**Shaping of the European Union in historical context**

**Integration** – connecting the parts to form one unit, creating a superordinate unit, uniting.

**Integration process -** unification, cooperation of individual states in the fields of politics, economy, etc., creation of multinational units, alliances.

**Causes:** 1. political and economic dependence of countries on the USA (after WWII the USA provides economic and financial help for the war destroyed Europe – Marshall Plan).

2. USSR and its influence on middle and Eastern Europe.

3. Division of Europe to block between the two world powers the USA and USSR.

**Forms of integration:**

1. *Free trade area* – the cooperating countries cancel the taxes in common trade and quantitative limitations of goods and services; towards countries that are non-member states they assert limitations according to their needs.
2. *Customs union* – the member states cancel taxes between each-other, but towards non-member states they assert common customs policy, unified customs rate on the import of goods and services.
3. *Common market* – cancelling the restriction on free movement of goods, production factors and manpower (free movement).
4. *Economic union* – cancelling of restrictions, unification and certain harmonization and coordination of economic policies.
5. *Monetary union* – common monetary policy, common currency (euro), unified rules of financial circulation, common central bank, and unified monetary policy towards non-member countries.

**Integration in western Europe**

* After WWII new global tendencies of unification on political and economical levels started to emerge. The reason for this process was the effort to prevent yet another war as well as the effort to help economically.
* **1945** – the UN global organization was established – **United Nations*.***
* **1946 –** *Winston Churchill* advocated the emergence of the **United States of Europe.**
* **1945 – 1950 – beginning of European integration*,*** when the organization for European economic cooperation was established.
* **1948 –** the **customs union** already works between Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg.
* **1949** - **Council of Europe** was founded.
* **1950 –** in France *JeanMonnet* presented a proposal in which he suggested that the production of steel and coal of France and Germany to be directed by a supranational authority.
* **9 May 1950 – Schuman's declaration –** French Foreign Minister *RobertSchuman* invited other European countries to administer the sources of coal and steel together. Due to the fact that coal and steel were the main components for weapon production, he believed that this form of cooperation made the future war much less likely. In addition, coal and steel were essential for restoration of the continent after the war.
* **1951 – Declaration of founding the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)-** France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg reacted positively to the declaration of Robert Schuman. In 1951 these six countries signed the treaty of Paris (Treaty of founding the European Coal and Steel Community). The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) came into force in 1952.
* **1957 – Treaty of Rome - Treaty of the European Economic Community (EEC) and European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) –** the first six countries signed two new treaties:Treaty of the European Economic Community (EEC) and European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), know as the Treaty of Rome.
  + **European Economic Community (EEC) –** the states agreed that they would gradually change their separate economies to a common market beginning with customs union. This treaty was the beginning of cooperation in the field of agriculture, fishing, Harbour policy and transport policy.
  + **European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM**) – the cooperation in the field of atomic energy was focusing on common research of the atomic energy civilian usage possibilities.

The Treaty of Rome came into force in 1958.

* **60s of the 20th century – Success and fight –** the trade within the EEC was as vast as the trade between the USA and Soviet Union. After accepting the Treaty of Rome the European cooperation entered a difficult period: the member states didn’t want to transfer further authority onto European level. These demanding negotiations marked European cooperation in the 60s and 70s of the 20th century.
* **1965 – European Communities (EC) –** Merger Treaty (signed in 1965 valid since 1967): ECSC, EEC and EURATOM have merged into European Communities (EC).
* **1968** – **customs union** began to be implemented within EC.
* **1979 - first direct elections to the European Parliament were held –** citizens of the EC voted their representatives to the European Parliament in June 1979. In that time there were nine member countries in which 410 representatives of EP were voted for the period between the years 1979 – 1984.
* **1986 – Single European Act (SEA) –** twelve member states decided that by 1992 they will create a common trade.All barriers to free trade and movement had to be removed by then. The member states began to cooperate in the area of environmental policy and scientific research.
* **1992 – The treaty of the European Union – Maastricht Treaty –** marked the real beginning of political cooperationwhich started to evolve besides economic integration. The former European Community received a new name: European Union (EU).

„New“ European Union stands on these three main pillars:

* Economic integration: the member states have decided to reinforce the economic integration and to create a common currency: euro.
* Cooperation in the field of foreign affairs and security policy.
* Cooperation in the field of internal affairs and justice.

Decisions in political affairs had to be accepted unanimously. Every member state had the right of veto.

This treaty was signed in February 1992 and came into force on 1st November 1993.

* **1993 – Open borders -** 1 January 1993 customs controls were removed from the internal borders of the EU member states. Free single market and freedom of movement, goods, services and capital came into force.
* **1993 – criteria to join the EU were set:**
* To be a „European“ country (geographically or historically),
* Respect the rules of law principles,
* To have a well functioning market economy,
* To be a stable democratic state,
* To respect the human rights,
* To implement all existing rules and laws of the EU, the acquis communautaire or Community Acquis.
* **1997 - Amsterdam Treaty -** due to increase in number of EU member states the reform of the decision-making process was necessary: less decisions based on unanimous agreement and more decisions based on majority of votes. The first attempt to change these rules was the Amsterdam Treaty (signed in 1997, came into force in 1999. The treaty however didn´t meet the expectations.
* **2001 – Treaty of Nice -**  the second attempt to reform the EU (signed in 2001, came into force in 2003). It didn´t solve all problems in EU control.
* **2002 – Introduction of the euro -** euro was introduced into the bank system in 1999. However it wasn´t until 1 January 2002 that euro started to be actively used by 12 member states of the EU. Three member states (The United Kingdom, Denmark and Switzerland) decided to use their national currency instead of the euro. The EU institution that manages the euro is the European Central Bank (ECB).
* **2004 - 2005 - European constitution -** June 2004 – the third attempt for reformation of the EU took place. Due to its importance some of the countries decided to hold a referendum about the constitution. The citizens of France and the Netherlands voted against the new „constitution for Europe“. Every new EU treaty coming into effect has to be accepted by every member state, the decision of these two states sent the „constitution“ right into trash.
* **2007 – Lisbon Treaty –** the fourth attempt took place in 2007: the European constitution got a new look and was renamed to Lisbon Treaty. This treaty was ratified by all member states. New principles came into force in December 2009 and determined the way of running the EU till this date.
* **2012 - Nobel Peace Prize for the EU –** European Union acquired the Nobel Peace Prize. This prize was the acknowledgement symbol for the sixty years of effort to support peace, reconciliation, democracy, and human rights in Europe.
* **2014 – Elections to the European Parliament with European election leaders –** first time in the history of European parliamentary elections it was directly decided who the new chairman of the EU would be.Large political groups in the European Parliament determined their election leader in advance. In time before the elections a vast discussion between the election leaders about their views on the future of Europe took place. The European people's party became the largest political group in the European Parliament. Due to this fact it was the election leader from Luxembourg, *Jean-ClaudeJuncker*, who was appointed the new chairman of the European Commission.

***States of EU:*** West Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy (18 April 1951), Denmark, Ireland, Great Britain (1 January 1973), Greece (1.1.1981), Spain, Portugal (1 January 1986), United Germany (3 October 1990), Austria, Finland, Sweden (1 January 1995), Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia (1 May 2004), Bulgaria, Romania (1 January 2007). Croatia (1.7.2013), Great Britain (left the EU – 2020). EU = 27 states.

Candidate member states and potential member states:

Today there are five official candidate member countries to be included to EU:

* Albania,
* Northern Macedonia,
* Montenegro,
* Serbia,
* Turkey.

Candidate state is a state that has successfully made a request for membership. Subsequently the negotiations of the accession between the EU and the country have begun.

Apart from the candidate member states there are some potential member states. These countries officially announced their interest in entering the EU but the negotiations have not started yet.

They are:

* Bosnia and Herzegovina,
* Kosovo.