

'Schuman Plan signed' from the Luxemburger Wort (19 April 1951)

Caption: On 18 April 1951, as the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) is signed in Paris, the Luxembourg daily newspaper Luxemburger Wort outlines the role and operation of the future Community institutions.

Source: Luxemburger Wort. Für Wahrheit und Recht. 19.04.1951, n° 109; 104e année. Luxembourg: Imprimerie Saint-Paul. "Der Schumanplan unterzeichnet", p. 1.

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Schuman Plan signed

‘In signing the Treaty, the Contracting Parties have given proof of their determination to lay the real foundations of an organised Europe’

Paris, 19 April. The Foreign Ministers of France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and the three Benelux States signed the Schuman Plan yesterday afternoon. The signing took place in the Clock Room in the French Foreign Ministry. Chancellor Adenauer signed for the Federal Republic, Robert Schuman for France, Count Sforza for Italy, Paul van Zeeland for Belgium, Dirk U. Stikker for Holland and Foreign Minister Joseph Bech for Luxembourg. The Plan’s architect, Jean Monnet, who had led the negotiations over several months, was not present at the ceremony. Apart from the Foreign Ministers of the participating nations, the Belgian and Dutch Ministers for Economic Affairs also signed the documents.

The Treaty is set in German ink on Dutch parchment. The typesetting was done in France, the leather bindings came from Belgium and Luxembourg and the silk decorative ribbons were supplied by Italy.

More than 200 journalists and photo reporters witnessed the ceremonial act. In addition to the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty, the Foreign Ministers also signed the agreement on the transitional period, during which the Plan will not yet be fully operational, as well as a declaration in which the Community states pledge to continue working towards a united Europe. A joint statement by the participating states reads: ‘In signing the Treaty, the Contracting Parties have given proof of their determination to set up the first supra-national institution and thus to lay the real foundations of an organised Europe. All European countries are free to participate in such an organised Europe. We sincerely hope that other nations will associate themselves with our efforts.’

The structure of the Schuman Plan

In the last few days’ negotiations, the Foreign Ministers agreed on the following formal arrangements for the European Coal and Steel Community, as now set down in the Treaty text:

The **High Authority** consists of nine representatives elected without regard for nationality. It manages the steelworks and coal mines of the six participating states.

The Foreign Ministers of the participating states form a **Council of Ministers** which is intended to provide a link between the individual governments and the Community. It acts in an advisory capacity with regard to High Authority decisions with a political dimension. The Federal Republic and France enjoy special influence in the Council as decisions can only be taken by a minimum of four votes to two. At least one of the four majority votes must be cast by either France or Germany. In the event of a three to three split vote, with Germany and France voting together, the vote will have to be taken again. If the result remains the same, the position taken by the Federal Republic and France is considered accepted.

The **Community’s Parliamentary Assembly**, in which France, the Federal Republic and Italy each have 18 representatives, Belgium and the Netherlands ten and Luxembourg four, functions as a legislative body. The participating states are represented by members of their national parliaments.

A **special committee**, made up of producer, worker and consumer representatives, will be set up to advise the authorities of the European Coal and Steel Community.

A special procedure applies for the election of the High Authority, which can be thought of as the Community’s supranational government. The six governments each designate three candidates. From among these, the Council of Foreign Ministers elects eight Members, without regard for their nationalities. The eight so elected in turn elect the ninth Member. The Members of the High Authority are elected for six years and have to give up any other professional activities during that time. For three years after the end of their term of office, they may not hold any position within the coal and steel industries.

During the final negotiations, the issue of the High Authority again gave rise to difficulties with the Benelux delegations. Foreign Minister Schuman and Federal Chancellor Adenauer nevertheless succeeded in preserving the Authority's supranational character in the face of counterproposals that at times seemed to threaten it.