

# The expiry of the ECSC Treaty

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## The expiry of the ECSC Treaty

The Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the practical embodiment of Robert Schuman's Declaration of 9 May 1950, was signed for a period of 50 years. It came into force on 23 July 1952 and expired on 23 July 2002. By the pooling of the coal and steel sectors, the ECSC became the foundation stone in the Community construction of a united, peaceful, prosperous and mutually supportive Europe. The ECSC thus became the model for the creation of the other Community organisations, characterised by their supranational nature, by an autonomous decision-making procedure and by independent institutions which were granted the powers and the authority required to make the system work.

In the early 1990s, following an analysis of the various options for dealing with the expiry of the ECSC Treaty in 2002, a solution was adopted. This solution made provision for the gradual transfer of activities in the coal and steel sectors to the Treaty establishing the European Community (EC). The Amsterdam European Council of 16–17 June 1997 asked the Commission to submit proposals so as to ensure that, on expiry of the ECSC Treaty, income from the existing reserves would be used for a research fund aimed at sectors linked to the coal and steel industries, in line with the wishes expressed by the European Parliament and the ECSC Consultative Committee. The 2001 Treaty of Nice also laid down, in a protocol, that all assets and liabilities of the ECSC, as they existed on 23 July 2002, would be transferred to the EC on 24 July 2002. The Commission would manage those assets separately so as to guarantee long-term revenue. The net revenue from the assets would be used to carry out research in the coal and steel sectors.

The Consultative Committee, the only ECSC body which was not common to the three Communities, ceased to operate on 27 June 2002, and its activities were taken over by the Economic and Social Committee.