

1957 Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC)

What do I need to know before I start?

At the Messina Conference in June 1955, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) Council of Ministers formally agreed to explore new possibilities to further European integration, after the failure of the European Defence Community in 1954. A committee was established under the chairmanship of former Belgian Prime Minister Paul-Henri Spaak, to work out proposals that would deepen the integration of the ECSC Member States. The Spaak Committee report and the subsequent inter-governmental conference would lead to the signing of the Treaties of Rome in 1957.

The Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC), also known as one of the Treaties of Rome, the other being the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community, was signed on 25 March 1957, by the governments of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. It entered into force in 1958 and created the EEC, the forerunner of today's European Union.

The EEC Treaty aimed to establish a customs union and a common market through the elimination of trade barriers between Member States and the development of common policies in the field of transport and agriculture, among others. The EEC was to be composed of the Council of Ministers, the Commission, the Parliamentary Assembly (which later became the European Parliament) and the Court of Justice, together with the Economic and Social Committee advising decision-making processes. Though providing for the development of common policies in further fields, the Treaty of Rome already specified certain policies that were to be developed commonly: a common agricultural policy (Art. 38-47), a common trade policy (Art. 110-116), as well as a common transport policy (Art. 74-84). Since its coming into force in 1958, the Treaty establishing the EEC has been amended on a number of occasions and is today known as the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). With the 1967 Merger Treaty, the institutions of the EEC became common to all three existing communities – the ECSC, the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) and the EEC itself.

Languages: Please be aware that although most documents available in our Archives are in French, English or German, some may be in other EU languages. In order to check the languages used in a fonds, please refer to our holdings page. Additionally, some fonds may contain a few files in a language other than the ones listed in the description.

What can I find at the HAEU?

Related specifically to the EEC Treaty – from its drafting to its adoption – the fonds available at the HAEU are:

1) *EU institutions*

[ECSC Special Council of Ministers](#) and [Council of Ministers](#)

The fonds of the ECSC Special Council of Ministers available at the HAEU includes the proceedings of the Council's meetings as well as various working documents pertaining to the work of the Special Council. As the fonds are organised by years, you need to browse the fonds of each year separately to access the different files of its inventory. Importantly, you will also find a specific fonds '[Conseil spécial de ministres CECA-Négociations du traité instituant la CEE et la CEEA-1955-1957](#)' that documents extensively the various stages of the negotiations leading to the final adoption of the EEC Treaty, including the [Messina Conference](#) as well as the [Spaak Report](#) and the activities of the [Intergovernmental Committee](#) and [Conference](#). The fonds of the EEC and EURATOM Council of Ministers are less relevant in this context because the establishment of these institutions results from the adoption of the EEC Treaty.

[Commission](#)

Created in 1951 and merged in 1967 into the European Commission (Merger Treaty), the High Authority was the executive body of the ECSC governing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The inventory of the ECSC High Authority includes a separate section for each division of the High Authority, namely for its [Legal Service \(bis\)](#), its [General Secretariat](#), as well as for its division for [External Relations](#), for [Transports \(bis\)](#), for [coal-related economic affairs](#), for [steel-related economic affairs](#), for [Economic Affairs and Energy](#), for [Employment and Social Affairs](#), for [Administration and Finances](#), for [ECSC working groups](#), and a section for the [Four Presidents' Commission](#) and for the [ECSC Consultative Committee](#). These files are of great relevance to understand the developments leading to the adoption of the EEC Treaty. The fonds of the European Commission are of less relevance in this context since the establishment of that institution followed and resulted from the EEC Treaty adoption.

[ECSC Common Assembly](#) and [European Parliament](#)

Predecessor of the European Parliament, the ECSC Common Assembly, which had supervisory powers over the ECSC High Authority, held its first session in September 1952 in Strasbourg. The fonds of the ECSC Common Assembly (1952-1957) available at the HAEU comprises all the documents related to the activities of the Assembly's organs, including its Bureau, its enlarged Bureau, its Presidential Committee and its Reorganization Committee. It also includes all documents pertaining to the Assembly's [parliamentary activities](#), including the [resolution proposals](#), the [proceedings](#) and [reports](#) of the parliamentary commissions, [parliamentary questions](#) as well as the proceedings of the Assembly's [plenary sessions](#). You can look into these files to

know more about the Assembly's position and activities in relation to the drafting and adoption of the EEC Treaty.

[Court of Justice of the European Union \(CJEU\)](#)

Created in 1951, the ECSC Court of Justice became the Court of Justice common to all three European Communities with the entry into force of the Treaties of Rome in 1958. According to the nature of the CJEU, these fonds include documents dealing with judicial affairs, namely procedure dossiers and sentences, from 1952 to 1982. You might find it interesting to consult some of its files, including the [original procedure records](#) for the years 1953 to 1959.

[European Investment Bank](#)

The idea of establishing an organ promoting investment in the European Community was first discussed at the Messina Conference and the EIB was established under the provisions of the EEC Treaty. You may consult the fonds of the EIB, in particular the series related to the [EIB creation](#), as well as the EIB [annual reports](#) as well as the sub-fonds '[Publications](#)'.

2) *Corporate Bodies*

[Organisation for European Economic Co-operation \(OEEC\)](#)

It can be useful to consult the fonds of the OEEC, which includes several files pertaining to the [adoption of the EEC Treaty](#) and the position of OEEC countries in this context. Among others, you will [find](#) papers on the EEC Treaty negotiations, reports on the opinion of the 17 OEEC member countries, and memos pertaining to future cooperation between the two organisations resulting from the EEC Treaty. You may also consult the files pertaining to OEEC's [relations with the ECSC High Authority](#) in the context of the Steering Board for Trade and to the OEEC participation to the ECSC work at the [Messina Conference](#), as well as some material pertaining to [OEEC's relations with other international organizations](#) including the ECSC.

3) *Individuals*

[Pierre Uri](#)

Pierre Uri participated to the drafting of the Treaties of Rome and acted as Paul-Henri Spaak's representative during the intergovernmental conferences leading to its signature. It can therefore be very useful to consult Uri's private fonds, which includes several files pertaining to the [negotiations](#) of the Treaties of Rome, including the [Messina Conference](#) and the intergovernmental conference held in [Val-Duchesse](#).

[Albert Léon Coppé](#)

Albert Coppé participated to the negotiations of the Paris Treaty and was subsequently appointed as [vice-president of the ECSC High Authority](#) in 1952. In his private archives, you'll find relevant information pertaining to the ECSC developments leading to the adoption of the EEC Treaty.

[Michel Tracy](#)

It can be useful to look into the private archives of Michel Tracy to know more about the agricultural aspects of the negotiations during the [Messina Conference](#) and for the signature of the [EEC Treaty](#).

[Roberto Ducci](#)

The private papers of Roberto Ducci pertain mainly to the [intergovernmental conferences](#) held between 1955 and 1957 and in particular to the [1955 Messina Conference](#) and include numerous relevant documents for understanding the context and the positions of the different actors involved in the negotiations.

[Emile Noël](#)

Noël's private fonds include [files](#) pertaining to the work of the ECSC and its Common Assembly, as well as to the [revision of the ECSC Treaty](#). In addition, you may look into his notes on the European Council and Commission's meetings, as well as into documents related to the [work of the different DGs](#) of the Commission, during his time as Secretary-General.

[Paul-Henri Spaak](#)

Spaak was the first president of the ECSC Common Assembly and his private fonds includes several files pertaining to his involvement in the [ECSC](#).

4) *Collections*

[Jean Monnet Duchêne Sources](#)

This collection of material consists of photocopies and excerpts used by François Duchêne to write his book *Jean Monnet - The First Statesman of Interdependence* (1994). It can be useful to consult the specific [sub-series](#) on the events leading to the EEC Treaty adoption, which includes several files pertaining to the Messina Conference, to the Spaak report as well as to the position of the [French](#), [British](#) and [US](#) governments in this context.

[Richard Griffiths Collection](#)

You may look into the Richard Griffiths collection, which includes a specific [series](#) with numerous files pertaining to the negotiations leading to the signature of the Treaties of Rome, including the Spaak report and the Messina Conference, and in particular the Dutch position in this context.

[French Ministry for Foreign Affairs](#)

It can be useful to look into the collection 'Ministère des Affaires étrangères français', which includes a whole series on the [European Economic Community](#) and includes numerous files pertaining to the [treaty negotiations](#), providing insights on the French position in this regard.

[Auswärtiges Amt, Politisches Archiv](#)

You may also consult the collection pertaining to the German Foreign Ministry's [Secretariat for the Schuman Plan](#), which includes an important amount of files related to the positions of the different countries involved and to the [negotiations](#) leading to the launch of the Schuman Plan and to the establishment of the [ECSC](#).

[Nicola Di Gioia's Collection](#)

The Nicola Di Gioia collection includes several [posters](#) and [photographs](#) pertaining to the signature of the EEC treaty and to the Treaty's anniversaries since its adoption in 1958.

[Jean Monnet Duchêne Sources](#)

The Jean Monnet Duchêne Sources includes a specific series pertaining to the two Treaties of Rome

5) *Oral History*

In addition, take a look at the [oral history holdings](#), which comprise numerous interviews of European politicians and officials, including important figures and officials active in the elaboration and adoption of the Treaty of Rome establishing the EEC. Below, you can find a (non-exhaustive) list of persons interviewed who discussed the EEC Treaty, its elaboration and ratification by Member States.

[Émile Noël](#)

[Christian Pineau](#)

[Robert Lecourt](#)

[Jean-Charles Snoy Et D'Oppuers](#)

[Pierre Uri](#)

[Hans Von Der Groeben](#)

[Willem Riphagen](#)

[Karl Carstens](#)

[Robert Rotschild](#)

[Jelle Zijlstra](#)

[Bernard Clappier](#)

[Henri Teissier Du Cros](#)

[Antoine Pinay](#)

[Winrich Behr](#)

[Fernand Chaussebourg](#)

[Maurice Faure](#)

[Jaap Kymmell](#)

[Johannes Roelof Maria Van Den Brink](#)

[Charles Rutten](#)

[Pieter Alphons Blaisse](#)

[Paul Luyten](#)

Jacques Van Offelen

Edmund Wellenstein

Max Kohnstamm

Fritz Hellwig