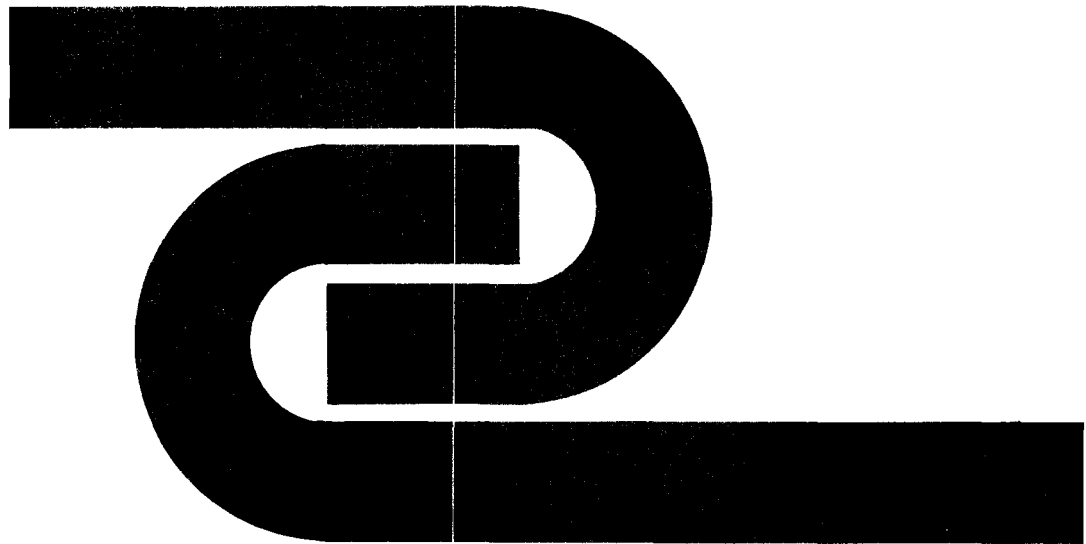


BULLETIN



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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Statement by the ESC Chairman on the conclusion of the European Summit	3
225th PLENARY SESSION	4
Adoption of opinions	
1. FARM PRICES 1985/86	4
2. PRIORITIES FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH	4
3. CARRYOVER OF LOSSES OF UNDERTAKINGS	6
4. MEDICINAL PRODUCTS	8
5. MEDITERRANEAN BASIN	12
6. APPLICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES	14
7. TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT — HYDRO-CARBONS	14
8. SECOND PERIODIC REPORT ON THE REGIONS	17
9. IMPROVEMENT OF GREEK VINEYARDS	19
10. AGRICULTURAL SURVEYS IN GREECE	20
11. SOCIAL SECURITY FOR VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT WORKERS	20
EXTERNAL RELATIONS	23
ESC Chairman visits Rome	23
Other activities	23
NEW CONSULTATIONS	25
PROVISIONAL FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME	27
MEMBERS' NEWS	29

Statement by the ESC Chairman on the conclusion of the European Summit

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities has reacted with profound satisfaction to the successful conclusion of the accession negotiations. Its Chairman, Mr Gerd Muhr, said that enlargement to include Spain and Portugal is a political necessity and that failure of the negotiations would have seriously undermined the credibility of the Community. The Community cannot and must not evade its historic task of strengthening democracy in Western Europe.

It is clear, however, that the present gap between the north and south of the EEC could grow even wider because of the economic structure of both Spain and Portugal. A certain balancing-out is called for and so the integrated Mediterranean programmes must be implemented without delay. At the same time the Community must also ensure that its traditional political and economic relations with the other countries of the Mediterranean Basin are not adversely affected.

The institutions of the Community will also have to adjust to the new situation if they are to continue to function. With 12 partners now in the Community it is essential to move away from the unanimous voting principle, as currently applied in the Council of Ministers.

This further enlargement is a historic moment for the Community. The problems which posed a threat to the Community's very existence only a short time ago have now been cleared up. This should enable the political leaders to turn their minds again to the future development of the Community for the first time in more than 10 years, and should pave the way for a Community that will be attractive to the next generation.

225th PLENARY SESSION

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities held its 225th plenary session in Brussels, on 27 and 28 March 1985. The Committee's Chairman, Mr Gerd Muhr, presided.

1. FARM PRICES 1985/86

'Commission proposals on the fixing of prices for agricultural products, and related measures (1985/86).'

The opinion of the Section for Agriculture, amended in the plenary session, was rejected by 42 votes for, 52 against and 9 abstentions.

The Chairman of the Committee stated after the discussion: 'This year, the Committee has been unable to take up a position on farm prices.'

2. PRIORITIES FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH (own-initiative opinion)

'Priorities for Community research initiatives: the next revision of the framework programme for Community scientific and technological activities.'

Background to the opinion

The Committee is frequently asked to react quickly to Commission proposals. It had to do so in 1983 when it gave its opinion on the current framework programme. The Committee did not have enough time to study the Commission's R&D proposals in any depth.

It was therefore proposed that the Committee carry out a thorough review of the priorities in the framework programme. The main objective was to contribute to Community thinking on R&D in order to influence the next revision of the framework programme.

Uninhibited by pressures of time and without the constraint of producing an opinion on a specific proposal, it was possible to gather information for the opinion from experts capable of viewing Community R&D strategy from a distance.

It was intended that the opinion would examine the following specific areas:

the potential contribution of R&D to the Community in the medium to long term;

gaps in current Community R&D strategy;

existing areas of Community R&D which may be superfluous to Community R&D strategy;

the role of Community R&D in solving the problems identified by the Committee in recent opinions, i.e. in particular the social and economic consequences of barriers to technological development;

Community R&D priorities relative to the Community's commitment to developing countries.

Gist of the Committee opinion¹

Europe's need to achieve competitiveness with the USA and Japan must not become so important a priority that unemployment is allowed to worsen. The Committee calls for a Community R&D programme directed more towards providing new products or services with job-creating effects than towards faster production methods which cause job losses. A concentration on new, faster production methods rather than on new products and services could lead Europe up a blind alley by allocating scarce resources to production processes in fields in which our competitors already have the lead. This was one of the messages given in an opinion, adopted unanimously by the Economic and Social Committee. Outlining a research and development strategy for technological and scientific innovation in the Community, the Committee hinted that there could be an advantage in having been in second place for a time if Europe were to learn from others' experience and avoid mistakes made elsewhere.

Underlining R&D's crucial role in preventing the technological dependence of the Community on its major economic competitors, the Committee insists on the need for rapid commercialization of the results of research, and demands that more attention be given to adopting a European patent. There has been a failure to exploit efficiently the high level of research achievement in the Community. On this point it criticizes the Council for its delay in committing funds to the framework programme of 1984-87 on which research activities are based.

¹ CES 318/85.

The opinion nevertheless warns against giving too much finance to industrial research programmes, the results of which will only benefit the Community after the year 2000. More of today's scarce R&D resources, it urges, should go towards maintaining and developing those industries that are currently competitive.

Amongst the proposals made by the Committee is the establishment of a European researchers' community offering financial support for high-risk ventures, greater mobility for researchers, stronger links between R&D centres, as well as immediate commercialization of the results of research and a proper European patent system.

In concrete terms the Committee proposes a large budget increase for promoting industrial competitiveness and for improving working conditions but recommends a smaller proportion of total Community R&D funds be allocated to R&D energy management (40% instead of the current 47%) of total R&D spending.

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Energy and Nuclear Questions, chaired by Mr Romoli (Italy - Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Roseingrave (Ireland - Various interests).

3. CARRYOVER OF LOSSES OF UNDERTAKINGS

'Proposal for a Council directive on the harmonization of the laws of the Member States relating to tax arrangements for the carryover of losses of undertakings.'¹

Gist of the Commission document

Among the priority objectives in the Community at the present time are the following:

- the approximation of company tax burdens,
- the promotion of investment,
- the improvement of the Community's international competitiveness.

One measure which may help to achieve these aims is the carryover of company losses.

The Commission has therefore submitted a draft directive on the setting-off of losses, incorporating as many options as possible without

¹ COM(84)404 final.

placing too great a financial burden on the Member States and without providing encouragement to fraud or abuse. It is proposed that losses may be carried forward without any time-limit and may be carried back for up to two years. Tax repayments are thus possible and this will strengthen the financial position of the companies concerned. Companies will not, however, be obliged to carry over losses. Tax-exempted profits, profits taxed at a lower rate and distributed profits can thus be excluded from the set-off.

Gist of the Committee opinion¹

The Economic and Social Committee, in an opinion adopted by a large majority with 2 votes against and 1 abstention, approved a proposal aiming to bring national company taxation systems into line and to encourage investment amongst firms by allowing them to carry over their losses.

Recognizing the need for greater international competitiveness on the part of European firms, the Committee opinion supports the measures allowing them to carry forward their losses but with a time-limit. Indeed, the Committee considers unlimited carry-forward for all losses to be unacceptable. It proposes that carry-forward be limited to eight years — which is the rule in most Member States. However, it should be possible for the start-up losses of new firms (during the first eight years) to be carried forward without restriction.

On the other hand, it proposes a three-year limit on carrying back losses, as against the two-year limit suggested by the Commission. The serious budgetary repercussions which this may have in certain Member States could be offset by allowing these countries to phase in the time-limit.

The opinion urges that undertakings be given as much flexibility as possible in using the carryover mechanism, and is confident that the arrangements can lead to an optimum tax environment for companies in the Community. However, it maintains that if the measures for carrying forward losses are to be practicable they must be phased in.

This opinion was presented to the Committee by Mr Goris, Rapporteur-General (The Netherlands - Various interests).

¹ CES 319/85.

4. MEDICINAL PRODUCTS

'Proposal for a Council directive on the approximation of national measures relating to the placing on the market of high-technology medicinal products, particularly those derived from biotechnology.

Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 75/318/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to analytical, pharmacotoxicological and clinical standards and protocols in respect of the testing of proprietary medicinal products.

Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 81/852/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to analytical, pharmacotoxicological and clinical standards and protocols in respect of the testing of veterinary medicinal products.

Proposal for a Council recommendation concerning tests relating to the placing on the market of proprietary medicinal products.

Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 65/65/EEC on the approximation of provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action relating to proprietary medicinal products'.¹

Gist of the Commission document

Five directives and one recommendation on proprietary medicinal products for human beings and two directives on veterinary medicinal products were adopted in the past to encourage the placing on the market of these products.

The Commission proposal of 1980 to introduce the principle of mutual recognition of national marketing authorizations has been put into practice by the Council only to the extent that it agreed that the responsible authorities must duly take into account marketing authorizations for medicinal products already authorized in Member States.

Pending the definitive creation of a common market for medicinal products — likely in the foreseeable future — the Commission thinks it necessary to take urgent measures in the sector of medicinal products based on biotechnology and other high-technology medicinal products.

¹ COM(84)437 final.

- A. In the field of biotechnology, it gives the following justification:
- (a) Pharmaceutical research, especially in the biotechnology field, requires considerable investment (8 to 10 years), frequently with an element of uncertainty. Amortization of this investment will be possible only if sufficient demand is guaranteed through the creation of a common European market. This would create similar conditions for the European pharmaceutical industry in the biotechnology field to those in the United States and Japan, which have a vast internal market with fairly high prices, protected from foreign competitors.
 - (b) In the new field of biotechnology, scientific and technical expertise is still largely lacking in the Member States, so that concertation enabling the exchange of experience can only be advantageous.

To this end the Commission proposes to harmonize national measures relating to the placing on the market of high-technology medicinal products, particularly those derived from biotechnology. This should be done by consulting the committees for proprietary medicinal products and veterinary medicinal products which already exist at Community level. The medicinal products concerned include antibiotics, interferon, immunotoxins and new medicinal products based on radio-isotopes.

- B. The harmonization of technical provisions on the marketing of medicinal products requires continual adaptation to technical progress. In order to achieve this the Commission proposed the amendment of Directives 75/318/EEC and 81/852/EEC, to take account particularly of ethical problems (new definition of acute toxicity, as little use as possible of laboratory animals in experiments). In order to ensure that provisions are adapted as quickly as possible to new technical developments, delegation of this task to the Commission is envisaged.
- C. The proposal for a recommendation concerning tests relating to the placing on the market of proprietary medicinal products is intended to provide guidance on tests for acute toxicity and mutagenesis and on clinical tests. These notes for guidance should help in the interpretation of the Annex to Directive 75/318/EEC, without being binding. At the same time this proposal should ensure that authorizations already issued in other Member States are recognized by national authorities.
- D. The proposal for amendment of Directive 65/65/EEC is intended to clarify the interpretation of Article 4, point 8 of the said directive, and particularly of the restatement of the usual derogation principle

(marketing authorization for a proprietary product on presentation of a simplified document and bibliographical references, if the product is essentially similar to an already authorized medicinal product). It is also proposed that the provision on labelling of narcotics be repealed.

Gist of the Committee opinion¹

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its opinion by 73 votes to 38 with 9 abstentions.

It welcomes the proposed directive which will encourage an alignment of administrative procedures in the Community and bring a European market in medicines one step closer. This would be in the interests of both consumers and industry. Implementation of the directive will facilitate innovation in an area of drugs research involving high economic risks and major investments. This would improve the prospects of developing new medicines with a high therapeutic value, which is to be welcomed in the interests of public health.

The Committee attributes particular importance to compliance with the deadline laid down in Article 4 for the authorization of medicines. It approves the setting-up of a secretariat with scientific staff to prepare the discussions of the Medicinal Products Committee, but recommends that independent experts be consulted as well.

In addition, it urges that the proposed optional consultation for high-technology drugs be reviewed after a certain time to see whether it should not be made mandatory.

'Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 75/318/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to analytical, pharmacotoxicological and clinical standards and protocols in respect of the testing of proprietary medicinal products.

Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 81/852/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to analytical, pharmacotoxicological and clinical standards and protocols in respect of the testing of veterinary medicinal products.'

The Committee endorses the ethical aim of reducing the number of animals used in tests by introducing new test techniques. It approves the proposed procedure for updating the recommendation (Committee

¹ CES 317/85.

procedure with majority decision), but thinks that these matters should be dealt with by the existing committees rather than by setting up a new body.

'Proposal for a Council recommendation concerning tests relating to the placing on the market of proprietary medicinal products.'

These recommendations will enable all the Member State authorities responsible for authorizing medicinal products to take their decisions on the basis of uniform tests and common criteria. The Committee expressly supports this objective. One drawback of these recommendations, however, is that they relate only to medicines of the scientific school. By prescribing one particular method there is a danger that other schools of medicine are discriminated against and hence certain drugs excluded. Recommendations should therefore be kept sufficiently general so that they apply to all schools.

The Committee also notes that the proposed recommendations must be able to stand up to scientific scrutiny as regards both content and terminology. Furthermore, such documents must be drawn up and submitted much more quickly in future.

'Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 65/65/EEC on the approximation of provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action relating to proprietary medicinal products.'

The Committee welcomes the fact that a standard Community-wide arrangement is to be laid down for second-applicant authorization for proprietary medicinal products. It fully endorses the rule whereby the second applicant can waive the submission of test results if the original innovatory firm consents to the use of its dossier or if reference can be made to published literature. However, the Committee is not entirely in agreement with the 10-year embargo on utilization which stipulates that the second applicant, if the above-mentioned rules do not apply, can only waive the submission of test results if an essentially similar medicine has been marketed for 10 years already in the country concerned. The Committee deplores the lack of a proposal on conditions for lifting the embargo if a major public interest necessitates earlier authorization for a second applicant. It therefore urges the Commission to check whether and how the 10-year embargo period can, if necessary, be shortened.

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr de Wit (The Netherlands - Employers). The rapporteur was Mrs Strobel (Federal Republic of Germany - Various interests).

5. MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

'Communication from the Commission to the Council on the protection of the environment in the Mediterranean Basin.'¹

Gist of the Commission communication

With a view to protecting the environment of the Mediterranean, the Commission proposes to introduce a Community plan of action (Medspa) comprising short-term measures to alleviate the more serious and pressing problems on which the relevant Commission departments already have sufficient details. These measures cover:

- water quality and supply,
- waste management,
- rational use of land,
- international action,
- specific measures already formulated in detail and relating to specific needs.

In addition, long-term measures are envisaged to rectify various structural deficiencies which might in some cases be directly or indirectly responsible for ecological damage.

The plan of action is to be formulated in close consultation with the relevant authorities of the Member States concerned; the aim is to identify, on the one hand, those measures which could be integrated into existing Community policies and, on the other, those which could be financed from other sources.

Gist of the Committee opinion²

In its opinion, adopted unanimously, the Economic and Social Committee recommended an overall strategy for the protection of the environment in the Mediterranean Basin. While warmly welcoming the Commission's initiative, the ESC regrets that the Commission document does not contain a realistic plan, on a sufficiently large scale, to resolve the urgent problems.

The Committee's opinion recommends that Spain and Portugal and countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean be involved in the Community action, as well as the present EEC Mediterranean States

¹ COM(84)206 final.

² CES 311/85.

(France, Italy and Greece). There must also be close collaboration with the regions, international organizations and bodies, laboratories and foundations which have been involved in the protection of the environment over recent years. This is essential if one considers that an apparently isolated phenomenon such as the advance of the desert in North Africa can affect the ecology and climate of the whole Mediterranean region. Here the Community could provide scientific back-up to the policy pursued by some African countries.

The Committee regrets that most of the measures proposed by the Commission are too limited geographically and vital aspects of the deterioration of the environment are overlooked. For instance, the damage currently being caused to certain key zones could lead in the long term to a severe imbalance in nature and the disappearance of animal species and marine plants.

The Community should develop its information system on the state of the environment and natural resources (ecological mapping), including for the sea; but the ESC also proposes that the Community tackle the economic and financial problems involved in the rehabilitation of the environment following pollution. The problems of compensating the victims should not be seen as applying only to the tourist trade, but also to local authorities and those deriving their livelihood from the sea who are the first victims of the various forms of pollution and must often wait years for the outcome of compensation proceedings.

The disposal of urban and industrial waste and waste resulting from accidents at sea must be an integral part of environmental protection policy. The ESC also suggests that, in accordance with the 'polluter pays' principle, the visitor's taxes paid by tourists should help to finance the water treatment facilities essential during the high season.

The ESC stresses the need for improved policy coordination. For instance, it suggests funding the research and development of prototypes in different fields, e.g. multi-purpose aircraft for disasters such as forest fires, oil slicks, etc.

Several existing Community legal instruments could help right now to implement these policies. Improved international collaboration and Member State participation in the financing of projects could only be beneficial and help to combat other forms of pollution (by chemicals, oil discharged by ships, etc.)

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mrs Heuser (Federal Republic of Germany - Various interests). The rapporteur was Mr De Grave (Belgium - Workers).

6. APPLICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES

'Proposal for a Council regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 on the application of social-security schemes to employed persons, to self-employed persons and to members of their families moving within the Community and Regulation (EEC) No 574/72 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71.'¹

Gist of the Commission proposal

Since the date of the entry into force of the consolidated and updated versions of both Regulations No 1408/71 and No 574/72, a number of changes have taken place in the legislations of the Member States the effects of which are required to be taken into account by the Community regulations so as to safeguard the rights of migrant workers. In addition, a number of existing provisions require modification necessitated by evidence, derived from experience of their application, of their unsatisfactory operation. The modifications include those consequential to the abolition of widows' pensions in Denmark; the double liability to pay social insurance contributions imposed upon Greek teachers temporarily employed in Germany, and the rationalization of the rules dealing with the overlapping of family benefits.

The proposal also includes a number of other minor amendments of a consequential or administrative nature.

Gist of the Committee opinion²

The Economic and Social Committee unanimously adopted its opinion endorsing the Commission's proposal.

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social Questions, chaired by Mr Houthuys (Belgium - Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Fuller (United Kingdom - Employers).

7. TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT — HYDROCARBONS

'Proposal for a Council regulation (EEC) on a programme of support for technological development in the hydrocarbons sector.'³

¹ COM(84)756 final.

² CES 310/85.

³ COM(84)658 final.

Gist of the Commission proposal

This proposed regulation would replace Regulation (EEC) No 3056/73. The latter regulation has enabled some 307 million ECU to be granted to 319 projects aimed at encouraging technological development activities directly connected with hydrocarbons exploration, production, storage or transportation activities, which are such as to improve the security of the Community's energy supplies.

The proposed new regulation, instead of providing for a year-by-year support system of granting aid to projects, would be multiannual involving an estimated 200 million ECU over an initial five-year period.

The Council, in November 1984, approved grants for the current year's 51 projects totalling 35 million ECU.

Notwithstanding this, however, the Commission, in a communication sent to the Council on 22 May 1984 (COM(84)272 final) recommended that the whole scheme supporting the Community's hydrocarbons sector be re-evaluated.

In that document the Commission describes the programme's main technical achievements and finds that the Community support has made it possible in particular to improve the security of the Community's oil supplies, and to encourage technological development and innovation in European firms and the pooling of effort at Community level.

In view of these positive results, and the leading role which oil and gas will continue to play in future in the Community's energy supplies, the Commission takes the view that there is every justification to continue with the programme of support to new oil technologies. Nevertheless, in order to ensure that the Community programme is as effective as possible, certain adjustments and improvements should be made in the light of the experience gained and in order to bring it into the general framework of the Community's energy strategy.

To this end, the Commission proposes in particular:

- (a) the adoption of a multiannual programme,
- (b) changes in the decision-making process,
- (c) the definition of priority objectives,
- (d) improvements to the procedure for implementing the programme of support.

This proposal, in brief, is for a regulation which will deal specifically with the objectives set out in (a) and (b) above.

The purpose of adopting a multiannual programme is basically to ensure financial continuity for the programme of support, something which is lacking under Regulation No 3056/73. To this end, it is proposed that the programme should be the subject of a commitment, with an adequate budget, for a five-year period. This is justified by the need to offer promoters whose projects are spread over several years the prospect of continuous support for their projects.

After the regulation has been in force for four years, the Commission will, if necessary, make proposals, on the basis of an overall evaluation, for a possible extension of the programme.

The present decision-making system should be brought into line with Article 205 of the Treaty. It would thus be the Commission's responsibility to grant support for Community projects each year after consulting an Advisory Committee made up of Member States' representatives.

The financial considerations of this proposed regulation are mentioned briefly above, i.e. that the Commission proposes that the estimated amount needed to continue the programme over an initial period of five years should be fixed at an indicative level of 200 million ECU.

Whilst the proposed regulation sets out to tackle the two aspects, which are the adoption of a multiannual programme and changes in the decision-making process, referred to above, the Commission says in its explanatory note that:

for the definition of the priority technological objectives to be pursued by the Community programme in the fields of hydrocarbons exploration, production, transportation and storage, the Commission will take account of the opinions of the Member States' experts obtained during discussions in the Council and of the representatives of the industry meeting at the end of the year in Luxembourg at the second symposium on new oil technologies;

the changes to be made to the procedures for implementing the programme will be introduced gradually in the areas indicated in the Commission's communication of 22 May 1984 when the new regulation is applied. This chiefly concerns the setting of annual priorities, the widest possible dissemination of knowledge and cooperation between promoters of projects.

Gist of the Committee opinion¹

The Committee unanimously endorses the Commission's proposal that the Community continue with its programme of technological

¹ CES 313/85.

development projects in the hydrocarbons sector. It agrees with the Commission that there is a need to review the current arrangements for defining and controlling the programme.

The Committee sees the new proposal as involving the Council in agreeing to an indicative total expenditure of 200 million ECU over a five-year period, provision being made for review at the end of four years.

The Committee believes that the proposal to agree an indicative total expenditure covering a five-year period is better than putting to the Council a series of annual programmes which would be quite inappropriate for technological projects in the hydrocarbons sector where the calendar year has no relevance. It goes on to say that an even better solution would be to provide a rolling programme involving a review every two years. It recognizes that this is not current practice in the Community but would ask that it be given serious consideration.

Under the procedure proposed by the Committee the advisory committee would advise at this review, where progress would be assessed, projects seeking support would be scrutinized and, subject to findings, the programme would be rolled forward two years. The indicative funding required for the later years can be increased or decreased.

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Energy and Nuclear Questions, chaired by Mr Romoli (Italy - Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Campbell (United Kingdom - Employers).

8. SECOND PERIODIC REPORT ON THE REGIONS

'The regions of Europe — Second periodic report on the social and economic situation and development of the regions of the Community.'¹

Gist of the Commission document

The report analyses regional disparities particularly as regards employment, production and productivity.

Other regional disparity factors such as population density, population change and peripherality are also dealt with.

This second periodic report tackles several new areas not discussed in the first report published in 1981, namely:

¹ COM(84)40 final.

the infrastructure endowment of the Community's regions;
the particular situation of the regions adversely affected by the decline in certain industrial sectors;
the consequences, for industry and agriculture in the Community's regions, of enlarging the Community to include Spain and Portugal;
projections concerning regional employment situations;
the regional aspects of the growth of the services sector;
the specific problems of frontier regions;
the regional impact of new information technologies;
a 'typology of the regions' to supplement the analysis of the relative severity of regional problems by further enquiry into the nature of those problems.

Gist of the Committee opinion¹

In its opinion, adopted unanimously, the Committee expresses its satisfaction with the quality of this second report and with the improvements made to it in the light of the Committee's points of criticism.

However, the Committee calls for the Member States to cooperate in refining and further harmonizing the data which are used to calculate the GDP in each country. The Commission is asked to investigate whether the indicator 'unemployment' might not be replaced by a positive indicator for the level of employment to counter the danger of inaccuracy at present arising from part-time employment and 'moon-lighting'.

The opinion also once again emphasizes the possibility of applying a number of indicators introducing qualitative aspects.

The Committee also considers that the chapter of the report relating to enlargement and its consequences should have been made more detailed. The request for a modification in the lay-out of the periodic report is reiterated.

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Regional Development, chaired by Mr Milne (United Kingdom - Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Fuller (United Kingdom - Employers).

¹ CES 312/85.

9. IMPROVEMENT OF GREEK VINEYARDS

'Proposal for a Council regulation (EEC) on a common measure to improve the structures of certain areas under vines in Greece and amending Regulation (EEC) No 355/77 on common measures to improve the conditions under which agricultural and fisheries products are processed and marketed.'¹

Gist of the Commission proposal

The specific 'common measure' proposed here is aimed at improving the structure of 20 000 hectares of Greek vineyards and of the Greek wine production industry, on the basis of Regulation (EEC) No 355/77.

It is tailored to the particular structures of Greece, and its field of application has been extended to the entire Greek wine production sector.

In a way, the present proposal may be considered as an advance implementation of the integrated Mediterranean programmes.

Proper modernization of agricultural structures and the processing and marketing of agricultural products is hampered by the shortage of funds in Greece. The measures involved, therefore, will require exceptional aid from the EAGGF Guidance Section if Greece is to make the most of the instruments provided for in the proposed regulation.

Gist of the Committee opinion²

The Committee unanimously approves the proposed regulation, which takes the same line as the recommendations made in the ESC opinions on integrated Mediterranean programmes and the proposed regulations for the wine sector.

However, the Committee feels that in certain cases the possibilities of grafting the recommended vine varieties should also be taken into account when restructuring vineyards.

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture, chaired by Mr Lauga (France - Various interests). The rapporteur was Mr Chaliotis (Greece - Various interests).

¹ COM(85)46 final.

² CES 315/85.

10. AGRICULTURAL SURVEYS IN GREECE

'Proposal for a Council decision on the restructuring of the system of agricultural surveys in Greece.'¹

Gist of the Commission proposal

The Commission has concluded that the Greek Government is currently unable to provide the statistical data required to introduce and implement the common agricultural policy in Greece.

The Greek Government has therefore been asked to present a plan for restructuring the system for compiling and processing agricultural statistical data to enable the Greek system to be brought into line with those of the other Member States after a period of five years.

The Greek administration has presented a programme of measures to be implemented in the period from 1986-90.

The estimated budget for the overall programme provides for expenditure of approximately 70 million ECU over five years.

In view of the substantial effort which the Greek Government has agreed to make in this area, it would appear necessary for the Community to provide a financial contribution to facilitate the implementation of this programme.

The total amount of the Community contribution proposed is 23 million ECU, i.e. one-third of the total.

Gist of the Committee opinion²

The Committee unanimously approves the Commission's proposal and hopes that it will be implemented as soon as possible.

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture, chaired by Mr Lauga (France - Various interests). The rapporteur was Mr Bazianas (Greece - Various interests).

11. SOCIAL SECURITY FOR VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

'Draft Council recommendation on social security for volunteer development workers.'³

¹ COM(84)708 final.

² CES 314/85.

³ COM(84)710 final.

Gist of the Commission proposal

Volunteer development workers neither have the same status as individuals directly recruited by governments, nor are they strictly speaking volunteers. They are sent out to developing countries by non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

They are normally paid according to local conditions of remuneration in the receiving State. As a result of this, or of the simple lack of provision in some Member States' social-security systems for the affiliation of some or all categories of persons working outside those Member States, volunteer development workers (and their families, where the latter have no independent claim to social-security cover) run the risk, under existing welfare legislation, of losing their social-security rights altogether during and in respect of the time spent as a volunteer development worker, or of having those rights severely restricted.

Returned volunteer development workers may therefore be at a considerable disadvantage compared with other workers in the same country and their reintegration into the labour market may be compromised.

The matter having been raised both in the European Council and at the informal meeting of Employment and Social Affairs Ministers, the Commission has recommended a series of common measures and techniques — to be financed directly or indirectly by Member States — in order to ensure equal social security protection for volunteer development workers in relation to other Community workers.

Gist of the Committee opinion¹

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its opinion unanimously.

Having noted the inequalities and inadequacies in social-security cover for volunteer development workers, the Committee is in broad agreement with the Commission's proposals. Volunteers should have full cover. Social-security cover should be granted not only to volunteers and their families but also to recognized dependants.

The Committee stresses that social security cover should embrace not only the period of preparation and the period spent in the developing country but also an appropriate period immediately following the volunteer's return to the sending country, so as to facilitate reintegration, among other things.

¹ CES 316/85.

The Committee also stresses that in order to make an effective contribution to development projects, volunteer development workers must:

have completed a course of vocational training and possess practical experience in areas where developing countries need assistance and have requested it;

have real motivation and knowledge acquired before departure.

At the same time the impression should not be given that by sending volunteers abroad we are hoping to reduce unemployment in Europe.

The Committee considers that a directive would be a more appropriate Community instrument for achieving the desired aims.

This opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social Questions, chaired by Mr Houthuys (Belgium - Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Soulat (France - Workers).

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

ESC Chairman visits Rome

Mr Gerd Muhr, Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee, paid an official visit to Rome from 18 to 21 March 1985. Mr Muhr, who is Vice-President of the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB), was accompanied by his two Vice-Chairmen, Mr Philippus Noordwal, consultant to the Dutch Business Confederation, and Mr Umberto Emo Capodilista of the Italian Agricultural Confederation (Confagricoltura), and by the ESC Secretary-General, Mr Roger Louet.

The ESC delegation had talks with government authorities including Mr Gianni De Michelis (Labour), Mr Filippo Pandolfi (Agriculture), Mr Clelio Darida (State participation), Mr Renato Altissimo (Industry) and Mr Francesco Forte (Community policy).

The talks focused on current European issues, particularly the accession of Portugal and Spain and integrated Mediterranean programmes.

The delegation also met Mr Bruno Storti, Chairman of the National Economic and Labour Council (CNEL), and the presidents of national organizations such as the trade union confederations (CGIL, CISL and UIL), employers' organizations (e.g. Confindustria, Confcommercio), cooperative and craft organizations such as Federconsorzi and Confartigianato, and the agricultural organizations Confagricoltura, Coldiretti and Confcoltivatori.

Other activities

The Chairman of the ESC Section for Transport and Communications, Mr Delourme, gave a dinner on 26 February for a delegation from the European Parliament's Transport Committee led by its Chairman, Mr Anastassopoulos. The Economic and Social Committee's Secretary-General, Mr Louet, also attended.

Mr Briganti and Mr Pelletier, the Rapporteur and Chairman respectively of the ESC Section for External Relations' Study Group on the Mediterranean, addressed a hearing arranged by the Committee of Permanent Representatives' Working Party on the Mediterranean (Chairman: Mr Sanfelice di Monteforte) on 27 February.

The Italian Minister for the Environment and President-in-Office of the Council, Mr Biondi, attended the debate on the draft opinion on the Mediterranean Basin at the meeting of the ESC Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs on 5 March.

The Chairman of the ESC Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, Mr de Wit, gave a luncheon on 11 March for the President of the French Confederation of Arts and Crafts, Mr Delisle. Mr Delisle was accompanied by the President of the French Federation of Jewellers and Goldsmiths, Mr Arthus-Bertrand.

The EC Commissioner for Social Matters, Mr Sutherland, addressed a meeting of the ESC's Section for Social Questions on 21 March.

On 22 March the Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee, Mr Muhr, held talks with the President and Secretary-General of the European Trade Union Confederation, Mr Debunne and Mr Hinterscheid.

NEW CONSULTATIONS

Since the last plenary session, the Council has requested the Economic and Social Committee to deliver opinions on the following subjects:

'Communication from the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament entitled 'Technical harmonization and standards: A new approach' (COM(85)19 final);

'Communication from the Commission to the Council on guidelines for a Community policy on migration' (COM(85)48 final);

'Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 72/461/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in fresh meat and Directive 72/462/EEC on health and veterinary inspection problems upon importation of bovine animals and swine and fresh meat from third countries' (COM(85)57 final).

PROVISIONAL FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

APRIL 1985 PLENARY SESSION

Opinions upon consultation

- Dangerous substances
- 18th and 19th VAT Directives
- 9th European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Annual Report
- Protection structures on tractors
- Repayment of import or export duties
- Customs debt
- Easing of frontier checks on EEC citizens
- Technical standards
- Mannheim Convention
- Starch products
- Demonstration projects — Energy

Information report

- National regional development aids

SUBSEQUENT PLENARY SESSIONS

Opinions upon consultation

- Equal income tax treatment
- Social security for volunteer development workers
- Migration policy
- Modified starches
- Infant formulas
- Consumer accidents

Waste oils
Cross-border company mergers
Nuclear industries
Economic situation mid-1985
Social developments in 1984
Air transport
Medium-term guidelines for transport infrastructures
Strengthening of EEC-Latin American relations
Non-quota measures — ERDF
Shipbuilding aids (Additional opinion)
Telecommunications standards
Specific training for general practitioners
Counterfeit goods
Mortgage credit
Seaports/hinterland

Own-initiative opinions

Occupational cancer
Television without frontiers
GATT

Information reports

Demographic situation
Shared-cost research programmes
Energy options — environmental constraints
Development of upland areas

MEMBERS' NEWS

Appointment

The Council of Ministers has appointed Miss Ada Maddocks (United Kingdom) a member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mrs Marie Patterson who resigned. Miss Maddocks is National Organizing Officer of the National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO).

Resignation

Mr Jeannot Schneider (Luxembourg) has resigned his membership of the Economic and Social Committee.

Death

Mr Hicks-Beach, a former British member of the Economic and Social Committee, died last January.

PUBLICATIONS OBTAINABLE FROM THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

General documentation

- The Economic and Social Committee (leaflet) (January 1980)
- The Economic and Social Committee (December 1982) (a descriptive brochure) 16 pp.

Opinions and studies

- Irish border areas (Information report) (February 1984) (ESC 84-002)
- Tourism (Opinion) (June 1984) (ESC 84-004)
- Consumer-producer dialogue (Opinion) (January 1985) (ESC 84-011)
- Europe and the new technologies — Conference report (January 1985) (ESC 84-016)
- Inaugural conference — 1983: the European Year of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (Proceedings) (December 1983) (ESC 83-016)
- The economic and social situation in the Community (2 opinions) (July 1983) (ESC-83-013)
- Youth employment (Opinion) (June 1983) (ESC-83-011)
- Transport policy in the 1980s (Opinion) (March 1983) 99 pp. (ESC 83-003)
- Inaugural conference — 1983: The European Year of SME (February 1983) 27 pp. (ESC 83-002)
- Guidelines for Mediterranean agriculture (4 opinions) (September 1982) 64 pp. (ESC 82-010)
- The economic and social situation of the Community (2 opinions) (July 1982) 57 pp. (ESC 82-008)
- The promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises (Opinion) (June 1982) 70 pp. (ESC 82-007)
- Agricultural aspects of Spain's entry into the EC (Opinion) (February 1982) 107 pp. (ESC 81-017)
- The EEC's external relations — Stocktaking and consistency of action (Study) (January 1982) 139 pp.
- Genetic engineering (Colloquy) (October 1981) 120 pp. (ESC 81-014)
- Economic pointers for 1982 (Opinion) (August 1981) 32 pp. (ESC 81-010)
- Problems of the handicapped (Opinion) (September 1981) ± 46 pp. (ESC 81-013)
- Present situation in the Community's building sector (Opinion) (September 1981) ± 24 pp. (ESC 81-011)
- Community competition policy (Opinion) (ESC-81-008)
- Development policy and working conditions (September 1980) (Opinion) 61 pp. (ESC 80-012)
- The organization and management of Community R&D (February 1980) (Study) 168 pp. (ESC 80-001)
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- Community shipping policy — flags of convenience (April 1979) (Opinion) 170 pp.
- Youth unemployment — Education and training (November 1978) (5 opinions) 97 pp.
- The stage reached in aligning labour legislation in the European Community (June 1978) (Documentation) 60 pp.
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- Industrial change and employment (November 1977) (Opinion) 98 pp.
- EEC's transport problems with East European countries (December 1977) (Opinion) 164 pp.
- Systems of education and vocational training (August 1976) (Study) 114 pp.

Obtainable from GOWER Publishing Co. Ltd., 1 Westmead, Farnborough, Hants GU 147RU:

Community Advisory Committee for the Representation of Socio-Economic Interests (UKL 8.50)
European Interest Groups and their relationship to the Economic and Social Committee (UKL 25)

Obtainable from EDITIONS DELTA, 92-94 Square Plasky, 1040 Brussels:

Action by the European Community through its financial instruments (Brussels 1979) (BFR 425)
The Economic and Social Interest Groups of Greece (BFR 350)
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