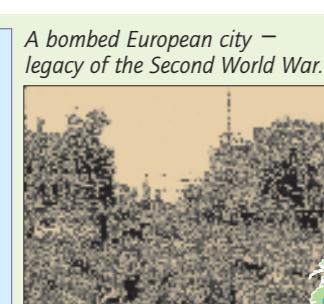


The historical roots of the European Union lie in the Second World War. Europeans are determined to prevent such killing and destruction ever happening again. Soon after the war, Europe is split into East and West as the 40-year-long Cold War begins. West European nations create the Council of Europe in 1949. It is a first step towards cooperation between them, but six countries want to go further.



18 April 1951

Based on the Schuman plan, six countries sign a treaty to run their heavy industries – coal and steel – under a common management. In this way, none can on its own make the weapons of war to turn against the other, as in the past. The six are Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.



Europe on the move The story of the European Union (EU)

Follow the timeline as it spirals down from top left to bottom right.

Yellow panels describe EU events.
Blue panels describe more general events in Europe.

25 March 1957

Building on the success of the Coal and Steel Treaty, the six countries expand cooperation to other economic sectors. They sign the Treaty of Rome, creating the European Economic Community (EEC), or 'common market'. The idea is for people, goods and services to move freely across borders.



You can learn more about the EU at the 'Europa' website: europa.eu
'EUROPE DIRECT' answers your questions about the EU: call 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 or e-mail via europedirect.europa.eu

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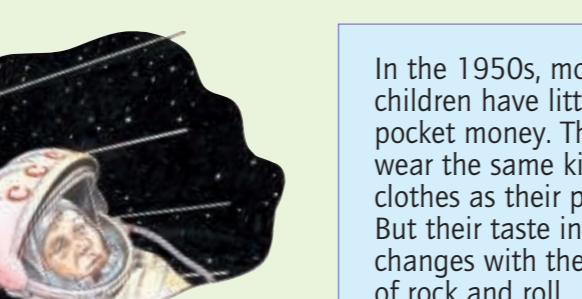
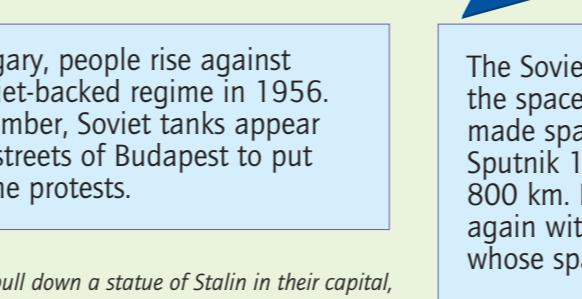
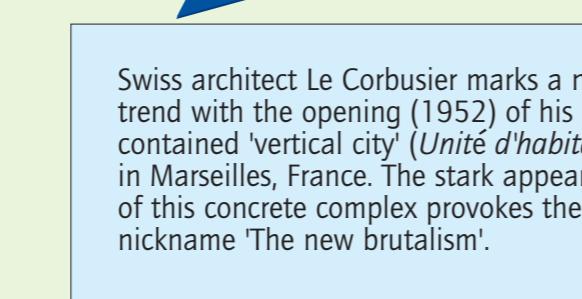
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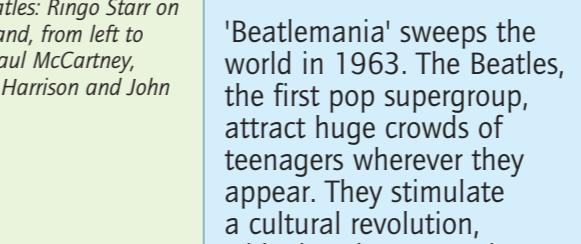
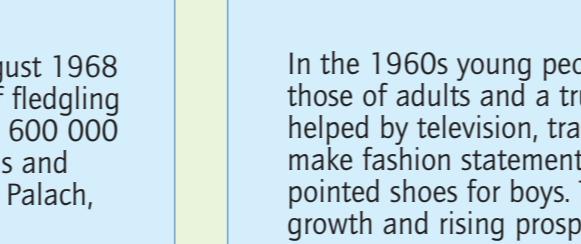
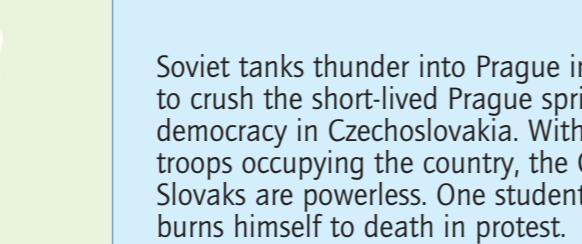
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24 April 1972

The EU's first plan for a single currency dates from 1970. To maintain monetary stability, EU members decide to allow their currencies to fluctuate against each other only within narrow limits. This exchange rate mechanism (ERM), created in 1972, is a first step towards the introduction of the euro, 30 years later.



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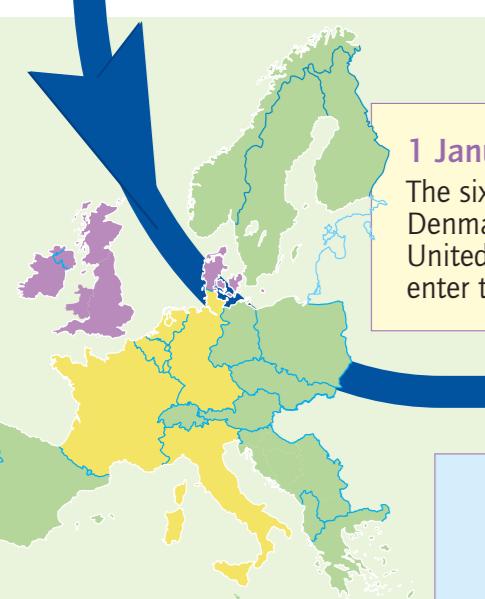
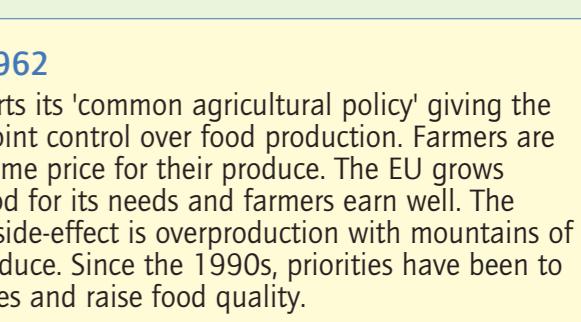
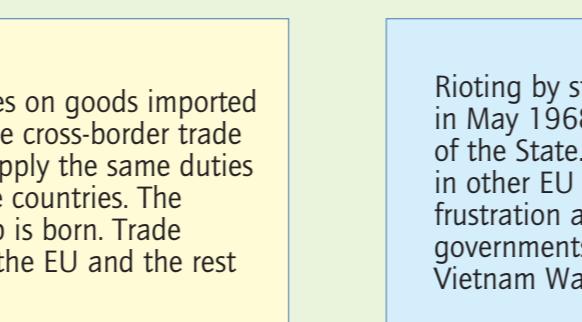
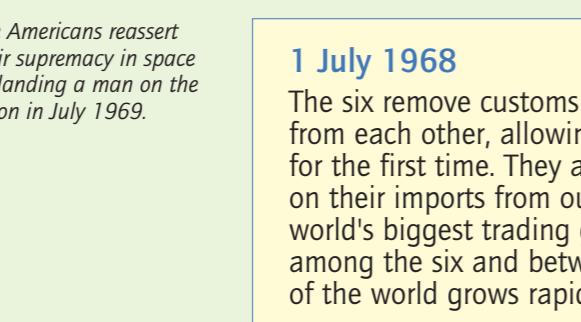
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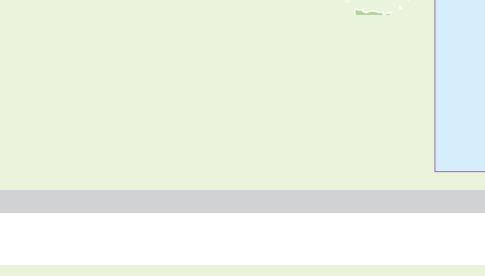
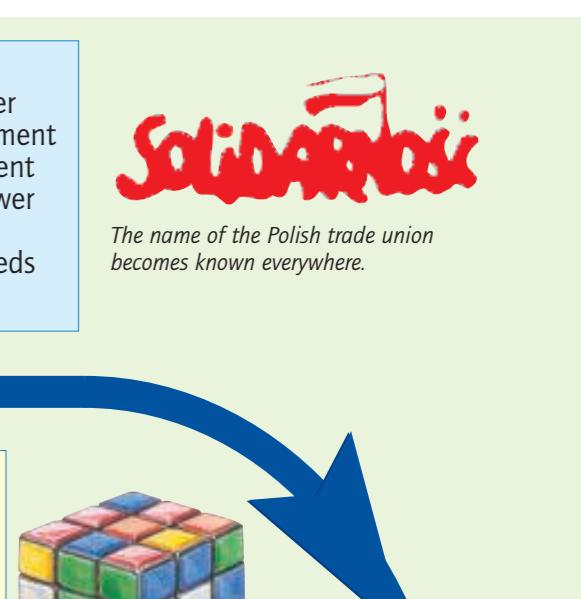
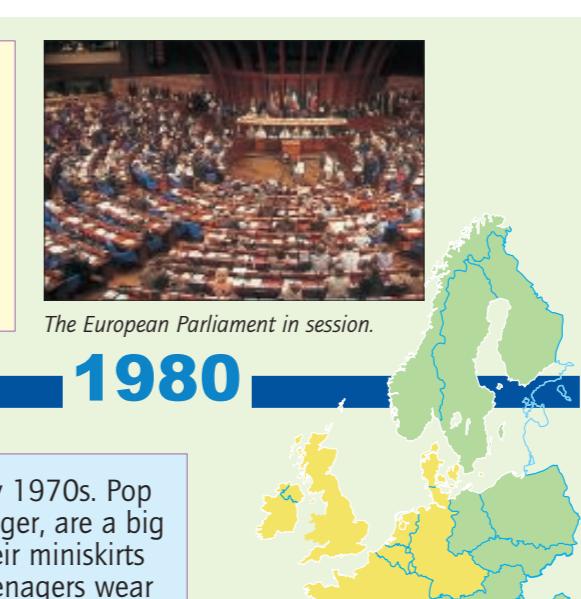
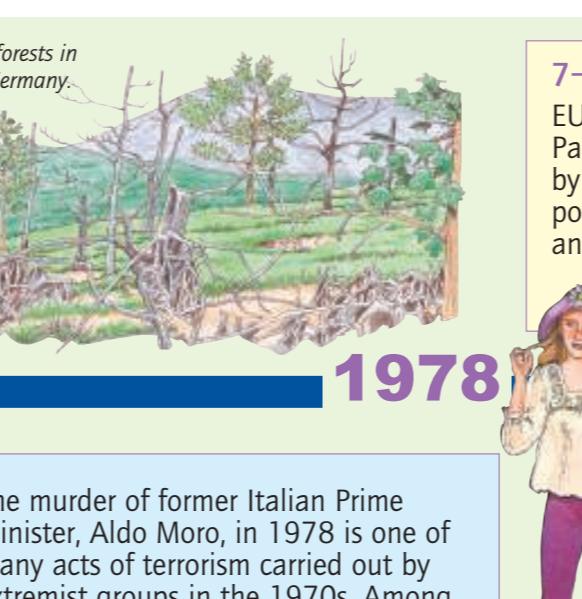
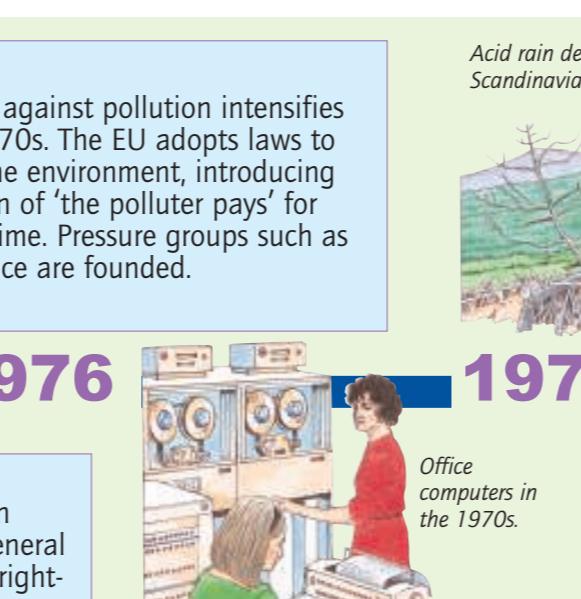
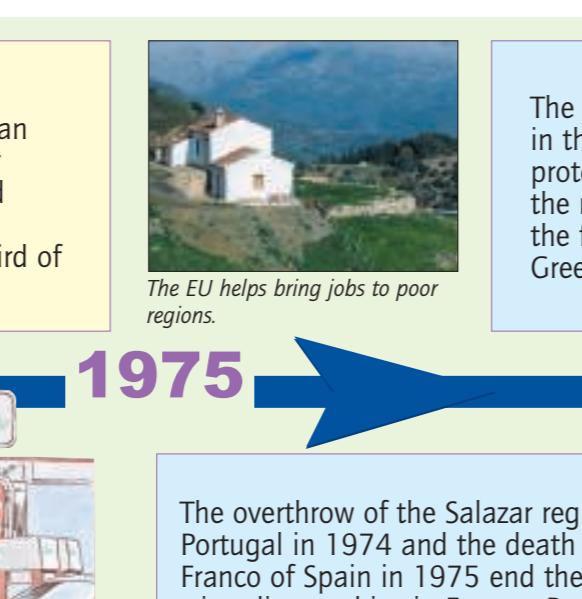
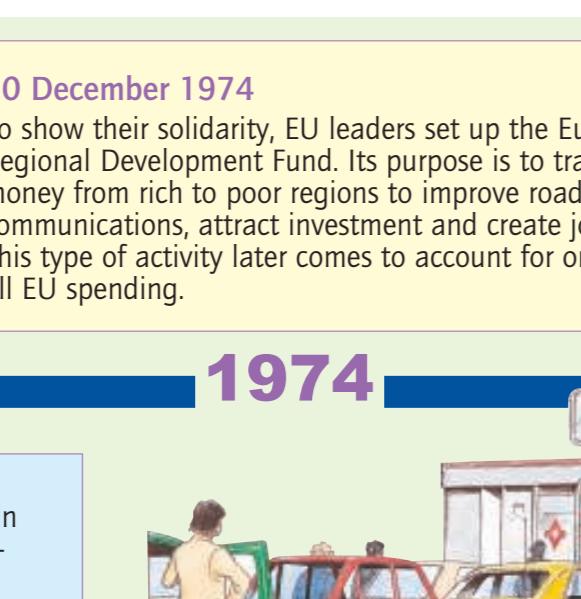
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1 January 1973

The six become nine when Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom formally enter the EU.



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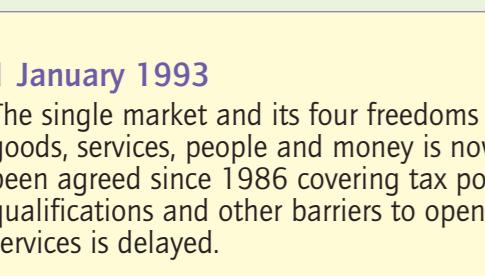
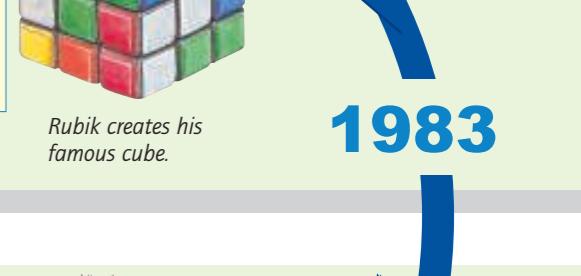
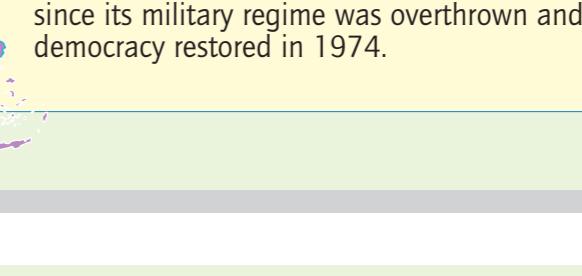
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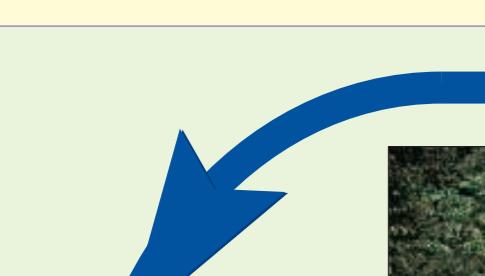
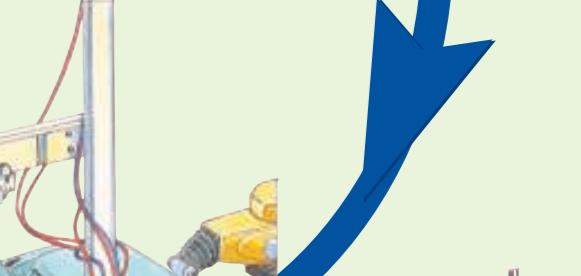
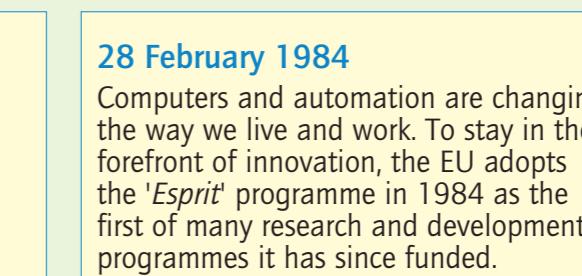
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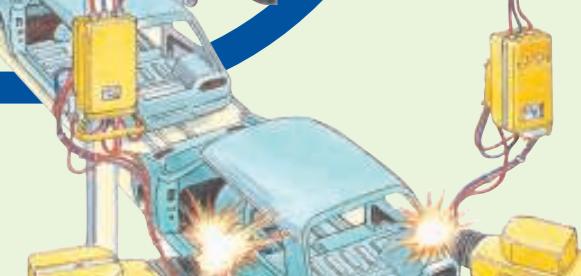
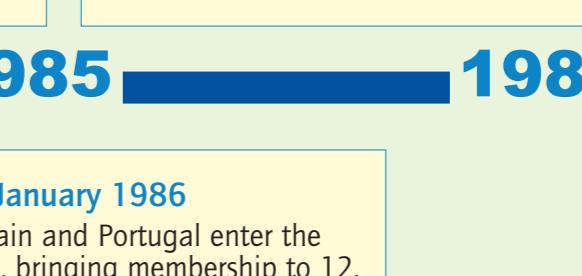
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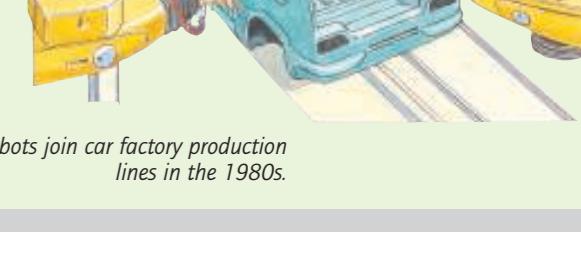
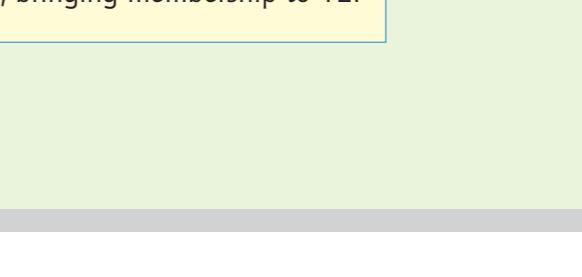
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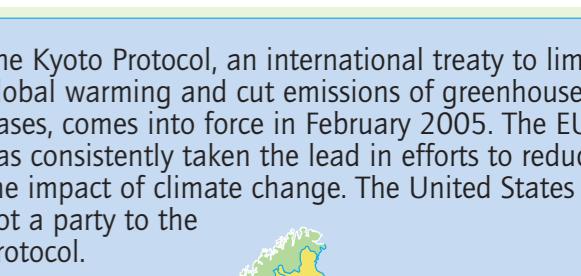
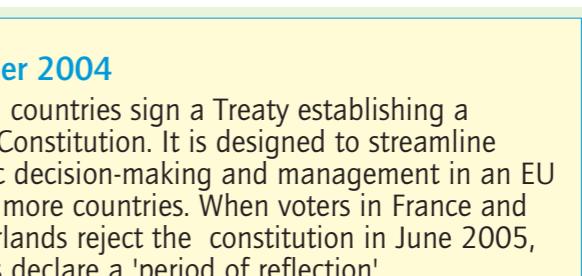
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