

A chronology of the EU constitution

23 June 2007	<p>An Taoiseach Mr Ahern: ‘Thankfully, they haven’t changed any of the substance’ (RTE News 23/06/’07) Listen to it at: http://www.rte.ie/news/2007/0623/6news_av.html?2261976,null,230</p> <p>On the change of name for the EU Foreign Minister he said: ‘It’s the original job as proposed but they just put on this long title - High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and also vice president of the Commission. It’s the same job [...] it’s still going to be the same position.’ <i>Irish Independent</i>, 24 June 2007.</p>
19 June 2007	<p>Commission president José Manuel Barroso warns the new Member States not to disrupt the upcoming summit: ‘I believe ... it would be in their interest for them to show that their membership of the EU is not making the union’s life more difficult.’ (<i>EUobserver.com</i>, 19.06.2007)</p>
18 June 2007	<p>UK prime minister Tony Blair outlines ‘red lines’ on negotiations over the next EU Treaty at the forthcoming EU summit in Brussels (21-22 June 2007), vowing once again to fight off the Charter of Fundamental Rights, alongside anything that would ‘displace Britain’s role in the world’ (foreign affairs), undermine ‘the common law legal system’, as well as extending qualified majority voting. (<i>BBC</i>, 18.06.2007, <i>Open Europe</i> http://www.openeurope.org.uk/media-centre/bulletin.aspx?bulletinid=58, 19.06.2006)</p>
17 June 2007	<p>German foreign minister Frank Walter Steinmeier said after talks in Luxembourg that EU foreign ministers have agreed on how the new EU Constitution should be presented – it should not be called a Constitution, and not contain symbols such as an EU flag and anthem. ‘Of course we don’t have a guarantee of the success we are all hoping for and that we are all intensively working for will actually come about,’ Mr Steinmeier added.</p>
12 June 2007	<p>Addressing national and euro-parliamentarians Commission president José Manuel Barroso says he hoped UK prime minister Blair ‘will have the courage’ to back EU integration despite public hostility: ‘You know about the UK, and the respect I have for your country. We have to stand up in front of our national public opinions, not give up to some of the populisms we have in our member states.’ <i>Open Europe</i> http://www.openeurope.org.uk/media-centre/article.aspx?newsid=1918</p>
07 June 2007	<p>‘Tony Blair and I have just agreed on what might be the framework for a simplified treaty’ says French president Sarkozy at the G8 summit in Germany.</p>

06 June 2007	Pro-Constitution MEPs threaten to block any new treaty that is not ambitious enough. Spanish MEP Inigo Mendez de Vigo (EPP) warns: 'Our hands won't be trembling if we have to reject the treaty which comes out of the intergovernmental conference if we think it doesn't match our expectations.' (EUobserver.com, AFP) After a lively debate in the European Parliament the Resolution over the Baron Crespo/Brok Report http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A6-2007-0197&language=EN&mode=XML on the Roadmap for the Union's Constitutional Process, which calls for the ratification of a new treaty by the end of 2008 , is passed by 469 votes, with 141 MEPs voting against and 32 abstentions. The report's envisaged treaty is as close as possible to the rejected constitution, and there is no mention of referenda.
01 June 2007	An Taoiseach says that he has 'no difficulty' with a simplified EU Constitutional Treaty. http://www.ireland.com/newspaper/ireland/2007/0601/1180483618593.html
23 May 2007	'We must come up with a mutually acceptable solution that does justice to the concerns which emerged following the Dutch and French referenda' Dutch prime minister Jan-Peter Balkenende tells MEPs in the European Parliament. He adds that the new EU treaty should drop the name 'Constitution' as it was a major factor in the Dutch rejection in 2005. Among the other requested changes Balkenende expressed his concern about giving up the Dutch veto right if the qualified majority voting is implemented. He also pledged the reinforcement of national parliaments control on EU policies: 'If a majority of national parliaments are opposed to a given proposal, there must be consequences'. Finally, he criticized the rate at which the EU extends its borders. 'After the latest round we have to realise that the public needs time to get used to the EU in its new form. Things have changed too quickly for some people's taste,' Balkenende said
09 May 2007	Referring to the Constitutional Treaty, French UMP member Alain Lamassoure (possibly the next French Europe Minister) explains to <i>Euobserver.com</i> that the newly elected French president Nicolas Sarkozy plans to stick 'as much as possible to the original text'.
08 May 2007	'Whatever form the final document takes, the essential reforms embodied in the original draft need to be maintained' – European Parliament president Hans Gert Poettering in <i>Cabinet News</i>
04 May 2007	The Czech government publishes its position on the next treaty. According to Czech officials, 'further discussions should be based on the current draft of the Treaty on the Constitution for Europe'. eudemocrats.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Documents/Czech_Republic_s_position.pdf
18 Apr 2007	Polish prime minister Kaczynski tells Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso in Brussels that 'Poland is not satisfied with a situation in which from quite a privileged position in the Nice structure we are to become one of the least privileged.' (<i>Euobserver.com</i> , 19.04.2007)
17 Apr 2007	After a three-hour meeting with German chancellor Angela Merkel, Czech president Vaclav Klaus declares that Germany has understood that there will be no breakthrough over the EU charter during its six-month presidency term. 'There is a qualitative shift going on' says Mr. Klaus, adding that Germany seems to realise that substantive changes in the functioning of the EU are more important than a timetable for solving the Constitutional impasse. (<i>Euobserver.com</i> , 18.04.2007)
16 Apr 2007	After a meeting with Dutch prime minister Jan Peter Balkenende, UK prime

	<p>minister Tony Blair indicates that he would support the Dutch proposal for a new Treaty rather than try to revive the Constitution. 'It is important we go back to the idea of a conventional treaty where the idea is to make Europe more effective, work more effectively, because we now have a Europe of 27 countries rather than 15', Blair said. Criticising the scope of the actual treaty, Blair argues: 'There's all the difference in the world between a Constitutional Treaty that is an attempt to consolidate ... to write all the rules of the European Union, to give rise to a whole new set of legal principles – and an amending treaty within the existing European treaties that makes the rules work more effectively.' (<i>Euobserver.com</i>, 17.04.2007).</p>
16 Apr 2007	<p>In an interview with <i>Le Monde</i>, Czech deputy prime minister Alexandr Vondra is quoted as saying: 'We are ready to participate in finding a consensus, so that everything is ready for 2009... We have agreed that the Constitutional text as it was signed constitutes a basis for negotiation'. Although he says 80% of the text remained valid, Vondra insists that he would favour the suppression of the Part 3. Vondra says he would agree to a fusion of High Representative for Foreign Policy and the Commissioner for External Relations. In the end, Vondra says he prefers 'Nice plus to less Constitution'. http://www.openeurope.org.uk/media-centre/summary.aspx?id=311</p>
25 Mar 2007	<p>European Parliament president Hans Gert Pottering underlines that the Constitution will have to have a name change but it should remain the same in content and that it must be ready by June 2009. Berlin press conference.</p>
25 Mar 2007	<p>Italian prime minister Romano Prodi: 'To continue building, we now need new rules, but not starting from zero.' 'The treaty signed in Rome in October 2004 forms a very solid basis ... a text signed by the 27 heads of state and ratified by 18 countries.' http://euobserver.com/9/23771</p>
25 Mar 2007	<p>At a press conference after the Berlin Declaration German chancellor Merkel briefly explained the 'road map' which would aim for an inter-governmental conference (IGC) to be launched and concluded by the Portuguese presidency (July-Dec 2007). This would then flow into the Slovenian presidency (Jan-Jun 2008), giving 'a solution right up to the French presidency' (July-Dec 2008). www.eu2007.de/en/Media_Service/Live_Streaming_Press_Conferences/index.html When asked to elaborate, Ms Merkel had this to say: 'We have already got a draft [constitution] signed by 27 prime ministers and finance ministers, and the process has to go through the procedures of national parliaments; there were two referendums with a negative result and we have drawn our lessons; there is no use of having 27 signatures on a text that cannot be implemented, but in June 2007 we will have a clearer picture.' www.eu2007.de/en/Media_Service/Live_Streaming_Press_Conferences/index.html</p>
25 Mar 2007	<p>Berlin Declaration marking the 50th Anniversary of the Rome Treaties: German chancellor Merkel failed to garner enough support from among EU leaders to declare the revival of the EU Constitution. Reflecting this dissent, the eventual Berlin Declaration www.eu2007.de/de/News/download_docs/Maerz/0324-RAA/English.pdf could only reach as far as a modest attempt at directing the way forward: 'today, 50 years after the signing of the Treaties of Rome, we are united in our aim of placing the European Union on a renewed common basis before the European Parliament elections in 2009'.</p>

23 Mar 2007	A poll conducted by Open Europe finds that 75% of people across the EU ‘want a referendum on any new treaty which gives more powers to the EU.’ In all 27 countries a majority would want a referendum, reaching 83% in the UK. http://www.openeurope.org.uk/media-centre/pressrelease.aspx?pressreleaseid=31
09 Mar 2007	EU summit in Brussels discusses the text for the Berlin Declaration which they will sign on 25 March in Berlin to commemorate the 50 th Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. It is agreed that the words ‘Constitution’ and ‘Constitutional’ should not be used in the declaration. Instead, it should make reference to the need for a ‘new Treaty’.
20 Feb 2007	Italian interior minister Giuliano Amato declares that he wishes to ‘change the name but not the substance’ of the Constitution. According to Amato the ‘good thing about not calling it a Constitution is that no one can ask for a referendum on it’ (speech at the London School of Economics - Open Europe)
06 Feb 2007	Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso: ‘Referendums make the process of approval of European treaties much more complicated and less predictable ... If you have signed a treaty, you should also ratify it. And if you can’t, you should at least contribute to a solution.’ When considering whether to hold a referendum to ‘every member state... [should] think twice’. (Commenting on the Dutch decision on whether to hold another referendum) (Euobserver) also: http://euobserver.com/18/23458
30 Jan 2007	Sweden: Despite strong popular support for a referendum on the Constitution, Swedish EU-minister Cecilia Malmstrom said that the Swedish government wants to keep ‘as much as possible’ from the old Constitution proposal, adding that the government will avoid an ‘undesirable’ referendum on the Treaty.
18 Jan 2007	‘The best way is to reach a deal without referendums, the whole referendum procedure would take too long’, says Slovenian prime minister Janez Jansa , who is working closely with Mrs. Merkel on the Constitution ahead of his country taking over the EU presidency in January 2008. FinancialTimes http://www.ft.com/cms/s/107f1f94-a71f-11db-83e4-0000779e2340,dwp_uuid=70662e7c-3027-11da-ba9f-00000e2511c8,_i_rssPage=70662e7c-3027-11da-ba9f-00000e2511c8.html
17 Jan 2007	German chancellor Merkel declares that the ‘pause for reflection’ on the stalled EU Constitution was over . Concerning the time table, she said that a decision about how to resurrect the controversial treaty must be reached by June 2007 – and implemented before the European elections in 2009 (German chancellor addressing the EU parliament).
1 Jan 2007	Bulgaria and Romania sign up to the EU Constitution upon accession, as provided by the Accession Treaty.
14 Dec 2006	‘I would consider it an historical failure’ German chancellor Angela Merkel said according to Deutsche Welle ‘if we do not succeed in working out the substance of the constitutional treaty by the time the next European elections take place,’ adding that she and the German government would work ‘intensively’ during the six-month presidency ‘so that such a treaty, based on our common values, can go into force.’ (Source: Open Europe) http://www.openeurope.org.uk/media-centre/summary.aspx?id=229

<p>5 Dec 2006</p>	<p>Finland: parliament approves without a referendum. The ratification process is still pending. Following the ratification of the proposed EU Constitution, Paavo Lipponen, the president of the Finnish parliament, said the vote had produced ‘an even greater majority of member states in favour of this treaty’, ignoring the principle of unanimity on EU treaties, the Dutch and French votes against the constitution, as well as the majority of Finns who are against ratification. Mr. Lipponen added that Finland has contributed to making a ‘front against tearing the treaty apart and starting from zero.’ (see poll results on 02.06.2006 and 23.05.2006)</p>
<p>12 Nov 2006</p>	<p>The Netherlands: According to a poll 64% of Dutch would oppose a Constitution, while 87% agree with the idea that ‘the population does not have a say’ in the decisions taken in Brussels (<i>Le Monde</i>, 13.11.2006).</p>
<p>6 Nov 2006</p>	<p>To the question: ‘Who’s waiting for the Constitution in Europe? Just the politicians?’ German chancellor Angela Merkel answers: ‘Whether citizens have an essential need for the Constitution, I don’t know. I don’t know either whether every German has a need for the Basic Law every minute. But when one agrees on a platform of common rights and obligations, it is substantial.’ (Source: <i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>)</p>
<p>18 Oct 2006</p>	<p>UK shadow minister for Europe, Graham Brady: ‘There’s a very strong case for saying Europe is not only stuck but going in the wrong direction. On current trends the EU’s share of global wealth could be cut by half in the next 30 years. But six years after Lisbon, at best nothing has happened and if anything there is more regulation. More decision-making is being taken away from the people’. (a few days before the EU summit in Lahti, Finland on 20.10.2006). (<i>The Guardian</i>, 19.10.2006)</p>
<p>13 Oct 2006</p>	<p>During a visit to Poland (13-14 Oct.) by Commission president Barroso, Polish president Lech Kaczynski announced that his country would make some important reform proposals on the future of the EU in early 2007 during the German presidency (<i>Euractiv</i>, 16.10.2006). It is believed that both the president and his twin brother, the prime minister, want to open up the Constitution as far as re-negotiating member states’ voting rights (<i>EUobserver</i>, 19.10.2006). Otherwise, the Nice Treaty figures would do fine for Poland.</p>
<p>11 Oct 2006</p>	<p>German chancellor Angela Merkel said she would like to see the EU Constitution in place before the 2009 European Parliament elections. ‘It should be a structure that is deserving of the word constitutional treaty,’ she said. (<i>EUobserver</i>, 11.10.2006).</p>
<p>08 Sep 2006</p>	<p>French presidential candidate, interior minister Nicolas Sarkozy: ‘We should resort to a mini treaty to achieve the most urgent institutional reforms [in the EU].’ ‘All this could be negotiated rapidly,’ Sarkozy goes on, ‘without reopening the political debates on issues on which a compromise had been found. It would provide a way out for those countries that voted “No” without humiliating those who voted “Yes”.’ (<i>Reuters</i>, 09.09.2006).</p> <p>These reforms, which are hoped to be ratified in parliaments without referendums, would include a long-term EU president and foreign minister, a reformed voting system and wider use of majority voting. The ‘mini-treaty’ approach, while favoured by Italian prime minister Prodi, was rejected by German chancellor Angela Merkel, who favours the current constitutional text. (<i>EUobserver</i>, 08.09.2006).</p>

06 Sep 2006	German foreign minister Steinmeier declares that Germany will carry out a deepened dialogue in order to ‘preserve the substance of the constitutional treaty’. He announced a consistent dialogue with the nine countries which have not yet ratified the treaty ‘to make sure that the political substance of the constitutional treaty is preserved’. ‘That will not have to rest only on the German shoulders, all in Europe must take part.’ (<i>AFP</i>)
28 Aug 2006	German chancellor Angela Merkel maintains after an audience with the Pope that ‘Christianity has formed Europe in a decisive way’ and that such an element should appear in the EU constitution. (<i>AP</i>)
	The foreign affairs committee of the British House of Commons (made up of Labour, Conservative and Liberal-democrat parliamentarians) drew up a report in which it attacked attempts at ‘ cherry-picking ’ key articles from the constitution. The committee’s report concludes with a clear recommendation: ‘We conclude that the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe is unlikely ever to come into force, although attempts may be made to enact some of its provisions by other means ... We recommend that the government encourage its European counterparts to face up to this reality and explicitly to abandon the Treaty as a package.’ (<i>EUobserver</i> , 28.07.06).
22 June 2006	A few days after the EU summit in Brussels (15-16 June) An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern said: ‘Reports of the death of the European Constitution are premature ... In the interim, we will not have a referendum in Ireland ... How can the government ask the people to vote on a European treaty when the final form and content of that treaty remain open to question?’ ‘I remain firmly convinced that the Constitution is essential for the future success of the enlarged EU’. However, he warned that governments should not try to force through a charter against people’s will. (<i>Reuters</i>)
22 June 2006	‘ We might change the name, I would not insist on the name constitution, ’ said chancellor Wolfgang Schussel on behalf of the Austrian EU presidency . ‘ It may be that one adds an appendix, or an interpretation of the existing chapters, but the substance must remain unchanged. ’ (<i>Direction Générale de l’Information, European Parliament, Brussels</i>)
16 June 2006	‘We have in front of us a six-month period which we will use to suture the wounds, but the mourning is over’ declared Italian prime minister Romano Prodi on the EU Constitution after the EU summit in Brussels (15-16 June) (<i>Direction Générale de l’Information, European Parliament, Brussels</i>). According to the <i>EUobserver.com</i> Mr Prodi said in May: ‘It is impossible to go ahead with exactly the same text’, arguing that the risk of a second ‘no’ to the treaty in France or the Netherlands was too high.
16 June 2006	German chancellor Angela Merkel said after the Brussels EU summit (15-16 June) that it was ‘urgently necessary that [the EU] reaches consensus’ before the 2009 European elections. We need ‘to say clearly what we require for Europe ... for that we need the Constitution’. (<i>Direction Générale de l’Information, European Parliament, Brussels</i>)
16 June 2006	Belgian prime minister Guy Verhofstadt said after the EU summit in Brussels (15-16 June): ‘I had the impression that there was an attempt to bury’ <i>the Constitution, but</i> ‘the pressure is being maintained on those which suspended the process of ratification.’

16 Jun 2006	<p>‘We are moving away from the rhetoric’ to concentrate on the ‘delivery of concrete results,’ Austrian chancellor Wolfgang Schussel said on behalf of the outgoing Austrian EU presidency, adding after the EU summit (15-16 June in Brussels) that it would likely be ‘good to preserve a good number of elements of the Constitution.’</p> <p><i>(Direction Générale de l’Information, European Parliament, Brussels)</i></p>
16 June 2006	<p>‘The decision that was taken is to continue the ratification process’, Luxembourg’s prime minister Jean-Claude Juncker declared after the EU summit in Brussels (15-16 June). Mr Juncker also said that ‘it is absolutely possible that the EU will move forward without the British if they reject the Constitution.’ <i>(openeurope.org)</i></p>
16 June 2006	<p>Speaking after the EU summit in Brussels (15-16 June) Dutch minister for Europe Atzo Nicolai excluded a new referendum on the same Constitutional text or even on a slightly modified text. ‘And one should not have too much hope that a possible future new government would do it’ he added, since the word ‘Constitution’ had a ‘counterproductive’ effect in the Netherlands.<i>(Direction Générale de l’Information, European Parliament, Brussels)</i></p>
16 June 2006	<p>Swedish prime minister Göran Persson said after the EU summit in Brussels (15-16 June 2006): ‘I’m quite confident there will be a new try in France and in the Netherlands.’ This contrasted starkly with what the Dutch foreign minister Atzo Nicolai said after the EU summit, when he excluded a new referendum on the same text or even on a slightly modified text: ‘And one should not have too much hope that a possible future new government would do it’ Mr Nicolai added, since the word ‘Constitution’ had a ‘counterproductive’ effect in the Netherlands. <i>(Direction Générale de l’Information, European Parliament, Brussels)</i></p>
02 June 2006	<p>A poll commissioned by Open Europe suggests that a new referendum would see the lead of the No camp increase by 2 percent in France and 7 % for the Netherlands. The poll was conducted in France and the Netherlands a year after the Referendum. The results for France are as follows (the Netherlands in brackets):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give more power to the EU: 18 % (15 %) • Keep the current balance: 16 % (17 %) • Take back powers from the EU: 53 % (54 %) • Leave the EU altogether: 10 % (14 %) <p>According to the same poll 74 % of French voters (75 % of Dutch) think that no parts of the Constitution should be implemented unless they are agreed in fresh referendums. See openeurope.org report. www.openeurope.org.uk/research/one_year_on.pdf</p>
02 June 2006	<p>Finland: According to a TNS Gallup Oy poll published in Finland, only 22 % of Finns agree that their parliament should ratify the EU Constitution, while 48 % are opposed.</p>
01 June 2006	<p>The Netherlands: according to a poll by Maurice de Hond/NOS 68 % of respondents would vote against the European Constitution ‘if a new referendum on the European Constitution took place this week’, with 32% in favour (conducted on 24 May 2006 with 2,200 Dutch adults).</p>
23 May 2006	<p>Finland: According to a media poll by Sunnuntaisuomalainen 57% want a referendum, while another 14% prefer no ratification at all. This gives a total of 71% who would not like the Finnish parliament to carry on with the ratification of the Constitution. Only 26% agree to ratification.</p>

11 May 2006	‘[We should] consider very well, how to lead the project of the Constitutional Treaty to a success. I want this Constitutional Treaty, the German Government wants it and also, as I think, the majority of this parliament.’ (German chancellor Angela Merkel in her speech to the Bundestag.)
09 May 2006	Estonia: Riigikogu (parliament) ratifies without a referendum. Polls on the EU Constitution suggest that this does not reflect the will of the Estonian people: 5 May 2006: Estonian national TV talkshow ‘Foorum’ poll – 80.1% voted against the EU Constitution (the talkshow involved a debate between high profile parliamentarians). 8 May 2006: Newspaper <i>Postimees</i> Internet poll – 79% of Estonians voted against the EU Constitution.
20 Apr 2006	Spanish prime minister Jose Zapatero says that ‘Europe needs a new, more ambitious treaty’ and that the Spanish government would work with Germany ‘to take advantage of the first opportunity we have to recover the constitutional will.’ (<i>EITB</i> , 20 April 2006)
19 Apr 2006	Although the Latvian government indicated it is open to changes on the Constitution, prime minister Aigars Kalvitis hopes that ‘this Constitution will be ratified sooner or later in all European Union countries’. (<i>AFP</i> , 19 April 2006)
08 Feb 2006	Final ratification in Belgium , after several constituent parliamentary approvals since 28 April 2005
19 Dec 2005	Portuguese prime minister Jose Socrates says that ‘the project of the Constitutional Treaty was signed by the 25 member states and it would not be right’ to forget it. He plans to revive the EU Constitution during the Portuguese presidency of the EU in June-Dec 2007. (<i>AFP</i> , 20 December 2005)
12 Dec 2005	EU Council (end of UK presidency) issues an ‘interim report on the national debates during the reflection period on the future of Europe’ http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st15/st15576.en05.pdf
13 Oct 2005	EU Commission launches Plan D: Commission issues a communication (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2005/com2005_0494en01.pdf) with its ‘contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate.’ The Commission declares that it ‘has proposed a Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate, not as a rescue operation for the Constitution, but to stimulate a wider debate between the European Union’s democratic institutions and citizens.’
10 July 2005	Consultative referendum in Luxembourg: 56.52% in favour, 43.48% against.
06 July 2005	Malta: Parliament ratifies without a referendum.
30 June 2005	Cyprus: Parliament ratifies without a referendum. It is the first country to ratify during the ‘Period of Reflection’.
18 June 2005	Period of Reflection: At the end of the European Council (EU summit), EU leaders adopt a declaration on ‘the ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe’ calling for a ‘period of reflection’ following the negative votes in France and the Netherlands on the European Constitution. They also gave guidance to the Member States on the type of debate that could be organised: ‘the period of reflection will be used to enable a broad debate to take place in each of our countries, involving citizens, civil society, social partners, national parliaments and political parties’. It also indicated that the European Institutions should ‘make their contribution, with the Commission playing a special role in this regard’. (see Commission’s response, 13.10.2005, above)

After the French & Dutch Results	Czech Republic and Denmark cancel planned referenda , pending further decisions. Ireland, Poland, Portugal and the United Kingdom: postpone planned referenda . Sweden is the only country (after the Finnish ratification on 05.12.2006) where a referendum was not planned, whose parliament has not ratified the EU Constitution.
02 June 2005	Latvia: Saeima (parliament) ratifies without a referendum. It is the first of seven national parliament to ignore the French and Dutch popular will and the principle of unanimity on EU treaties.
01 June 2005	Consultative referendum in the Netherlands: the EU Constitution is again rejected with a higher percentage – 61.54% to 38.46%, with a turnout of 63.30%. The Dutch government proclaims that it will respect the will of the people and will not proceed with the ratification process.
29 May 2005	Referendum in France: the EU Constitution is rejected by 54.68% to 45.32% with a turnout of 69.34%. The ratification process cannot proceed further and the French government cannot ratify the Treaty. In view of the Principle of Unanimity on EU Treaties, the Treaty cannot be implemented across the EU. Yet the ratification process of the same Constitutional text continues in seven other Member States.
27 May 2005	Germany: Bundesrat approves following the approval of the Bundestag (12 May 2005). The ratification process is not complete, pending a decision by the German Constitutional Court.
25 May 2005	Austria: Bundesrat ratifies after approval by the Nationalrat on 11 May 2005
11 May 2005	Slovakia: Narodna rada (parliament) approves without a referendum. The president of the republic has not signed.
28 Apr 2005	Belgium: senate approves , followed by the Chamber of Deputies (19 May 2005) and several constituent parliaments including Brussels (17 June 2005), German-speaking community (20 June 2005), Walloon (29 June 2005), French community (19 July 2005), Flemish (8 February 2006). Final ratification will be on 8 February 2006. No referendum was held.
18 Apr 2005	Greece: Parliament ratifies without a referendum.
06 Apr 2005	Italy: Senate confirms earlier ratification by the Italian Chamber of Deputies (25 January 2005) without a referendum.
20 Feb 2005	Consultative referendum in Spain: 76.73% vote Yes. The turnout is only 42.32% and polls show that very few people understood it or its implications.
01 Feb 2005	Slovenia: Državni zbor (Parliament) ratifies without a referendum.
20 Dec 2004	Hungary: Országgyűlés (parliament) ratifies without a referendum.
11 Nov 2004	Lithuania: Seimas (parliament) ratifies without a referendum.
29 Oct 2004	Rome: The Constitutional Treaty is signed by the heads of state and government of Member States, but it still needs to be ratified by the national parliaments.
18 June 2004	EU summit in Brussels under Irish presidency Taoiseach Mr Ahern announces an agreement on the Constitutional Treaty leading to the signing of the treaty in Rome.
01 May 2004	EU enlarges to 25 Member States
26 Mar 2004	EU summit in Brussels under Irish presidency reaffirms ‘its commitment to reaching agreement on the Constitutional Treaty’, agreeing ‘on the importance of maintaining the momentum imparted by the Convention and by the work of the Intergovernmental Conference so far’. www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/pdf/bru0304_en.pdf
17 Oct 2003	EU summit in Brussels leaves it to the Irish EU presidency to settle the remaining disagreements.

04 Oct 2003	Rome IGC fails to reach agreement on the draft Constitutional Treaty mostly in questions related to qualified majority voting.
15 July 2003	The Convention on the Future of Europe officially completes the <i>Draft Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe</i> . Since the Treaty is actually a Constitution establishing a new European Union, it is generally referred to as the proposed EU Constitution .
20 June 2003	EU summit in Thessaloniki: Greek presidency conclusions welcomes the draft Constitutional Treaty presented by the Convention president and considered the draft as marking ‘the completion of the Convention’s tasks as set out at Laeken and, accordingly, the end of its work. However, some purely technical work on drafting Part III is still required, this work needing to be finished by 15 July at the latest.’ www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/pdf/the_en.pdf
16 Apr 2003	The 10 candidate countries sign the Treaty of Accession in Athens
25 Aug 2002	In an interview to <i>La Stampa</i> , Italian economy minister Giulio Tremonti exposes a mysterious document originating from the ‘Secretariat of the European Convention’ entitled ‘Project Non-Paper: A Possible Draft of a Fundamental Treaty’ proposing a possible text for a European federal constitution. Speaking on the availability of the secret document, Tremonti says it came to him ‘by way of Anglo-Saxon paths’, describing the technique as one that ‘shatters the democratic process’ requiring ‘the arbitration of a technocracy. It yields a democracy that is paralyzed by an excess of complexity. This reminds me of Byzantium ...’ (<i>La Stampa</i> , 25.08.2002)
28 Feb 2002	The Convention on the Future of Europe is launched in Brussels. Members of the Convention are drawn from national governments, national Parliamentarians, the European Parliament, and the European Commission, and includes representatives from the candidate countries. It is presided by the former president of France, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, with former Italian prime minister Giuliano Amato and former Belgian prime minister Jean-Luc Dehaene as vice-presidents.
15 Dec 2001	The European Council adopts the Laeken Declaration on the Future of Europe , aimed at bringing citizens closer to the European Institutions, establishing the Convention on the Future of Europe, tasked with drafting the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe. The Laeken summit is also characterized by an 80,000-strong protest outside the European Council building in Brussels, with a small group of protesters throwing Molotov cocktails at Belgian police.