

from the Community than the two superpowers, the United States and Soviet Union, combined.

The figures for direct investment by the Community in EFTA and vice versa, he added, 'also indicate that we are well down the road towards a single economic area in Western Europe'.

The current member states of EFTA are Austria, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland.

At the start of their relationship, this closeness and co-operation was not always evident. EFTA's origins stem partly from a reaction to the formation of the Community. The grouping was formed by the United Kingdom, which had first elected to remain outside the Community, the neutral countries of Austria, Sweden and Switzerland, which also wanted to avoid joining blocs, and Denmark, Norway and Portugal, with Finland as an associate. Instead of the closer integration of the Community, these countries sought a looser association limited to achieving a free trade zone. Iceland also became a member in 1970.

Many predicted the demise of the EFTA when the United Kingdom, Denmark and Norway negotiated to join the Community in the early 1970s. However, the first two actually joined, along with unattached Ireland, and Norway elected to stay out, the enlarged Community of Nine and the remaining EFTA members negotiated agreements leading to a free trade area in industrial products.

Percentage Shares
of Community-EFTA Trade, 1979

	Exports	Imports
Belgium	5.9%	5.6%
Denmark	5.6%	7.9%
France	11.5%	11.5%
Germany	41.6%	33.1%
Italy	9.9%	9.5%
Ireland	0.3%	0.7%
Netherlands	6.4%	6.7%
United Kingdom	18.6%	24.8%

Source: Eurostat

Since then their links have grown stronger through frequent consultation and co-operation in fields such as transportation, science and environmental protection.

Last June's EFTA ministerial meeting noted the increasing benefits that have been derived from this close association between the two groups and reaffirmed EFTA's resolve to seek closer co-operation.

Speakers at the ceremonies in Stockholm underlined the fact that these relations will be bound to undergo further changes in the coming years with the accession to the Community of Greece and later Portugal, which is an EFTA member, and Spain, creating a unit of some 360 million people spanning a broad geographical area of Europe.

Mr. Haferkamp emphasized this in his address, saying 'Common European action is indispensable if we want our continent to maintain its role and its influence and accept its responsibilities in today's changing world'.

LENA'S

PROGRAMME

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Saturday: 6.00-7.00 p.m.
Sunday: 6.00-7.00 p.m.