

1981 Enlargement

What do I need to know before I start?

With the signing of the Athens Agreement on 9 July 1961, Greece became Associate Member of the Community after invoking in June 1959 Article 238 of the Treaty of Rome, which provided for individual states or a union of them the opportunity to become associated with the Community.

Coming into force in November 1962, the Association Agreement between Greece and the Community provided for a customs union after a 22-year transitional period, for the conclusion of a financial protocol and for the harmonisation of certain policies, particularly in the field of agriculture and taxation. The Agreement (Art. 72) also confirmed the eventual accession of Greece to the Community and led to the establishment of an Association Council and a Joint Parliamentary Committee.

The Association Agreement was suspended following the military coup of 21 April 1967 and restored after the fall of the regime in July 1974. Threatened with expulsion for human rights infringements, Greece had left the Council of Europe in December 1969 but was readmitted in November 1974.

On 12 June 1975, Greece officially submitted its application for accession to the European Economic Community (EEC), for which the Commission showed some reticence in its reply to the Council's request for an opinion. The Commission's detailed opinion was set out in a report addressed to the Council in January 1976, in which it stressed Greece's backward economy and agriculture compared with the nine Member States composing the EEC at the time. Seeing the need for a long transitional period to successfully adapt Greece's economy integrate it into the Community, the Commission proposed the establishment of a pre-accession period. Greece had a substantially lower gross domestic product (GDP) and a higher unemployment rate than the Community's Member States at the time, while its GDP was 50 per cent below the average of the Community. The accession negotiations for Greece officially began in July 1976 and were completed in May 1979, leading to the signing of the Accession Treaty on May 28, 1979.

The Accession Act was subsequently ratified by the Greek Parliament and on 1 January 1981, Greece became a Member State of the Community. A five-year transitional period was granted to the country in order for it to adapt its economy to the rules governing the Community and its Member States (although a seven-year period was applied to some aspects of the accession including the free movement of Greek workers and agricultural products). Greece was initially exempted from a portion of the payments pertaining to the value-added tax (VAT) and the Commission drew up several aid programmes, particularly in the field of regional policy and in the context of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for Greece to adapt its economy to that of the other Member States in the Community. Greece's accession to the EEC, the second enlargement of the Community, is considered as part of the Mediterranean enlargement, together with Spain and Portugal which joined the Community in 1986.

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 the ones listed in the description.

What can I find at the HAEU?

Related specifically to EU's second 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 for [External Relations](#), comprising numerous documents pertaining to Greece's early relations and association with the Community (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)). To find these files more easily, it is advisable to use the database search tool and filter the results to limit the search to the ECSC High Authority's fonds.

[Council of Ministers](#)

In the HAEU inventory, the fonds of the Council of Ministers is organised by year and you need to browse each separate year to access specific files. In the Council's fonds, matters related to the Community's second enlargement are assembled in the section 'Relations Extérieures' or 'Relations avec Pays tiers' (example for the year [1962](#) and [1973](#)), which include various files pertaining to the Community's relations and association with Greece before it joined the Community (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)). You may also consult the Council's fonds pertaining to the [application process and accession negotiations of new member countries](#), including the case of [Greece](#).

[Commission](#)

In the Commission's fonds, various files related to Greece's early relations with the Community and its accession negotiations are included in the section for the [DG External Relations](#) (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)), as well as a dossier that pertains among others to the [accession negotiations for Greece](#). In addition, you might want to look into the sections related to the [Secretariat-General](#) and the [Cabinets](#), as well as in the section 'Documents COM' which also include relevant files in this context (example [1](#), [2](#)). 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.

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

Concerning the early relations that developed between Greece and the Community, you might find it useful to consult the proceedings and reports of several parliamentary commissions and delegations concerned in particular with Greece's association with the Community ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#)). In this context, it might be also useful to consult 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](#). For the Parliament's first legislature, the section comprising the [parliamentary questions](#) includes numerous files (that you may easily find using the database search tool) pertaining to the Community's relations with Greece before accession and to the consequences of the second enlargement for the Community (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)), including Greece's [Treaty of Accession](#). The sub-fonds pertaining to [Simone Veil's Presidency](#) also includes numerous files pertaining to the Community's relations with Greece (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)). You may also consult the reports and proceedings of the parliamentary commission for external economic relations for the [first](#) legislature), while the fonds of the Parliament's second and third legislature are of less relevance considering that the second enlargement took place before 1984.

[European Court of Auditors](#)

You might find it interesting to consult the ECA's [annual reports](#) (1977-1997), [special reports](#) (1978-1991), as well as [opinions](#) (1977-1997) and [internal documents](#), including [information documents](#) (1977-1994) and [working documents](#) (1977-1994).

[European Court of Justice](#)

According to the nature of the ECJ, these fonds include documents dealing with judicial affairs, namely procedure dossiers and sentences. You might find it interesting to consult some of its dossiers dealing with the Community's second enlargement.

[European Investment Bank](#)

The fonds of the European Investment Bank (EIB) includes files pertaining to the [criteria for accession](#), to the [negotiation process between candidate countries and the EIB](#), as well as to 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](#) as well as the section devoted to [EIB projects signed between 1959 and 1971](#) regarding EU member states and associated countries. The fonds also includes some economic studies pertaining to the [Community's associate members](#), including [Greece \(more\)](#).

[Economic and Social Committee](#)

The section 'Avis' of the fonds of the Economic and Social Committee comprises various files (reports, articles, and position papers) pertaining to [Greece's relations with the Community](#) and the accession negotiations (example [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)), including several [dossiers](#) pertaining to Greece's application. Similarly to the Council of Ministers, the inventory of the Committee is organised by years, each including a special section 'Avis' (example for [1975](#)) and it is advisable to search directly the database and filter the results to limit the search to the Committee's fonds to find relevant files more easily.

2) *Corporate Bodies*

[European League for Economic Cooperation \(LECE\)](#)

You may also consult the fonds of the LECE, which comprises several [files](#) pertaining to Greece and the Community in the pre-accession period and during the accession negotiations.

3) *Individuals*

[Émile Noël](#)

It can be very useful to consult the private fonds of Émile Noël as it includes various files related to the [Community's second enlargement](#), including a special [section](#) on the Community's relations with Greece (1975-1985) and the accession negotiations. His fonds also comprises files pertaining to his [professional travels \(1963-1987\)](#), including his [visit to Athens](#) for the signing of Greece's Accession Treaty. In addition, you may look into his notes on the [European Council](#) and [Commission's meetings](#) (1957-1987), as well as into documents related to the work of the [different DGs](#) of the Commission, during his time as [Secretary-General](#).

[Edoardo Martino](#)

You may also look into Martino's private fonds which includes several [dossiers](#) pertaining to Greece, the military coup of 1967, its consequences on Greece and on its relations and association with the Community, as well as Greece's accession negotiations.

[Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza](#)

Mugnozza's private fonds includes some [files](#) pertaining to Greece's application for membership and [accession to the Community](#), including reports, notes, and correspondence between Mugnozza and Greek personalities.

4) *Collections*

[French Ministry for Foreign Affairs](#)

It can also be useful to look into the collection '*Ministère des Affaires étrangères français*', which includes some files pertaining to bilateral relations between the Community and third countries, including [Greece](#) (more [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)), and to the [EEC-Greece Association Agreement](#).

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 second enlargement. Below, you can find a (non-exhaustive) list of persons interviewed who talked about Greece's accession to the Community and about the previous association agreement between Greece and the Community.

[Ioannis Yennimatas](#)

[Bjarne Bladbjerg](#)

[Thomas O'Dwyer](#)

[Claude Pleinevaux](#)

[Francesco Fresi](#)

[Alfonso Mattera](#)

[Ole Bus Henriksen](#)

[Arne Larsen](#)

[Umberto Stefani](#)

[Jean-Pierre Contzen](#)

[Grigoris Varfis](#)

[Jürgen Erdmenger](#)

[Nicolas Moussis](#)

[Lord David Williamson](#)

[Jens Hauge Pedersen](#)

[Robert Toulemon](#)

[Helmut Sigrist](#)

[Michael O'Kennedy](#)

[Bino Olivi](#)

[Jean-François Deniau](#)

[David Hannay](#)

[Axel Herbst](#)

[Robert Jackson](#)

[Alan Pratley](#)

[Michael Emerson](#)

[Christopher Audland](#)

[Christopher Tugendhat](#)

[Norbert Kohlhasse](#)