COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

studies

The aspects of establishment, planning and control of urban retail outlets in Europe

ES COMMERCE AND DISTRIBUTION – 1978

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COLLECTION STUDIES
Series Commerce and Distribution No. 4
Brussels, December 1977

This publication is also available in

DE ISBN 92-825-0290-2
FR ISBN 92-825-0292-9
IT ISBN 92-825-0293-7
NL ISBN 92-825-0294-5

A bibliographical slip can be found at the end of this volume

Printed in Belgium

ISBN 92-825-0291-0

Catalogue number: CB-NK-78-004-EN-C

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INTRODUCTION

Almost everywhere in Europe the pattern of trade has undergone profound changes marked, on the one hand, by a process of selection and, on the other, by the appearance and spread of new types of establishments and new selling methods. The main development in recent times in the majority of Community countries has been the growth of self-service super-stores selling high-volume products on small margins. And yet today a change is often to be seen in ideas about expected developments. People are once again becoming more interested in specialized establishments, which are largely found in the traditional commercial centres of urban areas. These areas have a wide range of facilities and activities. It would appear that many firms will in future be more attracted by the idea of neighbourhood services than by costly out-of-town developments involving lengthy procedures and uncertain outcome.

Europe's trading facilities, meaning the sum-total of wholesale and retail firms, have developed along very different lines depending on the Member States concerned. At the beginning of 1972 the Nine had 3 102 900 outlets - 12.2 per thousand inhabitants. Contrary to popular belief, the commercial system in France does not operate on a vast scale and on average ranks with that of the Netherlands. On the other hand, the relatively low density of the facilities in Germany and Ireland contrasts vividly with the relative superabundance of establishments in Belgium and Italy. There are significantly fewer food stores than non-food stores in the United Kingdom and, especially, the Netherlands. The opposite is true in Ireland and Italy, whereas there is a fairly even balance between the two categories in Belgium, Luxembourg and France. In the Federal Republic of Germany, one third of the retail trade is accounted for by food stores and two thirds by non-food stores. Average selling area is highest in Germany and lowest in Italy. A general reduction has been taking place in recent years, especially in the food sector. In Germany nearly 7 000 small food outlets close yearly. Yet the number of specialized non-food outlets is on the increase in Belgium, France and the United Kingdom. In the wholesale sector there is a general trend towards concentration, with the exception of Italy, where the number of outlets continues to increase.

In 1971, the retail trade employed differing proportions of the total active population, depending on the country. In the Netherlands, the figure was approximately 16 %, falling to 11 % in Italy and 10 % in the United Kingdom. Generally speaking, the number of employed staff is increasing. It exceeds 75 % of the active population in the Federal Republic of Germany and 70 % in France and the Netherlands, but drops to 39 % in Italy, where the proportion of self-employed persons (plus non-wage-earners) is still very large; it is also still considerable in Belgium. The number of working women is also tending to increase: in France, for example, the figure is 56.6 % and in Belgium 46.8 % (in the retail trade). In the wholesaling the figures are 28.9 % for France, approximately 25 % for Belgium and nearly 20 % for the Netherlands.

The distinction between the multiples and independent or affiliated traders is valid for all countries. Italy is the country where the preponderance of small and medium-sized businesses in the retail sector seems to be the most marked. The same situation prevails in France and Belgium but to a lesser extent. On the other hand, concentraded trading is particularly significant in the United Kingdom, where small independent businesses account for only about 50 % of the turnover in the retail trades. In Denmark, the cooperative movement is remarkable in that it accounts for nearly 15 % of the total. Mail order sales account for almost 4 % of the market in Germany, where cooperative retailing also plays an important part.

I. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Europeans have seen their living conditions change radically in the post-war period. The resulting change in their purchasins habits fostered the emergence of new types of trading facilities. Other factors operated to the same effect: technical progress, industrialization and the concentration of businesses, the reduction in working hours and the growing proportion of working women.

A. GENERAL FACTORS

Rising standards of living, urban development and the use of private cars have been the main factors exerting a direct influence on the creation of shopping outlets.

- Rise in the standard of living

In the ten years from 1966 to 1975 per capita consumption by the private final consumer rose by more than 33 % throughout Europe, according to the OECD. The highest increases were in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Germany and Italy, the lowest in the United Kingdom, Denmark and Ireland.

Nowadays the vast majority of European households own a refrigerator, a television, a washing machine and a car.

- Urban development

Urbanization was rapid after the war, mainly caused by population drift from the countryside and the increase in population. The population of the Nine is at present 258 million, with the highest density per km2 in the Netherlands and Belgium. Next come the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom. Population density is lowest in France and Ireland. The vast majority live in urban areas. To meet the increased demand for housing, cities have greatly extended their boundaries while attempting to adapt themselves to the requirements of modern urban development. Urban growth has spawned new residential areas, not always provided with neighbourhood shops, their place being taken by suburban super-stores. In most cases, the new types of outlets require more selling area per person.

- The private car

There are at present more than 68 million private cars in Europe: one to less than four inhabitants. Up to now this total has increased steadily every year and, despite a degree of disenchantment with the car, the trend seems to be towards the American average of one vehicle per two inhabitants. The second car is appearing and it is estimated that in a few years time 25 % of households will have more than one car.

This has radically changed habits in most countries of Europe. Consumers are attracted by the idea of consolidated shopping at regular intervals in supermarkets. Further population movements have arisen from holidays and the spread of second homes. On the other hand, a certain proportion of customers without means of transport have suddenly found themselves isolated and, in some cases, abandoned.

B. SUPERMARKETS AND SUPER-STORES

Self-service shops have increased, selling high-volume products at discount prices, generally on the edge of town, the trading premises being located on large areas of low-cost land where there are no parking problems.

In Luxembourg and Italy, however, legal restrictions have prevented all but limited growth in these new forms of trading. In Denmark there are only seven discount shops.

In Ireland, again, hypermarkets are not a characteristic feature of retailing, no doubt because of the low urban concentration. On the other hand, town-centre renewal programmes have brought the construction of shopping centres which include a number of retail outlets. Itinerant motorized traders, who often slip through the taxman's net, continue to be of great importance.

In the United Kingdom, the situation has been marked by the tendency to reduce the number of shops and to increase selling area. This is particularly true of the food and household shopping sector, and has led in the last 20 years to the rapid growth of supermarkets and, more recently, to the development of super-stores and hypermarkets. At the end of 1976, there were some 125 of these newer outlets with a selling area greater than 2 333 square meters, mainly in built-up areas. The development of these outlets in out-of-town locations has been prevented generally by policies which seek to control unplanned growth of urban areas by maintenance of green belts around them and, in particular, by the development of control powers vested in local authorities. Within urban areas extensive reconstruction, modernisation and extension of shopping centres has been undertaken and covered centres, pedestrianized areas and traffic management schemes have been provided. New shopping centres have also been established in new towns.

In the Federal Republic of Germany reconstruction enabled a network of well-located modern shops to be created in the old towns. Alongside the traditional commercial outlets in town centres and on the outskirts, commercial centres were set up according to a master plan, mainly because of changes in the population structure and distribution. The Rhein-Main-Taunus-Zentrum near Frankfurt (30 000 m2) and the Ruhrpark near Bochum (70 000 m2) in particular deserve to be mentioned in this context. Such centres sometimes take the form of sub-centres (neighbourhood centres), for example, the Nordwest-Zentrum (25 000 m2) at the heart of three districts near Frankfurt which were being revitalized.

At the end of 1976 the selling area of the some 500 commercial centres of all sizes was to be approximately 3 600 000 m2; their share in total retail turnover has reached some 6 %. The experts are of the opinion that in the next few years this form of trading will not grow dramatically although the number of commercial centres is expected to increase.

In the mid-sixties hypermarkets and self-service stores began to appear, taking about 11 % of the market, so it seems. In most cases there was no attempt to set them up, as in France, in a regional shopping centre or to attach a shopping arcade. At the beginning of 1976 there were some 1 100 hypermarkets and self-service stores with a selling area of some 4 600 000 m2. Their average size is approximately 4 200 m2. However, some 250 establishments, i.e. 20 %, have an area greater than 6 000 m2 and a hundred more are over 10 000 m2. Increasing importance is accruing to the non-food sector in the range of articles on sale. In some regions these supermarkets have made a major contribution to the extension of selling area.

Traditional retail outlets, located chiefly in the heart of towns, are trying to maintain, or increase, their attractiveness, in particular by the establishment of pedestrian precincts. This is particularly true of consumer durables or goods requiring supplementary instructions. At present there are 400 pedestrianized streets in 270 West German municipalities. The necessary investments are financed jointly by the authorities and the businesses concerned.

In Belgium, too, there has been a distinct trend towards concentration and larger selling areas, especially in the food sector. Supermarkets and hypermarkets began developing from 1960 onwards and the town centre lost some of its privileged position with the establishment of large attractive shopping complexes on the outskirts. At the beginning of 1975 there were 709 supermarkets and 70 hypermarkets. So-called neighbourhood shopping centres with an area less than 10 000 m2 have a supermarket as a "magnet". Centres whose area is between 10 000 and 20 000 m2 are generally built around a hypermarket or the branch of a department store. Regional shopping centres, far fewer in number, exceed 20 000 m2 in area. They include several department stores and serve a very large clientele. On a smaller scale, a number of shopping areas have been built within the urban fabric and certain streets have been pedestrianized with the aim of revitalizing town centres.

It is chiefly in France that hypermarkets have been built on green-field sites. This spontaneous proliferation was the result of rapid and haphazard urban development, which for long neglected shopping facilities. On 1 January 1977 there were 353 hypermarkets employing 69 000 persons with a total sales area of 2 000 000 m2, accounting for 8 % of all retail sales. However, the effort to modernize trading facilities is much more widespread. On the same date, there were 3 157 supermarkets employing 94 000 persons and with a total sales area of 2 456 000 m2 and a turnover of more than 9 % of all retail sales. Small supermarkets have also developed at a steady rate. There are more than 5 300 outlets of this kind employing 35 000 persons, with a sales area of 1 000 000 m2 and accounting for 10 % of all retail food sales. Changes in trading facilities are not confined, however, to growth of the self-service shops. From 1969 onwards American-style regional shopping centres began to spring up, as did an even larger number of smaller shopping centres in the form of shopping arcades located between two large establishments. The present trend is to have a number of shops and services sited by a hypermarket.

The main concern in the Netherlands, especially after 1945, was to integrate retail trading into an urban framework in the most harmonious manner possible and in line with a systematic concept of commerce in urban areas. In particular, facilities were relocated within reach of consumers living in the new residential quarters of expanding towns, in commercial centres, most frequently along with other collective facilities. The system distinguishes, hierarchically, between area, local and other centres. On 1 September 1972, there were 646 new centres. The rapid increase in the sales area in establishments (an increase of 80 % between 1945 and 1972) indicates how much businesses have expanded. The rising standard of living and the increase in individual mobility have led to a steady change in purchasing habits, particularly since 1970. As a result of this development and under pressure from rising costs in the retail trade, distributive undertakings have tended to establish themselves on the edges of towns in the form of large self-service stores, discount stores and regional commercial centres. These new types of trading establishments are a threat to shops in town centres, which are already suffering from the depopulation of these centres and because of traffic problems.

However, it is the policy of the Netherlands to keep these urban centres alive and economically healthy; hence the opposition to green-field sites.

The effects of building such major projects on the edge of urban areas on the retail trade, the environment and traffic are given detailed study before permission to build is granted. The result of this restrictive policy is that a relatively small number of such large-scale markets have been able to set up so far.

Apart from these large-scale establishments, the question which has attracted attention in the past years is that of improving conditions for businesses located in urban-renewal areas. By pursuing an active policy, buying up buildings and improving living conditions and also by helping undertakings located in urban-renewal areas, the authorities hope that these areas will remain both residential and commercial, an improvement in living conditions going hand in hand with greater profitability for the businesses there.

C. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLESALE TRADE

This sector has also undergone rapid development in Europe as a result of the dual need for better facilities caused by the wishes of producers and the requirements of a fast-changing retail trade. Generally speaking, lack of space, parking and traffic difficulties, the cost of land and town-planning obligations favour the movement of wholesalers to the outskirts of towns and encourage grouping on large and easily accessible sites well connected with major traffic arteries. Experience has shown that the wholesale trade, in leaving congested areas, has not only freed space which can be used by other, more specifically urban, activities but is also encouraging a new type of operating structure which favours improved organization of urban centres by simplifying the movement of labour, extending residential areas and eliminating nuisances in the town.

In France, from 1953 onwards, the State, motivated by the desire to regularize transactions, took a hand itself in the establishment of markets of national importance responsible for marketing perishable foodstuffs, particularly fruit and vegetables. In 1975 the twenty such markets in operation handled nearly 4 000 000 tonnes of goods, including 1 400 000 at the Paris-Rungis market alone. Private enterprise, sometimes encouraged by attractive credit facilities, has constructed 24 wholesale distribution centres in ten years, handling a vast range of industrial products. Other schemes are under consideration or in hand. In the United Kingdom, the wholesale markets in London play an important part in food distribution. Each year Covent Garden Market, at its new site, handles up to 1 000 000 tonnes of fruit and vegetables, Smithfield Market handles approximately 170 000 tonnes of meat, while Billingsgate is the main fish distribution centre. In Italy, the Bologna wholesale centre is a remarkable experiment in concentration.

With the development of large-scale outlets it became possible to improve the organization of part of the retail trade by setting up voluntary chains and, in some countries, by franchising. These groups have set up chains of warehouses and increased the number of cash and carry stores. At the beginning of 1976, there were 350 establishments of this kind in France, with a total area of 580 000 m2, and 600 in the United Kingdom, accounting for approximately 45 % of the goods bought by independent retail grocers, i.e. about 17 % of the whole grocery sector.

II. ACTION BY THE AUTHORITIES

Generally speaking, the policy followed as regards the geographical distribution of commercial outlets is based on the need for balanced development of the distributive machinery in the interest of both traders and consumers. The need is seen everywhere to maintain and improve town centers with schemes for the renovation, rehabilitation and restoration of the urban fabric by means of plans to control traffic and parking and the pedestrianization of streets.

A distinction must be made between solutions based on general town-planning regulations and those which apply regulations specifically tailored to the creation or change of trading facilities. The latter category merits further investigation.

A. COUNTRIES WITHOUT SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

Germany, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Netherlands have no specific regulations on the opening of commercial outlets. The current solutions deserve attention.

a) Germany

In Germany, particularly from 1972 onwards, there was a sharp increase in selling space as a result of the efforts by major undertakings to increase their market share and offset the steady rise in wages by extending self-service. In some places this has produced overcapacities which have brought tougher competitive conditions, to the detriment of small and medium-sized businesses in particular. The relevant authorities are keeping a sharp eye on these effects and bear them in mind when considering applications for building permits. The federal law on building, as amended in 1976, lays down that local authorities must give more thought to drawing up zoning plans and, where urban development plans exist, integrate them with local zoning plans. The law also provides for increased participation by those concerned, i.e. by medium-sized retailers.

Building regulations, which were amended recently, proceed from the view that large retail enterprises occupying a sales area in excess of 1 500 m2 generally have an effect on urban development. If a business fits this description, a building licence is not issued - outside central neighbourhoods - except for special areas. In the last few years, the local authorities responsible for the issue of building licences have taken increasing account of the problems which can arise when large retail outlets are set up, particularly on the edge of town or in open country. Increased awareness of the problems plus the new regulations are expected to get a firmer grip on this development.

b) United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, too, the planning of commercial premises is subject to general laws and administrative planning control procedures. The policy regarding the retail trade in any part of the country will be contained in the structure plan or in the local plan, and individual proposals to develop stores will be considered by the local planning authorities in the light of this policy and other material considerations. Unsuccessful applicants have the right of appeal to the appropriate Minister. The need to maintain and improve the condition of town centres by means of renovation schemes is fully recognized.

c) Ireland

In Ireland a similar form of control is to be found in the provisions of zoning plans. Provision for shopping centres is made in the planning of new developments and it is forbidden to locate shops outside these centres.

d) Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the law on land use planning provides for regional plans, local structure plans and utilization plans valid for ten years, the latter embracing the planning of distribution services. By virtue of an amendment of the 1976 law on land use planning, the drawing up of these documents is subject to a distribution-planning enquiry in which national experts have an important part to play in each province. The enquiry has two aims:

- to provide a clear idea of the structure of the retail trade, its location and function, as well as consumers' purchasing habits;

- to provide information about expected developments, taking particular account of population trends. As far as long-established neighbourhoods are concerned, the aim is, rather, to limit the extension of shopping facilities.

This information is vital for devising a system of shops organized in a balanced fashion according to the various requirements involved. In a country where scarcity of land demands even greater care and attention than elsewhere, it is unusual to find large retail outlets on an isolated site in open country. The authorities have managed to limit the number of establishments built on the outskirts of towns without making such developments subject to special authorization. Retail businesses exhibit a preference for shopping centres, either existing or to be built.

B. COUNTRIES WITH SPECIAL LAWS

Luxembourg, Italy, France and Belgium have adopted regulations restricting the freedom to establish or extend business premises.

a) Luxembourg

The law of 2 June 1962 laying down the conditions for taking up and exercising certain occupations and the laws governing the establishment and administration of undertakings maintained the ban on large chain stores already provided for in the Grand Ducal Order of 14 August 1934. This ban applies to all retail outlets which have at least two genuinely separate and independent branches with seven or more employees.

The Law on Establishment of 26 August 1975 extends these restrictions by stipulating that the same definition shall include retail outlets which, although autonomous and separate, inter-communicate. As a result, all commercial establishments are obliged to separate physically distinct branches operating under one roof. The law also states that, as regards retail outlets - whether separate or grouped - whose selling space exceeds 600 m2, approval must be specifically authorized by the Minister responsible, acting on the opinion of a special committee which considers applications for the establishment, extension or conversion of premises. Such authorization may be refused if the opening of the new premises is likely to jeopardize the national or regional balance of the distributive trade. The committee includes representatives of consumer organizations, the Chamber of Commerce and Trades, the Departments of Public Works and the Interior, Economic Affairs and Small Firms and Traders, as well as the Mayor (or his deputy) of the area in which the proposed premises are to be located.

b) Italy

Restrictive legislation has hampered the development of large retail outlets since the passing of the law of 1926, which made the opening of new businesses subject to authorization in the form of a permit issued by the local authority. This procedure was extended in 1938 by a second law and by the circulars of 1958 and 1962. These various legal instruments gave the Prefetto (chief administrative officer) the power to issue permits to operate bazaar-type stores, department stores and, later, supermarkets.

Law No 426 of 11 June 1971 on the control of businesses and its implementing decrees of 30 August 1971, 14 January 1972 and 28 April 1976 replaced all the previous regulations. The aim of the new law was to prevent shops being opened by incompetent traders in areas selected without due regard to the needs of national development. It also requires applicants to be suitably qualified, enables businesses to expand by determining the products which may be sold by certain establishments and lays down that retail facilities must develop in line with sectoral planning requirements within the broader framework of land use planning. With the idea of eliminating the shortcomings of the distribution system, the new rules stipulate that the opening of retail businesses and the transfer to another zone and expansion of existing businesses must be subject to authorization.

This authorization is issued by the Mayor of the municipality in which the business is located, after consultation of a special committee made up of representatives of commerce and the administration. Authorization may be refused only if the applicant does not possess the necessary qualifications or if his application runs counter to the local development plan or to the law itself. Besides the municipal authorization, a regional permit is also required for opening businesses with an area of more than 400 m2 in municipalities with fewer than 10 000 inhabitants, and for opening large retail complexes with a selling area of more than 1 500 m2 designed, by virtue of their size and location, to serve areas wider than the territory of a single municipality. The authorities retain discretionary powers in this area only in the formulation of the municipal plans and in determining the correct balance in the development of various forms of distribution.

The general principles laid down in the law of 11 June 1971 were extended by Law No 524 of 14 October 1974 to the catering and restaurant sector and to itinerant traders by Law No 398 of 19 May 1976.

There are several factors contributing towards stemming the indiscriminate expansion of the distribution system and bringing about a rational restructuring at a higher level of productivity (a trend further strengthened by the need for personal qualification); they are: the laying down in the municipal plan of the maximum total selling area for high volume goods, the possibility of imposing minimum sales areas for each type of outlet and the expansion of the range of goods offered. But experience in the first few years of application of the new law has shown that it is not yet fully effective owing to difficulties connected with the establishment and operation of the new structures.

Many municipalities have no urban planning schemes at all or have only inadequate planning machinery. Lack of funds has also prevented local authorities from drawing up plans for commerce, the priority being given to decentralization. To these general difficulties must be added the lack of experience on the part of municipalities with regard to commercial planning and the disadvantages arising from the large number of small municipalities (more than 6 000 have a population less than 5 000). Furthermore, the plans approved do not always pursue the idea of modernizing retail networks and are inconsistent with the general objectives.

To overcome these difficulties, the Italian Association for the Town and Country Planning of the Distributive Trades and the National Institute for the Distributive Trades were asked to prepare methodological proposals with a view to helping the municipalities in preparing their commercial schemes which could embrace homogeneous zones on a larger scale than that of individual municipalities.

The Italian Government intends to review Law No 426 to make it more effective but, in the present economic and social climate, it would not appear that, at least in the medium term, the trend to fewer commercial firms and alignment with the other Community countries can be greatly speeded up.

c) France

Law No 73-1193 of 27 December 1973 on the regulation of commerce and owner-operated undertakings was designed to meet complaints against the large-scale retail establishments by introducing important provisions on the planning of the distributive trades. Prior to that, the creation of new commercial outlets was subject only to one requirement, namely the obtaining of a building licence under the Planning Law.

Bearing in mind that, within a framework of fair and open competition, the freedom and desire to engage in business remain the foundation of commerce and owner-operated businesses, the Law instituted a procedure for granting authorizations for the development of commercial sites which is distinct from the procedure for granting building permits; it also set up a Department Committee on the Distributive System which has power of decision. In reaching his decision this body has to take into account commercial and trading structures, changes in shopping facilities, the pattern of urban and rural activities and the desired balance between the various forms of commerce. Decree No 74-63 of 28 January 1974 brought these provisions into force.

Before building permission is granted (where this is necessary) and before the project is started (where no building permit is required) the following must be submitted for authorization by the Department Committee:

- Projects for retail shops having an overall floor space exceeding 3 000 m2 or a sales area exceeding 1 500 m2, reduced to 2 000 and 1 000 m2 respectively in municipalities with less than 40 000 inhabitants.

- Projects to expand shops or increase the sales area of commercial establishments which have already reached the said limits or will reach or exceed them as a result of the projected work, if the latter involves a sales area exceeding 200 m2.

- Projects to convert existing buildings into retail establishments with an overall area or sales area not less than the above-mentioned limits.

Once authorization has been granted for a new establishment, it may be neither assigned nor transferred to another party.

The Committee, which is chaired by the Préfet, is composed of 24 membres and 20 alternate members, as follows:

- nine elected local officials, including the Mayor of the municipality where the project is to be sited, appointed by the Conseil Général (County Council);
- nine representatives of trades and crafts, appointed by the Chambers of Commerce and Trades & Crafts;
- two representatives of consumer associations, appointed by the Préfet.

The Director of Public Investments and the Director of Competition and Prices attend the meetings.

The mayors of municipalities contiguous with the municipality where the project is to be sited also attend the meetings in an advisory capacity.

The Committee is informed by reports from the Director for Competition and Prices and from the appropriate Chambers of Commerce and Industry and of Trades and Crafts.

It has to take a decision, stating its reasons, within three months of an application being lodged. Where a project requires substantial modification, it is resubmitted to the Committee which must take a decision within two months. Once these time limits have expired, authorization is deemed to have been granted.

The Préfet or one-third of the members may appeal against the Committee's decision within two months of the meeting or of tacit approval. The applicant also has the right of appeal, which he must exercise within a specified period commencing on the day the decision is published. Appeals are submitted to the Minister for Commerce and Owner-Operated Undertakings, who consults the National Planning Committee for the Distributive System and must take a decision within three months.

The building permit may not be granted or construction begun before the Committee or the Minister has delivered a decision.

The National Planning Committee for the Distributive System reflects the structure of the local committees and comprises:

- nine representatives of elected local officials, five appointed by the National Assembly and four by the Senate;
- nine representatives of commercial and craft activities appointed by the Minister;
- two consumer representatives appointed by the consumer associations represented on the Comité national de la Consommation (National Consumers Association).

The experience of two years' operation has shown the need for a number of improvements to the machinery for town-planning in relation to the distributive trades since the Law on Commerce came into force. The Decree of 6 October 1975 (No 75-910) basically introduced a two-year period of validity for authorizations and provided for the introduction of penalties for breach of the statutory provisions. A circular of 10 March 1976 further stipulated that the provisions of the Law covered only the opening of new sales areas. Once opened to the public, the establishments could change their activities at will as long as they did not increase the area beyond the permitted limits.

d) Belgium

The Law of 29 June 1975, based in part on the French Law, is the outcome of an agreement between the economic circles concerned. It lays down that authorization must be obtained for projects involving the construction of one or more retail outlets which have, within the zones defined according to the opinion of the National Committee for Distribution, an overall area of 3 000 m2 or a sales area of 1 500 m2, these limits being reduced to 1 000 m2 and 750 m2 respectively in other parts of the country. Authorization is also required for proposed extensions to retail outlets and projects concerning the redevelopment of existing buildings not previously used for trading. Authorization must also be obtained for any significant change in the nature of the business carried on in premises already used for commercial purposes.

The agencies involved in implementing the Law are:

- The Social and Economic Committee for Retail Distribution made up of officials from the ministerial departments for Economic Affairs, Small Firms and Traders, Public Works, Employment and Labour, and Agriculture. A negative opinion delivered by this Committee is final and the local authorities must endorse it.
- If the opinion is favourable, a second opinion must be delivered by the Provincial Committee for Retail Distribution which, not counting the Chairman, is made up of ten members representing the consumers, workers, small firms and traders, agriculture and composite trading. On the basis of these two opinions, the municipality makes its decision.
- If there is an appeal against the decision of the Municipal Council, the file is forwarded to the National Committee for Retail Distribution which discounting the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, is made up of 18 members representing consumers, workers, small firms and traders, agriculture, composite trading, wholesalers and the Federation of Belgium Undertakings. The final decision is then taken by an Interdepartmental Committee, composed of the Ministers for Economic Affairs, Small Firms and Traders, Public Works and Regional Affairs.

The Social and Economic Committee for Retail distribution and the Regional Committees give their opinion taking due account of the location of the project, its size in relation to the municipality, consumer interests, the number of jobs created and the likely repercussions on the existing trading structure.

The Law introduces a detailed procedure with a whole series of time limits, the most important of which are described below:

- The Mayor forwards the application to the Social and Economic Committee which has 90 days to deliver its opinion. If this opinion is unfavourable, the Council of Mayor and Aldermen must issue a refusal decision within 15 days. If the decision is favourable, the Provincial Committee must deliver its opinion within 30 days and the Council of Mayor and Aldermen also has 30 days in which to act.
- On expiry of a period of 165 days from the date of notification or receipt, the applicant may call upon the Committee, which then has 30 days to give a ruling on his application; the absence of a decision is tantamount to a refusal.
- Except where the opinion of the Social and Economic Committee is negative, an appeal may be lodged with the Interdepartmental Committee within 30 days of the decision. The National Committee forwards its opinion to the Interdepartmental Committee within 35 days, which then has 45 days in which to act.

The authorization lapses if the project has not been implemented within two years, unless a one-year extension has been granted by the Council of Mayor and Aldermen.

As in France, there are penalties for infringing the provisions of law.

III. PROSPECTS

All the Member States recognize the basic restructuring and vital role played by the distributive trades in town and land-use planning. Modernization of commercial facilities is to be encouraged in view of the attendant consumer benefits. The process of concentration, generally evidenced by the appearance of hypermarkets, has still not come to an end but it will slow down a little while specialized stores will increase, largely due to affiliated trading. The refinement of planning methods, environmental requirements and short-term economic conditions mean that the authorities will have to monitor the establishment of the main commercial facilities to ensure a satisfactory balance between economic considerations and social and environmental factors. Increasing use will be made of participation procedure, allowing users to share in the decision-making by the authorities while more attention will be given to forward studies.

A. THE URBAN SECTOR

The growth of large-scale commercial facilities is unlikely to continue at the rate recorded in past years. More modest projects restricted to the needs of new suburban areas or seeking to renovate the existing location will often be preferred to large out of town developments or to urban renewal projects - both are expensive and unwieldy. There has been increased interest everywhere in revitalizing city centres within the existing structure. A return to neighbourhood trading is clearly taking shape in line with traditional ideas which recommend an attractive, integrated variety of social, cultural, recreational and service facilities. As in the past, small self-service stores, supermarkets and convenience stores might well be the centres for groups of neighbourhood shops. The supermarket above all may need to rethink its market strategy. Pedestrianized streets may increase; shopping centres may be better integrated into built-up areas, they will be smaller and may seek to blend in with their environment. In some countries large stores may no longer experience the same increase in sales volume. The expansion of hypermarkets will be slow. Around 1980 the problem may arise, replacing the oldest of them. Large establishments will accept a reduction in their unit area and try to increase productivity while seeking to set up close to shopping arcades, medium-sized special-range shops and service stores. Shopping facilities in medium-sized towns should experience a degree of renewal as part of land use planning.

However, the increase in property taxes and financial contributions demanded by the local authorities in some countries will present developers of shopping facilities with problems for which satisfactory solutions have in many cases not been found but which the authorities must investigate in order to restrain the possible extra loading of retail prices.

B. THE RURAL SECTOR

There is general agreement on the need to combat the decline of rural communities caused by the fall-off in primary activities, urbanization and increased car ownership. Here, too, use could be made of consultation with the aim of securing the survival or improvement of shopping facilities which are the backbone of small towns, villages and hamlets. The State can play an important role in some countries by giving priority to the development of rural and mountainous areas and encouraging local initiatives, if necessary by granting financial assistance. In particular, encouragement must be given in small towns, to the operation of facilities sufficiently diversified to counteract the attraction of neighbouring towns but modest enough not to harm neighbourhood businesses providing the inhabitants of outlying areas with their everyday requirements. To remain profitable, rural commercial activities could in some countries be linked with other activities in premises built or converted with the help of the local authorities and could group together to set up joint warehouses and central buying organizations and at the same time organize regular delivery rounds and markets for the most remote areas. But a number of countries are not in favour of a system of State subventions.

C. THE WHOLESALE TRADE

Movement of wholesale firms out of town is likely to continue because of concentration and the advantages resulting from the grouping of wholesale activities in specially planned and organized areas. This form of trading may normally, in some countries, form part of a regional economic development plan conceived as one of the aspects of a regional planning policy. Transfer allowances and various tax advantages are sometimes recommended to encourage this concentration process. Grouped together in this way, the wholesale trade could make a more effective contribution to the development of international trade.

CONCLUSION

It may be wondered what led some authorities to take action in the planning of the distributive trades sector. Their attitude is largely explained by the sweeping changes to the pattern of commerce. The point was to mitigate certain of the effects of over-rapid change without hampering modernization.

Town-planning regulations have generally reinforced the obligations imposed on developers so that trade can be conducted in the best conditions. The demands of modern distribution have revealed the need for studies by inter-disciplinary teams and the advantages of consultation of the parties concerned, in particular consumers.

Some Community countries have introduced - parallel to the rules on the granting of building permits - additional provisions to regulate the establishment of shopping areas exceeding a certain size. There can be no question of finding one system which could be proposed to all Member States. Each country has adopted the solution most appropriate to its own structure and the habits of its people. Some countries recommend setting up public land authorities in charge of the renovation of town centres, others favour building leases with long terms, others take the view that chambers of commerce should play a greater part in the building of commercial facilities, while still others stress the desirability of leases with an option to purchase as a means of improving ways of financing such facilities. It may simply be noted that legal measures recently promulgated in the Community have attracted great interest and could serve as a precedent, always bearing in mind that excessively strict rules should be avoided, for they might cumulatively slow down the replacement of facilities. In any case, it would be both premature and unrealistic to contemplate harmonization at the European level before passing beyond the stage where information is being exchanged.

But, by recapitulating and collating the information provided, it may be possible to identify a number of ideas which could find general acceptance.

Town-planning in relation to the distributive trades must take account not only of the existing relationships between trading centres in the same built-up area but also of the hierarchy of towns in a region and the requirements of rural areas. It must endeavour to reconcile a large number of economic, social and environmental considerations which sometimes conflict with each other.

Subject to this, facilities must be designed for the whole of a built-up area as part of a general programme and not merely at local level, as clashes of interest between local communities must often be reconciled. Ideally a development plan would be drawn up within which the interests of commerce would be taken into account.

This point prompts the recommendation of extensive decentralization of procedure and the adoption of methods which will bring together all concerned in the private and public sectors.

The complicated nature od the operations involved makes it necessary to seek out all those elements vital to a proper understanding of the sector. Within a well-defined field of observation, detailed information must be gathered on staff engaged in the distributive trades and their movements, on existing shopping areas and their dynamic geographical distribution, and on the experience obtained by those bodies involved in the operation of establishments. Some countries already have specialist institutes or are making preparations to establish them.

The existing degree of collaboration between the Member States could profitably be intensified with the ultimate aim of obtaining harmonised results in particular, as regards statistics, the Statistical Office of the European Communities (SOEC) in Luxembourg should be supported in its efforts by the national bureaux. This would be a welcome improvement in the Community's facilities for monitoring current developments. Beyond such preliminary measures it would be useful to consider whether new forms of organization should be instituted at European level to encourage the modernisation of commercial premises so as to achieve a more satisfactory balance between the various economic and social considerations involved, for the greater well-being of the peoples of Europe.

ANNEXES

Table N° 1

BUSINESSES AND STAFF EMPLOYED IN THE WHOLESALE TRADE IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

Country	Year	No. of Businesses	No. of persons employed	Average No. of persons employed per business	Year	No. of Businesses	No. of persons employed	Average No. of persons employed per business
Belgium	1961	34 970	143 270	4.1	1970	31 003(4)	198 968	6.4
Denmark	1958	10 665	89 900	8.4	-	-	-	-
F R Germany	1968	110 375	1 190 000	10.8	1974	116 299(3)	1 211 500(3)	10.4(3)
France	1966	77 520	675 300	8.7	1970	100 587(4)	716 240	7.1
Ireland	1966	2 325	33 820	14.5	1971	2 495	32 150	12.9
Italy	1969	84 000	415 570	5.0	1970	102 619(1)	449 800(2)	4.4(2)
Luxembourg	1958	1 145	6 245	5.4	1975	909(3)(4)	8 722(3)	9.6(3)
Netherlands	1963	30 915	263 540	8.5	1975	21 000(5)	273 606(5)	-
Great Britain	1965	41 050	772 835	18.8	1974	76 430	1 084 291	-

Source: The Distributive Trades in the Common Market H.M.S.O., London, 1973.
Calculations based on data from national censuses.

Information applied by the delegations. (not necessarily comparable in that the fields of survey may not be identical).

(1) Source: Ministry of Industry and Commerce.
(2) Source: ISTAT.
(3) Numer of wholesale trading companies.
(4) Not including the recovery/recycling sector.
(5) Excluding self-employed persons without staff and persons working less than 15 hours per week.

Table N° 2

RETAIL TRADE ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

Country	Year	Number of retail food establishments	Number of non-food retail establishments	Total number of retail trade establishments	Average area per establishment (in sq. m.)
Belgium	1970	66 731(9)	77 562	144 293	-
Denmark	1969	33 108	24 811	57 919	-
F.R. Germany	1974	118 989(4)	226 974(4)	345 963(4)	121.4(4)
France	1971	275 378	316 180(6)	591 558(8)	64.0
Ireland	1971	21 164	12 686(5)	33 850	-
Italy	1972	406 495(1)	396 944(1)	803 439(1)	47.0(2)
		(6) 141 670(7)(3)	(6) 122 551(7)(3)	(6) 264 221(7)(3)	
		= 548 165	= 519 495	= 1 067 660(8)	
Luxembourg	1975	1 578 (9)	2 115	3 693	-
Netherlands	1972	70 000	99 000	169 000	-
United Kingdom	1971	197 807	275 184(6)	472 991	-
				(6) 31 790(7)(5)	
				= 504 781(8)	

Source: Data supplied by the delegations. (Not necessarily comparable in that the fields of survey may not be identical. The data for F R Germany must be considered separately, as they are expressed as the number of companies).

(1) Source: Ministry of Industry and Commerce.
(2) Source: ISTAT.
(3) Source: ISTAT (Number of authorization).
(4) Number of companies.
(5)

(6) Including tobacco.
(7) Itinerant trades.
(8) Including itinerant trades.
(9) Excluding bakers and confectioners.

Table N° 3

ITINERANT RETAIL TRADING ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

1972

Country	No. of itinerant retail establishments	% of all retail establishments
Belgium	19 300(2)	-
Denmark	2 500	4.8
F R Germany (1)	25 000	6.8
France	50 000(3)	8.5
Ireland	1 000	4.0
Italy (4)	264 200	24.7
Luxembourg	200	4.1
Netherlands	13 200	7.8
United Kingdom	31 800(5)	6.3
The Nine : Total	407 200	-

Source: The Distributive Trades in the Common Market - H.M.S.O., London, 1973.

(1) Figures on the number of itinerant establishments corrected by the German Delegation.
(2) Estimate based on figures supplied by the Belgian Delegation.
(3) Figure from tax statistics in which no distinction is made between undertaking and establishment.
(4) Figure corrected by the Italian Delegation. Source: Ministry of Industry and Commerce.
(5) Figure supplied by the United Kingdom Delegation and relating to market traders.

Table N° 4

PERSONS EMPLOYED AND SALES AREA IN THE RETAIL TRADE IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

1972

Country	No. of persons employed	No. of persons employed per establishment	Average sales area per establishment (in sq. m.)	Sales area per 1 000 inhabitants (in sq. m.)
Belgium	342 000(2)	2.4	-	-
Denmark	210 000	4.0	63	660.0
F R Germany(1)	2 145 600	6.2	121.4	676.8
France	1 603 000	2.7	59(3)	680.0
Ireland	120 000(4)	3.6	52	436.0
Italy	1 584 000(5)	2.0(5)	47(5)	650.0
Luxembourg	17 000(6)	4.6	53	760.0
Netherlands	447 000(7)	2.7	59	670.0
United Kingdom	2 579 000(8)	5.1	63	594.0
The Nine: Total	9.047.600	-	57	650.0

Source: The Distributive Trades in the Common Market - H.M.S.O., London, 1973.

(1) 1974 figures for undertakings corrected by the German Delegation; these are not comparable with other figures.
(2) 1970 figure, supplied by the Belgian Delegation.
(3) According to the French Census of the Distributive trades for 1966, the average sales area of retail establishments was 48.5 m2.
(4) According to information supplied by the Irish Delegation.
(5) Figure corrected by the Italian Delegation; source: ISTAT (1972).
(6) According to information for 1975 supplied by the Luxembourg Central Office for Statistics and Economic Surveys.
(7) Figure supplied by the Netherlands Delegation.
(8) Figure supplied by the United Kingdom Delegation.

Table N° 5

THE WORKING POPULATION ENGAGED IN COMMERCE IN EUROPE INCLUDING HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

(in 'ooo)

	Belgium		Denmark		F R Germany		France		Ireland	
	1971	1975	1971	1975	1971	1975	1971	1975	1971	1975
Population engaged in commerce	684	697	352(1)	344	3 847	3 599	3 283	3 438	171	170
Total working population	3 703	3 748	2 355(1)	2 332	26 225	24 828	20 511	20 764	1 047	1 030
% of total working population	18.5	18.6	14.9(1)	14.8	14.7	14.5	16.0	16.6	16.3	16.5
Wage-earners in commerce (manual and office workers)	388	419	263(1)	252	2 810	2 693	2 307	2 507	130	131
Total number of wage-earners	3 034	3 118	1 923(1)	1 899	21 914	20 898	16 115	16 803	729	729
% of total number of wage-earners	12.8	13.4	13.7(1)	13.3	12.8	12.9	14.3	14.9	17.8	18.0
% of wage-earners in working population engaged in commerce	56.7	60.1	74.7	73.3	73.0	74.8	70.3	72.9	76.0	77.1

Source: O.E.C.D. Statistics on the working population - 1964-1975.

(1) In 1972.

The table relates to sector 6 of the C.I.T.I. (standard international classification by industry) sectors of activity: sector 6 comprises wholesale and retail trading, and restaurants and hotels.

Table N° 5 (cont'd)

THE WORKING POPULATION ENGAGED IN COMMERCE IN EUROPE INCLUDING HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

(in 'ooo)

	Italy		Luxembourg (3)		Netherlands		United Kingdom	
	1971	1975	1971	1975	1971	1975	1971	1975
Population engaged in commerce	2 477	2 621	-	34	834 (2)	814 (2)	3 916	4 156
Total working population	18 455	18 818	-	149.9	4 612 (2)	4 535 (2)	24 031	24 632
% of total working population	13.42	13.9	-	22.8	18.1	17.9	16.3	16.9
Wage-earners in commerce (manual and office workers)	955	1 043	-	23.7	594 (2)	589 (2)	3 301	3 589
Total number of wage-earners	12 791	13 624	-	127.7	3 860	3 834	22 122	22 707
% of total number of wage-earners	7.5	7.7	-	18.6	15.4	15.4	14.9	15.8
% of wage-earners in working population engaged in commerce	36.6	39.8	-	69.5	71.2	72.3	84.3	86.4

Source: O.E.C.D. statistics on the working population - 1964-1975.

(2) Statistics expressed in thousands of man-years.

The table relates to sector 6 of the C.I.T.I. (standard international classification by industry) sectors of activity; sector 6 comprises wholesale and retail trading, and restaurants and hotels.

(3) Figures for Luxembourg were provided by the Luxembourg Central Office for Statistics and Economic Surveys. (The activity (No. 6) of the C.I.T.I. is not mentioned separately in the statistics of the O.E.C.D.).

Table N° 5 (cont'd)

THE WORKING POPULATION ENGAGED IN COMMERCE IN EUROPE

(in 'ooo)

	Belgium		F R Germany (1)		France (3)		Italy		Netherlands	
	1961	1971	1970	1976	1968	1975	1961	1971	1961	1971
Working population engaged in commerce	473.2	576.7	3 727	3 355	2 232	2 341	2 020	2 508(2)	585	754
% of total working population	13.2	14.8	14.0	12.6	10.9	10.8	9.7	11.0	13.7	15.9
Wage-earners in commerce	226.8	355.3	2 923	2 718	1 482	1 723	695	969(2)	365	556
% of total wage-earners	8.4	11.3	12.2	11.2	9.7	9.5	5.5	5.6	10.8	14.0
% of wage-earners in working population engaged in commerce	47.9	61.6	81.0	81.0	66.3	73.6	34.4	38.6(2)	62.4	73.7

Source: SOEC, National Accounts 1961, with changes requested by some delegations.

(1) Information corrected by the German Delegation.
(2) Information corrected by the Italian Delegation; source: ISTAT.
(3) Information communicated by the French Delegation (commerce including bakers and pastry-cooks).

Table N° 6

SOME INFORMATION ON THE LARGE RETAILING TRADING COMPANIES IN CERTAIN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (1970)

	Belgium	France	F.R. Germany	Italy	Luxembourg	Netherlands
% of women employed in commerce	63	58	64 70(2)	50 34.4(1)	70	53
Hours worked per week	41.5	42.3	42.4 40 (2)	42.1	44.1	42.3
Hours worked per year	1 934	1 967	1 955 1 850(2)	1 916	2 046	2 005

Source: The Distributive Trades in the Common Market - H.M.S.O. London, 1973.

(1) Figure corrected by the Italian Delegation; source: ISTAT, 1970.
(2) Figure corrected by the German Delegation and relating to 1976.

Table N° 7

BREAKDOWN OF RETAIL SALES BY FORM OF ORGANIZATION IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

% All Products

1961 and 1971

Country	The major (concentrated commerce)												Affiliated commerce						Other retailers	
	Multiple stores		Department stores		Variety stores		Coopera-tives		Mail order sales		Total		Voluntary chains		Consumer coopera-tives		Total			
	1962	1971	1962	1971	1962	1971	1962	1971	1962	1971	1962	1971	1962	1971	1962	1971	1962	1971	1962	1971
Belgium	4.0	9.9	3.9	3.9	4.2	4.3	3.0	2.4	0.5	0.8	15.6	21.3	5.8	6.0	1.0	1.0	6.8	7.0	77.6	71.7
Denmark	3.1	6.0	3.5	3.6	-	2.0	10.3	11.4	0.1	0.2	17.0	23.2	4.5	8.0	9.0	6.7	13.5	16.7	69.5	60.1
F R Germany	9.1	14.6	6.5	8.8	1.2	1.5	3.1	3.0	3.5	4.7	23.4	32.6	15.0	15.2	21.5	22.4	34.5	39.6	42.1	27.8
	19.8(1)		10.9(1)				3.2(1)		3.9(1)			37.8 (1)	62.2(1)							
France	8.6	15.2	3.3	4.2	4.2	5.3	2.6	2.9	0.7	1.1	19.4	28.7	6.0	8.0	5.6	7.6	11.6	15.6	69.0	55.7
Ireland	6.0	10.2	5.5	6.6	1.0	4.7	0.2	0.2	-	-	12.7	21.7	1.5	8.8	3.8	4.4	5.3	13.2	82.0	65.1
Italy	1.3	3.0	0.4	0.5	1.7	3.4	1.3	1.7	0.1	0.2	4.8	8.8	1.0	3.4	1.0	2.2	2.0	5.6	93.2	85.6
Luxembourg	2.0	2.7	"	"	"	"	"	"	-	-	2.5	3.2	"	"	"	"	6.5	10.0	91.0	86.8
Netherlands	17.6	20.3	3.3	4.8	1.0	1.5	1.7	1.6	0.6	0.9	24.2	29.1	10.0	9.6	10.0	15.1	20.0	24.7	55.8	46.2
United Kingdom	24.0	29.1	4.5	4.5	4.3	5.8	10.2	7.1	2.5	3.8	45.5	50.3	3.4	6.4	3.5	3.6	3.9	10.0	47.6	39.7

Source: Table from thesis by Guy Stehle, "Turnover figures for the Community's retail trade", Paris, 1975. Most of the figures are taken from "The Distributive Trades in the Common Market" -H.M.S.O. London , 1973, and have been corrected and supplemented for some countries.

(1) Information for 1976 from the German Delegation.

Table N° 7 (Cont'd)

BREAKDOWN OF RETAIL SALES BY FORM OF ORGANIZATION IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

Food products

1971

Country	The major (concentrated commerce)						Affiliated commerce			Other retailers
	Multiple stores	Department stores	Variety stores	Coopera-tives	Mail order sales	Total	Voluntary chains	Consumer coopera-tives	Total	
Belgium	13.2	1.2	4.0	3.2	-	21.6	12.3	1.3	13.6	64.8
Denmark	7.9	0.5	2.1	17.4	-	27.9	15.3	12.4	27.7	44.4
F R Germany	18.0 23.6(1)	3.4 5.8(1)	1.0	5.5 9.1(1)	0.3 0.2(1)	28.2	32.0	36.0	61.3 68.0(1)	3.8
France	22.0	1.1	5.2	4.9	-	33.2	12.5	9.1	21.6	45.2
Ireland	16.5	0.8	3.8	0.5	-	21.6	18.0	9.0	27.0	51.4
Italy	3.5	-	1.6	2.7	-	7.8	5.5	3.0	8.5	83.7
Luxembourg	1.0	"	"	1.0	-	"	16.0	3.0	19.0	"
Netherlands	21.6	1.4	1.1	3.3	0.1	27.5	19.4	12.5	31.9	40.6
United Kingdom	37.7	1.0	3.5	12.3	-	54.5	13.1	2.6	15.7	29.8

Source: Table from thesis by Guy Stehle, "Turnover figures for the Community's retail trade", Paris, 1975. Most of the figures are taken from "The Distributive Trades in the Common Market" H.M.S.O. London, 1973, and have been corrected and supplemented for some countries.

(1) Information for 1976 from the German Delegation.

Table N° 7 (Cont'd)

BREAKDOWN OF RETAIL SALES BY FORM OF ORGANIZATION IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

Non-food products

1971

Country	The major (concentrated commerce)						Affiliated commerce			Other retailers
	Multiple stores	Department stores	Variety stores	Coopera-tives	Mail order sales	Total	Voluntary chains	Consumer coopera-tives	Total	
Belgium	7.1	6.2	4.5	1.6	1.5	20.9	0.4	0.7	1.1	78.0
Denmark	4.0	7.1	1.8	4.8	0.5	18.2	-	4.7	4.7	77.1
F R Germany	12.0	12.9	1.8	1.0	7.9	35.6	2.2	15.5	17.7	46.7
	17.9(1)	13.3(1)		0.4(1)	5.7(1)		62.7(1)			
France	8.7	7.9	5.4	1.0	2.1	25.1	3.6	6.1	9.7	65.2
Ireland	4.0	12.2	5.5	-	-	21.7	-	-	-	78.3
Italy	2.0	1.3	6.5	0.2	0.5	10.5	-	1.0	1.0	88.5
Luxembourg	4.6	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Netherlands	19.4	7.3	1.8	0.3	1.6	30.4	2.3	17.0	19.3	50.3
United Kingdom	23.0	7.0	7.5	3.3	6.5	47.3	1.6	4.2	5.8	46.9

Source: Table from thesis by Guy Stehle, "Turnover figures for the Community's retail trade", Paris, 1975. Most of the figures are taken from "The Distributive Trades in the Common Market" H.M.S.O. London, 1973, and have been corrected and supplemented for some countries.

(1) Information for 1976 from the German Delegation.

Table N° 8

GENERAL DATA ON THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

1975

Country	Total area 'ooo sq. km	Population 'ooo	Population density per sq. km.	Per capita gross domestic product of market prices EUR (x) 1975	Per capita private consumption at current prices EUR (x) 1975
		1975			
Belgium	30.5	9 801	321	4 715	2 854
Denmark	43.1	5 060	117	5 312	3 088
F R Germany (1)	248.6	61 832	249	5 173	3 152
France	549.1	52 748	96	4 803	2 994
Ireland	70.3	3.127	45	1 880	1 274
Italy	301.2	55 830	185	2 332	1 581
Luxembourg	2.6	356	138	4 633	2 775
Netherlands	40.8	13 660	335	4 481	2 588
United Kingdom	244.0	56.043	230	3 078	1 888
The Nine: Total	1 530.2	258 457	169	3 938	2 441

Source: Statistical Office of the European Communities.

(x) EUR: Unit of account of the European Communities (0.888671 g. fine gold).
(1) Further data supplied by the German Delegation:

Population 1974: 62 100 000,
1976: 61 500 000.
Population density per sq. km:
1974: 250,
1976: 247.

Per capita gross national product at market prices, DM:
1974: 15 892 DM,
1976: 18 263 DM.
Per capita private consumption at current prices, DM:
1974: 8 501 DM,
1976: 10 113 DM.

Table N° 9

STANDARD OF LIVING INDICATOR IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

Household equipment - refrigerators (% de population)

Year	Belgium	Denmark	F R Germany	France	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Netherlands	United Kingdom
1960				25.8					
1961	21.0								
1962			52.0(1)	36.1					
1963				41.3					
1964	31.0			48.3					
1965				58.9					
1966				63.7					
1967	45.0			68.5					
1968				72.5					
1969			85.0(1)	76.5					60.3
1970				79.9					65.6
1971				82.8					68.8
1972				85.3					74.2
1973	80.0		{ 96.9 (92.5)(1)	86.8	48.3				77.6
1974			95.9	88.5					81.8
1975	82.8	79.0	98.7	89.7	66.6	95.3		97.0	85.3
1976			96.6	90.8				97.0	86.9

Source: Data supplied by the nine national delegations and, for France, by I.N.S.E.E. (household consumption).

The German Delegation has supplied data from two sources: those from the first source are marked with (1).

Table N° 10

MOTOR-CARS IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

Year	Belgium	Denmark	F.R. Germany	France	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Netherlands	United Kingdom
1968	1 813 099		11 682 900	9 800 000		8 266 434		1 852 000	
1969			12 584 600	10 300 000		9 173 699		2 049 000	
1970	2 059 616		13 941 200	10 700 000		10 191 042	84 816	2 258 000	11 801 780
1971			15 115 100	11 500 000	414 053	11 294 480		2 511 000	12 357 870
1972			16 155 000	11 900 000		12 484 313		2 719 000	13 022 760
1973			17 023 100	12 550 000		13 424 118		2 957 000	13 815 000
1974	2 502 200	1 260 900	17 341 300	12 900 000	492 400	14 303 761		3 440 000 (1)	13 947 934
1975	2 613 835		17 898 300	13 600 000		15 060 609		3 399 000	14 060 973
1976	2 737 989		18 919 700	14 200 000			114 775		14 354 900
1977			20 020 200	14 300 000 (x)			136 719		

Source: UN statistical yearbook.
Data supplied by the nine national delegations.

(1) Or 3 153 000 according to the information supplied by the Netherlands Delegation.
(x) January 1977.

Table N° 11

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HYPERMARKETS IN SEVEN COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

(Figures harmonized according to French definition)

Country	Number and area of hypermarkets and similar establishments (sq. m.)					
	1.1.1972	1.1.1973	1.1.1974	1.1.1975	1.1.1976	1.1.1977
Belgium	47 318 900	64 445 500	67 470 100	70 505 200	72 527 100	- -
Denmark	2 18 400	10 48 500	16 107 500	17 110 500	- -	- -
F R Germany	370 2 070 000	400 2 153 000	500 -	538 -	699 4 058 000	777 4 432 000
France	147 817 000	209 1 242 400	276 1 561 800	307 1 757 600	320 1 833 600	353 2 009 300
Italy	1(1) 6 500	3(1) 25 120	5(1) 38 220	6(1) 43 220	9(1) 70 217	11(1) 82 832
Netherlands	18 65 000	20 -	25 -	30 125 000	- -	- -
United Kingdom	22 83 000	54 195 000	78 -	83 -	100(x) 400 000(x)	- -

Source: I.N.S.E.E.: Report of the Commission des Comptes Commerciaux de la Nation 1977.

Note: Hypermarkets are defined as stores with a sales area exceeding 2 500 sq. m.

(1) Data from the Italian Delegation, source: INDIS.
(x) At 1.6.1976.

Table N° 12

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUPERMARKETS IN SEVEN COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

Country	Number and sales area of supermarkets (in sq. m.)					
	1.1.1972	1.1.1973	1.1.1974	1.1.1975	1.1.1976	1.1.1977
Belgium	606 473 000	657 528 200	686 551 500	709 559 600	712	- -
Denmark	325 110 500	385 309 600	442 359 400	501 400 300	559 573 500	- -
F R Germany	2 832 2 026 000	3 189 2 249 000	4 011 2 760 000	4 201 -	- -	- -
France	2 069 1 462 400	2 330 1 728 700	2 587 1 949 300	2 694 2 053 600	2 846 2 182 200	3 157 2 456 800
Italy (1)	609 422 800	676 474 400	756 541 400	862 614 000	945 691 900	1 029 776 271
Netherlands	622 700 000	735 830 000	902 -	- -	- -	- -
United Kingdom	2 110 1 435 000	2 260 1 639 000	2 469 -	2 800(2) -	- -	- -

Source: I.N.S.E.E.: Rapport de la Commission des Comptes commerciaux de la Nation 1977.

Note: Supermarkets have a sales area between 400 and 2 500 sq. m.

(1) Information supplied by the Italian Delegation.
Source: Ministry of Industry and Commerce (Direction générale du commerce).
(2) Approximate figures.

Table N° 13

STANDARD OF LIVING INDICATORS IN THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES

	Belgium	Denmark	F R Germany	France	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Nether-lands	United Kingdom	E.E.C.
Motor-cars per 1 000 inhab. 1974	259	248	280 (1) 1975: 288 1976: 307	288	164	257	357	257	251	267
Television sets per 1 000 inhab. 1973	244	282	283 (1) 1975: 289 1976: 300	277	176	228(2)	227	258	309	262
Telephones per 1 000 inhab. 1974	272	428	302 (1) 1975: 317 1976: 344	236	127	246	397	344	366	293

Source: La C.E.E. en chiffres, édition 1976, Crédit Lyonnais.

(1) Data corrected by the German Delegation.
(2) Data corrected by the Italian Delegation; Source: ISTAT.

Table N° 14

DENSITY OF SUPERMARKETS AND HYPERMARKETS IN SEVEN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

(Harmonized according to French definition)

Country	Population at 1.1.75 'ooo inhabitants	Number of hypermarkets at 1.1.75 per million inhabitants	Number of supermarkets at 1.1.75 per million inhabitants
Belgium	9 792	7.1	72.4
Denmark	5 065	3.4	98.9
F R Germany	62 040	8.7	67.7
France	52 876	5.5	51.4
Italy	55 845	0.1	15.4
Netherlands	13 657	2.2	66.0(x)
United Kingdom	56 075	1.5	49.9

Source: Institut national de la Statistique et des Etudes économiques (INSEE) - Rapport 1976 de la Commission des Comptes commerciaux de la Nation.

(x) At 1.1.1974.

Table N° 15

OWNERSHIP OF CONSUMER DURABLES BY HOUSEHOLDS IN THE DIFFERENT COMMUNITY COUNTRIES IN MAY 1975

	Belgium	Denmark	F R Germany	France	Ireland	Italy	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Private car	59.3	64.9	53	63.8	60.0	64.1	61.1	56.0
Freezer or combined freezer and refrigerator	27.5	39.4	40.2	14.6	11.5	-	28.9	20.0
Refrigerator	82.8	79.0	94.0	89.0	66.6	95.3	92.9	85.0
Washing machine	63.1	56.1	85.9	66.0	52.2	82.0	88.6	72.0
Black and white TV	71.5	70.1	74.8	73.0	49.6	92.2	67.4	40.0
Colour TV	18.3	24.8	30.8	12.2	6.3	1.1	32.5	19.0
Dishwasher	7.4	12.1	9.7	8.1	4.1	14.7	7.2	3.0

Source: Commission of the European Communities; INSEE (Collection No M 55).

Note: This type of information was not supplied for Luxembourg.

Table N° 16

PER CAPITA FINAL CONSUMPTION BY PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS; IN DOLLARS AND AT 1970 PRICES AND RATES OF EXCHANGE

Country	1966	1975	% change between 1966 and 1970
Belgium	1 366	1 963	43.7
Denmark	1 682	2 076	23.4
F R Germany	1 418	1 899	33.9
France	1 410	2 026	43.7
Ireland	763	965	16.5
Italy	877	1 193	36.0
Luxembourg	1 462	1 922	31.5
Netherlands	1 118	1 559	39.5
United Kingdom	1 273	1 498	17.7
The Nine	1 249	1 662	33.1

Source: National accounts for the O.E.C.D. countries, 1975.

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Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

178 — 48 p. — 17,6 x 25 cm

Collection studies, Series Commerce and Distribution

DE, EN, FR, IT, NL

ISBN 92-825-0291-0

Catalogue number: CB-NK-78-004-EN-C

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This report, drawn up by Government experts from the Member States (1), makes a quantitative and qualitative analysis of these problems and of the urban and rural prospects for the development of the various types of trading facility.

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(1) On 1 October 1976 the Working Group of Government Experts on Commerce and Distribution set up a Sub-group on the Establishment, Planning and Control of Urban Retail Outlets. The Sub-group, which drew up this report, was:

Chairman	: Mr. Cantile (I)	
Rapporteur	: Mr. Baldacci (F)	
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ISBN 92-825-0291-0

Boîte postale 1003 – Luxembourg

Catalogue number: CB-NK-78-004-EN-C