



65 YEARS OF HISTORY

1953 - 2018

1952 | Beginnings of the EPP Group

11 September 1952

Following the first official meeting of the Common Assembly of the Europe Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) (forerunner of the European Parliament), Christian Democratic delegates from Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands form an unofficial alliance.

First Official Meeting



11 May 1954

Alcide De Gasperi, Founding Father of the European Union, is the first Christian Democrat to be elected President of the Common Assembly: **“The future will not be built through force, nor the desire to conquer, but by the patient application of the democratic method, the constructive spirit of agreement, and by respect for freedom.”** (Alcide De Gasperi, Accepting the Charlemagne Prize for his Pro-European Commitment, 12 January 1952)

First Elected President



First Christian Democratic Group Founded

16 June 1953

The Christian Democrat Members of Parliament of the six original Member States founded the first Christian Democratic Group within the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).



11 September 1952

6 Member States: Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

1952

Christian Democratic Group
38 seats from 78

Chair of the Christian Democratic Group

Emmanuel M.J.A. Sassen
Member of the Common Assembly of the ECSC (The Netherlands)

1979 | First Direct Elections to the European Parliament

1 January 1973

9 Member States: First Enlargement as Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom join the European Economic Community.

First Enlargement



19 December 1979

Defending citizens' interests, the EPP Group voted with the European Parliament to reject the 1980 European Budget: **"A vote for the budget would constitute a vote for the stagnation of the Community that cannot be in the interest of this House."** (Egon A. Klepsch, Chairman of the EPP Group in the European Parliament, Addressing the European Parliament, 12 October 1979)

Rejection of the 1980 European Budget

First Direct Elections

7-10 June 1979

The first direct elections for Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) took place in the Member States. Direct elections allowed European citizens to effect policy and the direction of the European Union.



The Christian Democratic Group changed its name to the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democratic Group), abbreviated to the EPP Group.

EPP Group
107 seats from 410

Chair of the EPP Group
Egon A. Klepsch MEP
(Germany)

1989-1991 | Freedom and Democracy in Europe

9 November 1989

The EPP Group spearheaded European integration after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the imminent demise of totalitarianism across Central and Eastern Europe.

At the Forefront of European Integration



26 December 1991

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the EPP Group supported the emergence of pluralist democracies in the former Communist countries.

Supporting New Democracies



Reunification following the fall of the Berlin Wall

3 October 1990

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the EPP Group advocated for the reunification of Germany within the European Economic Community: **“For the first time since the end of the Second World War there is thus legitimate hope that the East-West conflict will be overcome, that there will be lasting stability and freedom for all throughout Europe.”** (Helmut Kohl (EPP), German Chancellor: EP Plenary discussion, 23 November 1989)

EPP Group

121 MEPs from 518

Chair of the EPP Group

Enlargement as Greece joins the European Economic Community.

1 January 1981

10 Member States: Second Enlargement as Greece joins the European Economic Community.

1 January 1986

12 Member States: Third Enlargement as Spain and Portugal join the European Economic Community.

1992-1993 | One Europe, One Market

7 February 1992

The EPP Group has always been active in strengthening the process of European integration. The signing of the **Maastricht Treaty** was fundamental to this process.

It created the European Union, ushering **“a new and better chapter of European history.”** (Leo Tindemans, Chair of the EPP Group in the European Parliament, European Parliament Debates, 14 October 1992).

Signing of the Maastricht Treaty

The Maastricht Treaty laid the foundations for a single currency, the euro, and expanded cooperation between European countries. It also increased the power of the European Parliament, placing it on an equal footing with the Council of the EU in adopting legislation.

1 November 1993

The Maastricht Treaty officially came into force and the European Union was officially established.

Official Establishment of the European Union



Establishment of Europe's Fundamental Principles

1 January 1993

The Single Market, the cornerstone of Europe's integration, and its four freedoms are established: the free movement of goods, services, people and money is now a reality.



EPP Group
162 MEPs from 518

Chair of the EPP Group
Leo Tindemans MEP
(Belgium)

President (EPP Group) of the European Parliament
Egon A. Klepsch MEP
(Germany) 1992-1994

1999 | Launch of the Euro

4 January 1999

The euro is born. For the EPP Group the single currency created a strong symbol of European identity and the expression of European Union values.

“It represents the most tangible historical endorsement of the extraordinary adventure that is European integration, pursued for almost half a century on the basis of pooling national sovereignties.” (Nicole Fontaine, President (EPP-ED Group) of the European Parliament, Statement Marking the Introduction of the euro, 31 December 2001)

Single Currency as a Symbol



The Largest Group in the European Parliament

10-13 June 1999

European elections saw the EPP Group triumph. EU citizens supported the EPP Group vision of a reunited continent. Since 1999, the Group has remained the largest in the European Parliament.

The Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democratic Group), changed its name to the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democratic Group) and European Democrats, abbreviated to the EPP-ED Group.

EPP-ED Group

233 MEPs from 626

Chair of the EPP-ED Group

Hans-Gert Pöttering MEP (Germany)

President (EPP-ED Group) of the European Parliament

Nicole Fontaine MEP (France)
1999-2002

1 January 1995

15 Member States: Fourth Enlargement as Austria, Finland and Sweden join the European Union.

2004 | The Reunification of Europe

1 May 2004

The EPP-ED Group supported the EU's biggest ever enlargement, accepting 10 new countries from Central and Eastern Europe.

The enlargement marked the end of the division between the two Europes, which had been separated since the end of the Second World War by the Cold War and the Berlin Wall.

Supporting the Biggest EU Enlargement



“On 13 June 2004, Europeans took a decisive step towards the realisation of the grand design of the Founding Fathers of the European Union: after 50 years of oppression and Communist dictatorship, people in Central and Eastern European countries won the right for the first time to join other citizens of Europe.”
(Budapest Declaration, 2004)

For the EPP-ED Group reunification represented an opportunity to build the entire continent on the same set of values: democracy, the rule of law, and the respect of fundamental freedoms and rights.



EPP-ED Group

268 MEPs from 732

Chair of the EPP-ED Group

Hans-Gert Pöttering MEP
(Germany)

1 May 2004

25 Member States:

Fifth Enlargement as the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia join the European Union.

2009 | EPP Group Success Story Continues

14 July 2009

Confirming the EPP Group's influence, Polish MEP Jerzy Buzek was elected President of the European Parliament.

A symbol of Europe's reunification, his election expressed Europe's desire for freedom and turned a new page in the history of European integration.

President Buzek considered his election **"a tribute to all those millions of people who fought for democracy"** and to those

under Communism who refused to **"bow to the system."** (Jerzy Buzek addressing the European Parliament, Strasbourg, 14 July 2009)

Going back to its roots, the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democratic Group) and European Democrats, changed its name to Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democratic Group), abbreviated to the EPP Group.

Election of EP President Jerzy Buzek



EPP Group Wins the European Elections

7 June 2009

The EPP Group emerged victorious from the European elections with 264 MEPs elected to represent 500 million Europeans.

EPP Group
264 MEPs from 736

Chair of the EPP Group
Joseph Daul MEP (France)

President (EPP Group)
of the European Parliament
Jerzy Buzek MEP (Poland) 2009-2011

1 January 2007
27 Member States: Sixth
Enlargement as Bulgaria and
Romania join the European Union.

2012 | European Union Receives Nobel Peace Prize

12 October 2012

The EPP Group has always been actively engaged in the field of human rights and has constantly encouraged a policy aimed at guaranteeing respect for fundamental freedoms and strengthening democracy throughout the world.

In 2012, the EU received the Nobel Peace Prize for advancing the causes of peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe.

When awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to the EU, the Nobel Committee said its decision was

based on the stabilising role the EU has played in transforming most of Europe from a continent of war to a continent of peace. The EU's most important achievement has been **“the successful struggle for peace and reconciliation and for democracy and human rights.”**

“The European Union is the biggest peace-making institution ever created in world history and the strongest possible recognition of the deep political motives behind our union.” (Herman Van Rompuy, President (EPP) of the European Council, 12 October 2012)

Nobel Prize



EPP Group
270 MEPs from 736

Chair of the EPP Group
Joseph Daul MEP (France)

2014 | European Parliament Elects President of the European Commission

22-25 May 2014

The EPP Group retained its position as the largest political Group in the European Parliament following the European elections.

EPP Group Again the Largest



EPP Group
221 MEPs from 751

Chair of the EPP Group
Manfred Weber MEP (Germany)

President (EPP Group) of the European Parliament (2017)
Antonio Tajani MEP (Italy)

1 July 2013
28 Member States: Seventh
Enlargement as Croatia joins
the European Union.



Election of Jean-Claude Juncker as President

15 July 2014

For the first time in the history of the EU, the European Parliament elected - through the vote of EU citizens - the President of the European Commission via the *Spitzenkandidat* (lead candidate) process.

As the largest Parliamentary Group following the elections, the EPP Group was best positioned

to influence the decision of the EU Member States on the next Commission President. Thus, the EPP Group lead candidate Jean-Claude Juncker was elected President, pledging **“A new start for Europe”** and an **“agenda for jobs, growth, fairness and democratic change.”** (Jean-Claude Juncker, Strasbourg, 15 July 2014)

2018 | EPP Group Achievements in the 8th Parliamentary Legislature

EPP Group
219 MEPs from 751

Chair of the EPP Group
Manfred Weber MEP
(Germany)

**President (EPP Group) of
the European Parliament**
Antonio Tajani MEP (Italy)



2014-2018

The EPP Group has delivered on its 2014 election promises and will continue its work in the European Parliament to provide a better future for Europe's citizens.

In the 8th legislature, the EPP Group has been successful in:

- Implementing **security measures** to ensure the safety of European citizens
- Stabilising the **migration** crisis
- Creating **growth and jobs** across Europe
- Abolishing roaming charges and setting in motion the **Digital Single Market**

- Securing extra funding for the **Erasmus+** Programme
- Adopting policies to fight **climate change**

The 2019 European elections are fast approaching. The EPP Group will therefore elect its new Spitzenkandidat at the EPP Congress in Helsinki in November.

During the upcoming election campaign, the EPP Group will build on its achievements and outline its political priorities to make Europe fit for the challenges of the 21st century. We will work to ensure that citizens remain at the heart of Europe.

EPP Group in the European Parliament

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