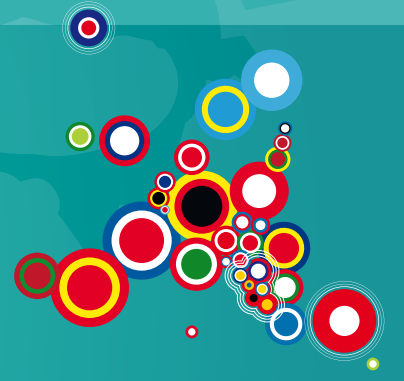European Commission

GROWING TOGETHER:
enlargement - a key ingredient
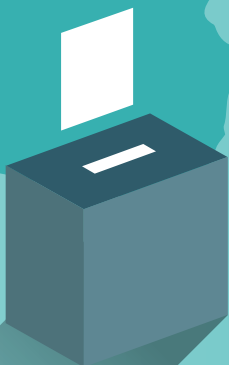## of the EU 'peace project'

THE EU IS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PEACE PROJECT IN MODERN HISTORY

Countries that once fought devastating wars now form a close union based on common values. The mere idea of an armed conflict between its members is unthinkable.

The accession of countries in Central and Eastern Europe in 2004-2007 finally reunited the continent after the fall of the iron curtain.

The accession of Croatia in July 2013 has anchored stability in the Western Balkans – a region where memories of war are still fresh.

Successive EU enlargements have extended the area of peace and stability across Europe. The accession of Spain, Portugal and Greece in the 1980s strengthened democracy in these countries after the transition from authoritarian regimes.

" *The stabilizing part played by the EU has helped to transform most of Europe from a continent of war to a continent of peace.* "

– The Nobel Committee, when awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to the EU, 12 October 2013

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