

'Greece officially applies for accession to the European Community' from the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (5 June 1975)

Caption: On 5 June 1975, Greece officially applied for membership to the European Communities. The German newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung sets out some negative arguments which could dog this country's accession.

Source: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. Zeitung für Deutschland. Hrsg. EICK, Jürgen; WELTER, Erich; FACK, Fritz Ullrich; DESCHAMPS, Bruno; FEST, Joachim; REIßMÜLLER, Johann Georg. 13.06.1975, n° 134. Frankfurt/Main: FAZ Verlag GmbH. "Athen beantragt offiziell den Beitritt zur Europäischen Gemeinschaft", p. 2.

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Greece officially applies for accession to the European Community

Gz. Brussels, 12 June. On Thursday, the Greek Ambassador to the European Community delivered the Greek Government's formal application for Community membership to the Chairman of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the Member States. During the brief ceremony, the Greek Ambassador noted that developments in Greece, in particular the consolidation of democracy, had now made this application for accession possible. The Irish Ambassador praised the Greek application a few days after the referendum in the United Kingdom as a historic event; he also recalled that the current Association Treaty would establish the principal elements of the Customs Union between the Community and Greece by 1 July 1975. At their next meeting on 23 and 24 June, the EC Foreign Ministers will in all probability formally discuss the Greek application; the Commission and the European Parliament will also have to deliver their verdict. At all events, negotiations are likely to take several years.

Bonn also basically welcomes the Greek decision; the German Chancellor has already expressed his support to the Greek Prime Minister, Konstantinos Karamanlis. In a statement in Brussels, Bonn emphasised that the Greek application for accession was proof of the Community's undiminished attractiveness. The Federal Government would, in the relevant Community bodies, consider 'the complex problems in detail and in a spirit of open-mindedness'.

This carefully phrased expression conceals a kind of embarrassment vis-à-vis the Greek application. Even within the Commission, there are some doubts, though rarely voiced openly, as to whether the enlargement of the European Community to include new Member States would be appropriate. These voices are advocating new forms of association, although they have, to date, been unable to clarify them. Even during the discussions between Brussels and Greece before the military coup, negotiations on the subject of the Greek acceptance of the common agricultural policy had made no progress. This is quite understandable, given that the adoption by a Mediterranean country of the common agricultural policy, whose basic principles are already regarded as dubious within the Community itself, would certainly result in new and almost insoluble problems for the common agricultural policy. Some years ago, Italy, a competitor of Greece with regard to some agricultural products, had already shown much hesitation during the association negotiations.

Greece will, however, be able to point out that the treaties between the Community and Turkey are geared towards full membership. Even if such membership is unlikely to occur before the final decade of this century, it may be difficult to enter the corresponding negotiations with Greece with less goodwill.