

Origins

The Road to Paris and Rome

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

- Although unity and cooperation were frequently suggested as a solution to Europe's long history of conflict, a peaceful European community was really only possible after World War II. The main legacy of the war was a fundamental reordering of the international system into a new bipolar world dominated by the US and the Soviet Union. American economic leadership ameliorated the continent's dire postwar economic needs and created the conditions for a prosperous Europe to emerge. At the same time, the security umbrella offered by the US provided Europe with the crucial space it needed to start addressing its long-term political problems.
- Meanwhile, recognition of the relative decline of Europe's power in the wake of frictions with the US in the 1950s led its governments to seek a greater degree of cooperation that would, some argued, lead eventually to political and economic integration and a common European identity. A first step toward these goals was the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which dismantled some national tariff barriers and subsidies while creating a set of supranational governing institutions.
- Despite its importance as a stepping stone toward creating an economic union, the ECSC was limited in scope. Accordingly, leaders of the ECSC signed the Treaty of Rome, which sought to forge deeper economic integration among its member states. Rome also created institutions that continue to be used, in modified forms, in today's EU.

The roots of the EU lie in soil created by hundreds of years of conflict among the peoples of Europe. Many had long dreamed of unity as an answer to Europe's divisions and conflicts, and ideas for the creation of institutions and processes that might help bring Europeans together date back to medieval times. But it was only after World War II that a broader and more receptive audience emerged. Although Europe enjoyed military and economic dominance before the war, World War II dealt these a severe blow. Subsequently, Europe found itself both divided and threatened by a cold war in which the main protagonists were external powers: the US and the Soviet Union. The time was clearly ripe for Europeans to protect themselves from each other and to regroup in order to defend themselves from external threats potentially more destructive than any they had ever faced before.

The US created a recipe for the emergence of the EU by offering three essential ingredients that gave Europeans the luxury of more time and resources to address their internal problems. Ingredient one was the economic opportunity offered by US aid in the postwar reconstruction of Western Europe, embodied in 1948–1951 by the Marshall Plan, which invested billions of dollars in helping address the devastation caused by war. Ingredient two

was the economic leadership offered by the Bretton Woods system, underpinned by US support for free trade and by the emergence of the US dollar as the linchpin of the international monetary system. Ingredient three was the security umbrella provided by the US in the defense of Western Europe against the Soviet threat, given heft in 1949 with the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Still, Europe's threats after World War II were not just external. Indeed, the largest threat to Europe remained nationalism, which had been at the heart of repeated conflict over the centuries, and had most recently been glorified, abused, and discredited by fascism and Nazism. Because the German brand fueled three major wars in seventy years, many now argued that peace was impossible unless Germany could be contained and its power diverted to constructive rather than destructive ends. It had to be allowed to rebuild its economic base and its political system in ways that would not threaten European security; France was particularly eager to ensure this outcome.¹ Perhaps if a new European identity could supersede multiple national identities, the cycle of conflict might be broken.

Unintentionally, the US helped push Western Europe toward this goal of European unity and identity by pursuing policies – particularly on the security front – that alarmed many Europeans. From the Korean War and continuing through the Suez crisis of 1956 and several major world events in the 1960s, transatlantic disagreements helped encourage Europeans to build stronger ties among themselves with a view to allowing Europe to build a stronger position as a global actor. Yet this goal demanded a concrete pathway to encourage a greater sense of unity and common purpose than they had ever been able to achieve before. The key would be to tamp down ambitions and develop a formula that could encourage Europeans to see the logic behind cooperation as well as produce tangible results as quickly as possible. The first move in this direction was taken with the creation in 1951 of the ECSC, designed to prove a point about the feasibility of European integration.

While the creation of the ECSC was an important first step toward unity, it was limited in its scope. Any move toward political integration and a common European identity would depend upon further economic integration. Accordingly, in 1957 members of the ECSC – France, West Germany, Italy, and the three Benelux countries – took matters further by creating the European Economic Community (EEC), which had the more ambitious goal of creating a single European market.

THE TAMING OF EUROPE

Americans sometimes think of Europe as a continent almost frozen in the past, a kind of cultural museum with centuries of history, timeless traditions, and relatively little social or political change. Nothing could be further from the truth. A long history it indeed has, but it is a history of constant change, of sometimes great political violence, and of almost unceasing social disturbance. Proposals for various kinds of international or regional bodies that might be the seeds of a European system of government, and thus the bridge to cooperation and unity, had often been put forward. But national, social, or religious divisions always won out, and it was only brute force that ever took Europe close to the goal of regional unity.

The term *European* was not generally used until 800, when Charlemagne was crowned Holy Roman Emperor by the pope and was described in poems as the king and father of Europe. Later champions of European unity were often motivated by their belief that a united Christian Europe was essential for the revival of the Holy Roman Empire and by concerns about Europe's insecurity in the face of gains by the Turks in Asia Minor.² Among

those thinkers and philosophers who explored the theme of peace through unity several stand out: Jean-Jacques Rousseau favored a European federation; Jeremy Bentham in 1789 proposed a European assembly and a common army; Immanuel Kant in 1795 argued that peace could be achieved through integration; and the Comte de Saint-Simon published a pamphlet in 1814, *The Reorganization of the European Community*, arguing the need for a federal Europe with common institutions, but within which national independence would be maintained and respected. Meanwhile, Napoleon tried to unify the continent by force, a project that ultimately failed as Europe by the end of the nineteenth century descended into nationalism and military rivalry between states.

The horrors of World War I (1914–1918) resulted in an audience that was more receptive to the idea of European integration, the most enthusiastic proponents being smaller states that were tired of being caught up in big power rivalry. Yet prospects of a voluntary and peaceful European union were swept aside by economic recession and the rise of Nazi Germany, which was intent on correcting the “wrongs” of the Treaty of Versailles and creating a German *Lebensraum* (living space). Adolf Hitler spoke of a “European house,” but only in the context of German rule over the continent.

The end of World War II in 1945 brought a fundamental reordering of the international system, which made the possibility of European unity appear more reachable. Before the war, the world had been dominated by “great powers” such as the UK, France, and Germany, which were distinguished from other states mainly by the size and reach of their militaries³ but also by their large economies, their strong positions in international trade, and their deep investments in the international system. Since the war had resulted in the resounding defeat of Germany, the UK and France continued to act like great powers, even though Europe’s global role was diminishing, and a new bipolar order was emerging, dominated by the US and the Soviet Union. Their power and reach were so formidable that they represented a new and unprecedented breed of “superpower.”

In sharp contrast, Europe had to perform triage in the wake of its crushing defeat, with its chief task creating the conditions necessary for peacetime reconstruction. For some this meant a rethinking of their systems of government; for others it meant a new focus on social welfare; and for all it meant taking a new view of international cooperation. But each country had very different sets of priorities, and different ideas about what needed to be done.

ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION AND THE MARSHALL PLAN

As Western European governments worried about domestic postwar reconstruction and adjustment, changes were taking place at the global level that demanded new thinking. During the war economists on both sides of the Atlantic had discussed the best means of achieving a stable and prosperous postwar world. Their views were crystallized in July 1944, when representatives from forty-four countries met at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, to plan for the postwar global economy. They agreed on an Anglo-American proposal to promote free trade, nondiscrimination, and stable rates of exchange – goals that were to be underpinned by American economic and political leadership, and by the creation of three new international organizations: the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, forerunner to today’s World Trade Organization), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank.⁴ More immediately, though, Europe’s economies had to be rebuilt on a more stable footing.

World War II had spread through most of Europe, resulting in an estimated 40 million deaths and leaving behind gaping pockets of devastation. Major cities lay in ruins, agricultural production was halved, food was rationed, and communications were disrupted because bridges, harbors, and railroads had been primary targets of attack. Denmark, France, and the Benelux countries had suffered heavily under occupation. Many of the UK's major cities had been bombed, its exports had been cut by two-thirds, and its national wealth plummeted by 75 percent. Before the war, the UK had been the world's second-largest creditor nation; by 1945 it was the world's biggest debtor nation. Germany and Italy were left under Allied occupation, their economies in ruins. In all of Europe, only Finland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland were relatively undamaged or unchanged.

When an economically exhausted UK ended its financial aid to Greece and Turkey in 1947, President Harry S. Truman argued that the US needed to step into the vacuum to curb communist influence in the region. The Truman Doctrine confirmed a new US interest in European reconstruction as a means of containing the Soviets and discouraging the growth of communist parties in Western Europe.⁵ At the same time, the US State Department had begun to realize that it had underestimated the extent of the wartime economic destruction in Europe. Despite an economic boom during the late 1940s, sustained growth was not forthcoming, food rationing persisted (raising the prospect of famine and starvation), and fears of communist influence spread like brushfire across a destabilized Europe.

Despite having already provided more than \$10 billion in loans and aid to Europe between 1945 and 1947, the US needed something bigger and more structured.⁶ Into the breach stepped Secretary of State George Marshall, who proposed a new and more structured program of aid to Europe. His calculations were mainly political (a strong Europe would be a buffer to Soviet expansionism), but he made his argument more palatable to Congress by couching it in humanitarian terms. "Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine," he announced in a speech at Harvard in June 1947, "but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos." Marshall argued that the initiative should come from Europe and that "the program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all European nations."⁷ Many in the State Department and elsewhere felt long-term stability demanded coordinated regional economic management that would prevent the breakdown of Europe into rival economic and political blocs.⁸

Clearly, Marshall's message struck the intended chord: the British and the French accepted the offer and approached the Soviets with the idea of developing a recovery plan. However, the Soviets suspected the US of ulterior motives and bowed out. In July 1947, sixteen European countries met in Paris and established the Committee on European Economic Cooperation. They listed their needs and asked the US for a whopping \$29 billion in aid, much more than the US had envisaged. Still, with congressional approval the European Recovery Program (otherwise known as the Marshall Plan) ultimately provided roughly \$12.5 billion in aid to Europe between 1948 and 1951.⁹ In April 1948 the same sixteen states created a new body – the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), based in Paris – to coordinate the program.

Although the effects of the Marshall Plan are still debated even today, there is little question that it helped anchor the economic and political recovery already underway in Western Europe and bound the economic and political interests of the US and Western Europe more closely together. It was a profitable investment for the US, to be sure, but it also galvanized the idea of European integration; as Western Europe's first permanent organization for economic cooperation, the OEEC encouraged Europeans to work together and played a key role in showing them how much mutual dependence existed among their economies.¹⁰ It also



MAP 2.1 Europe After World War II.

helped liberalize inter-European trade and ensured that economic integration would be focused on Western Europe. Yet the plan's focus on cooperation rather than true integration fell far short of promoting federalism or political unity.

SECURITY AND THE COLD WAR

Looming large alongside economic concerns were security concerns. US policy on Europe after 1945 had initially been driven by President Truman's desire to pull the military out as quickly as possible. American public opinion favored leaving future peacekeeping efforts to the new United Nations, so within two years the US military presence had been slashed by

95 percent. However, it was increasingly obvious to European leaders that Joseph Stalin planned to spread Soviet influence in Europe, and that the Nazi threat had been replaced by a Soviet threat. Winston Churchill helped spark a change in US public opinion with his famous March 1946 speech in Fulton, Missouri, in which he warned of the descent of an “iron curtain” across Europe.

The US had hoped to share responsibility for security with the Western European powers, but it soon became clear that the Europeans lacked the resources to maintain their end of the bargain, and the dangers that Europe still faced were intensified by events in Germany. Security concerns had propelled the UK, France, and the Benelux states in March 1948 to sign the Brussels treaty, creating the Western Union by which members would provide “all the military and other aid and assistance in their power” in the event of attack. In June, as a first step toward rebuilding German self-sufficiency, the Western Allies agreed to create a new West German state and a new currency for the three zones they were administering. In response, the Soviets set up a blockade around West Berlin. To counter this, in the next year a massive Western airlift was undertaken to supply West Berlin. The Soviet threat was now clear, and the Berlin crisis led to the arrival in the UK in 1948 of the first US bombers suspected of carrying nuclear weapons.

The US Congress was wary of any direct commitments or entanglements in Europe but saw the need to counterbalance the Soviets and to ensure the peaceful cooperation of West Germany. In 1949 the historic North Atlantic Treaty was signed, under which the US (entering its first ever peacetime alliance outside the Western Hemisphere) agreed to help its European allies “restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.” Canada also signed, as did the Benelux countries, the UK, France, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway, and Portugal. The pact was later given more substance with the creation of NATO, headquartered in Paris until it was moved to Brussels in 1966. The US was now formally committed to the security of Western Europe.

Although NATO gave Europe more security and more space in which to focus on reconstruction, it soon became obvious that it was an unbalanced alliance: only 10 percent of NATO forces were American, but the US exercised most of the political influence over NATO policy. NATO members agreed that an attack on one would be considered an attack on them all, but each agreed to respond only with “such actions as it deems necessary.” The creation of NATO sent a strong message to the Soviets, but at its heart was designed to make sure that the US would not immediately be drawn into in yet another European war.

Eager to encourage some kind of inter-European military cooperation, the UK invited its Brussels treaty partners to join with West Germany and Italy to create the Western European Union (WEU).¹¹ The WEU obliged each member to give all possible military and other aid to any member that was attacked. The WEU also reached beyond purely defensive concerns, and agreements signed by the seven founding members in Paris in October 1954 included the aim “to promote the unity and to encourage the progressive integration of Europe.” Within days of the launch of the WEU in May 1955, and the coincidental admission of West Germany into NATO, the Soviet bloc created its own defensive alliance in the form of the Warsaw Pact. All of Central and Eastern Europe was firmly under Soviet control, and the lines of the Cold War were now clearly defined.

At the same time, two major events in the mid-1950s confirmed the new realities of the postwar international system, altered the self-perception of Western Europeans, and boosted supporters of European integration. The first occurred in French Indochina (now Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), which – except for its wartime Japanese occupation – had been under French colonial control since the late nineteenth century. Demanding independence, communist groups under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh launched an uprising in 1946, dragging

the French into a bitter war. The end of the war came in May 1954 with the surrender of 12,000 French troops besieged in the village of Dien Bien Phu. The second defining event came in October 1956 when the Hungarian government of Imre Nagy announced the end of one-party rule and Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. As the UK and France were invading Egypt to reclaim the Suez Canal – built in 1856–1869 by the British and the French but nationalized by Egypt's new leader Gamal Abdel Nasser in July of 1956 – the Soviets responded to the Hungarian decision by sending in tanks. The US wanted to criticize the Soviet use of force and boast to the emerging Third World about the moral superiority of the West,¹² but it was hampered in doing so while British and French paratroopers occupied the Suez Canal. The UK and France were ostracized in the UN Security Council, the UK's prime minister, Anthony Eden, resigned, and the Suez invasion was quickly abandoned.

The combination of France's problems in Indochina, the Suez crisis, and the Hungarian uprising had tumultuous consequences.¹³ The UK and France began steady military reductions, finally recognizing that they were no longer world powers capable of significant independent action. Both countries embarked on a concerted program of decolonization; the UK began looking increasingly to Europe for its economic and security interests; and it became obvious to Europeans that the US was the major partner in the Atlantic Alliance, a fact that particularly worried the French. Indochina and Suez left the French more doubtful than ever about American trustworthiness and more convinced of the vital need for European policy independence.¹⁴ Meanwhile, Suez had the effect of drawing the UK's attention away from its traditional links with Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, and encouraging the UK to begin its slow turn toward Europe.¹⁵ Indeed, for Walter Hallstein, later president of the European Commission, the Suez crisis helped foster greater European unity.¹⁶ West Germany, meanwhile, worried about being caught in the middle of the Cold War, and many believed that a strong West German army would diminish the need for a nuclear defense strategy.

OPENING MOVES: COAL AND STEEL (1950–1953)

Support for the idea of European cooperation after the war found footing in the emergence (or reemergence) of several groups of pro-Europeanists. They included the United European Movement in the UK, the Europa-Bund in Germany, the Socialist Movement for the United States of Europe in France, and the European Union of Federalists. The spotlight shone particularly on the UK, which had led the resistance to Nazism and was still the dominant European power. In 1942–1943, Churchill had suggested the creation of “a United States of Europe” operating under “a Council of Europe” with reduced trade barriers, free movement of people, a common military, and a high court to adjudicate disputes.¹⁷ Yet it was clear that he felt this new entity should revolve around France and Germany and would not necessarily include the UK, which he once said was “with Europe but not of it. We are interested and associated, but not absorbed.”¹⁸ This was not to be the last example of the UK's contradictory embrace of Europe (and the later EU) while at the same time keeping it at arm's length.

In an attempt to push the cause of European unity, pro-European groups organized the Congress of Europe in The Hague in May 1948. Within months the governments of the UK, France, Italy, and the Benelux countries had agreed to the creation of a new organization. The French and Italians hoped to call it the European Union, but the British insisted on the more ambiguous and noncommittal title Council of Europe.¹⁹ It was founded in May 1949 with the signing of a statute in London by ten European states that agreed on the need for “a closer unity between all the like-minded countries of Europe.” The Council of Europe made

progress on human rights, cultural issues, and even limited economic cooperation, but it never amounted to anything more than a loose intergovernmental organization. It was far from the kind of organization that European federalists wanted.

Among those who sought something bolder were two Frenchmen: an entrepreneur and public servant named Jean Monnet and French foreign minister Robert Schuman (see Box 2.1). Both were ardent Europeanists, both felt something practical needed to be done that went beyond the noble statements of organizations such as the Council of Europe, and both believed that the logical point of departure should be the perennial problem of Franco-German relations. One way of promoting reconstruction in Germany without allowing it to become a threat to its neighbors (particularly France) was to let it rebuild under the auspices of a supranational organization, thereby tying it into the wider process of European reconstruction. The congresses of the European Movement in early 1949 had suggested that the coal and steel industries offered strong potential for common European organization, for several reasons:²⁰

- Coal and steel were the building blocks of industry, and the steel industry had a tendency to create cartels. Cooperation would eliminate waste and duplication, dismantle cartels, make coal and steel production more efficient and competitive, and boost industrial development.
- The heavy industries of the Ruhr Valley had constituted the traditional basis for Germany's power, and France and Germany had battled before over coal reserves in Alsace-Lorraine. Monnet argued that "coal and steel were at once the key to economic power and the raw materials for forging weapons of war."²¹ Forging a supranational coal and steel industry would help contain German power.
- Integrating coal and steel would ensure that Germany became reliant on trade with the rest of Europe, bolstering its economic reconstruction and calming French fears of German industrial domination.²²

Monnet felt that unless France acted immediately, the US would become the focus of a new transatlantic alliance against the Soviet bloc, the UK would be pulled closer to the US, Germany's economic and military growth would burgeon, and France would hurtle towards its "eclipse."²³ As head of the French national planning commission, Monnet knew from personal experience that intergovernmental organizations tended to be hamstrung by the governments of their member states and to become bogged down in ministerial meetings. To avoid these problems, he proposed a new institution independent of national governments that would have a life of its own, one that would be supranational rather than intergovernmental. After discussing the proposal with West German chancellor Konrad Adenauer, Schuman announced it at a press conference at the French Foreign Ministry in Paris on May 9, 1950. In what later became known as the Schuman Plan, he argued that Europe would not be built at once or according to a single plan but only through a series of clearly identifiable achievements.

The coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany.... With this aim in view, the French Government proposes that action be taken immediately in one limited but decisive point. It proposes that Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole be placed under a common High Authority, within the framework of an organization open to the participation of the other countries of Europe.²⁴

Concrete construction on European unity had begun.

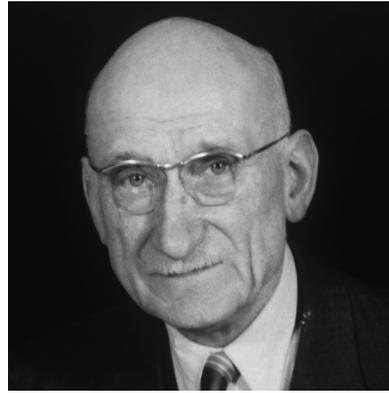


PHOTO 2.1 & 2.2 The Founding Fathers of the EU: Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman.

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Box 2.1 Monnet and Schuman: The Fathers of Europe

The roll call of people throughout the centuries who have pondered the notion of European unity is impressive and includes William Penn, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Jeremy Bentham, Immanuel Kant, Victor Hugo, and Winston Churchill. But it was two Frenchmen who outlined the ideas that led most immediately to the European Union as we know it today.

Jean Monnet (1888–1979) was an entrepreneur who spent many years in public service, notably during the two world wars. Born in Cognac in western France, Monnet worked for his family business before becoming an adviser to the French government during World War I, then working for the League of Nations. After the war he worked as a financier for an American investment bank, reentering public service during World War II. He was instrumental in postwar planning in France and was the architect of the Monnet Plan, a five-year strategy for investment and modernization. He became first president of the High Authority of the ECSC, from which he resigned in 1955.

Robert Schuman (1886–1963) had an altogether different career. Born to French parents in Luxembourg, he was raised in the province of Lorraine (which had been annexed by Germany in 1871 but was returned to France in 1918), attended university in Bonn, Munich, Berlin, and Strasbourg, and served in the German army during World War I. After the war he was elected to the French parliament and spent much of his time dealing with the legal problems of Alsace-Lorraine. He refused to serve in the French Vichy government during World War II, instead becoming an outspoken critic of German policy in Alsace-Lorraine. Schuman was imprisoned by the Gestapo, but he escaped and then worked for the French underground. Reelected to the new French legislature in 1945, he served as finance minister, briefly became prime minister, then served as French foreign minister from 1948 to 1952.²⁵

Although the plan announced as the Schuman Declaration bears the name of the French foreign minister, it was actually Monnet's creation.²⁶ In fact, Monnet later claimed that Schuman "didn't really understand the treaty [the Treaty of Paris] which bore his name."²⁷ Nonetheless, the announcement of the plan was the spark that led to the European Union of today.

The plan, Schuman went on, would be “a first step in the federation of Europe” and would make war between France and Germany “not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible.”²⁸ Few other governments were enthusiastic, however, and only four took up the invitation to join: Italy sought respectability and economic and political stability, and the three Benelux countries opted in because they were small and vulnerable, had twice been invaded by Germany, and felt their only hope for a voice in world affairs and a guarantee for security was to be part of a bigger unit. They were also heavily reliant on exports and had already created their own customs union in 1948.

Undeterred by a tepid response from other states such as the UK, the governments of the founding member states (the Six) opened negotiations and on April 18, 1951, signed the Treaty of Paris, creating the ECSC. The new organization began work in August 1952, following ratification of the terms of the treaty in each of the member states. It was governed by four institutions:

- A High Authority with nine members (nominated for six-year terms) who were expected to work toward removing all barriers to the free movement of coal and steel and to represent the joint interests of the ECSC rather than national interests.
- A Special Council of Ministers representing the member states which would have equal power of decision making for the ECSC.
- A Common Assembly with advisory responsibilities, chosen on the basis of population from the national legislatures of the member states.
- A Court of Justice tasked with settling conflicts between states and ruling on the legality of High Authority decisions.

The birth of the ECSC was a small step in itself, but it represented the first time European governments had transferred significant powers to a supranational organization. It was empowered to pull down tariff barriers, abolish subsidies, fix prices, and raise income by imposing levies on steel and coal production. Though it faced some national resistance, its job was facilitated by the fact that much of the groundwork had already been laid by the Benelux customs union. The creation of the ECSC showed that integration was feasible, and its very existence obliged the Six to work together. While ultimately failing to achieve many of its goals (notably the creation of a single market for coal and steel),²⁹ it had been established to prove a point about the feasibility of integration. In this respect, the ECSC was a great success.

FROM PARIS TO ROME (1955–1958)

Meanwhile, integrationists stumbled badly with two much larger and more ambitious projects. The first of these was the European Defence Community (EDC), which was intended to promote Western European cooperation on defense while binding West Germany into a European security system. Echoing ideas outlined by Churchill in a speech to the Council of Europe in August 1950, a draft plan for the EDC was made public in October of that year.³⁰ It argued the need for a common defense and “a European Army tied to the political institutions of a united Europe and a European Minister for Defense.”³¹ On that understanding, the six members of the ECSC signed a draft EDC treaty in May 1952. Although West Germany, Italy, and the Benelux countries all ratified the treaty, there was clear resistance in the UK – wary of any kind of supranational security arrangement – and, ironically, within France, which had first proposed it. Plans for the EDC were finally abandoned in August 1954, when the French National Assembly voted it down on the grounds that giving up the right to a national army would have a crippling effect on its sovereignty.

The second failed venture was the European Political Community (EPC), which was envisioned as the first step in the genesis of a European federation. A draft plan was completed in 1953, based around a European Executive Council, a Council of Ministers, a Court of Justice, and a popularly elected bicameral parliament. With ultimate power resting with the Executive Council, which would represent national interests, the EPC was more confederal than federal in nature.³² With the collapse of the EDC, however, all hopes for an EPC died, at least temporarily, and the plans were shelved. The failure of these two initiatives dealt a sobering blow to the integrationists, sending shock waves through the ECSC; Monnet left the presidency of the High Authority in 1955, disillusioned by the political resistance to its work and impatient to move on with the process of integration.³³

Nevertheless, it could be argued that the failure of the EDC created a much better opportunity for deeper economic integration to proceed. For EU historian Desmond Dinan, the EDC was not a lost opportunity but instead “rescued European integration from the political quagmire of an unworkable military commitment.”³⁴ Indeed, while the six original members of the ECSC agreed that coal and steel had been a useful testing ground for economic integration, its scope was limited. Moreover, it was difficult to develop those two sectors in isolation. When the foreign ministers of the Six met at Messina, Italy, in June 1955, they decided to reach further by working “for the establishment of a united Europe by the development of common institutions, the progressive fusion of national economies, the creation of a common market, and the progressive harmonization of their social policies.”³⁵ A committee chaired by Belgian foreign minister Paul-Henri Spaak (the driving force behind the conference) crafted what he himself admitted was a plan motivated less by economic cooperation than by a desire to take another step toward political union.³⁶

The Spaak committee report led to a new round of negotiations and the signing on March 25, 1957, of the two Treaties of Rome, creating the EEC and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). Following member state ratification, both came into force in January 1958. The EEC treaty committed the Six to several economic goals: the creation of a single



PHOTO 2.3 Signing of the Treaty of Rome.

Source: © European Communities, 1992, Source: EC – Audiovisual Service.

market within twelve years through the removal of all restrictions on internal trade; agreement on a common external tariff; the reduction of barriers to the free movement of people, services, and capital; the development of common agricultural and transport policies; and the creation of the European Social Fund and a European Investment Bank. The Euratom treaty, meanwhile – mainly of interest only to the French – aimed at creating a single market for atomic energy, but it was quickly relegated to focusing on research. When West Germany and Italy began developing their own nuclear power programs, Euratom funding was cut, and it rapidly dwindled to a junior actor in the process of integration.³⁷

Although the EEC and Euratom inherited the same basic institutional framework as the ECSC, there were some notable changes:

- Instead of a High Authority, the EEC had an appointed nine-member quasi-executive Commission with less power to impose decisions on member states and whose main jobs were to initiate policy and to oversee implementation.
- The EEC Council of Ministers was granted greater power over decision making but still represented national interests. Though composed of six members, they shared seventeen votes (four each for France, Germany, and Italy; two each for Belgium and the Netherlands; and one for Luxembourg). Some decisions required unanimity, while others could be made by a simple majority or, more often, a qualified majority of twelve votes from at least four states. This system made it impossible for the larger states to outvote the smaller ones.
- A single Parliamentary Assembly was created to cover the EEC, ECSC, and Euratom, with 142 members appointed by the member states. It could question or censure the Commission of the ECSC, but had little legislative authority. The Assembly renamed itself the European Parliament in 1962.
- A single Court of Justice was created with seven judges appointed for renewable six-year terms. It was responsible for interpreting the treaties and for ensuring that the three institutions and the member states fulfilled their treaty obligations.

Desmond Dinan has argued that while the ECSC was “important politically and institutionally” it was economically insignificant.³⁸ Be that as it may, it was arguably the Treaty of Rome, more than the Treaty of Paris, which shaped the structure and ambitions of today’s EU. Its institutional architecture has persisted to this day: a Commission that served as a quasi-executive, a Council of Ministers and a Parliamentary Assembly that performed legislative functions, and a Court of Justice that operated like a supranational constitutional court. Moreover, Rome set the stage for fuller economic integration and an accompanying logic of political integration which would take root, albeit slowly and fitfully, over the next several decades, as we shall see in the next chapters.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1 What were the major obstacles to progressing toward European unity and cooperation before World War II? What changed after World War II and what role did the US play?
- 2 Why did Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman emphasize the Franco-German relationship in their ideas about a future European community? Why was the integration of coal and steel chosen as the foundation for this community?
- 3 What were the factors which drove the Treaty of Rome and how did it further European integration?

NOTES

- 1 John Gillingham, "Jean Monnet and the European Coal and Steel Community: A Preliminary Appraisal," in *Jean Monnet: The Path to European Unity*, edited by Douglas Brinkley and Clifford Hackett, 131–137 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991).
- 2 Derek Heater, *The Idea of European Unity*, 6 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).
- 3 Jack S. Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495–1975*, 16–18 (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1983).
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