

## 'Europe's centre parties move closer together' from the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (25 April 1978)

**Caption:** On 25 April 1978, German daily newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung comments on the creation of the European Democratic Union in anticipation of the first direct election to the European Parliament, due to take place in June 1979.

**Source:** Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. Zeitung für Deutschland. Hrsg. EICK, Jürgen; WELTER, Erich; FACK, Fritz Ullrich; DESCHAMPS, Bruno; FEST, Joachim; REIßMÜLLER, Johann Georg. 25.04.1978, n° 3. Frankfurt/Main: FAZ Verlag GmbH. "Europas Parteien der Mitte rücken enger zusammen", p. 3.

**Copyright:** (c) Translation CVCE.EU by UNI.LU

All rights of reproduction, of public communication, of adaptation, of distribution or of dissemination via Internet, internal network or any other means are strictly reserved in all countries.

Consult the legal notice and the terms and conditions of use regarding this site.

**URL:**

[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/europe\\_s\\_centre\\_parties\\_move\\_closer\\_together\\_from\\_the\\_frankfurter\\_allgemeine\\_zeitung\\_25\\_april\\_1978-en-dd326a1a-629f-4ed9-8142-55ad3e149984.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/europe_s_centre_parties_move_closer_together_from_the_frankfurter_allgemeine_zeitung_25_april_1978-en-dd326a1a-629f-4ed9-8142-55ad3e149984.html)



**Last updated:** 01/12/2016

## Europe's centre parties move closer together

### Foundation of the European Democratic Union / Kohl: a splendid and momentous day

Salzburg, 24 April. Eighteen parties from 15 European countries, representing a total of 56 million voters, met last Monday in the magnificent setting of the Klesheim baroque castle in Salzburg and founded the 'European Democratic Union' (EDU). Through collective agreement and a concentrated effort in this 'working partnership of Christian-Democratic, conservative parties' they hope soon to introduce very close cooperation in order to use the powers of Europe's centre parties more effectively and actively than before.

In this connection, we might think primarily about next year's direct elections to the European Parliament. The idea of creating a long hoped-for counterweight to the Socialist International is also attractive. In Salzburg, however, it was confirmed that the EDU had not developed from the 'political portrait of the enemy', or, as was said, from a degree of negation. The founding of the EDU goes back to the interests of an association of political parties sharing common features in politics and political principles.

A considerable factor for the creation of the European Democratic Union, which required several years of preparatory work, was, however, the interest shown by some Christian-Democratic parties in the EC, especially the German CDU and CSU, after the recent founding of the European People's Party (EPP), in creating a European political grouping that would include allied parties in the Christian-Democratic, conservative and centre parties and which could not join the EPP on ideological or integration grounds. In this way, to some extent, the founding of the European Democratic Union might certainly be regarded as an extension of the EPP.

The task of the EDU should, on the one hand, be to draw up common positions on the principal global and European problems, and, on the other, if particular problems relate to individual and/or groups of countries, its task should be to strengthen the mutual support of the European political parties affiliated to the EDU. Josef Taus, Chairman of the Austrian People's Party, has been elected Chairman of the EDU for the next two years.

Of the 18 parties who launched the EDU in Salzburg, only ten will become full members during the first phase. The other eight merely wish to observe, having only a seat and an advisory role. The full members are thus the German CDU and CSU, the French Gaullists, the British Conservatives, the Danish Conservative People's Party, the Finnish National Coalition Party, the Austrian People's Party, the Norwegian Conservatives, the Swedish Liberal Coalition Party and the Portuguese Centre Democratic and Social Party. Observer status is held by the South Tyrol and Trent People's Party; the Greek Nea Demokratia, the French Republican Party, the Swedish People's Party in Finland, the Spanish Union of the Democratic Centre, the Maltese National Party and the Swedish Christian People's Party.

Despite great efforts, the political parties united in the EDU have not succeeded in persuading the principal Christian-Democratic parties in Italy and the Benelux countries to participate. These parties are instead waiting on the sidelines, first and foremost because they are wary of cooperation with Conservatives and Gaullists. In the EDU sphere, however, it is certainly hoped that Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands' decision to remain outside the Union is not a final one.

Karl Carstens, Speaker of the German Parliament, sees the founding of the EDU as a significant event, one which may be of fundamental importance for European politics in the future. He believes it creates the possibility for long-term, productive political cooperation between the centre parties. Meanwhile, Helmut Kohl, leader of the CDU, spoke of a 'splendid and momentous day'.