

## 1973 Enlargement

### What do I need to know before I start?

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1973, the United Kingdom, Denmark and Ireland joined the European Communities, marking the first enlargement of today's EU. Although the United Kingdom (UK) did not join the Community before 1973, relations between the British government and the European Communities date back to the 1950s. Indeed, the UK was the first country to establish a Delegation to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952 and to sign with the Community an Association Agreement in 1954. It applied to join the Community in 1961 but its first and second applications were vetoed by the French government in 1963 and 1967. Negotiations eventually began in 1970 and the Treaty of Accession (available [here](#)) was signed in Brussels in January 1972 by the British Prime Minister Edward Heath. Being closely linked economically with the UK, it was necessary for Denmark, Ireland, and Norway to follow the UK and join the Community as well. With the exception of Norway where the government lost a national referendum on membership, the three countries thus joined the European Economic Community (EEC) on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1973. Accession to the Community was however not evident from the start and was the result of long negotiations, especially within the UK and with the Community's Member States and institutions. Indeed, back in the 1950s, the British government did not join the European Coal and Steel Community's Schuman Plan and instead participated in the establishment of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960 with the Stockholm Convention. Founded to promote closer economic cooperation and free trade in Europe, the EFTA founding countries included Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. With their accession to the EEC, the UK and Denmark left the EFTA in 1972 but British entry in particular and the conditions attached to it were not favored by all. The British Labour Party quickly called for renegotiations of UK's membership, which required a national referendum (held in 1975) on whether the UK should stay in the Community or leave it. 67% of the votes were in favor of staying in the Community, and the UK is until today member of the European Union although it began negotiating its withdrawal in 2017 – a process still on course.

Languages: Please be aware that although most documents available in our Archives are in French, English or German, some may be in other EU languages. In order to check the languages used in a fonds, please refer to our holdings page. Additionally, some fonds may contain a few files in a language other than those listed in the description.

## What can I find at the HAEU?

Relating specifically to the EU's first enlargement, the fonds available at the HAEU are:

### 1) *EU institutions*

#### [ECSC High Authority](#)

It can be very useful to consult the fonds of the ECSC High Authority, which includes a section on [External Relations](#), comprising numerous documents. Concerning the UK in particular, the fonds also includes a [section](#) related to the UK's relations with the Community between 1953 and 1967 before accession to the EU as well as files related to the [British delegation to the ECSC](#) and to the [Association Council](#) between the High Authority and the UK.

#### [Special Council of Ministers of the ECSC](#) and [Council of Ministers](#)

The fonds of the ECSC Special Council and of the Council of Ministers being organized by years, you need to browse the fonds of each separate year to access the files mentioned below. Concerning early relations between the ECSC special Council and the UK, you may look into the Special Council's fonds, which includes some files related to the [UK's association with the ECSC](#). In the fonds of the Council of Ministers, matters related to the Community's first enlargement are assembled in the section 'Relations Extérieures' or 'Relations avec Pays tiers' (example for the year [1962](#) and [1973](#)). You may also consult the Council's fonds pertaining to the [application process and accession negotiations of new member countries](#), including the [first enlargement](#).

#### [Commission](#)

In the Commission's fonds, various files related to the Community's first enlargement are included in the section for the [DG External Relations](#) and for the [DG EURATOM](#). The fonds also includes a [dossier](#) related to the first enlargement and its consequences on the Community, while the section 'Documents COM' also includes relevant files including the [Treaty of Accession](#) for the first enlargement. You may also look into the numerous files ([example](#)) pertaining to the GATT negotiations and in the section for the [DG Internal Market](#), considering the significant impact of the 1973 Enlargement (especially the UK) on the role of the EEC in the GATT rounds. It is advisable to search the database directly to find these files more easily, filtering the results to limit the search to the Commission's fonds. In addition, you might want to look into the sections pertaining to the [Secretariat-General](#) and the [Cabinets](#).

## [ECSC Common Assembly](#) and [European Parliament](#)

You may look into the fonds of the Common Assembly, which includes the [proceedings](#) and [reports](#) of the parliamentary commission for political affairs and for the Community's external relations. Concerning the early years of the Parliament, the fonds includes the proceedings and reports of the [parliamentary commission for commercial policy and economic cooperation with third countries](#) and of the [parliamentary commission for external economic relations](#). Particularly in relation to the UK, the fonds also includes the [proceedings](#) of the meetings of the parliamentary working group on technological cooperation between the EEC and the UK. Moreover, the dossiers pertaining to the work of the Walter Behrendt Cabinet includes numerous files pertaining to British accession (example [1](#), [2](#)). The fonds of the three Parliament's legislatures are of less relevance in this context as British entry in the Community took place at an earlier date.

## [European Investment Bank](#)

The fonds of the European Investment Bank (EIB) includes [dossiers](#) concerning the application for membership of new countries including the [UK](#), [Denmark](#), [Norway](#) and [Ireland](#), the criteria for accession and the negotiation process between candidate countries and the EIB, as well as the [consequences](#) of enlargement for the [EIB and its status](#). You also might find it interesting to consult the sub-fonds '[Publications](#)' that includes the EIB [annual reports](#).

## [Economic and Social Committee](#)

The fonds of the Economic and Social Committee includes several [Commission position papers](#) to the Council concerning the potential accession to the Community of the UK, Ireland, Denmark and Norway, as well as some [articles](#) pertaining to the first enlargement.

### 2) *Corporate Bodies*

## [European Free Trade Association](#)

It is of utmost importance to consult the fonds of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), considering that it included Denmark, Norway and the UK as founding members in 1960 before leaving it to join the EU. The EFTA fonds includes the organization's official documents pertaining to its different councils and committees, as well as [general](#), [information](#) and [working documents](#), and files concerning [EFTA's relations with member and non-member countries](#). The fonds also includes [files](#) related among others to British accession, consultation between the EFTA countries on [Britain's negotiations for entry into the EEC](#), as well as documents pertaining to the case of [Denmark and Norway](#) and reports on their [negotiations with the EEC](#).

### [Organisation for European Economic Co-operation \(OEEC\)](#)

It can be useful to consult the fonds of the OEEC to understand the early relations between the Community and the candidate countries for the first enlargement in the development of a free trade area in Europe, particularly in the section for the OEEC [Inter-governmental Committee on the establishment of a European Free Trade Area](#).

#### 3) *Individuals*

##### [Émile Noël](#)

It can be very useful to consult the private fonds of Émile Noël as it includes various files on the Community's [first enlargement](#), including the early [candidatures](#), the [accession negotiations](#) and the [1974 renegotiations](#).

##### [Uwe Kitzinger](#)

Kitzinger's fonds includes numerous files of interest to study the Community's first enlargement, in particular in relation to the UK and its access negotiations. The fonds includes among others a [section](#) pertaining to the first enlargement and to the negotiations and renegotiations of the Accession Treaty.

##### [Emanuele Gazzo](#)

You may consult Gazzo's private fonds which includes [files](#) on British domestic policy and the UK's position towards European integration, as well as documents pertaining to the [first enlargement](#).

##### [Franco Maria Malfatti](#)

Malfatti's private fonds includes several [files](#) relating to the first enlargement, the [accession negotiations](#) for the [UK](#), [Ireland](#), [Denmark](#) and [Norway](#), as well as the signature of the [Accession Treaty](#).

##### [Paul-Henri Spaak](#)

You may consult Spaak's private fonds, which includes files on Spaak's time as foreign minister and the Community's relations with UK representatives from the early years of integration in the 1950s (example [1](#), [2](#)).

## [Helmut Von Verschuer](#)

You may also look into Verschuer's private fonds, which includes numerous [files](#) pertaining to the negotiations on the development of a common agricultural policy, including the impact of the 1973 enlargement.

### 4) Collections

#### [Jean Monnet Duchêne Sources](#)

The collection 'Jean Monnet Duchêne Sources' comprises '[François Duchêne's Archival Material](#)' which includes several files on the [Community's early relations](#) with candidate countries, to British entry from the [Rome Treaties to De Gaulle's veto in 1963](#), and to the subsequent first enlargement.

#### [French Ministry for Foreign Affairs](#)

It can be useful to look into the collection 'Ministère des Affaires étrangères français' to know more about the French position towards [British accession to the Community](#). In addition, you may consult the related fond, the [French inter-ministerial committee for European issues](#), which includes numerous [files](#) related to British accession negotiations.

### 5) *Oral History*

In addition, take a look at the [oral history holdings](#), which comprise numerous interviews of European politicians and officials, including important figures and officials involved in the access negotiations of the Community's first enlargement. Below, you can find a (non-exhaustive) list of persons interviewed who touched upon the 1973 enlargement.

[Crispin Tickell](#)  
[David O'Sullivan](#)  
[Hayden Phillips](#)  
[Uffe Toudal Pedersen](#)  
[Christopher Audland](#)  
[Aneurin Hughes](#)  
[Michael Franklin](#)  
[Michael Hardy](#)  
[Albert Coppé](#)  
[John Pinder](#)  
[Edmund Dell](#)  
[Arthur Cockfield](#)  
[Eric Roll](#)  
[Roy Denman](#)  
[David Hannay](#)

[Derek Ezra](#)  
[Ivor Seward Richard](#)  
[Jan Jacob](#)  
[Michael Palliser](#)  
[Roger Sherfield](#)  
[Richard Mayne](#)  
[Robert Nathan](#)  
[Garrett Fitzgerald](#)  
[John Tuthill](#)  
[Carl Kaysen](#)  
[Georges Berthoin](#)  
[Paul Luyten](#)  
[Francesco Fresi](#)  
[Jean-François Deniau](#)  
[Richard Hay](#)  
[Lord David Williamson](#)  
[Alec Cairncross](#)  
[Donald Mac Dougall](#)