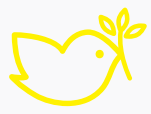


What does the world commemorate on the 8 and 9 of May?

Which historical events do Latvia and Europe commemorate on 8 May?

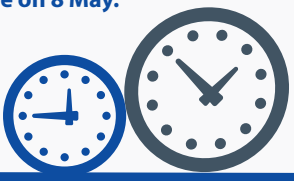
ON 1945
8 May,



with the unconditional surrender of the Nazi Germany, World War II came to an end and peace was restored in Europe. **This day became Victory in Europe Day (VE Day).**

In Western Europe, nations regained their independence on 8 May 1945, but this was not the case with Latvia. For Latvia, independence was restored only on 4 May 1990 and confirmed in Constitutional Law on 21 August 1991.

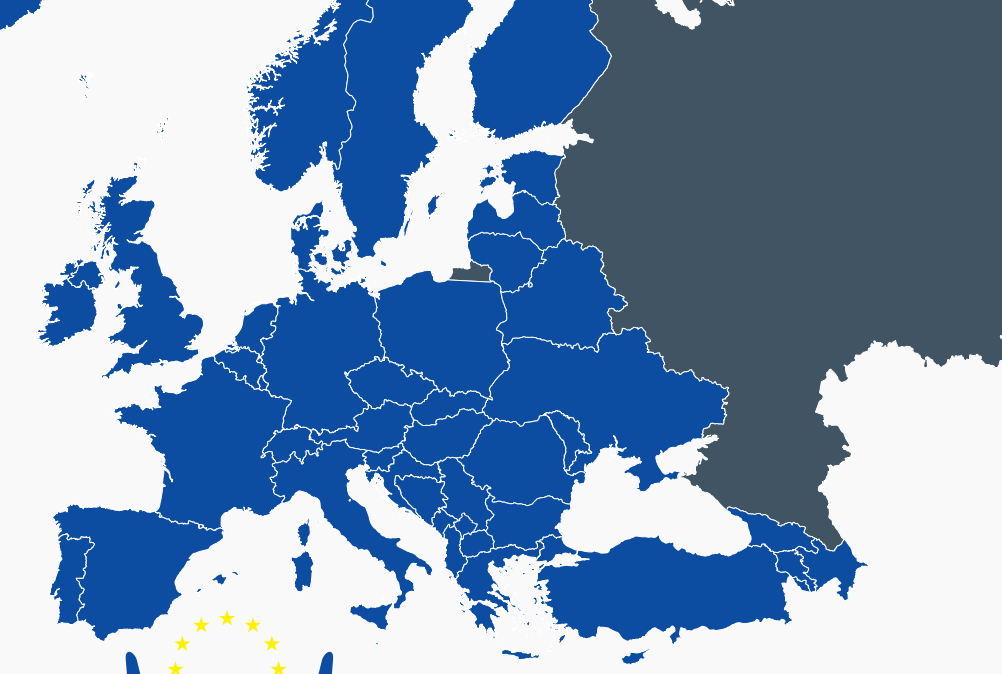
For more than ten years, Latvia has been a full-fledged Member State of the European Union. **Latvia marks the Day of the Defeat of Nazism and Commemoration of Victims of World War II together with the rest of Europe on 8 May.**



Europe commemorates the end of World War II on 8 May

1945

The German "Instrument of Surrender" was signed in Rheims (France) on the morning of 7 May at 2.41, and came into effect at 23.01 on 8 May. This instrument was also signed by a representative of the Soviet Union.



Which historical events do Latvia and Europe commemorate on 9 May?

ON 1950
9 MAY

in Paris, French Foreign Minister Robert Schumann, being aware of the threat of a possible third world war that could engulf Europe as a whole, presented a declaration to the international press, in which **France, Germany and other European countries were urged to pool their coal and steel production with the aim of safeguarding peace and raising living standards.**

Robert Schumann proposed that a common transnational European authority be instituted to supervise the coal and steel sector which at that time was directly connected with military power, since coal and steel were materials used in the production of arms.

Pooling coal and steel production ensured common grounds for the growth of European economies. The principal motivation for the European great powers to unite was their conviction that development of the countries on the continent only be fostered by peace not war.

1985

9 May has a symbolic significance in European history.

On that day, the first step was taken towards the creation of the European Union – this is the day when the European project was launched. Therefore, at a summit of the Heads of State and Government in Milan in 1985, it was decided that 9 May would be celebrated as 'Europe Day'.

This is a celebration for all who live in the European Union. This day symbolises unity and solidarity among different countries, including those that once fought against each other.

2004



Since 1 May 2004, when Latvia joined the European Union, **9 May is also celebrated in Latvia as Europe Day.**

while Russia* has its commemoration on 9 May.

At the request of the Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, the act was also signed by Marshal Georgy Zhukov in Berlin at 22.43 on 8 May. Both texts envisaged the surrender of Germany to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force and the Supreme High Commander of the Soviet Forces (though with positions reversed).

Both texts provide for capitulation as of 23.01 on 8 May 1945.

The unconditional surrender of Germany became effective at 23.01 on 8 May 1945, while in the USSR, due to different time zones, it was already 1.01 AM on 9 May 1945. **Therefore, 9 May became Victory Day for the part of Europe under the control of the Soviet Union.**

*** 9 May is also an official day of commemoration in a few other countries.**