

## The Origins of European Integration

Bringing together political, diplomatic, economic, cultural, and contemporary history, this book explores why and how European integration came to pass. It tells a fascinating story of ideals and realpolitik, political dreams and geographical realities, and planning and chaos. Mathieu Segers reveals that the roots of today's European Union lie deep in Europe's past and encompass more than war and peace, or diplomacy and economics. Based on original archival and primary source research, Segers provides an integrated history of the beginnings of European integration and the emergence of post-war Western Europe and today's European Union. *The Origins of European Integration* offers a broad perspective on the genealogy of post-war Western Europe, providing readers with a deeper understanding of contemporary European history and the history of transatlantic relations.

Mathieu Segers is Professor of Contemporary European History at Maastricht University and academic director of Studio Europa Maastricht. He is general editor of *The Cambridge History of the European Union* and has previously held positions as a research fellow at Harvard University and at the University of Oxford. His book *The Netherlands and European Integration, 1950 to Present* was awarded the Dutch PrinsjesBoeken prize for best political book in 2013. Segers is a member of The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy.

# The Origins of European Integration

*The Pre-history of Today's European Union,  
1937–1951*

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## Acknowledgements

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This book is the result of more than ten years of research. The history of that research is like any other history: it is a story of ideas and ideals. But it is also a story of the often brutal confrontation between those ideas and ideals and the reality of researching and of life in general. To stay grounded on my own two feet in that confrontation – and thus to be able to write this book – I relied on the indispensable support of others.

The support and help I received in the research for this book go back a long way. The pre-history of the research that underpins this book began more than ten years ago, when I was preparing the European diaries of Max Kohnstamm for publication (published in Dutch in 2008 and 2011), a project that was a result of the research I conducted for my dissertation (on the West German position and the French–German dynamic during the negotiations for the Treaties of Rome). During my research for these publications, I obtained many new and deeper insights into the early history of European integration through the diaries of Kohnstamm, who was the right-hand man of Jean Monnet for many years. What struck me most was the whirlwind of ideas for post-war Europe that existed at the time, meticulously documented by Kohnstamm.

What stuck in my mind from this research was just how chaotic that whirlwind was and the sheer number of different and contradictory ideas that were circulating at the time. Many of those ideas we now no longer – or barely – know about. Countless such ideas ended up being unsuccessful; and many were not as new as they seemed or only consisted of superficial rhetoric – from hopeful words to despairing language. Plenty of ideas were self-contradictory or contradicted other ideas; and many were in-depth and impressively well thought out on a philosophical level as well as the policy level. Above all, I was impressed by how this chaotic storm of ideas drove the history of European integration. It became clear to me that, without an understanding of this storm of ideas characterising the history and pre-history of the beginning of European integration, it was an illusion to think that one could fathom anything about the history of European integration.

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There was one more thing that struck me. It was evident that all these ideas needed to have people sponsoring and supporting them – among the population, in intellectual and political circles, among economists and planners, etc. But what I had not realised sufficiently until then was that many of the ideas for European integration had been sustained by ecclesiastical networks. This was something that received little attention in the historiography that I came across, while it is clear from Kohnstamm's diaries that such networks played a key role in the process of selecting and combining ideas for the future of post-war Europe.

I am deeply grateful to Max Kohnstamm – not only for his diaries and for his generosity in the final years before his death in 2010 in giving me access to his personal papers and in providing background explanations but also and above all for his guidance and friendship, which were a never-ending source of inspiration and insight for me.

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Mathieu Segers

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## Abbreviations

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Benelux	Customs union of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg
CDU	Christian Democratic Union
CEEC	Committee of European Economic Cooperation
CJDP	Commission for a Just and Durable Peace
DNA	Nationaal Archief, Dutch National Archives, The Hague
ECA	Economic Cooperation Administration
ECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EKD	<i>Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland</i>
EPU	European Payments Union
ERP	European Recovery Programme
EU	European Union
FRG	Federal Republic of German (West Germany)
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
HAEU	Historical Archives of the EU, Florence
IEPS	Intra-European Payments Scheme
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITO	International Trade Organisation
MPS	Mont Pèrelin Society
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NWO	Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek
NWR	Nachlass Wilhelm Röpke, Institut für Wirtschaftspolitik Cologne
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
TNA	The National Archives, Kew, Surrey
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WCC	World Council of Churches