

From the Schuman Plan to the Paris Treaty (1950-1952) — Foreword

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Foreword

The research corpus ‘From the Schuman Plan to the Paris Treaty’, developed to mark the 60th anniversary of the declaration made by Robert Schuman on 9 May 1950, provides a series of resources concerning the origins and repercussions of the French Foreign Minister’s address. In his declaration, he proposed that coal and steel resources in France and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) be pooled within an organisation open to the other countries of Europe. This almost revolutionary declaration by Robert Schuman — a Luxembourger by birth and today considered as one of the ‘Fathers of Europe’ — set off a shock wave that launched the European unification process.

More than 1 000 documents trace the origins and implications of this founding event in the history of European integration, which led to the signing of the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) by the Foreign Ministers of Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands on 18 April 1951.

The corpus was compiled by means of a methodical selection from the numerous documents held in the Historical Archives of the European Union in Florence, the National Archives of Luxembourg, the Federal Archives of the Federal Republic of Germany in Berlin, as well as from the papers and image archives on Robert Schuman housed in the Moselle Departmental Archives in Metz and at the Robert Schuman House in Scy-Chazelles. Moreover, Jean Monnet’s papers, held at the Jean Monnet Foundation for Europe in Lausanne, shed light on the origins of the Schuman Plan and the role played by Jean Monnet in the declaration of 9 May 1950.

Primary sources were also collected from other archives such as the National Archives at Kew, London; this material particularly highlights the British Government’s initial caution and eventual rejection of any participation by the United Kingdom in the Schuman Plan.

The corpus contains a wide range of material including press articles, extracts from memoirs, photos and cartoons. Original audiovisual material dating from the time the declaration was made corroborates the historic significance of Schuman’s proposal and illustrates the various stages in the establishment of the ECSC.

Personal accounts provided by key figures interviewed by the CVCE are a source of further audiovisual material, and contribute to the CVCE’s oral history project:

— Paul Collowald, who was a journalist for the daily newspaper *Le Monde* before becoming Director in the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Press and Information

— Georges Berthoin, former Head of the Private Office of the President of the ECSC High Authority, Jean Monnet, then Representative of the European Commission in the United Kingdom

— Hubert Ehring, former legal adviser for the coal and steel pool in the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), then director of the legal service at the Secretariat of the ECSC Special Council of Ministers

— Archduke Otto von Habsburg, former President of the Paneuropean Union and former

Member of the European Parliament

— Max Kohnstamm, former official in the Netherlands Foreign Ministry and former Secretary of the ECSC High Authority

— Jacques-René Rabier, former Head of the Private Office of the President of the ECSC High Authority, Jean Monnet, and former Director-General of the Press and Information Service of the European Communities

— Henri Rieben, Founder and Director of the Centre for European Research in Lausanne and former President of the Jean Monnet Foundation for Europe in Lausanne

— Leo Tindemans, former Belgian Prime Minister and Minister for External Relations

The corpus, primarily aimed at the academic community, is introduced by a detailed bibliography on the subject as well as by biographical information about Robert Schuman, and each themed section is introduced by an explanatory text.

This corpus was coordinated by Marco Gabellini and Étienne Deschamps, researchers in contemporary history at the CVCE.

It was originally published as a ‘Special File’ in European NAvigator in February 2010.