

EU EXPANSION PLANS

Saturday's vote in Ireland would allow the European Union to expand to the east, creating a single trading bloc that would stretch from Portugal to Estonia.



Timetable for negotiations



- 1950** France proposes creation of European federation. Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands join.
- 1973** Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom join.
- 1981** Greece joins.
- 1986** Spain and Portugal join.
- 1995** Austria, Finland and Sweden join.
- 1999** Introduction of the euro money system.
- 2002** **Oct. 9** EU Commission recommends that 10 countries join EU in 2004: Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus.
Saturday Irish referendum on Nice Treaty; voters rejected the treaty last summer.
Dec. 13-15 Copenhagen summit; deadline for completing negotiations.
- 2003** Signing of various accession treaties.
- 2004** **Jan.** Ten new countries join EU.
June Up to 25 EU member states participate in elections for EU Parliament.
- 2007** Bulgaria, Romania likely to join EU; Turkey expected to be still negotiating.

Source: EU, Knight-Ridder Newspapers