

Letter from Charles Haughey to Gaston Thorn (Dublin, 31 July 1982)

Caption: On 31 July 1982, Charles Haughey, Irish Prime Minister, writes a letter to Gaston Thorn, President of the European Commission, in which he emphasises the significance of a close analysis of the financial and economic impact of the accession of Spain and Portugal to the European Communities.

Source: Archives historiques de l'Union européenne, Florence, Villa Il Poggiolo. Dépôts, DEP. Emanuele Gazzo, EG. Elargissement de la Communauté. Adhésion à la Communauté européenne de l'Espagne et du Portugal, 23/06/1982 - 19/02/1985, EG 128.

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Letter from Charles Haughey to Gaston Thorn (Dublin, 31 July 1982)

Oifig an Taoisigh
Office of the Taoiseach

31 July, 1982.

Mr. Gaston Thorn,
President,
Commission of the European Communities.

Dear Gaston,

Thank you for your recent letter on the follow-up to the discussions on the enlargement of the Community which we had at the meeting of the European Council in June. I will take this opportunity to outline briefly our principal concerns to you and will arrange, as you suggest, to have these developed in greater detail with Vice-President Natali as soon as possible.

At the outset, I should make it clear that my Government remain committed to the principle of enlargement and we hope that the present negotiations will be successful. I agree that this whole issue has been the subject of considerable examination and debate both by the Commission as you point out in your letter, and in the member States. Nevertheless it must be accepted that problems do exist and in some cases have been aggravated by developments within the Community and in the world economy since these formal studies were completed in 1978.

Our underlying concern is to ensure that the Community has the capacity to undertake enlargement without damaging itself, its existing common policies and its ability to develop further. If the Community's capacity to deal with the current major economic and social problems is not improved, enlargement is likely to give rise to widespread frustration and disappointment with all the risks to Community cohesion this involves.

In this context, we consider that special attention must be paid to the financial capacity of the Community to undertake enlargement without detriment to existing common policies, in particular the common agricultural policy and to those designed to reduce regional imbalances within the Community. In our view the Community's financial resources are insufficient for this task and therefore there must be a clear commitment to make available the necessary "own resources".

As regards agriculture, the consequences of enlargement will have to be examined as regards all areas of the present Community and not just the Mediterranean areas.

The impact of enlargement on the evolution of the common fisheries policy, which is proving very difficult to negotiate, must also be assessed and the implication for member States established.

Finally, I should mention that we are totally opposed to any suggestion of a "two speed" Community which would in our view be a backward step in Community integration.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Haughey
Taoiseach.