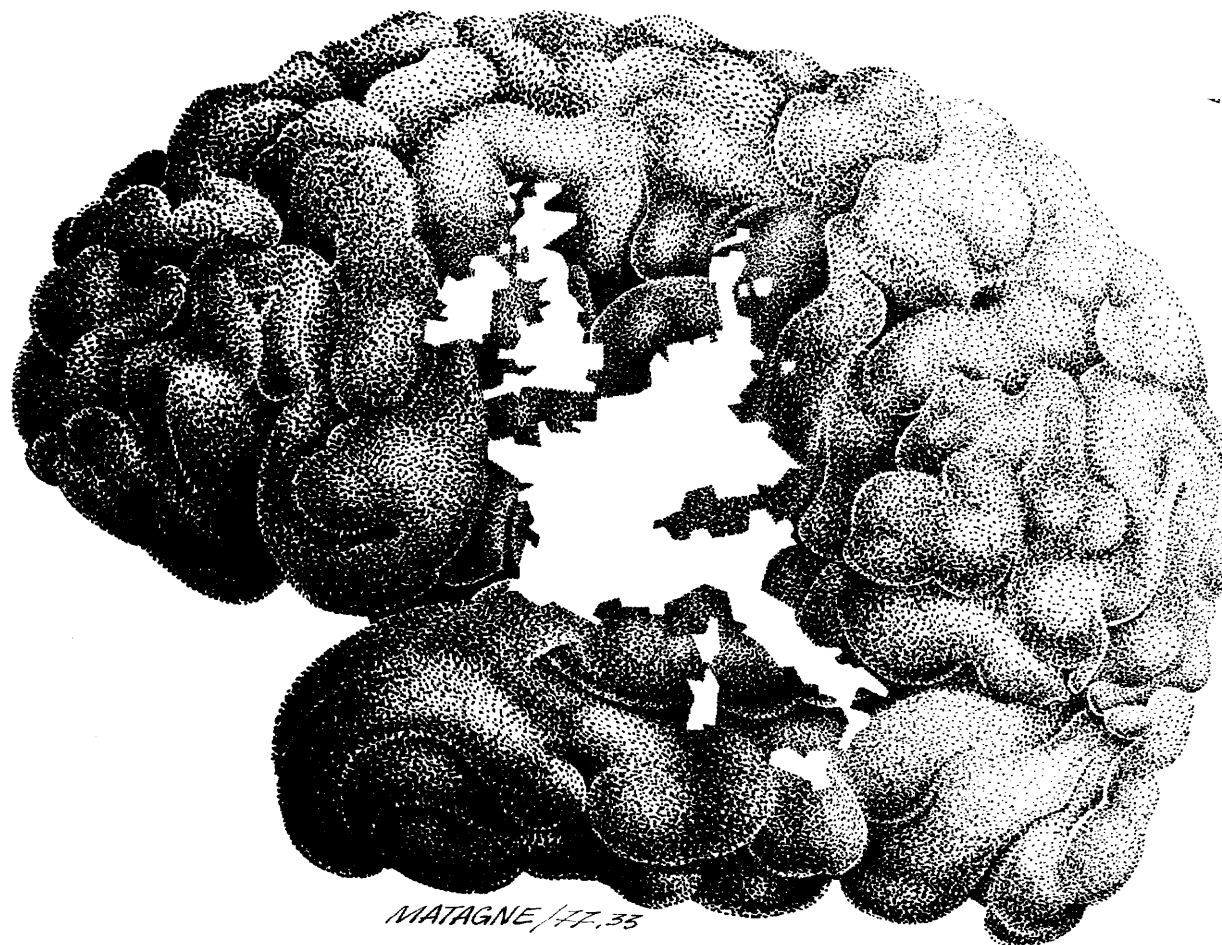


Brussels, 4 October 1977

N° 35/77



A tap on a computer keyboard will give access to the Community's complete scientific memory when EURONET is completed. (See page 3)

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Editor and coordinator : Jean Pirlot

++ ENLARGEMENT WITHOUT WEAKENING

Is it possible to enlarge the Community without weakening it? Could, in fact, enlargement of the Community be used to solve some of its fundamental problems?

In Annex 1, Euroforum presents some of the personal views on this subject expressed by European Commissioner Dr. Brunner in an article recently published in the German daily 'Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung'.

++ EURONET : EUROPE'S LIVING MEMORY

Euronet is the new Community-wide telecommunications network being set up by the European Commission in collaboration with national postal authorities in the Community.

Euroforum explains in Annex 2 how Euronet will put a complete scientific, technical, economic and social memory bank at Europe's disposal.

++ THE TRAVELLING CONSUMER

BEUC - the European Bureau of Consumer Unions - has drawn up a report at the request of the European Commission on consumer participation in the Community's public transport.

Euroforum presents, in Annex 3, some of the disconcerting facts to emerge from this report.

++ COMMUNITY UNEMPLOYMENT

The number of jobless registered in the Community increased by almost 100,000 between the end of July and the end of August 1977. The total jobless now stands at 5.8 million. This increase is, however, considerably less than the 420,000 increase recorded between the end of June and the end of July, and is mostly due to the arrival of new school leavers on the job market.

In August the proportion of unemployed registered as a percentage of the labour force reached 5.5% for the whole of the Community, against 4.9% in August 1976. This percentage varies from 3.8% to 9.5% throughout the Nine.

The proportion of people under 25 in this total has naturally enough increased during this period and exceeded 40% in all countries where statistical data is available.

For the whole Community the total unemployed increased by 14% between August 1976 and August 1977, representing an increase of 9% for men and 20% for women.

++ PREJUDICE AND THE SOCIAL FUND

Out of 250,000 British engineers, there are only 3,000 women and employers excuse themselves by saying that it is not a job for women. To counter such prejudice, an Agency for Training Services and the Office for Training in Mechanical Construction has been given financial support by the European Commission. It is a pilot scheme to show the industrial sector that young qualified females constitute a work-force every bit as capable as their male counterparts. The pilot scheme will give young women practical training outside their companies.

The European Commission has just proposed to the Council of Ministers that the European Social Fund be used more extensively for the benefit of women. The research undertaken by the Commission has highlighted the principal obstacles that women face with regard to vocational training and jobs. This basically consists of inadequate vocational direction, concentration of women in a limited area of training and jobs, and insufficient job opportunities.

The Commission now proposes that the Social Fund be directed towards training and retraining women over 25 years old. This training will be preceded by suitable preparation for professional life (basic level of knowledge, information on working conditions in industry, etc.) and followed by measures likely to give women access to jobs equivalent to their qualifications.

++ SOLAR ENERGY AT BECK AND CALL

Some 400 specialists gathered in Luxembourg, 27-30 September, to further the development of solar cells as a source of electricity.

The first practical use of solar cells was to supply space vehicles with electricity. Since then, they have been used to provide local sources of energy in developing countries. By the end of the century, these solar cells should provide a certain percentage of the energy production in industrialised countries. With this in mind, the European Commission decided to bring together the world's experts who presented their countries' main research and development activities, and examined the short term outlook for solar cells.

Some 70 scientific papers were presented, and provided serious technical discussion on the different types of solar cells (silicone, Cadmium Sulphide, etc.) and their relative advantages and drawbacks.

The Commission is particularly interested in this research field as it demonstrated by its own research and development programme for solar energy (see Euroforum N° 26/77) and the 17.5 million units of account (1 u.a. = 1.1 US dollars approx.) allocated to it.

++ GOLDEN WASTE

Each year the Community produces about 1.7 billion tons of waste, 90% of which is simply thrown away. To combat this wastage, the European Commission has just held its first meeting with the 'waste material exchanges' which operate in the European Community.

The waste exchanges are clearing organisations which manage the supply and demand for reusable or recuperable industrial wastes. They regularly publish information on the availability of industrial wastes which can not be reused by the manufacturing company, on the demand for secondary raw materials, as well as the demand for processing installations and their capacity. They increasingly act as advisers to companies with waste disposal problems, and generally encourage the recuperation and reutilisation of waste.

The exchanges are considerably reducing the quantities of wastes to be disposed of, and increasing the value of industrial waste. At the same time, they are improving the Community's raw material supply situation, and encouraging the rational management of waste, which is basically in the Community's interest.

Currently between 2-5% of wastes produced in Community Member States are dealt with by the existing waste material exchanges. The main activity is, however, limited to certain industries, particularly the chemical industry, which has been a pioneer in this field.

It is now necessary to give support to these exchanges, develop contacts between them, develop the market for wastes and open them up on a Community scale.

At the initiative of the European Commission, all the various waste exchanges, both private and public were, for the first time, brought together to discuss the organisation of waste exchanges at the European level. This first exchange of information and views brought general agreement to produce an inventory of all the waste processing installations in the Community, and for all the waste material exchanges to keep each other informed of developments and experiences.

++ INDUSTRIAL CHANGE AND NATIONAL AID

Public aid to industries in difficulty has been seriously questioned in a report, just published by the Community's Economic and Social Committee, on industrial change and employment.

"Though aid is granted within the context of national programmes, it should be considered in its broader context as being contrary to the proper functioning of the common market, whatever the objectives of the assistance are", notes Rapporteur Mr. Carstens who added that "throughout the (economic) crisis, national aids in the Community have multiplied considerably more than in the past, and they, in fact, amount to a step backwards in the realisation of the common market".

"The fact that a large company employs a large number of people is not sufficient reason in itself to justify assistance. The aid which national governments have given to industries in difficulty has, in many cases, only contributed to keeping companies alive which have no chance of survival. Such assistance does not resolve the real problems. It is fruitless to want to stop the tides of change."

++ FAMILY ALLOWANCES

The normal monthly family allowances available to a family where the father works in the industrial sector are presented below (September 1976). They are calculated in units of account (1 u.a. = 1.1 US dollars approx.)

	<u>1 child</u>	<u>2 children</u>	<u>3 children</u>
B (1)	29.10	75.29	138.54
DEN	20.57	41.14	61.71
D	18.10	43.45	86.90
F (2)	53.52 (3)	83.39	133.36
IRL	3.58	9.20	15.99
I	10.59	21.18	31.77
LUX (4)	23.88	47.79	109.34
NL (5)	19.01	52.99	86.97
UK	- (6)	10.13	20.26

1) Supplement according to age : 5.44 for a child between 6 and 10 years, 9.60 for a child between 10 and 14 years, 15.54 for a child over 14 years.

- 2) Supplement : 11.48 for a child between 10 and 15 years, if there are at least 3 children, and a supplement of 30.41 per child over 15 years if there are less than 3 children.
- 3) Maximum level for one 'wage allowance' under certain conditions (wage ceiling, etc.)
- 4) Supplement : 5.36 per child over 12 years.
- 5) Allocations can be doubled or tripled in certain cases according to age, studies or accommodation away from the family.
- 6) One parent families with one child received the equivalent of 10.13 u.a. per month in September 1976.

++ PROTECTING THE MEDITERRANEAN

The European Commission is a co-signatory together with 15 Mediterranean countries of the Barcelona Convention on the protection of the Mediterranean against pollution. Various protocols are to be added to the Convention detailing the types of action to be taken against the principal sources of pollution. The Community has already signed the protocol relating to dumping operations, and the Commission now wishes the Community to be represented at negotiations which are soon to begin in Athens on a new protocol relating to pollution from land-based sources.

++ EUROPEAN IDEAL AND DIRECT ELECTIONS

What will be the real difference to the European Parliament once the members are elected by direct universal suffrage? In a recent speech, European Commissioner Mr. Richard Burke has been outlining some of the more intangible benefits which we can be likely to expect. The principal one is that the parliamentarians will have much more power to their elbows simply by virtue of the fact that they will be elected. This change of status will reinforce their legitimacy and the legitimacy of all the European institutions. From the election results, we will be able to gauge the public's opinion on the trend towards Europe. Above all the parliamentarians will provide new drive. And since the parliamentarians represent very different political groups, it will not be just a boost towards one particular goal. They will have a common commitment to European affairs at the European level. It is this commitment by voters to Europe, transmitted through their elected representatives, which will gradually lead to the formation of an authentic European identity.

++ WORKING TOGETHER

Progress on the 21 projects to combat poverty which are being

financed by the European Commission were discussed at a seminar entitled "Working Together" which took place on 18-29 September in Chantilly, France. At the invitation of the Commission (in collaboration with the French ministry for health and social security) experts and politicians studied the interaction between the various projects to combat poverty, and their collective contribution to the Community's social policy.

The projects being undertaken by the Commission fall into three broad categories : those concerning specific communities, those aimed at certain social categories, and those aimed at improving social assistance systems (see Euroforum N° 30/77).

++ AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

The number of male and female workers in the agricultural industry (in 1975) and their average earnings in national currencies are presented below.

	<u>MEN</u>		<u>WOMEN</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Hourly wages</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Hourly wages</u>
D	36,432	7.27 DM	5,603	5.71 DM
F	151,422	8.93 FF	11,826	8.51 FF
I	113,807	1,143 lire	8,252	1,049 lire
NL	16,111	8.78 Florins	576	6.83 Florins
B	4,199	106.04 FB	277	93.54 FB
LUX	310	50.11 F Lux	18	41.45 F Lux
UK	155,136	92 p.	8,446	80 p.
DEN	17,011	20.56 D Kr	1,316	21.85 D Kr
IRL	18,348	73 p.	414	64 p.

++ THE COLOUR OF MEDICINE

The list of colourants which could be used in medicines was discussed in Euroforum N° 31/77. The Community's Council of Ministers has not yet formally adopted the regulation concerning colourants which may be used in medicines, and discussions on the final list of colourants, as well as the transitional arrangements before the general application of this regulation, are still continuing.

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ENLARGEMENT WITHOUT WEAKENING

Expanding the Community from six to nine members was not without its difficulties. The inclusion of Spain, Portugal and Greece will present the same problems of balance posed by the entry of Denmark, Ireland and the UK. But how can the Community be expanded without weakening it? Has the time come in fact to think about reorganising the Community? European Commissioner Dr. Guido Brunner gave his personal views on these questions in an article recently published in the German daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. Euroforum presents the main extracts from the article (subtitles are curtesy of Euroforum).

Europe of tomorrow

Extension of the European Community is inevitable, but it is still far from being taken for granted. The nine Member States are seeking a common approach to the timing and method of enlargement. They are not even of one mind about its practical effects either. Particularly about who is to bear the financial burdens of accession, for the bill is still being passed back and forth.

And so even the pre-enlargement phase is already causing strains in the structure and substance of what has so far been achieved in Europe - without any assistance from the applicants for accession. It is difficult to balance the interests of the Community Governments on the issue of accession because their ideas, expectations and reservations about Europe do not coincide. They cannot agree over what the Europe of the future should be like politically and economically. (.....)

Differing outlook

(Dr. Brunner reviews the political attitudes of the big European countries over the last decade : British isolationism, French 'dirigisme', Germany's market economy philosophy, and the way they influenced the building of the Community.)

The British, French and German attitudes, as they have developed over the past few years, have a number of points in common:

- growing uncertainly as to the long-term objective of the Community: can there ultimately be a European Union and, if so, what will it be like?
- the reluctance to give up national control where important matters are concerned : no-one is powerful enough to determine the course of events by himself but he can prevent developments which he does not like;

- consequently, a European policy of straightforward pragmatism: it is best for the European Community to "cook over a low flame".

However, Italy and the Benelux countries chiefly stand for a European policy involving integration and the handing-over of sovereignty. Italy hoped for an upswing in its economy - together with a narrowing of the gap between North and South - and also greater political influence. For the Benelux countries and Denmark a policy of integration offers, in addition to economic advantages, a means of ensuring that they are treated on an equal footing and of offsetting the power differential via uniform legislation for all.

The enlargement of the Community from six to nine has shaken the attitude of the older Member States in this group because the movement towards integration has slackened. Even the first enlargement operation reduced the role played by the Benelux countries in the European Community to some extent.

How is a common policy of enlargement of the European Community to be developed when there are these four different schools of thought, and when the only possible common ground between three of them is national reservations?

The wording of the question points to the answer: everyone favours a solution to the enlargement issue which involves minor - in other words administrative - adjustments to the existing system. After the number of members has been increased from nine to twelve the day-to-day functioning of the Community should not change too much, nor should its importance.

Three permanent problems

(The enlargement debate, notes Dr. Brunner, is currently a question of juggling with a few agricultural, financial and administrative facts. The debate is being conducted at the lowest level, and the technical considerations of experts reflect wider problems which have existed since the creation of the Community.)

Accession (of the three candidate countries) will make a new balance necessary between northern and southern Europe.

The entry of over 50 million people from the Mediterranean region will alter things dramatically. The opening-up of southern markets to industrial products and agricultural goods from the "North" that will accompany this development must be offset financially and structurally. This cannot be achieved merely by supporting the applicant countries' agricultural products. In the meantime, therefore, it is agreed that the

European Community must in future do more for the applicants in terms of the regional and social policies. This would be a new way of sharing the burden between poor and rich in the Community, as well as forming part of a new European Mediterranean policy.

This is a goal worth striving for. Only we cannot overlook the fact that this is one of the weakest points in the achievements of the European Community to date. The gap between rich and poor in the Community has not grown smaller but has widened. Today a worker in Hamburg earns six times as much as a Calabrian. How can this situation be changed overnight? (....)

The structural and social levelling-out process raises a second key problem: the European Community must in future strike a better balance between agriculture and industry. It will not get by with a budget of which 74% is spent on agriculture. Industrially, it must be more than what it is today, that is a customs union coupled with weak regional and social policies. In order to make headway here, the Community needs its own energy policy and an industrial policy. How can efforts be made in that direction concurrently with the accession negotiations?

Lastly, there is yet a third key problem: in the context of enlargement a new balance must be struck in the Community between the larger and smaller Member States. The biggest disappointment of European policy of recent years - the failure to achieve economic and monetary union - is not only felt generally. The countries it hits hardest are the smaller original members of the Community, since they have been intent on European integration and a balance of power with the bigger countries. Their currencies need the support of the strongest Community currency, the Deutsche Mark. However, this is not counterbalanced by integration of European monetary policies, which in turn means that the smaller States do not have a bigger say in decision-making. Now, because of the latest accession operation the voting power of these countries in Community bodies is likely to be reduced even further.

A European Constitution

(Mini-solutions to the essentially political question of the viability of the European Community, will not get us very far in Dr. Brunner's view. "How is Europe to be organised politically and economically in the future? How is it to function?")

Whether one likes it or not, the European Community's survival is tied up with the objectives of European unification. If the opportunity to move towards unification offered by an increase in membership from nine to twelve is not exploited, technical solutions to individual questions will not bring any improvement in the European situation. Elections to the

European Parliament do not provide sufficient impetus on their own. Simply doubling the number of members without giving the Parliament new powers could disillusion the electorate, frustrate the members and thereby even weaken European unification.

The major European themes of achieving a balance between North and South, between agriculture and industry, between large and small and the related issues of the future Mediterranean policy, economic and monetary union, energy policy and industrial policy, reorganisation of the European Community's institutions, can be dealt with only by an act of bold political design. Even matters relating to cooperation on armaments should not be excluded.

The time is ripe for a "grand design" such as this, for a major conference to work out the basis of a future European Union and adopt a European constitution as a sequel to the Treaties of Rome.

In addition to the nine present Member States of the Community and the relevant Community bodies, the three applicant countries Greece, Portugal and Spain, should be involved on an equal footing from the beginning. Generous support for the Three would have to precede the conference, for the legitimate hopes of membership cherished by the poorest countries of Western Europe should not have to suffer for the fact that the conference is likely to last a long time.

Is the desire for European unification, the solidarity that is possible among the democratic States of Western Europe, too weak for such an effort to be made? The number of possible starting points, differences in material interests and technical difficulties is very great. Some have been described above. However, by temporarily excluding the key issues, they all have the same kind of inhibiting effect on the attempt to develop the European Community through routine enlargement negotiations, by means of a "simple administrative solution". If the real problems are not tackled, there is a danger that enlargement from nine to twelve will change the European Community beyond all recognition. An unworkable entity might result which could strain relations between the Member States and in the long run reduce European stability. No-one should forget that Europe is still in the field of tension of two world powers.

Perhaps, though, it is worth risking an attempt to comprehensively reshape our region.

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EURONET : EUROPE'S LIVING MEMORY

A minor medical breakthrough has been made at a medical research centre in Brussels where researchers have developed a method of directly monitoring (in vivo) the Ph level of a patient's blood without the use of test-tubes. The question is, however, how long it will be before this laboratory success can effectively be used by doctors. And secondly how long should it take researchers involved in such work to be able to inform themselves of complementary work being undertaken in other parts of the European Community. EURONET will soon provide an answer to both these questions.

EURONET - which is destined to become a household word like EUROVISION - is the name of the joint telecommunications network set up by the European Commission in collaboration with the national postal authorities in the Community. Through this European-wide network the Commission intends the public to have direct access to all the Community's scientific and technical information held in computer memory banks.

A simple computer terminal will enable any hospital in Italy, for example, to inquire about the research work undertaken in Brussels, or will enable a German steel works, for example, to acquire information on a particular metallurgical problem. In a similar way, it could enable an economist in France to draw on British statistics.

Why Euronet?

A key factor in the success of the European Community should be the rapid transmission of scientific, technical, economic and social information between the nine countries. The amount of information currently available or being collated represents a considerable resource for industry, trade, governments and individuals. This resource needs to be efficiently coordinated, managed and distributed.

Lacking many basic raw materials and faced with increasingly sharp world competition, the Community needs to develop carefully the resources it actually has, and particularly its intellectual resources. Scientific research is the core of this intellectual potential and represents a rich source of raw material, particularly so since such scientific, technical, economic and social information is a saleable product with which the Community could become a world market-leader.

Before this comes about, however, it will be necessary to create an effective common market for information within the Community itself. In addition, all potential users (engineers, economists, administrators, agronomists, doctors, researchers, etc.) should have easy access to all sources of information throughout the Community, without discrimination.

1975-77

The first Community action programme covering scientific and technical information and documentation comes to an end in December 1977. It has already produced good results.

The basic principles for setting up and operating a common information market have been established. These principles cover areas such as the rights of information users, free competition and the rights and responsibilities of suppliers of services. In addition to the direct application of these principles to Euronet, they also contribute considerably to cooperation between Community States in the field of scientific and technical information.

The first action plan initiated the creation of several important "data bases". Researchers in fields such as environment, energy and agriculture can now draw on a complete file of research projects being undertaken in these critical fields. Cooperation between existing national bodies has been improved, and among some of the new projects being undertaken (in which the Community has played a principal role) is a project on joint collation of data concerning medicines and pharmacology.

Birth of Euronet

The original contract signed on 15 December 1975 set the Community's postal authorities about the work of establishing the Euronet telecommunications network. The potential benefits of the project are numerous.

Firstly, Euronet should be able to resolve the vital European problem of data transmission by introducing custom built international equipment. Secondly, it has involved all the national post and telecommunications authorities in finding a common solution to the problem and involves the use of common technology. There should also be major advantages for industry resulting from the standardisation of computer and telecommunications procedures. Euronet has already played a major role in the development of interface X 25 (for the technically minded) and has been a great influence on the development of a standard transmission procedure between terminals : ESP (32).

Almost inevitably, Euronet has come up against the problem of language. Work has been undertaken in the first programme aimed at developing a number of linguistic tools such as multilingual vocabularies in selected fields, the creation of a terminology data bank, and the development of a system of automatic translation.

Ways of making the lives of users easier have also been examined, and the European Commission has initiated a feasibility study for the use of a common command language for the on-line use of the data bases. The results of the study indicate that such

a language is possible, and would offer advantages to a wide range of users.

A second example of measures to help users is the cooperation between the European Commission and EUSIREF, (the European Association for the Diffusion of Scientific Information). This cooperation has resulted in a project to advise users on existing information services.

Growing interest

Interest in Euronet has grown tremendously. By the end of 1976, Community governments had already proposed that Euronet be linked to some 27 memory banks offering more than 100 data bases. These figures were much greater than those forecast when the original action plan was drafted.

With such interest shown, great efforts have been made to develop specific means of cooperation. For example, the technical problems raised by the linking of computers to the network have been jointly studied with the manufacturers, the telecommunication authorities, the European Commission and the data bank operators.

It is understood that the Commission expects the network to be completed before 1980.

At the moment, the national telecommunications authorities are setting up switching centres in Frankfurt, London, Paris and Rome to which the users terminals and the data banks can be linked directly, or through national networks. In addition, five concentrators or multiplexers will be located in Amsterdam, Brussels, Copenhagen, Dublin and Luxembourg and will be linked to the nearest switching centre by special lines. These concentrators will permit the terminals to be linked to the system and will serve as regional liaison points for the multiple users and data bank lines.

In the long term the Euronet telecommunications network will be self-financing and costs will be covered by user payments.

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THE TRAVELLING CONSUMER

All too often in reports and statistics produced by public transport organisations, the passenger is regarded as a curious being with two legs, a backbone and no head. Passenger comfort and convenience is given great importance but rarely are the views of the passengers themselves ever consulted. Passengers, however, are consumers and have views and ideas which can be valuable.

BEUC - the European Bureau of Consumer Unions - has drawn up a report at the request of the European Commission on consumer participation in the planning of public transport in the Community. The results are disconcerting.

Everyone is agreed, it seems, that the users should, in theory at least, have a say in the organisation of public transport. No country as yet, however, has translated this theory into practice.

There have been a number of encouraging signs. At the international conference on public transport and the people, which took place in Paris in April 1975 (organised by the French Institute for Transport Research), researchers, engineers and politicians all expressed their desire to know more about the consumer view of public transport.

The conclusions of the conference were quite explicit : "the fundamental problem is to ensure that the consumer's voice is better heard, in the first place by the designers who only consider passengers as a passive element, and secondly by the local and national authorities, so that they all have a better understanding of users' needs and are better able to defend the role of public transport in cities."

Country by country

In practice, there are significant differences between Community countries.

In France, a national committee of public transport users drew up a report in December 1975 presenting a number of suggestions which would make transport correspond more closely to consumer needs. There were also public hearings at Besançon which produced a fair crop of ideas. The French government is looking at ways of repeating these hearings.

In Germany the users of public transport have representatives in the political parties, but research shows that users participate actively in public transport policy.

In Belgium, transport users have representatives who are frequently on the Boards of the public transport companies. Direct participation of users has only occasionally been requested in two cities, Liège and Gent.

In Denmark the city of Copenhagen intends to stage a number of public hearings and the Danish government itself intends to bring users into the decision making process in the future.

In the Netherlands, as in Germany, research has revealed the necessity for users to participate effectively in decisions which affect them. In practice, only official public hearings enable the user to voice his feelings.

In Italy and Ireland, public participation in transport planning is limited to representatives.

The UK is the only country to have set up bodies representing consumer interests. In London there is the London Transport Passengers Committee (L.T.P.C.), and throughout the country there are regional committees (Transport Users Consultative Committee - T.U.C.C. -) which are in contact with a central committee (Central Transport Consultative Committee) which is in direct contact with the Ministry of the Environment.

The mandate of these committees is, however, not as wide as one would hope, but still represents a move in the right direction.

BEUC recommendations

In concluding its report, BEUC has issued a number of recommendations to bring theory into practice, and effectively involve passengers in transport planning.

According to BEUC, governments and transport organisations should officially recognise the importance of active participation by users in the early stages of planning. They should also make this involvement a statutory right.

Systematic research should be undertaken to establish user needs. This research should be carried out by users themselves and not only by the transport companies. A number of specific social groups (handicapped people, old age pensioners, etc.) should be included in this research.

Transport users' representatives, naturally enough, need considerable technical competence and virtual professional qualities. But consumers have already demonstrated in a number of other fields, their capacity to comprehend subjects of the highest technicality.

BEUC finishes off its report in encouraging the European Commission to coordinate progress in letting users participate in the planning of public transport.

The European Bureau of Consumer Unions (BEUC) has just set up a press service with the aim of providing information for Europe's journalists on action being undertaken in the consumer field throughout the Community, by consumer organisations and Community institutions. Address : Diana Fortescue, BEUC, 29 rue Royale, 1000 Brussels, Belgium. Tel : (02) 219.13.30.

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