

From the Messina Conference to the Rome Treaties (EEC and EAEC) – Introduction

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Introduction

On 25 March 1957, the Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) were signed in Rome. This event marked a key stage in the history of European integration. Less than five years after the entry into force of the Paris Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), and less than three years after the failure of the planned European Defence Community (EDC), united Europe took an irreversible step forward towards integration, particularly since, unlike the Treaty establishing the ECSC (signed for 50 years), the Rome Treaties made no provision for a time limit or a withdrawal procedure.

The Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) created a general common market characterised by a customs union which was based both on the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital and on the drawing up of common policies, in particular in the sectors of agriculture and transport. Euratom, which enshrined the civil importance of atomic energy, created a common nuclear market.