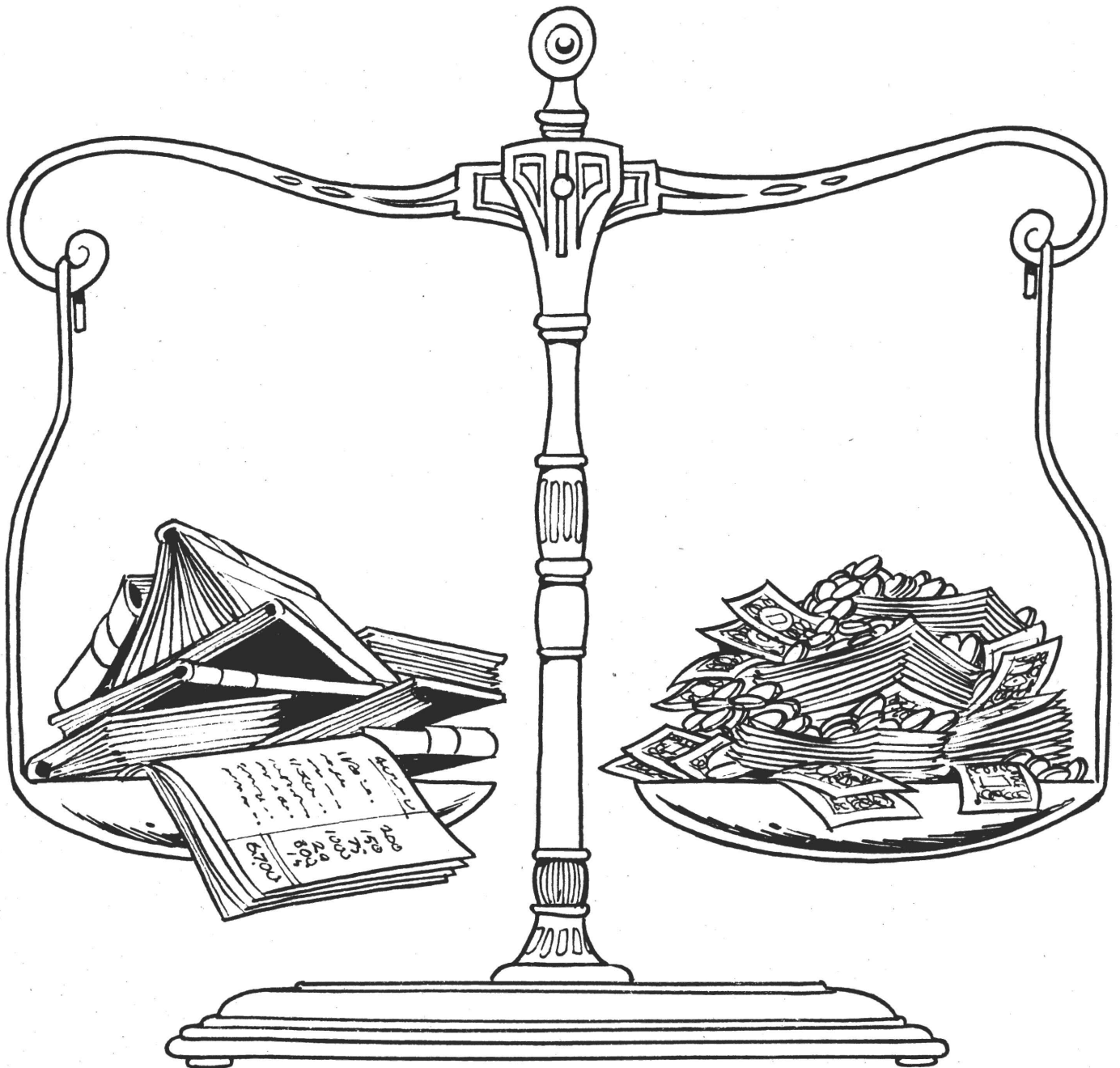


# Euroforum



Keeping a close eye on the spending of the taxpayer's money. See page 3.

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# Euroforum

## Contents

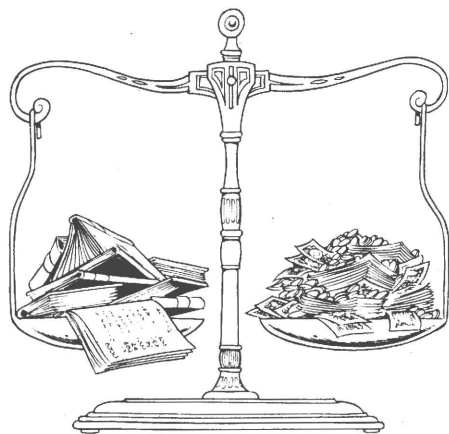
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<b>The institutions</b>	3	Keeping a close eye on the spending of the taxpayer's money
<b>Consumers</b>	4	Air fares: cut-price king seeks Commission support Commissioner refuses to change direction of Community policy
<b>Research</b>	5	Europeans prepare to launch their first astronaut
<b>Environment</b>	6	Pooling resources to help provide for the future
<b>Energy</b>	7	Children brush up on their knowledge of the great outdoors
<b>Taxation</b>	8	Bottle banks play important role in preventing waste
<b>Trade</b>	8	Economic motoring: a few signposts to better performance
<b>The Member States</b>	9	Commission to finance conservation projects: tenders invited
<b>The regions</b>	10	Europeans topping league table as the yield rises Nine come together in an effort to combat evasion
<b>The economy</b>	11	Switzerland on the watch-out?
<b>Agriculture</b>	11	Tugendhat analyses UK experience in the Community
<b>External relations</b>	12	Blueprint to aid poorer areas is outlined
<b>The news at a glance</b>	13	Oil price rises continue to fuel gloomy forecasts
<b>Focus</b>	13	Wine: still headaches in matching quality, quantity and thirst
	13	Community accepts Comecon invitation to new talks
	14	The news at a glance
	15	The Man Who Came In From The Cold

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## Keeping a close eye on the spending of the taxpayer's money

The European Court of Auditors hit the headlines for the first time when details of its confidential report on the expenses of the 13 members of the European Commission began to appear in the international press this summer.

In our last issue, we reported on the Commission's reaction to the contents of the report—since made public—and the determination of its President, Roy Jenkins, to exercise more rigorous control over expenditure where possible.

But while the public have taken a great deal of interest in the findings contained in the report, few people have a clear idea of what the Court of Auditors is or does.

The Court is the youngest of the Community institutions. It started work only towards the end of 1977 when it took over and developed the role of its much smaller predecessor, the Audit Board, which had a staff of 30. The Court's payroll now covers 170 people, and this figure is expected to rise to over 200 next year.

The Court is based in Luxembourg in a building that has been used by the Community since the 1950s, but as the Court has expanded so has it been forced to take additional accommodation elsewhere in the city.

The Court consists of nine auditors—one from each Community country—who have either belonged to external audit bodies or who are qualified for the office. At their first meeting, the members decided to nominate Irishman Michael Murphy, a former Secretary of the Irish Department of Finance, as its President.

The members are appointed for six years, like the judges in the Court of Justice, although to ensure a satisfactory rotation a number of them are serving only four year terms this time round.

The Court is regarded as being the 'financial conscience' of Europe and its task is to examine 'the accounts of all the revenue and expenditure of the Community'. This focuses in particular on the Community budget—worth just over £ 8 billion last year.

But, unlike its predecessor, the Court may carry out audits whenever it wishes—the old Board had to wait until the annual closure of accounts and the final payment on a project had been made, before moving in. The wider scope given to the new Court allows for continuous audits, which makes it easier to tackle any financial irregularities that might occur.

The Court has the power to publish its findings, submit reports on its own initiative, comment on specific questions and give its opinion at the request of any of the Community institutions.

Although occasional reports, such as that on the Commissioners' expenses, catch the public's imagination, most of the Court's work is taken up in preparing its annual report for each financial year, in much the same way as an annual audit is carried out on the books of a private or, more particularly, a public company.

Its first such report, covering 1977, was published earlier this year and highlights several cases of what the auditors considered was misspending of Community funds which, after all, are contributed by the taxpayers in the nine member states.

For instance, they pointed out that in 1977 the Commission sent Niger six times more milk than it needed, and 3 750 tonnes of husked rice were found to be unfit for human consumption when they arrived.

It also noted that over £ 3.5 million still remain to be collected from agricultural frauds dating back to 1971. The 20 cases of fraud discovered in 1972 had shot up to 258—or one per working day—four years later.

The annual report should in future be ready for publication by the November of the year following. As the Court becomes more familiar with its tasks, and builds up its contacts with the other Community institutions, so the reports are expected to be more thorough and the procedures more streamlined.

Later this year, therefore, the Court will publish its findings on 1978 expenditure and revenue in the Community—the first time the report will be entirely the fruit of its own labour. The 1977 report largely relied on the groundwork done by the old Audit Board.

Earlier this year, the Court published a factual, and non-contentious, report on the Community's office accommodation policies in which it recommended that the institutions 'give further study to whether the present apparent preference for rental agreements continues to be sound financial management'.

The Court noted that of the many buildings used by the Community, it owned only its small sports ground at Overijse on the outskirts of Brussels and offices in Paris, Montevideo, London, Ottawa and Washington. All other buildings are rented.

The members of the Court are: Mr Michael Murphy (Ireland), President; Mr Aldo Angioi (Italy), Mr Paul Gaudy (Belgium), Mr Arne K. Johansen (Denmark), Mr Albert Leicht (Germany), Mr Pierre Lelong (France), Mr Marcel Mart (Luxembourg), Mr André Middelhoeck (Netherlands), and Sir Norman Price KCB (United Kingdom).

*Supporting sound-tape material lasting appr. 10 minutes and including an interview with the President of the Court of Auditors is available for broadcast purposes or briefings on application to the Directorate-General for Information TV-Radio-Audio-visual Department, Commission of the European Communities, 200 Rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels.*

## Air fares: cut-price king seeks Commission support

Sir Freddie Laker, the man who almost single-handedly revolutionized transatlantic air travel with his Skytrain service, was in Brussels recently to seek support from the European Commission for a similar scheme of low-fare flights in Europe.

European jet hoppers have long had to pay disproportionately high fares compared with Americans—on average 20% more—despite the fact that jet travel has become a necessity rather than a luxury.

With the creation of the European Community and the breaking down of national frontiers the amount of business and tourist air travel has greatly increased. Yet fares are still high.

During talks with the Commissioner responsible for Transport, Richard Burke, Mr Laker said he warmly supported the Commission's own ideas, presented last June, for cheaper and more flexible air fares in Europe.

Mr Laker was interested in obtaining the Commission's moral support before applying to the British Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) for permission to introduce cheap fares on flights between London's Gatwick airport and 35 European cities. Fares would be well under half normal scheduled rates and no reservations would be needed.

Mr Laker said after the meeting, 'It is high time someone brought down the fares. I hope to receive approval from the CAA by early 1980'. If he is successful, the UK government would then have to approach other European governments for their support. Stiff opposition is expected from the national airlines, although British Airways and Air France have already taken anticipatory action by cutting fares on 26 Paris-London flights per week.

Mr Laker warned that he would take his case to the European Court of Justice if the airlines infringed the

Community's competition rules. But he added: 'I do not think this will be necessary'.

Mr Burke gave broad backing for Mr Laker's plans. He said he expected they would be 'very seriously considered' by the national licensing authorities. He hoped progress could be made towards 'greater flexibility' in the air transport market.

Mr Burke added that he was ready to exchange views on this subject with airlines, governments and other interested groups.

A few days later, British Caledonian Airways unveiled in Brussels a plan for a 'Mini-Prix' network of low-fare air services within Europe, with existing tariffs cut by up to 81%. As an example, the lowest-available fare between Brussels and London would come to just BF1 050 (about £ 17), a reduction of 73% on normal economy class.

British Caledonian's bid for the new network of off-peak services between 23 cities in Europe and the United Kingdom, to start next April, is now before the British Civil Aviation Authority. A spokesman for the airline said: 'We are immensely encouraged that our philosophy on 'Mini-Prix' has run parallel with the conclusions and recommendations drawn by the European Commission'.

## Commissioner refuses to change direction of Community policy

Consumer Affairs Commissioner Richard Burke has defended the Community's first programme for consumer protection which came under fire recently from Mrs Sally Oppenheim, the British Minister of State for Consumer Affairs.

Mrs Oppenheim declared that she wanted to see a radical change in the direction of the Community's policy which began to be put into operation in 1975.

A number of important Commission proposals, notably in the field of con-

sumer health protection, have already become Community law and several others are on the Council of Ministers' table awaiting a decision.

Among these are proposals for Community laws to govern the liability of manufacturers for defective products, advertising standards, consumer credit such as hire purchase, door-to-door selling and correspondence courses.

These proposals were all made under the Community's first protection programme. The Commission recently put forward its ideas for a second programme which broadly aims to continue the work of the first though with significant innovations.

BEUC, which groups national consumer organisations at Community level, has written to the current President of the Council of Ministers, Irish Foreign Affairs Minister, Michael O'Kennedy, complaining about the delay in implementing the Community's first consumer protection programme.

At a symposium in Brussels, Mr Burke said that Mrs Oppenheim appeared to see her ideas as a 'piece of spring cleaning', whereas he believed they represented a fundamental attack on the whole policy which, he pointed out, had been agreed to by the nine member state governments.

He said that just because a number of Commission proposals had not been adopted was not a reason to abandon them. To do so would leave the Community without a consumer policy worthy of the name.

Mrs Oppenheim had urged that Community action should be based on three principles—safety of goods, removal of non-tariff barriers to trade and the elimination of factors which limited competition.

While Mr Burke found these aims acceptable, he pointed out that there were other important areas which concern consumers, such as more information about products, more education about their rights and increased representation to promote their views.

## Europeans prepare to launch their first astronaut

In 1957 the Russians sent the first sputnik into orbit around the earth. Twelve years later an American, Colonel Neil Armstrong, was the first man to set foot on the moon. But while the space race got underway, Europe remained in the starting blocks.

Europeans have so far taken a back seat, watching the race between the Russians and Americans on their TV sets. Isn't it time something was done to close the gap?

Apart from the prestige of putting a European astronaut into space there would be considerable scientific, economic, military and political prizes to be won.

programmes should soon provide Europe with an independent satellite launcher and its first man in space.

This month the first of four test flights of the Ariane satellite launcher will be made by the European Space Agency (ESA) at its launching base in French Guyana.

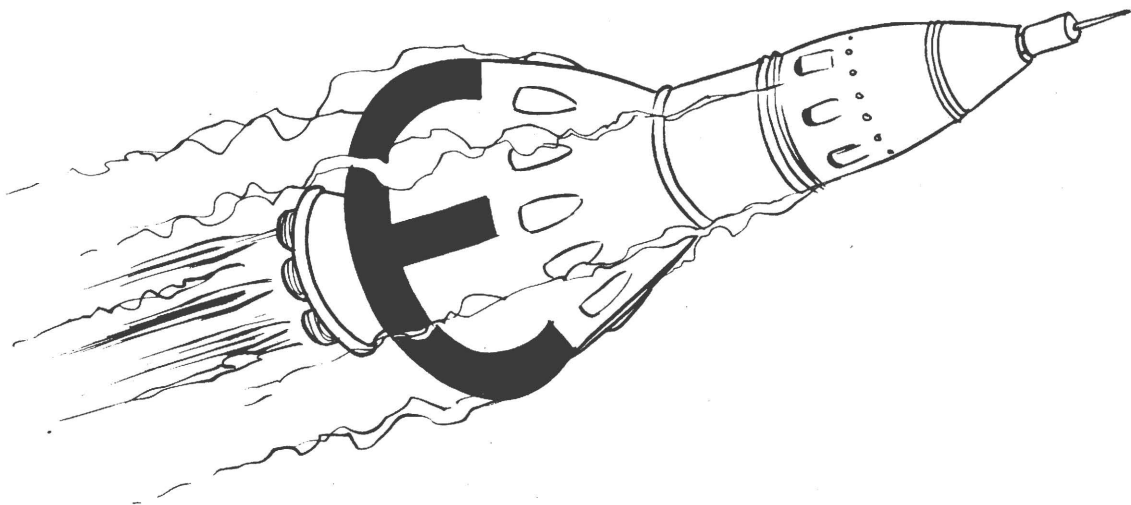
The tests should be completed by October next year which would mean that Ariane could become operational by the end of 1980.

By providing Europe with an independent satellite launcher Ariane should capture a share of the large launcher market forecast for the 1980's. During the next decade about 200 satellites will be put into fixed orbit around the earth. Most of these will be communications satellites and up to 25% are expected to be launched into space by Ariane.

valent in space to what the EEC is here on land. It aims to promote for peaceful purposes space research and technology cooperation among European countries. Space cooperation is essential not only to avoid duplication and promote efficiency but also to allow Europe to compete on equal terms with the space giants—the USA and USSR.

Based in Paris ESA has a total staff of 1500 spread throughout centres at Noordwijk (Netherlands), Darmstadt (Germany) and Frascati (Italy). ESA will this year spend nearly \$700 million on space research, of which 95% is being provided by Community funds. Nearly 50% of the budget is being spent on the Ariane and Spacelab programmes with the remainder shared between communications, meteorological and scientific projects.

Despite the fact that ESA is almost entirely financed by the Community



Medical research, exploration of the planets, weather forecasting, prospecting the earth's mineral and oil resources, and telecommunications are just some of the areas which would benefit.

Although the spin-offs of space research have been apparent for some time it has been difficult to coordinate the activities of the numerous European countries. The USA and USSR have no such problem.

However there are signs that after a slow start Europe is at last starting to catch up. The Ariane and Spacelab

Ariane is the brainchild of the European Space Agency (ESA), which was created in May 1975 to replace two other European space organizations—ESRO, which was concerned with satellite development, and ELDO which was involved in the construction of satellite launchers. ESA's 11 members include all the member states of the European Community except Luxembourg, plus Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. In addition, Austria, Norway and Canada participate in some of ESA's programmes.

ESA's objective is to create a European Space Community, a sort of equi-

there is no formal link between the two bodies. The Ripamonti report adopted earlier this year by the European Parliament suggested much closer liaison between the two. It proposed that a special space service be set up within the European Commission which would help prepare long term policy and nominate a representative to the ESA board.

The report pointed out that since 1974 the Community has been slowly moving towards a common policy on science and technology. It urged that unless the Member States made a much greater effort to pool their resources

Europe risked being left hopelessly behind in space research.

Another aim of ESA is to improve the competitiveness of European industry. ESA carried out a study to calculate how much industry benefited from its space programmes. The study tried to measure the economic spin-offs from its research contracts.

The study covered 81% of contracts awarded by ESA to Community firms between 1964-75. It found that the economic spin-off was nearly threefold. For each contract worth 100 European Units of Account (£62) the contractor would benefit by 300 Eua (£186) resulting from the research in terms of sales of eventual new products, increased turnover and reduction of R&D and production costs.

The main contractor for the Ariane programme is the French Centre Nationale d'Etudes Spatiales. More than 50 firms from 10 European countries are participating in the contract.

Ariane is based on acquired and proven technology, notably from the successful French Diamant launcher programme. No risks are being taken with new technology.

The launching base in French Guyana has been chosen because of its position near the equator. This makes it possible to launch satellites in a wide range of fixed orbits.

A first series of six launches has already been planned. These include shipping communication, weather and scientific satellites.

Ariane will be followed in 1981 by the Spacelab mission which will put Europe's first astronaut into space. Spacelab forms part of the American Space Shuttle Programme and is by far the most important example of space cooperation between the European Community and the USA.

Spacelab is being developed by ESA and is in fact a manned space laboratory. It will be carried into orbit by the Space Shuttle, which looks like a supersonic plane. At the end of each mission the Shuttle will land the Spacelab back on earth at an airstrip.

Unlike previous space laboratories Spacelab can be re-used many times. It is therefore much more economic. Another difference is that it will carry scientists and engineers (women as well as men) in addition to astronauts.

On board the first Spacelab mission will be four astronauts and two scientists—one of whom will be a European. A shortlist of 3 candidates

—German, Dutch and Swiss—has already been chosen from over 2000 applicants.

The six man mission crew will be accommodated in a split-level pressurised cabin in the nose of the shuttle. The upper level consists of the flight cockpit; the lower level of eating, sleeping and living quarters as well as shower and toilet.

The first mission will last one week. Apart from testing the performance of the Space Shuttle and Spacelab, the scientists will carry out 76 experiments (60 European, 15 American and 1 Japanese). These will demonstrate Spacelab's potential for conducting research into the stratosphere, astronomy, solar and plasma physics, medicine and biology.

Spacelab is being built for ESA by nearly 40 European firms led by the German VFW/ERNO group. Work began in 1974. A prototype is due to be delivered in mid-1980 and the first flight should take place a few months later.

Spacelab's programme will be highly flexible partly because the Space Shuttle can orbit between altitudes of 200 and 900 kms above the earth. By providing a stable, gravity free environment Spacelab will open up vast new areas for scientific and space research.

By joining forces with the USA, Europe will be able to put Spacelab into orbit more quickly and cheaply. Europe will also become associated with the American space programme and the eventual construction of a space station. Spacelab is one step in this direction.

Moreover the costs, technological difficulties and political implications are so vast that it is essential that space exploration be tackled on an international scale.

## Pooling resources to help provide for the future

From what started out some 20 years ago as a joint scientific research project into nuclear energy, the European Community research programme is now a broad undertaking that employs more than 2000 persons in such diverse fields as aerospace, computers and pollution control.

As European society's goals and priorities have evolved during this time span, the common research activities have also broadened to reflect this change and to encompass a growing number of important areas.

Now the Community research budget, which reached some £140 million in 1978, is devoted to five main areas of activity: resources, which still includes nuclear energy; industrial development; life in society; the environment, and information, training and forecasting. Each of these major chapters divides this total funding in that order of priority with the resources sector consuming more than half.

If the emphasis still seems to be on energy in the Community research budget, it's largely in keeping with European preoccupations about the reliability of energy sources in the future and the quest for alternatives.

Nuclear power accounts for about 41% of the spending. But as governments and industry have also assumed a greater share of the total nuclear research, the Community programme is aiming more at filling important gaps in the total knowledge. That's why much of the Community activity in this field is concerned with reactor safety, radiation protection and the management of radioactive waste.

Looking far into the future, this programme is also beginning to examine the problems and techniques connected with the dismantling of abandoned nuclear power stations and also with controlled thermonuclear fusion which promises to be a potentially useful and clean source of power in the next century.

A major aspect of the energy research sector, as we mentioned in *Euroforum* 15/79, is focused on alternative sources of energy, including such new forms as solar power and such traditional ones as coal. It also means an accompanying effort to find ways and techniques of conserving energy.

In addition, the related field of agriculture and raw materials are the subject of projects funded by the Community budget. This spending in part represents an insurance policy against the threat of shortages in the future in other important raw materials.

Another important priority in the Community research programme is the need to sustain the competitiveness of European industry in the face of increasing challenges from other major industrialised nations and developing countries. A number of projects in this area have already been undertaken and

## ENVIRONMENT

others have been proposed in the aerospace and data processing industries. The Council of Ministers has just approved a major part of this programme dealing with computer technology in the next four years.

Not overlooked in the midst of all these highly sophisticated scientific projects, are more human needs. Similarly advanced research is also conducted into means of improving the quality of everyday life for the average citizen in a more direct way.

A major ingredient of this phase is the work conducted into the preservation of the environment against pollution. In this field there are not only long-standing operations, but also new ones that arise as a result of specific events or needs such as the 1978 shipwreck of the giant supertanker Amoco Cadiz off the coast of France. Health hazards associated with the rapid urbanisation of European society are also being studied under Community research.

These projects are sometimes undertaken in the Community research facilities scattered in several member countries, in national research centres or universities, or in cooperation with a number of different facilities that may also be located in non-Community countries who want to be associated in such major activities.

Sometimes projects are also undertaken in conjunction with other international organizations, such as the International Energy Agency.

You can learn more about the Community's research programmes from a new booklet: 'Science, Research and the European Community', No 11/79 in the European File series, available from the European Commission, Directorate-General for Information, rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels.

## Children brush up on their knowledge of the great outdoors

At one time, developing an acquaintance with the world outside the school window was described as 'nature study'. Very often, it amounted to little more than germinating peas and beans in a glass jar, starting a flower patch in the school grounds or pressing autumn leaves into textbooks after an outing to a public park.

However, in more recent times, nature has become known as the environment and nature study has become known as environmental education.

The European Commission is taking an active interest in this type of study and is currently sponsoring a project which is aimed at coordinating environmental studies in certain pilot schools in the nine member states.

The network started its work in February 1977. Before this, discussions between representatives of the Commission and the ministries of Education in the Community member states established its main aims and operational framework.

It was agreed that the schools involved would advance the range and quality of the environmental education they provided by co-operating and learning from each other's experience. It was also agreed that the schools would act as collectors of information for schools in their own countries and for the Community as a whole.

The members of the co-ordinating team are based in the Curriculum Development Unit in Dublin. Schools

were chosen on the basis that children involved would be in the nine to eleven age group, there would be evidence of good practice in environmental education and that teachers would be willing to join their colleagues in other countries in discussing and developing classroom techniques.

The network was set up between February and June 1977, when teachers from all the pilot schools met each other for the first time at a seminar in Dublin. They agreed that each pilot school and centre should be encouraged to embark on a study of some aspect of its local area. They also agreed to facilitate communications between schools by issuing a newsletter, to explore the possibility of organizing in-service courses in environmental education for teachers, and to encourage exchange visits between teachers.

Concerning the project work, a village school in Belgium examined the effect that tourists had on the village. A school in Hertfordshire, England established a mini-weather station and studied weather forecasting and its importance on agriculture.

A school near Rome made a study of fossils and archaeological remains of the Etruscan and Roman civilisations. Schools in both Dublin and the Netherlands made studies of the ecology. Other studies in other member states included insect infestation, fishing, food and city life.

Copies of a study called 'Life and Environment' presenting the work of the Curriculum Development Unit can be obtained from:  
O'Brien Educational,  
11 Clare Street,  
Dublin 2, Ireland.



## Bottle banks play important role in preventing waste

'Neither do men put new wine into old bottles', the Bible tells us. But is it any longer a universal truth?

In recent years we have become accustomed to the sight of empty bottles stockpiled at various points around our cities awaiting recycling. They may sometimes be unsightly but they are playing an increasingly important environmental and economic role in society. Consider a few statistics.

By doubling the amount of waste glass recycled over the next 2-3 years the European Community could save 225 million litres of oil, over £4.5 million in waste disposal costs, more than 2 million tonnes of raw materials and reduce the total amount of glass in domestic waste by 20%.

This picture emerged from an international seminar on glass recycling recently held in Brussels which was attended by experts from Community institutions, the OECD, consumer and environmental bodies, the Community's Waste Management Committee and representatives of industrial container glass manufacturers.

The seminar was organized at the initiative of FEVE, the European Container Glass Federation, to brief European experts on the latest developments in the field.

The reports showed that Community countries are already making great

strides in glass recycling. For example, front-runner Germany achieved a figure of 370 000 tonnes in 1978; France expects to recycle 600 000 tonnes by 1982; the UK is well advanced with its 'Bottle Bank' scheme; Belgium is now extending collection systems across the country. Other member states also have programmes.

The key to success in most cases in the bottle-bank placed at strategic locations in towns and villages such as supermarkets, car parks and street corners, where householders bring along their empty bottles and jars. The containers are emptied by private contractors or local authorities and the glass is sold back to the manufacturers for cleaning and remelting into new bottles.

Recycling is of considerable importance for society: it means less glass to collect, less glass to dispose of, less extraction of raw materials and savings on the use of energy. All these benefits have environmental consequences and also represent financial savings.

Industry also benefits in terms of more economical energy use (2% energy saving for every 10% of recycled glass used, due to its lower melting point) and more efficient use of raw materials (for every tonne of crushed glass used in the furnace, 1.2 tonnes of raw materials are saved).

The FEVE president, Mr David Bailey, told the seminar his organization is committed to doubling the amount of glass recycled over the next 2-3 years.



## ENERGY

### Economic motoring: a few signposts to better performance

One of the rarest things these days is to find someone who admits to being a bad driver. Many fancy themselves as Frangios or Nikki Laudas burning down the motorway or screeching round hairpin bends.

But a bad driver is not simply dangerous; he is also heavy-footed and wastes petrol. Fortunately, life is becoming steadily more frustrating for such drivers, with petrol prices escalating rapidly and speed restrictions and fines becoming more and more severe.

In addition to the safety aspect, one major reason for this is, of course, the oil crisis and the need to economise on petrol. European Community experts have calculated that fuel savings of between 20-35% could be achieved by more efficient cars over the next 20 years. But immediate savings, of the order of 10 to 15% or more can certainly be got from better driving behaviour.

For instance 10% less petrol is used for each 10 km per hour (just over 6 m.p.h.) cut in speed. A 1200-1300 cc European car consumes 6.5 litres of petrol per 100 km at 80 km/hr, 7.3 at 90 km and 8.2 at 100 km.

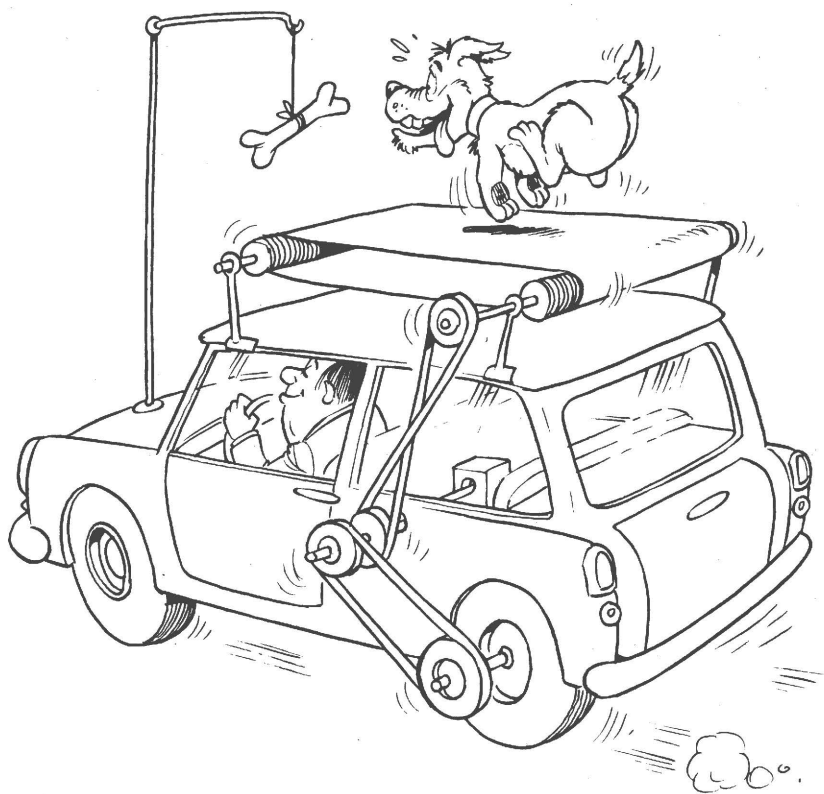
Denmark and Ireland have the strictest speed limits in the Community but Germany has no compulsory limits on its autobahns. However, speed limits serve little purpose if they are ignored.

In France, for example, only 5% of motorists caught speeding in 1975 had exceeded the limit by more than 10%. By 1978 the ratio had risen to 20%. It has been estimated that 500 000 tonnes of fuel could be saved annually if French motorists respected speed limits.

Speed is one problem—heavy footed drivers another. A lighter touch on the gas pedal could save up to 10% of fuel without affecting average speed. Racing starts at traffic lights or violent acceleration consume gallons. More frequent gear changes, especially at low speeds, could also work wonders.

The driver is only half the problem. A well-tuned and designed car is also





essential. The fuel performance of European cars varies greatly. French cars are the most efficient, according to a recent study of the Geneva based Economic Commission for Europe.

A standard French car consumes 8.45 litres per 100 km/hr compared with 8.72 for an Italian, 9.32 for a British and 9.55 for its German counterpart.

European cars have for long been more economical than US cars. But there is no room for relaxation. The Americans are aiming to cut average fuel consumption to 8.5 litres per 100 km by 1985.

Member states have, however, already started to try and improve car efficiency. A standard fuel consumption test has already been introduced in Germany, the UK and France to aid car owners and buyers assess fuel rates of different models.

An agreement has been reached between the UK and German governments and their car industries to reduce fuel consumption of new cars by 10% between 1978-85. Similar schemes to encourage development of more energy efficient cars are now being discussed in other Member States.

These national agreements should be completed by a Community agreement to ensure a consistent and fair presentation of results. Improvements could also be achieved through the wider use of diesel engines and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). Diesel engines were practically unheard of a few years ago but are now found in 6% of new cars and the ratio is rising fast.

In the longer term the mixture of alcohol with petrol could also bring major savings. Tests have shown that up to 35% alcohol can be added without having to change car engines.

The development of external combustion and gas turbine engines and continuously variable transmissions could cut fuel consumption by 50%. But these are not for tomorrow.

On the other hand you can cut fuel consumption by 5-8% today by fitting an economiser onto the carburettor. It is of greatest value in towns and dense traffic. Moreover it is relatively cheap. Electric cars are another possibility once batteries of sufficient power and life have been developed at commercially viable prices. Lighter, more streamlined cars equipped with better tyres would also save fuel.

## Commission to finance conservation projects: tenders invited

The European Commission has issued invitations to tender by people and firms based in the Community for energy-saving demonstration projects.

The projects are being subsidized within the framework of the Community's four-year energy research programme (1979-83) for which £ 70 million has been allocated.

The projects should concern the construction of new installations using energy-saving equipment or processes. Alternatively, the projects may involve the use of existing techniques for new energy saving applications. These include improvement of insulation, heating and air-conditioning in buildings, as well as more efficient production of electricity for industrial use and the recovery and recycling of waste heat. Projects for improving the energy yield of engines and motor vehicles without reducing performance would also be eligible.

The projects must be commercially viable and have been preceded by feasibility studies. The Community would normally finance between 24-49% of project cost.

Those interested should send proposals in two of the official Community languages, one of which should be English or French, (25 copies in each of the two) not later than 15 January 1980 to the following address: Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Energy, Energy Conservation Demonstration Projects, Rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels.

Further more general information can be obtained from Community press and information offices (see back cover).

### Keeping up to date

A symposium on the impact of new techniques on publishing is being held in Luxembourg on November 6-7. Contact: Mr J.M. Gibb, European Commission, DG XIII-A/3, Boite Postale 1907, Luxembourg. Tel. 4301-2918.

## TAXATION



## Europeans topping league table as the yield rises

Taxmen would hardly rate a place on anyone's list of favourite people. To most people, they are the prototype image of anonymous bureaucrats who slice increasing chunks off salaries every payday.

It is not surprising that European taxmen have become the targets of a considerable amount of bitter abuse and the hapless victims of a number of unpleasant jokes. It is generally acknowledged that the levels of taxation in Europe are among the highest in the world.

A graphic indication of just how much tax the average European pays is contained in a recent study prepared by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)—the Paris-based organization that monitors economic

trends in the developed, industrialized countries of the world.

According to the OECD study, the nine Community Member States feature at the top of the league along with the Nordic countries and Switzerland when it comes to taxation.

Leading the Community's own league table is Luxembourg, where the average level of taxation last year was around 50%. The tiny land-locked country is followed by the Netherlands (46.7%), Belgium (44.4%), Denmark (43.2%) and France (39.4%). Further down the table is Germany (38.0%), the United Kingdom (35.2%), Italy (34.5%) and bringing up the rear is Ireland where the average level of taxation is around 33.7%.

The study also contains some other interesting facts about taxation in the OECD as a whole. It draws attention to how the level of tax revenues

have changed over the years. For the OECD area, the average proportion of Gross Domestic Product accounted for by taxation rose from 28% in 1965 to 36% in 1977.

The increase was especially large in northern Europe—the Nordic countries, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Between 1977 and 1978, however, figures show that there has been a levelling off of this trend.

As regards tax structures, the OECD points out that the main tendencies have been to increase reliance on personal income tax and social security contributions while reducing overall reliance on consumption taxes, especially excises on tobacco and alcoholic drinks. Taxes on corporate incomes and on property have also continued to decline in most countries.

It is worth noting that the level of taxation in the United States is around 30.4%, lower than any of the Community countries. Yet this level has triggered off a 'tax revolt' in the USA where Americans are expressing open and bitter dissatisfaction.

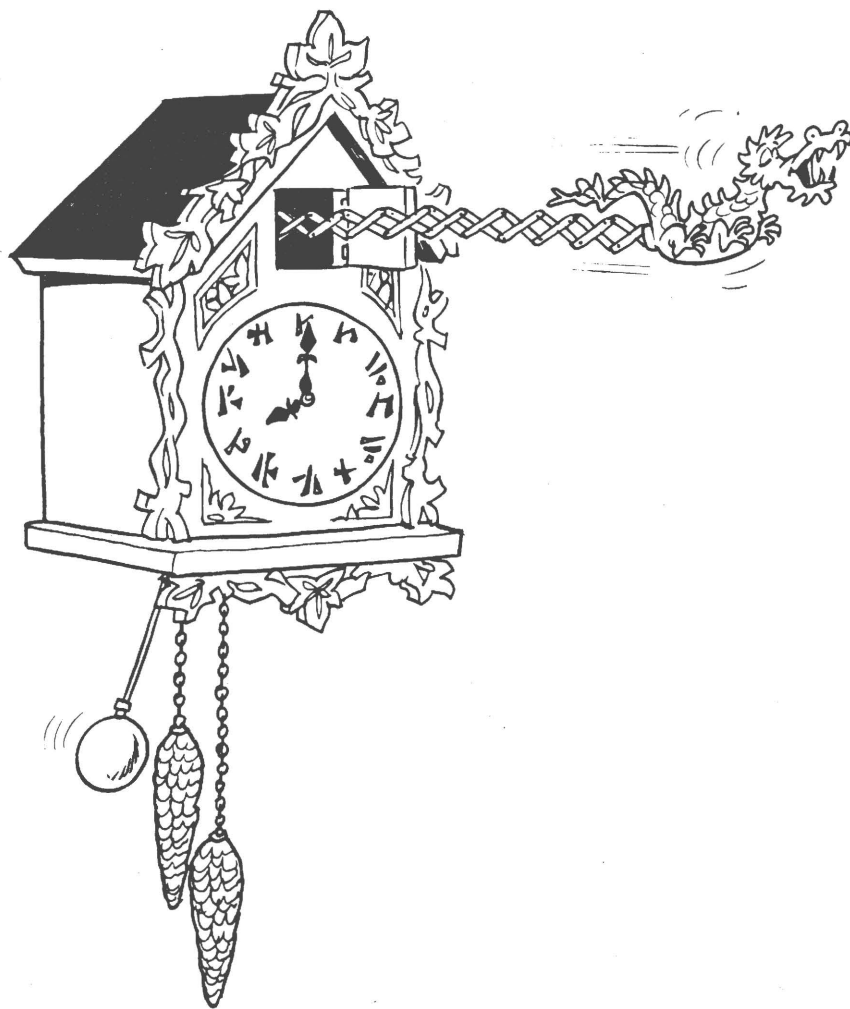
So it would appear that the average European is a pretty tolerant sort of person when it comes to paying tax since there has not been any widespread 'revolt' in the Nine.

## Nine come together in an effort to combat evasion

Life is to be made somewhat less cosy in the future for tax dodgers who cost Community governments—and, indirectly, all taxpayers—millions of pounds every year.

The Community's Council of Ministers has just agreed to three important pieces of legislation governing value added tax, one of which will reinforce the efforts of the nine member states in their fight against fraud and evasion.

The new legislation extends an existing system of mutual assistance between the member states in certain tax areas to VAT by means of an agreement to exchange information, as well as the setting up of a uniform procedure for the recovery of VAT in another member state.



## Switzerland on the watch-out?

If you are one of the many who have always thought immediately of Switzerland when you heard the word 'watch-making', it may well be time to change your word-association habits, judging from a set of figures just released by the European Commission.

It appears that imports into the Community of electronic watches manufactured in the South East Asian countries, especially Taiwan and Hong Kong, are growing appreciably.

In fact, imports from S.E. Asia rose by a staggering 260% between 1976 and 1977, compared with an increase of 102% from the traditional home of clockwork. From 1.9 million items in 1976, imports from S.E. Asia expanded to 5 million items, while those from Switzerland grew from 0.6 million to 1.3 million.

As a percentage of the total number of electronic wrist watches imported

into the Community, the share coming from S.E. Asia rose by 10% during the year 1976/7, from 45% to 55%.

By far the biggest increases in exports from individual countries were recorded by Taiwan and Hong Kong, whose sales rose 332.5% and 276.6% respectively. Imports from Japan enjoyed a more modest boost (113.9%).

In value terms, however, the figures show a less marked increase in 1977 (+ 59%) for imports from the S.E. Asian countries, while the value of imports from Switzerland grew by 82.4%. This indicates that the import pattern for electronic wrist watches is following that for most other Community imports: cost per item tends to be falling.

Thus, although electronic watches earned S.E. Asian countries some £47 million in the Community in 1977, the import price per item fell from the 1976 level of £15 to about £9 in 1977. Swiss-made watches dropped in price too, though less markedly from about £28 per item in 1976 to around £25 in 1977.

## Tugendhat analyses UK experience in the Community

'For several years now the Community has been hindered, even crippled, by a grudging acceptance of membership by Britain. The combination of new developments in the Community, attempts to tackle issues which cause problems for Britain, and a positive approach to the Community by the new British Government provides the opportunity both for a more whole-hearted British participation and a more effective Community'.

This was the central theme of Commissioner Christopher Tugendhat's talk to the Bow Group, an organization of Conservative graduates, at the recent Conservative Party Conference in Blackpool. Mr Tugendhat discussed the special reasons why Britain's role in the Community has been an uneasy one so far—the difficulties of political adaptation, late arrival as a member, the world economic crisis, poor British economic performance, divisions in the British Labour Party, and particular British problems on the Community budget and the CAP.

'Joining the Community has involved a major and difficult political adjustment for the British people' said Mr Tugendhat. 'The Community is Britain's first permanent peacetime engagement on the continent since the Middle Ages, so we should not be surprised if our focus takes time to adjust'.

Nor had joining the Community 16 years after its establishment made things any easier, he said. It was inevitably less satisfactory than being one of the founder members, helping to frame the Treaty and laying the basis of the policies pursued.

'But it is a fact', he added, 'that culturally, spiritually and politically the history of Europe is our history too, and I believe that in the European Community Britain is returning to its natural home in Europe'.

### More energy

The Community is to back 24 hydro-carbon research projects in the member states with funds of £14 million.

## THE REGIONS

## Blueprint to aid poorer areas is outlined

Too many citizens in Europe still find themselves to be outsiders in the midst of a relatively prosperous society. Because of a number of factors outside their control they are residents not of a competitive and dynamic community but of an impoverished region where their standard of living may even be deteriorating in comparison to that of more fortunate neighbours.

National and European Community authorities for years have tried to assist people who are held captive by their roots to an area that is no longer agriculturally or industrially productive. But, despite the spending of billions of pounds in funds and a variety of imaginative efforts new approaches and new efforts are necessary.

That's why the nine member governments and the European Commission in Brussels recently agreed to begin a new type of programme for some of the poorest regions in the Community.

Since 1975, the European Regional Development Fund, designed espe-

cially to try to narrow the gap between underdeveloped regions and the more prosperous ones, has been helping national and other authorities to finance their regional programmes.

The first Fund was worth around £ 540 million. The second, for the 1978-80 period, is worth around £ 1 234 million.

The money is allocated to individual member states on a quota basis. Italy receives 39.39%, the UK 27.03%, France 16.86%, Ireland 6.46%, Germany 6%, the Netherlands 1.58%, Belgium 1.39%, Denmark 1.20% and Luxembourg 0.09%.

Last year, it was agreed that some regional development programmes should be formulated at the central level where a better overview could be made of more general Community needs. The result is a new proposal recently drafted by the European Commission that recommends that the Regional Fund would allocate around £ 136 million on a non-quota basis in the five years from 1980 to 1984 for five high priority needs that span a number of different Community countries and regions. Additional projects involving other regions will also be formulated later.

These high-priority programmes are aimed at aiding regions to cope with the new energy crisis, the catastrophic downturn in the steel and shipbuilding industries, the expected consequences of the enlargement of the Community and the need to develop small-scale economic activity in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

One major priority is assisting the regions of Italy and France that will be the most directly affected by the anticipated low-cost competition from Spain and Portugal when these two countries join the Community. Some £ 75 million is proposed to help develop rural tourism and small and medium enterprises in the Italian Mezzogiorno and the Aquitaine, Midi-Pyrenees and Languedoc-Roussillon regions of Southern France.

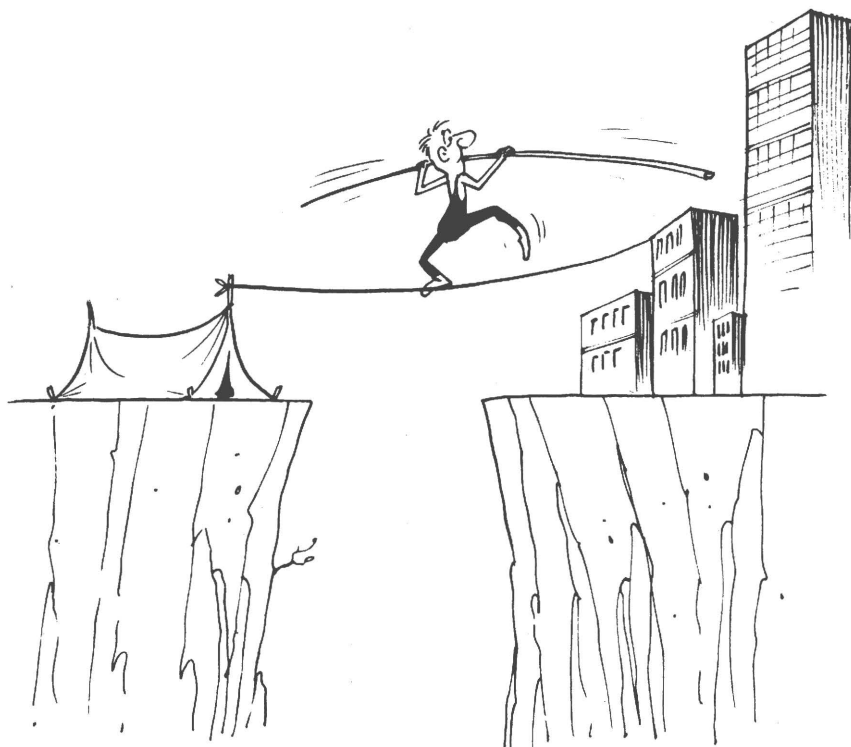
To try to ease the plight of regions throughout the Community which have been the most seriously affected by the world-wide crisis in the steel industry, some £ 27 million would go to areas in the United Kingdom, Italy and Belgium. The aim is to improve the environment for the establishment of smaller businesses in the counties of Strathclyde, Cleveland, Clwyd, South and West Glamorgan and Gwent and the Corby District in the United Kingdom, the Province of Naples in Italy and areas of Liège, Hainaut and Luxembourg Provinces in Belgium.

Regions in the United Kingdom including Strathclyde, Cleveland, Tyne and Wear, Merseyside and Belfast would benefit from the £ 10.5 million proposed to replace jobs lost in the shipbuilding industry by jobs in small businesses.

The isolated region of the Italian Mezzogiorno would also receive £ 10 million to help develop alternative domestic sources of hydro-electricity and lessen its dependence on distant and costly energy.

A special effort totalling £ 15 million aims to encourage tourism and small cottage industries in the border regions in Ireland.

The main idea in all these plans will be to finance not specific projects but broader programmes. It will mean that activities which have not previously been financed by the Regional Fund, such as market studies or promotional and consulting services, will benefit.



## THE ECONOMY

### Oil price rises continue to fuel gloomy forecasts

The Community is expected to have an economic growth rate of around 2% next year, according to the annual economic report published by the European Commission.

Most member states can expect a volume growth of between 2.5 and 3% in their gross domestic product, but weaker member states will bring down the average to 2%.

This figure compares with an average growth rate of a little over 3% in 1978, a rate which is expected to be repeated this year.

Because of the rise in oil prices, average inflation both this year and next is expected to be around 9%, compared to an increase of 7% in 1978.

There are expected to be deficits in the Community's balance of payments in both 1979 and 1980) of between £2 billion and £3.25 billion compared with a surplus of around £8.7 billion in 1978.

The Commission makes a number of recommendations:

- in a first phase of recovery, incomes must be kept down, which means that consumers would have to absorb higher energy costs. A strict monetary policy is urged;

- as inflation is brought under control a more active policy could be adopted to boost investment and consumption;

- a more realistic energy policy must be adopted which gets away from the traditional equation: economic growth = higher oil imports.

## AGRICULTURE

### Wine: still headaches in matching quality, quantity and thirst

More quality and less quantity. That's the message about the Community's wine production which emerges from the European Commission's annual report on the state of the industry which has just been published.

The pattern is in line with the Commission's own aim to provide the Community's wine drinkers with a more delectable beverage and to save taxpayers from a repeat of the notorious wine lakes of old.

The Commission estimates that in the course of this year the area under wines will be cut by 21 000 hectares to around 2.5 million hectares. This will be about the same reduction as last year.

The land taken out of production is all in regions capable of growing nothing better than table wine of poor quality. On the other hand, an additional 4 000 hectares have been planted with vines in quality areas that will produce wine of merit and of export value.

Unfortunately, despite Community measures to encourage the shift from quantity to quality, there is once again a danger that production will exceed consumption because of a particularly good harvest this year—reckoned to be 150 million hectolitres as against 132 million in 1978 and 128 million in 1977.

On the other hand, direct human consumption is only around 126 million hectolitres this year, a fall from 133 million in 1975, since when it has been steadily diminishing.

Oddly enough, the greatest culprits are in France and Italy, the two leading producers in the Community, where imbibers are turning to more exotic potions.

## EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### Community accepts Comecon invitation to new talks

Commission Vice-President Wilhelm Haferkamp is due in Moscow this month at the head of a negotiating team for a new round of talks with Comecon, the Soviet trade bloc.

The visit follows an invitation from Comecon secretary-general Nikolai Faddeev which was made last June, seven months after the Commission had put forward proposals representing a balanced compromise between the two sides differences.

In his reply accepting the invitation, Mr Haferkamp made it clear that he was agreeing to travel to Moscow in the hope of reaching an agreement.

### Talks with Egyptians

European Commission President Roy Jenkins last week paid an official visit to Cairo for talks with Egyptian government leaders.

*The Community economy 1973-80*

	GDP volume growth %	Rise in consumer prices %	Current account balance of payments (billion EUA <sup>(2)</sup> )	General government financial deficits % GDP	Unemployed in labour force %
1973	6.0	8.4	1.1	-0.7	2.5
1974	1.6	13.4	-9.5	-1.7	2.9
1975	-1.6	12.8	0.8	-5.6	4.3
1976	5.0	11.1	-6.2	-3.8	4.9
1977	2.3	10.5	1.2	-3.3	5.3
1978	3.1	6.8	14.0	-4.0	5.5
1979 (1)	3.1	8.9	-3.3	-4.0	5.6
1980 (1)	2	9	5.25	-3.9	6.2

(1) Forecasts of the Commission staff on the basis of present anticipated policies.

(2) 1 EUA = approx. .62 p.



## THE NEWS AT A GLANCE

### Aid to quake victims

Italy is to receive more than £ 600 000 in Community aid for the relief of earthquake victims in the provinces of Perugia and Ternia. The aid must reach the people affected by the earthquake in September as directly as possible and be used ideally for emergency action aimed at safeguarding life and the means of livelihood of the survivors.

### Energetic agenda

The reduction of oil imports, more control over oil pricing and greater use of coal topped the agenda when Community Energy Ministers met in Luxembourg on October 9. The main outcome was agreement on a means of registering all oil imports.

### A better environment

The European Commission is proposing to spend £ 1.6 million on 17 social research projects in the field of ergonomics aimed at improving working conditions in the coal and steel industries.

### Cheaper medicine?

Experts from the Nine are currently drawing up an inventory of all national legislation concerning the control of medicine prices.

### Exchanging credit

A first meeting was held in Brussels on October 15 of the recently-formed Committee of Credit Associations of the European Community. The idea is to provide a forum in which the banking industry will be able to discuss the work of the European Commission in their field as well as matters of interest both to them and to the Commission.

### £ 1.3 billion in aid

The European Development Fund in early October approved 19 separate funding projects in a number of developing countries belonging to the Lomé Convention that brought the total expenditure from the current Fund, which was established in 1975, to £ 1.3 billion.

### Job-creating plan

The European Commission expects to be ready with detailed proposals this month aimed at creating more jobs. It is working on a number of work-sharing ideas, including schemes for early retirement, part-time and temporary work, the length of shifts and a reduction in the total amount of time worked by an individual each year, all of which should make more jobs available for those out of work or expected to come on the labour market.

### 66-state Parliament

Parliamentarians from all signatory states of the Lomé Convention—the nine Community countries and 57 states in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific,—met in Luxembourg recently to discuss the outcome of negotiations for a new Convention which was due to be signed in Lomé on October 31.

### Inquisitive

European Parliamentarians are becoming more inquisitive, at least since they became directly-elected last June. In all of last year they put 900 written questions to the Commission. In the first three months of the new Parliament, the figure was 530, giving a rough annual average of more than 2 000.

### For typhoon victims

The island of Dominica, which lost the bulk of its banana crop due to typhoon David, is to receive £ 1.5 million from the Commission to compensate it for loss of export earnings under the terms of the Lomé Convention. This money is in addition to emergency aid worth £ 1.9 million which the Commission has already sent to Dominica.

### Ecologists to meet

The European Environmental Bureau is organizing a one-day seminar on the Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species on December 13 in Brussels. Details from the Bureau at 31 rue Vautier, 1040 Brussels. The European Commission is shortly to publish its proposals to implement the provisions of the Convention.

### Looking to the future

The Community is now spending more than the United States on research and development, according to Energy Commissioner Guido Brunner—£ 6.9 billion (11.1 billion Eua) in 1978 against £ 6.6 billion (10.6 billion Eua) for the U.S. The figure for Japan was £ 3.7 billion.

### Eurolympics

A Belgian member of the European Parliament, André Damseaux of the Liberal and Democratic Group, has urged the European Commission to sponsor a Community Games or 'Eurolympics' every four years. Unfortunately, the Commission has had to tell him that it does not have the necessary funds at the present time.

### A bridge too far

The European Commission has said that it does not see the need at the moment to propose a Community-wide ban on the registration of new motor vehicles which exceed a certain fuel consumption. It was urged to do so by a member of the European Parliament, German Socialist Horst Seefeld.

### For cleaner air

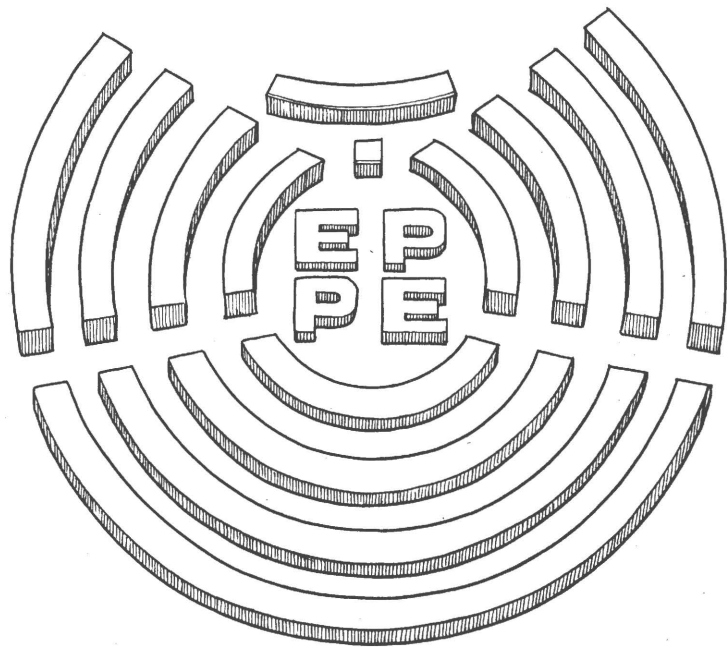
The Council of Ministers has given the go-ahead for the Community to become a signatory to an international convention on long-range trans-frontier pollution. It is due to be signed at a UN meeting in Geneva this month. Details *Euroforum* 15/79.

### More mobility

The European Commission has had a first detailed discussion of ideas presented by Transport Commissioner Richard Burke on the development of a Community role in creating a comprehensive transport infrastructure. There will be at least one further discussion, probably this month, before the Commission makes its proposals public.

### Unemployment static

The number of people out of a job in the Community has remained at around 5.9 million for the three months up to the end of September.



## The Man Who Came In From The Cold

The handshake is warm. And so is the smile which lights up the instantly recognisable features. But there is a hint of astonishment there too. Finn Lyngé really does seem surprised by the curiosity he has aroused, and surprised that people should find him so interesting, at the European Parliament.

Admittedly the 46 year old deputy from Greenland doesn't act much like a star attraction. Quite the contrary. Big and solidly-built, unremarkably dressed, and lugging a briefcase around with him wherever he goes, this former Catholic priest, theologian and Director of Radio Greenland treads the Strasbourg and Luxembourg corridors of power discreetly.

Nonetheless, his constituency covers an area bigger than that of all his colleagues at the Parliament put together: he represents a 2 million square kilometre island the width of America. It lies on the edge of the Arctic Circle, a largely

ice-bound country where scientists are only just beginning to assess the great riches hidden under the earth's surface.

An eskimo and proud of it, the MP from Siumit joined the Socialist Group only at the last moment. Discreet and modest he may be, but he nevertheless bears the mark of one who does not underestimate the seriousness of his responsibilities.

In 1982, the 45 000 inhabitants of this 'Danish' island are to decide in a referendum whether or not to remain in the European Community.

As a 'Common Market sceptic', Finn Lyngé is profoundly aware that the verdict he pronounces in a little over two years' time may well be a deciding factor.

He explains his position: 'For various reasons, most Greenlanders want to leave the Common Market, even though membership has so far been to our advantage economically. When people use the term 'Common Market' they tend to think of economics and money, but in fact the European Communities stand for much more than that.

'People in Greenland are against the Common Market because they mistrust big power structures, but in 1972, at the time of our first referendum on membership, no-one really knew what the choices implied. Denmark was familiar, but what lay to the south was unknown.

'So it seems to me that, as Greenland's only representative here, I must make a thorough examination of all the issues involving Greenland and the Community, to find out what the pros and cons of membership are, both in terms of our present situation, and to assess what the future would hold if we left. In the next referendum, the people of Greenland must have a real choice between well-defined alternatives'.

Finn Lyngé has tackled the work of analysis with meticulous care and seriousness, but not without some difficulty. 'After such a short time here it's hard to form an opinion', he says.

No doubt the long plane journeys he has to take from Godthæb to Strasbourg, Luxembourg and Brussels will be put to good use by this European deputy from the cold.

# Euroforum

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