



**A NEWSHEET FOR JOURNALISTS • REPRODUCTION AUTHORIZED**

WEEKLY No. 3/86

BRUSSELS, 20-27 January 1986

CONTENTS

- P. 2 ROAD SAFETY GETS THE GREEN LIGHT  
"European Road Safety Year" launched in The Hague.
- P. 3 COMMISSION ATTACKS MICROCHIP PIRATES  
A broadside launched to stop the plunder of ideas.
- ENVIRONMENT - CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES GET MORE MONEY  
Ideas sought for ways to clean up industry.
- P. 4 MOUNTAINS, LAKES AND CASCADES OF ECUS  
The agricultural picture shows a worrying landscape.
- P. 5 THIRTY-FIVE MILLION ECUS FOR HYDROCARBONS  
A proven idea is to be continued this year.
- THE KIWIS COME TO EUROPE  
Could the growers develop as strong a taste for them as the consumers?
- P. 6 HARD DRUGS - ALL OF EUROPE IS AT RISK  
The growth in use threatens society, says an MEP.
- COMMUNITY FINDS NEW WAYS TO TACKLE ACID RAIN  
EC scientists come up with a breakthrough idea and win finance.
- P. 7 THE EUROPE OF TWELVE - YOUNGER AND MORE RURAL THAN THE TEN  
Two new additions change the character of Europe.
- P. 8 EUROPE NEEDS MORE TREES, SAYS COMMISSION  
New discussion document suggests an EC forest policy.

This newsheet is published in six languages (English, French, German, Dutch, Italian and Spanish) by the Directorate-General for Information, Communication and Culture of the  
Commission of the European Communities,  
Rue de la Loi 200 - 1049 Brussels - Belgium  
Tel.: 2351111 - Telex: 21877 COMEU B

Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Community institutions



### ROAD SAFETY YEAR GETS THE GREEN LIGHT

If it works, the roads of Europe should be safer this year than they were last. Not that Europeans are giving up parties but 1986 has been declared "European Road Safety Year" in the EC. The year-long campaign has been launched in The Hague by the transport ministers of the Twelve.

The Year will include new Community road safety regulations, a coordinated campaign of national legislation in the member states, and Europe-wide debate and information campaigns and surveys - all aimed at reducing accidents in towns, cities and on open roads and motorways.

In the European Community every year road accidents claim 50,000 lives and cause over a million and a half injuries, not to mention untold financial loss. The Safety Year will tackle the recognised main causes of accidents, including poor maintenance of vital parts of vehicles, the effects of bad weather, high speed and driver inattention, promised Transport Commissioner Stanley Clinton Davis in The Hague.

The EC will unite experts on motor design and manufacturing in an effort to make lorries, cars and coaches safer in their construction and provision with security systems. Also on the list will be the extension of the MOT test across the Twelve and the improvement of braking efficiency, together with stricter security norms.

Bad weather could be less of a danger by strengthening fog lamps and improving the spray-guards on lorries; and lower speed limits, both regulatory and voluntary by means of education, would also lessen hazards. In general, the behaviour of drivers - and pedestrians - should be tackled with a view to improving responses and increasing awareness of dangers. The Commission suggests that the twelve national authorities make full use of the press, radio, television and posters as well as traditional school campaigns.

A generalized use of alcohol tests, seat belts and motorcycle helmets would lead in the right direction, according to an MEP, Vera Squarcia-lupi. Alcohol testing is not presently used at all in Italy, Greece and Portugal. Obligatory seat belt wearing and helmets are not the law in Italy, either.

Belgium will begin its campaign for Road Safety Year on January 21, with Germany following on the 23rd.

### MICROCHIP PIRATES ATTACKED BY COMMISSION

A new Directive proposal has been issued by the Commission, aimed at providing legal protection to designers and manufacturers of original microchip designs or "architectures". The Directive will be a framework to allow the members states to apply protection according to their own legal systems.

Microchip piracy is a growing problem in the technological world. Original designs require large amounts of money and frequently years to develop. Once made, however, these can then easily and cheaply be copied by the pirates, resulting in huge losses for the owners of the design. The problem has already been tackled in the US and American legal protection for European producers depends on similar and reciprocal measures being introduced in Europe for American designs sold there. In addition, the Commission recognises Europe's need to develop new products to be able to compete and wishes to remove such a possible disincentive. The plan would lay down a fixed period of 10 years during which a design would be protected from copying by unauthorised producers.

### AID FOR TEN CLEAN TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS

Ten projects in the field of "clean technologies" are to receive grants from the Commission. Each of these receives aid under a regulation of June 1984, aimed at supporting projects to develop industrial techniques which will reduce pollution, waste and demand for natural resources.

The largest of the ten grants goes to a plant in Denmark converting straw pulp to paper, thereby avoiding the environmental hazards of other disposal methods such as stubble-burning. Altogether, five of the projects aim at drastically reducing the levels of waste of dangerous metals like chromium, cadmium and copper.

Reduced chrome levels are also the target of a new Directive proposal, dealing with the metal content in surface waters, including lakes, rivers and seas.

A total of more than 3 million ECU\* has been awarded as part financing of the ten clean technology projects.

1 ECU = £0.61/IR£0.71

### WINE LAKES, FOOD MOUNTAINS AND CASCADES OF ECUS

A mountain of butter, a hill of cereals and twin peaks of sugar and beef overlook pools of milk and a lake of wine. That's the picture of the European landscape conjured up by the latest annual report of the European Commission on the situation of the agricultural markets. By the end of last September, the value of butter, beef and cereals held in stock was estimated to be more than 9 billion ECU\*, at a stock cost of 1.3 billion ECU per year.

The report says that the maintenance of such stocks and the costs involved now tend to monopolize most of Europe's agricultural management. However, during the last year the first steps towards solving the problem of overproduction have been taken, with important decisions taken on wine and milk surpluses. Similar proposals along these lines were made by the European Commission a few months ago concerning sugar and it plans to attack the cereal and beef mountains this year.

More than 1.2 million tonnes of butter were held by public storage agencies on September 30, worth over 3 billion ECU as well as over 480.000 tonnes of skimmed milk powder, worth 700 million ECU. Milk production has, however, diminished, thanks largely to quotas applied in 1984 to producers' sales. In 1983 milk production was 122 million tonnes, falling to 110.5 million in 1984. According to the Commission, 1985 production will be down again to 107 million tonnes.

One negative effect of this has been the slaughtering of dairy cattle, leading to a surplus of an estimated 700,000 tonnes contributing to the beef mountain.

During 1984/85, around 160 million hectolitres of wine were produced in the EC, as compared to an estimated demand of 130 million. Almost 20% of the whole production of 1985 had to be distilled. Quality wines however still sell without problems and the surpluses are made up of ordinary table wines.

Concerning sugar, overproduction is a global problem and the Community holds 2 million tonnes of it in stock. The Commission has proposed to tax producers in order to help get rid of surpluses. And a total of 23.7 million tonnes of cereals are held in stock, the result of a good harvest in 1984 and a disappointing demand for animal feed, the main outlet.

### THIRTY-FIVE MILLION ECU FOR HYDROCARBONS

The Community programme of technology aid in the petrol and natural gas sectors, successful to date, is to continue. Community energy ministers recently decided to grant the scheme 35 million ECU\* for 1986.

Since the 1973 Yom Kippur war, which set off the first oil price shock, the Commission each year supports a series of projects designed to develop basic technologies useful to the exploitation of hydrocarbons, oil and natural gas, from exploration through to transportation. These allow access to difficult sources of resources, for example in the North Sea, or the supply to remote regions of gas and oil produced elsewhere.

Although the Community is in a better position now than it was in 1973, it is still not home and dry. Thanks to the North Sea oil discoveries, the EC has been able to increase its oil production for several years now. Between January and August 1985, it went up to 92 million tonnes, 2% more than during the same period in 1984. In the same time petrol imports fell by 8% but still amounted to 175 million tonnes.

For this reason, the EC feels it is necessary to continue to subsidize European businesses presenting innovative ideas for exploration, recovery, transport or stockage of hydrocarbons. They are invited to present their projects until 3 April 1986.

\* 1 ECU = £ 0.61/IR£ 0.71

### THE KIWIS COME TO EUROPE

European growers could receive grants to grow the typical New Zealand fruit, the kiwi. This is revealed in an answer by the Commission to Belgian MEP Luc Beyer de Ryke.

Because of promotional activities by New Zealand producers, European consumers are eating more and more kiwis, a small soft fruit with a brownish, hairy skin. The Mediterranean regions of the Community, however, could be the perfect spot to grow them. In fact, investment aid for agriculture and the integrated Mediterranean programmes already allow European growers to request aid to develop the production of this exotic fruit.

### HARD DRUGS - ALL OF EUROPE IS AT RISK

The increase in the use of hard drugs, particularly among young people, is continuing. According to a report of a House of Commons Select Committee, the UK is most at risk because of closer links with the United States. The Committee sees the present situation as the beginning of a tide which will sweep across the Atlantic and pose a serious threat to national well-being.

Conservative MEP Sir James Scott-Hopkins has put a special question to the Commission, expressing his concern that not only Britain but the whole of Europe is at risk, and asking what steps have been taken to deal with the situation.

In reply, Mr Sutherland pointed out that the Commission has already considered the problem as part of its plan for Community cooperation on health matters. In addition, it has published a training manual for teachers - often the best able to spot young people at risk - on attitudes and approaches.

### NEW PROJECT COULD TACKLE ACID RAIN

The growing problem of acid rain could soon be tackled, thanks to a new method of cleaning flue gases of combustion plants financed by the Community.

Acid rain is caused by emissions of oxides of sulphur and nitrogen released into the atmosphere by large installations such as power plants. The new process, called ISPRA Mark XIII A, was invented at the Community's research centre in Italy and has so far shown promise in the laboratory. A pilot plant will now be built in Sardinia by Ferlini Technology of Genoa. The process, which is planned to go into operation in 1987, not only cleans waste gases but allows for the recovery of hydrogen and sulphuric acid.

The Commission hopes that the new cleaning method, together with a continuation of the current trend towards reducing emissions, will have a major effect on pollution and acid rain, a cause not only of damage to buildings but also to fish, trees and wildlife.

### NEW MEMBERS CHANGE THE FACE OF EUROPE

As well as swelling the population of the EC by 48 million and thus making Europe's population almost a third greater than that of the United States, the entry of Spain and Portugal has had a number of other important effects on the Community, especially in the field of employment. This is the conclusion of a new set of statistics released by the Community's statistical office, Eurostat.

The people of Spain and Portugal are younger than the European average, for one thing. In those two countries, 24% of the population is under 15, compared with an average in the Ten of only 19%. In sectoral employment, the biggest effect of their entry is seen in agriculture. While in industry the Iberian countries now account for only 11.6% of the total of the Twelve and in the service sector only 9.9%, in agriculture the two countries together account for 26.6% of the whole. In the Ten, the average percentage of the total population employed in agriculture was 7%, in Spain this reaches 18% and in Portugal 23%. However, in Greece, the latest addition before the entry of Spain and Portugal, the proportion is still 28%.

In the service sector, where 60% of the population of the Ten are employed, only 2.5% and 7.4% respectively in Portugal and Spain are accounted for.

The level of workers changes too. On average, 82.4% of those working in the Ten are employed by someone else. In the new member states, this figure is lower, at 70%, bringing the average down. Both are still higher than Greece, however, where 48.4% are their own boss. Across the various sectors, there are slightly fewer Spanish employees in the service sector and industry than the Community average, but more in agriculture. Portugal has more in the service sector, the same in industry and less in agriculture.

These figures tend to outline the direction of the Community after enlargement. Agriculture is more important in the new countries, affecting a broader population base than in the more industrial northern countries. This is already true for Greece, whose presence among the Ten does slightly colour the overall picture, disguising the North-South differences which enlargement will probably continue. The changes shown by these broad statistics are likely to affect EC movements for years to come.

### EUROPE NEEDS MORE TREES COMMISSION SAYS

The problem of agricultural surpluses (see page 4 of this issue), the current trade deficit in wood products and the damage done to Europe's forests by pollution and fire could all be tackled by an increase in afforestation and the productivity of existing forests. These are some of the suggestions of a new discussion document on forestry from the Commission.

At present, although fully one-fifth of the surface of Europe is covered by forests, Europe is the world's largest importer of wood and wood products. In 1984 the bill for these came to 17 billion ECU\*. At the same time, however, the Community is an exporter of furniture and paper and board, all made from wood. That demand from European producers could be met, and money saved on imports, if Europe grew more trees.

Certainly, wood production could be increased by additional areas of woodland, and the Commission welcomes the idea that farmers who at present grow uneconomic crops turn to afforestation, especially if their soil is poorer and so less profitable. However, incentives in the form of tax exemptions would be needed, largely to cover the long fallow period before the new trees become marketable.

Another way would be to increase the output of the land already used for afforestation, the Commission says. Only a small investment would be necessary to achieve results, with assistance given towards the establishment of small cooperatives.

The document does not perceive trees simply as a cash crop. The value of forests for recreation and leisure, with an expansion of parks and nature reserves, is recognised. These would benefit the local population, tourists and educational and scientific interests.

Dangers to forests by pollution - especially acid rain - have already been approached by the Commission and more measures are planned. They have also proposed a system of damage monitoring and fire-fighting improvements which are presently blocked in Council. It is estimated that about half the German forests and 40% of the French Vosges forest are damaged already. Those areas where forestry is the main source of income, the document says, makes protection all-important.

The document will now be circulated to all interested parties for comment.

\* 1 ECU = t 0.61/IRL 0.71