

European Community



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NEWS RELEASE

SPAIN APPLIES OFFICIALLY TO JOIN THE EC

On July 28, 1977, Spain submitted a formal application for membership to the EC, joining Greece and Portugal - two other newly democratic candidates seeking entry into the nine-nation Common Market, the world's largest trading unit.

Spain's application has been long anticipated, particularly in light of the outcome of the June elections marking Spain's return to democracy. In addition, public statements by both King Juan Carlos I and Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez expressed the desire of the Spanish people to belong to the European Community.

Spain now meets the EC requirements for membership, namely a democratically elected government (universal suffrage), non-government sponsored trade unions and freedom of the press and association.

Spain, under the dictatorship of Generalissimo Francisco Franco, sought associate membership in the EC as early as 1962. This status was rejected by EC member states in opposition to the Franco regime. However, after lengthy negotiations, an agreement on a preferential trade arrangement was reached in 1970. In 1973, the Community was enlarged by the entry of three new members, Britain, Denmark and Ireland. Consequently, trade agreements had to be renegotiated with third countries. The EC/Spain trade agreement has not yet been revised. This will be one of the first items on the agenda during the accession talks expected to begin after the summer recess, in September.

The Nine agree that membership for Spain and the other two Mediterranean nations is a political necessity, despite serious economic implications. The scale of Spanish agricultural exports, for example, poses a considerable problem to French and Italian farmers.

Spain's population is over 35 million and its Gross Domestic Product is \$102.8 billion, approximately one fourth that of EC's top producer, Germany.
