

## The establishment of the EEC and Euratom

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## The establishment of the EEC and Euratom

The signing of the Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) in Rome on 25 March 1957 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) and the European Political Community (EPC), 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 Rome Treaties, which entered into force on 1 January 1958, were the result of intense diplomatic negotiations which, following on directly from the movement for the revival of Europe, opened formally on 1, 2 and 3 June at the Messina Conference. This was followed, under the chairmanship of Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian Foreign Minister, by the proceedings and consultations of the Six at the Intergovernmental Committee set up by the Messina Conference, and subsequently at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Common Market and Euratom.

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 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 energy market.