

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

BULLETIN

7

ECONOMIC AND
S O C I A L
C O M M I T T E E



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Origins

The ESC was set up by the 1957 Rome Treaties in order to involve economic and social interest groups in the establishment of the common market and to provide institutional machinery for briefing the European Commission and the Council of Ministers on European Union issues.

The Single European Act (1986) and the Maastricht Treaty (1992) reinforced the ESC's role.

Membership

The 222 members (193 men, 29 women) of the ESC are drawn from economic and social interest groups in Europe. Members are nominated by national governments and appointed by the Council of the European Union for a renewable 4-year term of office. They belong to one of three Groups: Employers (Group I - President: Manuel Eugénio Cavaleiro Brandão - Portugal), Workers (Group II - President: Roger Briesch - France), Various Interests (Group III - President: Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli - Italy). Germany, France, Italy and the United Kingdom have 24 members each, Spain has 21, Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, Austria and Sweden 12, Denmark, Ireland and Finland 9 and Luxembourg 6.

The members' mandate

The main task of members is to issue opinions on matters referred to the ESC by the Commission and the Council.

It should be noted that the ESC is the only body of its type which advises the EU Council of Ministers directly.

Advisory role

Consultation of the ESC by the Commission or the Council is mandatory in certain cases; in others it is optional. The ESC may, however, also adopt opinions on its own initiative. The Single European Act (17.2.86) and the Maastricht Treaty (7.2.92) have extended the range of issues which must be referred to the Committee, in particular the new policies (regional and environment policy). On average the ESC delivers 145 advisory documents a year (of which 15% are issued on its own initiative). All opinions are forwarded to the Community's decision-making bodies and then published in the EU's Official Journal.

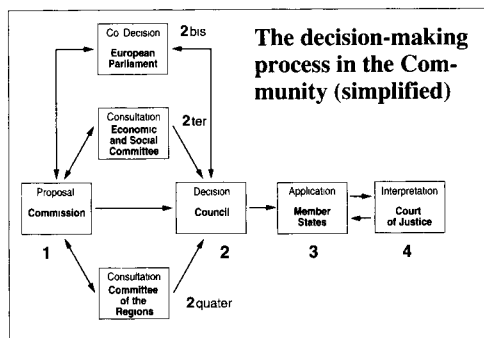
Information and integration role

Over the last few years the ESC has stepped up its role in the European Union and has transcended the straight forward duties flowing from the Treaties. It acts as a forum for the single market and has hosted, with the support of other EU bodies, a series of events aimed at bringing the EU closer to the people.

Internal organization

1. Presidency and bureau

Every two years the ESC elects a bureau made up of 36 members (12 per group), and a president and two vice-presidents chosen from each of the three groups in rotation.



The president is responsible for the orderly conduct of the Committee's business. He is assisted by the vice-presidents, who deputize for him in the event of his absence.

The president represents the ESC in relations with outside bodies.

Joint briefs: relations with EFTA, CEEC, AMU, ACP countries, Latin American and other third countries, and the Citizens' Europe fall within the remit of the ESC bureau and the president.

The bureau's main task is to organize and coordinate the work of the ESC's various bodies and to lay down policy guidelines for this work.

2. Sections

The Committee has nine sections:

- Economic, Financial and Monetary Questions - secretariat tel. 546 92.27
(President: Göke Frerichs - Group I - Germany)
- External Relations, Trade and Development Policy - secretariat tel. 546.93.16
(President: John F. Carroll - Group II - Ireland)
- Social, Family, Educational and Cultural Affairs - secretariat tel. 546 93 02
(President: Mrs H.C H. van den Burg - Group II - Netherlands)
- Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs secretariat tel. 546.96.57
(President: Manuel Ataíde Ferreira - Group III - Portugal)
- Agriculture and Fisheries - secretariat tel. 546 93 96
(President: Pere Margalef Masià - Group III - Spain)
- Regional Development and Town and Country Planning secretariat tel. 546.92.57
(President: Robert Moreland - Group III United Kingdom)
- Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services - secretariat tel. 546.93.85
(President: John Little - Group I - United Kingdom)
- Transport and Communications secretariat tel. 546.93.53
(President: Eike Eulen - Group II - Germany)
- Energy, Nuclear Questions and Research - secretariat tel. 546.97.94
(President: José Ignacio Gafo Fernández - Group I - Spain)

3. Study groups

Section opinions are drafted by study groups. These usually have 12 members, including a rapporteur who may be assisted by experts (usually four with a maximum of six).

4. Sub-committees

The ESC has the right to set up temporary sub-committees, for specific issues. These sub-committees operate on the same lines as the sections.

5. Plenary session

As a rule, the full Committee meets in plenary session ten times a year. At the plenary sessions, opinions are adopted on the basis of section opinions by a simple majority. They are forwarded to the institutions and published in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

6. Relations with economic and social councils

The ESC maintains regular links with regional and national economic and social councils throughout the European Union. These links mainly involve exchanges of information and joint discussions every year on specific issues.

The ESC also liaises world-wide with other economic and social councils at the "International Meetings" held every two years.

7. Relations with economic and social interest groups in third countries

The ESC has links with economic and social interest groups in a number of non-member countries and groups of countries, including Mediterranean countries, the ACP countries, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and EFTA. For this purpose the ESC sets up 15-30 man delegations headed by the president. Some meetings involving the countries of central and eastern Europe, will be institutionalized under the Europe Agreements.

Publications

The ESC regularly distributes a number of publications free of charge (order in writing by mail or fax - 546.98.22), including its main opinions in brochure format and a monthly newsletter.
Secretariat-General

The Committee is serviced by a secretariat-general, headed by a secretary-general who reports to the president, representing the bureau.

Since 1 January 1995, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions have shared a common core of departments, mainly staffed by members of the ESC secretariat.

1997 Budget

The 1997 ESC budget totals ECU 27,865,858. The budget for the departments servicing both the ESC and the Committee of the Regions stands at ECU 53,775,429.

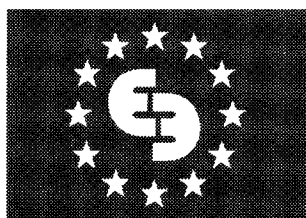
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CES: 1

This Bulletin reports on the activities of the Economic and Social Committee, a consultative body of the European Communities. It is published by the ESC's General Secretariat (2, rue Ravenstein, B-1000 Brussels) in the official Community languages (10 editions per annum)

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Catalogue number: ESC-97-016-EN

Brussels: General Secretariat of the Economic and Social Committee, 1997

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Printed in Belgium

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<http://www.esc.eu.int>

I. 348th PLENARY SESSION ON 1 AND 2 OCTOBER 1997

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities held its 348th plenary session in Brussels on 1 and 2 October 1997, with its president, Mr Tom Jenkins, in the chair.

This session was attended by Mr Jean-Claude Juncker, Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and President-in-office of the Council, and by Mr Pádraig Flynn, Member of the European Commission. Mr Juncker spoke in connection with the adoption of the "Employment" opinion; Mrs Mady Delvaux-Stehres, Luxembourg Minister for social security, transport and communications, was also present for this debate.

The Economic and Social Committee adopted the following opinions at this session:

Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs
Mrs Calamandrei, Principal Administrator - ☎ (32-2) 546 9657

1. LANDFILL OF WASTE

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the *Proposal for a Council Directive on the landfill of waste*

(COM(97) 105 final - 97/0085 SYN)

(CES 980/97 - 97/0085 SYN)

Rapporteur: Mr Sergio COLOMBO (Italy - Workers)
Co-rapporteurs: Mr Klaus BOISSEREE (Germany - Various Interests)
Mr Rudolf GAUDER (Belgium - Employers)

Gist of the Commission proposal

This proposal is a new version of the one on which the ESC delivered an opinion in 1991¹ and on which the Council adopted its common position in 1995. The common position was rejected by the European Parliament in 1996, mainly because it contained a large number of exemptions which weakened its effectiveness.

In the meantime, the Community waste management strategy was re-examined and updated. It is against this background that the proposal, which contains some new features, should be considered.

The most important of these features are:

- provisions to reduce the landfilling of biodegradable waste and to control the gases produced;
- the requirement whereby waste must be treated in order to reduce its volume or hazardous nature before it is landfilled (Article 6);
- a ban on disposal of used tyres;

¹

- the call for Member States to ensure that the minimum price to be charged for waste disposal includes the costs involved in cleaning the site after closure (Article 10);
- a ban on joint disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous waste;
- the introduction of a minimum distance between landfills and residential areas and of stricter general requirements, listed in Annex I;
- stricter provisions for existing landfills;
- precautions to ensure that exemptions are not too widely used.

Gist of the Opinion

The Committee welcomes the main thrust and declared objectives of the proposal. These objectives (stimulation of waste prevention, recycling and recovery of waste, landfilling as a last resort, high levels of environmental protection around the sites, internalization of environmental costs and promotion of a level playing field for costs in the Member States) are in keeping with the consistent implementation of Community waste management strategy, recently upheld in the Council resolution on waste policy.

The Committee is pleased to see that the current version of the proposal has taken on board many of the recommendations and comments made by the Committee and the European Parliament on the first version of the directive; however, some important points have been overlooked, and the Committee feels these should most definitely be included:

- firstly, there is a need for programme guidelines for landfill technicians and managers. It is not enough to insist on professional competence when granting the permit; national and regional authorities must also set up ongoing training/updating programmes for technicians and those in charge of running and monitoring the sites. Exchanges of experience could help with the establishment of career briefs at Community level;
- secondly, the proposal needs to reflect the environmental-information access criteria specified by the relevant directive, and to provide for adequate levels of public participation in the decisions on disposal operations. The Committee urges the addition to Article 8 of a clause calling on the competent authorities to inform the public of any steps taken to ensure the landfill complies with authorization requirements.
- Given that the proposal also aims to encourage waste pre-treatment and recovery techniques, the Committee calls on the Commission to provide fresh impetus for the following:
 - research to collate reliable statistics on waste production and types of waste, particularly for industrial waste;
 - specific directives and regulations on priority waste-flow management, starting with the recovery of used tyres;
 - Community regulations on civil liability for environmental damage.

In its specific comments, the Committee:

- points out that only urban waste, and not industrial waste is targeted and calls for a suitable policy in this matter to be framed speedily;
- feels that the problem of landfill sites which will be closed without a conditioning plan is not resolved (3.3);

- calls for a study of measures to set up funds for the remediation of landfills which have closed down or will be saturated before the new standards become mandatory;
- urges a more detailed appraisal of the environmental impact and potential risks from the dispersion of landfill gas in the sub soil.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL TAXES

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the *Communication from the Commission on environmental taxes and charges in the single market*
(COM(97) 9 final)

(CES 993/97)

Rapporteur: Mr José GAFO FERNÁNDEZ (Spain - Employers)

Gist of the Commission document

The Communication, which is the result of a joint initiative by Commissioners Bjerregaard (Environment) and Monti (Internal Market), aims at providing guidelines to Member States on how to design, implement and evaluate environmental taxes and charges in a *national* context. The document should be seen in the light of the Community's goal, inter alia expressed in the fifth Environmental Action Programme and its 1996 review as well as in the Delors White Paper of 1993, to increase the use of fiscal instruments in environmental policy.

The Communication notes that the use of environmental taxes and charges and of their revenues impinges on several areas of Community legislation, including competition, single market and taxation policies. Therefore, it seeks to clarify the rules applicable for Member States wishing to introduce such taxes and charges. It does so by reviewing the basic legal context surrounding environmental levies, especially with regard to Articles 9-12 (intra-Community customs duties or charges having equivalent effect), 95 (internal taxation), 92-93 (state aid) and 30-36 (quantitative restrictions) of the Treaty. In addition, it also gives a description of the Community control mechanisms (notification requirements, Commission investigations) in this field and contains an overview of existing national levies.

In the foreword to the Communication it is noted that the document is a first step in addressing the use of environmental taxes. The Commission intends to continue to explore the avenue of this policy instrument, inter alia by collecting national experiences and by analysing the impact of these taxes on the environment, the single market and industrial competitiveness.

Gist of the opinion

The Committee welcomes the Commission communication whilst making a number of recommendations regarding the future use of environmental taxes and charges.

The ESC recalls its earlier opinion that environmental levies should not entail an increase in the overall tax burden in any of the Member States and that consideration should be given to the possible effects of such levies on competitiveness and employment in the community. The Committee then urges the Commission to complete its analysis of the economic and environmental impact of environmental levies in as short a time as possible and to put into practice the general policy conclusions to be drawn therefrom.

Secondly, the ESC points to the danger that the lack of clear and precise Commission guidelines will result in the uncontrolled development of environmental levies and pose a threat to the single market. The Committee considers that the legal framework laid down in the communication only partly allays these concerns.

The Committee would therefore urge the Commission, as soon as it has completed its analysis of the economic and environmental impact of the levies, to draw up an additional communication setting out precisely and clearly the criteria which should govern the imposition of such levies by the Member States. It would consequently be appropriate for the Commission to submit a prior resolution to the Environment, Ecofin and Single Market Councils underpinning this initiative legally.

3. FRAMEWORK FOR EU ACTION - WATER POLICY

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the *proposal for a Council Directive establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy*
(COM(97) 49 final - 97/0067 (SYN))

(CES 994/97 - 97/0067 SYN)

Rapporteur: Mrs Mariá Candelas SÁNCHEZ MIGUEL (Spain - Workers)

Gist of the proposal for a directive

The present proposal for a Water Framework Directive follows closely the outline presented in the Communication on European Community Water Policy² adopted by the Commission in 1996, which received general support by the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and a broad circle of interested parties. The proposed directive should provide the transparent, effective and coherent overall legislative framework for action necessary for Community water policy.

The directive, proposed under Article 130s(1) of the Treaty, aims at maintaining and improving the aquatic environment in the Community, and establishes the objective of achieving at least good status of surface waters and groundwater within the Community. To do so, it requires:

- river basin management (taking into account both quality and quantity aspects);
- an assessment of the characteristics of the river basin (including the designation of areas requiring special protection);
- monitoring of the status of the surface water and groundwater³ of the river basin;
- the establishment of programmes of measures to achieve the objective;
- the summarizing of all the above in a "River Basin Management Plan", and
- public consultation on that plan.

In addition, it contains requirements for:

- a mechanism to ensure that water use is paid for at full cost recovery prices;
- a feedback mechanism to inform national authorities and the Commission of particular problems;
- action to combat accidental pollution;

² OJ No. C 30, 30.01.1997

³ OJ No. C 89, 19.03.1997

- simplified reporting procedures; and
- a procedure for the development of coordinated strategies for dealing with pollution by individual pollutants or groups of pollutants (with control of pollution at source combined with setting objectives for the environment - "combined approach").

Regarding timing, the text of the Commission's proposal is based on the assumption that the Framework Directive is adopted by Council at the end of 1997. Implementation is scheduled for 31 December 1999. The year 2010 would then be the deadline for achieving "good status" of water. During the period of co-existence of the proposal, with legislation already in force but destined to be repealed, a particular effort will be needed to ensure coherence of activities (through a committee set up by this directive).

Gist of the Opinion

The Committee endorses the proposed framework directive as a whole. It improves earlier legislation by clarifying the relevant rules through a total or partial repeal of those directives which have become obsolete in practice. At the same time it retains the *acquis communautaire* which has served to create the EU's water policy, as requested by the ESC in its opinion on the communication⁴.

Nonetheless, the ESC considers it necessary to make a number of general comments with a view to improving the effectiveness of water policy.

With regard to water pricing, the ESC takes the view that financial transfer mechanisms should be devised so that future increases in the cost of water can be reinvested in conservation measures and costs do not rise for those most affected.

In order to provide guidance on the possible ways of complying with the objectives of transnational river basin management plans which include non-EU countries, the ESC urges the Commission to introduce and/or strengthen the following:

- international institutional agreements covering both objectives and policies at a level higher than the Community;
- action on more limited pollution problems, boosting voluntary agreements with non-Community productive sectors, official bodies, users, etc.

The ESC sees it as a handicap that the penalties for failure to implement river basin management plans are to be laid down by the national authorities, since it is the administrative authorities who are responsible for putting the plans into practice. Similarly, the ESC considers that the absence of general criteria governing the content of the penalties may give rise to disputes on the grounds of inequality between different countries.

The ESC proposes a number of additions and/or suggestions aimed at enhancing the general content of the framework directive:

Article 2: Add the following uses of water to the definitions:

- domestic
- industry and energy production
- agriculture
- leisure and sport.

4

OJ No. C 30, 30.01.1997

Articles 3 and 4: The administrative bodies must be allowed considerable freedom in the way they work out the cooperation strategies necessary to meet the requirements of the river basin management plans. Exceptions should be as few as possible, be clearly defined, and reported to the Commission.

Article 6: Environmental impact studies must be carried out in the case of both water regulation and distribution works and economic activities which use and affect bodies of water.

Article 8: A periodic (annual) review must be carried out of the state of bodies of water likely to be used for human consumption. The public must have access to the inventory of these bodies which has to be drawn up for each river basin.

Article 12: The Commission must determine with the utmost clarity the content of the charging arrangements to be established by each Member State for the various types of water use. The current wording of the proposal fails to define a number of important concepts such as who is to recover costs, who decides on prices, etc.

Articles 13 and 21: The framework directive must offer a uniform methodology for setting environmental quality standards required to combat water pollution at all levels (Community, national, etc.).

Article 16: The conceptual part of the annexes should be incorporated in the main body of the directive in order to harmonize compliance with the recommendations and technical specifications in all EU countries and avoid the element of discretion which normally accompanies the transposition of annexes.

Article 20: The provision of better information and particularly its centralization by the Commission and by the European Environment Agency appears to meet one of the concerns expressed by the ESC⁵. However, the rights of citizens on access to environmental information must be respected (Directive 90/313/EEC)⁶. To this end, the competent authorities and administrative bodies should draw up a public register to centralize all the information in each state; this register should be updated periodically.

The ESC also thinks it necessary to draw up a new article on citizens' and social participation in the management of water resources; this would make it obligatory to:

- set up consultative bodies with the competent authorities which would monitor the preparation of river basin management plans and their implementation and carry out additional measures for providing information and raising social awareness;
- establish public registers - at river basin district level - in respect of water quality control, emissions, licences, and any other data which are relevant to the implementation of the framework directive.

4. **SULPHUR CONTENT OF CERTAIN LIQUID FUELS**

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the *proposal for a directive of the Council relating to a reduction of the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels and amending Directive 93/12/EEC*

(COM(97) 88 final - 97/0105 SYN)

(CES 979/97 - 97/0105 SYN)

Rapporteur: Mr José Ignacio GAFO FERNÁNDEZ (Spain - Employers)

⁵ OJ No. C 30, 30.01.1997

⁶ OJ No. C 139, 05.06.1989

Gist of the Commission proposal

Emissions of sulphur dioxide (SO₂)⁷ contribute to problems of acidification as well as having both direct and indirect impacts upon human health. The purpose of this proposal for a directive is to reduce emissions of SO₂ arising from combustion of certain liquid fuels, namely heavy fuel oils and gas oils⁸, by controlling their sulphur content. Heavy fuel oil is quantitatively the most important of these two sources and it is used in refineries, power stations and industry with smaller quantities used for domestic purposes and transport.

This proposal is an integral part of a cost effective package of measures designed to reduce emission of SO₂ to levels compatible with the attainment of ambitious environmental objectives regarding acid deposition and air quality targets for SO₂ and particulate matter⁹, and so it is based on Article 130S of the Treaty.

A general limit of 1% by weight for the sulphur content of heavy fuel oil as from 1 January 2000 is proposed. Derogations are provided for countries or regions where SO₂ emissions do not contribute to human health or environmental problems. Derogations are also provided for new combustion plants which are covered by Directive 88/609/EEC¹⁰, on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from large combustion plants, and for other combustion plants which respect an SO₂ emission standard which is equivalent to using heavy fuel oil with a 1% sulphur concentration.

The current limit value of 0.2% by weight for the sulphur content of gas oils as laid down in Directive 93/12/EEC¹¹, relating to the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels, is maintained but as a minimum standard. Derogations are provided for Greece and for the Canary Islands with regard to gas oils used for marine purposes. All relevant provisions relating to gas oils of Directive 93/12/EEC will be repealed and taken over by the present proposal.

In order to avoid problems caused by a sudden change in the supply of crude oil or petroleum products, the Commission can authorize a higher limit value for the sulphur content of the different fuel types for a period not exceeding six months.

Sampling and analysis of the sulphur content of the fuels concerned will be checked by Member States following ISO methods and reported to the Commission on a yearly basis. The Commission will use these reports, and the observed trends in Community air quality and acidification, to draft a report and submit it to Council by the end of 2003. This report will, if appropriate, be accompanied by proposals to revise the provisions of the directive.

Gist of the Opinion

The Committee takes the view that the directive - with its aim of reducing the sulphur content of gas oil and fuel oil - is a good starting point from which to move on to fixing higher levels of environmental protection in the future.

The Committee considers that it would be a good idea to state explicitly in the recitals that the directive does not place any significant restrictions on Member States' choice of energy plan.

⁷ A result of the combustion/oxidisation and subsequent release to the atmosphere of the sulphur naturally present both in coal and liquid petroleum fuels, and which is derived from the proteins present in the tissues of the plants and other organisms from which coal and oil are formed.

⁸ The proposal does not apply to fuel contained in the fuel tanks of vessels crossing a frontier between a third country and a Member State, neither to fuels intended for processing in the refining industry.

⁹ Communication on a Community Strategy to Combat Acidification, COM(97) 88 final - 97/0105 (SYN)

¹⁰ OJ No. C 25, 28.1.1985.

¹¹ OJ No. C 14, 20.1.1992.

The Committee specifically backs the derogations allowing Austria and Finland to maintain their stricter standards for the marketing of these fuels, and the derogations granted for gas oil for marine use in Greece and the Canary Islands.

Given the inclusive nature of the strategy for combating acidification, the Committee does not agree with the order in which the documents are being presented by the Commission, which has put forward the present directive before revising Directive 88/609/EEC on large combustion plants.

The basis for this assertion is that the individual emission limits decided for petroleum products will - indirectly - alter the criteria for reducing SO₂ emissions from "existing" large plants as defined in Directive 88/609/EEC (plants which came into service before 1987). It would consequently be more logical for such "existing" plants to be explicitly excluded from the scope of the present proposal for the time being.

Also, given the high percentage of SO₂ emissions coming from solid fuels, the Committee would call on the Commission to present a directive to regulate their use.

The Committee therefore thinks that the present proposal should be put before the Council and adopted and implemented simultaneously with the revision of Directive 88/609/EEC and any directive on the use of solid fuels (in plants not covered by Directive 88/609/EEC).

Lastly, the Committee takes the view that the use by refineries of the various intermediate sidestreams for heat generation which would otherwise have no market outlet should be made more flexible.

Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services
Mr Pereira dos Santos, Head of Division - ☎ (32-2) 546 9245

5. TRANSIT SYSTEMS

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the Communication from the Commission - Action plan for transit in Europe, a new customs policy (Single Market Observatory)
(COM(97) 188 final)

(CES 992/97)

Rapporteur: Mr Helmut GIESECKE (Germany - Employers)

Gist of the Commission proposal

The call for a fundamental review of the European customs transit systems emanates from the increasing reports on fraud and other financial losses that followed abolition of internal borders with reduced administrative staff and increased trade. To reinforce efficacy and security a complete reform of the system is foreseen, the long-term goal being the computerization of customs services.

In the interim report on transit annexed to the Commission's Communication COM(96) 477 final of 9 October 1996, a framework for work and action is set out. The interim report contains an in-depth analysis of the legislation in force, an examination of problems and weaknesses, and proposals for its improvement. Trade organizations, customs administrations of the Member States as well as relevant organizations and

administrations in countries associated with the European Union have been consulted. In particular, the following points have been reviewed :

- processing and discharge of declarations;
- supervision and controls;
- the responsibilities of users;
- guarantees;
- supporting measures.

The proposed new computerized transit system will be based on control in real time, whereas in the current system control is performed a posteriori, with data exchanged directly between the customs administrations and not via the traders.

Two previous Commission communications of 29 March 1995 and 3 April 1996, focused on the crisis in the transit systems and short-term action to reduce fraud. On 13 March 1997 the European Parliament adopted a recommendation, in which it calls upon the Commission, the Council and the Member States to ensure that the conclusions of its special inquiry are acted upon.

The latest Commission communication and the attached Action Plan of 30 April 1997 are the result of the previous process of analysis and wide consultation.

Gist of the Opinion

The Committee welcomes the Action Plan for transit in Europe, because it provides for a long overdue comprehensive modernization of the transit system with clear goals and deadlines and in particular the current political determination to give European customs administrations new status. This means providing them with the necessary authority as well as better equipment.

The Committee has a number of concrete comments on the various elements of the Action Plan and it hopes that these comments will be taken into account when implementing the Action Plan and wishes to be involved in future developments.

The close collaboration between the Council, the Commission and the EP on one hand and the debate with the operators on the other hand has proved over the last twelve months that it is possible to set up a new transit system resulting from a wide-ranging consensus between all the parties concerned. Such a partnership must be continued in the future.

6. INFORMATION SOCIETY - SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - EU Action Plan: satellite communications in the information society*
(COM(97) 91 final)

(CES 981/97)

Rapporteur: Mr Michael MOBBS (United Kingdom - Employers)

Gist of the Commission document

The aim of the action plan presented by the Commission is to define a strategic approach to satellite communications. The growing importance of global satellite infrastructures (in the information society),

combined with new requirements demanding high performance access and back-bone structures, and the need to strengthen the role of European industry in this sector, make action at European level imperative.

The Commission believes that the conditions must be created to ensure that effective competition is created at all levels of the market in the satellite sector to enable the European Union to play an important role in putting in place the much needed global information infrastructures and associated services and applications which are critical to the information society and the world's economic system.

The key importance for Europe of satellite communications and the need to move ahead and establish a private/public partnership in this area were identified through a number of studies and confirmed at a high level the meeting between Commission, Member States and industry.

The proposed Europe-level action should, with due respect for the subsidiarity principle, concentrate on completing the internal market, strengthening Europe's position in international fora and supporting European R&D.

The proposed action plan comprises 16 actions in several areas:

- Identification of remaining barriers to the internal market;
- Review of effectiveness and timeliness of CEPT¹² measures and procedures;
- Review of effectiveness and timeliness of European standardization efforts;
- Review of future functioning of the international satellite organizations;
- Improved market access;
- Securing access to orbits and frequencies.

The following tentative timeschedule is foreseen for the actions presented in this plan:

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------------------------|
| a) | Internal market | |
| | - implementation of legislation: | January 1998 |
| | - requests to industry, CEPT, ETSI ¹³ | July 1997 |
| | - first industry input: | October 1997 |
| | - completion CEPT review: | October 1997 |
| | - completion ETSI review: | October 1997 |
| b) | International level | |
| | - implementation of WTO obligations: | January 1998 |
| | - analysis general trade policy implications: | July 1997 |
| | - review trade issues orbits/frequencies: | July 1997 |
| | - review relations with third countries: | end 1997 |
| c) | R&D and applications development | |
| | - completion of a first review of complimentary actions: | October 1997 |
| | - actions under 4 th Framework Programme: | last half 1997 |
| | - actions for 5 th Framework Programme: | according to timetables foreseen |
| d) | Creation of an appropriate interface EC-industry | May 1997 |

12 CEPT = European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations

13 ETSI = European Telecommunications Standards Institute

Gist of the Opinion

The Committee considers that the Commission's prime objective should be to step up efforts to:

- achieve full implementation of all existing EU legislation in areas covered by the Commission proposal, and review internal market access barriers;
- ensure compliance with international trade treaties and regulations in respect of satellite communications and reinforce Europe's position at international fora;
- improve and coordinate R&D and application developments in close consultation with the ESA¹⁴.

Whilst the Committee is pleased to note the revenues expected over the next ten years, it is regretted that the Commission is unable to give any indication as to the effect this will have on the market, industry and jobs. Since all forms of telecommunications are part of an expanding market, the Committee considers that the Commission should examine and advise on how and to what extent this may offset the effects on other declining markets and industries.

The Committee endorses the Commission's desire and proposed actions to reinforce Europe's position at international level within the competence of the common commercial policy and in particular in the WTO context.

The Committee recognizes the Commission's concern that action should be taken to support the position of European industry. Cooperation between CEPT and the Commission is in the best interests of industry.

The effects of developments in all telecommunication activities have very significant political and cultural effects. Telecommunications, in particular satellite communications, neither know nor acknowledge national borders. This also raises the question of the democratic control and the regulation of the media. The Committee regrets that the Commission does not address this scenario in its communication.

The Commission Action Plan has failed to identify one practical issue facing the satellite industry in Europe: the availability of risk capital. The Committee considers that the Commission should consider and propose a strategy for facilitating the introduction of innovation in the financing of long-term leases of satellite transponder capacity with a view to increasing European satellite capacity.

Section for Regional Development and Town and Country Planning

Mr Fève, Principal Administrator - ☎ (32-2) 546 9616

7. COHESION AND THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the *Communication from the Commission on cohesion and the information society*

(COM(97) 7 final)

(CES 982/97)

Rapporteur: Dame Jocelyn BARROW (United Kingdom - Various Interests)

14

ESA = European Space Agency

Gist of the Commission document

Not all European regions, citizens or firms are equally well equipped to grasp the opportunities offered by the information society because of geographical, social and economic reasons. In some areas, measures stimulating the demand are necessary before market forces will close existing gaps. By involving regions, national governments and the European institutions, the EU's structural policy can play an important role in preventing the polarization between the information haves and the information have-nots. These ideas are at the core of a communication adopted today by the European Commission. Its aim is to outline the way forward in the areas of regulatory, investment and demand policies and to induce authorities into making the information society a priority in their policy agenda and investment decisions. It is to invite Member States to move away from mere pilot actions and increasingly to integrate the information society into the broad scope of their Structural Fund programmes.

Gist of the Opinion

Given the importance of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the extent to which the EU lags behind its competitors, particularly the US and Japan, there is a vital need for the EU to formulate a strategy for boosting its commitment to and achievements in ICT. This requires a comprehensive approach in which the different facets of the information society, including its effects on cohesion, are recognized. In its general comments the Committee thus welcomes the fact that the Commission advocates the establishment of a policy on the information society and it goes on to specifically examine how the need for cohesion is to be taken into account. The Committee does, however, take the view that the Commission fails to pay adequate attention to the problem of the extent to which the EU is lagging behind the US and Japan.

The Committee calls for measures to improve the opportunities for all, especially the less-favoured regions, to compete effectively for activities related to the information society.

It is also important to recognize that not every region can expect to attract a full gamut of economic activity: some regions will be better placed to support ICT-related industries than others.

Major changes are in prospect in the structure of the telecommunications industry, including the progressive privatization of publicly-owned networks. In this context, it is worth asking how any proposed support from the Structural Funds would be reconciled with the presence of private companies in the industry and, more generally, with competition policy. The Committee argues that support should normally be limited to public investment and that there should be clear guidelines for how the money is used.

As regards the impact of the information society on employment, the social and economic partners have a self-evident role to play in this respect in ensuring that the attendant job losses are managed with the minimum of social disruption.

The Committee goes on to make a number of specific comments. It stresses the importance of tailoring policy initiatives to the actual requirements of business, individuals and the social and economic partners.

The Committee highlights the role and the contribution of the Structural Funds and the key role of the private sector in advancing the information society.

The Committee also considers the concept of universal service, which is a crucial aspect of the information society. It calls upon the Commission to refine the concept of universal service and to explore how it can best be made more readily operational.

The Committee believes that new opportunities have been provided for the regions; it is essential that the Commission sets out specific measures to enable these opportunities to be exploited, distinguishing between opportunities requiring expenditure, and those not requiring expenditure, whilst taking account of the cultural and social diversity of the regions of the EU.

The Committee calls on the Commission to appraise the consequences for cohesion of anticipated developments in telecommunications and to put forward, in liaison with the economic and social partners, proposals for linking these developments to cohesion policies.

8. SOCIAL PARTNERS/FRONTIER REGIONS (*Own-initiative opinion*)

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the role of the socio-economic partners in the INTERREG and EURES programmes

(CES 984/97)

Rapporteur: Mr Jan Jacob van DIJK (Netherlands - Workers)

Co-rapporteur: Mr John SIMPSON (United Kingdom - Various Interests)

Objective of and reasons for the request to draw up an own-initiative opinion

The new framework regulation on the Structural Funds stipulates that the social partners must be more closely involved in the planning, development and implementation of the Structural Funds. This applies not only to Objective 1 regions, but undoubtedly also to Objective 2, 3 and 4 regions. The social partners must, however, also be involved in Community initiatives. In particular in the case of INTERREG it is crucial that the social partners be closely involved in the development and implementation of the various projects.

In earlier opinions the ESC has already addressed the involvement of the social partners in the Structural Funds. On these occasions, though, the ESC confined itself to the role of the social partners in Objective 1 regions. This own-initiative opinion should deal with the role of the social partners in the various border regions and in the INTERREG programmes and at the same time consider the EURES initiative, which provides the authorities and the social partners with the opportunity to develop cross-border placement arrangements and to exchange information on frontier traffic problems.

Gist of the Opinion

This opinion examines the role of the socio-economic partners in border regions and in cross-border projects, as part of the INTERREG programme and EURES network in particular, and comments on the arrangements for their participation.

The Committee has always argued for the participation of the socio-economic partners in Structural Fund projects. It considers that they should at least be involved in the development, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of INTERREG projects, in the monitoring committees for instance, and that the Commission should check each project to ensure effective participation.

The Committee thinks that the EURES network can make a good start on reducing the obstacles to the free movement of workers. It proposes that the EP, ESC and COR be more closely involved in the decisions on this programme which at the moment are entirely in the hands of the Commission.

Considering that EURES was originally intended to promote the free circulation of workers, but that the emphasis is increasingly on the cross-border exchange of vacancies, the Committee urges that a specific percentage be reserved for the socio-economic partners.

Finally, the Committee calls for close cooperation between the EURES network and INTERREG IIA, particularly in the area of vocational training and the labour market; this presupposes that the socio-economic partners have broad access to INTERREG IIA and that their role in EURES is not reduced any further.

9. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN BUILDING AND HOUSING IN EUROPE (*Own-initiative opinion*)

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on sustainable development in building and housing in Europe

(doc. CES 983/97)

Rapporteur: Mr Hans-Joachim WILMS (Germany - Workers)

Reasons for drawing up an own-initiative opinion

It is proposed that the ESC issue an opinion, based on the Rio Agenda 21 and the fifth EU action programme, on taking environmental concerns into account in Community urban planning policy.

For decades, all sides have highlighted the apparent clash between economic, social and ecological elements in the European construction industry. This criticism bears on employers and workers alike. Particular emphasis has been placed on the supposed incompatibility of job security with the need to protect the environment.

The idea that ecology does not make economic sense, or that construction cannot be compatible with environmental protection, may have a certain simple appeal, but they do not offer an alternative solution.

Today, it is difficult to believe that social considerations and job security were sacrificed for investment in improved environmental protection and the development of new environmental technologies.

It is now realized that, in the building sector in particular, concern for the environment has helped to create stable, future-oriented jobs. Economic and social interests are not contradictory, but complementary.

The opinion should provide an inventory of Member States' different approaches to this issue, as hitherto there has been no overview of the wide variety of urban planning projects.

The EU policy context

Three years into the fifth environmental action programme, the European Environment Agency (EEA) noted in early 1995 that none of the measures taken had managed to integrate environmental considerations into economic activity or to implement the principle of sustainability (cf. EUR-OP NEWS, No 1/95, page 5).

Like previous EU moves to reduce environmental damage, the Commission's new action plan has had some degree of success. However, it is still not enough to improve environmental quality as a whole and to achieve sustainable, sound development. The Commission is seeking to step up environmental measures in the following key areas in order to boost the impact of the fifth action programme:

- measures designed to incorporate environmental concerns into other policies;
- focal points: agricultural policy instruments, non-intensive farming, organic farming, fertilizers/plant protection products, energy and transport, vehicle emission standards, fuels;
- incentive measures;
- awareness-raising measures;
- studies into climate change, the ozone layer, acidification, water management, waste, noise;
- strengthening the EU's role in international initiatives - eastern Europe, the Mediterranean.

The first area is particularly important. Unfortunately, the policy areas selected are hardly innovative, and include only those fields which have traditionally been linked to the environment.

There is no mention, for example, of issues related to housing (a basic human need), recycling of building materials, construction techniques which facilitate recycling, environmentally friendly manufacture of building materials, or ecologically sound building work.

Urban planning is an ideal policy area for accommodating environmental concerns as here, more than anywhere else, large-scale use is made of natural resources such as air, soil and water.

Gist of the Opinion

The ESC sees its task as promoting integration of the three "pillars" of lasting and environmentally sound development, i.e. the economic, social and ecological dimensions. The social dimension also includes the cultural aspect which is extremely important, especially in the area of building and housing.

The Committee notes that there is no single definition of "sustainable development " or of "sustainable building and housing", but that the concept of sustainable development is increasingly finding its way into EU policies, which should be better coordinated.

The Committee thinks that implementing the objectives of sustainable building and housing will require a series of measures bearing, in particular, on land management, conservation of resources and materials, building management, and a change in the practices of building users. In addition it is imperative to promote the development of a model for sustainable building and housing as part of a partnership between different levels, organizations and interest groups.

The Committee believes that a new approach is required and advocates increased coordination between policies, the creation of a data base and the organization of an exchange experience between Member States. Appropriate financial support should be given to innovatory pilot and demonstration projects.

In conclusion the Committee calls on the Commission to develop directives or recommendations with regard to basic standards for sustainable building and housing, with due respect for the principle of subsidiarity and within the framework of strategy which is effective from the economic, ecological and social points of view. It is also essential that adequate information and recommendations be provided for the parties mostly directly involved.

Section for Transport and Communications
Mr Del Bino, Head of Division - ☎ (32-2) 546 9353

10. RELATIONS THIRD COUNTRIES/MARITIME TRANSPORT

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the Proposal for a Council Decision setting up a consultation procedure on relations between Member States and third countries in shipping matters and on action relating to such matters in international organizations and an authorization procedure for agreements concerning maritime transport

(COM(96) 707 final - 97/0012 SYN)

(CES 985/97 - 97/0012 SYN)

Rapporteur: Mrs Anna BREDIMA-SAVOPOULOU (Greece - Employers)

Gist of the Commission document

This document, following on from the Communication on "a new approach to maritime strategy"¹⁵, builds upon the experience and considerable achievements over the past ten years in implementing the Community maritime transport policy. Its aim is to enable the EU to pursue a policy destined to improve the access of European shipping industry to third country markets and to create new business opportunities.

The general objectives of this policy are:

- to consolidate, bilaterally as well as multilaterally in international organizations, through consultations and negotiations, developments towards liberalization, as well as to obtain further roll-back of existing restrictions;
- to address specific problems that arise with third countries, in particular in respect of market access;
- to address the problem of unfair competition and the related problem of sub-standard shipping arising particularly, although by no means solely, from open registry shipping;

and in parallel,

- to work towards the development of an integrated and efficient European transport system, including assistance for the transition of CEEC to the market economy and the alignment of their policies in the perspective of accession.

To achieve these objectives, the Commission considers that the main instrument should be the multilateral negotiations in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO). However, since they are not due to resume before the year 2000, the Commission will use in the meantime all the instruments, negotiations and opportunities available to achieve these objectives, in the expectation that they could ultimately become a springboard for a multilateral agreement in the WTO.

The Commission considers that the main components of Community external action should be:

- the further development of relations with, and related action vis-à-vis third countries;
- the development of cooperative action in the field of shipping as a component of a global approach to the transport services and systems of Europe, including those of central and eastern Europe, so that they can develop in as integrated a way as possible;
- the reinforcement of the role of the Community within relevant international organizations.

Finally, the appropriate and effective response to problems faced in the world shipping market may require the adaptation of existing EC legal instruments to present circumstances, in the light of experience to date. To this end, the Commission

- will undertake a review of Council Regulations Nos. 4057/86 and 4058/86;
- proposes the replacement of the consultation procedure set up by Council Decision 77/587/EEC by a new procedure.

Gist of the Opinion

In its opinion, the ESC agrees entirely with the basic objective of the Communication, namely the liberalization of maritime transport. The Committee shares the purposes and objective aims of Community policy in the field of external relations, which should seek to improve the terms of access to third country

¹⁵

OJ No. C 56 of 24.02.97, p. 9.

markets for the Community shipping industry and to create new opportunities for enterprise and jobs both at sea and in ancillary activities ashore.

The Committee goes on to make more specific comments on the various sections of the Communication:

- It is cautious about the arguments put forward for strengthening the European Union's role in international organizations through expressing the Community position with a single voice.
- It has no objection to the conclusion of bilateral shipping agreements by the EU subject to authorization by the Council, nor to the inclusion of shipping clauses in other types of agreements which the EU concludes from time to time. However, the conclusion of bilateral shipping agreements will take place under ad hoc authorization, on the basis of a specific negotiating mandate and after the necessary prior consultations have taken place between the European Commission, the Member States and the shipping industry. There will also have to be transparency and full information for all interested parties at all stages of the negotiation.
- The ESC thinks in principle that the Member States are entitled to conclude bilateral shipping agreements with third countries as long as their content does not include matters which are regulated by Community acts.
- On the revision of Regulations 4057/86 and 4058/86¹⁶, it takes the view that, as these regulations are the product of compromises between the Member States and of very delicate balances which would be disturbed if the package were opened up, they should not be modified.

Finally, as regards the proposed draft decision to replace Decision 77/587/EEC, the Committee, while agreeing in principle, thinks it necessary to avoid bureaucratic, time-consuming procedures such as those contained in the draft decision presented by the Commission. However, for the EU better to fulfil its mission it is essential to improve the consultation and coordination procedure. The proposed committee should operate not under the authority of the European Commission but as a Council body under the presidency of the Member State currently holding the Council presidency.

Section for Energy, Nuclear Questions and Research
Mr Martinez, Principal Administrator - ☎ (32-2) 546 9794

11. TOWARDS THE FIFTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME: SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the Commission working paper: Towards the fifth framework programme: scientific and technological objectives (COM(97) 47 final); the Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision concerning the fifth framework programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (1998-2002) and the Proposal for a Council Decision concerning the fifth framework programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) for research and training activities (1998-2002) (COM(97) 142 final - 97/0119 COD - 97/0120 CNS)

(CES 987/97 - 97/0119 COD - 97/0120 CNS)

Rapporteur: Mr Giannino BERNABEI (Italy - Employers)

Gist of the Commission document

The Commission has to date published two working papers on the fifth framework programme for research and technological development. The first, published on 20 November 1996, clarified and gave detailed information about structure and implementation instruments. The second, dealt with here, describes the content and the scientific and technological objectives of the proposed activities within the various programmes.

The Committee published its opinion on the first working paper and on the communication on inventing tomorrow on 26 February 1997.

Given that the main purpose of an RTD policy is to place scientific and technological progress at the service of the Union and its people, the following two aims must be inseparably linked:

- to maintain and enhance European research potential in the context of a European scientific and technological research area;
- to ensure that European research is at the service of the European public (the EU's social objective) and boosts European competitiveness (economic objective).

This is why the Commission working paper on the fifth framework programme for scientific and technological research focuses on:

- Unlocking the resources of the living world and the ecosystem
- Creating a user-friendly information society
- Promoting competitive and sustainable growth
- Confirming the international role of European research
- Innovation and participation of SMEs
- Improving human potential.

Through these programmes, the Commission is seeking, above all, to capitalize on: scientific and technological progress in biological and environmental sciences, the information society project which is aimed at sustaining growth and generating new types of employment in the EU, Europe's improved capacity to compete, the work done on transnational cooperation in the light of the globalization of trade and related matters, the findings of scientific and technological research, the support given to the establishment of innovative business ventures, and the creation of a genuine European community of scientists, engineers and technicians.

Programme implementation would require improved coordination and flexibility, and implementation instruments would include the shared cost system, Joint Research Centre (JRC) activities, closer links with EUREKA and COST and the application of articles 130k, l and n.

The scientific and technological objectives of the various types of activities envisaged under the Commission's fifth framework programme were defined with the aim of meeting the new economic and social challenges facing the Union.

Gist of the Opinion

The general thrust of the Commission proposal responds at least in part to the need for Community research to target precisely defined objectives and for flexible, transparent management and coordination. The proposal suffers, however, from the tendency of the specific sub-programmes of the past Framework Programmes to be

self-perpetuating and from the lack of adequate instruments for defining strategic criteria. The Committee therefore calls on the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council to:

- adopt an integrated approach closely binding the horizontal with the thematic programmes, together with other EU instruments for structural intervention and international cooperation;
- provide the necessary interface for Community and national actions by applying the basic legal framework for Articles 130k, l and n;
- adapt the multiannual programming of RTDD work and establish a real common European strategy that directly involves research players and end-users, particularly the various types of SME, from the planning of the Framework Programme right through to the innovative application of research results;
- concentrate research on a limited number of key actions (9 or 10), each with a minimum threshold of combined public and private funding of ECU 1,000 million;
- ensure visibility and coherence in international cooperation;
- clarify and strengthen the strategic role of the JRC and its institutions, especially the IPTS;
- ensure more transport, simplified and streamlined management procedures;
- rebuild a relationship of trust with research players and end-users.

12. **IMPACT ON SMES/RTD** (*Own-initiative opinion*)

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the Impact on SMEs of the steady, widespread reduction in funds allocated to research and technological development in the EU (at Community and national level)

(CES 986/97)

Rapporteur: Mr Henri MALOSSE (France - Employers)

Aim of the own-initiative opinion

The Committee has repeatedly drawn attention to the difficulties facing SMEs in developing their activities and particularly the increased difficulties in the research and technological development sector.

The steady decline in real funds allocated to RTD activities is growing worse today and this is true not only in the Community but in practically all the Member States so that the difficulties facing SMEs are becoming even more acute.

The aim of this proposed opinion would be to study the serious impact such a general decline of resources might have on European society in general and look in detail at the effects on SMEs.

The access of SMEs to Community RTD programmes is vitally important for the future of these programmes. Despite a number of attempts, the Commission has never really succeeded in increasing the involvement of SMEs in Community RTD programmes.

By recommending new ways of approaching this problem and - if the occasion arises - organizing some form of hearing, the Committee could make a useful contribution to the European Union in this field.

The involvement of SMEs is central to the task of disseminating innovation - an important factor in increasing competitiveness and job-creation in Europe.

Community RTD has not had the expected effects on EU competitiveness since the topics selected have not so far been sufficiently in tune with the real needs of citizens and SMEs, even though the latter are particularly well-placed to translate RTD results into new products and new technical processes.

It would be necessary to underline the importance of the link between RTD and innovation at SME level.

Gist of the own-initiative opinion

SMEs will have to innovate if they are to meet increased competition and to contend with the internationalization of business strategies, against the background of economic globalization. In addition to other requirements, SMEs must therefore have access to the new technologies or develop the technologies which meet their needs. The Economic and Social Committee, recognizing the crucial role which technical and financial back-up for industrial RTD plays in promoting growth and employment in Europe, calls for:

- the adoption of a new approach which draws a distinction between (a) small technology-intensive enterprises, (b) enterprises which have unused applied research capacity, and (c) enterprises which simply make use of the "final products" of RTD, this latter group representing the majority of enterprises;
- the establishment of a method for optimizing public and private research funding and of a genuine European market in the field of innovation in order to decompartmentalize national schemes;
- giving priority, in the planning of EU programmes, to the needs of small technology-intensive enterprises and gearing the Structural Funds to the abovementioned approach, with a view to promoting economic and social cohesion.

In this own-initiative opinion, the ESC wishes to put forward proposals to the EU institutions and the Member States with a view to providing enterprises with conditions which are more conducive to the exploitation of research, access to innovation and achieving the common goals in respect of competitiveness, growth and employment.

Section for Agriculture and Fisheries
Mr Vallejo, Head of Division - ☎ (32-2) 546 9396

13. SEASONAL LABOUR (*Own-initiative opinion*)

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on seasonal labour and migration in rural areas: stocktaking and outlook

(CES 988/97)

Rapporteur: Mr Hans-Joachim WILMS (Germany - Workers)

Reasons

The present circumstances surrounding the common agricultural policy, i.e. the result of the reform (not yet completed), the situation that is emerging in view of the future enlargement of the Union, the planned agreements with the Mediterranean Basin countries and the outlook for greater liberalization in the

agricultural sector, inevitably affect the factors of production, particularly labour, with seasonal labour being the weakest component in agriculture.

The section wishes, through this opinion, to highlight the current situation with respect to seasonal work along with the problems stemming from the current economic climate. These have to do with the role of seasonal labour within the complex, multi-faceted rural sector which is expected to play an ever-increasing role in the common agricultural policy.

Gist of the Opinion

This own-initiative opinion studies the possibilities and risks involved in seasonal labour in the European Union. The ESC considers that, despite ever more pressing problems, seasonal labour remains a traditional and vital form of farm work in many EU countries. It pays special attention to the work performed by migrant workers, which constitutes a particular type of periodic or non-permanent employment in rural areas.

Structural change (both economic and technical), structural disparities and the opening-up towards the Maghreb states and the central and eastern European countries are all factors which still lead to large-scale migratory movements of workers in search of employment and pay.

According to the ESC, these migrant workers are not a fringe group or economic refugees. Nor, however, are they organized in any way. They have no real voice to protect their interests and are to a large extent deprived of elementary information on what options and rights they have within the EU.

The Committee recommends that all parties should spare no effort to bring some degree of clarity into the situation and to defend the interests of seasonal workers in cooperation and consultation with the other partners concerned, namely: workers seeking seasonal labour, employers, regions, production sectors and allied branches of trade and industry, social security systems, national governments, national parliaments and the social partners.

The ESC considers that, to put an end to frequently unacceptable working conditions, it is essential to gather more detailed statistical information without delay in preparation for the implementation of other policy instruments.

As seasonal work is a permanent fixture, the ESC considers that a greater effort must be made to enable people working only periodically or temporarily to enjoy some form of social security guaranteed at European level, and that discussion fora and training measures must be organized for those concerned and for target groups.

14. COM/WINE

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the *Proposal for a Council Regulation (EC) amending Regulation (EEC) No. 822/87 on the common organization of the market in wine*
(COM(97) 267 final - 97/0161 CNS)

(CES 989/97 - 97/0161 CNS)

Rapporteur: Mr Carlo GOTTERO (Italy - Various Interests)

Gist of the Commission proposal

The Commission proposal seeks to change certain aspects of the current regime, notably by abolishing measures never used, converting temporary provisions into permanent provisions, abolishing a case of preferential treatment, and adjusting entry price control arrangements for grape juices and musts.

Gist of the Opinion

The Committee broadly supports the adjustments proposed by the Commission. However, it has reservations about the procedure for fixing flat-rate entry prices for grape juices and musts. As it is difficult to determine these prices in the third countries of origin, the ESC thinks that it would be more practical to determine them on the basis of the average price at certain Community markets, as these markets are bound to be able to provide real data on market trends in these products.

15. BIVALVE MOLLUSCS

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision on reference laboratories for monitoring bacteriological and viral contamination of bivalve molluscs

(COM(97) 310 final - 97/0182 CNS)

(CES 990/97 - 97/0182 CNS)

Rapporteur: Mr Joseph BALLÉ (France - Various Interests)

Gist of the Commission document

In order to protect public health, the Commission proposal addresses the urgent need to develop new types of monitoring for viral and bacteriological contamination of bivalve molluscs. The development and application of these new techniques will require the network of national laboratories responsible for checking viral and microbial contamination of bivalve molluscs to coordinate their efforts.

The Commission proposes that the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science in Weymouth, United Kingdom, be designated as the Community reference laboratory for coordinating national laboratories.

Gist of the Opinion

The Committee approves the Commission proposal.

Section for External Relations, Trade and Development Policy
Mrs Willems, Head of Division - ☎ (32-2) 546 9471

16. PREPARATIONS FOR THE 3RD EURO-MEDITERRANEAN SUMMIT (Information report)

Information Report of the Economic and Social Committee on *The role of the economic and social interest groups in implementing social measures (particularly vocational training) to back up economic development*

(CES 575/97 fin)

Rapporteur: Mr Vasco CAL (Portugal - Various Interests)

Co-rapporteur: Mr Antonello PEZZINI (Italy - Various Interests)

Context

At the Euro-Mediterranean intergovernmental conference in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November 1995, the 27 delegations from countries within and outside the EU discussed three important aspects of cooperation: a political partnership for common security, an economic and financial partnership for the creation of a free trade area in the run-up to the year 2010, and a partnership for social and human cooperation to draw the Mediterranean peoples closer together.

It was also recognized that setting up a Euro-Mediterranean partnership would be helped by, among other things, encouraging contacts between the social partners. The work programme appended to the Barcelona Declaration stated that "regular contacts among other European organs, in particular the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, and their Mediterranean counterparts, would contribute to a better understanding of the major issues relevant in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership."

At the Euro-Mediterranean summit of economic and social councils in Madrid on 12 and 13 December 1995, plans were laid for new Euro-Mediterranean collaboration founded on decentralized cooperation between civil societies. A decision was also taken to hold a Euro-Mediterranean summit of economic and social interest groups each year. The second summit was held in Paris on 21 and 22 November 1996.

As a permanent member of the working party responsible for coordinating these activities, the ESC needs to ensure the continuation of relations both with the fifteen EU Member States and the associated Mediterranean countries, and with the Community institutions such as the Commission and the Council.

As part of the preparations for the next Euro-Mediterranean summit of economic and social interest groups to be held in Rabat in November 1997, the Committee has been asked to draw up a report on the abovementioned subject.

Gist of the information report

The establishment of a free trade area by the year 2010 has been the subject of regional meetings, and association agreements are being negotiated between the EU and each of the partners. To date, association agreements have been signed with Tunisia, Morocco and Israel, and negotiations are under way with Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Algeria. Exploratory talks are being held with Syria, and an interim trade and cooperation agreement has been signed with the PLO. The customs union agreement (covering sectors other than agriculture) with Turkey has entered into force, within the framework of the association agreement signed in 1963.

Delays have occurred in a number of important areas, and many accompanying measures have not yet begun to be discussed, negotiated or put into practice; it is in the sphere of accompanying social measures that greater efforts are needed.

It is vital that the activities and programmes (both existing ones and those in the pipeline) are transparent and well documented, so that the socio-economic partners in the Mediterranean countries can play a full part and so that their organizations can prepare for the development tasks for which they are best qualified.

Technical assistance for these organizations, enabling them to acquire the resources needed to carry out their institutional duties as well as other duties related to cooperation, must be provided for in the indicative programmes or, in the absence of these, in regional cooperation programmes.

The social measures which accompany the structural adjustment programmes involve large sums of money and in many cases cover the sectors of activity in which the Mediterranean partner countries face the greatest budgetary difficulties, such as basic education and primary health care.

The institutional dialogue between European economic and social councils and their counterparts in the Mediterranean partner countries must be continued and developed further. This dialogue should form the

institutional channel through which the socio-economic partners offer advice and recommendations concerning the progress of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, to the partnership authorities, the European Commission and governments. To this end, a network should be established linking economic and social councils and similar bodies on both sides of the Mediterranean, in order to bring together information, studies and documents on the Euro-Mediterranean partnership from all sources.

A detailed work programme for 1998-99 should be drawn up so that it can be discussed and approved at the forthcoming summit of economic and social councils and similar bodies, and can be presented for funding to the Commission by the end of this year.

This work programme should have four aims: closer understanding between the partners; exchanges of experience and knowhow; strengthening of the partners' institutional capabilities; and jointly chosen schemes and actions of common interest.

Closer cooperation is also needed between the socio-economic partners at sub-regional level (starting with the Maghreb and Mashreq), as the Malta declaration notes when it calls for "increased intra-regional and sub-regional cooperation, facilitated by technical assistance from the Union".

Economic and social issues of key importance for the Mediterranean partner countries (employment, structural adjustment, upgrading of the economy, social policy and fundamental social rights, vocational training, and so on) should be the subject of a social dialogue between the socio-economic partners and consultations between these and the public authorities, at both national and Euro-Mediterranean level.

A pilot programme of regional cooperation for vocational training should be devised, as part of the work programme, for inclusion in the regional indicative programme.

In the fields of employment and the labour market, a regional cooperation network should be set up between the national bodies responsible for monitoring and managing the labour market, as decided in Catania. These bodies should meet to decide jointly on areas of cooperation.

Territorial development pacts that adopt a similar strategy to the territorial employment pacts implemented in some parts of the EU could be concluded in the Mediterranean partner countries.

The MED programmes should form the backbone of cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean civil society. They should be relaunched as soon as possible, and their funding should be increased.

Subcommittee on the European Employment Council

17. EUROPEAN EMPLOYMENT COUNCIL

Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on *Economic growth and action to boost employment*

(CES 991/97)

Rapporteur : Mr H.C.H. van den BURG (Netherlands - Workers)
Co-rapporteur : Mr Werner LÖW (Germany - Employers)
Mr Antonello PEZZINI (Italy - Various Interests)

Purpose of the referral

In the light of the conclusions of the Amsterdam Summit, the president of the Council, Mr Juncker, prime minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, wrote on 7 July 1997 inviting the Committee to participate in the preparation of the European Council extraordinary meeting, which is to focus specifically on the subject of economic growth and the fight against unemployment.

The Luxembourg presidency has consistently taken the view that the social partners - and hence the Economic and Social Committee - play a key role in the sphere of employment. By virtue of their collective bargaining powers, they exercise considerable influence over the labour market in the Member States. Here they also have extremely valuable experience of action - often of an innovatory nature - which has produced tangible success on the ground.

Hence the Economic and Social Committee can make a highly constructive contribution to preparations for the planned autumn summit.

In this connection, the new powers conferred on the Economic and Social Committee - especially those indicated in the Amsterdam Treaty's section on employment - must naturally not be overlooked.

The ESC is invited to deliberate on the following three aspects in particular:

- What are the most relevant examples of operational provisions negotiated by the social partners under collective bargaining which have furthered job creation while maintaining existing employment?
- What constraints did the respective partners have to contend with and what difficulties had to be overcome?
- Which models had a multiplier effect, i.e. which positive experiences have been repeated on several occasions?

Gist of the Opinion

The Committee welcomes the decisions of the European Council of Amsterdam to consider a high level of employment as a major objective of the European Union, to insert a new Employment Chapter in the Treaty, and to adopt a resolution on growth and employment, that closely connects economic and social policies, and emphasizes the complementary nature of EMU, internal market and employment.

Now it is time to act, to develop new promising initiatives and implement decisions already taken in order to:

- coordinate macroeconomic, budgetary, fiscal and employment-creating policies;
- establish a better synergy between economic, monetary, social and employment policies;
- evaluate the employment impact of all EU policies;
- intensify the steps taken by Commission Presidents Delors and Santer to stimulate employment pacts and agreements at all levels;
- profit from positive experiences made at national, regional, interregional and sectoral levels with employment orientated pacts and agreements.

The Committee suggests that the Luxembourg Summit conclude a Growth and Employment Policy Coordination Pact containing performance criteria and a multi-annual plan backed up by specific measures and a binding timetable, as well as instruments and monitoring mechanisms to which Member States commit themselves.

The Committee urges the Commission to further develop and support the social dialogue at European level including at sectoral level. It should clearly position the social partners in the procedures for implementation of the European growth and employment strategy to be developed. The improvement of the social dialogue in sectors and branches where SMEs are predominant, and the involvement of SME organizations at the European level, is important since they play a major role in employment creation.

The Committee welcomes the Amsterdam European Council's call upon all the social and economic agents, to face fully their responsibilities within their respective sphere of activity.

The Committee urges the Commission to stimulate the development of focused, specific sector and branch framework strategies for growth and employment, entailing dedicated cooperation and commitment from the actors involved from both sides of industry:

- In the case of sectors operating at international level, this might involve coordinated European measures to make use of economies of scale and to prevent the sort of competition between Member States that destroys jobs, and in the end weakens the European position on the global market.
- Locally operating sectors, not competing across borders and often consisting of SMEs and micro-business with a high job potential for the numerous low-skilled unemployed workforce, are also confronted with particular effects of European policies and regulations, which, if not properly evaluated, may be counterproductive to job creation. The Committee therefore welcomes the setting up of the special SME Task Force.
- A social dialogue with respect to employment trends, at national and at European level, is vital for the public sector.

The Committee recommends that the European Council charge the Commission to work out - in close cooperation with the social partners - sectoral growth and employment strategies.

Benchmarking also has great potential as a method for improving employment performance. The Committee recommends that benchmarking procedures and corresponding pilot projects be incorporated in the coordinated growth and employment strategy. The macro-economic benchmarks of the Delors' white paper should be reaffirmed and updated. It also suggests that the Commission include in each proposal for decision at European level an "Employment Impact Check".

Measures should be taken to enhance the employment intensify of growth. The macro-economic content of the Growth and Employment Policy Coordination Pact should be complemented by specific labour market objectives and policies with respect to young job-seekers, long term unemployed and categories of jobseekers with a weak position on the labour market.

The macro-economic policy mix, should lead to the increase in investments that the white paper targeted. In the European context, valuable instruments are available through the activities of the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund. The Committee welcomes this extension of the EIB's activities and its increasing support for Private Public Partnerships (PPPs) initiatives, mobilizing private capital for financing infrastructure. It particularly welcomes the active approach that the EIB takes with respect to SMEs. If necessary, the mandate of the EIB/EIF should be broadened and/or adapted to maximize their budgetary and operational room for manoeuvre to contribute to job-creation.

The Committee has already argued for "a root-and-branch revamping" of the Structural Funds in favour of "lasting, additional jobs". It therefore welcomes the call to reinforce and redirect the contribution of the funds to the promotion of employment and job-creation, and recommends a closer evaluation of their employment impact.

Pacts at national, regional and sectoral (or branch) level between the social partners and public authorities should include commitments from authorities on taxation, legislation and education, coupled with commitments by the social partners on wage-moderation, reduction and reorganization of working time, reconciling work and family responsibilities, training, and flexibility and security.

Measures to shift emphasis from passive income-replacing policies to active labour market policies stimulating labour market participation should be continued vigorously. The objective of a European wide guarantee for all young people, within one year of finishing school, to have access to a job, work experience or initial or further training would be an appealing and promising commitment.

Sharper quantitative and qualitative educational and training targets should be set, through benchmarking. Higher targets should be accompanied by appropriate financial investments.

European taxation policy should be re-assessed from the perspective of employment impact. A coordinated European strategy is called for in order to reduce non-wage labour costs, and involving commitment to more coordination and harmonization of tax policies. The Committee recommends that in the field of VAT rates, where harmonization has already taken place, more room should be allowed for a differentiation in favour of low or zero tariffs for products and services that are labour intensive and offer major opportunities for job creation.

II. FUTURE WORK

- European Environment Agency and European information network (**ENV-DEC**)
COM(97) 282 final - 97/0168 SYN
- European space industry (**IND-DEC/JAN**)
COM(97) 617 final
- Registration documents for motor vehicles and their trailers (**IND-OCT 2**)
COM(97) 248 final - 97/0150 SYN
- Motor vehicles for transporting certain animals (**IND-DEC/JAN**)
COM(97) 336 final - 97/0190 COD
- Boosting customers' confidence in electronic means of payment in the single market (communication) (**IND-JAN**)
COM(97) 353 final
- Action programme for customs in the Community (Customs 2000) (**IND-DEC/JAN**)
COM(97) 433 final - 97/0228 COD
- Airport charges (**TRA-DEC**)
COM(97) 154 final - 97/0127 SYN
- Code of conduct for computerized reservation systems (CRSs) (**TRA-JAN**)
COM(97) 246 final - 97/0148 SYN
- Motor vehicles and their trailers - distinguishing registration signs (**TRA-DEC**)
COM(97) 366 final - 97/0199 SYN

- **Public-private partnerships in trans-European transport network projects (TRA-JAN)**
COM(97) 453 final
- **Transport of dangerous goods by vessels on inland waterways (TRA-DEC/JAN)**
COM(97) 367 final - 97/0193 SYNò
- **Professional competence of cabin crews in civil aviation (TRA-JAN)**
COM(97) 382 final - 97/0212 SYN
- **International standards for ship safety, pollution prevention and shipboard living and working conditions (TRA-FEB)**
COM(97) 416 final - 97/0215 SYN
- **White Paper on sectors and activities excluded from the working time directive (SOC-JAN)**
COM(97) 334 final
- **Voluntary organizations and foundations (Communication) (SOC-JAN)**
COM(97) 241 final
- **Social security for employed persons, self-employed persons and members of their families moving within the Community (SOC-DEC)**
COM(97) 378 final - 97/0201 CNS
- **Social and labour market dimension of the information society (communication) (SOC-FEB)**
COM(97) 390 final
- **Common organization of the market in milk (AGR-OCT)**
COM(97) 133 final - 97/0114 CNS
- **Control system applicable to the common fisheries policy (AGR-OCT 2)**
COM(97) 341 final - 97/0189 CNS
- **Scheme to compensate for additional costs incurred in the marketing of certain fishery products from the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands and the French department of Guiana as a result of those regions' remoteness (AGR-DEC)**
COM(97) 389 final - 97/0200 CNS
- **Marketing of the seed of beets, fodder plants, cereals etc. (AGR-DEC)**
COM(97) 403 final - 97/0217 CNS
- **Registration of certain establishments in the animal feed sector (AGR-DEC)**
COM(97) 409 final - 97/0213 COD
- **Common organization of the markets in processed fruit and vegetable products (AGR-DEC)**
COM(97) 414 final - 97/0223 CNS
- **Common organization of the market in seeds (AGR-DEC)**
COM(97) 421 final - 97/0218 CNS
- **Permanent abandonment premiums - wine-producing areas (AGR - DEC)**
COM(97) 423 final - 97/0226 CNS

- Statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States - nomenclature of products **(ECO-OCT 2)**
COM(97) 275 final - 97/0162 COD
- Short-term statistics **(ECO-OCT 2)**
COM(97) 313 final - 97/0171 CNS
- Common system of VAT (VAT committee) **(ECO-OCT 2)**
COM(97) 325 final - 97/0186 CNS
- Holding, movement and monitoring of products subject to excise duty **(ECO-OCT 2)**
COM(97) 326 final - 97/0181 CNS
- Information society and development (communication) **(RELEX-DEC)**
COM(97) 351 final
- Agenda 2000 (Communication) **(S/C OCT 2)**
COM(97) 2000 final
COM(97) 2001 to 2010 final

IN ANTICIPATION

- Good clinical practice in trials of medicinal products for human use **(ENVI-JAN)**
COM(97) 369 final - 97/0197 COD
- Harmonization of provisions relating to liability arising from defective products **(ENVI-TO BE DECIDED)**
COM(97) 478 final
- Climate change (Kyoto Conference) (Communication) **(ENVI-OCT2)**
COM(97) 481 final
- Application of Articles 92 and 93 of the EC Treaty to certain categories of horizontal state aid **(IND-JAN)**
COM(97) 396 final - 97/0203 CNS
- Competitiveness of the European textiles and clothing industry (Communication) **(IND-TO BE DECIDED)**
COM(97) 454 final
- European aerospace industry - meeting the global challenge (Communication) **(IND-JAN)**
COM(97) 466 final
- Aid for shipbuilding **(IND-DEC/JAN)**
COM(97) 469 final
- Towards a new shipbuilding policy (Communication) **(IND-MAR)**
COM(97) 470 final
- Community customs code (transit) (Communication) **(IND-JAN)**
COM(97) 472 final

On 24 July, the following guest speakers addressed the meeting of the Section for Energy, Nuclear Questions and Research:

- Commissioner **Edith Cresson**, on the future 5th Framework Programme;
- **Mr Decher**, head of the Luxembourg Ministry of Education's research and development department, representing the Luxembourg Presidency.

On 18-19 September **Mr Moreland**, president of the regional development section, took part in a seminar on the theme of the Territorial Employment Pacts, organized by the Commission in Östersund (Sweden). The topics discussed included higher education and employment, change and restructuring in industrial areas, lifelong training and integration into work. This seminar was the first of a set of three: the other two took place on 2-3 October in Viareggio and on 13-14 October in Porto.

Mr Von Schwerin, as member of the Section for Transport and Communications and ESC rapporteur for the Citizens' Network, attended the European trade union symposium organized by the CGT (France) in Montreuil on 22-24 September, when he presented the Committee's opinion.

In connection with the preparation of an opinion on EU enlargement, the Section for External Relations and its president, **Mr John Carroll**, invited socio-occupational interest groups in the central and eastern European applicant countries to a conference organized jointly by the ESC and the Commission's office for technical assistance and exchange of information on 23-24 September at the ESC's Brussels headquarters.

On 30 September **Mr Jorge Stecher Navarra**, vice-president of the Employers' Group, attended the "Forum das Americas" in Monaco, when he presented a major communication on "La Unión europea, España y el Mercosur".

Other activities

- *Uruguayan delegation at the ESC*

A Uruguayan delegation of the "Foro consultivo económico-social" of Mercosur was welcomed at the ESC on 4 June by **Mr Graziosi** (ESC secretary-general), **Mr di Muro** (director for the registry), **Mr Stecher Navarra**, **Mr Cal** and **Mr Pezzini** (ESC members) and **Mr Laval** (head of the press and media division).

- *Third Pan-European transport conference*

A nine-member ESC delegation attended the third Pan-European Transport Conference held on 23-25 June 1997 in Helsinki. Around one thousand people, including Commissioner **Neil Kinnock** and **Mrs A. Jorritsma-Lebbink**, president-in-office of the Transport Council, along with thirty or so ministers from European countries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea area were present.

Several delegation members officially presented the ESC position in the working groups, whose discussions focused on three areas: following up the second Pan-European Transport Conference, trans-European networks and transport infrastructures, and the rational use of transport systems.

At the closing plenary session, **Mr Eulen**, president of the ESC Section for Transport and Communications, proposed that the ESC relay the views of the economic and social players to the steering committees responsible for implementing the pan-European transport corridors.

- *3rd Euro-Mediterranean Summit of Economic and Social Councils and similar bodies*

The preparatory committee for the 3rd Summit of Euro-Mediterranean Economic and Social Councils and similar bodies held its third meeting in Brussels on 16 September. The participants included **Mr Habib El Malki**, secretary-general of CNJA, **Mr José Silva Lopes**, president of the Portuguese ESC, and **Mr Roger Briesch**, president of the ESC's Euromed follow-up group. The 3rd Euromed Summit will take place in Morocco on 27-28 November this year.

ESC information stands at public events of European interest

- on 26 September, at the symposium organized in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the International Centre for Research and Information on the Collective Economy, in the Palais des Congrès, Brussels;
- on 23-24 September, at the conference in Brussels on the "Enlargement of the European Union."

IV. APPOINTMENTS

The Council of the European Union has appointed the following members:

- **Mr Pedro Barato Triguero** (Spain) to replace **Mr José Luis Mayayo Bello**, Group III, (deceased);
- **Mr Rainer Franz** (Germany) to replace **Mr Jens-Peter Petersen**, Group I (resigned);
- **Mr Guido Ravoet** (Belgium) to replace **Mr Jean Pardon**, Group I (deceased);
- **Mr Michael Reiterer** (Austria) to replace **Mr Leopold Maurer** (resigned).

V. IN MEMORIAM

It is with deep regret that the ESC president, secretary-general and secretariat announce the death of **Mr Léon Wagner** in Luxembourg on 25 September. **Mr Wagner** was a member of the ESC from its creation on 25 April 1958 until 1970 and served as bureau member from 1962 to 1964.

The president asked the Assembly to observe a one minute's silence in memory of **Mr Wagner**.

VI. NEWS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS

The Association of Former Members of the Economic and Social Committee (president: **Mr Fons Margot**) organized its annual excursion in Luxembourg on 10-14 September.

22 ex-members and their wives held their reunion in the late-September sunshine. Thanks to the kind assistance of **Mr François Schweitzer**, they were able to visit the Luxembourg Economic and Social Council, the European Satellite Society, the Remich Wine-Growing Institute on the Moselle and the Luxembourg Farmers' Centre, where they had the pleasure of meeting up with a former ESC president, **Mr Mathias Berns**, who is still very actively involved in this venture, of which he was the founder. Friendship, good humour and Luxembourg gastronomy were obviously the order of the day at this reunion.

VII. FACT-FINDING VISITS

During the period in question, the following groups visited the ESC:

- 25 August: Joint Interpreting and Conference Service trainees
- 2 September: Karl-Arnold-Stiftung - Bonn - Germany
Bildungsdienst, Sozialwerk und Akademie des Deutschen Beamtenbundes, Bonn
(BISOWE des DBB) - Germany
- 4 September: Asociación Nacional de Transportes Urbanos - Spain
- 5 September: Nihon-Universität, Tokyo - Japan
- 8 September: Folkpartiet Liberalerna - Stockholm - Sweden
- 9 September: Delegation der Union HK (Union of Commercial and Clerical Employees) - Hjørring
und Frederikshavn - Denmark
Napomanagement - Romania
- 10 September: BISOWE des DBB - Bonn - Germany
- 11 September: Delegation of the Union HK (Union of Commercial and Clerical Employees) - Head
Office Copenhagen - Denmark
- 15 September: AKK New Management Tour - Japan
Universiteit Gent - Belgium
- 16 September: Delegation of Senior Civil Servants Cyprus - Cyprus
BISOWE des DBB - Germany
Association Léonardo de Vinci - France
- 17 September: Batxillerat "Vinyes Velles" Institute - Montornés del Vallès - Spain
- 18 September: Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung - Kiel - Germany
- 23 September: Assistant nurses from Middelfart - Denmark
- 24 September: BISOWE des DBB - Germany
Deutsche Gesellschaft - Germany
Gymnasium Droyssig - Germany
- 26 September: Swedish Consumer Council - Sweden
AKAVA - Gewerkschaftsjournalisten - Finland
- 30 September: Gymnasium Zeitz Ost - Germany
- 1 October: Delegation from the Fédération de l'Education Nationale - France
Deutsche Gesellschaft - Berlin - Germany

BISOWE des DBB

- 2 October:** **American University - USA**
 Istituto Guglielmo Tagliacarne - Roma - Italy
 Parliament and Industry Trust (United Kingdom)
- 3 October:** **Diakonhjemmets Høgskolesenter Oslo - Norway**
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