

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

**BULLETIN**



**Brussels N. 5/1980**

*CES:1*



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# I

## **179th PLENARY SESSION**

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities held its 179th Plenary Session at 2, rue Ravenstein, Brussels, on 28/29 May 1980. The Committee's Chairman, Mr. R. VANNI, presided.

The Italian Labour Minister and President-in-Office of the Council, Mr. FOSCHI, attended the discussion of the Opinion on the Social Situation.

### **Committee's call to the Community institutions**

The Committee adopted a statement calling on the European Council, the Community institutions and the member governments to act urgently to restore the dynamism which the Committee needs if it is to make an effective contribution to ensuring world peace, to economic growth, to improving the situation of the underprivileged, and to safeguarding jobs, purchasing power and social progress.

### **Adoption of Opinions**

#### **1. SOCIAL SITUATION IN 1979**

The Development of the Social Situation in 1979.

#### **Gist of the Commission document**

As in previous years, the Commission asked the Committee for an Opinion on the social situation in the Community with particular reference to the Report on the Development of the Social Situation in the Community in 1979.

As the Commission notes in the introduction to its Report on the social situation in 1979, the economic difficulties which have been facing the Community for more than five years were still very clearly in evidence in the employment sphere in the past year. At the end of 1979 there were more than 6 million unemployed in the Community, and the present prospects are scarcely promising in the short term.

The causes of this sustained imbalance on the labour market are well known : continuous technical changes and innovations which are taking on a new aspect, particularly as a result of the introduction of new technologies, not only in manufacturing industries but also, to an

increasing extent, in the services sector; increases in the labour force brought about by demographic factors and particularly evident in the growing numbers of school-leavers; a considerable increase in the activity rate of women independently of the unfavourable situation on the labour market; decreasing rates of economic growth as a result particularly of the soaring prices of energy and raw materials, as well as changes in the international division of labour.

### **Mr. FOSCHI's SPEECH**

Addressing the Committee, Mr. FOSCHI, Italian Minister of Labour and President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers, stressed the need for constructive dialogue between the two institutions. He trusted that this meeting with the representatives of the Community's economic and social groups, who were particularly sensitive to employment policy and labour issues, would encourage the current presidency of the Council to press on with the work in hand. Above all, he hoped that the meeting would enable the Economic and Social Committee to be actively associated with the determination of priority objectives for Community policies.

The problems facing the Community countries at the onset of the eighties were probably more serious than cyclical trends would suggest.

Although production had been developing at fairly high levels for more than a year, the economic and political tensions besetting the international scene were making it increasingly difficult to return to stable, sustained growth and, at the same time, obstructed the Member States in their drive to overcome the range of structural shortcomings which had emerged at the beginning of the 1974-1975 recession.

Since then, the drop in growth rates had affected almost all the industrialized countries, which found themselves unprepared for the decisions and demands of the commodity-producing countries.

The most costly consequence in social and human terms had been and was still the widespread unemployment. Taking all the OECD countries, more than 17 millions (including 6 million in the European Community) were today without a job.

The major danger at present was that the level of unemployment reached in the Member States should everywhere become a structural rather than a cyclical phenomenon, thus making the objective of full employment ever more distant and unattainable.

In the next five years, the Community would also be faced with a considerable increase in the working-age population and the worse-

ning employment situation could not be adequately tackled solely by boosting economic activity on the basis of the usual policies of underpinning aggregate demand.

Above all, the Community would have to concentrate on a coordinated programme of restructuring in certain key sectors, on support for scientific research — particularly in the field of energy — and on adequate action to underpin the application of new technologies, especially microelectronics and informatics.

When framing the specific measures, it must be borne in mind that much of the labour coming onto the market in the coming years will be young and much of it female, categories which often represent a weak sector of the labour market.

Already in recent years there had been an increasingly significant number of young people among the growing ranks of the unemployed, in response to which the Community bodies and national authorities had made a constant effort to find solutions. The key to unemployment among the young had often been sought — successfully in some countries — in specific actions, but the fact that such unemployment was becoming more and more structural made it necessary to move from temporary incentives to reforms of systems of training, guidance and introduction to the world of work.

The number of women looking for work in the Community was rising. In many cases, women wished to return to work after they had reared their families. A positive response to this trend required more flexible, effective instruments for monitoring demand, as well as facilities for continuous training and retraining.

The introduction of new technology — in particular the microchip — into industry and services was dictated by the pressing need to maintain international competitiveness. There was thus an increasingly urgent need for retraining facilities designed to promote staff mobility.

The Community must respond promptly to this challenge. Otherwise it would lag behind its competitors and there was a serious risk of massive unemployment. Apart from the different forecasts of the impact of microelectronics on employment levels, the consequences on the quality of the labour force could be assessed.

To ensure that the price of maintaining competitiveness was not too high in terms of jobs, it was necessary to work out economic and social policy guidelines which were consistent, timely, interlocking and also provided with adequate instruments for implementation at Community level.

Industry could only solve some of the employment problems and the public sector could not be expected to absorb everyone coming on to the labour market because, inter alia, of the curbs on public spending. For these objective reasons and for its intrinsic value, the emphasis should be on the potential role which cooperative management in various areas of the economy could play in providing more and better jobs.

Mr. FOSCHI concluded by stating that, by virtue of its broad, representative membership, the Economic and Social Committee must make a specific, unique contribution to efforts to solve employment and to secure the social development of the Member States in the difficult years which lay ahead.

As you know, the Council has reacted sympathetically to the proposal to allow alternates to sit on Study Groups, in order to improve efficiency. I am happy to say that the bodies responsible for preparing Council Decisions have virtually completed their review of the proposed changes in your Rules of Procedure, and are broadly in favour. The Italian President is doing everything to ensure that the changes are approved in the near future.

Careful attention has been paid to the ideas put forward on ways of establishing closer relations between the heads of the Council and the Committee. Here again, the attitude of the Council bodies is favourable.

#### **Mr. STARATZKE's SPEECH**

Speaking in his capacity as Chairman of Group I (Employers), Mr. STARATZKE welcomed the fact that the Opinion repeatedly drew attention to the impossibility of reducing unemployment unless measures were taken to combat inflation. Measures in those two fields should be given equal priority; attention should, of course, at the same time, be given to the other requirements for achieving economic stability, namely an adequate rate of growth and improvements in balances of payments. The absolute need for increased productivity, given the sharper competition on world markets, had not, however, been sufficiently stressed.

The fact that the rate of increase in productivity had been slowing down for years was an alarming sign. He wondered whether there was any possibility of reversing that trend. The capacity to introduce innovations in the EC economy had been a decisive reason for the export successes which had been achieved so far. The application of new technologies and fundamental innovations could make it possible



to influence the rate of growth of productivity in the future so as to enable the Community to remain competitive internationally.

Both the strengthening of the Community's competitiveness and the reduction of the Community's dependence on oil import would require investments in areas where productivity could be increased. Those investments would have to concentrate on new forms of energy and on ways of saving energy. There were, however, extremely high risks involved in such investments.

The necessary capital had first to be acquired and firms would have to be given sufficient freedom to build up their capital resources.

Mr. STARATZKE then turned to the question of international trade. People were always talking about introducing free trade throughout the world and rightly so. The necessary conditions would, first have to be created however. It was a matter of concern that individual Member States of the Community were invoking Article 115 of the EEC Treaty to an unusually large extent in order to keep out imports from outside the Community, which then entered those markets within the Community which were liberalized.

Such a retrograde step in the liberalization of trade in the Community and in the Community's trade with the rest of the world was intolerable.

### **Mr. DEBUNNE's SPEECH**

Mr. DEBUNNE, Chairman of the Workers' Group, stated that there was agreement within the Economic and Social Committee as to the diagnosis of the brutal economic and social realities facing the Community. Sadly, though, there was profound disagreement as to the remedies and approach. For some years unemployment and inflation had been identified as the central issues and economic growth as the cure. Unemployment was far from being beaten; inflation threatened to become more of an incubus than before. Yet unemployment and inflation eroded the quality of life of the worker; the worker's buying power and job security were at stake. The main victims were low-wage earners and the jobless.

The Community was feeling the effects of an unsatisfactory international monetary policy, balance-of-payments deficits and the recycling of Eurodollars. The Community was at the mercy of OPEC and US monetary policy. Again and again attention was drawn to this state of affairs, but where were the decisions, actions and remedies, if any? Mr. Debunne, wondered whether the conflict of interests between the workers- and employers- representatives resulted in the destruction of

positive opportunities. The employers' opposition to the trade unions' request for a fairer distribution of the available work showed that there was no agreement on how to proceed. After looking at the way unemployment was growing in the Community, Mr. DEBUNNE asked how matters could be remedied without distributing the available work and how the unemployed could be guaranteed a living in the light of the financial difficulties which the Member States would be facing. The solution advocated by industry — competition, investment, productivity — did not seem to be ideal. Productivity implied rationalization, i.e. less jobs. To increase profits was to decrease purchasing power. Attempts to find a solution at the Economic and Social Committee, the Standing Committee on Employment and the Tripartite Conference had failed to come up with anything positive as yet. Despite the promptings of the Council, the Commission and other bodies, no agreement had been reached between industry (represented by UNICE) and the trade unions. Mr. DEBUNNE stressed that the meeting of national leaders in Venice offered an opportunity for getting out of the impasse.

#### **Mr. GERMOZZI's SPEECH**

Replying on behalf of Group III (various interests), Mr. GERMOZZI declared that his Group, which represented not only small industrial, craft, commercial and agricultural businesses but also consumer and family interests, sorely felt each worsening of the economic situation. As far as his members were concerned, inflation, recession and even the rise in the cost of credit meant that deadlines for payments could not be met, bankruptcy petitions had to be filed, firms had to close, belts had to be tightened and savings accounts were used up.

However, some room for economic and social development was also offered by the sectors represented on Group III on account of their flexibility and adaptability and their need for capital and consumer goods of all kinds.

Small businesses had proved to be highly resistant, but now the limits to their resistance were being reached. There was therefore an urgent need to find a rapid remedy first and foremost to the problems at hand, and this was where the Community and the Member States held the key.

The main priority was vocational training, for there was a chronic shortage of skilled workers despite the high unemployment at present.

The Community could, by means of funds and special programmes, help to solve the problems of recurrent training as well as a large

number of other problems. However, the paperwork and conditions of entry to training courses would have to be simplified because firms often did not have a legal department or a person specialized in handling the multitude of formalities.

In addition, the setting-up of firms would have to be made even easier as a remedy to the job shortage problem.

In conclusion, Mr. GERMOZZI stressed the fact that the economy had to be revived by restoring human dynamism. It was a very good thing to encourage the search for alternative energy sources or energy saving techniques, but it was necessary to go further. Thus, it was also necessary to encourage the founding of firms, though this needed to be linked to the aim of regaining control over the environment. Finally, it was necessary to encourage a population revival, for the populations in several Member States, far from stagnating, were well and truly on the decline.

#### **Gist of the Opinion (\*)**

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion by 78 votes in favour, 2 against and 10 abstentions.

In it it observes that unemployment not only poses a threat to the material well-being, health and social situation of the workers affected and their families but also jeopardizes the financial basis of the social security system, thereby threatening the very foundations of our free and democratic society. The Committee is worried about the emergence of social conflicts and the difficulty of finding solutions to social problems, particularly the problem of improving working conditions and working environments and improving the living conditions of disadvantaged groups (above all, the elderly, the handicapped, the sick and the poor). In this connection it points in particular to the urgent need to resolve the increasing problems of groups of people whose standard of living is below the acceptable minimum.

Regardless of the quantitative repercussions on employment, technological change and, in particular, the introduction of micro-electronics, are going to considerably alter the structure of the economy and patterns of employment. The Committee therefore emphasizes that great importance is to be attached to improving education, vocational training and further training so as to achieve a lifelong learning process (« polyvalent » vocational training). It draws attention to the fact that the jobs of highly skilled workers are more crisis-proof than the jobs of workers with lower levels of skill.

(\*) Opinion No. CES 549/80

Health and safety at work must be improved as a contribution towards humanizing working conditions and the working environment.

The Draft Directives already drawn up in this area and commented on by the Committee (protection against chemical, physical and biological agents at work, major accident hazards in industry and lead-related diseases) should be adopted by the Council as quickly as possible. In addition, the Directives on asbestos, which are at present before the Council or will subsequently be submitted to it, must take account of the recommendations and demands set out in the Committee Study on health and environmental hazards arising from the use of asbestos.

The Committee also calls upon the Commission to take initiatives to prevent dangers to health through radiation at the workplace and in the working environment. This applies above all to chemical and nuclear installations in the Community.

Improving the coordination of labour market policy in the Member States is particularly important on account of the continuing high unemployment with its heavy concentration in disadvantaged groups, especially migrant workers.

As regards the occupational rehabilitation and integration of the handicapped, the Committee notes with particular concern that this group has been very seriously hit by unemployment, despite various protective measures in the individual Member States.

The Commission must take initiatives to improve vocational preparation, assistance and training for young handicapped people so that the largest possible number of them can complete vocational training with adequate qualifications.

The Committee also stresses the need for comprehensive measures of a preventive nature in the area of social and labour market policy to help older people and to improve the position of disadvantaged groups of older people. These measures must be geared both to working life and to retirement.

The Committee further calls upon the Commission to continue its evaluation of experience with existing schemes and measures to overcome the tendency for some jobs to be confined to one sex only and to devise measures to ensure that girls and women have greater access to occupations that are crisis-proof and offer better prospects. The necessary cooperation must be forthcoming from the girls concerned, their parents, the labour market authorities and the personnel departments and workers' representatives in firms and administrations. Training should be provided and, in the case of women without any

skills, should link up with their prior occupational experience. The European Social Fund's financial contribution in this area should be checked for effectiveness and if necessary improved and increased.

The Committee therefore calls upon the Commission and the Council to adopt Community measures to improve the education, linguistic knowledge, vocational training and employment prospects of the children of all migrant workers.

This Opinion was based on work prepared by the Section for Social Questions under the chairmanship of Mr. HOUTHUYS - Belgium - Workers. The Rapporteur was Mrs. ENGELLEN-KEFER - Germany - Workers.

## **2. ECONOMIC SITUATION (own-initiative Opinion)**

*The Economic Situation (Mid-1980).*

### **Background of the Report and Opinion**

In drafting a Report and Opinion on the Economic Situation in the Community, the Committee is following an established practice. It has for some years given two Opinions a year on the Economic Situation in the Community. The first Opinion each year is an own-initiative Opinion, whilst the second is in response to a Council referral based on a specific Commission document, namely, the Annual Economic Report.

This, the first (own-initiative) Opinion is considered as the Committee's major statement on economic policy.

Again, as in the past, the Committee has attached to its Report a detailed account of the economic situation in a particular Member State, wishing to underscore the fact that the Community's economic situation as a whole is still but the sum of nine different economic situations, each brought about by the interplay of a different set of social and economic factors. The Member State whose economy is under scrutiny on this occasion is the Member State holding the presidency of the Council at the time the Opinion is given, namely Italy.

### **Gist of the Opinion (\*)**

In its Opinion, adopted by 69 votes in favour, 19 against and 10 abstentions, the Committee lays stress on the imperative need for

(\*) Opinion No. CES 550/80

Member Governments increasingly to pursue policies designed to steer the nine economies on to convergent courses. The problems stemming from the energy crisis, the sluggishness of the international economy and the rigidities and constraints of the productive sector of our economies are such that a joint effort will have to be made to cut back inflation, to narrow inflation differentials and to reduce unemployment.

Apart from the continuing pressures on the oil market, the instability of the main commodity markets, volatile rates of inflation, very high interest rates and the recession underway in the United States, the Opinion cites the uncertainties caused by the international political situation as factors having a direct impact on the growth, trade volume and economic-financial equilibria of the Community. All these factors require that the Community increase its internal political cohesion and make its own specific contribution to the international consultation and co-operation needed to cushion the adverse effects of these factors.

The Committee singles out unemployment and inflation as the major problems within the Community, saying that we cannot concentrate on one at the expense of the other for they are both liable to be highly disruptive of the social fabric if they become structural components of the economic cycle.

Looking at the measures needed to support employment in connection with the policies for development, re-development and re-structuring of specific sectors, it calls yet again for closer coordination, both of the economic policies themselves and the timing of Community macroeconomic guidelines. The adverse impact, especially on the small and medium-sized firms, of certain monetary policy decisions affecting the cost of money is referred to. The Committee calls for a co-ordinated set of specific measures designed to boost employment combined with conventional macroeconomic demand management policies. The latter, it suggests, are too unselective in their impact if used alone. The Opinion favours the retraining and redeployment of the employees of ailing industries, saying that it is necessary to strengthen the European Social Fund and ensure that the existing financial instruments of the Community are optimally exploited.

The Committee recognizes the employment and counter-inflationary role of agriculture but says that increased structural funds should be coupled with structural measures to strengthen and reform agriculture leading to a more balanced agricultural production.

More weight should be given to labour-intensive activities (research, environment, health, etc.) in choosing the priorities for

public expenditure. At a time of increasing pessimism about the employment outlook, work-sharing deserves closer attention.

In the light of the real and monetary variables and the fact that the inflation forecasts made at the beginning of the year are too optimistic, the Commission should as a short-term measure, recommend a closer co-ordination of monetary and budgetary measures with a view to taking selective intervention measures. This would help to ensure that soaring interest rates do not depress demand for capital goods at a time when support for such demand is warranted by a number of factors (energy policy, industrial restructuring, and technological innovation). Unless there is a closer alignment of economic policies backed up by non-deflationary measures to narrow the disparity between the Member States the European Monetary System (EMS) will be threatened in that it will be necessary to make continuous alignments. The evolution towards full economic and monetary integration in accordance with the Bremen and Brussels agreements must continue to be based on three guiding principles : exchange agreements, credit machinery and back-up measures for the transfer of resources.

At Community level, the current serious crisis — which is not confined to the economic sphere — calls for a political will to generate debate between political, economic and social interests capable of ensuring further progress towards European union.

This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Economic and Financial Questions under the Chairmanship of Mr. LANE - Ireland - Various Interests. The rapporteur was Mr. DRAGO - Italy - Workers.

### **3. EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS (own-initiative Opinion)**

*The Report on the European Institutions.*

#### **Gist of the Opinion (\*)**

In an Opinion, adopted unanimously, the Economic and Social Committee expresses its gratification that the Report of the Three Wise Men reaffirms the Committee's role as central instrument of socio-economic consultation at Community level and is in favour of its position in the institutional system being strengthened.

It notes with satisfaction that the Report stresses that the Committee, as a consultative body like the European Parliament, should, by

(\*) Opinion No. CES 551/80

virtue of its roots in the Treaties, hold a central place « among the Community fora for socio-economic consultation ».

Like the authors of the Report, the Committee regrets that its important role is limited in practice by the weakness of the Community's own efforts in the social sphere and by a certain dilution of the consultative function at Community level.

The Committee shares the desire of the Report's authors for better participation by the European organizations in its work and wonders whether certain organizations could be accorded the status of permanent observer at Plenary Sessions.

It is aware that its work is not always seen at its true value. In this connection it has already taken a number of steps to enable members to concentrate on the more important issues at Plenary Sessions. Rational use of the right of initiative and application of procedures whereby opinions are voted on without a debate are the principal measures here.

In order to improve the « transparency » of its Opinions, the Committee has recently decided that groups formed within it or categories of economic and social activities represented on it may have statements added to Opinions.

The Committee regrets, however, that it does not have better information on the action taken in response to its Opinions and that it is unable to gauge their impact correctly. It points out that it is not able to present its Opinions direct to COREPER.

There is a need for better synchronization of the decision-making process between the various institutions. It approves the conclusions of the Report, which makes proposals in this area. In particular, it approves the suggestion of the Three Wise Men that every six months or so representatives of the Commission should hold talks with the managers of ESC and European Parliament business.

The Committee cannot but be pleased that the Report advocates closer relations between the ESC and the European Parliament. It points out that considerable progress has been made in these relations as regards both general cooperation and exchanges of information in the area of consultative work. It stresses, however, that the two assemblies are autonomous bodies and finds it hard to see how work could be shared between ESC sections and Parliament committees, since the two bodies each have their own specific task under the Treaties.

In conclusion, the Committee takes note of the Three Wise Men's proposal that it should take over from the Commission the task of convening and organizing the meetings of the various joint committees



bringing together workers' and employers' representatives from sectors where there is a particular Community interest.

It stresses, however, that there must not be any confusion between the function assigned to it by the Treaties and the tasks entrusted to these committees.

The Rapporteur-General was Mr. FRIEDRICHS - Germany - Workers.

#### **4. STORES - INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT**

*Proposal for a Council Directive on the Community Value Added Tax and excise Duty procedure applicable to the stores of vessels, aircraft and international trains.*

##### **Gist of the Commission's proposal**

Customs legislation traditionally provides for a special procedure to be applied to the stores of vessels, aircraft and international trains.

This tradition has always been upheld by Member States's tax laws, and the Sixth Council Directive on turnover taxes also embodies the principle that vessels' and aircraft's stores are to be exempt from VAT.

However, the Commission considers now that provision should be made for Community rules in this field with a view to (a) moving further towards the harmonization of the VAT uniform basis of assessment for the purpose of the Community's own resources and (b) aligning the tax procedure (VAT and excise duties) and the customs procedure applicable to one and the same transaction as closely as possible.

##### **Gist of the Opinion (\*)**

The Economic and Social Committee adopted this Opinion unanimously. It welcomes a tax Directive in this field which is in keeping with its wishes.

It nevertheless regrets that a single text cannot deal with all the Community-wide aspects of the problem and, in particular, the question of tax exemptions and exemptions from customs duties.

At the same time the Committee reiterates a number of comments which it has already made in the past and which mostly relate to matters of much wider importance than international transport stores.

(\*) Opinion No. CES 545/80

This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services under the chairmanship of Mr. van CAMPEN - Netherlands - Employers. The Rapporteur was Mr. MARVIER - France - Various Interests.

## **5. PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES (CONSTRUCTION PLANTS)**

*Proposal for a Council Directive (EEC) on the Approximation of the Laws of the Member States relating to Roll-Over Protective Structures (ROPS) of certain construction plant*

*and*

*Proposal for a Council Directive (EEC) on the Approximation of the Laws of the Member States relating to Falling-Object Protective Structures (FOPS) for certain construction plant.*

### **Gist of the proposal**

These proposals come under the Proposal for a Council Directive on the Approximation of the Laws of the Member States relating to Common Provisions for Construction Plant and Equipment. Their aim is to provide construction plant drivers with better protection against falling objects and against injury in the event of their vehicles overturning.

In several Member States measures to protect drivers have already been taken or are in the pipeline at the moment. Consequently, manufacturers of construction plant have to adapt the plant's protective structures to a variety of national provisions. This is why the Commission has carried out a study of how the approximation of legislation might eliminate the adverse effects of disparities in national laws.

EEC type-examination is the method that has been selected for the Community-wide marketing and use of the protective structures.

The Commission has proposed total harmonisation for roll-over protection structures, whose fitting to construction plant is compulsory. In the case of falling-object structures, total harmonization has, for practical reasons, been restricted to the technical criteria which these structures must satisfy. Whether or not these structures must be fitted to construction plant in certain cases has been left to the discretion of either the national/local authorities or the plant owners.

## **Gist of the Opinion (\*)**

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion unanimously. It approves the two proposals for Directives which are based on ISO standards that fully correspond to the objectives which have been set and meet with the entire approval of manufacturers in the Community.

In view of the fact that manufacturers generally have both their own test facilities (which are, moreover, essential for the fundamental development work on protective structures) and staff who are qualified to carry out the tests provided for in the Directive, the Committee regrets that the « ESC self-certification » procedure has not been proposed, at least in respect of manufacturers having such facilities and staff.

As the certificate of conformity, which is part of the machine's papers, indicates both its identity and its conformity to given standards, the Committee wonders whether it is necessary to have conformity marks.

Finally, the Committee draws the Commission's attention to the fact that charges for tests may vary from one Member State to another and this could give rise to distortions in competition between manufacturers in different States in some cases.

This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services under the chairmanship of Mr. van CAMPEN - Netherlands - Employers. The Rapporteur was Mr. MARVIER - France - Various Interests.

## **6. ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT.**

*Proposal for a Council Directive on the Approximation of the Laws of the Member States concerning electrical equipment for use in potentially explosive atmospheres in mines susceptible to fire-damp.*

### **Gis of the Proposal**

Council Directive 76/117/EEC of 18 December 1975 on the Approximation of the Laws of the Member States concerning Electrical Equipment for Use in Potentially Explosive Atmospheres excluded electrical apparatus (Group I) for use in gassy mines as this apparatus can be made subject to Community recommendations drawn up by the

(\*) Opinion No. CES 546/80

**Safety and Health Commission for the Mining and other Extractive Industries in Luxembourg.**

In February 1973, the Safety and Health Commission requested its Working Party on Electricity to prepare, in collaboration with the Commission departments, a Draft Proposal for a Directive adopting the aforementioned Directive to make it applicable to electrical apparatus for use in potentially explosive atmospheres in gassy mines. Furthermore, the Safety and Health Commission requested its Working Party on Electricity to examine the European Standards and to modify and supplement them if this should be necessary.

The Safety and Health Commission adopted on 1 December 1978 the drafts for the present Proposal for a Directive and its Explanatory Memorandum.

The technical specifications with which electrical apparatus must comply are contained in Harmonized Standards which are identical to the European Standards of the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC), except when amended by the annexes to the Directive.

The type of harmonization proposed is the optional kind. This enables the harmonized Standards and national standards to continue in coexistence.

#### **Gist of the Opinion (\*)**

The Committee approves the proposed Directive in a unanimous Opinion, but thinks that it is desirable to eliminate existing confusion in the marking of apparatus due to the fact that the standards adopted by CENELEC (some of whose members are from outside the Community) are not in line with harmonized standards. In future CENELEC should therefore be required to have their mining proposals vetted and adopted by the Luxembourg-based Safety and Health Commission for the Mining and Other Extractive Industries.

The proposed distinctive Community mark introduces a further extension of Community marking. The Committee believes that a unique mark should be developed for all Community products which consumers and producers will quickly recognise.

This Opinion was based on material prepared by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services under the chairmanship of Mr. van CAMPEN - Netherlands - Employers. The Rapporteur was Mr. PEARSON - Ireland - Employers.

(\*) Opinion No. CES 547/80

## II

### EXTERNAL RELATIONS

#### Statement by the Chairman

Between the 178th and 179th Plenary Sessions, the Committee Chairman, Mr. Raffaele VANNI, met the following persons :

**Mr. FOSCHI (Italy)**, President of the Council of Ministers (Social Affairs) (5 May), Mr. VANNI and Mr. FOSCHI discussed the main social policy questions before the Council on which the Committee had delivered Opinions.

**The presidency of the Communist group of the European Parliament (14 May)** who invited Mr. VANNI to participate in the proceedings of the Group's next meeting, to be held in Strasbourg on 19 June, to put over the Committee's ideas about strengthening Committee relations with the Parliament.

**The President of COREPER**, Ambassador PLAJA (Italy). Mr. VANNI stressed the importance which the Committee attaches to the Council's reaching a swift decision on the amendments to the Rules of Procedure and the organizational and administrative questions pending before COREPER.

**Mr. PILAVACHI (20 May)** who recently took over as director responsible for external relations at the Council of Europe.

In the same period, the Chairman represented the Committee at the following congresses and conferences :

- Federal Assembly of the Confederazione generale dell'industria italiana (Rome, 6 May 1980)
- Congress of Europe; organized by the European Movement to mark the XXX Anniversary of the Schuman Declaration (Paris, 8 May 1980)
- The symposium organized by the BEUC (European Office of Consumers' Unions) on the role of consumers' organizations in bringing about a policy on energy saving (Paris, 12 May 1980)
- Meeting organized by the Marseilles Chamber of Trade with representatives from EEC and ACP economic and social groups (Marseilles, 21 May 1980).



### III

#### NEW CONSULTATIONS

During the month of May, the Council asked the Committee for its Opinion on the following :

*Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on Common Rules for Imports of Whale Products  
(Doc. COM(80) 150 final)*

*Proposal for a Council Decision on the Conclusion of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals  
(Doc. COM(80) 187 final)*

*Draft Council Recommendation to the Member States concerning the Recovery and Re-use of Waste Paper and Board  
(Doc. COM(80) 237 final)*

*Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 64/432/EEC with Regard to Swine Vesicular Disease and Swine Fever*

*Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 72/461/EEC with Regard to Swine Vesicular Disease and Swine Fever*

*Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 80/215/EEC with Regard to Swine Vesicular Disease and Classical Swine Fever*

*Proposal for a Council Directive prolonging Certain Derogations Granted to Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom in Respect of Swine Fever  
(Doc. COM(80) 207 final)*

*Proposal for a Council Directive relating to the Date of Entry into Force of Directive 80/217/EEC introducing Community Measures for the Control of Classical Swine Fever*

*Amendments to the Proposal for a Council Regulation Laying down Conditions Designed to Render and Keep the Territory of the Community Free from Classical Swine Fever (Amendments under the Second Paragraph of Article 149 of the Treaty)*

*Proposal for a Council Decision introducing Community Financial Measures for the Control of Classical Swine Fever  
(Doc. COM(80) 206 FINAL)*

*Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 456/80 on the Granting of Temporary and Permanent Abandonment Premiums in Respect of Certain Areas under Vines and of*

***Premiums for the Renunciation of Replanting  
(Doc. COM(80) 246 final)***

***Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the Granting of a Premium for the Birth of Calves during the 1980/81 Marketing Year.***

***Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) continuing for the 1980/81 Marketing Year, the Premium for the Slaughter of Certain Adult Bovine Animals Provided for in Regulation (EEC) No. 870/77  
(Doc. COM(80) 254 final).***



## IV

### PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME OF FUTURE WORK

#### July 1980 Plenary Session

##### Opinions requested

- Legal Protection
- Protection of Workers against lead
- Textile names
- Air transport (additional Opinion)
- Biodegradability of non-ionic surfactants
- Research and Development Biomolecular engineering
- Seat belts
- Flax and hemp
- Organization of the market in oils and fats
- Organization of the wine market

##### Own-initiative Opinions

- International standards — working conditions
- Investment guarantees (less-developed countries)
- Human rights

#### September 1980 Plenary Session

##### Opinions requested

- Income tax provisions with respect to freedom of movement for workers
- Transport infrastructure support
- Development of transport infrastructure
- Regional transport statistics
- Performance of heat generators
- 2nd Lomé Convention
- Quota-free aid — regional policy (additional Opinion)
- Pesticide residues in cereals
- Dangerous substances

##### Subsequent sessions

##### Opinions requested

- Saint-Geours Report (long-term energy consumption)
- Protection of wildlife

- Products from cetaceans
- Measures to combat swine fever
- Pemphigus in pigs
- Recycling of old papers

### **Ow-initiative Opinions**

#### **Own-initiative Opinions**

- Competition policy
- European Development Fund

### **Studies**

- DNA (genetic manipulation) conjectural risks
- Coherence in external policies
- Integrated operations — regional policy
- Turkey

### **Information Report**

- Common agricultural policy

## V

### MEMBERS' NEWS

#### **Appointment**

The E.C. Council appointed Mr. Geoffrey DRAIN (United Kingdom) a member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr. MacGOUGAN.

Mr. DRAIN is General Secretary of the National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO).



Echo de la Bourse  
13.5.80

Le Monde 26.5.80

AMÉNAGEMENT DU TERRITOIRE

Les Communautés européennes  
concentrent leurs efforts  
pour aider la Lorraine

M. Jean Bernard, secrétaire général de la CEE et membre du Comité économique et social (C.E.S.) des Communautés européennes, vient de présenter un rapport intitulé « Les membres du Comité économique et social de la région lorraine pour une opération intégrée ».

Dans son rapport, le C.E.S. reprend l'idée de la Commission de Bruxelles selon laquelle il est important de jumeler les différents aides européennes (Fonds régional, Fonds agricole, Fonds social, près de la B.E.I. et de la C.E.C.A., etc.) sur une zone géographique bien délimitée afin de donner à ces mécanismes de soutien financier un maximum d'efficacité. Telle est la philosophie de procédure dite des « opérations intégrées de développement régional » qui veut aller à l'encontre d'une répartition des ressources jusqu'à ce jour, en divers secteurs comme dans chaque Etat : à

savoir, les aides ponctuelles, sectorielles, et mal coordonnées les unes avec les autres. La Lorraine a été retenue par première étude approfondie sur ce thème, parce que cette région frontalière, affectée par la crise des mines de fer et de la sidérurgie, constitue l'archétype des régions en mutation.

L'archétype  
des régions en mutation

Le rapport de M. Bernard fait plusieurs propositions pour que les aides « intégrées », appliquées à la région lorraine, trouvent la plus grande efficacité : une meilleure information ; une diversification industrielle plus poussée ; l'adaptation de l'appareil de formation professionnelle ; la création d'un institut supérieur national de l'artisanat ; le développement de l'agriculture et de la forêt ; le tourisme et le thermalisme ; la recherche de l'allongement de la durée du travail, sous des aides européennes appropriées.

Mais, jusqu'à ce jour, le gouvernement français n'a toujours pas pris politiquement en considération cette notion d'opération intégrée. Ce qui fait que les propositions du C.E.S. européen demeurent des vœux pieux. En revanche, des organismes agricoles ont été créés dans les régions du Centre (Irlande du Nord) et dans les régions frontalières de la CEE.

La Croix  
23.5.80

La Sidérurgie lorraine :  
initiative  
européenne

Une initiative originale. A la suite d'un rapport, rédigé par Jean Bernard, secrétaire général de la CEE, le Comité économique et social des Communautés européennes demande que « la zone sidérurgique lorraine bénéficie d'une opération de développement intégré... Il propose de « coordonner les efforts nationaux et européens », notamment pour « diversifier les activités » en Lorraine (modernisation des infrastructures routières, valorisation de la forêt...).

FINANCIAL TIMES

28.5.80

Today's Events

EEC Economic and Social Committee (two-day plenary session) opens, Brussels.

Les comités  
consultatifs  
communautaires  
à composition  
socio-économique

Documentation établie par la Division « Etudes et Recherches » du Secrétariat Général du Comité économique et social des Communautés européennes. 200 pages, format : 15 x 22 cm, 495 FB. Publiée par les Editions Delta, 82 sq. E. Plesky, 1040 Bruxelles.

La première partie de cet ouvrage donne un aperçu des 46 comités et organismes consultatifs existant au sein des Communautés européennes et composés entièrement ou partiellement de représentants des diverses catégories de la vie économique et sociale.

La seconde partie est composée d'annexes qui sont des « fiches techniques » détaillées sur chaque organe (base juridique, composition, mode de désignation des membres, fonctionnement et activités, budget, services compétents à la Commission et au Conseil, etc.).

Terra e Vita  
16.5.80

Scambi del  
riproduttori suini

Proposta una direttiva per favorire l'armonizzazione dei rapporti export-import.

Il CEE (Comitato Economico e Sociale) della comunità ha adottato, all'unanimità una proposta di regolamento relativa alle norme zootecniche applicabili agli animali riproduttori della specie suina. Il Comitato sottolinea che l'importanza delle divergenze fra Stati membri in campo di legislazione zootecnica renderebbe necessario di formulare la proposta sotto forma di direttiva e non di regolamento. Detto ciò il Comitato approva l'obiettivo perseguito dalla Commissione, vale a dire l'eliminazione degli ostacoli agli scambi intracomunitari di suini riproduttori, seppur sottolineando che gli ostacoli attuali non sono più così importanti.

Le Republicain Lorrain 19.5.80

## Le CES européen propose une opération de développement régional intégrée

Coordonner l'ensemble des aides nationales et communautaires prévues pour le bassin industriel lorrain afin d'unifier l'efficacité. Cette proposition faite par le comité économique et social des entrepreneurs lorrains sera présentée mardi à Paris où M. Jean Bernard espère ce qu'il entend par « opération de développement régional intégrée ».

Cette initiative s'inscrit dans le prolongement d'une mission effectuée en octobre dernier en Lorraine par une délégation du C.E.S. européen conduite par M. Reinhard Blang, membre du bureau de l'Institut allemand de l'emploi, et M. Jean Bernard, le secrétaire général de la C.F.T.C.

A cette époque déjà, un mission avait déploré le caractère dispersé et insuffisant des efforts déployés en Lorraine. Une appréciation que le C.E.S. des entrepreneurs européens a repris à son compte en proposant de « donner le maximum d'efficacité et de cohérence aux interventions en coordonnant les différentes politiques entre elles et en assurant la complémentarité des efforts nationaux et européens ». Dans ce but, ce C.E.S. européen prévoit la création de groupes de travail régionaux ayant au niveau de la Communauté européenne un seul interlocuteur chargé de coordonner les interventions des différents fonds (Fonds européen de développement régional, Fonds

social européen, Fonds européen d'organisation et de gestion agricole, Banque européenne d'investissements, etc.).

Cette décentralisation paraît d'autant plus souhaitable que la mission du C.E.S. européen en

Lorraine s'est rendu compte que l'existence des aides européennes reste fort peu connue, notamment des PME, des artisans, des responsables des collectivités locales et même des organisations syndicales.

Luxemburger Wort 30.5.80

## Le CES regrette la paralysie de la CEE

Le Comité économique et social réuni en assemblée plénière les 28 et 29 mai, s'est ému dans une déclaration adoptée à l'unanimité de la situation de crise grave dans laquelle se trouve la Communauté.

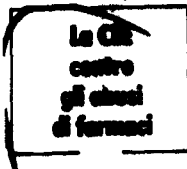
Il regrette que les nombreuses sessions du Conseil de ministres et les réunions du Conseil européen n'aient pas permis de résoudre les problèmes fondamentaux qui paralysent la Communauté.

Il déplore tout particulièrement l'absence de budget dont il dénonce les conséquences néfastes sur les politiques communes et le fonctionnement des institutions et qui risquent de conduire à

des initiatives nationales incompatibles avec l'esprit et la lettre du traité.

Le Comité économique et social lance un appel pressant au Conseil européen, aux institutions communautaires ainsi qu'aux gouvernements des Etats membres afin que toutes les mesures soient prises d'urgence pour trouver une solution qui permette de rendre à la Communauté le dynamisme dont elle a besoin pour apporter une contribution efficace au maintien de la paix dans le monde, au développement économique, à l'amélioration du sort des plus défavorisés, à la sauvegarde de l'emploi, du pouvoir d'achat et de l'équité sociale.

L'Adige 11.5.80



Ministère contemporaneamente il primo dei prodotti farmaceutici ed il loro consumo è l'obiettivo che

devesse perseguire le autorità nazionali competenti del novo Paese della CEE secondo un parere, formulato a larga maggioranza, dal parlamento europeo e sociale della Commissione europea.

Il documento ricorda l'esistenza di due tipi specifici di consumi farmaceutici:

quelli prescritti dal medico e quelli assenti o limitatamente dal medico e proprio tale. Se i medici che i consumatori devono modificare il loro comportamento, si afferma. Da una parte però si constata che talvolta il medico prescrive più del necessario, per compensare l'incertezza della diagnosi o per rassicurare il paziente. D'altra parte, il consumo di farmaci da parte del grande pubblico tende a diventare eccessivo anche per influenza della pubblicità.



**PUBLICATIONS OBTAINABLE FROM THE ECONOMIC  
AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

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**Periodical**

- Bulletin (monthly publication)

**General Documentation**

- The Economic and Social Committee (leaflet) (January 1975)
- The Economic and Social Committee (April 1979) (A descriptive brochure) 16 p
- Annual Report (1978) 115 p (1976) 80 p
- Directory (January 1980) (List of Members)
- The Right of initiative of the Economic and Social Committee (October 1977) 124 p.
- 20th Anniversary of the Economic and Social Committee (May 1978) 19 p


**Opinions and Studies**

- The Organisation and Management of Community R & D (February 1980) (Study) 168 p
- Agricultural Structures Policy (November 1979) (Opinion) 90 p
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- Progress Report on the Common Agricultural Policy (February 1975) (Study) 52 p.
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- Community Advisory Committee for the Representation of Socio-Economic Interests (£8 50)  
(Obtainable from GOWER Publishing Company Limited, 1 Westmead Farnborough, Hampshire, GU 147RU)





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**Cat. Nr CES 80-008-E**