

The Messina Conference

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The Messina Conference

The [Messina Conference](#), attended by the Foreign Ministers of the six Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), took place from 1 to 3 June 1955. The Luxembourgish Joseph Bech chaired the meeting, which was attended by Antoine Pinay for France, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Professor Walter Hallstein for the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), Paul-Henri Spaak for Belgium and Johan Willem Beyen for the Netherlands.

- [Photo of the Messina Conference \(1–3 June 1955\)](#)
- [Joseph Bech, Paul-Henri Spaak and Johan Willem Beyen at the Messina Conference \(1 to 3 June 1955\)](#)
- [Composition of the delegations of the Six at the Messina Conference](#)

In Messina the Foreign Ministers expressed their wish to start negotiations at both levels at once: while forms of new, partial integration — especially in the areas of transport, conventional energy and nuclear energy — needed to be examined, another objective was the creation of a common market.

The discussions mainly focused on the memorandum submitted by the Benelux countries, which summarised the various proposals and ideas. The ministers of the Six agreed to look into the possibility of extending European integration to all sectors of the economy.

There were rather differing and conflicting concepts of Europe at Messina: for or against supranational institutions, for or against giving the ECSC wider powers, giving priority to political or economic aspects, and so forth. Despite these differences, agreement was reached at dawn on 3 June 1955.

The Six adopted a [resolution](#) in which they stated their determination to make ‘further progress [...] towards the setting up of a united Europe by the development of common institutions, the gradual merging of national economies, the creation of a common market and the harmonisation of their social policies’.

Determined to ensure that Europe maintained its position in the world and to restore its influence, they also set themselves the objective of progressively raising the standard of living of its population.

The six ministers recognised the importance of developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. They therefore considered it essential to look into creating a common organisation which would have the responsibility and the facilities for ensuring the peaceful development of nuclear energy.

The Messina Conference signalled the start of the European revival.

- [‘European revival’ from Le Figaro \(3 June 1955\)](#)