

Euroforum



A growth industry with the help of Community funds. See page 3.

€11/80
20-6-1980

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Euroforum is published by the
Directorate-General for Information,
Commission of the
European Communities,
Rue de la Loi 200,
B-1049 Bruxelles,
Belgium
Tel. 735.0040/8040
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A growth industry with the help of Community funds

'Tourism' to you or me may mean soaking up the Mediterranean sun, admiring the glories of ancient Rome, skiing in the Alps or trying to master the Paris Metro. But it's also one of the most important branches of the European Community's economy.

For one thing, it's a major source of foreign exchange. The 189 million tourists who take European holidays every year spend about £100 000 million in the Community alone. Tourism now provides employment for about 10 million Community citizens—about 9% of the entire labour force. What's more, it's a constantly expanding sector, and one of the few where unemployment is virtually non-existent.

Though there are no provisions relating to tourism in the Community's founding Treaty, the creation of the Common Market has itself helped to develop tourism by making it easier for people to move from one country to another, and quite a lot of Community legislation touches directly or indirectly on tourism.

From the environmental and health point of view, for instance, directives in 1975 and 1976 aimed to safeguard the quality of bathing water and limit pollution. From a safety point of view, the Commission is preparing measures to improve the protection of travellers against fires in hotels. From the consumer's point of view, a recent Commission memorandum on air transport aims to stimulate competition between airlines.

Bearing in mind that there is often great tourist potential in the natural beauty or architectural heritage of regions which are suffering economic decline or do not readily lend themselves to industrialization, many Community governments have included tourism in their regional development plans.

The various Community funds—the Regional Fund, the Social Fund and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)—and the European Investment Bank also provide financial support for a number of tourist projects. In this way it is hoped that rural economies can be revitalized and local people can continue to live and work there.

Assistance from the Social Fund, for instance, enables some 225 people a year to attend a regional centre for training in the tourist trades at Briançon in France which offers training in the hotel and restaurant trade, or in providing winter sports facilities—as ski instructors, mountain guides and rescue workers, sports goods retailers, and so on—or in rural tourism—running farm holidays or riding instruction for instance—and crafts like carpentry, enamelling, weaving and art metalwork.

In an effort to develop tourism on the Italian island of Elba, the region of Tuscany trains young people for

occupations in the catering trade to encourage them to remain on the island. Eighty people a year benefit from Social Fund assistance here.

Similarly, the EAGGF (primarily an agricultural fund) can grant financial aid for projects relating to tourist or handicraft activities. And aid given under this Fund for projects improving the infrastructure, like rural and forestry road networks, electricity supply, land drainage, and drinking water supplies, while it's principally aimed at encouraging farmers to modernize their farms, will also help to improve an area's tourist potential.

The European Regional Development Fund, with its aim of correcting the regional imbalances within the Community, can also offer assistance for tourist investments, especially in areas where tourism is the main—or only—source of development potential.

One possibility is help in creating, extending or modernizing hotels, inns and holiday villages. Another is aid for constructing large-scale sports, leisure and cultural facilities; or developing marinas, lakes and waterways which might give a boost to tourism in the region. Over the past five years assistance has been given to over 200 projects with a direct bearing on tourism in all Community countries.

Where the money goes

Revenue from and expenditure on international tourism in 1976 and 1977
(\$ US million)

Country	Revenue (R) Expenditure (E)	1976	1977	Difference between R and E	
				1976	1977
Belgium-Luxembourg	R	841.8	993.2	-	581.7 - 642.2
	E	1 423.5	1 635.4		
Denmark	R	803.3	939.9	+	54.9 - 0.023
	E	748.4	942.2		
FR of Germany	R	3 204.6	3 803.7	-	5 646.4 - 7 000.9
	E	8 851.0	10 804.6		
France	R	3 639.4	4 376.7	+	205.9 + 456.9
	E	3 433.5	3 919.8		
Ireland	R	259.3	323.1	+	71.3 + 85.8
	E	188.0	237.3		
Italy	R	2 525.0	4 762.4	+	1 817.7 + 3 868.5
	E	707.3	893.9		
Netherlands	R	1 061.0	1 110.0	-	916.0 - 1 344.0
	E	1 977.0	2 454.0		
United Kingdom	R	2 899.0	3 805.0	+	1 104.0 + 1 884.0
	E	1 795.0	1 921.0		

The so-called 'quota-free' section of the Regional Fund, created last year, now enables the Community to finance more specific measures over a limited period. One proposal involves £72 million to help develop rural tourism in the areas most directly affected by Greece, Spain and Portugal's accession to the Community. Another is for £14.5 million to promote tourism and develop craft industries in frontier areas on either side of the Irish border.

The European Parliament has set up a working group to deal with matters relating to tourism. Its job will be to consider Community initiatives that help promote tourism, such as the reduction of frontier formalities, the creation of a Community passport and the protection of Europe's cultural heritage.

Though tourism can bring enormous economic benefits to the countries concerned—and offer visitors the chance of relaxation and cultural exchange—mass tourism can also be a source of problems. Many people complain that the hotels, roads and other facilities provided for the tourists ruin the natural beauties of the countryside, or that tourist traffic chokes the streets and public buildings of historic towns and villages during the holiday season. As well as destroying the atmosphere of a place, overcrowding by tourists can even pose a physical threat to the sites and monuments themselves—as happened in Lascaux in France with its famous cave paintings.

It's surely Europe's scenery, history and architecture which make it such a popular place to visit, but preserving and protecting this heritage is an expensive and often difficult task.

The Community has realized the importance of searching for a balance between the development of the tourist

industry in certain areas and conserving our natural and cultural heritage. In a 1977 Resolution, the Council of Ministers agreed that 'our architectural heritage... is a non-renewable resource of the Community... and the major physical manifestation of the cultural and historical identity of Europe...'

Community measures in this field have so far concentrated on sponsoring training for students in restoration techniques and funding research into new methods of conservation, but the Commission is at present examining other ways of helping to finance conservation projects.

Other suggestions for improving the situation include increased staggering of holidays to reduce overcrowding and offering tax incentives for firms connected with the tourist trade if they contribute towards financing preservation work.

If, by both national and international action, the benefits of tourism can be more evenly spread and the problems brought under control, the prospect of tourism becoming the world's third largest industry in the near future will be one to welcome rather than dread.

Frontier queues: will we ever see an end to them?

Whether you travel by road, rail, sea or air on your holidays this year, you will inevitably have to contend with queues at customs posts. Is this consistent with being a citizen of the European Community?

This is the gist of a question which was posed recently by a Danish member of the European Parliament, European Progressive Democrat Kai Nyborg, to the European Commission.

Mr Nyborg himself put his finger on one of the main causes of the delays—the need for greater vigilance because of the growth in terrorism. Nevertheless, he felt that the officers of the law sometimes go too far.

'These more stringent checks,' he complained, 'assume in certain cases the form of irrelevant questions to incoming travellers concerning their private lives and occupations, and one Member State has even introduced what are virtually systematic identity checks on motorists both entering and leaving the country.'

Mr Nyborg's concern was that these more stringent identity checks might cancel out the progress already made towards unimpeded passage across the Community's internal frontiers.

He also doubted if systematic checks were an effective means of combating terrorism and he wondered if the inconvenience suffered by ordinary citizens was not out of proportion to the results obtained in the fight against terrorism.

The Commission pointed out to Mr Nyborg that it was not for it to judge the benefits to security which result from a tightening up of checking at borders since security is a matter dealt with by the national administrations and does not fall within the Commission's competence.

However, it reminded him that, as far back as 1968, it called on the Member States to avoid systematically stopping travellers at frontiers within the Community and to carry out checks on them and their vehicles in exceptional cases only.

While the Commission appreciates the need to combat terrorism, it said that, in principle, it shared Mr Nyborg's view that, far from making it more difficult to cross the Community's internal frontiers, every effort should be made to make it easier.



It added: 'Citizens of the Member States are increasingly aware of their right to free movement within the Community and consequently fail to understand, under normal circumstances, why they should nevertheless have to wait for long periods at frontiers.'

In addition to combating terrorism, Member States maintain border checks because there are still differences between their regulations in the areas of taxation, agriculture, public health, statistics, commercial policy, transport regulations and, in some cases, exchange control.

Checks on travellers are also measures to help combat smuggling, particularly of firearms and narcotics, and organized crime. In order to limit these checks, the Commission has already taken a series of measures to harmonize legislation, particularly in relation to taxation, public health, statistics and transport, and to simplify customs procedures and formalities.

In addition, steps have been taken to introduce a procedure for mutual assistance between administrative authorities in the Community, aiming particularly to deal with infringements of customs and agricultural regulations and tax legislation.

The introduction of a Community passport would also make travel easier for Community citizens travelling from one Member State to another. However, progress has been deadlocked for more than three years because the Member States have failed to reach agreement on the use of Community languages on the passport, on whether the words 'European Community' should appear more boldly than the name of the Member State on the cover, and on which legal instrument should be used to create the passport.

Agreement has already been reached on the format of the passport, the number of pages, and the colour.

With the approach of the summer holidays, we devote a large part of this issue to travel and tourism. *Euroforum* will be taking a break itself shortly. Our mid-July issue will be the last before the summer break, and we will be resuming publication in September. We wish you all a happy holiday.



Duty-free goods: allowances may be increased

Few things retain the flavour and scent of holidays than a duty-free bottle of whisky or perfume. When we have nothing but photographs to remind us of our sun tans, it's nice to have a cut-price nip of cognac or the aroma of a good cigar to remind us of how things used to be.

In recent years, the existence of the European Community has meant that you can stretch out these memories a little longer. Whether you have spent your holiday in another Community country or outside, the amount of duty-free goods you can bring home has gradually been increased.

Our table sets out exactly what you are entitled to bring through customs without paying duty or excise. Why not cut it out and take it with you on holiday? Not many duty-free shops tell you what your entitlement is, particularly those outside the Community.

If you are not to be disappointed when you arrive home laden with

goodies, you should read this list carefully. It is particularly important to note the word 'or'.

Travellers, particularly those who do not travel all that regularly, are often confused by the different classifications of alcoholic drink. Here are a few pointers.

'Distilled beverages and spirits' exceeding 22° include whisky, gin, rum, cognac, vodka and most liqueurs. Fortified wines include port, sherry, vermouth and madeira.

Sparkling wines mean champagne, spumanti, semi-sparkling wines and the like. Still wines are normal table wines like burgundy, bordeaux, chianti and so on. However, wines from some regions can be either sparkling or still, so read the label carefully.

The European Commission has consistently aimed to boost these allowances and it currently has proposals before the Council of Ministers which it would like to see adopted by 1 July in time for the holiday season.

Its proposals are that the amount of still wine you can bring back from another Community Member State be increased from four to five litres, that the amount of coffee be increased to 1 000 grams, of coffee extracts and essences to 400 g, and of tea and tea extracts and essences to 200 g and 80 g respectively.

In addition to the goods itemized in our table, you are also allowed to bring in other goods worth up to 180 European Currency Units (ECU) of account. This is approximately £108 at the current rate of exchange but you should check on the exact amount in your national currency before you leave. Travellers under 15 years of age have an allowance of 50 ECU (approximately £30).

The Commission is proposing that these additional allowances should be increased to 210 ECU (approx. £126) from 1 July for over-15s and to 300 ECU (approx. £180) by the beginning of 1982. The equivalent for under-15s is 60 ECU (approx. £36) rising to 85 ECU (approx. £50).

A final point worth noting. Under existing legislation, Denmark and Ireland can exclude from tax exemp-

tion goods whose unit value exceeds 135 ECU (about £80) and 77 ECU (about £46) respectively. These levels may also be increased.

In addition to goods which you can bring home duty-free from your holidays, you should also remember that, as a result of Community legislation, you can now receive small parcels from abroad duty-free.

This extra perk applies to small consignments of a non-commercial character (usually gifts) which are sent to you by a friend living in another Member State or in a non-Community country.

The goods, which may include small quantities of tobacco and a bottle or two of wine, should be intended for your own private use and should not exceed 30 ECU (about £20) in total value.

Helping to keep down the cost of foreign coach trips

The European Community recently signed an agreement with eight other European countries which should help to make cross-border coach travel easier and also help to keep down fares.

The agreement, which de-regulates the movement of tourist buses, covers the nine Community Member States and Austria, Finland, Greece, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

Its effect will be to remove the need for authorizations to coach companies to operate in another country, which until now have been the subject of bilateral agreements, as well as cutting through a lot of red tape. In future, drivers of tourist coaches will simply have to keep a log book recording their trips.

The agreement means that tourist coaches will now be able to tour all over Western Europe with the minimum of administrative fuss. Coaches will also be able to take a group from one country to another and return empty, or make an outward journey empty and pick up a group abroad.

The result will be increased competition between coach tour operators and this, together with the removal of costly and time-consuming administrative formalities, should help to keep down fares for the tourist.

Insuring your car

Frontier officials no longer ask motorists to present their insurance 'green card' when they cross Community frontiers or when they enter or leave Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway and Finland. This is because insurance companies within the Community must provide third party cover for motorists travelling to other Community countries and have extended this principle to the other countries mentioned.

It should be emphasized, however, that the automatic cover is only the legal minimum required according to the laws of the country visited, and this differs from one country to another. The 'green card', therefore, is not legally essential, but motorists wishing to be fully insured against accident should make their own private arrangements.

Quantitative reliefs^{1 2} from taxes and excise duties

Product	Travellers within the Community	Travellers from third countries
<i>Tobacco products</i>		
cigarettes or cigarillos (cigars of a maximum weight of 3 grams each) or cigars or smoking tobacco	300	200
	150	100
	75	50
	400 grams	250 grams
<i>Alcoholic beverages³</i>		
distilled beverages and spirits of an alcoholic strength exceeding 22° or distilled beverages and spirits, and aperitifs with a wine or alcohol base of an alcoholic strength not exceeding 22°; sparkling wines, fortified wines and still wines	to a total of 1.5 litres	1 standard bottle (0.70 to 1 litre)
	to a total of 3 litres	to a total of 2 litres
	to a total of 4 litres	to a total of 2 litres
<i>Perfumes and toilet waters</i>	75 grams	50 grams
	3/8 litre	1/4 litre
<i>Coffee⁴ or coffee extracts and essences</i>	750 grams	500 grams
	300 grams	200 grams
<i>Tea or tea extracts and essences</i>	150 grams	100 grams
	60 grams	40 grams

¹ These reliefs do not prejudice national provisions applicable to travellers whose residence is outside Europe.

² Member States may reduce certain of these reliefs for frontier zone residents, frontier zone workers and international travel crew members.

³ This relief does not apply to travellers under 17 years of age.

⁴ This relief does not apply to travellers under 15 years of age.

Falling ill on holiday: don't go unprepared

Falling ill in a foreign land has long been the traveller's nightmare. Even today you hear horror stories about people who have had to spend years paying back the enormous hospital bills they ran up when they fell seriously ill on holiday. Having adequate insurance before you leave is the only answer, but that's not always easy.

Citizens of the European Community are lucky in this respect, because so long as they are travelling in another Community country they don't need to take out any special insurance and can still rest easy that, should they or their family fall ill, they will be taken care of.

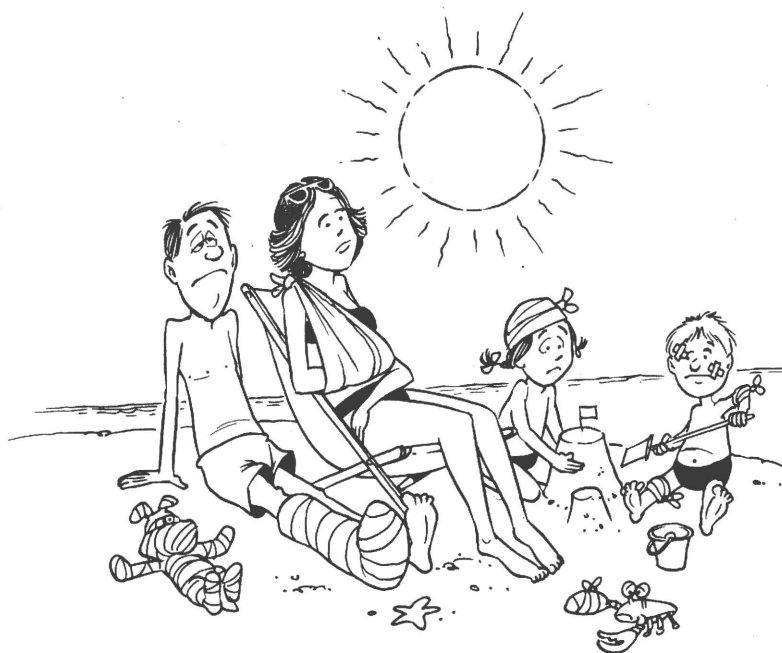
This is because of the Community's agreement on reciprocal health insurance and social security, whereby people covered by such a scheme in one Member State are entitled to the normal benefits which are available in any other Member State in which they happen to find themselves.

This means that an Italian suffering from frostbite in Greenland or a Dane with sunstroke in Sicily will find himself treated like any other Dane or Italian with a similar problem. The same applies to schoolchildren and students if they are members of a Community worker's family.

The cost of the benefit is, in principle, borne by the Member State where the worker is insured. If the legislation of the Member State of stay requires nationals insured under its scheme to participate in the medical costs, for example prescription or dental charges, then the worker will have to make the same contribution to those costs as nationals of that State.

One snag is that, for the moment at least, self-employed and non-employed people are not so fortunate, unless they are insured in a scheme for workers or fall into certain categories under the United Kingdom social security system. The European Commission has twice suggested to the Council of Ministers that the provisions should be extended to include them as well, but so far to no avail.

For those who are insured, it is important to follow the right procedures. The main thing is to carry with you Form E111. For this, contact your local social security office, which will supply you with all relevant information leaflets.



Form E111 is a certificate of entitlement to treatment. It is not needed in Ireland, the United Kingdom or Denmark. Visitors to Belgium, France and Luxembourg, where part of the cost of treatment has to be paid, would be wise to take out private insurance to cover that risk, as the contribution to costs could be substantial and there is no entitlement to refund.

Form E111 will be valid from the date of issue until one month after the expected date of return, and may be extended.

If it is impossible to get Form E111 before leaving and it is required abroad, you should ask the local sickness institute to get it for you before you leave the country where you are holidaying.

A visitor is generally entitled to treatment only for conditions needing immediate attention during the visit. However, pensioners and their dependents, or people receiving industrial injuries benefit, may be able to obtain a wider range of treatment.

Arrangements for free or reduced cost treatment apply only if treatment is undertaken by doctors and hospitals operating under the sickness insurance scheme of the country concerned. Not all charges are refundable but the local sickness insurance office will pay those that are.

Refunds should be applied for in person or by post before leaving the country; otherwise, it may not be possible to receive expenses on your return home or, at least, there will be considerable delay before the matter is settled.

Generally speaking in Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, the United Kingdom and Italy medical care is given free by doctors or dentists approved by the insurance organizations, though charges are sometimes made for medicines. In the Netherlands, while medical care and prescribed medicines are free, part of the cost may have to be paid for dental treatment.

In Belgium, France and Luxembourg, the insured person must normally pay all or part of the costs of treatment, and is then reimbursed by the competent local sickness insurance organization in accordance with the scale applied to these countries' own citizens.

So what will happen when the holiday haunts of Greece, Portugal and Spain eventually join the Community?

The same rules will apply to Greece as to the other Member States as from 1 January 1981.

In addition, there is a proposal at present before the Council of Ministers suggesting that, in the light of the agreement concluded between Portugal and the Community, Portuguese workers and their families within the Community should be covered by similar rules. No negotiations on the matter have yet taken place with Spain.

So, for the moment at least, the soundest advice for the Briton travelling to Portugal or the Spaniard going to Belgium—or for the self-employed person going almost anywhere—is: get covered. And that doesn't mean just keeping out of the midday sun.

Europe's historic buildings: can they be saved?

'A thing of beauty is a joy forever', wrote Keats. If he had been writing nowadays with some of our historic monuments in mind, he might well have felt the need to add—'or, if not forever, at least until it starts falling down'.

We are certainly fortunate in Europe to have a heritage of art and architecture which is possibly unequalled in richness and diversity anywhere else in the world. And with modern travel, more and more of us can enjoy it.

But whether it's the chateaux of the Loire or the Dutch windmills, this heritage cannot take care of itself. Whether these buildings are publicly or privately owned, it takes care, hard work and money to keep them intact and a joy that future generations can share.

This is not easy, especially in times of economic recession, particularly for private owners, and during European Architectural Heritage Year various national associations of historic house owners got together to form a European Union of Historic Houses. Feeling that they could benefit from the experience of others and that there were some problems which could best be tackled at a European level, they approached the European Commission.

As a result, a conference was held in Brussels this spring and a number of reports were commissioned. The first of these to be published is by Professor Ignace Claeys Bouuaert of the University of Gent in Belgium and concerns tax problems—a subject with which we can all feel sympathy.

Every Member State in the Community has a great deal of often very complex legislation concerning the preservation and upkeep of historically interesting places. In fact, owners of listed buildings often feel hedged about with requirements to do one thing and prohibitions from doing another.

And though the essential work is usually subsidized by the government or charitable trusts, help of this kind can be a mixed blessing since it tends to mean that the owner loses the right to decide what work needs to be done, who should do it, and how much should be spent. Then there are often delays and bureaucracy to cope with.

According to the report, families who have lived in a place for centuries often feel they have lost control over their home, and no longer feel really responsible for it. Added to this, owners in many countries find their taxes crippling. Many feel they cannot continue in this way for another generation.

One answer to the problem could be public ownership, but as Professor Claeys Bouuaert points out, while this suits some places, like the Doges Palace in Venice or Versailles, groups of buildings like the Grand Place in Brussels would be almost impossible to administer. There is also a limit to the number of places that can be turned into museums and cultural centres and still be used.

As for the historic houses, they really need to be lived in to survive, and the private owner, the report concludes, is likely to be the most caring guardian, not to say the cheapest, being the only one likely to dip into his own pocket to help preserve the place. They must be encouraged to stay on.

From his study of the measures in force in all Community countries, the author concludes that though laws differ and even diverge from country to country, certain general ideas do emerge which show the way forward.

He says, for instance, that it is illogical to oblige an owner to preserve his house and keep it in good repair while at the same time taxing him on the added value resulting from this conservation work. So he recommends that when this work can be shown to be in the public interest it should be deductible from his revenue.

Another recommendation points to the importance of ensuring that pro-

perties can be passed on from generation to generation and the fact that heavy taxes can make the splitting up of an inheritance inevitable.

The professor also underlines the paradox whereby the older, bigger and grander a place is, the less valuable it is on the open market, because all these features are going to make it uncomfortable and inconvenient to live in and difficult to run. So he suggests that the grander the place, the lower, not higher, the tax-rating should be, and that it should be the public interest in a place rather than its market value which governs the rate of tax.

Other recommendations concern the contents of houses—their furniture and works of art—and their gardens, saying that they should not be regarded separately, but as essential parts of the whole, contributing to a place's life and character.

He also adds a word or two of warning about visitors. In theory, these historic houses should certainly be open to the public, but in practice this can cause severe problems, either because the place is small or because of the cost of guides, guards, attendants and other overheads. He recommends that rulings on public access should therefore not be too rigid.

The report concludes with a series of specific proposals for Community action through a directive covering state taxes on revenues, on capital, and on inheritances and gifts.

As Professor Claeys Bouuaert points out, if an owner cannot afford to maintain his house, the alternative to helping him is a brutal one—selling off its contents or letting it fall into ruins.

Protecting our heritage

Total government aid to public and private organizations for the preservation of historic buildings

Country	Year	Amount in European units of account ¹	% of National Budget
Belgium	1978	7.8 million	0.028%
Denmark	1977	14 million	0.123%
FR of Germany	1978	33 million	0.023%
France	1978	44 million	0.057%
Ireland	1977	1.3 million	0.033%
Italy	1978	32.7 million	0.044%
Luxembourg	1977	975 000	0.11 %
Netherlands	1977	31.3 million	0.103%
United Kingdom	1977	11.6 million	0.012%

¹ 1 Eua = approx. 61 p.

It's not so much a living, more a way of life

Not every owner of a stately home wants to go as far as Britain's pioneering Duke of Bedford or Marquis of Bath, whose gimmicks like the provision of a safari park or the occasional appearance of a real live peer of the realm bring hundreds of thousands of visitors every year to Woburn Abbey and Longleat.

It is often hard to draw the line between making a historic place accessible to the public and retaining its atmosphere as a home that is lived in. But, as the previous article makes clear, throughout the Community, private owners of historic houses are facing increasingly severe financial problems, and each has to find a solution which suits his own situation.

The Honourable Desmond Guinness, a member of the brewing family, bought Castletown House, Ireland's largest and finest Palladian building, when speculators had left it empty for several years and it was in a bad state. The house, just a few miles outside Dublin, was built in 1722 and remained with the original owners, the Conolly family, until they found it too big and uncomfortable to live in. It was restored with money raised by public subscription and now belongs to a trust, chaired by Desmond Guinness.

Part of the house has been converted into flats, the income from which helps to keep the house solvent. The old kitchen has been turned into a restaurant and the stables are let out, but the rest of the house is open to the public. Some 12 000 visitors come a year, and about the same number again attend the seminars, lectures and concerts held there.

Since it is owned by a charitable trust, the house itself is exempt from tax, but Mr Guinness feels that the place is underfinanced. He would like to be able to employ a proper curator and carry out repairs.

Rockingham Castle in the United Kingdom was built by William the Conqueror in 1066. In 1530 Edward Watson built an Elizabethan house inside the walls of the castle, and it has remained in the Watson family ever since. Though it is not a very big house, it is historically interesting, and the present owner, Commander Michael Saunders Watson, opens the gates to 25-30 000 visitors every year. Teas made locally in the village and occasional concerts are a feature.

He reckons that what the visitors spend covers between a third and a half of his running costs, and the rest of these has to come from the income from the estate farm. Up to half the cost of major repairs, though, can be covered by grants from the State. Although the house is exempt from certain taxes because he maintains it and allows access to the public, the farmland which supports it is subject to tax of up to 75% and Commander Watson says that the effect is to decimate the estate.

In reply to a written question from a Dutch member of the European Parliament, Cornelis Berkhouwer, the Commission said it was not yet in a position to adopt the measures suggested by Prof. Claeys Bouuaert. It pointed out that taxation must be harmonized as comprehensively as possible, which implies that any reform of taxation on historic houses should be part of the general effort to bring different taxes more into line with one another.

Looking to the future, he would like to see increased educational use made of historic houses: 'Like an extension of the classroom, so that children studying, say, the Tudor period, could come and study a Tudor house'.

Prince Antoine de Ligne welcomes 100 000 visitors a year to the Château de Beloeil in Belgium. He thinks of it as 'a living museum—seeing the owner makes it more amusing—' and says he makes an effort to offer what people want. The house, open only

in the summer, is filled with works of art, tapestries and china and part of it can be hired out for banquets.

The gardens, for which Beloeil is best known, are open all the year round. As well as a lake and tree-lined walks, there are cafes, amusement arcades and playgrounds, car parks and souvenir shops. Recently the television programme 'It's a Knockout' was made there.

However, the Prince says it is a very bad business and the money the tourists bring in is peanuts compared with his maintenance costs. 'I have 11 acres of hedges to clip—can you imagine what that costs to do?' He sees himself as answering a demand on a social basis rather than a financial one, though 'one day I hope to break even'.

On the subject of taxes he would like to see a reduction in the annual tax and the introduction of direct tax relief for maintenance costs. But the main problem for owners in Belgium is to be able to hand the property down—if the inheritance is indirect, say from uncle to nephew, the taxes are particularly crushing.

Schloss Dyck was built in the 11th century and added to over the centuries until now it is the biggest moated castle in Nordrhein-Westfalen, in the German Federal Republic. The Salm Reisserscheidt family have lived in the castle since the 15th century and built up fine collections of fire-arms, tapestries and other fine art. At the beginning of the 19th century the then owner, a botanist and collector of trees, had a 40 hectare park designed, and this has traditionally been open to the public.

After her husband had died and her family grown up, the present owner decided to open the house to the public to help with the cost of upkeep. About 25 000 visitors come to the house every summer and another 100 000 to the park, but this does not cover the castle's maintenance costs, and Princess Salm Reisserscheidt would like more help from her Land for repair work (Each German Land has its own laws in these matters).

Taxes are also a problem, though there is no income tax on the money from the visitors, but the biggest problem for the family is the inheritance laws whereby the estate has to be split up between all the children with no more than half going to one person.

The three men who built Vaux le Vicomte in France—Le Vau who did the exterior, Le Brun who designed



the interiors, and Le Notre who did the gardens—then went on to build the first Versailles, so the house has been famous for many years and now attracts 300 000 visitors every year. The 75 hectares of formal gardens have been open to the public since the beginning of the last century and the present owner, Comte Patrice de Voguë, opened up the house completely in 1968, adding a cafeteria, a shop and a horse carriage museum over the years.

The revenue from visitors is now almost enough to cover the house's 3 million French franc annual maintenance costs. However, with local taxes, income tax and death duties to pay, the Count feels that changes need to be made in the tax laws for houses open to the public, to bring them more into line with publically-owned castles and museums.

'After all', he said, 'they cost the public 100% to run, and we private owners cost them almost nothing.'

Synchronizing watches could mean a saving of time

A meeting of European Community Transport Ministers in Luxembourg on 24 June could bring some relief to holidaymakers and other travellers who are eternally confused by the different times in different European countries.

The European Commission has been trying for a long time to get the nine Member States to agree to coordinate their summertimes. Now there is a strong possibility that the Nine will agree to introduce summertime on

the same day as from next year. The dates are 29 March in 1981 and 28 March in 1982.

The United Kingdom and Ireland will still remain one hour behind the other seven Member States. We can expect that Greece, which will then be a Member State, together with Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Spain and several Central European countries will synchronize their summertime watches with the Community as of next year.

Holidaymakers would not be the only beneficiaries of the summertime agreement. Businessmen travelling to meetings, long-distance lorry-drivers planning their routes, airlines, shipping lines, railways, tour operators and travel agents would also benefit.

Another way of making life easier for the Community's citizens is the aim of a second proposal due to be discussed by Ministers at this meeting—the introduction of a European Community driving licence.

The European Commission has been trying for about eight years now, with support from the European Parliament, to get the Nine to agree on a common driving licence.

A first step will be agreement on a common format and a system of exchange of licences in cases of a change of residence from one Member State to another.

After long hesitation it looks as if agreement could be reached on the basis of a common format and automatic exchange for some categories of licence with additional experience requirements for certain professional categories (e.g. lorry and coach drivers).



COMPETITION

Commission pays out £25 000 in Hoffmann la Roche affair

The European Commission has made an *ex gratia* payment on humanitarian grounds of 50 million Italian lire—approximately £25 000—to a former employee of a Swiss multinational corporation which it sued for breaching the Community's fair trading laws.

The Commission had already paid around 100 000 Swiss francs—£26 000 in fines and legal costs incurred by Mr Stanley Adams, who was taken to court in Basle by the Swiss chemical giant Hoffmann la Roche, his former employer.

In 1974, Mr Adams had supplied the Commission with information which enabled the Commission to prosecute Hoffmann la Roche, the world's leading vitamin manufacturer, for entering into exclusive or preferential supply contracts with a number of major bulk vitamin users who incorporated the vitamins into their own medicines, foods and feedstuffs.

Holding a dominant position in the Community for seven groups of vitamins, the Swiss company was able to corner the market and virtually prevent its chief competitors from supplying these manufacturers. The result was to the detriment of the ultimate consumer.

With the help of the evidence supplied by Mr Adams, the Commission was able to investigate Hoffmann la Roche's abuse of its dominant position in the vitamins market and fined the firm £180 000. This finding was subsequently upheld by the European Court of Justice although the fine was reduced by one third.

As a result of his action, Mr Adams was taken by the company to the Swiss Court which imposed a fine with costs and banned him from the country for five years. The Commission paid his bail, the fine and his court costs.

It later tried to help Mr Adams, a Maltese, to obtain a British passport, which he had lost when Malta became independent, and also to become established in Italy, where he is now living, as a pig breeder.

ENVIRONMENT

Making the best use of the Community's limited land

Land in the European Community is a very limited natural resource and therefore much sought after. Decisions on how to use available land will have a great impact on the future quality of the environment. Land management policy also reflects closely the need to reconcile economic development with environmental protection.

This is a subject that will be discussed when the Community's Environment Ministers meet on 30 June.

The European Commission's work in this field has been concentrated in three connected areas. The first is 'ecological mapping', a tool that will make it possible to take the environment more fully into account in land use planning. The second and third areas concern the development of a Community policy towards, firstly, rural areas and forestry and, secondly, zones where planning causes particular environmental problems.

The four-phase ecological mapping project is designed to help planners build up a picture of environmentally sensitive areas in the Community. This will enable them to match demands for land for development or recreational purposes with the supply of ecologically 'safe' zones. Planners will be able to tell at a glance the areas where development would be least harmful to the environment. The eco-map would also point up potential ecological imbalances in time to help redress them.

A test mapping method has already been tried out in nine Community regions, including Provence in France, the Northern Alps in Germany, South Yorkshire and South Mayo in Ireland. The fine tuning is currently being carried out in a tenth and final test run in North Mayo.

The Commission hopes to present the draft eco-mapping method to the Council of Ministers for approval next year.

Community action in rural areas and forestry has been organized with a two-fold aim in mind: to accentuate the good effects of agriculture and forestry on the environment and to reduce their adverse effects. This

will involve work on pesticides (chiefly control of their marketing and use and monitoring residues of pesticides in food); intensive stock rearing (technical and health requirements of waste collection and setting limits on muck-spreading); mineral fertilisers (their potential polluting effects on water); the ecological consequences of land development and water management (use of less-favoured agricultural regions); the size and composition of forests.

Action has already been taken banning the sale and use of certain pesticides containing dangerous substances.

The Commission is currently carrying out a number of pilot studies to assess the environmental impact of major drainage and irrigation projects in Southern Italy and the West of Ireland which the Community's agriculture fund is financing.

The Commission has also sent the Council of Ministers a communication on forestry policy, aimed at ensuring that any policy is compatible with the main function that a forest is required to fulfil (timber production, environmental value and recreational use), and that policies are consistent throughout the Nine.

The Council has already adopted a regulation on forestry in Mediterranean regions designed to improve protection of that particularly fragile natural environment by improving reforestation measures in areas affected by soil erosion and water shortage.

Turning from the countryside to the city, the Commission's Liverpool

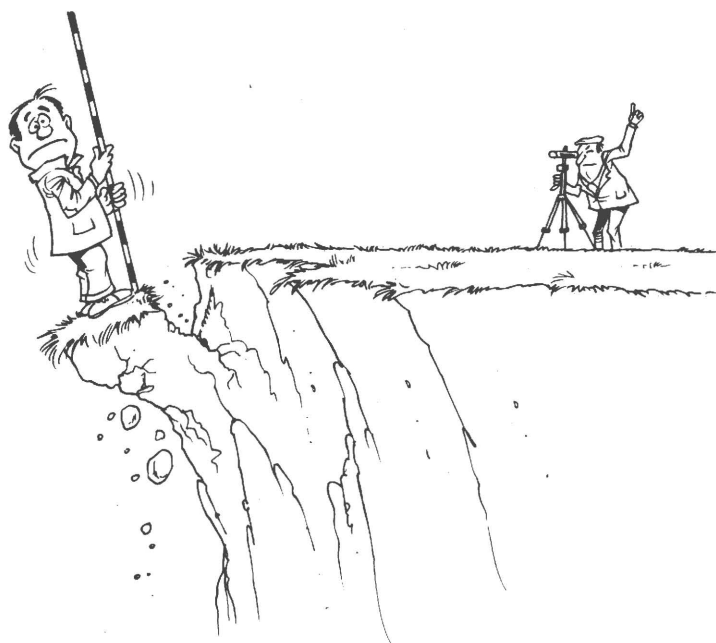
conference on urban problems held in November last outlined the main directions that the Community should take.

Major attention should be given to the vitality of large old industrial urban areas. There should be more cooperation and direct contact between the Community and local and regional authorities to find solutions. Financial resources should be made available from the Community's Social and Regional Development Funds for pilot projects in urban areas.

In 1978, the Nine established a concerted research programme on the growth of large urban areas involving 23 projects in 1978. Another major Commission conference on conservation of the Community's architectural heritage was held in Brussels recently.

The Commission believes, however, that initial responsibility for dealing with urban problems lies with local, regional and national authorities. It considers that its own role should be to study the effects of economic integration and Community policies on the cities and to take action, to reduce the negative effects; to aid local, regional and national authorities to fulfil their tasks and to promote coordination between the Nine for international consultations. Organizing exchanges of information and experience between the Member States could be another job for the Commission.

Protection of coastal and mountain regions also falls within the Community's land management scheme. The Commission is currently working



towards a European charter for coastal areas, setting out certain principles for coastal planning.

Two other fields are particularly favoured by the Commission: the setting up of a European data bank on the coastal environment and supplying information such as management manuals for environmental impact assessment in coastal areas; and codes of conduct for tourists. Community financing for measures to prevent erosion might also be possible.

A similar general plan of action should be worked out for mountain regions, the Commission feels. Special attention should be paid to the many functions that these areas have to fulfil from the point of view of the environment. The Commission suggests a number of priority measures that could be taken concurrently:

- to promote types of farming which are most compatible with conservation of the mountain environment;
- to improve methods for assessing the environmental impact of for example, energy production or transport infrastructure on the natural environment;
- to draw up management manuals (a guide for tourist development is already being drawn up);
- to establish and finance a network of protected areas.

New proposals to reduce water pollution

The problem of water pollution and how to prevent it will be very much on the minds of European Community Environment Ministers when they meet in Luxembourg on 30 June.

Part of their discussion will focus on prevention of pollution by four particularly nasty substances.

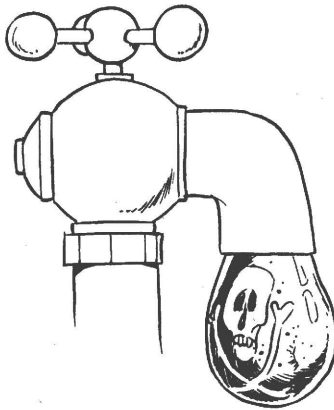
Firstly, the Ministers will have before them a proposal from the European Commission which aims at limiting the amount of mercury dumped into both fresh and sea water by certain industries (notably battery cell manufacturers).

The draft directive sets a number of emission standards for direct discharges of the poisonous mercury into water. Certain quality objectives are also set for the water into which mercury is discharged: in other words, if mercury is to be dumped the given

stretch of water must not already exceed a certain concentration of mercury.

Similar action is being sought by the Commission on discharges of three pesticides—aldrin, endrin and dieldrin. Again, a rather technical proposal has been drawn up, designed to limit the level of discharge of the three chemicals and setting minimum quality standards for water into which permitted quantities are dumped.

Close monitoring will obviously be required in order to meet or maintain consistently the quality standards required. To this end, the Commission has drawn up a detailed monitoring procedure.



It has been found that, in some cases, it can be simpler, quicker and more effective to carry out analyses of sediments or of fish, rather than on the water itself, which is a costly process requiring sophisticated equipment.

Since the concentrations of pollutants in fish and molluscs reflect the pollution of the water in which they live, they can serve as indicators of any marked deterioration in the quality of the water.

HEALTH

Tracing the effects of controversial weedkiller

Much of the work done by the various services of the European Commission is, while necessary, often too technical to catch the public eye. Take the case of herbicides and pesticides, for instance, which the Commission has been working on since 1974.

The work that goes into the regulation of the manufacture and use of pesticides may be humdrum, but it can

be very important for human and animal health.

For example, the Commission is currently reviewing all the available scientific evidence relating to the use of a chemical which has made the headlines in recent years. It is 2,4,5-T, the active ingredient in a number of chemical weedkillers used in many Community countries by foresters, farmers and gardeners.

At one stage in its manufacture, a highly dangerous substance can be formed if the chemical reaction is not properly controlled. This substance, known as dioxin, can find its way into the final product as an impurity.

Last year, the US authorities suspended the use of 2,4,5-T in forests, rights-of-way and pastures following field studies on miscarriage rates among animals in Oregon State. Last November, the chairman of the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, British Labour MP Kenneth D. Collins, raised the question of 2,4,5-T, which he followed up this March with a request that the Commission 'institute procedures for an enquiry into the substance'.

A number of such enquiries have been carried out already. Germany's Federal Biological Research Centre and the Federal Health Office recently reviewed the available scientific data and concluded there was no reason to restrict the use of 2,4,5-T products already approved for use in the Federal Republic.

In the UK, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture recently reaffirmed in Parliament that weedkillers containing this chemical can 'continue to be safely used in the recommended way for the recommended purposes'.

However, 2,4,5-T is banned in three other Community countries—Italy, the Netherlands and Denmark.

Because of this, the Commission is reviewing the evidence in order to establish a scientific basis for possible action at the Community level. It has already consulted a number of independent experts and will be collecting evidence from scientists, environmentalists and other interested parties over the coming months.

If its inquiries establish that 2,4,5-T can lead to miscarriages or malformations among humans or animals, or can cause other defects, it can propose the banning of the use of the substance throughout the Community.

Commissioner urges more cooperation o help women

A Community-level Equal Opportunities Commission was urged by Social Affairs and Employment Commissioner Henk Vredeling when he spoke at a seminar on the problems facing working women in Manchester on 30 May.

Most Member States now have an official organization whose task it is to uphold and promote the principle of equality between men and women in working life (their representatives, together with government officials, representatives from the European Parliament, employer and trade union organizations and other international bodies, attended the seminar).

However, Mr Vredeling felt that more cooperation was needed at Community level. Much of the legislation now being implemented in the Member States—on equal pay, equal opportunities and equal treatment in matters of social security—springs from Community initiatives.

Mr Vredeling said that if, by means of a European Equal Opportunities Commission, the European Commission could be kept informed of grass-roots thinking and of the wishes being expressed and initiatives being taken at national level, its task of putting forward proposals at European level would be simplified to a significant degree. Equally, the exchange of ideas and experience would have a stimulating effect on activities at national level.

Mr Vredeling told his audience that, despite progress, certain areas of legislation, particularly in the field of social security and taxation, were still permeated with the notion that a married woman's station was to carry out her task unpaid and within the four walls of her home.

'Married women who go to work are discriminated against', he pointed out, 'since certain benefits are paid only to the breadwinner.' In all Member States, the most complicated areas of legislation are those relating to taxation and social security.

'However, I can assure you that in the years ahead our efforts will be directed towards making progress in this field, in particular by amending or abolish-

ing discriminatory provisions. The Commission will seek to achieve this firstly by keeping a close watch on how the Member States implement the existing Directive on equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security and secondly by paving the way for new measures.

Mr Vredeling went on to discuss the microchip revolution which has cast its shadow over the whole labour market. The development of new technologies constitutes a real threat to existing jobs, and is a problem to which the European Commission, and particularly Mr Vredeling, has been devoting considerable thought (see *Euroforum* 3/80).

Mr Vredeling warned that jobs at present held by women will be particularly affected if the new technology is allowed to sweep over us unchecked. Jobs in the administrative sector—in banks, insurance companies and the like—a high percentage of which are traditionally held by women—are particularly threatened.

The Commissioner said that if the Community was to avoid an even higher rate of unemployment among women—6.9% in April compared with 5.1% for men—the notion of jobs being specifically reserved for either men or women should be discussed. In his opinion, there were very few occupations that could be justifiably reserved for one sex or the other.

'However,' he warned, 'if the relationship between certain occupations and a particular sex is to be abolished we shall need a change of mentality, and not only among employers. Women must convince themselves and come to realize that lorry-driving, wielding a hammer or a trowel, operating a crane, working on a building site or on a canal barge are not exclusively male preserves. I hope that it will be possible for the European Social Fund to play a greater role in this sphere.'

Despite such a challenging scenario, Mr Vredeling said that while technological innovation posed a threat to existing jobs it could also encourage the creation of new jobs. Women would have to adapt to this new situation and be in a position to demand a significant number of these newly-created jobs for themselves. The best solution would be to involve women in the consultations that

should be initiated at all levels—including Community-level—on the way in which this new technology would be introduced into working life.

One of the subjects to which the Commissioner has been devoting considerable attention over the last few years is work-sharing. He is convinced that the widening gulf between supply and demand on the labour market can only be bridged effectively by measures to redistribute available work. This can have significant consequences for women as well as for men.

As he pointed out: 'The redistribution of paid work should also have a positive effect on the redistribution of unpaid work within the home. It would be a significant and positive social consequence of the measures made necessary by the economic recession and technological development if, in the coming decade, men and women came to be treated as equals, both on the labour market and in the home.'

The conference supported Mr Vredeling's idea of an European Equal Opportunities Commission so that national committees could contribute more to the formulation and implementation of Community initiatives in favour of women.

The conference called on the Commission to undertake an evaluation of existing social security and taxation systems. Most delegates felt that the present systems acted as a disincentive for the employment of married women.

Among the other recommendations were the formulation of European guidelines on 'positive action' programmes to integrate women in the labour market, more pilot schemes backed by the Community's Social Fund to train in 'non-traditional' jobs, the safeguarding of existing maternity pay and the provision of more facilities for the care not only of working women's children but of their handicapped and elderly dependents.

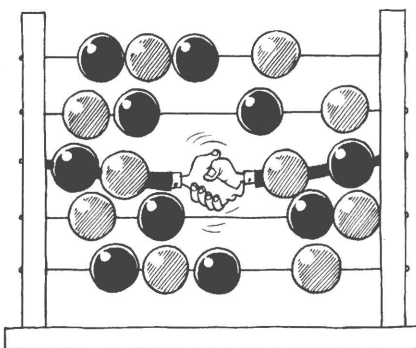
The conference noted that much of the new technology was being developed in sectors where there is a high concentration of women workers and it supported Mr Vredeling's view that women should be represented in the negotiations for the implementation of this technology.

BUDGET

Agreement at last between the UK and her partners

The protracted battle between the United Kingdom and her eight Community partners over contributions to the Community budget finally ended at a marathon session of the Council of Ministers in Brussels on 29 and 30 May.

At a separate but linked meeting, agreement was reached by the Farm Ministers on the level of prices for the current marketing year, as well as on the setting up of a Community regime for mutton and lamb.



The budget agreement means that the UK's contribution to the 1980 budget will be around £365 million instead of an estimated £1 070 million. The contribution for 1981 will be around £438 million instead of an estimated £1 284 million.

The budget contributions of the nine Member States are based on customs duties and agricultural levies which they collect on trade with third countries, together with a percentage of their VAT collections. All three items can vary.

A special financial mechanism has been worked out to deal with a situation where the UK's contributions exceed the expected amounts. This mechanism will function automatically until the end of 1982 and provides, roughly speaking, for the UK to bear 25% of the excess and her partners the rest, but on a sliding scale in 1981.

With regard to the 1982 budget, the Council has asked the Commission to carry out a study of structural modifications which could be applied, without prejudice to the basic prin-

ciples of the common agricultural policy or to the concept of common financial responsibility for Community policies. The object of this exercise is to prevent an unacceptable budgetary situation for any Member State arising in the future.

A second protracted dispute looks like being settled soon. The Ministers agreed to adopt in the coming months the decisions necessary to have a common fisheries policy in operation by the beginning of next year.

This will be aimed in general at the management of resources and the conservation and reconstitution of stocks so as to preserve fishing as a long-term occupation.

Fish catches will be distributed to take account of traditional fishing activities, to the special needs of regions dependent on fishing, and to the loss by Member States of fishing rights as a result of third countries extending their territorial waters.

The agreement will also cover future relations and negotiations with non-Community countries, and the modernization of the Community's fishing industry with the help of Community funds.

Parallel to these agreements, the Farm Ministers settled on an increase of 5% (in European units of account) for produce covered by the common agricultural policy. This accord was subject to agreement on the UK budget contributions.

Taking into account the effect of 'green rates' which are used to offset the impact of currency fluctuations, the price increase overall will be around 5.7% in national currencies. This is expected to raise the cost of living by less than 0.5%.

In a bid to reduce dairy surpluses, a co-responsibility levy charged to milk producers once production exceeds a certain level is being increased from 0.5% to 2% and the principle was adopted that cost of any surpluses in the future will be borne by the producers.

Agreement was also reached on the inclusion of lamb and mutton in the common agricultural policy. The new regime, which envisages different systems for the UK and the other Member States, will not come into effect until agreement has been reached with third country producers (such as New Zealand) to limit their exports to the Community.

THIRD WORLD

More aid to be sent to Kampuchean war victims

The European Community is to send aid worth around £16 million to Kampuchea, the European Commission's Director-General for Cooperation and Development, Klaus Meyer, announced at a recent United Nations meeting held in Geneva to discuss the problem of Kampuchean war victims.

A total of around £32 million has already been made available from Community funds and from its Member State governments in aid to the war-torn country.

As in the first phase of the relief operation, Community aid will be channelled through both public international organizations like the Red Cross, UNICEF and the UN High Commission for Refugees, and non-governmental organizations.

Mr Meyer drew attention to the obstacles which continue to hamper the relief effort, particularly inside Kampuchea. He called for the regularization and improvement of camps on the Thai border, and provision for a road bridge to transport supplies across the border into Kampuchea. He also emphasized the importance of a more direct air link between Bangkok and Phnom Penh.

He made four specific suggestions to improve the situation in Kampuchea itself:

- increase of relief personnel operating inside Kampuchea,
- more medical personnel,
- improved transport, notably through more rational use (smaller convoys, better use of capacity, improved truck maintenance, etc.),
- distribution of aid based on need, particularly to the provinces.

Mr Mayer paid tribute to both the international humanitarian agencies whose work had provided for the 'survival of the Cambodian people', and to the Thai government which had accepted so many refugees on its territory at the cost of great sacrifices for its own people.

The problems of being of 'no fixed abode'



Fortune tellers and flamenco dancers, fairground salesmen and gaily-painted caravans—a gypsy's life strikes a romantic chord with most of us. Indeed, the true Romany has a proud heritage of language and culture, and a tradition of fierce independence.

Many others follow the gypsy way of life even though they are not of Romany origin. Many of them would like to settle more permanently if they could.

But whether they are true gypsies or 'travellers', nomads, itinerants, tinkers or vagrants, they have certain problems in common—modern life is hard on people 'of no fixed abode'.

Our housing, education, welfare and employment policies are not geared to people who are always on the move, so all too often these people tend to live on the fringes of society, treated with suspicion because they are 'different', often regarded as an unwelcome burden by local authorities eager for them to move on as soon as possible.

These days they find it hard to get the casual employment on which they have traditionally relied, and they are often illiterate. Unable to find well-equipped permanent sites, many

of them end up living in unhygienic temporary camps with few facilities. Sometimes they are extremely poor.

As part of the Community's Action Programme Against Poverty, the Commission recently concluded a new contract with the Catholic University of Louvain for a study on poverty experienced by nomads in Belgium, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany.

In France, a similar study is being carried out by research teams at the Universities of Paris, Strasbourg and Toulouse in association with the gypsy organization *Etudes Tsiganes*.

The Community's Social Fund has also given financial support to a pilot scheme in Bray near Dublin in which a group of young itinerants and a group of settled unemployed young people have been trained together in an effort to get both groups into permanent employment. For the itinerants this meant settling them into the community, and there were also literacy programmes.

This project had such positive results—most people got work and all were integrated into the community—that it has formed the basis for various other pro-

jects, both in Ireland and elsewhere. The Irish authorities applied for, and got, Social Fund assistance to train 300 young itinerants in 1979 and an application for training a further 350 has been made for this year.

In the Netherlands, the local authority of Oldenzaal has just got support from the Fund for a project involving a clan of 72 gypsies of Balkan origin who have traditionally travelled around Europe and now want to settle more permanently under a recently-passed Dutch law. The clan spans grandparents down to tiny babies.

Community aid is going to help 28 members of the clan (14 men and 14 women) between the ages of 44 and 18 to get into settled employment. The project will last two years and draw heavily on the Irish experience. It's hoped that projects like these will serve as a model to apply to other groups of itinerants all over the Community.

There is still an urgent need to provide more permanent sites and give a more conventional type of employment to roving people. It's not limited to gypsies—vagrants and other rootless people need help to change their way of life.

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ISSN 0379-3079
Catalogue N° CC-AC-80-011 EN-C