

# Statement by Jean Monnet (30 April 1953)

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As from tomorrow, 1 May 1953, the frontiers between Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, which were already eliminated in February as regards coal, will come down for steel. From now on there will be no more German coal, no Luxemburgish or French steel, there will be European coal and steel. We have at long last started to set up the single European common market of 150 million consumers which is vital to the prosperity of us all. The High Authority is establishing the common market in steel with complete freedom, but the price of a freedom open to businesses is competition. The High Authority's duty is to oversee it in the interests of all, whether producers, workers, users or consumers. In pooling their coal and steel, the six Western European countries have genuinely started to create Europe. We often look far afield without seeing what is happening on our own doorstep, and we should all, as Europeans, realise that what we are making with our own hands, here and now, in Europe, is probably the greatest revolution in our history. For too long, the quest for domination and nationalism divided Europe against itself. The old nation-based solutions proved that they were powerless to ensure our prosperity. They set us up against one another and the bloody rivalry among sovereign States led the peoples of Europe to the brink of destruction. At last, for the first time in our history, we are peacefully eliminating the national barriers which separate our peoples. When it comes to such major changes, the most difficult thing is always making a start. For some months now, the living European Community, in which all free peoples are welcome to play their part, has become a reality. The shared institutions of this united Europe are already operating and our countries all abide by their decisions. None of this, we should remember, existed a year ago. The pooling of coal and steel is only the start. The union of the peoples of Europe is where it will end. That is the vital contribution which, after so many centuries of struggle, Europeans are making to peace.