

Letter from Walter Hallstein to Victor Larock (18 June 1958)

Caption: Letter sent by the President of the Commission of the European Economic Community, Walter Hallstein, on 18 June 1958, to the President of the Council of the European Economic Community, Victor Larock, on the occasion of the position taking of the presidents of the institutions of the European Communities concerning the choice of the seat of the Communities.

Source: Schreiben des Präsidenten der Kommission der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, Herrn Walter Hallstein, vom 18. Juni 1958, an den Präsidenten des Rates der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, Herrn V. Larock, Betrifft: Stellungnahme der Präsidenten der Organe der Europäischen Gemeinschaften bezüglich der Wahl des Sitzes der Gemeinschaften. 616 d/58 ao. Brüssel: Rat der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft; Rat der Europäischen Atomgemeinschaft, 23.06.1958. 2 S.

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Letter dated 18 June 1958 from Walter Hallstein, President of the Commission of the European Economic Community, to Victor Larock, President of the Council of the European Economic Community

Brussels, 18 June 1958

Dear Mr President,

As President of the Commission of the European Economic Community, I have been called upon, at the behest of the Foreign Ministers of the six signatory States of the Rome Treaties of 6 and 7 January 1958, to take a position on the issue of the seat of the institutions of the European Communities. I now have the honour, also in response to your letter dated 31 May, to advise you of my position.

The six governments have already taken an important preliminary decision in this matter in agreeing that all of the six countries' European institutions should share the same location as soon as this is actually feasible. I should like to begin by saying that I consider it essential to keep to this fundamental decision. This is a view which I already expressed publicly earlier this year, at the constituent session of the European Parliament on 18 March.

Similarly, I should like to stress how absolutely essential it is — if the European Communities are to act in unison and if their administrations are to work successfully and smoothly — for the decision on the definitive choice of location to be taken by the agreed date in July this year and for that decision to be determined by no consideration other than actual feasibility.

In order to accommodate the institutions of the European Communities in a single location, it would seem appropriate to create a European District.

In considering the proposed locations, I have been guided by a concern that the decision on the seat should, as far as possible, be uninfluenced by prestige considerations and that a proper balance should be maintained within the Community. It is my view, therefore, that the seat should go to none of the three large Community countries.

Of the cities proposed, Brussels succeeds particularly well in meeting the demands — in terms of geographical situation, communications links and immediately available office accommodation and housing — that have to be made of the city that is to be home to all the European institutions.

I therefore take the view that Brussels is the most suitable location in which to accommodate all the European institutions. For that reason, I propose that Brussels be selected as the single seat.

Yours faithfully,

Signed: Walter HALLSTEIN