



European Communities Act 1972

1972 CHAPTER 68

PART I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1 Short title and interpretation.

(1) This Act may be cited as the European Communities Act 1972.

(2) In this Act . . . ^{F1}—

“the Communities” means the European Economic Community, the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Atomic Energy Community;

“the Treaties” or “the Community Treaties” means, subject to subsection (3) below, the pre-accession treaties, that is to say, those described in Part I of Schedule 1 to this Act, taken with—

- (a) the treaty relating to the accession of the United Kingdom to the European Economic Community and to the European Atomic Energy Community, signed at Brussels on the 22nd January 1972; and
- (b) the decision, of the same date, of the Council of the European Communities relating to the accession of the United Kingdom to the European Coal and Steel Community; ^{F2}and
- (c) the treaty relating to the accession of the Hellenic Republic to the European Economic Community and to the European Atomic Energy Community, signed at Athens on 28th May 1979; and
- (d) the decision, of 24th May 1979, of the Council relating to the accession of the Hellenic Republic to the European Coal and Steel Community; ^{F3}and
- (e) the decisions, of 7th May 1985 and of 24th June 1988, of the Council on the Communities’ system of own resources; and
- (f) the undertaking by the Representatives of the Governments of the member States, as confirmed at their meeting within the Council on 24th June 1988 in Luxembourg, to make payments to finance the Communities’ general budget for the financial year 1988; ^{F4}and

Status: Point in time view as at 23/07/1993. This version of this provision has been superseded.

Changes to legislation: European Communities Act 1972, Section 1 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 09 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

- (g) the treaty relating to the accession of the Kingdom of Spain and the Portuguese Republic to the European Economic Community and to the European Atomic Energy Community, signed at Lisbon and Madrid on 12th June 1985; and
- (h) the decision, of 11th June 1985, of the Council relating to the accession of the Kingdom of Spain and the Portuguese Republic to the European Coal and Steel Community;^{F5} and
- (j) the following provisions of the Single European Act signed at Luxembourg and The Hague on 17th and 28th February 1986, namely Title II (amendment of the treaties establishing the Communities) and, so far as they relate to any of the Communities or any Community institution, the preamble and Titles I (common provisions) and IV (general and final provisions);^{F6} and
- (k) Titles II, III and IV of the Treaty on European Union signed at Maastricht on 7th February 1992, together with the other provisions of the Treaty so far as they relate to those Titles, and the Protocols adopted at Maastricht on that date and annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community with the exception of the Protocol on Social Policy on page 117 of Cm 1934]

and any other treaty entered into by any of the Communities, with or without any of the member States, or entered into, as a treaty ancillary to any of the Treaties, by the United Kingdom;

and any expression defined in Schedule 1 to this Act has the meaning there given to it.

- (3) If Her Majesty by Order in Council declares that a treaty specified in the Order is to be regarded as one of the Community Treaties as herein defined, the Order shall be conclusive that it is to be so regarded; but a treaty entered into by the United Kingdom after the 22nd January 1972, other than a pre-accession treaty to which the United Kingdom accedes on terms settled on or before that date, shall not be so regarded unless it is so specified, nor be so specified unless a draft of the Order in Council has been approved by resolution of each House of Parliament.
- (4) For purposes of subsections (2) and (3) above, “treaty” includes any international agreement, and any protocol or annex to a treaty or international agreement.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words repealed by Interpretation Act 1978 (c. 30, SIF 115:1), s. 25, **Sch. 3**
- F2** S. 1(2)(c)(d) inserted by European Communities (Greek Accession) Act 1979 (c. 57, SIF 29:5), s. 1
- F3** S. 1(2)(e)(f) and the word “and” immediately preceding it substituted by European Communities (Finance) Act 1988 (c. 46, SIF 29:5), s. 1
- F4** S. 1(2)(g)(h) inserted by European Communities (Spanish and Portuguese Accession) Act 1985 (c. 75, SIF 29:5), s. 1
- F5** Words inserted by European Communities (Amendment) Act 1986 (c. 58, SIF 29:5), s. 1
- F6** S. 1(2)(k) and the word 'and' immediately preceding it inserted (23.7.1993) by 1993 c. 32, s. 1(1); (resolution of House of Lords dated 22.7.1993; resolution of House of Commons dated 23.7.1993).

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