in the 1990s from a rather lukewarm stance to a one of firm engagement. The UK government played a leading role within the EU caucus in the negotiations leading to the Kyoto Protocol of November 1997. Subsequent meetings have been slow to produce results. The UK remains committed to working with EU partners to make progress.

The politics of EU institutions and treaty reform

Over the years successive inter-governmental conferences (IGCs) have negotiated changes to the treaties. Recurrent issues for the UK have included: efforts to avoid competence creep of additional powers for the EU, including extended jurisprudence for the Court of Justice; the retention of unanimity voting in the Council in sensitive areas of policy; and protection of distinctive British interests, sometimes by opt-out arrangements.

In 1985 Mrs Thatcher was persuaded that treaty reform was necessary to drive the SEM forwards and the UK (both government and parliament) was a willing party to the Single European Act. Subsequent IGCs have been trickier for the British. In the 1991/2 IGC leading to the Treaty of Maastricht the UK government focused on the EMU proposals, contributing to the substantive discussion, while intent on securing a UK opt-out. The UK insisted on a Social Protocol to avoid the application of new social (essentially employment) measures. The ratification process in the UK was deeply contentious and generated a wave of calls for a referendum, spurred partly by the first negative Danish referendum on the Treaty. The IGC of 1996/7 leading to the Treaty of Amsterdam found the British Conservative Government intent on limiting its scope and insistent on an opt-out from the incorporation of the Schengen Agreements into EU law. The incoming Labour Government in 1997 held to the Schengen opt-out, but agreed to the broader development of EU activity in justice and home affairs (JHA), and to reverse the Maastricht Social Protocol. Ratification in the UK went smoothly. The IGC leading to the Nice Treaty, convened to deal with institutional issues to facilitate eastwards enlargement, was not controversial for the UK.

Subsequent proposals for further treaty reform became deeply controversial for the UK. The EU summoned in 2001 a Convention (with Lord (John) Kerr as its Secretary General) to meet in public, with participants from beyond the usual IGC format. The ensuing 'Constitutional Treaty' proposed far-reaching changes to the operating system and treaty structure of the EU, which provoked increasing clamours in the UK for a referendum. The ratification process was halted after negative referenda votes in 2005 in France and The Netherlands, before the UK had completed its parliamentary ratification process. A conventional IGC then negotiated what became the more modest Treaty of Lisbon. Difficult issues for the British included: the incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights into EU law, the provisions for opting-into/-out of JHA measures, and some procedural questions re the use of the passerelle clauses to enable certain steps to be taken by majority vote in the Council without the need for further treaty amendments. Ratification proved contentious in the UK, partly because the Conservative opposition disliked much of the content and partly because of the increasing demands for a referendum for its ratification.

The current coalition Government passed in July 2010 the European Union Act, which requires a referendum to ratify any future treaty reform involving a transfer of powers from the UK to the EU. In December 2011 the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, blocked the plan for EU treaty reform to anchor the fiscal compact for the eurozone, leaving all other member states (except the Czech Republic) to proceed instead by an inter-governmental treaty. More broadly there has been growing support for the calling of a referendum in one of two scenarios:

- i. a UK negotiation with other member states to alter the terms of UK membership, with options mooted, such as the Norwegian or Swiss forms of association, with a menu of repatriated powers, the plausibility of which remains to be tested; and
- ii. A decision on EU membership as such in the hope of settling the controversy within the UK.

British domestic politics and public opinion

Across the years of pre-accession, accession and post-accession the European issue has been contentious in British domestic politics among and often within parties. Contention has increased with: the emergence on the scene of the hard Eurosceptical United Kingdom Independence Party, which has made inroads into especially the otherwise Conservative-voting electorate; the continuing steps being taken by other EU countries

to support deeper integration against the widespread British preference for shallower integration; and the increasingly loud calls for resorting to referenda to resolve EU controversies. The UK now has a multi-party system in which the EU issue has become an important element in political competition. The prospect of an independence referendum in Scotland is an additional complication.

British public opinion reflects and conditions these controversies. As the Tables below show, British public opinion exhibits a three-way split on EU membership and on whether EU membership benefits the UK. At one end of the spectrum is a core constituency of support for the EU; at the other end of the spectrum is a core 'hard' Eurosceptical segment; in between lies a more volatile constituency which has over the years shifted back and forth between the two ends of the spectrum. This last has sometimes shifted towards a more pro-European position, as in the 1975 referendum on the terms of renegotiation; latterly more of this constituency has moved to a 'soft' Eurosceptical position. These developments beg the question as to whether it is the stances of the political parties which frame and drive public opinion or the constraints of public opinion that box the parties into their defensive positions on EU policies.

Table 1: UK Public Opinion on the European Union

Question: "Generally speaking, do you think that UK membership of the European Community (Common Market) is ...?" 1973-2010

Date	A good thing	A bad thing	Neither good or bad	Don't know
Sep-73	31%	34%	22%	13%
May-75	47%	21%	19%	13%
Apr-80	23%	49%	22%	6%
Apr-84	25%	48%	20%	7%
Apr-85	37%	30%	28%	5%
Apr-90	52%	19%	24%	5%
May-95	44%	20%	31%	5%
Jun-00	25%	24%	29%	22%
Jun-05	36%	27%	28%	9%
Jun-10	29%	33%	31%	7%

Source: *Eurobarometer*, used because it asked this same question from 1973-2011.

Table 2: UK Public Opinion in April 2012

Question: "Which of these statements do you agree with most, even if you don't agree with any entirely?"

Britain would be better off leaving the EU	33%
Britain would be better off staying in the EU but only as a member of a free trade area	36%
Britain would be better off staying in the EU as it is currently but not taking part in any further integration, even if other countries did	18%
Britain would be better off staying in the EU and playing a full role in any further integration	14%
NET: Staying in under varied scenarios	67%

Source: *Populus* for Policy Network

In conclusion

It is hard to draw up the balance sheet of the UK's forty years of EU membership. The British have been active proponents and beneficiaries of some EU policies and programmes but have consistently had reservations, sometimes major, about others. The tendency towards British exceptionalism has become more pronounced across the years and the patterns of partnership and alliance with other EU countries have fluctuated, not least as regards the key relationships with France and Germany, which have not delivered of the trilateral EU leadership of which there had been some hopes. When and how these controversies will be resolved is a matter of fierce current debate.

* * *

¹ The term EU is used generally in this text and encompasses the three founding European Communities.

Journal of Contemporary European Research

Volume 8, Issue 4 (2012)

Scotland: 40 Years of EU Membership

Jo Shaw *University of Edinburgh*

This chronology was commissioned by the *European Parliament Information Office in the United Kingdom* and has been published here with their kind permission and that of the author.

Professor Jo Shaw is Salvesen Chair of European Institutions and Dean of Research of the College of Humanities and Social Science, Edinburgh Law School, University of Edinburgh.

Citation

Shaw, J. (2012). 'Scotland: 40 Years of EU Membership', *Journal of Contemporary European Research*. 8 (4), pp. 547-554.

Published in: www.jcer.net

KEY DATES

This chronology picks out the most significant UK and EU events, noting where possible how these affect Scotland in specific ways. It also identifies some Scotland specific events.

- 1967 Establishment by JDB Mitchell (first Salvesen Chair of European Institutions) of the Centre for European Governmental Studies in the Law Faculty of the University of Edinburgh, on of the first centres for the study of European integration institutions in the UK (now Edinburgh Europa Institute)
- 1972 European Communities Act adopted
- 1973 UK joins the European Communities
- 1973 George Thomson appointed as one of the UK's first two European Commissioners
- 1973 Lord (Jack) Mackenzie Stuart becomes UK judge in the Court of Justice (President of the Court 1984-1988) (retired 1988)
- 1974 UK General Election leads to election of Labour Government committed to holding a referendum of UK membership of European Communities
- 1975 European Commission office in Scotland established
- 1975 UK referendum on European Community membership; Scotland votes in favour of retaining membership by 58.4% to 41.6%, although this majority is lower than elsewhere in UK. Shetland and Western Isles vote against.
- 1979 First direct elections to the European Parliament; 8 MEPs elected by first past the post election from constituencies in Scotland (5 CON, 2 LAB, 1 SNP) (constituencies). Election of Winnie Ewing as SNP MEP played significant role in changing attitudes in the SNP towards the European Communities
- 1979 UK General Election leads to election of Conservative Government, adopting noticeably more skeptical policies towards certain aspects of European integration (although SEA and Treaty of Maastricht are signed) (re-elected in 1983, 1987 and 1992)
- 1984 Second direct elections to the European Parliament; 8 MEPs elected by first past the post election from constituencies in Scotland (5 LAB, 2 CON, 1 SNP) (constituencies). David Martin LAB MEP first elected (Scotland's longest serving MEP)
- 1986 Single European Act comes into force giving significant new powers to the European Parliament

- 1988 Bruce Millan is appointed as one of the UK's two European Commissioners under Jacques Delors. Significantly, Millan held the portfolio for regional policy and cohesion
- 1988 Significant reforms of the Structural Funds lead to new principles of regional policy creating a direct link between Scottish partners and the European Commission. New programmatic approach adopted, along with a significant increase in funding, and real impetus given to the slogan 'Europe of Regions'
- 1988 SNP adopts 'Independence in Europe' policy, highlighting most significant political shift on European integration by a political party in Scotland, building on strand of thinking pioneered by Jim Sillars – by then Deputy Leader of the SNP – when a member of the shortlived Scottish Labour Party, before joining the SNP
- 1988 Establishment of a Scottish Constitutional Convention, bringing together all the mainstream parties apart from the Conservative Party, and many large and small organisations within civil society including the churches established the momentum which led to the successful devolution campaign in 1997. SNP participated initially, but then withdrew
- 1989 Sir David Edward becomes first UK judge in the newly established Court of First Instance, becoming in 1992 the successor to Sir Gordon Slynn as UK judge at the Court of Justice (retired 2004)
- 1989 Third direct elections to the European Parliament; 8 MEPs elected by first past the post election from constituencies in Scotland (6 LAB, 1 CON, 1 SNP) (constituencies)
- 1992 Establishment of Scotland Europa – now part of Scottish Enterprise to lobby for Scottish issues
- 1992 Edinburgh Summit (European Council meeting) during UK Presidency significant for the concessions made to enable Denmark to hold second referendum on Treaty of Maastricht, and also for putting Edinburgh on the European map
- 1993 Treaty of Maastricht comes into force – without UK participation in 'social chapter' and with arrangements for opt out from monetary union, and creating the Committee of the Regions, with members representing Scotland
- 1994 Fourth direct elections to the European Parliament; 8 MEPs elected by first past the post election from constituencies in Scotland (6 LAB, 2 SNP) (constituencies)
- 1997 UK General Election leads to election of a Labour Government committed to introducing the Maastricht 'social chapter', and also to holding referendums on devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (re-elected in 2001 and 2005)

- 1997 Referendum on devolution votes overwhelmingly in favour (74.3% in favour of a Scottish Parliament, with a significant majority also in favour of it being given tax raising powers (63.5%))
- 1998 Scotland Act 1998 – Scottish Parliament precluded from legislating in a manner which is incompatible with EU law and reserving international relations, including EU matters to the Westminster Government
- 1999 First Scottish Parliament elections leads to LAB-LD coalition Scottish Executive
- 1999 Scottish Executive opens first representative office in Brussels – now Scottish Government European Union Office (SGEUO)
- 1999 Memorandum of Understanding and related overarching Concordat on the Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (updated most recently 2010) between Westminster Government and the devolved administrations, including attendance of Scottish Ministers at meetings in the Council of Ministers (and COREPER)
- 1999 Fifth direct elections to the European Parliament; 8 MEPs elected using the d'Hondt method of party-list proportional representation from Scotland (3 LAB, 2 SNP, 2 CON, 1 LD). MEPs include Neil MacCormick
- 1999 European Parliament Information Office in Edinburgh opened
- 1999 Treaty of Amsterdam comes into force – with UK participation in 'social chapter', but with UK opt out from Schengen related matters
- 2001 Establishment REGLEG – the network of regions of European Union Member States with legislative power, of which Scotland is a member
- 2002-2003 Neil MacCormick appointed substitute member of the Convention on the Future of Europe where he pushes for a significant boost to the principle of subsidiarity to recognize its importance for regions, and for places such as Scotland
- 2003 Treaty of Nice comes into force
- 2003 Second Scottish Parliament elections also leads to LAB-LD coalition Scottish Executive
- 2004 Constitutional Treaty (based primarily on work of Convention on Future of Europe) approved by Member States for ratification, containing significant recognition of diversity of governance arrangements *within* Member States and recognizing these as an element of national identity; not ratified but same provision reappears in Treaty of Lisbon

- 2004 Sixth direct elections to the European Parliament; 8 MEPs elected using the d'Hondt method of party-list proportional representation from Scotland (3 LAB, 2 SNP, 2 CON, 1 LD)
- 2007 Third Scottish Parliament election leads to a minority SNP Scottish Government
- 2009 Treaty of Lisbon comes into force, giving legal force to Charter of Fundamental Rights, and establishing Treaty on European Union and Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and also introducing various powers for national parliaments in relation to the implementation of the subsidiarity principle which are significant also for subnational parliaments
- 2009 Seventh direct elections to the European Parliament; 6 MEPs elected using the d'Hondt method of party-list proportional representation from Scotland (2 LAB, 2 SNP, 1 CON, 1 LD)
- 2010 UK General Election leads to a Con-LD coalition
- 2010 Scottish Parliament European and External Relations Committee report on the implications of the Treaty of Lisbon for Scotland notes the need (and opportunity) for enhanced engagement with EU law and policy-making after Lisbon
- 2011 Fourth Scottish Parliament election leads to an SNP Scottish Government with an absolute majority of MSPs and committed to holding a referendum on Scottish independence before the end of its term
- 2012 Agreement between the United Kingdom Government and the Scottish Government on a referendum on independence for Scotland (Edinburgh Agreement), paving the way for enabling legislation in the Westminster Parliament and the Scottish Parliament
- 2012 Scotland Act 2012 giving significantly enhanced tax variation powers to the Scottish Parliament

THE NARRATIVE

Scotland is, of course, part of the EU because it is part of the United Kingdom, which has been a Member State of the EU for 40 years on 1 January 2013. On the other hand, given that there have been – throughout the UK's membership of what was then the European Communities and is now the European Union – debates about 'home rule', devolution and now independence for Scotland, these offer a significant gloss upon the meaning of EU membership for Scotland. The 'idea of Europe' and lately the notion of 'independence in Europe' has been an important trope within Scottish nationalist politics for many decades. Hence, many of the significant moments of Scottish constitutional politics since the UK's accession to the EU also have resonance for a chronology of Scotland in the EU.

While 'Europe' was not a significant factor in the first devolution referendum in 1979, when Scots voted by a majority for devolution, but did not surpass the 40% population threshold set by the Westminster legislation (and thus this referendum is not included in the timeline), by 1997 when the second referendum was held, the landscape had shifted to a very substantial degree. The footprint of European integration was to be found by then all over Scotland, and not just in the traditional policy areas of agriculture and fisheries that had generated a previous hostility to European integration, which saw Scotland vote in the 1975 membership referendum by a lower majority to remain in the Communities.

The changes which mattered most stemmed not just from the evolving character of the European integration project after the amending treaties of the Single European Act, the Treaty of Maastricht and the Treaty of Amsterdam (agreed during the first weeks of the new Labour Government elected in May 1997 which also put in train the wheels of devolution) and subsequent to a significant increase in focus on regional and structural policy in partnership with the regions after 1988, but also related to alterations in the landscape of Scottish politics.

As a result of hostility to Thatcherism in Scotland during the 1980s, the electoral representation of the Conservative party had declined dramatically, and while electoral politics was largely dominated by the Labour Party which was itself moving gradually towards greater acceptance of European integration because it saw this as a vehicle for social democratic politics, from 1979 onwards the Scottish National Party was represented in the European Parliament. This representative opportunity, held initially by Winnie Ewing MEP, opened the eyes of a hitherto Eurosceptic party which had campaigned for a no vote in the UK referendum on membership in 1975 to two key factors: first, the possibility of being an effective small polity within the broad protective umbrella of European integration, which would give access to markets but also a voice in international negotiations, e.g. on trade matters (a view also championed by Jim Sillars, the pioneer of 'Independence in Europe'), and second, the opportunities offered by regional and structural policies for direct partnerships between Scottish bodies and the European Commission, in the period of structural funds growth before the accession of the post-1989 Member States in 2004 resulted in a decisive shift eastwards of the focus of those policies.

Meanwhile, the idea of a Europe of the Regions, the establishment of the Committee of the Regions after the Treaty of Maastricht, and the setting up of the so-called REGLEG network for regions with legislative powers within the EU have all provided opportunities for voice for Scotland and Scottish institutions within the framework of European integration. From 1992, Scotland had a presence in Brussels in the form of Scotland Europa. And in the midst of the crisis over the first Danish 'no' to the Treaty of Maastricht, a crucial European summit was held in Edinburgh which helped to resolve some of the most intractable tensions to ease the way towards a second Danish referendum, and which had the side effect of putting Edinburgh at that point firmly on the 'European map.' By that stage, meanwhile, a more or less unstoppable momentum towards a greater degree of governmental autonomy was building, most evidently in the form of the Scottish Constitutional Convention established in 1988 and bringing together most significant forces within civic and political Scotland including, for a time, the SNP, except the Conservative Party.

The devolution settlement after the overwhelming 'yes' vote in the referendum in 1997, which resulted in the Scotland Act 1998, the reconvening of a Scottish Parliament in 1999 for the first time in almost 300 years and the creation of a Scottish Executive of Ministers (now largely designated the 'Scottish Government', with significant practical responsibilities in relation to the implementation of all types of matters falling within the competences of the EU, required a sophisticated power-sharing and intergovernmental communications structure to be established. Thus by 1999, not only were Scottish governmental institutions established, but also the European Parliament had joined the

European Commission (since 1975) in opening an (Information) Office in Scotland. This also reinforced a stronger sense – buttressed also by the introduction of the d'Hondt method of election based on party lists which created a single constituency for EP elections in Scotland – of a 'Team Scotland', interfacing between Scottish representatives in Brussels and European institutions with offices in Scotland.

The Scotland Act itself provides that international and European relations are a reserved matter. The Scottish Parliament is also explicitly prohibited from legislating in a manner that is incompatible with EU law. Thus from the perspective of the EU institutions and the other Member States, they are only dealing with the UK as a Member State, including in matters related to the responsibility for breach of EU obligations. However, in practice many areas of highly active EU policy-making, including a number that have become more significant in recent years such as criminal justice and environmental policy, fall within the law-making powers conferred upon the Scottish Parliament. A Memorandum of Understanding and associated Concordats between the UK government and the government of the devolved parts of the UK establish the practical arrangements which deal with the inevitable complexities and frequent tensions that are going to arise in such circumstances, such as granting Scottish Ministers representation at Council and COREPER level in areas such as agriculture and fisheries, while ensuring that a 'UK line' is adopted, and allowing flexibility in implementation in relation to sensitive matters such as criminal justice which are not only devolved matters under the Scotland Act, but – more significantly from a historical perspective – were always preserved as distinctive Scottish matters under the Act of Union. The Scottish Government now maintains a substantial presence in Brussels as part of the 'UKRep family'.

European Union policy is an inevitable source of friction between the UK and Scottish governments, with both Scottish Ministers and the Scottish Parliament puzzling over the most effective ways to ensure sufficiently early engagement with policy priorities of the Commission in order to be able to make a difference to the types of proposals made as well as how to work with the UK government. For the first time after the Treaty of Lisbon, the European and External Relations Committee of the Scottish Parliament compiled, after hearing extensive evidence, a substantial report on the impact of the treaty on Scotland, marking a new level of sophistication in its engagement with European affairs. Alongside a continuing interest in the future of the Structural Funds, the current preoccupations of the Committee have also turned to other opportunities which arise to promote both science and economic development in Scotland, such as Horizon2020.

Scotland's distinctiveness in European affairs has also been maintained by a succession of major public figures who have contributed to European debates. Two of the UK's most distinguished judges – including the only UK judge thus far to hold the office of President of the European Court of Justice – have hailed from a background of Scots law: Lord (Jack) Mackenzie Stuart and Sir David Edward. Both have been associated in different ways with one of the first centres for the study of European affairs to be established in the UK (and the first with a specific legal focus) by the pioneering legal scholar Professor JDB Mitchell. This is now the Edinburgh Europa Institute. Similarly, a powerful contribution to the work of the Convention on the Future of Europe – belying his status as a mere 'substitute' member – was made by Sir Neil MacCormick, SNP MEP from 1999-2004 and legal scholar and philosopher. He pushed for a stronger sense of subsidiarity to be embedded in the European treaties, and in some respects his vision for better recognition of intra-state diversity is recognized in the text of the Treaty of Lisbon. Meanwhile, Scotland has supplied three of the UK's eleven Permanent Representatives since 1973 (Sir Donald Maitland, Sir John Kerr and Sir John Grant), and Kerr was also Secretary General of the Convention on the Future of Europe. Two Commissioners have hailed from Scotland – George Thomson and Bruce Millan.

It is hard to gauge public opinion in Scotland and to ascertain whether – on controversial issues such as the call for a further referendum on UK membership – there are

significant differences between Scotland and the rest of the UK. Polling figures – where they disaggregate Scotland – are based on very small numbers, but they appear to indicate that the Scottish public is marginally more supportive of UK membership than the UK as a whole. On the other hand, the political forces most associated with such calls for a referendum – the Conservative Party and the UK Independence Party – have little or no traction in electoral terms in Scotland. Moreover, individual elected representatives of the Conservative Party in Scotland are not amongst those prominent in calling for the UK to seek a radically looser relationship with the EU and the other Member States. And amongst those who are most publicly passionate about increased autonomy and even independence for Scotland, full participation within the European integration project continues to be one of the most important elements of their argument. Overall, therefore, it is very hard to separate out the debate about the future of Scotland within the EU – whether as part of the UK or not – from its own constitutional futures debate.

* * *

Journal of Contemporary European Research

Volume 8, Issue 4 (2012)

Wales: 40 Years of EU Membership

Richard Wyn Jones *Cardiff University*

Rebecca Rumbul *Cardiff University*

This chronology was commissioned by the *European Parliament Information Office in the United Kingdom* and has been published here with their kind permission and that of the authors.

Professor Richard Wyn Jones and Dr Rebecca Rumbul are both part of the Wales Governance Centre in the School of European Languages, Translation and Politics at Cardiff University.

Citation

Wyn Jones, R. and Rumbul, R. (2012). 'Wales: 40 Years of EU Membership', *Journal of Contemporary European Research*. 8 (4), pp. 555-562.

Published in: www.jcer.net

KEY DATES

A timeline of Wales in the EU.

1 Jan 1973	UK joins the European Economic Community
Dec 1974	The European Regional Development Fund is created
5 Jun 1975	UK votes 'Yes' in a referendum on EEC membership
1977	Roy Jenkins appointed President of the European Commission
1979	European Monetary System established
Jun 1979	First direct elections to the European Parliament. Beata Brookes, Ann Clwyd, Win Griffiths and Allan Rogers take the Welsh seats
Jun 1984	European Elections. Beata Brookes and Win Griffiths are joined by David Morriss and Llewellyn Smith
1984	Margaret Thatcher negotiates UK rebate
1984	Milk quotas are introduced in the EU as part of the CAP
1985	Jaques Delors becomes President of the EU
1986	The EU Flag is unveiled
1986	The Single European Act enters into force
1987	The Erasmus programme is launched
1988	Regional aid is doubled, and the regulations governing Structural Funds are significantly revised.
Jun 1989	European Elections. Wayne David and Joe Wilson join David Morriss and Llewellyn Smith. It is the first time Wales is without a female representative.
Oct 1990	UK enters European Exchange Rate Mechanism.
7 Feb 1992	Treaty of Maastricht is signed
16 Sep 1992	Black Wednesday UK market crash. The UK is forced to withdraw from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism
1993	The Treaty of the European Union comes into effect
1994	The Committee of the Regions is established and requests clarification on the definition of 'subsidiarity'
Jun 1994	European elections. Eluned Morgan becomes youngest ever MEP representing Mid and West Wales
26 Mar 1995	The Schengen pact enters into force
1 May 1997	Labour sweep to victory in the UK and immediately announce plans for a referendum on devolution in Scotland and Wales
18 Sep 1997	Wales votes 'Yes' by a narrow margin for devolution

13 Dec 1997	Agreement is made to open accession negotiations with 10 eastern and central European countries
31 Jul 1998	The Government of Wales Act 1998 receives Royal Assent and established the National Assembly for Wales
1998	The Jones Report urges Wales to take a proactive approach to engaging with European affairs
Mar 1999	Resignation of the European Commission. Financial regulation would now become more stringent
6 May 1999	First National Assembly for Wales elections. Labour win 28 seats and form a minority government
Jun 1999	European elections experience one of the lowest turnouts in Wales.
2000	The 2000-2006 Objective 1 programmes begin to be managed and administered in Wales for the first time.
9 Feb 2000	Alun Michael resigns as First Secretary for Wales. Poor leadership concerning the Structural Funds and negotiations with the UK Treasury over match-funding for them is a key cause.
1 Jan 2002	The Euro arrives in the 12 participating countries
1 May 2004	The EU welcomes 8 new nations. Large numbers of Polish migrants settle in Wales
Jun 2004	Turnout for European elections is 41% in Wales
Oct 2004	Wales disappears from the map of Europe on Eurostats annual publication
2005	Wales is awarded Objective 1 level funding for 2007-2013
25 Jul 2006	Government of Wales Act 2006 receives Royal Assent
1 Jan 2007	Romania and Bulgaria join the EU but the UK imposes travel restrictions until 2013
2007	Welsh Labour and Plaid Cymru make 'One Wales' agreement
13 Dec 2007	Lisbon Treaty signed strengthening principle of subsidiarity
Nov 2008	Welsh is used in the European Council of Ministers for the first time.
2009	EC & UK sign an agreement on use of the Welsh language in the EC
Mar 2010	Key elements of Europe 2020 agreed
3 Mar 2011	Wales votes 'Yes' on a referendum for full law-making powers for the National Assembly for Wales
2011	National Assembly for Wales abolishes European Affairs Committee
Mar 2012	First Minister Carwyn Jones poses the 'Bridgend question' on why UK representatives speak for Wales in Europe on devolved matters

Nov 2012 Carwyn Jones warns of the risks of a UK referendum on EU membership

Jan 2013 Wales celebrates 40 years as part of the European Community

THE NARRATIVE

Historically the Welsh believed themselves to have a special affinity with Europe. Wales, it was claimed, had retained the benefits of Roman civilization even as our less fortunate neighbours had succumbed to the ravages of the so-called 'Dark Ages'. With the country playing a full part in the worldwide British Empire this feeling of affinity may have waned. Still Europe loomed large in Welsh life, even it was the austere Geneva of John Calvin that inspired the country's fervent nonconformist Protestantism rather than Rome or the Romans. By the time the UK finally joined what was then called the Common Market – or in Welsh the *Farchnad Gyffredin* – nonconformism was in retreat and there was little by the way of a specifically Welsh debate about membership. Indeed, if anything the Welsh electorate were marginally less enthusiastic about the Union than voters in the rest of the state. In the 1975 referendum 64% voted to remain in the EEC as compared to 67.2% in favour across the UK as a whole.

In the intervening 40 years, however, there is no doubt that European membership has had a profound effect on everyday life in Wales. It is often now claimed that the Welsh look upon the European Union more favourably than the English (European Commission, 2007). They have certainly remained more resistant to the siren calls of Euro-scepticism. Indeed Welsh First Minister Carwyn Jones has recently confidently claimed that, should a new referendum on UK membership of the Union eventually be held, Wales would vote to remain part of the European Union (Jones, 2012).

Even if, as has been claimed, the past is always a foreign country, the Wales of 1973 was profoundly different to the Wales of today. The legacy of Wales's pioneering role in the industrial revolution remained with significant coal and steel industries still dominating the country's economic and, indeed, social life. Harbingers of change were, however, certainly in evidence. Heavy industry was in decline, while the opening of the Sony plant in Bridgend represented the first major investment by a Japanese company in the country and the beginning of a period in which inward investment was regarded as central to the successful restructuring of the economy. Yet a Wales without a coal industry seemed almost unimaginable. Political self-government also appeared a distant prospect. After all, the Welsh Office – the UK government's administrative office for Wales – was less than a decade old when Wales became part of the Union. The prospect of Welsh Government Ministers representing the UK in European Council meetings would have seemed entirely fanciful.

It was in rural Wales that the effects of European membership first became apparent through the workings of the Common Agricultural Policy. While the support provided to farmers and the rural economy more generally was welcome, it was not a policy without its controversies. Attempts to discourage over-production – in particular the 'milk quotas' introduced in the mid 1980s – led to several memorable protests by angry dairy farmers.

In the rest of Wales it was the precipitate decline of heavy industry in the recession of the early 1980s, followed by the collapse of the coal industry after the defeat of the 1984-85 Miners Strike, that brought the potential significance of European membership to the fore. With the skills base of much of the workforce apparently obsolete and unemployment stubbornly high, the 1988 reform of European Regional Development Funds and the doubling of regional aid would eventually have a hugely significant effect in Wales.

Although Wales received comparatively little by way of regional development aid throughout the 1990's, it was in the 2000-2006 programming period that the impact of these developments would really be felt. Following the redrawing of the NUTS II regional boundaries in Wales in 1998, much of west Wales and the Valleys qualified for Objective 1 funding, with the rest of Wales being eligible for Objective 3 support.

The management of the Structural Funds in Wales was to provide the first great test for the devolved National Assembly for Wales, meeting for the first time in 1999 as a result of a narrow Yes vote in the 1997 referendum (Cole & Palmer, 2011). Successful delivery of the programmes not only had the potential to significantly improve the country's economic potential but could also serve to legitimate the new governmental structures themselves. In the event, Objective 1 would also furnish Wales with its first post-devolution constitutional crisis. Disagreements with the UK government on the question of match funding would eventually lead to the removal of Alun Michael from his role as Wales' First Secretary. He was replaced by Rhodri Morgan, who had been the Welsh Labour party's original choice as leader, but whom had been opposed by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. Here was a case, then, of tensions with the UK government around an apparently arcane issue of European funding mechanisms leading to the installation in Wales of the leader that most of the Welsh electorate had wanted all along. Such are the sometimes serendipitous ways of multi-level politics.

It was not only the overthrow of Alun Michael that served to increase awareness of the importance of Wales' relationship with Europe among the wider population. European funding provided businesses, civil society organisations and individuals with new opportunities. New vistas were also opened up for those civil servants charged with implementing the programmes that were, for the first time, interpreted, structured and delivered in Wales by Welsh organisations. Plaques bearing the 'Funded by the European Union' logo became nigh on ubiquitous across the country with the relationship with the Union being widely promoted as being a key dimension in the regeneration of Wales's economy and society.

While the award of Objective 1 funding for 2000-2006 was widely described as a 'one-off' opportunity to receive such a high level of funding, it was announced in 2005 that the West Wales and the Valleys region had again failed to cross the threshold of 75% of average EU GDP. As a result, Convergence funding would provide a second bite of the cherry for Wales in the period 2007-13. Here was a chance to redeem some of the failures of the earlier period and build a more strategic and coherent programme than the one for 2000-2006, which was widely criticised for its incoherence and barriers in participation (Royles, 2006, Entwistle et al, 2007). The Welsh European Funding Office charged with management and distribution of the funds confidently asserted that the 2007-2013 programmes would be a great success for Wales. It will soon be time to assess whether such confidence was truly justified.

In the initial years of UK membership Wales was not directly represented in European institutions. Rather it was left to individuals of Welsh origins to make their mark. None more prominent than Roy Jenkins, hailing from Abersychan in south east Wales, who became the first British President of the Commission in the 1977.

The first four directly elected representatives from Wales to sit in the European Parliament were returned in 1979. Given the, until then, dire Welsh record of ensuring female representation, the fact that two of the four were women (Labour's Ann Clwyd and the Conservative's Beata Brookes) represented a major breakthrough. Meanwhile, inside the Commission, prominent Welsh individuals continued to make an impact, with Ivor Richard installed as Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs during the early 1980's, and fellow Welshman and acting Director General, Hywel Ceri Jones, playing a prominent role in the development of the flagship Erasmus programmes.

Welsh representation at the European level provided a fascinating footnote in the history of the establishment of the Single European Market. Specifically, the difficult passage of the Maastricht Treaty through the UK House of Commons was aided by a deal between the nationalist Plaid Cymru (Party of Wales) and the Conservative government that saw the party's MPs support the treaty in return for enhanced Welsh representation on the Committee of the Regions.

With the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales following the 1997 referendum, ensuring that a Welsh voice would be heard at the European level became an important political priority. Wales, it was argued, should not only benefit from structural funding and other support programmes, but devolved Wales should also seek to contribute positively in shaping the future development of the Union (Jones, 1998). On occasion, however, it wasn't entirely clear that Welsh interest in Europe was reciprocated. The omission of Wales from the map of Europe displayed on the cover of Eurostat's 2004 yearbook certainly raised a few eyebrows! Welsh politicians, however, were quick to laugh this off as a genuine mistake.

In 2008 it was not only a Welsh voice that was heard at a European Union Council of Ministers meeting, but for the first time a voice speaking in the Welsh language. The following year Welsh was recognised as a co-official language of the European Commission, ensuring translation of certain official publications, and providing for communication in Welsh to the Union through designated bodies. The governing Labour-Plaid Cymru coalition in Cardiff hailed this as a milestone for the language, and indicated their hope that other European institutions would follow suit.

The way that the National Assembly itself deals with European matters became the subject of controversy following a reorganisation of the Assembly's committee structures as a result of the granting of more expansive legislative powers to Welsh legislature after a further referendum in March 2011. This reorganisation saw the disappearance of the Assembly's Committee for European and External Affairs. Whilst some commentators argued this would lead to the downgrading of European affairs within the National Assembly (Dickson, 2011), the Presiding Officer was quick to defend the move on the grounds that this now placed responsibility on all Committees to keep abreast of European level developments and their ramifications for Wales. It is perhaps too soon to say whether or not this has proven to be the case. But what cannot be doubted is that most Welsh politicians, and certainly three of the four main parties in Wales, remain enthusiastically pro-European. But what of the broader population as a whole?

Wales enters its 40th year in the European Union with a stark warning from First Minister, Carwyn Jones, to those Euro-sceptics demanding another referendum on UK membership. Holding such a referendum, he argues, could serve to hasten the break-up of the UK given that the different component nations of the UK might well vote differently. His assumption is that the Celtic nations are more likely to adopt a positive attitude than their English neighbours. It is clearly the case that Euro-scepticism is not a prominent feature of Welsh political culture. Yet neither can it realistically be claimed that the Welsh have begun to think of themselves as the confident 'Welsh Europeans' imagined by thinkers such as Raymond Williams. What is beyond doubt, however, is that European membership has had – and continues to have – a profound effect on everyday life in every part of Wales. Whether or not we identify as Welsh Europeans, ours is very clearly, a European Wales.

* * *

The UK 40 Years in the Union – Wales Timeline



1st January 1973: UK joins the European Economic Community

December 1974: The European Regional Development Fund is created

5th June 1975: UK votes 'Yes' in a referendum on EEC membership

1977: Roy Jenkins appointed President of the European Commission

1979: European Monetary System established

June 1979: First direct elections to the European Parliament. Beata Brookes, Ann Clwyd, Win Griffiths and Allan Rogers take the Welsh seats

June 1984: European Elections. Beata Brookes and Win Griffiths are joined by David Morris and Llewellyn Smith

1984: Margaret Thatcher negotiates UK rebate

1973

1974

1975

1977

1979

1984

7th February 1992: Treaty of Maastricht is signed

October 1990: UK enters European Exchange Rate Mechanism.

June 1989: European Elections. Wayne David and Joe Wilson join David Morris and Llewellyn Smith. It is the first time Wales is without a female representative.

1988: Regional aid is doubled, and the regulations governing Structural Funds are significantly revised.

1987: The Erasmus programme is launched

1986: The Single European Act enters into force

1986: The EU Flag is unveiled

1985: Jacques Delors becomes President of the EU

1984: Milk quotas are introduced in the EU as part of the CAP

1992

1990

1989

1988

1987

1986

1985

16th September 1992: Black Wednesday UK market crash. The UK is forced to withdraw from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism

1993: The Treaty of the European Union comes into effect

1994: The Committee of the Regions is established and requests clarification on the definition of 'subsidiarity'

June 1994: European elections. Eluned Morgan becomes youngest ever MEP representing Mid and West Wales

26th March 1995: The Schengen pact enters into force

1st May 1997: Labour sweep to victory in the UK and immediately announce plans for a referendum on devolution in Scotland and Wales

18th September 1997: Wales votes 'Yes' by a narrow margin for devolution

13th December 1997: Agreement is made to open accession negotiations with 10 eastern and central European countries

31st July 1998: The Government of Wales Act 1998 receives Royal Assent and established the National Assembly for Wales

1993

1994

1995

1997

1998

2005: Wales is awarded Objective 1 level funding for 2007-2013

October 2004: Wales disappears from the map of Europe on Eurostats annual publication

1st May 2004: The EU welcomes 8 new nations. Large numbers of Polish migrants settle in Wales

1st January 2002: The Euro arrives in the 12 participating countries

9th February 2000: Alun Michael resigns as First Secretary for Wales. Poor leadership concerning the Structural Funds and negotiations with the UK Treasury over match-funding for them is a key cause.

2000: The 2000-2006 Objective 1 programmes begin to be managed and administered in Wales for the first time.

June 1999: European elections experience one of the lowest turnouts in Wales.



6th May 1999: First National Assembly for Wales elections. Labour win 28 seats and form a minority government

March 1999: Resignation of the European Commission. Financial regulation would now become more stringent

1998: The Jones Report urges Wales to take a proactive approach to engaging with European affairs

2005

2004

2002

2000

1999

25th July 2006: Government of Wales Act 2006 receives Royal Assent

1st January 2007: Romania and Bulgaria join the EU but the UK imposes travel restrictions until 2013

2007: Welsh Labour and Plaid Cymru make 'One Wales' agreement

13th December 2007: Lisbon Treaty signed strengthening principle of subsidiarity

November 2008: Welsh is used in the European Council of Ministers for the first time.

2009: EC & UK sign an agreement on use of the Welsh language in the EC

March 2010: Key elements of Europe 2020 agreed

3rd March 2011: Wales votes 'Yes' on a referendum for full law-making powers for the National Assembly for Wales

2011: National Assembly for Wales abolishes European Affairs Committee

March 2012: First Minister Carwyn Jones poses the 'Bridgend question' on why UK representatives speak for Wales in Europe on devolved matters

November 2012: Carwyn Jones warns of the risks of a UK referendum on EU membership

January 2013: Wales celebrates 40 years as part of the European Community

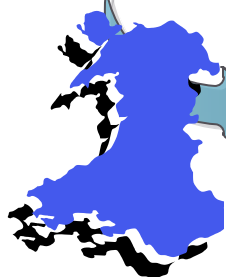
2007

2009

2011

2012

2013



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Clements, B. (2011). Understanding 'Utilitarian' Support for European Integration in Scotland and Wales: the Role of Economic Interests, National Identity and Party Support, *Regional & Federal Studies*, 21(1), pp. 1-21.

Cole, A. & Palmer, R. (2011). Europeanising devolution: Wales and the European Union, *British Politics*, 6(3), pp. 379–396.

Dickson, F. (2011). EU debate special 1: Assembly denies international role, *Click on Wales* [online]. Accessed 11.11.2012, <http://www.clickonwales.org/2011/12/eudebate-special-1-assembly-denies-international-role/>

Entwistle, T., Bristow, G., Hines, F., Donaldson, S., Martin, S. (2007). The Dysfunctions of Markets, Hierarchies and Networks in the Meta-governance of Partnership, *Urban Studies*, 44, (1), pp.63–79, Routledge, London.

The Gallup Organisation Hungary/Europe & European Commission (2007). Attitudes towards the EU in the United Kingdom, *Flash Eurobarometer 192*, European Commission.

James, T.S. (2010). Fewer costs, more votes? U.K. Innovations in Election Administration 2000–2007 and their effect on voter turnout, *Interpreting Democratic Governance Conference at De Montfort University*, 23-24 September 2010.

Jones, C. (2012). The Future of the Union: Wales, Lecture by the First Minister of Wales, the Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM, at the London School of Economics, 8 November 2012.

National Assembly for Wales (1998). The National Assembly for Wales and the European Union, Report of the European Strategy Group Chaired by H. Ceri Jones. Cardiff, UK: Welsh Office.

Royles, E. (2006). Civil Society and the New Democracy in Post-Devolution Wales – A case Study of Structural Funds, *Regional and Federal Studies*, 16(2), pp. 137-156.

Journal of Contemporary European Research

Volume 8, Issue 4 (2012)

Northern Ireland: 40 Years of EU Membership

David Phinnemore *Queen's University Belfast*

Lee McGowan *Queen's University Belfast*

Cathal McCall *Queen's University Belfast*

Peter McLoughlin *Queen's University Belfast*

This chronology was commissioned by the *European Parliament Information Office in the United Kingdom* and has been published here with their kind permission and that of the authors.

Professor David Phinnemore, Dr Lee McGowan, Dr Cathal McCall and Dr Peter McLoughlin are all members of the School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy at Queen's University Belfast.

Citation

Phinnemore, D., McGowan, L., McCall, C. and McLoughlin, P. (2012). 'Northern Ireland: 40 Years of EU Membership', *Journal of Contemporary European Research*. 8 (4), pp. 563-570.

Published in: www.jcer.net

KEY DATES

A timeline of Northern Ireland in the EU.

Jan 1973	Accession of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland to the European Communities
May 1974	Collapse of the Sunningdale Power-Sharing Agreement after five months; return of direct rule from London
Jun 1975	UK referendum on continued membership of the European Communities. In Northern Ireland the 'yes' vote is 52.1%. Turnout is 48.2%.
Mar 1975	European Regional Development Fund created
Jun 1979	First direct elections to European Parliament (EP): Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) tops the poll; John Hume, deputy leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) comes second; John Taylor of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) takes Northern Ireland's third seat.
May 1980	First Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Summit led by Charles Haughey and Margaret Thatcher
Oct 1981	Irish Republican prisoners start hunger strike; Sinn Fein's political rise begins
Feb 1983	EP Political Affairs Committee commissions report on Northern Ireland
Mar 1984	EP adopts Haagerup Report on the Situation in Northern Ireland
Jun 1984	EP election: Paisley (DUP) again tops the poll; Hume (SDLP) again comes second; Taylor (UUP) takes Northern Ireland's third seat.
Nov 1985	Anglo-Irish Agreement and the establishment of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference staffed by British and Irish government officials.
Oct 1988	Paisley (DUP) is ejected from the EP's Strasbourg plenary meeting after a protesting against the visit of Pope John Paul II, shouting 'I renounce you as the anti-Christ'.
Jan 1989	January Northern Ireland becomes an Objective 1 region under the EU's regional policy. EC Community Support Framework for Northern Ireland launched
Jun 1989	EP election: Paisley (DUP) tops the poll; Hume (SDLP) comes second; Jim Nicholson (UUP) takes Northern Ireland's third seat.
Mar 1994	Committee of the Regions established with two representatives from Northern Ireland

Jun 1994	EP election: 1989 result is replicated with Paisley (DUP), Hume (SDLP) and Nicholson (UUP) being elected.
Aug 1994	Irish Republican Army (IRA) announces 'complete' ceasefire
Sep 1994	As the EP endorses the IRA ceasefire, Hume's Socialist MEP colleagues initiate his nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to secure an end to violence in Northern Ireland.
Oct 1994	Loyalist ceasefire announced
Dec 1994	European Council agrees to establish €300m multiannual programme of financial assistance to support the burgeoning Northern Ireland peace process (initiated through joint-lobbying by all three MEPs).
Jul 1995	Special EU Programme for Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of the Republic of Ireland (Peace I) launched with funding worth €400 million
Apr 1998	Good Friday/Belfast Agreement signed. The agreement contained provisions on cross border cooperation and an international dimension (including the EU) for the new political architecture. Overall responsibility for foreign affairs is a reserved matter for the UK government but the regional administration in Northern Ireland is made responsible for ensuring the implementation of EU policies
Oct 1998	Hume (SDLP) and David Trimble (UUP) jointly awarded Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of their role in the making of the Good Friday Agreement. Hume stresses the European model of post-war reconciliation as his primary inspiration in accepting the award.
Mar 1999	European Council agrees to fund Peace II (2000-2004) programme
Jun 1999	EP election produces same result as in 1994: Paisley (DUP), Hume (SDLP) and Nicholson (UUP) re-elected
Dec 1999	Devolved powers granted to Northern Ireland Assembly
Jan 2000	Peace II launched with funding worth €597 million; Objective 1 status retained on transitional basis.
Jul 2000	European Policy Coordination Unit established within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
2001	Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels (ONIEB) opened
Oct 2001	Northern Ireland Assembly's Committee of the Centre launches an inquiry into Northern Ireland's relations with the EU
Mar 2002	Committee of the Centre publishes report: Approach of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Devolved Government on European Union Issues

Oct 2002	Devolved powers suspended; direct rule from Westminster returns
Jun 2004	EP election: Paisley is replaced by Jim Allister, but the DUP still tops the poll; the SDLP loses its seat to Bairbre de Brún of Sinn Féin (SF) as Hume retires; Nicholson (UUP) is again in third place
Jan 2005	Peace II extended
Oct 2006	Northern Ireland Executive launches Northern Ireland's first European Strategy: Taking Our Place in Europe
Jan 2007	Peace III (2007-2013) launched with funding worth €333 million
Mar 2007	Allister resigns from the DUP following its agreement to share power with Sinn Féin
May 2007	European Commission Task Force for Northern Ireland announced
May 2007	Devolved powers restored
Mar 2009	Northern Ireland Executive launches the first of a series of annual and biannual European Priorities documents
Jun 2009	EP election: de Brún (SF) tops the poll. Diane Dodds (DUP) comes second. Nicholson is again in third place, this time standing for a short-lived alliance between the UUP and the Conservative Party under the banner, Conservatives and Unionists – New Force (UCUNF).
Mar 2010	Memorandum of Understanding and its Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues sets out the mechanisms for dealing with EU business between the UK government and the devolved administrations.
Mar 2011	Members of the Barroso Taskforce visit Northern Ireland
May 2012	Martina Anderson takes over from de Brún as Sinn Féin's MEP

THE NARRATIVE

Since the United Kingdom and Ireland joined the European Communities (EC) 40 years ago, Northern Ireland has not only witnessed many of the darkest years of 'The Troubles' but also emerged from violent conflict as a more economically prosperous region with a broadly functioning devolved administration. The EU has often enjoyed a high profile, particularly as a source of funding. Successive European Parliament (EP) elections have been hotly contested as the region's four main parties have fought over the three available seats. Despite their clear political differences the three MEPs have generally demonstrated an uncharacteristic willingness to cooperate on matters of particular interest to communities and voters in Northern Ireland. Agriculture, fisheries and continued access to the Structural Funds have featured large. Objective 1 status in 1989-99 resulted in £1.7 billion of EU funding for Northern Ireland. Moves towards peace since the 1990s have been rewarded by the EU, notably with three dedicated Peace programmes.

As devolution has become an established reality, the Northern Ireland institutions – the Assembly and Executive – have gradually become more engaged with the EU and with EU policy issues. At the same time the EU, through the European Commission and most recently the Barroso Task Force, has continued to demonstrate its commitment to support peace, stability and improved economic and social well-being in Northern Ireland. This does not, however, translate into a heartfelt endorsement of the EU and further integration among voters in Northern Ireland. While they may look more favourably than voters elsewhere in the UK on the EU, there can be no mistaking the fact that the majority of political parties in Northern Ireland remain eurosceptic with most MPs taking their seats in Westminster supporting a referendum on the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Positive perceptions

During 'The Troubles' European integration was for many people in Northern Ireland a policy issue of only marginal concern. The opportunities and restrictions created by the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy certainly found resonance with the farming and fishing communities. So too did receipts from the European Regional Development Fund. Specific EC-funded infrastructure projects such as URBAN and INTERREG, the Single Market project, the dedicated Community Support Framework for Northern Ireland and the creation the Peace Programmes from 1995 also raised general awareness of the EU and over time contributed to more positive attitudes being expressed towards the EU. In the 1975 referendum on the UK's continued membership referendum, however, only just over half of the electorate voted 'yes'; and there was a noticeable difference between the two main communities: the Protestant community being more sceptical towards European integration than its Catholic counterpart.

The difference reflected contrasting stances on British sovereignty and links with other European states. Nearly three decades on, perceptions of the EU have improved and the gap between the two main communities has narrowed. An academic survey in 2002 found that Northern Ireland voters displayed more positive views on participation in the EU and whether it brought benefits exceeded the UK average by 14 percentage points (although this was well behind views expressed in the Republic of Ireland). A Flash Eurobarometer survey in 2008 also presented Northern Ireland as the region of the UK most positive about the EU.

Increasing engagement

A key event in the Northern Ireland's recent history was the return of devolved government in 1999. Although the area of foreign affairs was designated a reserved matter for Westminster, the Northern Ireland Assembly was tasked with ensuring the correct implementation of EU directives. Moreover, a 1999 (and recently reviewed 2010) Memorandum of Understanding and its Concordat on Coordination of European Union Policy Issues set out the mechanisms for dealing with EU business between the UK government and the devolved administrations. Previously, such business had largely been the preserve of specific departments, primarily Finance and Agriculture, the three MEPs and a small number of consultancies and interest groups. Awareness of EU issues amongst the new Assembly members (MLAs) was in most cases limited.

Devolution led to the creation of a special European Policy Coordination Unit (EPCU) within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and the establishment of the Office for the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels in 2001. OFMDFM sought to play a proactive role in terms of Northern Ireland's engagement on EU policy issues producing, a 2006 consultation paper, 'Taking our Place in Europe' and,

since the launch of the Barroso Task Force in 2007, adopting annual and biannual European Priorities strategy documents focused on improving the region's economic competitiveness and creating sustainable employment opportunities. OFMDFM also organises an annual Opportunity Europe event in Belfast.

The Assembly too has sought to engage in EU issues, launching in 2002 an *Inquiry into the Approach of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Devolved Government on European Union Issues*. In 2010 a further *Inquiry into Consideration of European Issues* was held. There is still more work to do to bring together an EU policy informed community to include the three MEPs, members of both the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions as well as a number of other interested parties (including interest groups, wider civil society and academics) but the devolved institutions and EU programmes have facilitated engagement and embedded Northern Ireland as a region deeper into EU than at any time before.

Northern Ireland's Three MEPs

The EU owes much of its profile in Northern Ireland to the region's three MEPs although EP elections have generally only added to the polarisation within society between the two predominant communities. From 1979 until 1999, Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) topped the poll with a majority of unionist votes. John Hume of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) received a similarly large mandate from nationalists. John Taylor of the Ulster Unionist Party secured the third seat. As in their views on Northern Ireland, Paisley and Hume represented very different attitudes towards Europe. Paisley's staunch opposition to the EC matched his hardline unionism, and reflected those in the unionist community who saw European integration as an additional threat to British sovereignty over Northern Ireland. By contrast, Hume – French-speaking and having previously worked as a special advisor in the European Commission – was unrepentantly Europhile, articulating the dominant view among progressive nationalists that European integration – diminishing the importance of borders, transferring political sovereignty, and reconciling previously warring populations – would help to ease the path towards Irish reunification.

The actions of Paisley and Hume in the EP also contributed to communal antipathy back home. Paisley's ejection from a 1988 plenary for protesting against the visit of Pope John Paul II may have delighted his evangelical followers, but offended many Catholics. Meanwhile, Hume's apparent influence among MEPs only heightened unionists' hostility towards him. With the SDLP a member of the European Confederation of Socialist Parties, Hume sat with the largest and most powerful political group in the EP. Moreover, as the group's treasurer he had a place on the front benches, a position Hume used to secure support to initiate a formal EC investigation into the Northern Ireland problem, culminating in the Haagerup Report of 1984. The investigation was opposed by unionists as unwarranted interference in Northern Ireland's affairs, even more so when it concluded by advocating a solution very much in line with SDLP thinking: power-sharing between the two communities and co-operation between the British and Irish governments in dealing with the problem. The report and Hume's lobbying within the EP, however unpalatable, arguably helped nudge Margaret Thatcher towards the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985. With this a first step in the peace process was taken as the British and Irish governments began to co-manage the Northern Ireland problem.

Though it often provided another arena for antagonism between nationalists and unionists, the EP did, at times, encourage co-operation between Northern Ireland's political representatives. Indeed, Paisley and Taylor were quite content to join in Hume's lobbying efforts when it came to the crucial issue of economic assistance for the region's conflict-damaged economy. Thus, throughout the 1980s, all three were eager to present a united front in order to maximise financial assistance from Brussels. This tendency

continued into the 1990s, by which time Jim Nicholson had replaced Taylor as the UUP's MEP, and led to the establishment of the Peace I programme in 1995.

Whilst Hume was continuously rewarded by nationalist voters for his efforts to secure EU support for Northern Ireland, this loyalty did not extend to his party. When Hume retired in 2004, the SDLP immediately lost to the Sinn Féin challenger, Bairbre de Brún. By contrast, when Paisley stood down in the same year, his DUP colleague, Jim Allister, again topped the poll. Though Allister subsequently resigned from the DUP following its agreement to share power with Sinn Féin, Diane Dodds retook the seat for the party in 2009. With Dodds, de Brún and Nicholson all representing parties with various shades of eurosceptic thinking, Northern Ireland since Hume's retirement has lacked a prointegration voice in the EP. With Nicholson in 2009 following British Conservative MEPs into the European Conservatives and Reformists grouping, Northern Ireland also lost its last representative in any of three largest EP groups. Nicholson's move also meant that he was unable to secure reelection as an EP quaestor, a post he had held since 2004, being re-elected in 2007.

The European Union in Northern Ireland – contributing to conflict transformation

Prior to EC membership relations between the United Kingdom and Ireland were often strained. A 'Cold War' over Northern Ireland existed. EC membership, however, facilitated a transformation of the British-Irish relationship since the EC offered neutral political spaces in Brussels and Strasbourg where British and Irish government ministers, parliamentarians and officials could build a new relationship unsullied by economic dependence, political antagonism and mutual suspicion. Their priority was dealing with the escalating ethno-national conflict in Northern Ireland. The new interstate relationship gradually became characterised by co-operation to that end.

A key development resulting from the transformed intergovernmental relationship was the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement which drew on EC-inspired notions of transnational governance in that it gave the Irish government a role in the public affairs of Northern Ireland. Thereafter, any fruitful negotiation on the future governance of Northern Ireland would require a transnational dimension leading to the establishment of transnational institutional structures. These structures were made manifest in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. The territorial Northern Ireland Executive, Assembly and Civic Forum (Strand 1) were matched by a transnational North/South Ministerial Council and its Implementation Bodies (Strand 2), as well as a transnational British-Irish Council and British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (Strand 3). The importance of the North/South arrangements was highlighted by the mandatory nature of the Implementation Bodies and by the clause, on paper at least, that linked the fate of the North/South Ministerial Council to that of the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Implementation Bodies concentrated on the specifics of cross-border co-operation in the areas of food safety, minority languages, trade and business development, aquaculture, waterways, and EU Programmes, with an all-island company established to communicate abroad Ireland's tourism potential.

The provision of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) was of particular significance, not least because this implementation body was given responsibility for managing EU programmes. Meanwhile, the North/South Ministerial Council, involving ministers with sectoral responsibilities for education, health, transport, agriculture, the environment and tourism, would meet to discuss wideranging cross-border co-operation. These institutions bear testimony to the effects of Europeanisation on the realisation of post-conflict, post-sovereign state institutional arrangements for the island of Ireland.

Though the EU was not a transnational diplomatic player in negotiations leading to the Good Friday Agreement its presence was felt in a number of ways. Many key actors in the peace process saw the agreement as one derived from many European sources, including the principles and treaties of the EU. Moreover, the EU, particularly through the European Commission, provided crucial and sophisticated support for the process at the local community level through its Peace programmes. Peace I (1995-1999), Peace II (2000-2006) and Peace III (2007-13) represent a sophisticated and sustained example of a 'peace-building from below' strategy. Europeanisation describes the tenor of the work undertaken in that the promotion of cross-border, inter-cultural dialogue, with a view to the acceptance of difference and the recognition of commonality, is central.

This communicative potential has been an important aspect of the cross-border, cross-community co-operation experience of local-level projects funded under the EU Peace programmes in Ireland. Project leaders have spoken of their positive experiences, for example, through engaging in discussions on history, participating in storytelling, and in organising cross-border, inter-cultural musical events or leisure pursuits for young people. It is also claimed that it was an important stepping stone on the path to improved cross-community relations in Northern Ireland. For others, benefit was gained from the simple relief of escaping the cage of territorial conflict in Northern Ireland, however briefly, and glimpsing another way of life.

The EU Peace programmes for Ireland have engaged public, private and third sector organisations on both sides of the Irish border and many cross-border partnerships for conflict transformation have been established. The issue of their sustainability is a major concern, however, as Peace III ends in 2013.

* * *