

The work of the Interim Committee for the Common Market and Euratom

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On 25 March 1957, when the Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) were signed at the Capitol in Rome, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the six Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) decided to set up an Interim Committee for the Common Market and Euratom in Brussels in the immediate future, to undertake certain work and studies in the period between the signature of the treaties and their entry into force and the actual establishment of the Community institutions.

The Interim Committee, composed of the Heads of Delegation at the Intergovernmental Conference for the Common Market and Euratom, held its meetings at the castle of Val Duchesse. It also coordinated the action of the six governments, particularly in certain international organisations. Chaired by Baron Jean-Charles Snoy et d'Oppuers, secretary-general of the Belgian Ministry of Economic Affairs and president of the Belgian delegation to the Intergovernmental Conference for the Common Market and Euratom, the Interim Committee was responsible in particular for:

- drawing up the Protocols on the Statute of the Court of Justice and the Privileges and Immunities of the Communities, provided for by the Final Act and to be annexed to the Treaty;
- formulating the rules of the Monetary Committee provided for in Article 105 of the Treaty establishing the EEC;
- undertaking the necessary technical customs work, in particular establishing common subheadings for the Brussels customs nomenclature;
- undertaking certain tasks relating to the Euratom research programme, the safety rules, isotopic and chemical separation and the Euratom Supply Agency.

On 17 April 1957, in Brussels, the Interim Committee members signed the four Protocols on the Statute of the Court of Justice of the EEC and Euratom and on the Privileges and Immunities of the Communities. The Interim Committee also continued to investigate the organic links that might be established between the various European Assemblies, in so far as the establishment of a single Assembly for the three Communities highlighted the need to clarify the relationship between that and the existing European Assemblies. It focused in particular on the question of alternate members and on the possible identity and composition of the Assemblies and their joint work.

Finally, until such time as common institutions were established, the Interim Committee ensured that the Six harmonised their relations with third countries, with particular reference to the statement on the Common Market and Euratom by the Soviet Foreign Minister on 16 March 1957, and that they coordinated their position in international economic bodies such as the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).