

## Pierre Werner and the European integration process from 1960 to 1969

Werner had been aware of the importance of [European issues](#) since his university days,<sup>1</sup> and his commitment to European unification took firm shape in 1949, when he became convinced ‘of the urgent need for the countries of Western Europe to undertake the economic and political construction of a united Europe. His experience of working in the international arena, particularly his awareness of the weakness and the divided state of Europe, made it almost an intellectual obligation.’<sup>2</sup>

By becoming more and more closely involved, through his posts in the Luxembourg Government, in the great issues of European integration, Pierre Werner, who was drawn to act as both a Luxembourger and a European, was to leave his imprint on the key events in that process. The ‘[battle of the seats](#)’ in 1965, the choice of Luxembourg as one of the three permanent capitals for the Community institutions,<sup>3</sup> the 1966 ‘[Luxembourg Compromise](#)’ and the 1970 [Werner Report](#) that sketched the outlines of Economic and Monetary Union are just some of the achievements to which he made a vital contribution.<sup>4</sup>

- 1 After the higher preparatory course in law in Luxembourg (1934–1935), Pierre Werner went to Paris to take courses at the Faculty of Law (1935–1937), at the same time attending courses at the École libre des sciences politiques. It was here that he joined the European ranks of Catholic thinkers and forged useful links with large numbers of prominent figures, including his teachers Jacques Rueff, Charles Rist, Wilfried Baumgartner and Fernand Collin, who greatly influenced his intellectual development and stimulated his interest in the study of monetary questions. In Paris he also met Robert Schuman, whom he was to run into again in the early 1950s, when the High Authority of the ECSC was being set up in Luxembourg.
- 2 Werner, Pierre, *Itinéraires luxembourgeois et européens. Évolutions et souvenirs: 1945–1985*, 2 volumes, Éditions Saint-Paul, Luxembourg, 1992, Volume 1, p. 35
- 3 As soon as he joined the government as Finance Minister, Pierre Werner turned his attention to the major projects for the reconstruction and development of the country (civil engineering, infrastructure, town and country planning), which mobilised considerable resources. With a view to making Luxembourg a modern, forward-looking country and a true international platform, a major town-planning scheme to redevelop the Kirchberg plateau was launched in 1961. Specifically, this ‘European quarter’ of Luxembourg City was developed to serve as a major asset for the country in the battle for the location of the Community’s seats.
- 4 At a domestic level, Pierre Werner played a major role in the country’s economic diversification. His visionary initiatives included promoting Luxembourg to the status of an international financial centre and coming up with the idea of a Luxembourg maritime flag and the satellite project. The cultural policy pursued by Pierre Werner during his term as Minister for Cultural Affairs (1979–1984) helped Luxembourg consolidate its distinctive character and strengthen its national identity, providing it with an international perspective. Pierre Werner also served as mentor and inspiration for other leading political figures in Luxembourg, who followed his work at both national and European level.