

# EESC

## INFO



February 2004 / 2

THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE — A BRIDGE BETWEEN EUROPE AND ORGANISED CIVIL SOCIETY

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### EDITORIAL



#### Creative industries in Europe

The development of creative industries is essential to promote the expression of European cultural diversity and acts as a vector of economic and social progress. Due to their huge potential in terms of job and wealth creation, creative industries can make a significant contribution to achieving the Lisbon goals relating to the creation of jobs.

Europe's creative industries are facing major challenges, however, in terms of external competition, pirating associated with new technologies, the balance between major players and independent entrepreneurs (market access and independent handling), varying tax treatment, and a lack of expertise and training in certain of the sectors' trades.

Culture is not an abstract concept. There is no culture without authors, artists, performers, etc., whose inspiration provides the public with works that are part of the cultural heritage of humanity, which admires and appreciates them in all their aspects.

A European cultural policy must aim at enhancing the Union's citizens' awareness of their common cultural identity and the cultural diversity of the different regions of Europe. The creation of a common cultural area provides a twofold enrichment in terms both of its cultural richness as such and of the economic benefits it brings through creative industries. These make culture accessible to the Union's citizens and promote the influence and export of our culture beyond the Community's borders.

**José Isaías Rodríguez García-Caro**  
Member of the EESC  
Rapporteur of the opinion on  
European creative industries

The full text of this article can be downloaded from the Committee's website: <http://www.esc.eu.int>

## Halfway through his term, Roger Briesch takes stock



Roger Briesch 'satisfied' but there are 'efforts still to be made'

'The Committee has every reason to be satisfied with its achievements over the past few months. Definite progress has been made though much still remains to be done'. Addressing members of the EESC at its plenary session on 29 January, Roger Briesch was keen to show that he was positive and grateful for the efforts his colleagues had made in the first half of his mandate. Positive and grateful, but also conscious that the objectives he had set himself when he took office in October 2002 still needed to be worked on and were in some cases difficult to achieve.

Four subjects dominated his speech:

- the European Economic and Social Committee's developing role as the key EU institutional representative of European organised civil society;
- continued promotion of Europe's socioeconomic model;
- the Committee's preparations for enlargement;
- the failure of the December Intergovernmental Conference meeting of Heads of State or Government.

### Improving the EESC's credibility as an institutional representative of civil society

President Briesch put particular emphasis on the work of the Convention, the Committee's role in the new emerging Europe and especially the **importance of consultation** with the organisations representing civil society at national and regional levels.

Referring to a series of meetings that the EESC had organised on the work of the European Convention and in other contexts, he said, 'the Union's new Constitution will call for structured civil dialogue. We must be prepared for this. It is vital for the Committee's reputation and its capacity to make its voice heard that we do not miss this opportunity'.

The series of meetings organised by the Committee in this context had been 'constructive preparation for our future cooperation with European civil society organisations'.

President Briesch also reminded members that the Committee was currently organising a conference on the subject of participatory democracy, due to take place on 8 and 9 March, which would further develop the Committee's work in this field.

### External relations: promoting the European socioeconomic model

President Briesch who, as part of a **drive to promote Europe's socioeconomic model**, held meetings with several key stakeholders across the world in 2003, also highlighted the 'excellent results' that had been achieved with the Committee's counterparts. Some examples he mentioned included:

- the enhanced cooperation with the Brazilian Economic and Social Development Council and a partnership agreement that was signed during Brazilian Minister Tarso Genro's visit to the EESC in July;
- several visits within the context of preparations for EU enlargement;
- a series of meetings that have taken place with representatives of civil society in China, India and several Afro-Caribbean and Pacific countries;
- moves to grant the EESC observer status at the United Nations' Economic and Social Council.

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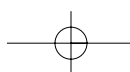
- Dick Roche and Viviane Reding visit the Committee
- The move: the EESC 'conveys a message about urban integration'

- Jean-Luc Dehaene seeks to play down the failure of the Intergovernmental Conference whilst highlighting the differences

- The Committee and the European Parliament discuss the Lisbon reforms and strategy

### AGENDA

- Future events





## Lisbon strategy and European integration

### Dick Roche calls on the Committee to lead the way

'There is nothing Europe cannot achieve if its members work together'. Dick Roche, Ireland's Minister for European Affairs, on his second trip to the European Economic and Social Committee in four months, was decidedly upbeat in his address to the Committee's plenary session on 28 January.

'This Committee continues to make a valuable contribution in providing policy advice for the Council and Commission and I look forward to continued cooperation with this Committee during our Presidency.'

Mr Roche also emphasised that in a European election year 'Europe' needed to be brought closer to its citizens, stressing that progress in European affairs could not be achieved without grassroots' support.

With regard to the Lisbon strategy, he stressed the importance of implementing it in a practical and coherent manner: 'Our aim is to focus on a limited number of key areas where improvements will result in real benefits for the people of Europe ... There has been too much vocalisation, too much verbiage on this subject', he stressed.

#### Mr Roche's speech in brief

##### Lisbon strategy

- ❑ The strategy must be coherent and appropriate to the economic and social situation in which it finds itself.
- ❑ Prioritise key areas, growth-oriented economic policies; structural reform of product, capital and labour markets; more and better employment.
- ❑ Facilitate worker mobility by enabling workers to access social protection benefits more easily in other EU Member States.

##### IGC

- ❑ A new Constitution **to respond better to the demands and expectations of the EU citizen; to make the EU more democratic, accountable and transparent.**
- ❑ Convention text: a 'lucid **simple** text'.

##### Communicating Europe

- ❑ **It is essential to engage effectively with the EU citizen and to** communicate the EU's messages effectively. For this purpose, a Ministerial Conference will be held on 7 and 8 April to discuss and review this growing challenge. The EESC, representing Europe's organised civil society, is invited to attend.

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### No unravelling of the draft Constitution

'The failure of the Intergovernmental Conference points to a lack of collective will to put the **common European interest** before national interests. Only a democratic process like the Convention... can further European integration and confer much enhanced legitimacy on the European project', indicated President Briesch, expressing his disappointment and concern at Europe's failure to reach agreement at the IGC in December.

'Sadly, the Intergovernmental Conference has now started to unravel the draft Constitution, which we had judged to be positive', he continued.

## Education and training

### Viviane Reding calls for sufficient financial resources for education



*Investments: it is not a matter of investing more but of investing better*

The paucity of the Community budget for education and culture is regrettable. We can have big ideas but we must also have the money to deliver them. This was the message given by Commissioner Viviane Reding to the members of the European Economic and Social Committee at their plenary session on 28 January.

Ms Reding, who also witnessed the adoption of a key exploratory opinion on Europe's creative industries (Rapporteur: Mr Rodríguez García-Caro (Group I, Employers, Spain)), (an opinion that she herself had requested from the Committee last year), asked the Committee to help convince Member State governments to take a more realistic approach to investment in education, which is an essential pillar of the EU's Lisbon strategy.

'I can only agree with the comment made by your internal market section when it deplors the inadequacy of the budgetary provision for actions that support culture and, by extension, the creative industries. Such provision is too small to provide for the take-off of the audiovisual sector in particular and creative industries in general', she stated.

The Commissioner, quoted figures to indicate the importance of this sector of the European economy, which employs about 4.8 million people (3.1 % of total employment in the European Union), and then went on to highlight the importance of increasing the level of private investment in education, which was three times higher in the United States, for example, than in Europe.

#### Transparency of qualifications

From theory into practice: the EU must give itself the means to strengthen a knowledge-based Europe. 'As the EU grows from 15 to 25 Member States, it is essential to strengthen the transparency of qualifications and competencies in order to improve transnational mobility and to support lifelong learning and make it a reality,' said **Ms Reding** when presenting the Europass proposals, which are designed to enable people to 'cross' the internal borders of the European Union with their diplomas.

*See also the key opinions adopted, page 4.*

## Jean-Luc Dehaene seeks to play down the failure of the Intergovernmental Conference whilst highlighting the differences; Andrew Duff MEP calls for great vigilance



*The draft Constitution: where now? Debate at the EESC with civil society*

At an information and dialogue meeting on the Intergovernmental Conference, held on 22 January at the EESC building in Brussels, the Vice-President of the ex-European Convention, **Jean-Luc Dehaene**, was keen to play down the failure of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) held in Brussels in mid-December, pointing out that a broad consensus had now been reached on 90-95 % of the provisions of the future Constitution that were still being debated just a few months ago.

At the same time, he did not make light of the differences persisting between the 25 Heads of State or Government of the enlarged Union. Contrary to certain claims, he considered that the weighting system for majority voting in the Council of Ministers and the future composition of the European Commission were not the only remaining points on which there was disagreement. For instance, he also identified the doubts raised about the provisions for budgetary procedures and about the so-called 'passerelle' clause, intended to facilitate future revision of certain parts of the Constitution.

In conclusion, **Mr Dehaene** was wary about a quick conclusion of negotiations in the IGC, and stressed that the result was more important than the date on which it was delivered.

**Andrew Duff**, MEP and former member of the Convention, who was also present at the meeting, spoke about a 'constitutional crisis', also calling, if not for rapid adoption of the Constitution, then at least for great vigilance with regard to attempts by certain Member States to postpone indefinitely the conclusion of the IGC's work. However, he said that he understood the caution on the part of the Irish government, which was aware that another IGC fiasco would trigger a serious crisis.

**Andrew Duff** assured the representatives of organised civil society that the European Parliament was determined to make its voice heard.



## The EESC's move to its new building

### The move: the EESC 'conveys a message about urban integration'



The EESC building on rue Belliard: 'a touch of green'; The EESC will now be physically at the heart of the European quarter in Brussels

**In an interview with EESC Info, Pierre Lallemand, the 'eco-architect' responsible for fitting out one of the five buildings that will house the Committee's staff and members from June 2004, takes initial stock of the final preparations for the building. Reflecting his attempt to 'green' the workplace, the success of this urban planning project will 'create a fresh, light, joyous and unique building, a green contrast with the monotonous excesses of urban planners.'**

**EESC Info:** Can you summarise the current situation at the 'Belliard 97' site?

**PL:** Despite this site being extremely complex due to the large number of different types of activity taking place, everything is being done to meet the goals in terms of schedules, budget and quality. Work is expected to be completed on 31 May 2004. The finishing touches are currently being made: furnishing the rooms, painting and plastering, installing special technical equipment and finishing off service areas.

**EESC Info:** What new working environment is on offer to the EESC and CoR staff who will be working in this building?

**PL:** The position of the building creates a unique working environment. On the south side (Parc Léopold and Parliament), the location and the view

are quite exceptional. On the rue Belliard side, as well as ensuring the building met urbanistic requirements, the idea was to provide users with a 'counterpart' to the park. The view is not focused on the 'urban motorway' of the rue Belliard, but rather on a 'vertical greenhouse' (the main façade). The entire construction was motivated — via the main façade (vertical greenhouse) and the solar protection equipment (south side/Parc Léopold and Parliament) among other things — by a concern to limit operating expenditure and energy costs and thus to fit in with sustainable development considerations.

**EESC Info:** What is an eco-architect?

**PL:** I am less concerned about this title ... than about the moral attitude towards a universal problem. It goes without saying that, these days, large buildings are big polluters. Attention must be given to limiting energy needs in a 'passive' way by adapting architecture to the climate and to a building's immediate environment. This type of concern helps to give a building local character and set it in a particular context, unlike an unduly 'international' architecture. Beyond the management of flows, there are a number of environmental concerns: the quality of the working environment which depends on managing the quality of the natural light (not compressing the solar spectrum with tinted glass, not obscuring views the moment there is a ray of sunshine, comfort achieved by the installation of louvres and brise-soleils); the quality of 'natural air' (the ability to open windows, particularly in the vertical greenhouse (filtered air)). These premises have been designed for living, with the emphasis on giving pleasure to our senses.

**EESC Info:** ...and what about access to the building for mobility-impaired people?

**PL:** The quality of signposting and accessibility for all — in particular for people with disabilities and/or reduced mobility — has received our utmost attention.

**EESC Info:** What is new about the aesthetic quality of the Belliard building — what new techniques have been applied to a building undergoing refurbishment?

**PL:** An aesthetic quality is defined in terms of the criteria and concerns that generated it. Consequently, when new conceptual parameters are applied to a building, this has a direct impact on its fabric. Environmental concerns are among the criteria that make up the

expression and definition of this aesthetic quality. Architecture is an expression of the sum total of all the contexts and pretexts that make up the 'design guideline'. Generally speaking, this guideline is divided into aspects linked to planning, budget, timing, urban context, type of project (in this case, a refurbishment), aspects regarding structure and special techniques (ventilation, co-generation, cabling, building management, intra-building communications), and finally, aspects relating to 'desires', to the thinking that will be the thread that connects and gives meaning to all these parameters.

In the case of the refurbishment of the EESC building, we are faced with a project where the distinguishing characteristic is the contrast between the front and the rear of the building - between silence and noise, tranquillity and speed, colour and grey, park and pollution. In order to identify this building as a public building, one of the key ideas was to make the best out of the rue Belliard location by creating a fresh, light, joyous and unique building, which provides a green contrast to its rather monotonous immediate surroundings. This building is marked by its arcs (structures made of glued laminated timber that are affixed at intervals all the way up the façade), which are, so to speak, the 'columns of the temple'. There is no doubt about the public function of this building, which stands out by virtue of its vivacity and makes a statement about urban integration.

What is new are not the techniques used as such, but rather the philosophy with which they are applied and developed. The unique feature of this building is the vertical greenhouse, which acts as an insulating layer or buffer zone, retaining heat in winter and cold in summer. The whole thing is planted with bamboo, one of the few plants that consumes more water than it gives off. It thus contributes to the humidity management of the building (as well as reducing condensation).

**EESC Info:** The EESC building: a splash of green on rue Belliard?

**PL:** I like that idea, and there is some truth in your suggestion ... in that the public authorities are continuing a cultural and historical logic by using the idea of 'greening' the city — and indeed our lives — as a guiding principle.

This is the first of a series of articles on the EESC move.

## The Committee and the European Parliament discuss the Lisbon reforms and strategy



Lisbon strategy: reforms do not threaten the European social model

**Coordinate reform, respond effectively to the fall in growth and employment in Europe, provide the general public with a better explanation of what is at stake. Three major challenges to address, according to Bruno Vever, member of the EESC, who emphasised to the European Parliament the importance of facing up to increased international competition.**

The European Parliament had consulted the Committee about the economic, social and employment-related impact of EU structural reforms. The EESC's opinion was adopted on 30 October. The rapporteur, Bruno Vever, along with the ECO section president, Henri Malosse, attended the European Parliament's Economic and Monetary Committee meeting on 20 January, at which the opinion was presented and discussed. Recalling that the EESC had widened the circle of groups it consults (socio-occupational players, national ESCs, conference on 8-10

October on Lisbon strategy with 300 participants), Bruno Vever made four main points.

- These reforms had been necessary in view of increased international competition. All the Member States had embarked on them, in line with the 'roadmap' and methods agreed at the Lisbon summit in March 2000 (progressive and date-specific goals, open coordination, exchange of good practice, annual reviews). However, they had not had sufficient impact to date.
- Indeed, the results had been varied and often disappointing. Growth and employment had fallen since 2000, with the economy now in a downturn. Better results had often been recorded in northern Europe than in southern Europe thanks to good internal cohesion and despite the often heavy tax burden. The countries adhering to the Stability Pact were often further advanced in the reform process than the others. However, even these better-placed countries continued to lag behind better-performing third countries. The challenge was not simply to do better than before, but to do better than elsewhere.
- The Member States had fallen too far behind in terms of information provision, cooperation and implementation. At the spring summits, they had rediscussed goals already set at Lisbon, rather than assessing the actual state of the reforms and the involvement of civil society.

- The reform strategy needed new life breathing into it.

These four points from the Committee led to four recommendations.

- The objective of the reforms needed to be better explained: it did not threaten the European social model, as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, but wanted to ensure its sustainability by adapting it to the reality of globalisation. Expressing the Lisbon objectives in this way should improve their credibility.
- The single market had, of course, to be completed as planned in Lisbon (e.g. in energy, telecommunications, public tenders, services, trans-European networks). After all the efforts that had already been made, the worst thing would be to stop in mid-stream for fear of not completing the work. The EESC's Single Market Observatory highlighted the urgency of new measures: simplified European company law for SMEs, Community controls, common organisation of customs at external borders, abolition of all double taxation within the EU, Community patent.
- Strengthening the method of open cooperation. Without encroaching on the Community method in the areas covered by the Treaty, it constituted a useful development of subsidiarity in other areas, building bridges between States and levels of competence in places where watertight partitioning

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# January plenary session: key opinions adopted

## Europe's creative industries (exploratory opinion)

Rapporteur: Mr José Isaías Rodríguez García-Caro (Group I, Employers, Spain)

### 'An essential and unifying element in the everyday lives and identities of the citizens of Europe'

Growth in the creative industries is essential in order to make them into major vectors for economic and social development. The sector has demonstrated that it has great potential for job and wealth creation and to promote the expression of European culture. The Committee has carried out a detailed analysis of the cultural and socioeconomic challenges faced by the creative industries in Europe with a particular focus on defining what is understood by the term

'creative industries' and the challenges arising from linguistic diversity and globalisation.

The Committee feels that the European Union has a contribution to make in terms of addressing these challenges, particularly in terms of:

- developing a cultural policy for the European Union;
- developing a European cultural area;
- finding ways to support creative industries; and
- supporting artists and other creative performers.

## Promoting renewable energy: means of action and financing instruments (own-initiative opinion)

Rapporteur: Mrs Ulla Sirkeinen (Group I, Employers, Finland)

### Renewable energy is essential ... but needs further developments

The Committee believes that support measures for renewable energy sources are necessary. The current potential of renewable energy is significant but remains limited. Furthermore, support schemes for renewable energy sometimes lack coherence with complementary policy measures such as emissions trading; these schemes also vary considerably in their approach, their design and their intensity, and are more often than not strictly limited to the national level, thus leading to severe distortions within the internal market.

On top of this, the cost of promoting renewable energy is very high. This situation is beginning to be a cause for concern, and could lead, in political terms, to a consumer backlash. Even if a single support mechanism for renewable energy does not seem necessary at this stage, a common system will certainly be required at some point.

On this matter, the Commission must:

- redouble its efforts to facilitate the sharing of good practice;
- improve monitoring of the development of the renewable energy market;
- evaluate the cross-interference of different Community policies on use of renewable energy and technology in order to avoid over-regulation;
- study the way in which current developments affect innovation, the markets, profitability and costs for private and industrial consumers.

## Preparing transport infrastructure for the future: planning and neighbouring countries — financing (own-initiative)

Rapporteurs:  
Mrs Karin Alleweldt (Group II, Employees, Germany);  
Mr Philippe Levaux (Group I, Employers, France);  
Mr Lutz Ribbe (Group III, Various interests, Germany)

The EU's transport policy must become one of the central priorities in the context of **sustainable development** and **climate change**. In order to achieve this, the Committee considers it necessary to: develop pan-European transport corridors in the **south** and **east** of Europe; improve **transport links** in the **Mediterranean** region; and emphasise the use of inland waterways and other modes of **marine transport** (especially short haul)

and their incorporation into the trans-European networks (TENs). **Rail transport** also needs ambitious but realistic targets with particular focus on border cooperation and the linking up of maritime ports. Finally, the Committee proposes the creation of a European **fund** dedicated to the priority TENs networks, the management of which would be entrusted to the European Investment Bank. The money would be raised through a EUR 0.01 levy per litre of petrol across the EU.

Note: Opinion carried over from the December 2003 plenary session.

## The agricultural employment situation in the EU and the accession countries: options for action for 2010 (own-initiative opinion)

Rapporteur: Mr Hans-Joachim Wilms (Group II, Employees, Germany)

Agricultural and rural development are two of the most pressing problems to be tackled in connection with the European Union's eastward enlargement. The increase in the number of people active in farming, and structural change heightening competition between farmers and for jobs in agriculture can have serious repercussions on the economic and social structure of European agriculture and on social security systems. An upsurge in rural unemployment in the accession countries could also put pressure on the labour market situation in the current Member States. Depopulation of the countryside (and with this a fall in prosperity) is a real threat as young and qualified people migrate to the cities.

The Committee calls for:

- competitive, sustainable agriculture to be a fundamental prerequisite for safeguarding employment and social development, within the framework of an integrated policy for rural areas;
- doubling effort to combat unemployment;
- greater cooperation between the social partners within regions affected.

## Lithuanian members announced

The Lithuanian government has announced its list of candidates for membership of the European Economic and Social Committee from 1 May onwards. The names now go to the Council of Ministers for approval.

### Representing employer organisations

Ginartas Morkis — Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists

Danas Arlauskas — Director-General, Lithuanian Confederation of Employers

Arvydas Zygis — Association of Lithuanian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts

Linas Lasiauskas — Deputy Director-General, Lithuanian Apparel and Textile Industry

### Representing workers' organisations

Algirdas Kvedaravicius — Vice-Chairperson of the Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation

Aldona Balsiene — President, Lithuanian Trade Union Solidarumas

Robertas Mileris — Vice-President, Lithuanian Labour Federation

### Representing of other interests

Rolandas Domeika — Director, Lithuanian Farmers' Union

Alvita Armanaviciene — President, Lithuanian National Consumer Federation

## IN BRIEF

### Renewable energy: the objective of at least 20 % by 2020 is achievable

The European institutions should be asked to launch a political process aimed at setting date-specific targets to increase the proportion of energy coming from renewable sources in the medium term (2020) and the long term. This was one of the conclusions of a conference on renewable energy entitled 'Options for an intelligent policy', which welcomed 650 participants to Berlin on 19 and 20 January.

Another major conclusion: the objective of at least 20 % of energy supply by 2020 is achievable.

Ulla Sirkeinen, rapporteur of the own-initiative opinion on renewable energy, adopted at the EESC's January plenary session, also took part in the conference, which looked at the development of renewable energy in Europe, assessed the measures already introduced at Community, national and local levels, and determined what obstacles stood in the way of a substantial increase in market share for renewable energy sources.

## FUTURE EVENTS

### 8-9 March at the EESC, Brussels

#### EESC Conference: Participatory democracy: state of play and outlook opened up by the European Constitution

How can we develop participatory democracy and real consultation of the peoples of Europe? How can we increase the sense of being involved in and belonging to the European venture? Jacques Delors, Jean-Luc Dehaene and Dick Roche will attend this major EESC conference and offer their contributions on a subject that is becoming increasingly relevant to the European public. For more information on the conference, please contact the coordinator, Patrick Fève, at the EESC (patrick.feve@esc.eu.int)

### 6-7 April, Dublin

#### Conference organised jointly by the EESC and the National Economic and Social Council of Ireland

The role that social dialogue can play in the provision of quality economic and social services.

#### The Committee will hold its next plenary session on 31 March and 1 April.

#### The Communication Group of the EESC will meet on Thursday 18 March. Other planned dates in 2004 are 24 June, 2 September, 21 October and 2 December.

## EESC INFO / February 2004 / 2

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Print run: 23 839 copies. Next issue: March 2004.

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would have been detrimental to our efficiency.

- Civil society actors had to be involved, as provided for in Lisbon. This reference was underestimated at the first spring summits in the reports from Member States and the conclusions of the Presidency. The situation improved when, on the eve of the summits, meetings were held between the social partners, the Presidency and the Commission. The social partners' social dialogue agenda had also helped to strengthen their involvement in the reform strategy.

**Bruno Vever, member of the EESC, author of an own-initiative opinion on the Lisbon strategy and economic structural reforms.**