

10th Anniversary
of Britain's Membership
of the
European Community



Why have a party?

Something to celebrate?

When Britain joined the Common Market in 1973, it took a historic step. That decision signalled a change in its relationship with its neighbours across the Channel: a commitment to full partnership in the European Community.

By the time Britain joined, the original six members had already made a working success of the Community. A couple of years later, in the Government's 1975 referendum, the British people voted to stay in by a two-to-one majority. Today, the arguments are, if anything, more compelling than ever.



Take and give

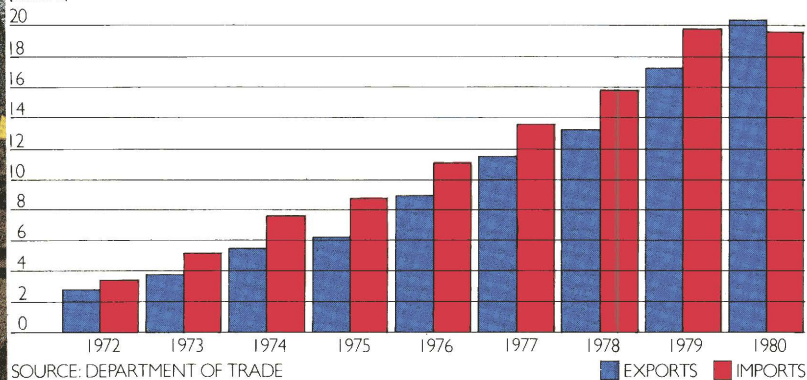
The nature of partnership is that it works both ways: you take a bit here, you give a bit there. That is how things work in the Community.

Inside the Common Market, Britain is part of a powerful trading bloc, the largest single market in the world. The biggest customer for British exporters in 1982 was West Germany. Indeed, eight of Britain's top ten export markets are also member countries of the Community.

The value of British exports to other member states has been rising at the rate of 28 per cent a year, compared with an increase of only 24 per cent for imports. The whole of the European Community is now our home market. It is still a tough and, occasionally, rough challenge to British industry. But if Britain cannot succeed in this vast open market, could it hope to succeed in the even more competitive and protective world market?

TOTAL TRADE WITH THE EC, 1972 - 1980.

(£000m)



Off to work

The Community's greatest concern is unemployment.

Britain is by no means the only sufferer. Few countries in the industrialised world have escaped and across the Community itself more than one worker in ten is now unemployed. Old industries like steel, shipbuilding and textiles have taken the hardest knocks.

The Commission is acting to combat the worst effects, and to help the jobless by means of European training and investment funds. Britain is now receiving more help of this kind than any other Community country except Italy.

Britain's membership of the Common Market affects jobs directly. Foreign investors are putting money into new businesses in the United Kingdom, to take advantage of free trading between member states. Furthermore, a huge number of jobs – the CBI puts the figure at two and a half million – depends on Britain's trade with other EEC countries.



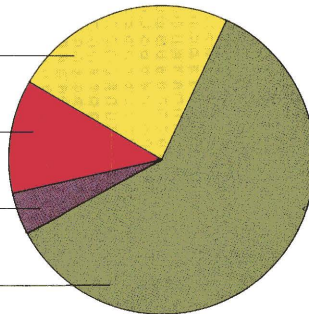
UNITED KINGDOM GRANTS FROM THE 1981 EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND.

£33.2m granted to regions of high unemployment.

£17m granted to schemes which helped disabled & handicapped persons.

£5.8m granted to other schemes in the U.K.

£85.1m granted to schemes which helped run, prepare and create jobs for unemployed young people.



SOURCE: EUROPEAN COMMISSION

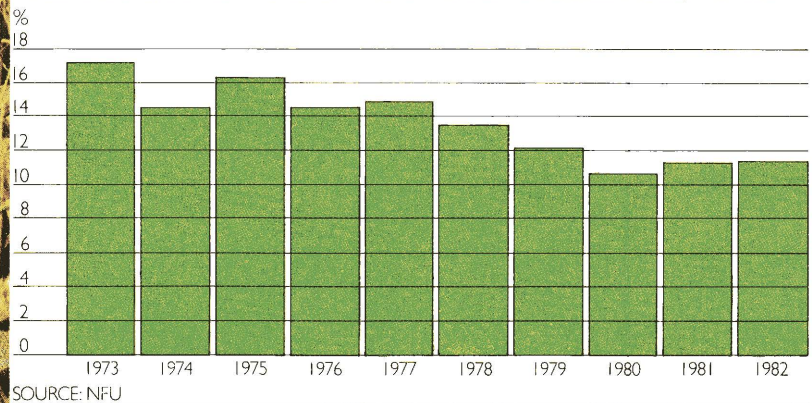
Reaping the fruits

Traditionally, Britain imported much of its food. After ten years of membership, Britain's farmers and growers now supply UK consumers with three-quarters of the food that can be grown in Britain's type of climate. Before 1973 it was only 61 per cent.

The Community's system of support prices for farm products has given British agriculture a secure economic base. The result: food production has shot up. Food imports, as a proportion of Britain's total import bill, have fallen from 22 per cent before 1973 to about 12 per cent. Last year, Britain actually became a net exporter of grain for the first time in 150 years.

The future of Britain's fishing industry is now secure with a 37.3 per cent share of fish in Community waters, and an effective conservation policy.

FOOD AND LIVE ANIMAL IMPORTS AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL U.K. IMPORTS, 1973 - 1982.



Cheap at the price

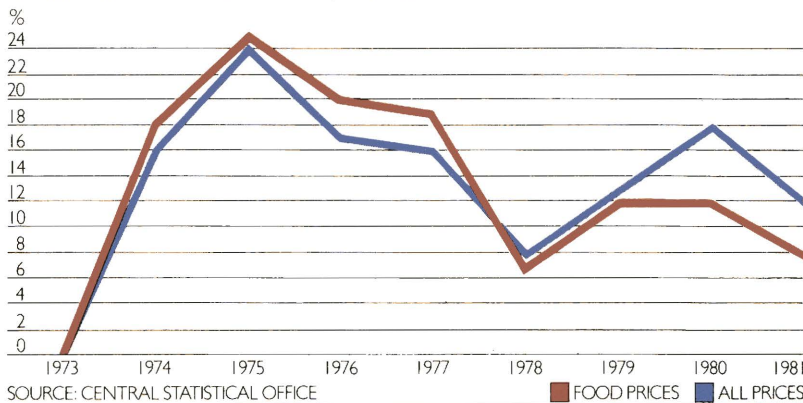
As for food prices, in each of the last five years they have gone up by less than the retail price index: an overall increase of 46 per cent, against a retail price index rise of 64 per cent.

Farm gate prices, which are fixed by the Community, are only a fraction of the final cost of food in the shops. Factors such as currency rate changes, energy costs and interest charges all add to the total. Many commodities, such as coffee, margarine and tea, are not covered by the CAP anyway. And the price of the daily pinta is fixed by the Government, not the Community.

It's no sin to produce too much food from time to time. No one can predict the size of a harvest, for instance. To ensure plenty of food in the shops, farmers must be confident of a decent income. Over-production of some products like milk is, undeniably, a problem. But the Community is working on proposals to resolve it.



ANNUAL INCREASE IN BRITISH PRICES, 1973 - 1981.



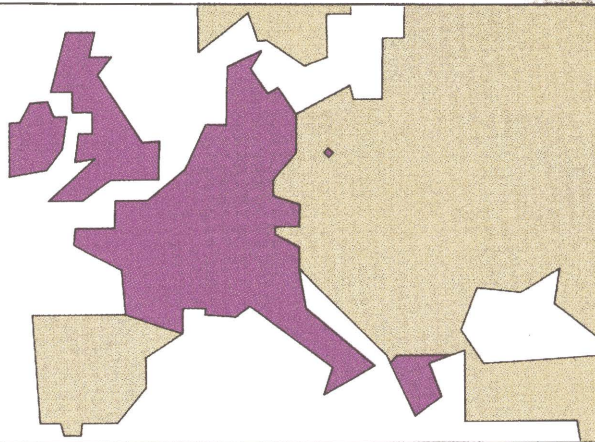
Where would we be without it?

It is hard, ten years after joining the Common Market, to envisage what life would be like outside it.

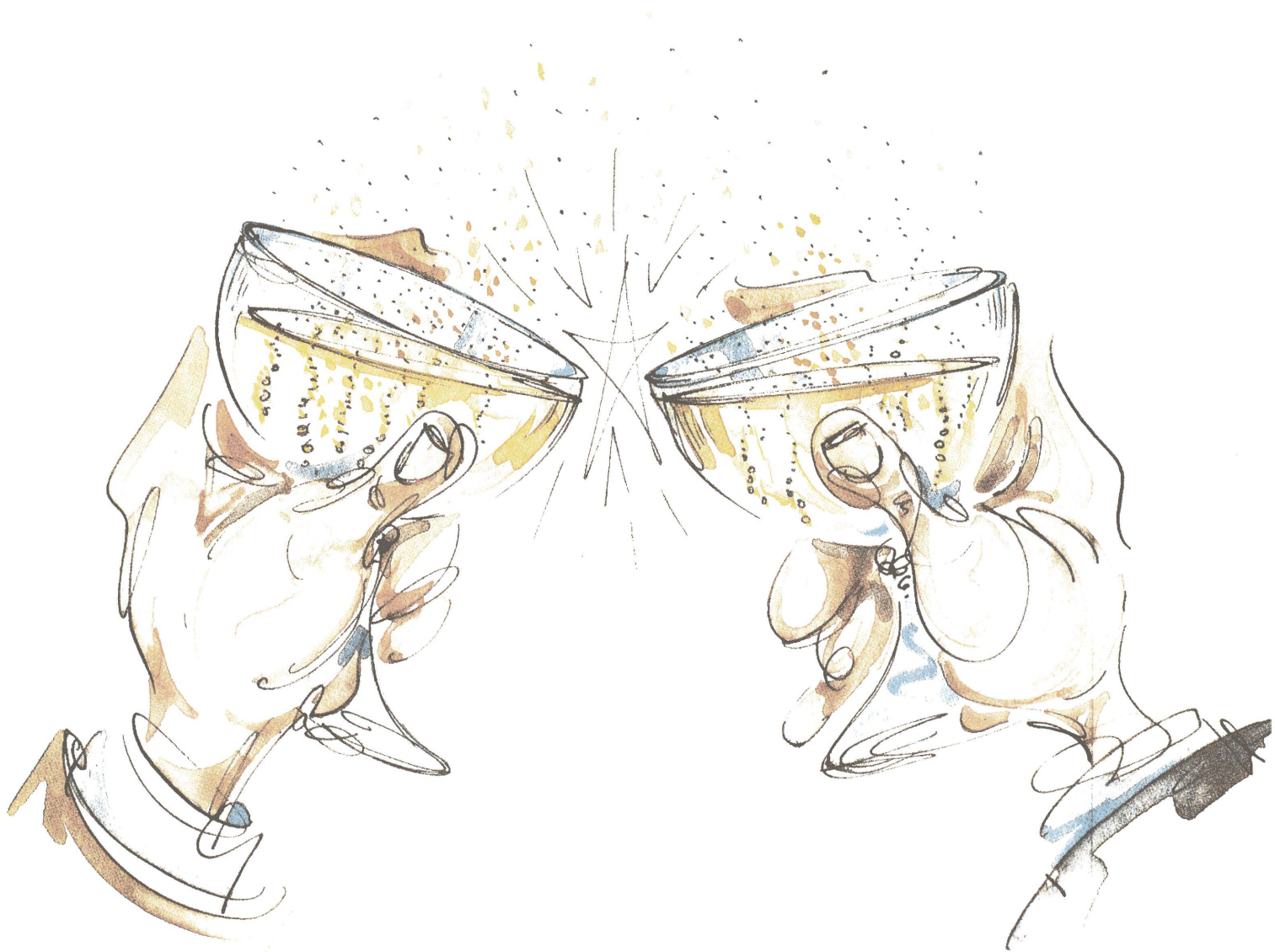
The difficulties of unhooking all the complex links with other member countries – economic, financial, commercial, technological, political – would be immense.

The world today is a different place from the world of 1973. Britain's old trading partners have secured new markets. Third World countries are not in a position to take their place. And Britain's present markets in Europe would be very much harder to penetrate across protective barriers.

Politically, Britain alone would be a Britain much diminished. As one of the Ten, Britain now shares the collective authority of the European Community – ten nations acting and speaking together. That Community is destined to grow. The other nine partners of the Community count on Britain's commitment to stay with them and go on working with them to make it stronger.



So here's to the next ten!



Published by the London Office of the European Commission
20 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 4QQ
January 1983
Designed by Charles Barker Corporate Design and Communications.
Printed by Croydon Printing Company