

Chronology of decolonisation: geopolitical issues and impact on the European integration process (1944–1975)

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Decolonisation: geopolitical issues and impact on the European integration process (1944–1975)

Chronology

- Former colonial power: France
- Former colonial power: United Kingdom
- Former colonial power: Netherlands
- Former colonial power: Italy
- Former colonial power: Belgium
- Former colonial power: Spain
- Former colonial power: Portugal

30 Jan.–8 Feb.1944	Brazzaville Conference: The French African Conference, organised by the French Committee of National Liberation and attended by representatives of the French territories in Africa, aims to lay the foundations for future relations between France and its colonies.
2 September 1945	Independence of Vietnam
17 April 1946	Independence of Syria
25 May 1946	Independence of Jordan
27 October 1946	The French Union replaces the Empire: Established by the Constitution of the Fourth Republic, the French Union incorporates mainland France, the overseas departments and territories, associated territories (under mandate) and associated states (protectorates).
December 1946	Start of the Indo-China War
14 August 1947	Independence of Pakistan
15 August 1947	Independence of India
4 January 1948	Independence of Burma
14 February 1948	Independence of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka)
7–10 May 1948	The Congress of Europe in The Hague adopts an economic and social resolution

	affirming the need to establish an economic union in Europe. This union should maintain and progressively adjust the economic ties which link the countries of Europe with overseas territories.
14 May 1948	End of the British Mandate for Palestine; David Ben-Gurion proclaims the independence of the state of Israel.
20–25 April 1949	Westminster Economic Conference: The conference, organised by the European Movement, recommends the establishment of a European Economic Union that would enable the preferential system which exists between some European nations and associated overseas countries to be maintained.
19 July 1949	Laos becomes an independent associated state.
8 November 1949	Cambodia becomes an independent associated state.
27 December 1949	Independence of Indonesia
1950	Colombo Plan: Set up following a Commonwealth Conference of Foreign Ministers in Colombo, the ‘Plan for Cooperative Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia’ particularly aims to improve the economies of young, newly independent states.
24 December 1951	Independence of Libya
September 1952	Strasbourg Plan: The Council of Europe adopts the Strasbourg Plan for the improvement of economic relations between member states of the Council of Europe and the overseas countries with which they have constitutional links.
9 November 1953	Independence of Cambodia
21 July 1954	Geneva Accords: The accords put an end to the Indo-China War. Vietnam is divided into two parts: whilst northern Vietnam is placed under the communist control of Ho Chi Minh, a nationalist dictatorship takes power south of the 17th parallel. The independence of Laos is officially recognised.
1 November 1954	Mahé and Yanam (French trading posts in India) are transferred de facto to India.
1 November 1954	Start of the Algerian uprising
18–24 April 1955	Bandung Conference: Delegations from 29 Third-World countries meet in

	Bandung, Indonesia, for a conference that marks the start of the Non-Aligned Movement.
1 January 1956	Independence of Sudan
2 March 1956	Independence of Morocco
20 March 1956	Independence of Tunisia
29–30 May 1956	Venice Conference: French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau officially raises the question of relations between the overseas countries and territories (OCTs) and the Common Market. France thereby makes the resolution of this question a prerequisite to any comprehensive agreement for European revival.
23 June 1956	Adoption of Defferre’s Framework Law: Drafted by Gaston Defferre, Minister for Overseas France in Guy Mollet’s government, with the support of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Mayor of Abidjan and first President of Côte d’Ivoire, the law on the future of overseas territories is an important stage in the process of emancipation of the colonial territories in French Africa (it introduces universal suffrage and a joint electorate, establishes government councils, extends the powers of territorial assemblies, reforms the administration, etc.).
26 July 1956	Nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and beginning of the Suez Crisis.
2 October 1956	Draft Franco-Belgian report on the association of the OCTs with the EEC: The Belgian and French authorities draw up a joint report in which they examine the financial arrangements for the possible association of their overseas countries and territories with the future EEC. The report is discussed on 15 November 1956 by the Committee of Heads of Delegation at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Common Market and Euratom.
5 October 1956	Memorandum by the Verret Committee on the participation of the OCTs in the Common Market: The French interministerial committee on the Common Market, known as the ‘Verret Committee’, describes France’s position on the association of the OCTs with the Common Market.
13 December 1956	Note from the Ad-Hoc Overseas Territories Group on the association of the OCTs with the Common Market: The Ad-Hoc Overseas Territories Group in the Common Market Committee at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Common Market and Euratom reviews the negotiations under way on the question of the possible association of the OCTs with the future EEC.

19–20 February 1957	Paris Conference: The Heads of Government and Foreign Ministers of the six countries participating in the Intergovernmental Conference on the Common Market and Euratom meet at Hôtel Matignon in Paris to take stock of the ongoing negotiations at the Château de Val Duchesse and finalise the political arrangements with regard to the conditions for the association of the OCTs with the future EEC.
6 March 1957	Independence of Gold Coast (now Ghana)
25 March 1957	Signing of the Rome Treaties: The representatives of the six ECSC Member States meet in Rome to sign the Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom). The Rome Treaties come into force on 1 January 1958.
31 August 1957	Independence of Malaysia
28 September 1958	After General de Gaulle’s return to power in 1958, he makes an offer of self-determination to the people of French Africa. He lets them choose between independence via secession or membership of the French Community, a body enshrined in his new draft Constitution. In a referendum held on 28 September 1958, voters are asked to ratify the draft Constitution, which lays the foundations for the French Fifth Republic. In France’s colonies, the Constitution provides for the replacement of the French Union by the French Community. Voters in mainland France and the overseas territories vote overwhelmingly in favour of the new Constitution (79.25%).
2 October 1958	Independence of Guinea: Guinea rejects the offer of joining the French Community and proclaims its independence.
4 October 1958	Adoption of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic. The French Community replaces the French Union.
1 January 1960	Independence of Cameroon (the part under French tutelage)
4 April 1960	Independence of Senegal
27 April 1960	Independence of Togo
26 June 1960	Independence of Madagascar
30 June 1960	Independence of the Belgian Congo
1 July 1960	Independence of Somalia

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1 August 1960	Independence of Dahomey (now Benin)
3 August 1960	Independence of Niger
5 August 1960	Independence of Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso)
7 August 1960	Independence of Côte d'Ivoire
11 August 1960	Independence of Chad
13 August 1960	Independence of Central African Republic
15 August 1960	Independence of Congo (Brazzaville)
16 August 1960	Independence of Cyprus
17 August 1960	Independence of Gabon
22 September 1960	Independence of French Sudan (now Mali)
1 October 1960	Independence of Nigeria
28 November 1960	Independence of Mauritania
27 April 1961	Independence of Sierra Leone
19 June 1961	Independence of Kuwait
19–24 June 1961	Eurafrican Conference in Strasbourg: The conference is attended by the European Parliamentary Assembly and 103 representatives of the parliaments of the Associated African States and Madagascar (AASM).
9 August 1961	United Kingdom's first application for accession to the EEC
1–6 September	Belgrade Conference: Following the Bandung Conference in 1955, the Belgrade

1961	Conference aims to reaffirm and define the Non-Aligned Movement.
1 October 1961	Independence of Cameroon (the part under British tutelage)
10 October 1961	Edward Heath, Lord Privy Seal and head of the British delegation, sets out the United Kingdom's positions to the representatives of the Six in Paris during the negotiations for accession to the EEC.
9 December 1961	Independence of Tanganyika (now Tanzania)
19 December 1961	Annexation of Portuguese India (Goa, Daman and Diu) by India
18 March 1962	Évian Accords: The agreements put an end to the Algerian War and grant Algeria sovereignty.
1 July 1962	Independence of Rwanda
1 July 1962	Independence of Burundi
5 July 1962	Independence of Algeria
6 August 1962	Independence of Jamaica
31 August 1962	Independence of Trinidad and Tobago
19 September 1962	Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference: Canada and New Zealand express their opposition to the United Kingdom's accession to the EEC.
9 October 1962	Independence of Uganda
14 January 1963	General de Gaulle's first veto: The French President declares his opposition to the United Kingdom's accession to the EEC. On 28 January, the French government forces its five European partners, shocked by the unilateral veto, to adjourn the accession negotiations with the candidate countries.
20 July 1963	Signing of the Yaoundé Convention: In Yaoundé, Cameroon, the EEC and the 18 AASM countries sign the first convention, valid for a period of five years, confirming the association between Europe and Africa on the basis of free trade and financial aid from the Six.

16 September 1963	Creation of the Federation of Malaysia, consisting of Malaya, the British colony of Singapore and the British protectorates of Sarawak and North Borneo.
12 December 1963	Independence of Kenya
23 March–15 June 1964	Geneva Conference: The first United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which aims to integrate developing countries into the global economy to stimulate their growth.
6 July 1964	Independence of Nyasaland (now Malawi)
21 September 1964	Independence of Malta
5–10 October 1964	Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Cairo
24 October 1964	Independence of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia)
18 February 1965	Independence of Gambia
26 July 1965	Independence of the Maldives
26 May 1966	Independence of Guyana
30 September 1966	Independence of Bechuanaland (now Botswana)
4 October 1966	Independence of Basutoland (now Lesotho)
30 November 1966	Independence of Barbados
11 May 1967	United Kingdom's second application for accession to the EEC
27 November 1967	General de Gaulle's second veto: The French President reiterates his opposition to the United Kingdom's accession to the EEC.
29 November 1967	Reply by Harold Wilson to General de Gaulle's press conference: Commenting on the veto on British accession reiterated two days earlier by the French President, British Prime Minister Harold Wilson refutes in turn each of the arguments put forward by opponents of the United Kingdom's accession to the EEC.
30 November 1967	Independence of South Yemen (the State of Aden)

12 March 1968	Independence of Mauritius
6 September 1968	Independence of Swaziland
12 October 1968	Independence of Equatorial Guinea
4 June 1970	Independence of Tonga
8–10 September 1970	Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Lusaka
10 October 1970	Independence of Fiji
20–21 May 1971	Meeting between Pompidou and Heath in Paris: Convergence of French and British points of view on the issue of EEC enlargement.
23 June 1971	Agreement on the United Kingdom's accession to the EEC: At the end of two days of talks in Luxembourg, the diplomatic delegation from Britain and the representatives of the Six reach a provisional agreement on the conditions for the United Kingdom's accession to the European Common Market.
15 August 1971	Independence of Bahrain
3 September 1971	Independence of Qatar
28 October 1971	The House of Commons votes in favour of the United Kingdom's accession to the EEC.
2 December 1971	Independence of the United Arab Emirates
22 January 1972	Signing of the United Kingdom's Treaty of Accession to the EC
19–21 October 1972	Paris Summit: At the Paris Summit, the Nine declare their willingness to step up their assistance for and cooperation with the most deprived developing countries.
1 January 1973	United Kingdom's accession to the EC
10 July 1973	Independence of the Bahamas

5–9 September 1973	Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Algiers
7 February 1974	Independence of Grenada
1 April 1974	Statement by James Callaghan: The British Foreign Secretary, in his very first address to the Council of Ministers, calls for a fundamental renegotiation of the terms laid down in the treaties of accession negotiated by the Conservative delegates.
10 September 1974	Independence of Guinea-Bissau
28 February 1975	Signing of the ACP–EEC Convention in Lomé: 46 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states and the nine Member States of the EEC sign a cooperation agreement in Lomé, Togo.
27 March 1975	British government white paper on the renegotiation of the conditions for the UK's membership of the EEC. On 9 April, the House of Commons approves the conclusions of the white paper and votes by 398 to 172 for the country to remain part of the Community structure.
5 June 1975	British 'yes' to the EC: In the referendum held on 5 June 1975, 67.2% of the British electorate votes in favour of the United Kingdom's continued membership of the EC.
25 June 1975	Independence of Mozambique
5 July 1975	Independence of Cape Verde
6 July 1975	Independence of the Comoros
12 July 1975	Independence of São Tomé and Príncipe
11 November 1975	Independence of Angola
25 November 1975	Independence of Suriname
28 November 1975	Independence of Portuguese Timor: Portuguese Timor (now East Timor) declares its independence but is immediately invaded and annexed by Indonesia. It only

becomes fully independent in 2002.