

Enlargement

What do I need to know before I start?

The process whereby new countries join the European Union is called “enlargement”. Since the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957, EU membership has grown from 6 to 28 countries. The first enlargement took place in 1973 with three new countries joining, namely the United Kingdom, Denmark and Ireland. Greece followed in 1981, Portugal and Spain in 1986, while Austria, Finland, and Sweden joined in 1995. The largest single enlargement took place in 2004/2007 with ten new EU member states from Central and Eastern Europe and the latest country to join joining the EU was Croatia, in 2013. The Treaty on European Union (1993; Art. 49) provides the legal basis for countries to join the EU and the Copenhagen criteria define the standard preconditions for EU membership. These criteria include a free-market economy, a stable democracy, the rule of law as well as the acceptance of all EU legislation. A country wishing to join the EU must submit its application to the Council which refers to the Commission to assess the country’s ability to meet the Copenhagen criteria. If the Commission’s assessment is positive, negotiations are formally opened following the Council’s agreement upon a negotiating mandate.

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?

Specifically concerned with enlargement and the development of an Enlargement policy, the fonds available at the HAEU are:

1) EU institutions

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

For early enlargement matters, you may look into the inventory of the ECSC High Authority, particularly in the section ‘[Relations Extérieures](#)’ as well as in the [section](#) relating to Britain’s relations with the Community between 1953 and 1967 before accession to the EU in 1973. You may also look into the inventory of the ECSC Special Council of Ministers.

[Council of Ministers](#)

In the HAEU inventory, enlargement matters discussed in the Council of Ministers are discussed in the section ‘Relations Extérieures’ or ‘Relations avec Pays tiers’. In the Council of Ministers fonds since they are-organized by year, you need to browse the fonds of each separate year to access the specific section on external relations (example for the year [1962](#) and [1973](#)). In

addition, you may look into the [Council's fonds](#) concerned with accession to the Community, including the case of the [United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Greece, Spain and Portugal](#).

[Commission](#)

In the Commission's fonds, you will not find a specific section on Enlargement but these matters are discussed in the section [DG External Relations](#). In addition, you might want to look into the sections on the [Secretariat-General](#) and the [Cabinets](#).

[European Parliament](#)

The European Parliament's fonds includes the proceedings of the meetings of the parliamentary delegations to third countries, such as discussions on enlargement matters (for the [1st](#), [2nd](#) and [3rd](#) legislature), as well as those of the parliamentary commission for external economic relations (for the [1st](#), [2nd](#) and [3rd](#) legislature). In addition, for the early years of the Parliament and the preceding Common Assembly, you might find it useful to consult the reports of several parliamentary commissions concerned with the Community's association with other countries (example for [Greece](#), for [Turkey](#)) as well as the [proceedings](#) of the meetings of the parliamentary commission for political affairs and for the Community's external relations.

[European Court of Auditors](#)

You might find it interesting to consult the ECA's annual reports (1977-1997), special reports (1978-1991) and opinions (1977-1997) as well as internal documents, including information documents (1977-1994) and working documents (1977-1994), where you will material on the enlargement of the EU.

[European Investment Bank](#)

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

[Economic and Social Committee](#)

The Economic and Social Committee includes a section on the work of a sub-committee on Enlargement, [1979](#) whose reports might provide additional information on the positions of different actors in Europe vis-à-vis enlargement to and association with non-member countries.

2) Corporate Bodies

European Free Trade Association

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) was established in 1960 as an economic union between non-EU countries, including initially Denmark, Norway, Austria and the UK, which later left the EFTA to join the EU. The history of EFTA is therefore closely related to the integration process that was taking place within the EU and it can therefore be useful to consult the fonds of the EFTA to understand the enlargement process of the EU, including the section on the [EFTA-EEC Joint Committee](#).

European League for Economic Cooperation

The fonds of the European League for Economic Cooperation (LECE) includes a section on the work of the [Commission of the LECE on Enlargement](#) from 1996 to 2009.

3) Individuals

Graham J. L. Avery

Avery's fonds includes an important [section](#) on Enlargement and provides insightful information in this context as he was [Director of the Task Force for Enlargement](#), 1993-94 and in this capacity he participated in the [accession negotiations](#) with Austria, Sweden, Finland and Norway, and became chief adviser for strategic questions in the [DG for Enlargement](#).

Uwe Kitzinger

Kitzinger's fonds includes numerous files of interest on Britain's relationship with the EEC during the period of negotiations between the former and the six founding member countries. The fonds includes a [section](#) on the Community's relations with non-member countries including the United Kingdom and Denmark.

Angel Viñas

Angel Viñas's fonds concerns his career within the European Commission from his position as Director for Asia and Latin America Affairs and then as Head of the EC Delegation to the UN to his position as Director for Multilateral Relations in the Commission and finally in the Directorate dealing with Human Rights. The fonds includes a [section](#) pertaining to the question of EU enlargement.

4) Oral History

In addition, take a look at the [oral history holdings](#), which comprise numerous interviews with European politicians and officials, including important figures active in the development of an enlargement policy at the European level. Below, you can find a (non-exhaustive) list of persons interviewed who addressed the topic of EU enlargement.

[David O'Sullivan](#)

[Roy Denman](#)

[Pierre Duchâteau](#)

[Josep Borrell i Fontelles](#)

[Niels Henrik Sliben](#)

[Nikolaus Van Der Pas](#)

[Catherine Day](#)

[Jean-Pierre Leng](#)

[Noel Dorr](#)

[Francesco Fresi](#)

[Jean-François Deniau](#)

[Eric Roll](#)

[Christopher Audland](#)

[Massimo Russo](#)

[Alfonso Mattera](#)

[Peter Pooley](#)

[Stanley Johnson](#)

[Gianfranco Rocca](#)

[Edmund Wellenstein](#)

[Neville Keery](#)