

PREFACE

“The aim is an open and secure European Union fully committed to the obligations of the Geneva Refugee Convention and other relevant human rights instruments, and must be able to respond to humanitarian needs on the basis of solidarity. A common approach must also be developed to ensure the integration into our societies of these third country nationals who are lawfully resident in the Union.”

With these fine words the European Council set out its strategy towards the development of an European immigration and asylum law at its Summit in Tampere, Finland, October 1999. The Tampere Summit is not the subject of this book, rather the story which begins in 1957 with the signature of the Treaty of Rome and finds a new impetus in the declarations of the European Council at Tampere.

The new powers which the Amsterdam Treaty's entry into force on 1 May 1999 had transferred to the Community in the field of immigration and asylum now need to be exercised. The powers themselves are very wide and permit many different and conflicting approaches. The purpose of this study is to look at the history of immigration law in the European Community, from the Community's conception in 1957. Can we discern the framework and principles from this history which will be needed for the next step of the Community's development in this field? With this underlying concern I began work on this dissertation in June 1997 as the Member States finalised and signed the Amsterdam Treaty. My greatest thanks in this endeavour for their help, insight, generosity and patience must be to Professors Kees Groenendijk and Roel Fernhout who guided me throughout. Without their great kindness this work would never have been completed.

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