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Mailed from Brussels X

SINGLE MARKET: A rather positive assessment after the first one hundred days
... despite the burning problem of the free movement of people.

"People can move freely when they accompany their luggage, but they have less freedom if their luggage accompanies them." This is how the EC Commissioner with responsibility for the single market, Raniero Vanni d'Archirafi, defined in early May the paradoxical situation of EC citizens in the European single market. In assessing the results of the first 100 days of the single market, the Commissioner underlined the fact that goods, services and capital can move virtually freely within the Community's internal frontiers; but he also pointed out that the free movement of people is lagging behind. The Commission in fact has just set up a special department to deal with this problem, which remains essentially within the jurisdiction of the Twelve*.

As of 31 March 1993 EC ministers had adopted nearly 95% of the "European laws" required for the introduction of the single market: 262 out of 282. The "laws" still awaiting adoption are a mixed bag, ranging from the transport of household pets to VAT on second-hand goods and the creation of a model for a European company.

However, 258 "European laws" had already come into force as of March 31; they included 214 laws requiring transposition into national laws before they could become effective. The fact is that only 95 of these "European laws" were in force in all 12 EC countries. For the rest, the various Member States are conforming to the requirements of the single market at their own speed, even if the most obvious gaps have been filled in recent months.

Denmark remains the model country in this connection, having transposed 93.2% of EC single market legislation. Italy, which had been lagging behind for a long time, is now in second place, with 89.5%. Britain and Belgium are not far behind the two leaders. Somewhat farther back, but still above the 80% mark, are France, the Netherlands and Portugal. Then come Spain, Germany and Luxembourg, just below this mark. Ireland (76.8%) and Greece (75.4%) bring up the rear.

These differences between EC countries are a cause of concern, because in practice Community citizens and businesses cannot all take advantage of the single market to the same extent and at the same time. The European Commission has promised, therefore, to be twice as vigilant, particularly as the transpositions which have been "overlooked" by Member States relate to certain sectors, such as company law or the opening up of public procurement to competition.

Despite everything, the European Commission has not recorded an increase in the number of complaints lodged with it after January 1 of this year: as of April 23 it had received a hundred or so in all - a figure regarded as normal - if we put to one side checks on people crossing the EC's internal frontiers. The complaints

have to do mainly with the free movement of goods, followed by the provision of services and the mutual recognition of diplomas between EC countries. Approximately one-third of these complaints have been lodged by private individuals with either the Commission in Brussels or its offices in the various Member States**. The remainder have been made by companies, law firms, associations and the representatives of the EC countries to the Commission.

The Commission will assess the situation afresh in July. To be continued ...

* See Eurofocus N° 15/93.

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SINGLE MARKET: The INFO 92 databank has been improved in 1993

It will tell you all you want to know about EC legislation and its implementation.

Since the last three years, anyone wanting to follow closely the realization of the European single market has only had to consult the INFO 92 databank, which contains information on not only all Community measures which have been proposed and adopted, but also on the national laws through which they are being implemented. A new feature was added in INFO 92 this spring: texts which bring together all the European rules which apply in a given field, even if they are to be found in several different pieces of Community legislation, adopted at different times.

All you need, in order to consult INFO 92, is a terminal or personal computer, fitted with a modem, and a telephone. In addition, you must take out a subscription - cost: ECU 10* per hour - by contacting Eurobases, the EC's databank service in Brussels. Telephone (32)-2-295 00 01 or 295 00 03. INFO 92 is updated every 24 hours.

* 1 ECU = UK£0.79 or IR£0.80

EDUCATION: 112,000 students and 8,700 teachers to undergo "European" training

The award of the ERASMUS and LINGUA II grants for 1993/94.

During the coming academic year for universities - 1993/94 - more than 112,000 students and some 8,700 teachers will spend a few weeks, or a few months, in another European country, thanks to the ERASMUS and LINGUA programmes, which are funded from the EC budget. The European Commission selected the happy beneficiaries in early May.

No fewer than 103,886 students will be able to take advantage of ERASMUS, the main European programme of university exchanges, in 1993/94. As in previous years, three EC countries - Britain, France and Germany - will together be host to more than half of the grant-holders. But their share has declined in relation to the previous academic year, resulting in a more balanced situation. Nearly 7% of these peripatetic students will come from the countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA): Austria, Finland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. These countries, most of whom want to join the EC, meet their own costs in ERASMUS.

Much the same trend can be detected as regards the inter-university cooperation programmes, under which exchanges and other joint activities are organized. In 1993/94 there will be 2,153 such programmes, more than 20% of which do not exist this year. Many of these "newcomers" involve universities in Greece, Portugal and the EFTA countries.

The subjects covered by these inter-university cooperation programmes include engineering technology, management and the natural and social sciences. They are the most popular, followed by languages. But teacher training, architecture and medicine are moving ahead sharply.

As for teachers from institutions of higher education, more than 8,000 of them will take part next year in the ERASMUS exchanges. In addition, 680 of their colleagues will benefit from Action II of the LINGUA programme, which is designed to facilitate the training of future language teachers. Priority is given to languages which are less widely spoken in the EC.

Action II of LINGUA will also benefit 8,847 EC students. This year the programme is emphasizing the study of a language combined with another discipline - law or engineering, for example.

TRAINING: Towards more European teaching and qualifications?
European Commission envisages two major programmes for 1995.

Tens of thousands of European students - 70,000 for just the current year - have been able to undertake part of their studies in another EC country, thanks to help from the EC budget. Each year 9,000 young people learn a trade or profession in a "European" context, through the travel or exchange programmes financed by the EC. There are seven Community programmes in all, aimed at giving a broader European dimension to higher education and vocational training. Nearly all these programmes will be coming to an end in December 1994. As a follow-up to them the European Commission suggested two major programmes in early May: one would be devoted to higher education, the other to training and professional qualifications.

The programme devoted to education would extend the activities of the current ERASMUS, COMETT and LINGUA programmes. The first of these deals with inter-university cooperation and student and teacher exchanges, the second with business/university cooperation in technological fields and the third with the learning of European languages. There would be more student and teacher exchanges as well as more agreements for the mutual recognition of diplomas and study periods among the Twelve.

The other projected programme would serve as a relay for another three programmes: FORCE - continuing vocational training for the young and EUROTENET - the application of new technologies to vocational training. It would enable the spread of new training methods throughout the 12-nation Community.

The new programmes would not call into question the key role of states, regions or linguistic communities - depending on the country - in education and vocational training. The present EEC Treaty, the "European constitution", gives the Community limited powers in these fields. The Maastricht Treaty on European Union also confirms the primary role of the Member States. But it provides for cooperation among the Twelve in the fields of education, the encouragement of language learning and a policy of vocational training which supports national policies.

SOCIETY: Europe is ageing - but how well?

The elderly are less well-off than the population as a whole.

Nearly 70 million Europeans, or some 20% of the EC's total population, were over 60 years of age in 1991 and nearly 12 million (3.5%) of them had already celebrated their 80th birthday (see Eurofocus N° 5/93). But what are their living conditions like?

A survey by Eurostat, the EC's statistical office, takes stock of the situation in the context of the European Year of the Elderly People. In most EC countries the elderly have fewer creature comforts than the population as a whole, as measured by an index devised by Eurostat and based on the availability of an inside toilet; an inside bathroom or shower; a telephone, television set, washing machine and refrigerator. Using this index, Eurostat found that it is in countries in which the population as a whole enjoys few creature comforts, that the difference in the living standards of the elderly, on the one hand, and the rest of the population, on the other, is the greatest. This is the case as regards Greece and Portugal. In a second group, consisting of Luxembourg, Italy, Belgium, France and Ireland, such differences are less marked, even if they are evident. In Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands the level of comfort is roughly the same for both the elderly and the population as a whole. Similar information was not available for either Britain or Spain.

The survey points to a rather different tendency when it comes to consumption. In the four countries in which consumption levels are the lowest (Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain) differences between the elderly and the rest of the population are slight. In Belgium, Denmark, France and Italy, where consumption levels for the population as a whole are considerably higher, inequalities between the elderly and the others are more marked. This is not the case as regards the Netherlands and the U.K., however. In Luxembourg, finally, both groups have very high consumption levels and inequalities are non-existent for all practical purposes.

The pattern of consumption of elderly people seems to be very similar throughout the 12-nation Community. The elderly devote the largest part of their budget to housing and energy - 29.1% as compared to 23.3% for the population as a whole. This average conceals national differences, ranging from 17.7% in Portugal to 36% in Britain. Food and drink account for 24.4% of the budget of the

elderly, as against 21.4% for the population as a whole. Here, too, there are substantial national differences; they range from 40.3% in Portugal and 32.5% in Spain to 17.3% in Luxembourg and 16.4% in the Netherlands.

Spending by the elderly on health care is also above average, except in Italy; here the elderly do not devote a higher proportion of their budget to it. In the EC as a whole the elderly devote 4.4% of their budget to health care as compared to 3.1% for the population as a whole. There is a slight difference also as regards spending on communication - 1.8% as compared to 1.4%. Here, too, Italy is an exception. As regards all the other sectors of consumption, including clothing, footwear, tobacco and recreational products and services (with the exception of books) the elderly devote less of their budget to them than the population as a whole. They also spend less on personal care, buying fewer beauty products but spending more on hairdressers and similar services. As regards tourism, and package tours in particular, the elderly devote 2.1% of their budget to them, which is exactly the same as the population as a whole.

One must not assume that the elderly have all retired. The fact is that in the EC some 4.3 million men and 2 million women, aged 60 years and over, are still working. They represent 10% of their age group. Most are in the services sector: 50.9% of men and 66.7% of women. They make up a much smaller proportion of the industrial workforce, when compared to those under 60: 26.3% of men (as compared to 43% for the latter) and 10.4% for women (as against 20.4%). The situation is very different in agriculture. Here 25% of elderly people are still active, as compared to 5.5% in the case of the under-60s. Another important difference: After the age of 60 only 52.9% of men and 56.8% of women who remain at work are salaried employees, as compared to 81.6% of men and 87.1% of women in the 14 to 59-year age group. The self-employed and employers account for 44% of elderly men still at work and for 29.6% of elderly women, as against 17.3% and 8.8% respectively for those under 60. This is also the case as regards home help: women over 60 years of age account for 13.6% and men for 3%, as compared to 4% and 1.1% respectively for younger people.

Nor is everyone equal in death. To begin with, women have a higher life expectancy than men: 82.5 years for the former in the EC as a whole and 78 years for the latter. As for the causes of death, half of those who are 55 years of age and older die of cardio-circulatory diseases and a quarter of cancer - lung cancer in the case of men, breast cancer of women.

HUMAN RIGHTS: Greek identity cards

Euro-MPs call for the removal of any reference to the holder's religious faith.

If you hold a Greek identity card, it includes a reference to your religious faith, along with your date of birth or the colour of your eyes or hair. Socialist and Liberal members of the European Parliament, along with the Greens and the Rainbow group found this reference incongruous, and submitted a draft resolution calling on the Greek government to eliminate all mention, even optional, of religious faith from new identity cards. They held that however important the role played by religion, it in no way justified a reference to it.

The resolution, which was adopted, also recalls that freedom of opinion and of religion is one of the foundations of a state based on law, and that such freedom is the exclusive jurisdiction of human conscience.

The issue is a very sensitive one, given on the one hand the place which the Orthodox Church occupied in Greece during centuries of Turkish domination, when it was the veritable cement and pillar of national identity and, on the other, the fact that the subject is one which is not within the EC's competence, as Mr. Vanni d'Archirafi, speaking on behalf of the European Commission, made clear. Any decision on this issue remains the exclusive competence of the Member States, even after the Maastricht Treaty has been adopted.

The Greek government recently tried to have the law in question amended by the Greek Parliament, but a negative vote forced it to withdraw its proposal. This resulted in the invitation to the government from the European Parliament to stand firm in the face of pressure from the Orthodox hierarchy and nationalist attempts at outbidding others, which are currently spreading in Greece.