

Articles from the Treaty establishing the ECSC relating to prices (Paris, 18 April 1951)

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Treaty constituting the European Coal and Steel Community (Paris, 18 April 1951)

CHAPTER V – Prices.....

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CHAPTER V – Prices

Article 60

1. Pricing practices contrary to the provisions of Articles 2, 3 and 4 are prohibited, particularly:

- unfair competitive practices, in particular purely temporary or purely local price reductions whose purpose is to acquire a monopoly position within the common market;
- discriminatory practices involving the application by a seller within the single market of unequal conditions to comparable transactions, especially according to the nationality of the buyer.

After consultation with the Consultative Committee and the Council, the High Authority may define the practices covered by this prohibition.

2. For the above purposes:

(a) the prices scales and conditions of sales to be applied by enterprises within the single market shall be made public to the extent and in the form prescribed by the High Authority after consultation with the Consultative Committee; if the High Authority deems that an enterprise has chosen an abnormal base point for its price quotations, in particular one which makes it possible to evade the provisions of subparagraph (b) below, it will make the appropriate recommendations to that enterprise.

(b) the prices charged by an enterprise within the common market, calculated on the base of the point chosen for the enterprise's price scale must not as a result of the methods of quotation:

- be higher than the price indicated by the price scale in question for a comparable transaction; or
- be less than this price by a margin greater than:
 - either the margin which would make it possible to align the offer in question on that price scale, set up on the basis of another point, which procures for the buyer the lowest price at the place of delivery;
 - or a limit fixed by the High Authority for each category of products, after consultation with the Consultative Committee, taking into account the origin and destination of such products.

These decisions shall be taken when they appear necessary to avoid disturbances in all or any part of the common market, or disequilibria which would result from a divergence between the methods of price quotation used for a product and for the materials which enter into its manufacture.

These decisions shall not prevent enterprises from aligning their quotations on the prices offered by enterprises outside the Community, provided that such transactions are reported to the High Authority; the

latter may, in case of abuse, limit or eliminate the right of the enterprises in question to benefit from this exception.

Article 61

On the basis of studies undertaken in cooperation with the enterprises and their associations in accordance with the provisions of the first paragraph of Article 46 and the third paragraph of Article 48, and after consultation with the Consultative Committee and the Council as to the advisability of these measures as well as concerning the price level which they determine, the High Authority may fix for one or more products subject to its jurisdiction:

- (a) maximum prices within the common market, if it deems that such a decision is necessary to attain the objectives defined in Article 3 and particularly in paragraph (c) thereof;
- (b) minimum prices within the common market, if it deems that a manifest crisis exists or is imminent and that such a decision is necessary to attain the objectives defined in Article 3;
- (c) after consultation with the enterprises concerned or their associations, and according to methods adapted to the nature of the export markets, minimum or maximum export prices, if such action can be effectively supervised and appears necessary either because of dangers to the enterprises on account of the situation of the market or to pursue in international economic relations the objective defined in Article 3 paragraph (f), without prejudice, in the case of minimum prices, to the application of the measures provided for in the last paragraph of section 2 of Article 60.

In fixing price limits the High Authority shall take into account the need to assure the ability to compete both of the coal and steel industries and of the consuming industries, in accordance with the principles defined in Article 3, paragraph (c).

If the High Authority should fail to act under the circumstances described above, the government of one of the member States may refer the matter to the Council; the latter may, by unanimous decision, invite the High Authority to fix such maximum or minimum prices.

Article 62

If the High Authority should deem that such an action would be the most appropriate one in order to prevent the price of coal from being established at the level of the production costs of the most costly mine whose production is temporarily required to assure accomplishment of the missions defined in Article 3, the High Authority may, after consulting the Consultative Committee, authorize compensations:

- among enterprises of the same basin to which the same price scales are applicable;
- after consulting the Council, among enterprises situated in different basins.

Such compensations may, in addition, be undertaken under the terms of Article 53.

Article 63

1. If the High Authority finds that discrimination is being systematically practised by buyers, particularly as concerns orders placed by government subsidiaries, it shall make the necessary recommendations to the governments concerned.

2. To the extent that it finds necessary, the High Authority may decide that:

- (a) enterprises shall establish their conditions of sale in such a way that their customers or their agents shall be obliged to conform to the rules established by the High Authority in application of the provisions of this

Chapter;

(b) enterprises shall be made responsible for infractions committed by their direct agents or by dealers acting on behalf such enterprises.

In case of a violation committed by a buyer against the obligations so contracted, the High Authority may limit the right of the enterprises of the Community to deal with the said buyer, to a degree which may entail temporary deprivation of access to the market in case of repeated infractions. In this case, and without prejudice to the provisions of Article 33, the buyer may appeal to the Court.

3. In addition, the High Authority is empowered to address to the member States such recommendations as may be necessary to ensure that any enterprise or organization engaged in distribution of coal or steel shall respect the rules established in application of Section 1 of Article 60.

Article 64

The High Authority may impose upon enterprises which violate the provisions of the present Chapter or the decisions taken in application thereof, fines not to exceed twice the value of the irregular sales. In case of second offense, the above maximum may be doubled.

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