


Methodology

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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 was undoubtedly a key stage in the history of European integration. After the failure of the plans for a European Defence Community (EDC) and a European Political Community (EPC) in the mid-1950s, the conclusion of the Rome Treaties marked a major step forward towards further integration for the Europe of Six.

The Treaty establishing the 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 on the drawing up of common policies, in particular in the sectors of agriculture and transport. The Treaty establishing the EAEC (or Euratom), which recognised the importance of atomic energy for civilian purposes, created a nuclear common market.

The ePublication ‘1955–1957: The European revival and the Rome Treaties’ is a new, enhanced version of the special file ‘The origins of the Rome Treaties (1955–1958)’, which was produced to make the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaties establishing the EEC and the EAEC on 25 March 1957 in Rome. This original file was published in March 2007 in European NAVigator.

The enhanced version of the ePublication has been produced in line with the conceptual framework set out in the CVCE Strategy Paper 2014–2017. This document is published on the CVCE’s research infrastructure and can be consulted [here](#). The enhancement process particularly involved the methodology, the composition of the ePublication, the quality and relevance of the selection of documents, and the metadata associated with the resources.

Research question and hypothesis

The ePublication has been prepared using a multidisciplinary approach involving contemporary history, law and political science to examine the degree of influence of the various endogenous and exogenous factors that resulted in the revival of the European integration process following the failure of the planned EDC and EPC. It puts forward the research hypothesis that the ability of the Member States to overcome their differences was facilitated by the commitment of an epistemic community formed by politicians and civil servants who were convinced of the need for European integration.¹

The principles governing the archive research and choice of documents

In order to examine the influence of professional networks and their ideas on the revival and development of the negotiations from the Messina Conference (June 1955) to the signing of the

Rome Treaties (March 1957), the ePublication is based on a methodical exploration of the Historical Archives of the Council of the European Union in Brussels. Documents from these archives form a significant part of the resources published in the ePublication. Particular attention was given to the collection *CM3/NEGO Négociations du traité instituant la CEE et la CEEA*, which covers the entire period from the revival of European integration to the signing of the Rome Treaties in 1957. This collection was compiled and maintained by the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers in charge of the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Committee which prepared the Rome Treaties.

The selected resources highlight the many economic, legal and political issues surrounding the European revival. They document the diplomatic negotiations between the delegations of the Six (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany).

A systematic analysis of the many meetings that were held throughout this period (1955–1957) between the Foreign Ministers, officials from national administrations, experts and representatives of trade unions and employers' organisations demonstrates the positions adopted by the various players and shows the developments in the negotiating process, indicating both breakthroughs and obstacles along the way. The archive documents reflect the difficulties facing the negotiators and the many areas on which there was disagreement, including the potential association of the overseas countries and territories (OCTs) with the future EEC, the harmonisation of social benefits, the introduction of a general common market and the question of Euratom's monopoly over supplies of fissile material. The power dynamics were such that the negotiations almost broke down on several occasions. This was avoided in part by the international situation (the Suez Crisis which erupted in 1956 helped reconcile the views of the different parties) and by the bilateral dialogues between the French and German Governments. Despite their major differences, Paris and Bonn managed to secure a political compromise that paved the way for the resumption and conclusion of the negotiations in Brussels.

Other archive collections were also consulted for the preparation for this ePublication, resulting in the inclusion of some previously unpublished documents. The archives explored include the Historical Archives of the European Union in Florence (particularly the private holdings of Pierre Uri and the collection of the General Secretariat of the Interministerial Committee for European Economic Cooperation), documents from the Jean Monnet Foundation in Lausanne (on the role of the Action Committee for the United States of Europe and the work of Jean Monnet), the Federal Archives of the Federal Republic of Germany and the archives of the Luxembourg Foreign Ministry held in the Luxembourg National Archives (ANLux).

French and Belgian diplomatic documents were also consulted to provide further information about the many aspects of the Val Duchesse negotiations; the various notes, memorandums and exchanges between consular offices help clarify the respective positions of the two countries with regard to the development of the future Rome Treaties.

A series of exclusive interviews conducted by the CVCE with people who were involved in or witnessed the negotiations offers a new perspective on the diplomatic documents. Those interviewed include Charles Rutten, Hubert Ehring, Pierre Pescatore, Max Kohnstamm, André Dubois, Hans-August Lückner, Albert Breuer, Pasquale Antonio Baldocci, Jean François-Poncet, Bino Olivi and Henri Rieben.

In addition to the interviews conducted by the CVCE, the ePublication includes other accounts from figures including Paul-Henri Spaak, Walter Hallstein, Hans von der Groeben, Maurice Faure, Christian Pineau, Jean-François Deniau, Pierre Uri, Dirk Spierenburg, Émile Noël, Paolo Emilio Taviani and Robert Rothschild, as well as contemporary audiovisual archives on the Messina Conference, the Venice Conference, the Val Duchesse negotiations and the signing of the Rome Treaties.

Structure of the ePublication

The ePublication is structured into five broad sections, which have been organised chronologically: The revival of European integration; The Intergovernmental Committee established by the Messina Conference; The Intergovernmental Conference on the Common Market and Euratom; The signing and ratification of the Rome Treaties; The entry into force of the Rome Treaties.

The sections have several levels of sub-sections, each introduced by a background article which offers a clear, simple and precise introduction to the topics under study. These articles are objective (all references and sources used are carefully verified), precise, logical (clear ordering of ideas and arguments), comprehensive (covering all aspects and dimensions of the subject) and interdisciplinary. The texts can be read at several levels, depending on the knowledge and degree of specialisation of the teachers and students.

Each level also contains a selection of documents of various types (institutional documents, correspondence, biographies, comments from doctrine/academic literature, press articles, etc.), from a wide range of disciplines (legal documents, economic analysis, etc.) and of varying geographical and linguistic origin and format (texts, images, sound and video recordings, diagrams, etc.).

Finally, the ePublication also includes a detailed, interactive timeline of the period from 1954 to 1958 and a select bibliography. The bibliographical references comprise the works used by the author in the production of the ePublication, as well as information sources (books, scholarly articles, monographs, websites, etc.) which shed further light on the subject. As a whole, the bibliographical references used are of high academic quality and also reflect a considerable level of interdisciplinarity and linguistic diversity.

1 On the concept of epistemic communities: RUGGIE, John Gerard. International responses to Technology: Concepts and Trends. *International Organization*, summer 1975, vol. 29, No 3, pp. 557–583; HAAS, Peter M. Introduction: Epistemic Communities and international Policy Coordination. *International Organization*, winter 1992, vol. 46, No 1. Knowledge, Power, and International Policy, pp. 1–35. For a general presentation: BOSSY, Thibault and EVRARD, Aurélien. Communauté épistémique. In: BOUSSAGUET, Laurie, JACQUOT, Sophie and RAVINET, Pauline (eds). *Dictionnaire des politiques publiques*. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2010, pp. 140–147. For an analysis of professional networks in the negotiations on the Rome Treaties, see, for example: GERBET, Pierre. La "relance" européenne jusqu'à la conférence de Messine. In: SERRA, Enrico (ed.). *Il relancio dell'Europa e i trattati di Roma. La relance européenne et les traités de Rome. The Relaunching of Europe and the treaties of Rome*. Brussels: Bruylant, Milan: Giuffrè, Paris: LGDJ, Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 1989, pp. 61 et seq.