

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY

BULLETIN

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Brussels - No 10/1987



The Bulletin reports every month (10 issues yearly) on the activities of the Economic and Social Committee, a Community consultative body. It is edited by the Secretariat-General of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities (2 rue Ravenstein, B-1000 Brussels) in the official Community languages.

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Catalogue number: ESC 87-019-EN

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1987

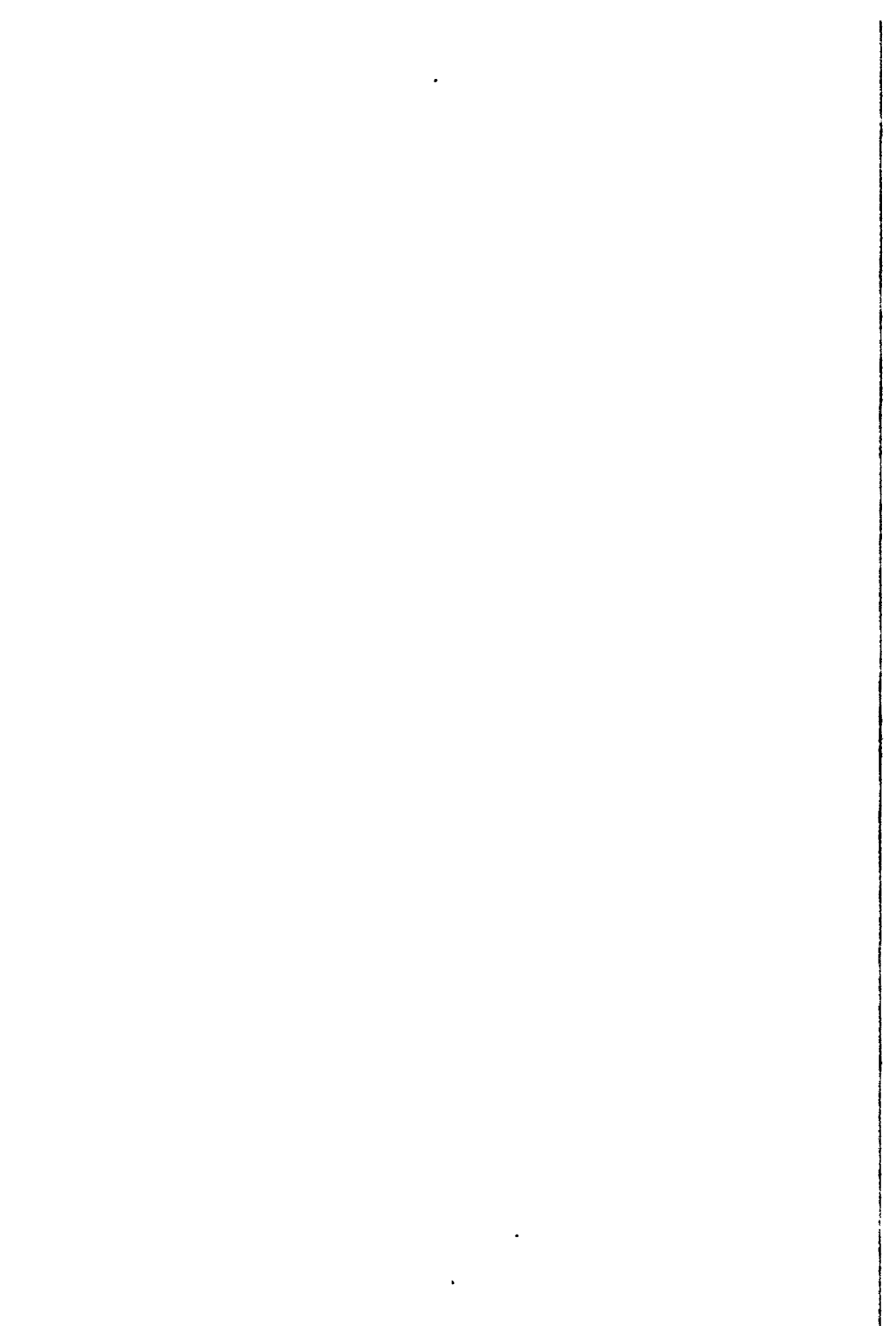
Catalogue number: EX-AA-87-010-EN-C

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Printed in Belgium

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249th Plenary Session

The 249th Plenary Session of the Economic and Social Committee was held at the Committee building in Brussels on 21 and 22 October 1987. The Committee Vice-Chairmen, Mr William G. Poeton and Mr José Maria Zufiaur Narvaiza, presided.

OPINIONS ADOPTED

1. SPEED LIMITS

'Speed limits in the Community (Communication from the Commission to the Council)'
[COM(86) 735 final]

Gist of the Commission document

This Communication from the Commission follows up the commitment it made at the Environment Council (June 1985) to present an 'appropriate proposal on speed limits', given the influence of speed on pollutant emissions from cars. However, discussion is not confined to the environment, but also relates to the effects of speed on:

(i) Road safety:

Speed greatly influences accidents and their consequences, since their seriousness is in general proportional to speed. It is noteworthy that the lowering of speed limits in the United States and Europe following the energy crisis (1973/74) led to a fall in the number of fatal accidents.

(ii) Vehicle emissions:

Studies clearly show that lower speeds significantly reduce vehicle emissions, especially of nitrogen oxides — one of the causes of acid rain.

(iii) Fuel consumption:

Lower speeds would have a significant impact only on motorways and roads of a similar type.

(iv) Other effects of speed:

It is difficult to assess the impact of lower speed limits on transport productivity and car manufacturers. However, any adverse effects would be limited, since the new limits would not be much below the speeds practised by the majority of motorists.

In view of the above and of the fact that, given the prospect of completion of the internal market (1992), it is unreasonable to have different speed limits for the same type of infrastructure, the Commission believes that the Community should adopt a Directive on speed limits.

Thus it intends to present, in the first half of 1987, a draft Directive to set legal speed limits.

Under this Directive, legally enforceable limits should apply on all roads in the Community and to all types of traffic; speed limits applied to cars and motorcycles on motorways should take account of the construction and traffic volume of the motorway, of environmental factors and of acceptability — and hence ease of enforcement (e.g. 'normal limit' of 120 km/h); on some motorways (e.g. those with less traffic) the legal limit might be higher than the 'normal limit'; on others (e.g. those with more traffic) and on all other non-urban roads, limits should be lower than the 'normal' motorway limit; this would encourage drivers to use motorways, where safety standards are higher; pollutant exhaust emissions would also be significantly reduced, since the bulk of traffic travels on the other non-urban roads. Speed limits for buses and heavy goods vehicles should be significantly lower than for cars. Existing speed limits should be maintained in urban areas, since they are already largely harmonized.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

The ESC believes that although speed affects road safety, other equally important factors are involved: driver behaviour (and the exercise of the utmost caution), vehicle design and efficiency, and the specific features and state of repair of the carriageway. Greater road safety is contingent on appropriate action in all these areas.

In an Opinion adopted by 110 votes for, 9 votes against and 21 abstentions, the ESC proposes that a Directive on speed limits should first and foremost comprise the following rules:

¹ CES 928/87.

Built-up areas

Maximum speed limit for all vehicles, except buses, coaches and goods vehicles above 3.5 tonnes: 60 km/hour; 50 km/hour for buses and coaches; 40 km/hour for goods vehicles above 3.5 tonnes.

Non-urban roads

Maximum speed limit for all vehicles, except buses, coaches and goods vehicles above 3.5 tonnes: 100 km/hour; 80 km/hour for buses and coaches; 70 km/hour for goods vehicles above 3.5 tonnes.

Motorways

Maximum recommended speeds under normal conditions for all vehicles except buses, coaches and goods vehicles above 3.5 tonnes: 130 km/hour; 100 km/hour for buses and coaches; 90 km/hour for goods vehicles above 3.5 tonnes.

The relevant authority should at all events be able to set mandatory limits below 130 km/hour for black spots.

The problems of pollution and energy consumption should be dealt with under other Community policies and decisions.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr L. J. Smith (United Kingdom — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Cavazzuti (Italy — Workers).

2. ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE DISABLED

'Proposal for a Council Decision establishing an action programme at Community level to promote the vocational rehabilitation and economic integration of people with disabilities'

'Proposal for a Council Decision adopting an action programme at Community level to promote the social integration and independent living of people with disabilities'

[COM(87) 342 final]

Gist of the Commission document

Even by a conservative estimate, there are over 30 million people in the European Community suffering from moderate or severe long-term physical, mental or psychological disabilities. This number is

not likely to fall significantly either, since the reduction in the number of disabled persons, thanks to medical and technological advances, is offset by high accident rates, lower infant mortality rates, and greater life expectancy.

Member State authorities are seeking to encourage disabled persons who in the past would have lived in special institutions to live in open society. This generates needs and new aspirations for the social and economic integration of the disabled. But at the same time the realization of these aspirations comes up against economic constraints. In all Member States, new measures will be needed to prevent a deterioration in the situation of the disabled.

This is the background to the new Community action programme which is to run from 1988 until 1991. The Commission sees it as a natural progression from the first action programme for the disabled which was introduced in 1981. However, the new programme will be somewhat modified and broader in scope, in order to promote the economic and social integration of the disabled and their desire to live independently.

To help the Commission, a new advisory committee is to be set up comprising representatives from the Member States, associations of disabled people and their families, and the two sides of industry.

The Commission proposes that the programme should include three interdependent areas:

- (a) policy guidelines for the economic and social integration of disabled people;
- (b) technical cooperation at Community level to promote innovation, exchange information, and pass on details of successful projects;
- (c) Community-level information and documentation systems.

A. Policy guidelines

Following the 1986 Recommendation on the employment of the disabled, the Commission proposes measures for their physical environment. These are to be implemented in three stages:

- (i) proposal on the mobility of disabled people, including transport, to be submitted by the Commission in summer 1987;
- (ii) proposals on access to public facilities, to be submitted by the Commission at the end of 1987;
- (iii) proposals on housing (including financial support for independent living at home), to be submitted by the Commission in summer 1988.

For all three stages, the Commission will propose a set of policy guidelines together with a more detailed code of practice.

The Commission also intends to take policy initiatives on disabled persons' incomes and benefits. It has already begun its preparatory work to identify priority issues for which Community action would be most justified and effective.

B. Technical cooperation

The Commission proposes that this should involve four activities:

- (i) *An extended network of rehabilitation centres.* The network was set up under the first action programme. The Commission now proposes extending its coverage of the psychiatric, sensory, physical and mental disability fields.
- (ii) *A network of 80 local innovatory projects,* focusing on the general coordination of services, vocational training and employment, the environment, and resources for independent living and educational integration.
- (iii) *A programme of prizes and exhibitions on the theme of independent living.* The Commission proposes to tackle one major theme per year: housing, home services and aids in the home (1988-89); mobility and transport (everyday movement and travel) in 1989-90; access to public buildings and facilities (1990-91); and a coherent environment: the interplay of mobility, access and housing, plus coordinated advice and information services (1991-92).
- (iv) Extension and rationalization of the present programme of *support for European cooperation*, particularly by non-governmental organizations.

C. Information and documentation

In the information field, the Commission has launched the 'Handynet' project, the first module of which ('Handy aids') will be operational in January 1988. This multilingual computerized information system for people with disabilities will be further developed in 1988. During the second action programme, Handynet will focus on consultation and decision-making procedures, and on the procedures for financing the development and day-to-day running of the system.

The Commission will also extend the documentation service established under the first programme, thereby going a long way to meeting the enormous demand which has been brought to its notice.

The programme will be closely coordinated with the programme to improve the educational integration of children and young people with disabilities which the Council adopted on 14 May 1987. Thus for the first time the Community will be in a position to undertake comprehensive action embracing all the main components of a policy to promote the integration of the disabled.

In 1987 the Commission is also to draw up proposals for giving disabled people better access to new technologies. This will include the broad areas of education, training, employment, mobility, communication and control of the environment.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The Opinion adopted unanimously in favour of the Commission's proposals and notes that these include a number of recommendations already made by the Committee.

After stressing the need to do more to prevent accidents on the roads and in the home, the draft Opinion expresses agreement with the approach adopted by the Commission, which concentrates on integrating the disabled into working and social life, rather than on just providing welfare. An effort is called for to promote basic research into the prevention of disabilities and the integration of the disabled. The draft Opinion also regrets the lack of budgetary resources earmarked for the programme.

In its specific comments, the draft Opinion covers the following in particular:

- (i) the definition of 'disabled people';
- (ii) the problems connected with the mobility of the disabled, transport and access to the workplace, and the training of persons taking care of the disabled; and
- (iii) the make-up of the proposed advisory committee.

The rapporteur-general of this Opinion was Mr Burnel (France — Various Interests).

3. DELTA PROGRAMME

'Proposal for a Council Regulation on a Community action in the field of learning technology — Delta (Developing European learning through technological advance)'

[COM(87) 353 final]

¹ CES 929/87.

Gist of the Commission proposal

The creation of the internal market, and in this context, the strengthening of the international competitiveness of industry and business as part of a policy for growth and employment, requires a concerted effort in the field of human resources on a Community level. Education and training — both initial and continuing — have a fundamental role to play, in relation to both the economic and social challenges. The Commission's recent communication ('Green Paper') on 'continuing education of employees in companies' as well as the proposed Community action programme on 'preparation and vocational training of young people', embody this political and strategic will.

In the development and implementation of a Community strategy relating to human resources, the new technologies play a key role as a subject as well as an option for more economic and flexible means of delivering education and training. This is addressed by a set of actions focusing on key aspects in a specific manner. These are:

- (i) the programme Comett for cooperation between universities and businesses for advanced training in technologies;
- (ii) the programme relating to the introduction of new technologies in the school; and
- (iii) the programme Eurotecnet concerning vocational training and new technologies.

These programmes rely on today's technology for education and training. The complementary research and development into advanced techniques to support learning is the objective of the Programme Delta, which will focus on the development of new technologies, tools and infrastructures required to support distance learning. Specifically Delta will exploit advances in information technology and telecommunications (IT&T) for the support of learning. In this it will rely on synergy with the above-mentioned actions in the delivery of education and training as well as on the Community actions in the field of information technology (Esprit), telecommunications (RACE), IT&T standardization and the information market policy.

Delta rests on the following considerations:

- (i) Identifiable advances in IT&T can enrich and enhance education and training in all countries of the Community, and thus serve the strategic objectives of upgrading the level of performance in all economic activities.
- (ii) The high degree of commonality in basic learning requirements, both between individual Member States and between various

economic sectors and disciplines, makes possible selective action at the Community level to bring about economies of scale which will be decisive in enabling the required systems and equipment to be produced competitively building on developments in related areas.

The five main areas of action are:

- (i) Concertation between the authorities, academia, the users and the industrial companies, including publishers and information providers, to establish present and future learning support requirements.
- (ii) Cooperative development of technology appropriate to the progression through the three main stages identified in the programme.
- (iii) Ongoing testing and validation of the concepts on the basis of a shared resource ('test-bed') and selected experimental implementations.
- (iv) Determined efforts to achieve a considerable degree of harmonization of the many standards and practices which, in this field, would otherwise constitute a continuing obstacle to development and use, by means of reinforcement of the ongoing work.
- (v) The promotion of favourable conditions for the development of learning technology and its use in open learning measures which are proposed for further consideration include the reduction of the 'cost of entry' for learners and companies, and of an appropriate regulatory regime facilitating the introduction of new learning support techniques (open learning).

The Delta programme would be set in motion progressively starting with a pilot phase in 1988.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

In its Opinion adopted unanimously, the Economic and Social Committee has approved the Delta programme, subject to the following remarks:

- (i) a full range of relevant economic and social interest groups ought to be consulted on the development of the programme;
- (ii) ongoing dialogue between suppliers and users is needed;
- (iii) Delta ought to be relevant to training of all kinds, including vocational training;

¹ CES 930/87.

- (iv) there must be easy access to the learning facilities promoted through Delta;
- (v) a wide range of projects is likewise essential.

The rapporteur-general for this Opinion was Mrs Williams (United Kingdom — Various Interests).

4. ESPRIT PROGRAMME

'Proposal for a Council Regulation concerning the European strategic programme for research and development in information technologies (Esprit)'
[COM(87) 313 final]

Gist of the Commission proposal

By transmitting to the Council its Communication on the second phase of the Esprit programme, the Commission has defined the objectives, rationale and scope for the second phase of Esprit.

The present draft Regulation is the concrete adjunct to this Communication.

The draft Regulation takes into account the recommendations formulated in the mid-term review of Esprit and the new initiatives taken both inside and outside the Community in the IT area. It builds upon the technical results of Esprit achieved so far.

Spiralling costs of R&D caused by the extreme dynamics of the sector, and an uncertainty factor which leads to pursuing several technological approaches in parallel, are main constraints on the IT industry. At the same time, strong international competition, and the increased resources devoted to research and development worldwide, have paved the way for a coordinated approach to research and development in Europe.

Therefore, it is the aim to ensure that in the future course of the programme the number of researchers rise to the challenge of meeting well-defined, ambitious technical objectives.

The size of Esprit effort must be such as to offer ample opportunity for industrial concerns to meet these objectives by building on cooperation within the Community.

In estimating the total volume of effort, the Commission has been guided by the defined technical objectives which the Community IT industry must meet in order to sustain competitiveness in key strategic

areas in the medium and long term. These determine the scope and content of the Esprit programme.

In this respect the foremost necessity at Community level is to devote the necessary critical mass efforts, defined as the minimum manpower needed to reach Esprit objectives in due time. New activities comprising an overall estimate of 28 000 man-years of R&D work coupled with some 12 000 already covered by the first phase, will be needed to ensure that this critical mass effort is maintained throughout the IT industry. In accordance with the provisions foreseen in the framework programme Regulation, out of the 28 000 man-years for new activities deemed to be necessary, an effort of 21 000 man-years is proposed to be initiated during the period 1988-92.

On the basis of a 50% contribution the budgetary load for the Community would be 1 600 million ECU.

Moreover, the Commission will facilitate, by means of new financial engineering mechanisms which are being prepared, the financing of cooperative, transnational projects, downstream the precompetitive R&D work undertaken in this programme.

The programme will also be submitted to external independent evaluation; in particular the report foreseen in 1990 (Article 8 of the proposed Regulation) will be based on an evaluation by a panel of high-level experts.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

Community funds of 1 600 million ECU are estimated for this phase. In its Opinion adopted unanimously with three abstentions, the Committee welcomes the continuation of the programme as proposed by the Commission. Attention is drawn to the following points:

- (i) SMEs should receive special consideration in the allocation of aid, possibly exceeding the limit of 50% of project costs in justified cases.
- (ii) It is also particularly important that the projects be properly linked to and coordinated with other EC projects in the field of information and communications technology and with relevant national R&D projects.
- (iii) The Committee reiterates its view that the users of the technology, especially manufacturers and the office technology sector, should participate in the R&D projects.

¹ CES 931/87.

The rapporteur-general for this Opinion was Mr Vassilaras (Greece — Various Interests).

5. FINANCING OF MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

'Proposal for a Council Decision on the financing of major Community infrastructure projects'
[COM(86) 722 final]

Gist of the Commission proposal

There are many difficulties hampering the emergence, launching and carrying out of large-scale infrastructure projects, which offer Europe advantages in terms of integration, cohesion and competitiveness. Such difficulties result both from the diversity and fragmentation of the interests involved and from more strictly financial aspects relating to the considerable amount of capital required by such projects and the high degree of risk entailed.

In view of the new financial context in Europe, which calls for a redistribution of roles in the promotion, financing and management of large-scale infrastructure projects and greater commitment of private capital, the Commission has presented a communication on the financing of large-scale infrastructure projects of European interest. The communication sets out the new role which the Community could play. The purpose of this proposal for a decision is to allow the introduction of new Community assistance procedures to facilitate and encourage private capital participation in the various development stages of large-scale infrastructure projects.

The means of action proposed are intended essentially to meet two objectives:

- (a) To provide the conditions necessary for the emergence and launching of large-scale projects, through
 - (i) a budget contribution towards the cost of the studies and preparatory work;
 - (ii) a 'declaration of European interest' which would demonstrate the Commission's support;
 - (iii) a budget contribution, in the form of a repayable advance, to the financial launching of projects declared to be of European interest;
- (b) To mobilize the market by giving the Community new ways of providing back-up, by granting a budget guarantee.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

The launching of large-scale infrastructure projects — such as the Channel Tunnel, the European High-Speed Rail Network, the cleansing of the River Rhine, a broadband telecommunications network for Europe — is a necessary condition for European integration. In an Opinion adopted by a large majority, with three votes against and one abstention, the Economic and Social Committee underlined the role of the European Investment Bank, particularly an enhanced role in financial coordination.

The Opinion considers that as these are the most far-reaching proposals in terms of coordinated European development since the signing of the Treaty of Rome, there is a need at the outset to test the proposed structures. To this end, it is recommended that only a short list of projects receive initial approval affecting a maximum number of Community regions, on the basis of socio-economic priorities.

Whilst appreciating that some Member States might have reservations about the possible diversion of funds away from national programmes, nevertheless, the hope must be that they will support these proposals as a long-term contribution to a more dynamic Community. This is particularly so in that the number of schemes requiring major financing, during the next five years, will be strictly limited. It is clearly necessary that greater political will is an essential if real progress in this area is to be made.

The financing needs of infrastructure projects of general public benefit are so great that they cannot possibly all be met, given current public sector budget constraints. Clearly only governments can finance projects where the return is insufficient to amortize the costs. Profitable projects on the other hand, where costs can be amortized by means of tolls, can be financed by private capital.

Some projects can be made suitable for private financing simply by the granting of a concession. Others are difficult to finance, either because they are not quite profitable enough, because they are too risky or because the amortization period is rather too long. In such cases it seems quite legitimate for the authorities, either at national or Community level, to give a helping hand, e.g. in the form of tax advantages, to make these projects viable. Official intervention is justified by the benefits accruing to the general public from projects of this kind.

¹ CES 932/87.

In the identification and preliminary appraisal of potential projects, it is proposed that a Commission Task Force be created for this purpose and specific criteria be established for designating projects as of 'potential European interest'.

For necessary projects with a particularly high risk, the EIB could have a role in the promotion of co-financing, together with sources of private capital. There could also be a role here for Community Funds. A way does need to be found of combining the two systems: e.g. the general system for promoting private investment in infrastructure and the specific system of aid for infrastructure development in disadvantaged regions (a scheme designed to promote cohesion in the Community). This will ensure that these regions are not excluded, indeed that they benefit to the full from the Commission's proposals.

Financing should be through a combination of bonds and equity, offered for sale at least in all Community countries, denominated in ECU and issued under rules specific to these instruments which should be binding on all Member States. Denomination in ECU would both reduce exchange risks for investors and ease the problems of project costing for transnational projects.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Economic, Financial and Monetary Questions, chaired by Mr Goris (The Netherlands — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Hancock (United Kingdom — Employers).

6. PUBLIC SUPPLY CONTRACTS

'Proposal for a Council Directive coordinating the laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to the application of Community rules on procedures for the award of public supply and public works contracts'
[COM(87) 134 final]

Gist of the Commission document

The Community rules on public procurement, and in particular Directives 71/305/EEC (public works contracts) and 77/62/EEC (public supplies contracts), do not specifically provide for effective monitoring of their application.

The Commission has noted that contracting authorities may infringe the Community and/or national law applicable at various stages of the contract award procedures. The most serious and frequent infringements include the following:

- (i) failure to publish invitations to tender in the *Official Journal*;
- (ii) misuse of the exceptional award procedures;
- (iii) inclusion in the tender notice of administrative, financial, economic or technical clauses (and in particular the obligation to apply national standards even where Community standards exist) which are incompatible with the relevant Community legislation;
- (iv) the unlawful exclusion of tenderers or candidates from other Member States;
- (v) discrimination in the checks made of the technical, financial and economic standing of tenderers;
- (vi) discrimination in the award of contracts.

The Commission thinks that infringements of the Community rules on public procurement generally occur before the contract is awarded. Since contract award procedures are of short duration, any failure to comply with the Community rules in question needs to be dealt with urgently and rapidly.

The Commission has also noted that the remedies open to a contractor or supplier when he considers that a decision taken by a contracting authority rejecting his candidature or bid under a public contract award procedure is in breach of the Community and/or national law applicable vary from one Member State to another. This disparity creates differences of treatment between those who have had recourse to such remedies.

The Commission makes the following concrete proposals:

- (i) effective and rapid administrative and/or judicial remedies to be introduced in those Member States in which they are lacking;
- (ii) Member States to be required to take the necessary measures to authorize the competent administrative body or court to take precautionary measures designed, among other things, to suspend the contract award procedure or the implementation of the decision taken by the contracting authority;
- (iii) the Commission to be able to intervene in the administrative or judicial procedures in order to ensure the precedence of Community public interest and compliance with the Community rules applicable to the award of public supply and public works contracts;
- (iv) the Commission to be empowered, in cases of urgency, to suspend a contract award procedure for a period that may not exceed three months. The decision to suspend the procedure is

to be notified to the contracting authority and to the Member State to which the latter is answerable. The Commission may publish its decision in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

The Economic and Social Committee adopted an Opinion on this subject by a large majority with five abstentions.

The Committee has doubts as to how far the proposed Directive can have the necessary effectiveness. In the Committee's view the draft Directive, as at present worded, fails to guarantee that an injured party will have his complaint dealt with in any Member State in accordance with the same criteria and legal principles, and within the same time-limits, as those of all the other Member States. And in the Committee's opinion it is neither fair nor reasonable to expect individual Member States to dismantle their rules protecting domestic producers unless they can be basically confident that the other Member States will follow suit.

The Committee therefore urges the Commission, without waiting for adoption of the Directive, to cooperate with the Member States on working out uniform provisions regarding time-limits, penalty payments and administrative procedures.

If the draft Directive is to be effective, the Commission must have the same powers to impose sanctions as those to be given to the national authorities.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr Kazakis (Greece — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Kaaris (Denmark — Employers).

7. DRIVE PROGRAMME

'Proposal for a Council Regulation on a Community programme in the field of information technology and telecommunications applied to road transport — Drive (Dedicated road infrastructure for vehicle safety in Europe)'

[COM(87) 351 final]

¹ CES 933/87.

Gist of the Commission document

The Commission proposes that a Community programme in the field of road transport informatics, called Drive (Dedicated road infrastructure for vehicle safety in Europe), be adopted for an initial period of 30 months, commencing on 1 January 1988.

The objectives of the programme are:

- (a) *to increase the Community's road transport efficiency.* According to current estimates, the cost of inefficient usage of the existing road network is of the order of 20 000 million ECU per year, which can be split almost equally between wasted mileage due to poor routing, on the one hand, and traffic congestion on the other;
- (b) *to improve road safety.* Over a million accidents occur in the Community every year, leaving more than 50 000 dead and hundreds of thousands injured. Information technologies and telecommunications cannot fail to contribute to the reduction of deaths and accidents on the roads, which will be of enormous benefit socially as well as economically;
- (c) *to improve environmental protection.* The incessant throbbing and screeching of vehicles stopping and starting, especially heavy goods vehicles, has a deleterious effect on the environment. The use of technological aids to maintain traffic flow at a more constant speed will enable internal combustion engines to operate quietly and efficiently. Improved traffic management by means of information technologies will also have a positive impact on the environment (see point (a) above).

The specific aims of the Drive programme are as follows:

- (a) to enable the timely adaptation of the road infrastructures and services to exploit the opportunities opened up by technological advance;
- (b) to exploit the opportunities for synergy between road and telecommunications infrastructure developments;
- (c) to contribute to a consistent development of RTI¹ so as to facilitate the realization of the internal market;
- (d) to contribute to the international competitiveness of the equipment and service industries;
- (e) to stimulate collaboration in the analyses of requirements and opportunities, the development of functional specifications, pre-

¹ Road transport informatics.

normative R&D for infrastructure technology, and their verification;

- (f) to support the international standardization in RTI and related equipment and services;
- (g) to contribute to the timely common adaptation of the regulatory framework to advances in RTI.

The programme will initially focus on common infrastructure technology requirements and operational issues concerning public authorities. It will also concentrate on following up efforts already made by the automobile industry in this field. The long-term aim is for a concerted approach to be adopted by sector actors, including:

- (i) national authorities responsible for the road infrastructures,
- (ii) telecommunications and broadcasting operators,
- (iii) automobile industry and component industry, and
- (iv) the IT&T equipment industry.

Other interested parties include:

- (i) insurance companies,
- (ii) road transport service industries, and
- (iii) all participants in road transport.

The programme's first year workplan, summarized in Annex I, consists of:

- (a) building a reference model,
- (b) drawing up protocols, specifications and standardization proposals,
- (c) carrying out the research, testing and experimentation needed to explore the technical and economic characteristics of new technologies relevant to Drive,
- (d) assessing technological scenarios, and
- (e) implementing an action plan.

The Drive programme is part of the framework programme of Community activities in the R&D sector (Eureka and Prometheus).

The implementation of the Drive programme will require approximately 60 million ECU of Community funding, which will cover 50% of the total cost.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

In its Opinion adopted unanimously the Committee notes that for the programme to be successful it must be adopted without delay, as this European initiative is already facing strong competition from overseas, and in particular from Japan where, on 1 October 1986, a joint venture in road transport informatics was agreed between the Japanese Ministry of Industrial Affairs (MITI) and 13 industrial companies in the automotive and electronics sectors.

The Committee also maintains that, in parallel with Drive's reappraisal of road traffic infrastructure, there must be adequate assessment of the programme's effects on the common transport policy and of the needs of the other modes of transport.

Social aspects likely to be affected by the Drive programme, such as its impact on the necessary qualifications of professional drivers, their conduct and health, and on the behaviour of the general driving public, will have to be considered. Training programmes will have to be defined, mainly in order to improve the qualifications of drivers and of staff responsible for the maintenance of vehicles and infrastructure.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr L. J. Smith (United Kingdom — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Perrin-Pelletier (France — Employers).

8. OFFICIAL INSPECTION OF FOODSTUFFS

'Proposal for a Council Directive on the official inspection of Foodstuffs'
[COM(86) 747 final]

Gist of the Commission proposal

The aim of the draft Directive is to lay down general rules to be followed when national authorities carry out controls on the conformity of foodstuffs with the provisions which ensure the protection of the consumer against health risks and fraud.

A survey held among the Member States showed that the monitoring of foodstuffs differs considerably from one country to another. The first stage would be to harmonize general principles; specific provisions, if necessary, would be adopted subsequently.

¹ CES 934/87.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

In its Opinion adopted unanimously, the Committee approves the proposal, but notes that the effectiveness of the Directive will be determined to a large extent by subsequent legislation in certain important areas covered by the Directive such as the organization of inspection, sampling and hygiene criteria.

The differences between Member States' rules on the labelling of products could give rise to considerable difficulties in the application of this Directive. Rapid progress thus needs to be made in the harmonization of labelling provisions.

Inspections should cover all stages of production and distribution and raw materials should also be inspected. To ensure that inspections are effective, special attention must be paid to the competence of the staff and the quality of the laboratories responsible for inspection. Clear Community criteria should be laid down for this.

Lastly, the Committee suggests that a Community body might be set up to coordinate and harmonize national inspection systems.

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 Mr Jaschick (Germany — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Hilkens (The Netherlands — Various Interests).

9. SHIFT PROJECT

'Proposal for a Council Decision on a system for health control of imports from third countries at frontier inspection posts'

[COM(87) 207 final]

Gist of the Commission proposal

Directive 72/462/EEC provides for the establishment of a system to monitor the importation of animals and meat from third countries, in order to ensure their acceptability from both animal and public health points of view prior to their admission into the Community. Subsequent Decisions and Directives, notably 85/649/EEC on the use of hormones in meat-producing animals and 86/489/EEC on examination of animals and fresh meat for the presence of residues, have indicated the need for inspection and testing of imported

¹ CES 926/87.

animals and meat to ensure conformity with Community regulations. As a consequence, it will be necessary to establish a system of inspection posts, all of which must be provided with the information required to carry out the required checks and inspections, and must also record certain statistics. Furthermore, communications between these posts must be established in such a way as to prevent fraudulent activities, as for example could occur when products are transhipped through the Community. It is clear that these aims can best be met by use of modern information and communication technology. On 4 February 1986 the Council agreed to the CD project as a means of coordinating the computerization of administrative procedures between Member States. This project does not, however, take account of the particular veterinary problems foreseen by Shift, nor does it provide for consultations between veterinary and informatics experts from Member States and the Commission, taking account of progress in the field of computerization specifically within the veterinary sector.

As yet, not all of the enabling legislation for the inspection posts has been completed, but it is considered that the Shift project should be developed in parallel with the enabling legislation, in order that there will be as short a delay as possible between agreement on procedures to be used at these posts and implementation of a modern communication and data-processing system to handle the information. These proposals are seen as particularly important to allow free movement of animals and animal products from third countries within the Community while maintaining adequate health safeguards.

It is therefore necessary that the Council should indicate its willingness to proceed on this basis, so as to enable the Commission to allocate resources to a full study of the problem, with the objective of producing a detailed analysis of the proposed computer system, including hardware, software, communications, manpower requirements and estimated costs. On the basis of the proposed Decision, Commission veterinary and informatics experts will be able to examine the necessity for each legal instrument, as it exists or is adopted, and, by liaising with similar experts from Member States, formulate a proposal for consideration by the Caddia Steering Committee and the Standing Veterinary Committee.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

The Economic and Social Committee has adopted its Opinion on this subject unanimously.

¹ CES 927/87.

The ultimate objective of the computerized system envisaged by the Shift project would be to improve the quality of frontier post inspection (including the effectiveness of the prevention of fraud) without slowing down the shipment of live animals and perishable animal products. The cost of such a system (to be determined as part of the Shift project) would be small in comparison to the savings in the administrative costs of handling large volumes of data manually, so that the result would be improved consumer protection at a lower cost to the consumer and producer.

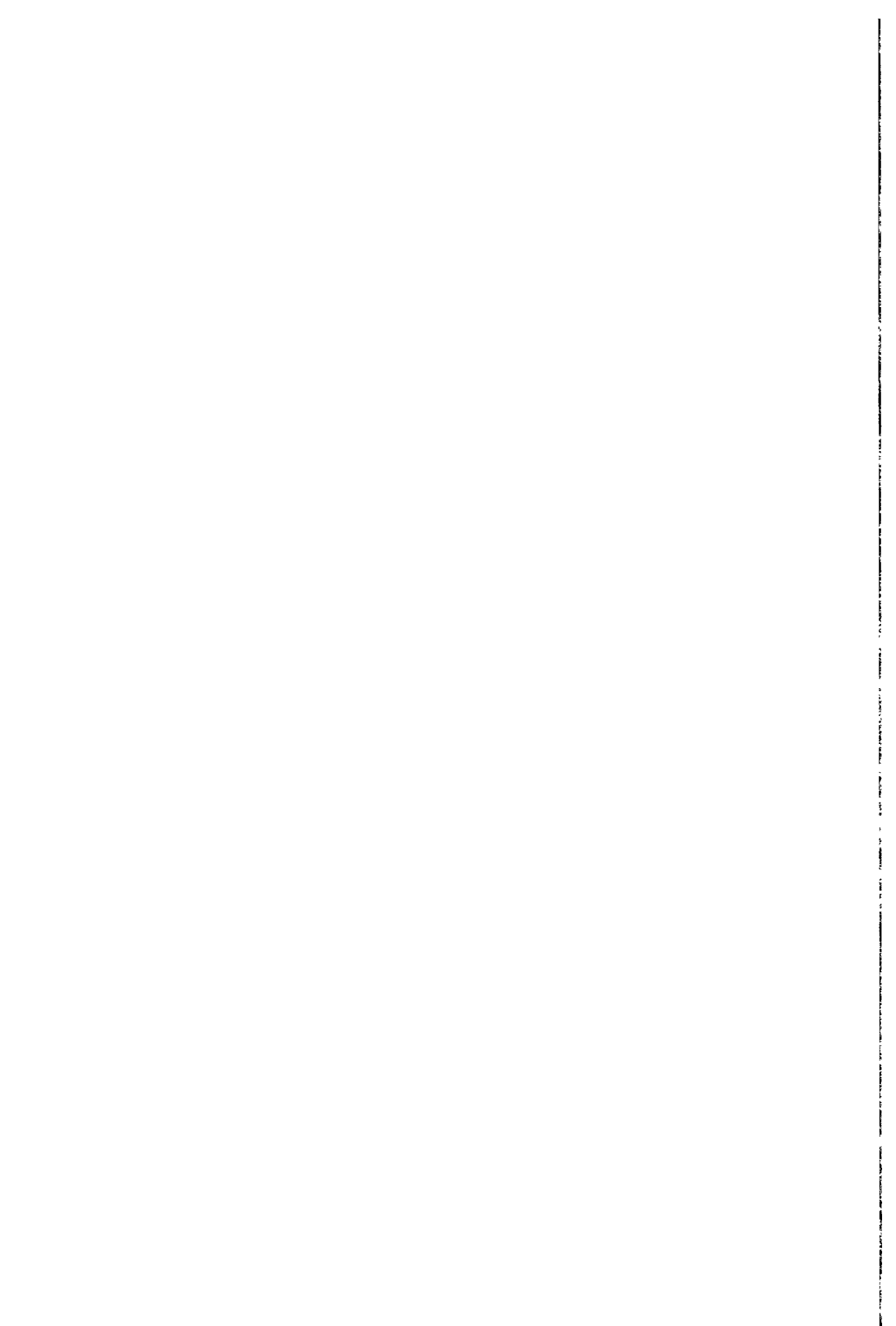
It should be emphasized that the Commission's proposal does not alter existing animal and public health legislation, but rather addresses itself to the efficient implementation of existing legislation as well as future legislation which may be adopted in the sector.

It is appreciated that there are problems of a broader nature, such as the structuring of data networks, the maintenance of data confidentiality and the elimination of linguistic barriers. The Committee feels, nevertheless, that progress can be made in a specific field whilst not ignoring the nature of the general problem.

By creating an interface between existing national systems and the Commission system, the Shift project should increase the uniformity of analytical methodology and of stringency in inspection procedures in different Member States, which would in turn avoid distortion of competition.

The Committee notes that the Shift feasibility study would be paid for by the transfer within the Commission of funds already allocated within the agriculture sector (Caddia). Bearing in mind the need for any proposed scheme to be implemented simultaneously in all Member States, special attention should be paid in the feasibility study to the increased cost burden which could fall upon certain Member States which already face financial difficulties in complying with existing animal and public health legislation (e.g. 85/649/EEC and 86/469/EEC).

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture, chaired by Mr Lopez de la Puerta (Spain — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Storie-Pugh (United Kingdom — Various Interests).



External relations

Chairman's activities

Economic and Social Councils meet in Rome

Mr Margot, Chairman, and Mr Louet, Secretary-General, attended a meeting of chairmen and secretaries-general of national Economic and Social Councils which was held in Rome on 25 September. Participants were received in audience by the President of the Italian Republic.

Nuclear conference in Luxembourg

On 5 October 1987, Mr Margot attended a Conference on health and safety in the nuclear age (Santé et sécurité à l'ère nucléaire) which was held at the Jean Monnet Building in Luxembourg.

Chairman's official visit to Copenhagen

Mr Margot, accompanied by the two Vice-Chairmen, Mr Poeton and Mr Zufiaur Narvaiza, and the Secretary-General, Mr Louet, paid an official visit on 1 and 2 October 1987 to Copenhagen where they met Mr Ellemann-Jensen, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Mr Wilhjelm, Minister for Industry. They also met members of the Folketing Common Market Committee and leading lights in the Trade Union Confederations, LO and FTF, the agricultural organizations, the Consumer Movement, the Employers' Association, the Chamber of Commerce and the Industrial Council. The visit concluded with a press conference.

15th joint ESC/EFTA meeting

The annual meeting between a delegation of the Economic and Social Committee and the Consultative Committee of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) was held in Dublin on 8 and 9 October 1987. The meeting, attended by some 80 participants from 18 Western European countries, dealt with transport policy as well as environmental issues. It was chaired in turn by Mr Margot, the Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee, Mr Kenna, Chairman of the



Left to right: Mr Poeton and Mr Zúñiga Narvaiza (the ESC's Vice-Chairmen), Mr Ellemann-Jensen (Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs), Mr Margot (Chairman of the ESC) and Mr Louet (Secretary-General of the ESC).

Economic and Social Committee's Section for External Relations, and Mr Roland Spant of the EFTA Consultative Committee. As it was the first time such a meeting had been held in Ireland, the Chairmen were received by the President of Ireland, Dr Patrick Hillery.

Chairman's visit to Japan

Mr Margot attended the 14th International Congress on Small Business (ICSB) in Nagoya (Japan) from 18 to 21 October 1987. At the final session he gave a speech on the economic situation of the EEC and Community policy on small and medium-sized enterprises.

The ICSB was organized this year by the Japanese Federation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, which has 3 million members. The Congress was attended by representatives of organizations and universities from all parts of the world.

Mr Margot met EC Ambassador, Mr Dries Van Agt, in Tokyo to discuss economic relations between the European Communities and Japan.

Other activities

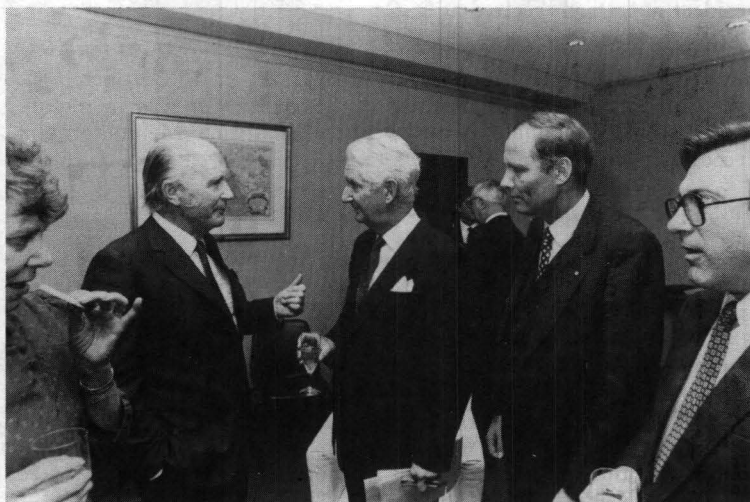
President of Ireland received at ESC

Dr Patrick Hillery, the President of Ireland, visited the Economic and Social Committee headquarters in Brussels, on 15 October 1987. In the absence of its Chairman, Mr Margot, who was in Japan, Dr Hillery was welcomed by the two Vice-Chairmen, Mr Poeton and Mr Zufiaur Narvaiza, and the Secretary-General, Mr Louet.

Energy Section meets in Spain

The Section for Energy, Nuclear Questions and Research held its 110th meeting in Spain, under the chairmanship of its Chairman, Mr Romoli (Italy — Employers), from 13 to 16 October 1987. They went first to Almeria where they saw the solar energy platform in Tabernas and met local and regional authorities. Later they proceeded to Madrid where they met representatives of the Scientific Research Council (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas). The purpose of the visit to Spain was to obtain first-hand information on Spain's new and renewable sources of energy. Press conferences were held in both Almeria and Madrid.

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Dr Hillery, President of Ireland, is received at the Economic and Social Committee headquarters in Brussels.

Mr Murphy, member of Economic and Social Committee, took part in the European conference on the impact of agriculture on water resources — consequences and outlook, held in Berlin from 16 to 18 October 1987 by the Deutscher Verein des Gas- und Wasserfaches.

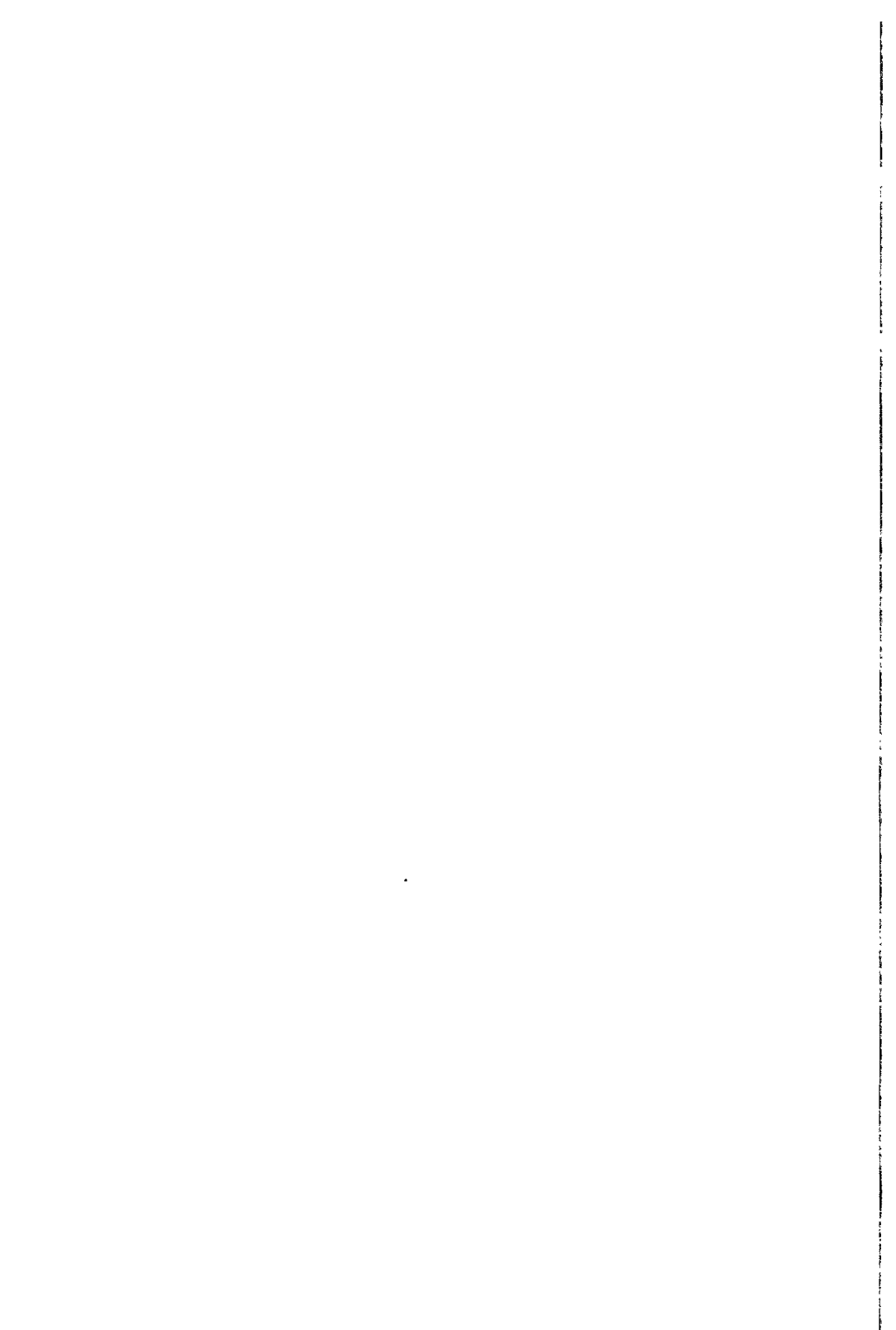
Mr Etty, member of the Committee, took part in the seminar on protection of the environment throughout the country and at the workplace, held in Sienna (Italy) from 1 to 3 October 1987 by the Italian Labour Union (UIL).

Mr Ceballo Herrero and Mr Schmitz, members of the Committee, took part in the seminar on the environment and the world of work, held in Lisbon on 2 and 3 October 1987 by the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (CGTP-IN).

Mr Vassilaras, member of the Committee, took part in a conference on regional policy for the islands held in Réunion from 6 to 8 October 1987 by the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of the EEC.

Mr Carroll, member of the Committee, took part in the conference on the role of the social partners in initial and continuing vocational training held in Berlin from 14 to 16 October 1987 by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

Mr Poeton, Vice-Chairman of the ESC, represented the Committee at the official inauguration of the first youth-Europe-technology festival in Strasbourg on 16 October 1987. The Committee participated in an interinstitutional stand.



New consultations

Since the last Plenary Session the Economic and Social Committee has been consulted on the following questions:

Communication from the Commission concerning the application of agricultural stabilizers, incorporating proposals covering the sugar, milk, sheepmeat and goatmeat, cereals, peas, field beans and sweet lupins sectors, as well as the wine market and the fruit and vegetables and raw tobacco sectors

[COM(87) 452 final]

Proposal for a Council Decision concerning a supplement in respect of carbon tetrachloride to Annex IV to the Convention for the Protection of the Rhine against Chemical Pollution

[COM(87) 427 final]

Proposal for a Council Recommendation to the Member States on developing the exploitation of renewable energy sources in the Community

[COM(87) 432 final]

Proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the tread depth of tyres of certain categories of motor vehicles and of their trailers

[COM(87) 407 final]

Proposal for a Council Regulation on a Community support plan to facilitate access to large-scale scientific facilities of European interest — 1988-92

[COM(87) 319 final]

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) instituting a Community programme to assist the conversion of steel areas (Resider programme)

Proposal for a Council Decision concerning a contribution to the European Coal and Steel Community from the general budget of the European Communities to finance measures connected with the restructuring of the steel industry

[COM(87) 388 final]

Proposal for a Council Regulation on a research and development programme in the field of applied metrology and chemical analyses in

the European Economic Community (1988-92) (The Community Bureau of Reference — BCR)

[COM(87) 444 final]

Proposal for a Decision on the common position to be adopted by the Member States at the time of the signature and ratification of the United Nations Convention on the conditions governing the registration of ships

[COM(86) 523 final]

Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 76/769/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations

[COM(87) 39 final and COM(87) 393 final]

Stimulation of the international cooperation and interchange needed by European research scientists (Science) plan 1988-92

[COM(87) 443 final]

Revision of the multiannual research programme for the European Community in the field of biotechnology

[COM(87) 481 final]

Proposal for a Council Decision concerning Community action in the field of forecasting and assessment in science and technology (FAST)

[COM(87) 502 final]

Vocational training for women

[COM(87) 461 final]

Proposal for a Council Directive completing the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in statutory and occupational social security schemes

[COM(87) 494 final]

Proposal for a Council Directive amending Annex II to Directive 86/280/EEC on limit values and quality objectives for discharges of certain dangerous substances included in List I of the Annex to Directive 76/464/EEC (2nd Amendment)

[COM(87) 457 final]

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 2727/85 on the common organization of the market in cereals

[COM(87) 450 final]

Provisional future work programme

November 1987 Plenary Session

Opinions

- Economic situation 1987/88
- Renaval programme [COM(87) 275 final]
- Resider programme [COM(87) 388 final/2]
- AIM programme [COM(87) 352 final]
- Pollution of the Rhine [COM(87) 427 final]
- Information market [COM(87) 360 final/3]
- Road passenger transport services [COM(87) 31 final]
- Carriage of passengers by coach and bus [COM(87) 79 final]
- Green Paper — Telecommunications [COM(87) 290 final]
- Radiation protection [COM(87) 332 final]
- Brite programme [COM(87) 307 final]
- Structural funds [COM(87) 376 final]
- Building products [COM(86) 756 final/3]
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- Dangerous substances [COM(87) 457 final]

Own-initiative Opinions

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- Social aspects of the internal market
- Reform of the CAP

Subsequent Plenary Sessions

Opinions

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Insider trading [COM(87) 111 final]
Dangerous substances [COM(87) 39 final + COM(87) 393 final]
Possession of weapons [COM(87) 389 final]
Third periodic report on regions [COM(87) 230 final]
16th Competition Report [COM(87) 180 final]
Lateral protection of motor vehicles [COM(87) 132 final]
Conditions for the registration of ships [COM(87) 523 final]
Applied metrology [COM(87) 444 final]
Access to large-scale scientific facilities [COM(87) 319 final]
Tax harmonization [COM(87) 320 to 328 final]
Own resources [COM(87) 420 final]
JRC programme
Thermonuclear fusion [COM(87) 302 final]
Energy efficiency [COM(87) 401 final]
Renewable energy sources [COM(87) 432 final]

Own-initiative Opinions

Social aspects of sea fishing
Relations between the Community and State-trading countries

Information reports

Upland areas
Training and supply of researchers in the Community
Energy policy and completion of the internal market
GATT — Uruguay Round
The problem of ACP countries' debt burden
Relations between the Community and Mediterranean countries

Members' news

Obituary notice

The Economic and Social Committee has learned with regret of the death on 3 July 1987 of one of its former members, Mr Willem Jonker (The Netherlands). He joined the Committee in 1958, when it was founded, and remained a member for 24 years until he resigned in 1982.

PUBLICATIONS OBTAINABLE FROM THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

General documentation

The other European Assembly, January 1987 (CES 87-004)
European Union, a people's Europe and the Economic and Social Committee
(Committee Chairman Muhr's speeches to the *ad hoc* Committees for
Institutional Affairs and a people's Europe), 1985 (EX-43-85-35)

Opinions and studies

National regional development aid (Opinion) (Brussels 1986)
Community Rail Policy (ECU 7.40, IRL 2.70, UKL 2.40, USD 4)
EEC maritime transport policy (Brussels, June 1986) (ESC 86-008-EN)
(ECU 3.40, UKL 2.40, IRL 2.70, USD 4)
Demographic situation in the Community (Information report) (Brussels 1986)
Occupational medicine — occupational cancer (1985)
Consumer-producer dialogue (Opinion) (January 1985) (ESC 84-011)
Irish border areas (Information report) (February 1984) (ESC 84-002)
Transport policy in the 1980s (Opinion) (March 1983) 99 pp. (ESC 83-003)

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

Community Advisory Committee for the Representation of Socio-Economic
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Obtainable from Editions Delta, 92-94 Square Plasky, 1040 Brussels:

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Directory of European agricultural organizations (UKL 39)

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Bulletin (monthly publication) (per issue: ECU 3.50, UKL 2.50, USD 3.50,
IRL 2.70). Annual subscription: ECU 27.70, UKL 19.80, USD 29, IRL 21.20)
Effects of the CAP on the social situation of farmworkers in the European
Community (Brussels 1987) (ISBN 92-830-0093-5) (ECU 3.40, BFR 150,
IRL 2.40, UKL 2.10, USD 3.50)
European environment policy: Air, water, waste management (Brussels 1987)
(ISBN 92-830-0108-7) (ECU 3.50, BFR 150, IRL 2.70, UKL 2.60, USD 4.00)
EEC air transport policy (October 1985) (ESC 85-10) (ECU 5.50, UKL 3.30,
IRL 4, USD 5)
The economic and social situation of the Community (1986) (84-015) (ECU 4,
IRL 3, UKL 3, USD 5)
GATT — towards a new round (Opinion) (Brussels 1986) (EX-46-86-937-EN-C)
(ECU 2.20, BFR 100, IRL 1.60, UKL 1.40, USD 2.50)

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