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Dialogue

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Rebuilding Kosovo

Agriculture funds

Blair's vision

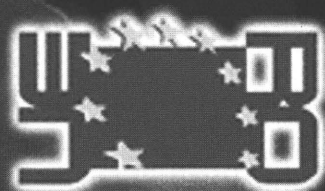
Prodi's team

Violence, women and children

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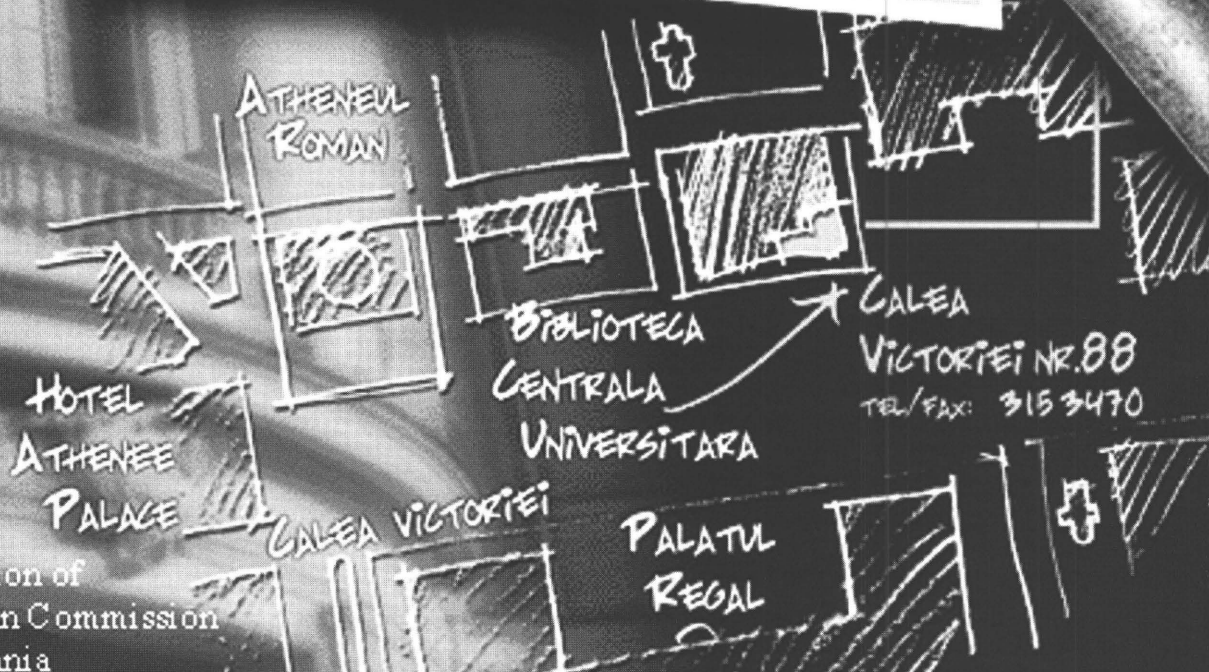
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The de facto amputation of Kosovo from Serbia and the establishment of an international protectorate over it is good news both for the region's stability and for democracy in Serbia. European Dialogue reviews the situation in south-eastern Europe.

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EU redefines its relationship with the Balkans

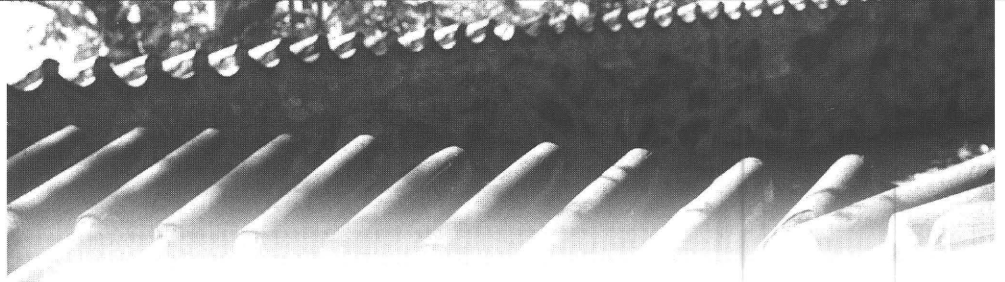
The war in Kosovo has been a huge human tragedy — above all for the province's majority Albanian population which suffered mass expulsion, murder, torture and rape on a large scale at the hands of the Serb security forces. The war has also been a tragedy for Kosovo's Serbs. Most of them have either retreated with the Serb security forces or fled afterwards.

Serbia is on its knees economically with much of its infrastructure destroyed by NATO's bombing campaign. For the neighbouring countries, too, the war has been a calamity (see separate articles).

Yet, as so often in history, a sequence of events perceived in the short term as an unmitigated disaster may prove in the longer term to have benign political and economic consequences.

The de facto amputation of Kosovo from Serbia, and the establishment of an international protectorate over it is good news, both for the region's stability and for democracy in Serbia. Ever since Yugoslavia imploded and broke up in 1991, a democratic Serbia living at peace with its neighbours has been seen as a key element of political stability and economic progress in the whole of south-eastern Europe. Standing in the way, however, was the expansionist greater Serbia project which had since the late 1980s been the principal destabilising factor in the area of former Yugoslavia.

A negotiated retreat of the Belgrade-commanded Yugoslav army from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in 1992 was a step in the right direction and



made an important contribution to regional stability.

The military defeat in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 of Serb paramilitary forces backed from Belgrade by the regime of President Slobodan Milosevic made another such contribution. It opened the way for a gradual normalisation of relations between Belgrade on the one hand and Zagreb and Sarajevo on the other.

However, the biggest block to progress towards peace in the region and, indeed, democracy and the rule of law in Serbia, still remained. This was the Belgrade regime's apartheid-style policy towards the majority Albanian population in Kosovo.

In 1989, two years after Mr Milosevic gained total power in Serbia, Kosovo's autonomy was abolished — to popular acclaim in Serbia. Kosovo, a part of the medieval Serbian state, was dear to the Serbs. In the late 1990s, Kosovo Albanians tiring of their then leaders' peaceful attempts to win back the province's autonomy, began to resort to guerrilla warfare. This was also grist to Mr Milosevic's mill. He could now assume the mantle of the defender of the country's territorial integrity. As part of its counter-insurgency operations, the regime reactivated old plans for a systematic, stage-by-stage expulsion of the bulk of the Albanians from the province.

The majority of the anti-Milosevic opposition went along with the regime's policy of holding onto Kosovo at all costs. This was partly out of conviction, but partly also for opportunistic reasons: the policy enjoyed wide popular support in Serbia, including that of the Serbian Orthodox church.

As well as exploiting the Kosovo issue domestically, the Milosevic regime sought, with some success, international tolerance for its policy of repression in Kosovo by invoking the spectre of a supposed greater evil — that of a greater Albania consisting of Albania proper and majority-Albanian parts of Macedonia with an independent Kosovo as its nub.

Despite its superficial plausibility, the greater Albania project has never enjoyed significant support either among Kosovo's Albanians or among the Albanians of Albania and FYROM. An encouraging pointer to the



NATO Photos

The war in Kosovo has been a huge human tragedy — above all for the province's majority Albanian population which suffered mass expulsion, murder, torture and rape on a large scale.

future has been the fact that, both during the war and afterwards, one of the Macedonian Albanian parties has continued to participate with two Macedonian parties in the coalition government in Skopje. With Kosovo under an international administration, any chance — if it had ever existed — of a greater Albania has receded.

Serbia's defeat in Kosovo should not be assumed to mean the abandonment of Kosovo by Serbian policy and public opinion. However, the chances of Serbia getting Kosovo back are nil. None of the great powers — or Serbia's neighbours, even those, like Greece and Italy, traditionally sympathetic to the Serbs — would support Kosovo's return under Serbian rule. Too much is still at stake for the outside powers both in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Kosovo to tamper with the post-conflict status quo into which so much diplomatic and military effort has been invested.

Equally there is no governmental consensus in favour of allowing Kosovo to become fully and formally independent. In the foreseeable future international consensus will continue to back the fiction of a Kosovo formally linked to Belgrade constitutionally, rather as Bosnia-Herzegovina remained under the nominal suzerainty of the Sultan in Constantinople for decades after it had been placed under Austro-Hungarian administration in 1878.

The danger that Serbia, under Mr Milosevic or later under a successor, might challenge the status quo and try to take Kosovo by force cannot be ruled out. For the moment, however, this danger remains minimal.

Mr Milosevic cannot risk the renewal of a military conflict that has cost Serbia so dearly. However, conflicts outside Serbia have been extremely useful to Mr Milose-



Popperfoto

An elderly Albanian woman stands among the ruins of her house, burnt by Serbs, in Pec, western Kosovo.

vic as a means of strengthening domestic support. There is still danger of Belgrade deliberately provoking such a conflict with Montenegro, Serbia's smaller partner in federal Yugoslavia.

Montenegro used the Kosovo war to carve out, with western support, an increasingly independent position for itself, perhaps preparatory to tiptoeing — if and when that became possible — out of Yugoslavia altogether. As time goes on this danger will gradually diminish — not least because Russia has taken Montenegro under its wing.

Who's who in the Balkans

The European Union and United Nations are working closely together in Kosovo to help put the province back on its political and economic feet. Helping create the basic atmosphere needed for this work is the international peace-keeping force, **KFOR**, which is in Kosovo maintaining security. Its core is a Nato force, joined by other countries, including Russia. The commander of KFOR is **General Klaus Reinhardt**.

The UN interim administration for Kosovo is known as UNMIK. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has appointed the Frenchman **Bernard Kouchner** as the UN Special Representative heading **UNMIK**.

Kosovo's civilian administrator is the UN High Representative. Among the changes Mr Kouchner has begun is the setting up of an appointed 19-member working group, co-chaired by the ethnic Albanian law professor Blerim Reka and UN legal experts, to review existing laws.

Carl Bildt, who is the UN Secretary-General's senior envoy to the Balkans, is also lending a hand. Mr Bildt,

who previously worked as the UN representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina, believes south-eastern Europe needs thorough-going political and economic reforms in addition to development assistance. Mr Bildt believes Serbia is the core of the problem. "It's such a big chunk of land in the middle of the Balkans that if it does not reform itself, it will be very difficult to do anything substantial with the rest. Serbia is the core nation of the region," says Mr Bildt.

The Commission has also set up a task force in Pristina, charged with organising damage assessment and initiating the EU's assistance for reconstruction. **Marc Franco** heads the task force, which is to pave the way for the Reconstruction Agency which should be operational before the end of the year.

The EU special envoy, the German **Bodo Hombach**, is in charge of the stability pact — an effort to integrate the countries of south-eastern Europe more fully with the rest of the continent and agreed by about 40 nations. ■

In domestic Serbian politics, the Kosovo issue will remain a factor for a long time. As the Serbs continue to work off their bitterness over the province's loss and look around for culprits, they will need to face up to and acknowledge publicly — as none has done up to now — the truth about the harm Serb policy had done to other. Failure to meet this challenge could be an obstacle to post-Milosevic rulers' attempts to get international money for reconstruction and development within the framework of rebuilt links with the EU.

However, the post-Milosevic era has not been reached yet. But the writing is on the wall for Mr Milosevic. Serbia will not - because it cannot afford to - for long remain a defiant, pariah state. Unfortunately, the slow pace of political change in Serbia is delaying the launch of the international effort for the reconstruction of the region within the framework of the stability pact, from which federal Yugoslavia remains excluded until there is a policy change.

As Carl Bildt, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's envoy to the region quite rightly stresses, unless significant political and economic reforms are made in the region — and that does not apply only to the states of former Yugoslavia — much of the reconstruction aid promised to Kosovo and to the region as a whole by

world leaders could be wasted. The underlying problem is the persistence of old-style socialist communist political and economic systems, with all their built-in faults.

Serbia has been the biggest, but by no means the only, drag on the region's economic growth. Crony capitalism exists throughout the region. The best that can be said is that with much of the old unfinished political business at last out of the way, the preconditions for the region's inclusion in the wider Europe have at long last been created.

Actually the region, with the exception of former Yugoslavia, has been a lot more stable for a longer time than it has been given credit for. Even when the trouble erupted in former Yugoslavia in 1991, there were, unlike in former times, no territorial claims. All of the neighbours behaved well.

With all the international attention that is at long last being lavished on the region, the danger of marginalisation, which has hovered over it since the end of the cold war, has receded. It is still there, but only just.

Ultimately, it will be up to the locals to remove the last barriers for full integration with Europe — ultimately through membership of the EU, something which many may see as a long-term goal and others as only a dream. ■

Christopher Cviic, London

Donors pledge aid

Over 100 countries and international organisations meeting at a donors conference co-hosted by the EU and World Bank in Brussels in July pledged \$2.1bn (€2.03bn) in aid for Kosovo. The money was the first step in a massive rebuilding programme for the Yugoslav province following a Nato bombing campaign and widespread damage caused by fighting between the Kosovo Liberation Army and Yugoslav troops, as well as over a decade of investment neglect and asset stripping by the Belgrade authorities. Since the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 was adopted on June 10, over 750,000 (UNHCR estimate) Kosovar refugees have returned to the province in order to rebuild their lives with the help of international assistance and under the auspices of UNMIK, the UN interim administration for Kosovo.

World Bank co-ordinator for south-east Europe, Chris Poortman, said after the meeting that the most urgent requirements for the region had already been met. "We found that donors were ready and willing in advance of the full reconstruction programme to pledge over \$2bn (€1.81bn) which we expect will cover a significant part of the full reconstruction programme."

The return of refugees has created many needs, of which the most immediate are food, water, shelter, basic infrastructure, utilities, health services and schools. Currently the international peace-keeping force, KFOR, is in Kosovo maintaining security.



A young Albanian boy in Stenkovac (in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia) refugee camp, packed and ready to return to Kosovo.

NATO Photos

An assessment team for physical damage, financed by the EU has been present in the province since June 23. The initial results gathered by this assessment team were made at the donors conference. A final assessment will be made by the end of the year.

The conference agreed that urgent financial assistance was required to cover the \$45m (€41.7m) deficit of the UN-sponsored administration of Kosovo, \$200m (€185.2m) for short-term needs identified by other UN agencies and about \$315m (€291.7m) to pay for immediate reconstruction.

Kosovo is looking at ways to raise revenue from ordinary activity. The UN mission in Kosovo, known as UNMIK, aims to raise money from user charges for public utilities, sales and excise tax and customs duties. It also plans to prepare the province for a second mobile telephone operator, including setting up a licence fee. Overall the economy is hampered by a lack of a functioning banking and payments system. The World Bank has also launched an economic damage assessment, which will help to define a strategy for developing Kosovo's economy.

Immediately following the crisis, the Commission installed a task force in Pristina, charged with organising damage assessment and initiating the EC's assistance for reconstruction. The task force will be succeeded by an Agency for Reconstruction by the end of year.

The EU has foreseen an indicative budgetary allocation of €137m for 1999. Around €500m is currently pending budgetary authority approval for 2000. Humanitarian assistance provided through ECHO, the EU's humanitarian aid office, totals €392m for the entire region, including Kosovo.

This year the EU will be providing financing of about €150m in the form of grants to launch the Kosovo reconstruction programme. Next year the programme could receive up to €500m, to be implemented by the European Agency for Reconstruction.

The main priorities of the first €45m phase of the 1999 reconstruction programme have been discussed with Kosovo's civilian administrator, the UN High Representative, Bernard Kouchner, and the commander of the Kosovo international peace force (KFOR), General Klaus Reinhardt.

Impact of Kosovo Sarajevo summit declaration

The main conclusions of the Sarajevo summit of the participating and facilitating countries of the stability pact for south-eastern Europe, initiated by the EU and adopted in Cologne and subsequently placed under the auspices of the OSCE are:

- to give concrete meaning to the pact by promoting political and economic reforms, development and enhanced security in the region
- to work together towards democracy, respect for human rights, economic and social development and enhanced security by promoting the integration of south-eastern Europe
- help countries in the region who seek integration into Euro-Atlantic structures
- to see all the countries of the region working together in a spirit of cohesion and solidarity through the stability pact to build a common, prosperous and secure future; to support UNMIK and KFOR in their efforts to ensure peace, democracy and security for all inhabitants of Kosovo
- the commitment of all the countries of the region to this undertaking is critical to its success
- regional co-operation will serve as a catalyst for regional solidarity and for integration into broader structures particularly through common cross-border or regional proposals and projects
- work to accelerate the economic and political transition in the region. Full implementation by all parties of the Dayton/Paris Accords, as envisaged by the Peace Implementation Council in Madrid, is also an integral element of regional stabilisation.

element of regional stabilisation.

□ *democracy and human rights*: encouraging co-operation, including promotion of human rights and attitudes and democratic practices, personal responsibility, freedom of expression and the rule of law

□ *economic development and co-operation*: enhanced economic relations with the EU and integration into the global trading system, including WTO membership. Providing unilateral trade preferences for south-eastern Europe and developing ways to allow active participation of companies from the area in the reconstruction and development in the region

□ *security*: end tensions and create peaceful and good neighbourly relations; promote transparency and accountability in defence and security matters and military spending

□ support for the appointment of Bodo Hombach as the special co-ordinator of the stability pact

□ the south-eastern Europe regional table to establish an effective co-ordination framework for the pact's activities. The EU will take an active part in organising this initiative

□ welcome the intention to translate the objectives of the pact into concrete action, tailored to the individual needs of each country

□ call on participants, facilitators and other interested countries to continue to participate in the process of transformation, economic development and reconstruction. ■



Poppefoto/Reuters

An ethnic Albanian family lives in a tent in the garden of the ruins of their house in Fustica, Kosovo.

The programme includes:

- supplies of materials to enable local inhabitants to repair their homes properly
- rehabilitation of basic infrastructure: the power grid and water supplies (including the wages of operating staff)
- setting-up of a co-ordination centre for mine clearance
- restoration of the customs service including collecting customs duties which will be used to finance the region's budget and boost confidence in the administration at the borders, so encouraging the return of the last remaining refugees
- support for job creation in villages through small-scale activities of benefit to the local community (such as cleaning up, restoring electricity lines, repairing schools and roads and other essential services).

UNMIK has stressed the importance of immediate action to rebuild houses and public services, especially the Commis-

sion project at Mitrovica hospital, and involvement of the local community in this work.

EU aid takes three main forms:

□ Humanitarian aid to ease the return of refugees to their homes, implemented by ECHO in close co-operation with the UNHCR. Humanitarian aid for Kosovo will be topped up and continued by a programme of reconstruction organised within the framework of the existing programme for the former Yugoslavia, Obnova, for which Kosovo is eligible. Aid under this programme will be in the form of grants. An initial estimate puts requirements from the EU budget at €150m for 1999 and between €500m and €700m for the next three years.

□ Macroeconomic aid (typically in the form of balance-of-payments loans) will be extended to the countries that have been adversely affected by the conflict (excluding Serbia for the time being) so that they can rebuild their economies.

□ Special aid of €100m was found in the EU budget to help Albania, FYROM and Montenegro cope with the refugee influx. ECHO has provided €182m in humanitarian aid (of a total of €476m from the EU, ECHO and member states). The Commission intends to mobilise the reserve of €196m for humanitarian aid. Aid of €15m to finance the reception of refugees evacuated to the member states and their return has also been allocated.

Other aid could be mobilised via G-24 co-ordination and through the EIB. So far MEPs have voted that €92m be used by the Reconstruction Agency which will co-ordinate the new building. Around €30m of direct aid has also been given to Kosovo. ■

Anthony Kent, Brussels

EU assesses economic impact

The EU is providing macro-financial assistance to Bulgaria, Romania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) which have all been affected by the Kosovo crisis. The proposals envisage EU balance of payments loans of up to €100m for Bulgaria and up to €200m for Romania with a maximum duration of 10 years. For FYROM EU macro-financial assistance of up to €80m, including a grant element of €30m and a loan with a maximum duration of 15 years, is on offer. In all three cases the EU assistance complements resources made available by international financial institutions and bilateral donors and will be provided only on the basis of progress in macro-economic stabilisation and reform efforts.

A Commission official says the financial assistance "demonstrates the willingness of the EU to support at this critical moment the countries affected by the Kosovo conflict in their economic stabilisation and reform efforts".

The package is on top of macro-financial assistance to Albania (up to €20.4m) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (up to

€61.2m). A further €100m was given to Albania, FYROM and Montenegro during the conflict.

The increase in political instability and the repercussions of the Kosovo crisis on international perceptions of the Balkan countries as destinations for tourism, recipients of foreign direct investment and borrowers on international capital markets will all have a negative effect on the economies of the two candidate countries in the region — Bulgaria and Romania

For Bulgaria and Romania, the effects on the economy will be small, but, particularly in the case of Romania, will be an additional problem to contend with in what is already a difficult economic environment.

With the ending of the conflict, some of the uncertainties surrounding the economic effects on neighbouring countries have diminished, but assessments continue to be subject to considerable doubt. The economic repercussions of the process of repatriation and reconstruction are unclear and may be both negative and positive. For example, both Romania and Bulgaria may benefit from reconstruction activity in Kosovo. ■

Impact of Kosovo

Skopje looks for brighter future

Of all the former Yugoslav republics, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has been the most vulnerable economically to developments in its neighbours. Before independence in 1991, it was the least developed republic of Yugoslavia. FYROM is land-locked — 50 miles from the Aegean Sea and port of Salonika in Greece. Crucially its links with the world depend on its neighbours, mainly Serbia and Greece. Access to roads and rail in the north-south direction and a few east-west are in poor condition. There are plans to modernise and expand the network, but this will take considerable investment and time which FYROM does not have. The European Investment Bank is providing some finance.

The economy has been hit hard both by UN sanctions against Yugoslavia in 1992-95 and most recently by the Kosovo crisis. It has lost significant trade revenues over the past years.

In addition the country has traditionally been tightly linked to and largely dependent on the Serbian economy. However, trade with Yugoslavia accounts for only 19 per cent of total exports and imports. Its most important EU trade partner is Germany.

Disintegration of former Yugoslavia was a setback for FYROM, as a smaller and weaker partner. Trade has been cut in half and totalled around \$100m (€92.6m) in the first half of the year. Industrial and agricultural production continues to decline. Reorientation of the economy has been slow and difficult and is far from over.

Recently, in spite of the less than friendly political relations between Skopje and Athens, there has been improvement in the economic area. Trade has risen and the Greek business community is showing greater interest in investing in the country. ■

Aleksandar Lebl, Belgrade



NATO Photos

The return of refugees has created many needs, of which the most immediate are food, water, shelter, basic infrastructure, utilities, health services and schools.

Impact of Kosovo

Economic impact on some neighbouring countries

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)

Refugees Very large: peak number equated to 11 per cent of population

Direct trade Large: Yugoslavia accounts for 20 per cent of exports and 12 per cent of imports

Transit Very large: 50 per cent of trade passes through Yugoslavia

Financial Moderate: FDI small, though it was increasing

Tourism Negligible: tourism sector very small

Governance Potentially serious: ethnic tensions exacerbated

Albania

Refugees Very large: peak number equated to 14 per cent of population

Direct trade Negligible: 70 per cent of trade with Italy and Greece

Transit Negligible

Financial Negligible: depends mainly on official flows; may be some capital flight

Tourism Negligible: tourism sector very small

Governance Potentially serious: political fragility and weak state institutions

Bulgaria

Direct trade Small (2.3 per cent of exports go to Yugoslavia)

Transit Large: significant amount of trade normally passes through Yugoslavia

Financial Moderate/large: FDI likely to be deterred; access to capital markets will probably deteriorate

Tourism Moderate: Yugoslavia and FYROM account for 10 per cent of tourists; proximity of war may deter others

Governance Negligible

Romania

Direct trade Small (less than 2 per cent of exports go to Yugoslavia)

Transit Moderate: some trade passes through Yugoslavia; possible additional transit through Romania

Financial Moderate: FDI likely to be deterred especially in border regions

Tourism Small

Governance Negligible

Source: Assessment of the economic impact of the Kosovo crisis on neighbouring countries (note for the Economic and Financial Committee), July 1 1999.



Serbia faces bleak economic future

Assuming the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has a political future — something a few observers question as many believe the smaller constituent of the federation, Montenegro, may go its own way — its economic future is extremely gloomy. If federation president Slobodan Milosevic remains in power, it is unlikely reformist politicians and economists will have much say in the running of the country. International aid to Serbia is likely to be limited. No matter if Mr Milosevic stays or go, the economic situation is unlikely to improve quickly. Social product (GDP minus services) is likely to be 30-40 per cent that of 1998 which in turn was about half what it was 10 years ago. In

The official unemployment rate, 17 per cent in 1998, has increased to 25 per cent this year. There are many who are formally employed but do not work and are not paid or receive only symbolic amounts.

Foreign trade, both exports and imports, have fallen drastically to less than half the 1998 values with the trade deficit higher than total exports. It is unlikely that trade will pick up. Yugoslavia is estimated to need around \$2.5-3bn (€2.3-2.8bn) a year on average for new investment and to cover its trade deficit.

Damage from the Nato bombing according to the independent Group of 17 economists totals an estimated \$1.1bn (€1.02bn) while total economic damage is estimat-

ed at around \$29.6bn (€27.4bn) although official estimates go as high as \$200bn (€185.2bn). Some repair and reconstruction started as soon as the bombing ended on June 10. Priority has been given to infrastructure and housing. However, local finance is insufficient to carry out serious reconstruction. External funds are needed and are unlikely to be available while Mr Milosevic remains in power.

Where money could come from is not clear. French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine and others confirmed recently that the international community will give no reconstruction aid to Serbia so long as Mr Milosevic remains in power. Any such assistance would only help prop up the regime,

believes Mr Vedrine.

The country was highly indebted before the bombs started dropping. Some estimates put total foreign debt at end 1999 at around 140 per cent of social product or \$16-17bn (€17-18bn). There is little likelihood of servicing that debt since the debt/export ratio is in excess of 1,000 per cent and reserves amount to a fraction of 1 per cent of debt.

G-17's stability pact for Serbia calls for a one-year transitional government to organise free and fair elections and to draft plans for economic reform. It says a "reasonable understanding" with Montenegro over the future of its relationship with Serbia and the Yugoslav federation must be reached quickly. Serbia also wants — and needs — to join the international stabilisation project for south-eastern Europe and make its markets attractive for foreign investors. With Mr Milosevic as leader it is generally agreed that Serbia is likely to "remain a black hole in Europe for the next 10 years", says one observer. ■

Aleksandar Lebl, Belgrade



Sue Cunningham/SCP

In Belgrade's main square, life slowly begins to return to normal

US dollar terms social product is likely to fall by \$11.5-12.5bn (€10.6-11.6bn) or by \$1,070-1,150 per capita — the lowest level for many decades. Some analysts predict average net monthly wages could fall as low as \$30-40. Prices of goods and services have been steadily increasing, especially since Nato's bombing campaign ended. The forecast for end 1999 inflation is about 50 per cent and would be higher if people had money to spend. Retail sales fell 30 per cent for food and 70 per cent for other goods in the first half of the year compared with the same 1998 period. The Belgrade Unicef office recently announced that Yugoslav children are five to six times more endangered by various risks than in EU countries, three times that in other former Yugoslav republics and Russia and twice those in Albania. Industrial production in the first half of 1999 was only two-thirds of the same 1998 period and one-third of what it was in the first half of 1991. The figure may improve by the end of the year, although due to the bombing some industries (oil refining, electric power generation and others) will not recover quickly.

Blair outlines his European vision

Britain's Prime Minister, Tony Blair, outlined his vision for Europe and the role that his country could play in achieving European integration.

Speaking on the occasion of his receipt of the Charlemagne prize in Aachen, Mr Blair's central argument was that Britain needed to overcome its ambivalence about Europe. Then, and only then, would his country be able to be accepted as a serious partner in building Europe and in protecting the interests of both Britain and Europe. "For Europe the central challenge is no longer simply securing internal peace inside the EU. It is the challenge posed by the outside world — about how we make Europe strong and influential, how we make full use of the potential Europe has to be a global power for good. To achieve this, we must accept our economy needs reform to compete . . . We do not yet wield the influence in global issues that we should," he said.

Mr Blair sees the main challenges for Europe as external ones. Specifically he targets the economy, defence and enlargement of the EU as key issues to be faced in the coming years.

"If Europe is to have a key defence role, it needs modern forces, strategic lift and the necessary equipment to conduct a campaign. No nation will ever yield up its sovereign right to determine the use of its own armed forces. We do, however, need to see how we can co-operate better, complement each other's capability, have the

full range of defence options open to us . . . If we were in any doubts about this before, Kosovo should have removed them," he said.

Mr Blair also believes events in Kosovo have given a new impetus to enlargement. "Events in Kosovo also bring home to us the urgency of enlargement. The thing the front line states want from us above all else is the prospect of membership of the EU. I do not underestimate the difficulties involved in extending enlargement to these countries, or in the necessary transition for their economies. But I do believe we have a moral duty to offer them the hope of membership of the EU and move as fast as we can to make that prospect a reality. In return for that offer, they must, with our help, build their economies and democratic structures and, above all, learn to live and work together in peace," he said.

But such ambitions should not mean hesitation or foot-dragging. "This does not mean slowing down the process of accession," he said. "On the contrary we should inten-

Is it not self-evident that a EU acting decisively together in partnership with other countries has far more power to counteract this menace than any member state acting on its own initiative? The issue that should primarily concerns us is how we pool our efforts for the common good.

sify our negotiations. Enlargement offers us the chance of a market of 500m consumers and the inestimable advantage of political stability for the continent. We must take it and make the changes necessary to secure it."

Europe, says Mr Blair, is at a cross-roads. "We are at a moment of transformation in Europe. To meet the global challenge, we need reform of our own workings too. I do not believe Europe is likely to grow into a replica of the US . . . In reforming our European structure, we should not imitate the constitutional theory of a sovereign state, but rather build the structures we need to achieve our objectives, recognising the unique nature of the Union." Rather than indulging in navel-gazing, however, Mr Blair wants Europe to be pro-active and far-sighted. "So my vision of Europe is this. A Europe looking out to the world, not in on itself. A Europe scaling the heights of ambition, not seeking the lowest common denominator. A Europe that does what it needs to do well and what it doesn't need to do, it doesn't do at all . . . A Europe that wins the battles that matter . . . We win in the battle for peace and security, jobs and competitiveness, crime, the environment, enlargement, defence and foreign policy. That is an agenda that matters for a Europe that counts." ■



Popperfoto/Reuters

British Prime Minister Tony Blair greets crowds in Pristina during his one-day visit in July.

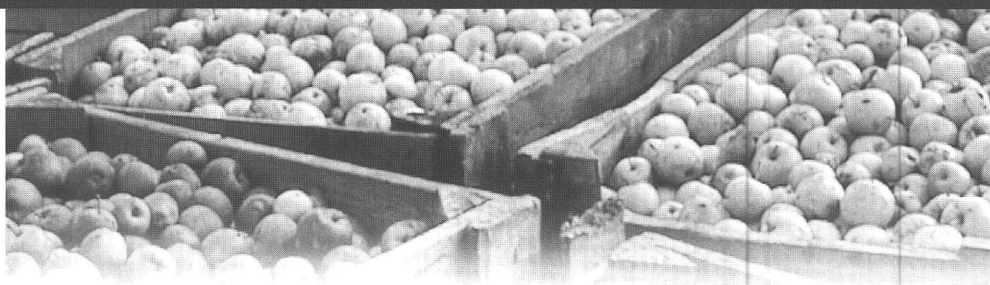
New fund aims to help restructure agriculture

A new fund set up to help the agricultural sector of the applicant countries prepare themselves for EU membership will begin operation in January.

SAPARD (Special Accession programme for Agriculture and Rural Development) will provide €520m every year to the 10 candidate countries. Poland and Romania will be the major beneficiaries with Poland receiving over €168m a year and Romania getting just over €150m.

In addition to this new fund, candidate countries also have access to phare funding and another new programme, ISPA, which supports environmental and transport projects (see article in ED 2000/1).

The fund is expected to help candidates prepare their rural economies for EU membership, notably by improving farm structures. "The pre-accession countries face many difficulties in preparing for EU accession," newly re-appointed Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler says. "It is imperative that the authorities of these countries



ensure that these funds are spent in the most productive way possible to help their agricultural sectors adjust to the economic environment they will face after accession."

The applicants will first draw up detailed plans for how the funds are to be used. These programmes will need to be approved by the Commission before money is disbursed.

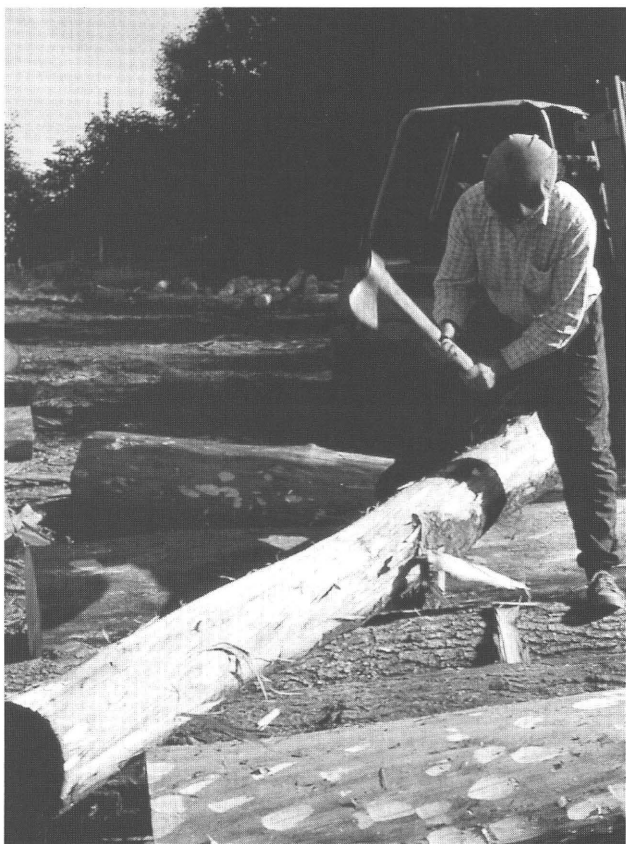
The programme will run until the end of 2006. Countries which join the EU during that period will stop drawing from SAPARD and have access to EU programmes as Member States.

Under SAPARD funds are allocated according to a number of criteria — farming population, agricultural area, GDP per capita and the specific territorial situation. SAPARD is intended to complement the EU's other pre-accession fund, instrument for structural policies for pre-accession.

Various measures for structural and rural development will be eligible to receive SAPARD funding including:

- investments in farm infrastructure
- improving the marketing of farm and fishery products
- improving quality and veterinary and plant health controls
- promoting environmentally-friendly farming practices
- diversifying economic activities in rural areas
- setting up farm management services
- setting up producer groups
- renovating villages and preserving rural heritage
- improving and re-parcelling land
- establishing and updating land registers
- improving vocational training
- developing rural infrastructure
- water resources management
- promoting forestry and processing and marketing of forest products
- financing technical assistance, including studies.

Under SAPARD the EU may contribute up to 75 per cent of the total eligible public expenditure for any project. This participation is reduced if the investments



Sue Cunningham/SCP

Indicative allocation by beneficiary country of the maximum annual amount (in €m, at 1999 prices)

Bulgaria	52.124
Czech Republic	22.063
Estonia	12.137
Hungary	38.054
Latvia	21.848
Lithuania	29.829
Poland	168.683
Romania	150.636
Slovakia	18.289
Slovenia	6.337
Total	520.000

generate revenue, in which case public aid may account for up to 50 per cent of the costs of the project of which SAPARD contributes 75 per cent.

Technical assistance and activities undertaken at the initiative of the Commission can be entirely financed from the fund, although this is limited to 2 per cent of total annual budget allocation.

Each country's development plan must set out the rural areas covered and their development potential and establish a rural development strategy with clear, quantified objectives. This must include an assessment of the expected impact of the programme in economic, social, environmental and employment terms, with a detailed breakdown of the resources needed to carry out the plan.

Applicants must also provide details of the proposed management authority for the programme and ensure mechanisms are in place to guarantee financial control and regular monitoring. The Commission is taking no chances



Sue Cunningham/SCP

after earlier problems with the management of money paid out under the EU's common agricultural policy.

"Actions that improve market efficiency, quality and health standards and create new jobs in rural areas should be prioritised," says the Commission. Officials from the Commission will work closely with each candidate country authority. "The plan will form the basis for discussions prior to the Commission's approval of a programme for rural development."

Agriculture still plays a central role in the economies of some candidates — more so than in the current EU members. Large investments will be needed if agriculture is to be brought into line with EU standards and membership requirements without putting too much strain on the EU's own budget and threatening the livelihood of candidate producers. SAPARD is expected to act as a catalyst for implementing these needed changes. ■

Anthony Kent, Brussels



Sue Cunningham/SCP

Enlargement Agriculture important to economies

Agriculture is an important industry in all candidate countries. In 1996 food production accounted on average for 6.8 per cent of GDP in the 10 candidate countries compared with only 1.7 per cent in the EU 15. The 10.3m agricultural workers in the candidate countries make up 22.5 per cent of the total workforce on average.

In the EU 7.5m people work in agriculture — 5 per cent of the workforce. But there are significant differences between the candidates themselves. For example, farmers make up just 4 per cent of the workforce in the Czech Republic, but 37 per cent in Romania.

Only in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia is the relative size of agriculture comparable to the EU average. Most dependent on agriculture are Romania and Bulgaria followed by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In a number of candidate countries, agricultural employment has increased in absolute and relative terms, in particular in those countries where agriculture has played a buffer role in a generally deteriorating economic situation such as Romania and Bulgaria.

The share of the total work force employed in agriculture is particularly high in these two countries, but also in Poland and Lithuania. Productivity in agriculture, as measured by the value added per worker, is only around 11 per cent of the EU level. Agri-food exports, as a percentage of total exports, are relatively important for



Sue Cunningham/SCP

Importance of agriculture 1996

	Agricultural area		Agricultural production*		Agricultural employment		Agri-food trade		Food expenditure
	'000 ha	% of total area	€bn	% of GDP	'000 people	% of total employment	% of total exports	% of total imports	% of household income
Bulgaria	6,164	55.5	0.9	12.8	769	23.4	18.8	8.0	54
Czech Republic	4,279	54.3	1.2	2.9	211	4.1	5.7	7.5	31
Estonia	1,450	32.1	0.3	8.0	74	9.2	15.7	15.6	30
Hungary	6,184	66.5	2.1	5.8	298	8.2	17.5	5.1	24
Latvia	2,521	39.0	0.3	7.6	208	15.3	16.8	13.4	39
Lithuania	3,151	48.5	0.5	10.2	398	24.0	13.1	17.1	52
Poland	18,474	59.1	6.2	5.5	4,130	26.7	11.3	10.7	35
Romania	14,789	62.0	5.3	19.0	3,975	37.3	8.8	7.6	58
Slovakia	2,445	49.9	0.7	4.6	169	6.0	5.4	8.6	35
Slovenia	785	38.7	0.7	4.4	61	6.3	4.2	7.8	23
CEC-10	60,242	55.9	18.1	6.8	10,293	—	—	—	—
EU-15	135,260	41.8	117.5	1.7	7,514	5.1	7.4	9.6	18

* as measured by GAP (gross agricultural product, value added in agriculture) Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic include beverages and tobacco.

Source: Agricultural Situation and Prospects in the Central and Eastern European Countries, Summary Report, DGVI working document, June 1998.

Hungary and Bulgaria, while for the three Baltic countries agro-food accounts for a relatively high share of exports as well as imports (partially a reflection of transit trade).

Food is an important item of household expenditure in most candidates, varying from 30 to 60 per cent. Only Slovenia and Hungary are closer to EU levels.

Although there are signs of recovery, in particular in the crop sector, agricultural output in most candidate countries is generally still much below pre-transition levels. In most candidate countries measures have been introduced to stabilise the agricultural sector, in the wake of the disruptions the early years of transition brought.

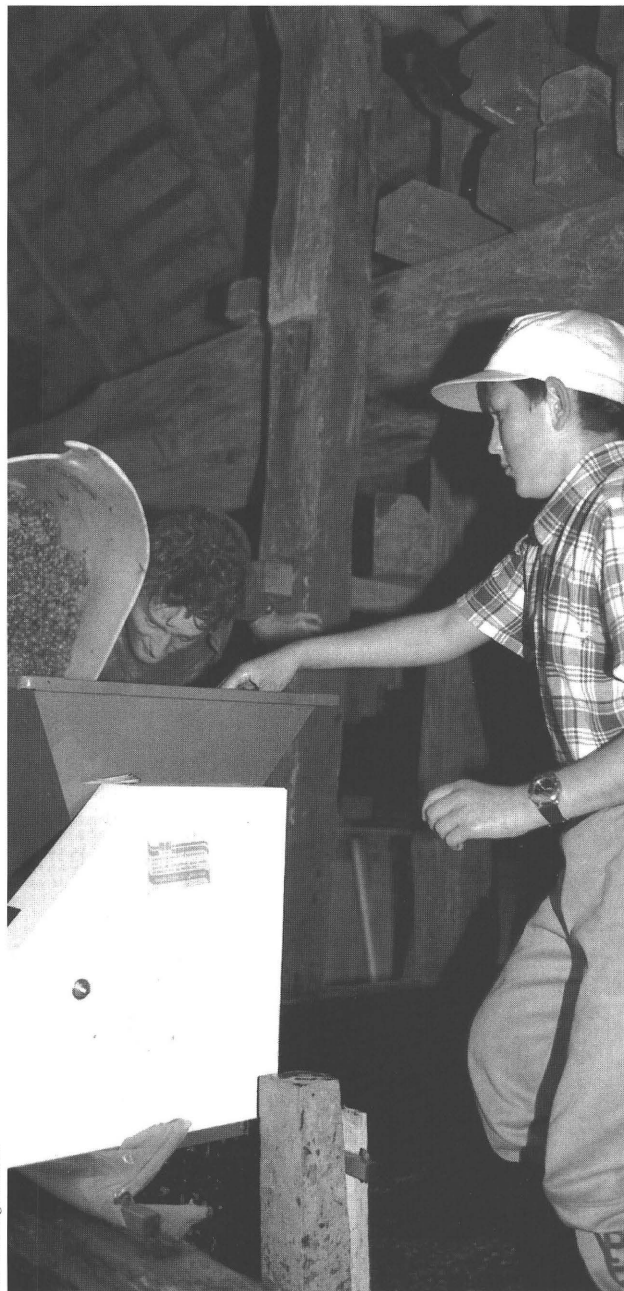
Depending on the country, support to agriculture has taken various forms ranging from CAP like intervention and border measures, to administrative controls still close to those used under central planning. In view of the budgetary constraints in many countries, state support to agriculture is not expected to increase much above current levels, limiting the possibilities of market intervention and structural aid.

In the coming years, a number of factors will influence the gap in agricultural prices between the candidate countries and the EU, Enlargement will entail full liberalisation of trade in agricultural and agro-industrial products between present and acceding members (as well as between the acceding members themselves). Since this sector has remained relatively protected under the Europe agreements, considerable further adjustment pressure on the primary sector as well as the food processing industry could be expected as the candidate country economies are exposed to the EU market. The restructuring can be expected to be accompanied by a significant shedding of surplus labour.

For some sectors in the existing Union, in particular for certain fruit and vegetables, increased competitive pressure from the enlarged market can be expected. Full implementation of the *acquis* will require the harmonisation of legislation and an adequate control and inspection infrastructure in the candidate countries to enforce the *acquis* domestically and at external borders.

Adequate implementation and enforcement of these requirements is essential for the protection of plant, animal and public health in an enlarged Union as a whole and must be accomplished before free movement of agricultural products without border control can be established.

The implementation of these measures will require additional investment in inspection and testing facilities in the public sector, as well as substantial investment in the private sector for upgrading of establishments in the food industry to meet EU requirements and standards. ■



Sue Cunningham/SCP

Sources of further information: Agricultural Situation and Prospects in the Central and Eastern European Countries, 10 country studies and a summary report published as working documents in June 1998; Study on alternative strategies for the development of relations in the field of agriculture between the EU and the associated countries with a view to future accession of these countries (agricultural strategy paper), a communication (CSE(95)607 of 29.11.95) presented by the Commission to the Madrid European Council in December 1995.

Web site: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg06/publi/peco/summary/fullrep/ch2-1_en.htm.

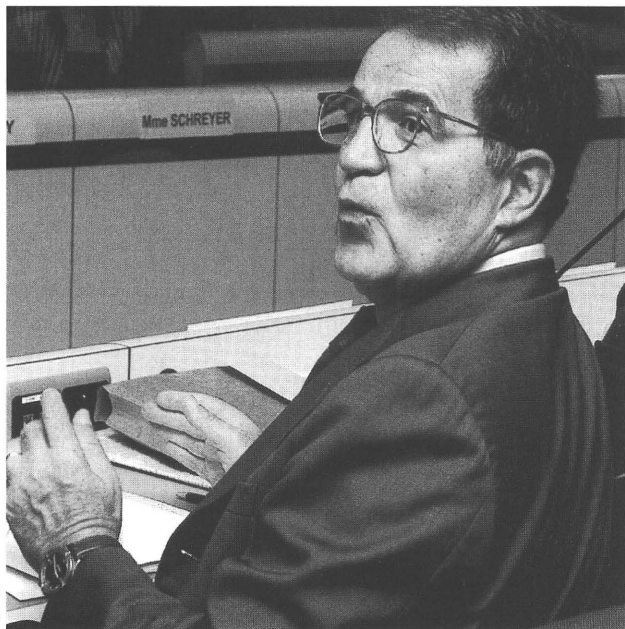
Prodi revamps Commission

Romano Prodi, the new Commission president, has begun a radical

reform of the Commission in an attempt to make it more effective in key areas such as external relations, justice and home affairs, health and consumer protection and promotion of enterprises. He also intends to implement other reforms over the longer-term. The new Commission, which includes five women, will seek to promote equal opportunities as well as reflecting the political complexion of the European Parliament. Strict rules on conflict of interest for Commissioners once they have left office are to be introduced.

Of the two vice presidents, one will take responsibility for relations with parliament, the other responsibility for reform. Reform, a challenge for the new Commission and other European institutions, will entail improved staff training, creation of a modern personnel policy and more control over spending of taxpayers' money. A blueprint for reform will be presented early in 2000.

Commissioners will be housed alongside their depart-



Popperfoto/Reuters

"I believe profoundly in democracy and in the ultimate accountability of the Commission . . . I intend to fulfill my responsibilities. The Commission is determined to make a new start."

ments, rather than grouped together in a separate building. Commissioners' offices (known as cabinets) are to be smaller and more multi-national. The rules on senior appointments will be tightened and made more transparent.

There will also be greater internal mobility for senior

Commission staff than in the past. The numbering of Commission departments will be abolished in favour of short, understandable names reflecting each department's main area of responsibility. Departments will be cut in number from 42 to 36, including the creation of several new ones. To focus staff resources where they are most needed, officials will be moved to priority areas.

The main changes are:

- dividing up external relations by subject (trade, development, enlargement and foreign and security policy) rather than by geographical region and giving one Commissioner an overall co-ordination role
- creating a new enterprise department, bringing together the current directorate-generals for industry, small and medium enterprises and innovation policy
- creating a new department for justice and home affairs, in line with the Commission's new role under the Amsterdam Treaty
- consolidating health and consumer protection into a single department
- creating a new department for education and culture, fusing the previous ones for education and training with part of the directorate-general for information and culture
- creating a new media and communication service, bringing together the spokesman's service and part of the information and culture department.

The 19 Commissioners for the first time were agreed between the governments of the member states and the incoming president.

We know the challenges that face us. Now we need to get down to planning and taking the decisions that are necessary. I am deeply concerned by the problems we face in preparing the next enlargement, in providing for a successful IGC, in improving growth and employment.

MEPs held extensive hearings at which all the commissioners were grilled about their views, priorities and ideas for their five-year tenure. "The hearings have been serious, professional and open. How many national governments or parliaments would conduct themselves as openly? You have provided a public display of the democratic legitimacy of the union and of the accountability of the Commission to parliament," Mr Prodi told MEPs, adding, "We must now follow these confirmation hearings with a demonstration of our commitment to a new

beginning. I reiterate my willingness to reinforce our co-operation and my confidence in your assembly. I believe profoundly in democracy and in the ultimate accountability of the commission to the elected representatives of the European people. I intend to fulfil my responsibilities. The Commission is determined to make a new start."

Mr Prodi also told MEPs that he intended to work closely with parliament to ensure better relations as well as more accountability to both MEPs and Europe's citizens. He promised that in its relations with the European Parliament the responsible Commissioner will be present whenever requested by parliament, either for plenary sittings or committee meetings for agenda items falling under his or her responsibility. Commissioners will be ready to respond substantively on important proposals.

The new Commission is committed to substantial institutional reform. Mr Prodi says his team will work closely with MEPs to ensure better relations and more accountability to both the European Parliament and Europe's citizens.

The Commission will listen to parliament requests to submit legislative proposals and undertakes to provide a prompt and sufficiently detailed response to any committee requests. If parliament expresses a lack of confidence in a Commissioner, Mr Prodi says he will examine seriously whether he should request that member to resign.

In addition Mr Prodi wants to have a constructive dialogue with parliament about administrative reform of the Commission and will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are established to consult and inform MEPs on a regular basis.

Overall Mr Prodi's team is committed to substantial institutional reform and during the coming inter-governmental conference (IGC) will keep MEPs informed and ensure they are part of the process.

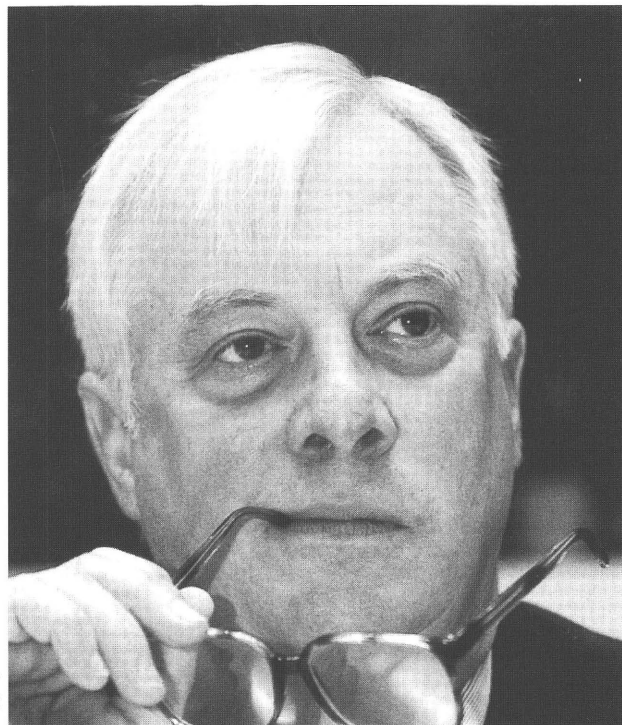
"We know the challenges that face us. Now we need to get down to planning and taking the decisions that are necessary. I am deeply concerned by the problems we face in preparing the next enlargement, in providing for a successful IGC, in improving growth and employment," he concluded.

The European Parliament approved the new Commission after seven days of US senate-style confirmation hearings with the 19 nominees. Parliament president Nicole Fontaine said nominees had made the grade and Mr Prodi had met demands for closer co-operation in future with the assembly. Ms Fontaine said none of the nominees had been found unacceptable.

The dominant European people's party echoed her praise for Mr Prodi's attempts to bridge the gap between the two institutions. "this is the start of a new culture of co-operation between the European parliament and the Commission," EPP leader Hans-Gert Pottering said.

Returning members of the Commission include:

Neil Kinnock (Britain), vice-presidents for administrative reform, with responsibilities for the overall co-ordination of administrative reform, personnel administration, linguistic service, protocol and security. Departments under his authority include the personnel and administration directorate-general, the inspectorate general, the joint interpreting and conference service and the translation service.



Popperfoto/Reuters

External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten ponders the tasks before him.

Mario Monti (Italy), Commissioner for Competition responsible for competition.

Franz Fischler (Austria), Commissioner for Agriculture and Fisheries, responsible for agriculture, rural development and fisheries.

Erkki Liikanen (Finland), Commissioner for Enterprise and the Information Society, responsible for enterprise competitiveness, innovation and the information society with the departments of enterprise and information society under his authority.

New Commissioners are:

Loyola de Palacio del Valle Lersundi (Spain), vice-president for relations with the European Parliament and Commissioner for Transport and Energy, responsible for relations with the European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, Economic and Social Committee and Ombudsman as well as transport (including trans-European networks) and energy.

Michel Barnier (France), Commissioner for Regional Policy, responsible for regional policy, the cohesion fund and the inter-governmental conference (IGC).

Frederik (Frits) Bolkestein (the Netherlands), Commis-



sioner for the Single Market, responsible for the single market, financial services, customs and taxation with directorates for the single market and customs and taxation under his direction.

Philippe Busquin (Belgium), Commissioner for Research, responsible for science, research and development and the Joint Research Centre.

David Byrne (Ireland), Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, responsible for public health and consumer protection directing the new directorate of health and consumer protection.

Pascal Lamy (France), Commissioner for Trade, responsible for trade policy and instruments of trade policy.

Pedro Solbes Mira (Spain), Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, responsible for economic and financial affairs, monetary matters and the statistical office.



Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen waves as he arrives for confirmation hearings at the European Parliament.

Poul Nielson (Denmark), Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, responsible for development aid and co-operation and humanitarian aid with the development directorate and the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) under his direction.

Chris Patten (Britain), Commissioner for External Relations, responsible for external relations, common foreign and security policy and delegations in non-member countries with authority over the common service for external relations and the external relations directorate.

He takes over responsibility for the former soviet republics. Mr Patten will work together with the Enlargement Commissioner and the newly-appointed High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Viviane Reding (Luxembourg), Commissioner for Education and Culture, responsible for citizens' Europe, transparency, education and culture, the publications office with the newly formed education and culture directorate under her administration.

Michaële Schreyer (Germany), Commissioner for the Budget, responsible for the budget, financial control and fraud prevention. She will direct the budget and financial control directorates as well as the work of the Fraud Prevention Office.

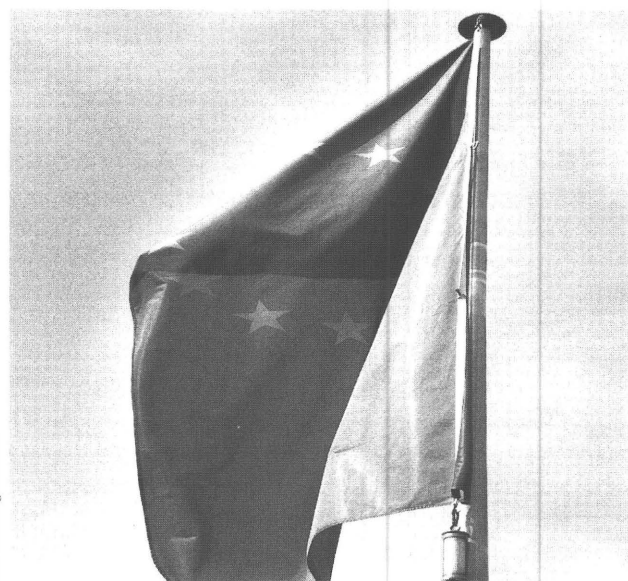
Günter Verheugen (Germany), Commissioner for Enlargement, responsible for the enlargement process including the pre-accession strategy with the newly formed enlargement service under his authority. He takes over all activities of the task force for accession negotiations. Enlargement is one of the key priorities for the EU over the coming years. The combination of services presently responsible for accession negotiations with those responsible for relations with the applicant countries creates a new enlargement service under a single Commissioner.

António Vitorino (Portugal), Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs, responsible for freedom, security, and justice.

Anna Diamantopoulou (Greece), Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, responsible for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities with the employment and social affairs directorate under her authority.

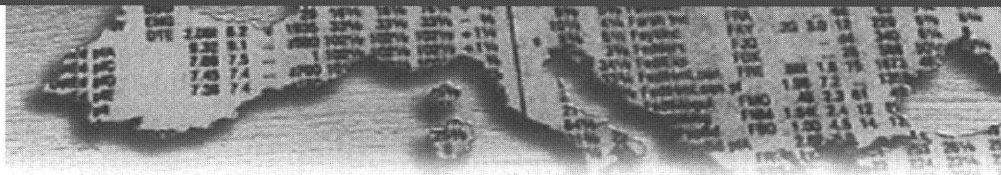
Margot Wallström (Sweden), Commissioner for Environment, responsible for the environment and nuclear safety. ■

More information about the new Commission can be found on Europa at http://europa.eu.int/comm/newcomm/index_en.htm.



November-December 1999/4

in brief



Boost for Romania's reforms



The Commission has adopted a €100m aid package as part of the Phare programme for economic reform in Romania. The programme will support the government's restructuring and privatisation plans, including the closure of loss-making enterprises. The reforms are part of the accession partnership and will help Romania meet World Bank and IMF demands for macro financial assistance. Enterprise restructuring has been a policy objective of the government since 1990, but has had limited success. The potential social and economic impact of enterprise closures and job losses on regions which are dependent on one industry has limited the government's reform programme until now. The EU assistance will help the government implement restructuring policies, promote employment initiatives, encourage sustainable employment through assistance to small- and medium-sized enterprises and micro businesses in order to curb the short- and long-term consequences of unemployment.

Millennium trade priorities

The Commission has set out its priorities and proposals for the agenda of the Millennium Round of global trade talks to be launched in November in Seattle. The Communication stresses the need to achieve greater market access by reducing tariffs and non-tariff barriers and improve market access in the services sector. The communication says a comprehensive round offers the best way to take account of the trade interests of all World Trade Organisation (WTO) members. The Commission proposes a four point agenda. First, to secure further trade liberalisation and market access, creating better conditions for competitiveness. Second, to promote the further strengthening of the WTO system so that it becomes a universal instrument for the management of global trade. Third, to take into account the continued need for special and differential treatment for developing countries in order to promote their development. Fourth, to ensure that the WTO continues to address issues of concern to the broader public, such as environment, health and social concerns.

FDI impact

Hungary leads the field in per capita inflow of foreign capital, according to recently published OECD figures. Between 1990 and 1998, capital worth \$17.193bn (€15.92bn) flowed into the country, putting Hun-

gary ahead of the Czech Republic, South Korea, Ireland and Japan. Poland is ahead in terms of total volume with \$23bn (€24.4bn), but on a per capita basis Hungary, ranks higher.

Kersti Kaljulaid, economics adviser to the Estonia's prime minister, warns her country needs dramatically higher rates of foreign investment if it is to escape from a mounting economic crisis. That is because its domestic economy is still too weak to power a recovery. Ms Kaljulaid acknowledges that "foreign investment has been this economy's main motor for years. Even though the economy went into a standstill last year, we still saw record levels" of outside investment. Now inward investment may be falling. The IMF recently refused to back additional investment there and other investors may follow suit. If that happens, Estonia, could find itself in both economic and political difficulties.



Raphaël programme

The Commission has selected 58 projects for the preservation and enhancement of the

cultural heritage under the Raphaël programme. The Raphaël programme ends in the year 2000 with a hand-over beginning this year under the framework programme in support of culture. Over 200 cultural organisations from the EU member states, the European Economic Area (EEA) countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) and candidate countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia) are involved in the selected projects. This year the programme centred on: conservation, safeguarding and enhancement of movable cultural heritage; co-operation for the exchange of experiences and development of techniques applied to the heritage; and public access to, participation in and awareness of non-movable cultural heritage.

Further information on selected projects is available from Ana Magraner (Tel: (322) 296 2953; Fax: (322) 296 6974).

ECB report

The European Central Bank has published a report on payment systems in countries that have applied for membership of the EU. The study was prepared in co-operation with the central banks of Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. It provides comprehensive information on the major payment and securities settlement systems operating in the candidate countries. For EU countries this kind of information has

been made available in the report, *Payment Systems in the EU*, also known as the "Blue Book". The second edition of the book was published in April 1996.

To facilitate an easy comparison of the systems operating in countries that have applied for EU membership with those existing in the current member states, the new publication has been structured in a similar way to the blue book of 1996. The report will be



distributed by each of the EU and candidate country national central banks to those interested in their respective countries.

More information on the report can be accessed via the ECB's web site: <http://www.ecb.int/press/pr990831.htm>.

News in brief ... News in brief ... News in brief ...

The Czech government has approved a plan for clamping down on organisations and movements that act against human rights. The plan provides guidelines to be followed by the ministries of education, interior, justice and labour and social affairs. It lists organisations that can be dissolved, including the Patriotic Front and National Front of Castists, which disseminates propaganda against foreigners, Jews, Roma and homosexuals.

The Polish government has approved a bill on compensating people whose property was seized by the communist authorities. The re-privatisation law allows compensation for former owners or their heirs who are unable to regain their property in kind. Compensation will amount to 60 per cent of the value of the property and will apply to possessions confiscated from 1944-62.

In a letter to Bulgaria's Prime Minister Ivan Kostov, US Vice-president Al Gore says "the Bulgarian experience . . . on ways to grapple with a number of issues can be of great value to other states in the region and to Kosovo in particular". He says the

success of the country "in promoting and implementing necessary economic and political reforms in the past two years has been well matched by your government's work to combat organised crime and corruption".

The Hungarian government expects economic growth in 2000 to be 4-5 per cent with inflation around 6 per cent and the budget deficit 2.5-3.5 per cent of GDP. "Now that we have survived difficulties such as natural disasters and the Yugoslav war, no one is prepared to see large-scale tax and social insurance reforms," says Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban. The decision to postpone the reforms means that those with low- and medium-sized incomes will continue to be disadvantaged. Data released in August by the Central Statistics Office shows annual inflation has returned to double figures, with prices rising 10.1 per cent in July compared with July 1998.

The Czech Human Rights Commissioner, Petr Uhl, says the "Romany problem" in the Czech Republic and Slovakia has many common features and that the comparisons could be extended to

Hungary. He says the Visegrad group of countries must devise joint projects financed by the EU to combat the problem which he sees as a European one. Mr Uhl says the Romany problem "cannot be solved through assimilation, but only through emancipation leading to complete integration" of Roma in the societies where they live.

The Baltic Defence College in Tartu, Estonia, has opened. A total of 32 cadets from the Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Sweden and the US make up the initial student body. The curriculum meets Nato standards, and most instructors are from Nato member states. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are sharing maintenance costs, while material assistance is supplied by Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Britain, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, and the US.

Freyja Film of Estonia, FORMA of Latvia and Studioa KOPA of Lithuania have signed an agreement to produce a documentary, entitled *History Denied*, on the occupation of the three

News in brief ... News in brief ... News in brief ... News in brief ...

Baltic countries. The three-part series will span the period from the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1939 to the withdrawal of Russian troops in 1994. The text of the Estonian section will be the responsibility of four historians, including Prime Minister Mart Laar.

Poland's political leaders have expressed concern at falling support among Poles for EU membership, the country's top foreign policy goal. A recent public opinion poll showed support for joining the EU fell to 55 per cent from 64 per cent last year and over 70 per cent three years ago. Former prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki said the issue had to be addressed urgently. "This is a great task for all political forces to stop this trend." EU membership will be put to a referendum in Poland once an accession date is fixed.

The Hungarian and Slovak transport ministries have initialled a bilateral agreement to rebuild the bridge over the River Danube between Esztergom and Sturovo. The project to rebuild the bridge, destroyed in World War II. Construction is planned to start in spring 2000 and be completed by the end of 2001.

The Bulgarian parliament has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which Bulgaria signed in September 1996. The country also has plans to restructure its defence forces. Under the plan forces will be halved by 2004 to 45,000 troops.

Estonian President Lennart Meri has called on the EU to accelerate the process of expansion. "History is how developing faster than politics," he said, adding that "politics is developing faster than European institutions."

Greek Prime Minister Kostas Simitis says "it is time for all Balkan countries to be integrated into Euro-Atlantic structures. . . I mean all countries, without exceptions, regardless of who's the head of that country." Mr Simitis says Balkan borders should not be changed.

Latvia's president and prime minister have emphasised the need for unity among the three Baltic countries. President Vaira Vike-Freiberga says that only by "taking each other's hand" will Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania achieve a better future in which "human rights, one law, one truth for all" are the primary values of

society. Prime Minister Andris Skele notes that "if each [Baltic country] is considered separately, we are three little states, but together [we are] one of the most strategically important regions in the new Europe." The comments came during a conference, Baltic Way, focusing on ways in which the three countries could co-operate.

Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski and his Slovak counterpart, Rudolf Schuster, have pledged to assume the "patronage" of co-operation between the two countries as well as between small- and medium-sized enterprises. Mr Schuster says the Slovak-Polish border should be open in line with the Schengen agreements. Mr Kwasniewski says Poland will support Slovakia's bid for both Nato and EU membership and share with Bratislava its experience in European integration.

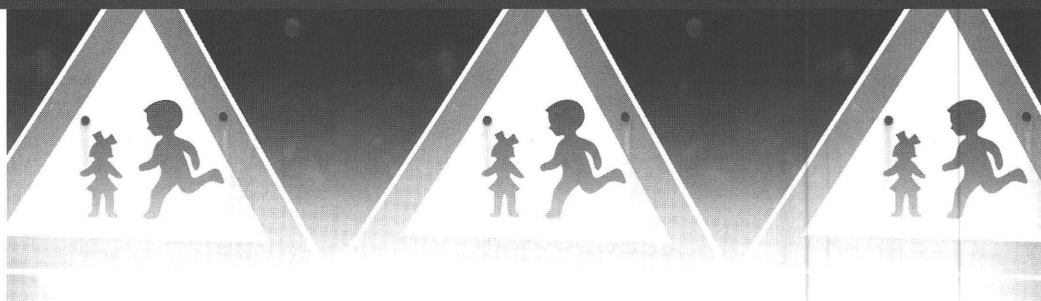
The Finnish government is providing \$100,000 (€92,593) to help Latvia implement its state language programme. OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max van der Stoep, has promised to help secure the \$1.3m (€1.4m) Latvia

needs to fund fully its new programme. Mr van der Stoep said he hopes more Russian speakers will take advantage of their rights to Latvian citizenship. A new language law is expected to be adopted in December. Around 56.5 per cent of Latvia's residents believe relations among Latvia's various ethnic groups are good or very good, while just under 12 per cent think they are bad or very bad, according to a *Latvijas Fakti* opinion poll. The report says just over 50 per cent of those questioned said fears about losing ethnic identity as a result of social integration are unfounded and that such integration is necessary for Latvia to develop a unified civil society. Ethnic Latvians were much more positive concerning inter-ethnic relations than non-Latvians: 17 per cent of non-Latvians thought those relations were bad or very bad, while only 7.5 per cent of ethnic Latvians concurred with that assessment.

Women and children need protection

One in every five women living in the EU and the applicant states today has at some point in her life been the victim of violence. This shocking statistic is at the heart of the Commission's initiatives to combat violence against women and children.

In the vast majority of cases, attacks on women come not from an unknown assailant, but from a member of the victim's family. Research presented at the Forum of the Council of Europe on Domestic Violence held in Bucharest in November 1998, showed that in Europe and the US, 50 per cent of women killed are murdered by their husbands or partners. The picture is equally grim when it comes to the problem of physical and sexual abuse of children. A recent report by the European Parliament concluded that, "violence against children, young persons and women is widespread across all EU countries, irrespective of class, race or any other distinctions. It has effects and costs both for individuals and society, including future generations." When it comes to defining what constitutes violence against women and children, the EU has produced some precise guidelines. "Violence is a violation of a person's right to life, safety, freedom, dignity and physical and mental integrity, and thus an obstacle to their full development," says the European Parliament report. The document continues: "[violence] encompasses, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological violence: occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of children in the household, marital rape, female genital



mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions; trafficking in women and forced prostitution; perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs."

It was against this sombre background that the Commission decided in 1997 to put forward a plan to set up a specific programme designed to tackle the problem of violence against women and children on an EU-wide scale. The scheme, known as the Daphne initiative, has since 1997 been active in its support for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in helping protect women and children throughout the EU.

The initial response to the Daphne initiative was greater than expected. From a total of 1,683 applications for funding, the Commission finally supported 47 projects. The €3m budget was over-subscribed nearly 12 times, with requests for funding totalling €35m

This interest showed that many organisations saw a need for an EU-level approach to the problem of violence against women and children to complement national schemes.

Former Justice and Home Affairs Commissioner, Anita Gradin — who put forward the original plans for the Daphne initiative — says she regrets the scheme could not provide help to more women and children in danger. "With the limited resources at hand, the Commission has been very careful in selecting projects that can bring added value at European level and provide exchange of ideas and of best practices. The success of Daphne would be that the completion of these projects and their follow up become a starting point for a more co-ordinated European action," she said in 1997 as some of the first projects to benefit from Daphne funding were unveiled.



Sue Cunningham/SCP

Since 1997 Daphne has supported a total of 95 projects — all designed to increase cross-border co-operation between grass roots organisations working with abused women and children in both the EU and candidate countries.

For Ms Gradin the practical help the initiative has given to NGOs working to defend women's and children's rights is perhaps its most important achievement.

"The overwhelming response shows that this initiative clearly meets a deeply felt need within the voluntary sector. I am therefore particularly pleased that the Commission is able to contribute to this co-operative European action at NGO level in the fight against violence towards women and children," she says.

Aside from giving practical aid to NGOs, Daphne has also provided funding for the creation of a European Observatory on Violence Against Women, to carry out research work.

Since 1997 Daphne has supported 95 projects — all designed to increase cross-border co-operation between grass roots organisations working with abused women and children in the EU and in candidate countries.

At the beginning of 1999, Ms Gradin announced a further 49 projects that would benefit from Daphne funding. So far the candidate countries have not been able to participate directly in Daphne projects. Instead, they can be partners with EU-led programmes suggested and co-ordinated by NGOs based in member states. Programmes in this area are funded by the EU in the candidates through the Phare democracy, human rights and institution building programmes.

Among these were several schemes specifically encouraging co-operation between NGOs in EU member states and partner organisations in the applicant countries. For example, Daphne is currently funding a project designed to combat and prevent sexual abuse of young people living children's homes and other institutions. This project is run by a Belgian NGO with partners from Italy and Estonia.

In Latvia a local NGO is one of the partners with NGOs from Sweden and Finland in an action designed to combat



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November-December 1999/4



Larry Bray, ChildLine

ChildLine operates a telephone helpline for children, many of whom call about family violence, speaking of being trapped in a world of secrecy and lies, just like children who are being abused. Some children believe the violence has started because of them and they should try to intervene to protect their mothers. Nearly four in 10 of the children in a sample study conducted by ChildLine had been physically abused. ChildLine works with other helplines in Europe, including Nadace Nase Dite in the Czech Republic, Kek Vonal in Hungary, Hasa Djeca in Croatia, the Moscow Trust for Children and Teenagers in Russia and others in Lithuania and Ukraine.

the trafficking of women in the Baltic countries. Many young women from the Baltic States and former Soviet Union are smuggled into Scandinavian countries to work as prostitutes.

Another co-operation example involves a Latvian NGO as a partner with Swedish and Finnish NGOs in a project aiming to raise awareness of female abuse and let women know what their rights are. This scheme is particularly targeted at immigrant women.

Two of the Daphne projects also have Polish NGOs as partners. One such project is designed to raise parental awareness of the problem of child abuse and is being run in conjunction with NGOs from Germany, the Netherlands and Britain. Another initiative involves setting up a database on violence against women and children. This particular scheme forms part of an EU-wide project with NGOs from Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden playing a leading role in the project's co-ordination.

The Daphne initiative was designed to prepare for a long-term programme and had an annual budget of €3m in 1997 and 1998. In 1999 the budget was raised to €5m. Under the current EU rules, preparatory rules may only run for three years before a multi-annual Community action programme is adopted. Therefore, Ms Gradin proposed the Daphne programme covering the period



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2000-04 with a budget of €25m spread over the five years. The Commission believed a longer period of time would be an advantage.

This proposal ran into certain problems in the Council of Ministers. Some member states had reservations about the legal base of the initiative. As a result of this, the Commission amended the legal base so that it came under an article of the treaty covering public health. The Commission maintained its view that violence in all its forms is an abuse of human rights, but the public health base compromise enabled the Daphne programme to continue to support the same types of actions against violence as those supported since 1997.

With the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty, the EU's public health competence has become more wide-ranging. The revised proposal was submitted in February 1999, with European Parliament approval coming in April. The plan now needs approval by EU governments before being presented to MEPs once more for their final agreement ahead of formal adoption. At the end of May the Council of Ministers adopted its common position for a four-year programme (2000-03) with a budget of €20m,

MEPs get involved with Daphne

Since Daphne first came onto the scene, the European Parliament has been one of the initiative's strongest supporters. Throughout the negotiations between EU governments, the Commission and Parliament leading to the creation of Daphne, MEPs consistently pushed for the scheme to be as comprehensive and effective as possible. They are continuing with these efforts as plans for the next Daphne programme — set to run from 2000-03 — are finalised.

The first concrete action taken by MEPs to support Daphne came in 1997 when a specific budget line was set to finance the programme. While such a move may on the face of it seem unexciting, without such a clear source of funding it would have proved almost impossible to provide financial assistance to anti-violence projects through Daphne. Parliament has also consistently put pressure on the Commission and EU governments to ensure that non-governmental organisation (NGOs) in the candidate countries reap the maximum benefit possible from Daphne.

Spanish MEP Francisca Bannasar Tous stressed the importance of extending the scheme's reach eastwards in her recent report to the Parliament's women's rights committee. "The progressive extension of the programme to third countries, in particular in central and east European countries (through Phare), EFTA countries and Cyprus is vital, given the trans-national dimension of many forms of violence (in particular, trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation and child

pornography on the Internet) and in the perspective of enlargement. It is important to start an active co-operation with applicant countries and to firmly enshrine criteria for children and women's human rights as well as for gender equality in association agreements," she says.

The MEP's report also called for a number of amendments to be included in the Commission's original plan for an updated Daphne programme — several of them designed to increase the scheme's effectiveness in the applicant countries. These proposed amendments included a specific reference to the applicant states' need to respect human rights; a paragraph calling on the Commission to co-ordinate Daphne projects in the applicant states and Russia with the Phare and Tacis programmes and a clause stressing the need to address the problem of trafficking in women in these states.

At its plenary session in April this year, Parliament approved the Commission's plans for Daphne on condition that the amendments were included in the text. Although Ms Bannasar Tous was not re-elected as an MEP in June, her report will still form the basis of much of Parliament's future work on Daphne. While MEPs have given the green light to the Commission's plans to update Daphne, they were disappointed with one aspect of the proposal — the new programme will be based on the EU's public health rules. They say violence against women and children is more than a simple health problem. ■



maintaining the annual €5m figure. The formal adoption of this common position came in September after which the European Parliament will reconsider and, hopefully, accept the common position before the end of year.

Both the Commission and parliament are keen for EU governments to accept the new Daphne proposal so the new scheme can enter into force on January 1 2000. "With the help of Daphne, the expertise and experience of NGOs can be stimulated and shared with like-minded organisations in other member states and the applicant countries," remarked Ms Gradin before leaving the Commission.

The deadline for applications under the 1999 Daphne programme was in June. Of the 354 proposals received, the Commission expects to support between 60-70. The project list will be announced in the autumn. Subject to the successful adoption of the four-year programme, it is hoped to invite applications under the 2000 programme from March 2000. A call for proposals will be published in the Official Journal and information can be found on the EU's web site, Europa, as well. ■

Reports by Simon Coss, Brussels

Tracing Daphne's parentage

The Daphne initiative is not an isolated programme, but represents the latest development in a long campaign to stamp out violence against women and children. The European Women's Lobby — the Union's largest women's rights federation — described Daphne as "an important step forward in tackling the global issue of violence against children, young persons and women by recognising it as a question of human rights for which member states have firmly stated their commitment". Some say the origins of Daphne can be traced back to the signature of the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1949. That document clearly established for the first time the principle that people have the right to live their lives without fear of violence or intimidation. It has formed the basis for all subsequent human rights initiatives anywhere in the world.

On a European level many observers point to the signature of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights as the first step on the road to Daphne. The Convention pre-dated the creation of the European Community. It established the right to life and the right not to be tortured or subject to degrading treatment. While the problem of violence against women was not specifically mentioned in the text, the basic principle that freedom from the threat of violence was a fundamental right was set out clearly for the first time in the Convention on Human Rights. Although not legally binding on EU member states — which have all signed up to its principles — countries found to be contravening its terms risk a serious loss of face among international partners. This happened recently when the police in France were accused of torturing a man in their custody.

The next important step in the campaign to stamp out violence against women came in 1979. This was an international initiative in which the EU played a leading role. The UN

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was one of the first international agreements to recognise that the problem of violence and discrimination against women merited particular attention.

The accord was signed by over 130 countries, including all EU member states, and laid the groundwork for a wide variety of women's rights projects around the globe. A decade later the international community turned its attention to the painful issue of the violence and abuse suffered by children. The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognised that the human rights of the world's children needed to be protected.

In 1993 the Vienna Declaration recognised for the first time that women's rights were human rights and that violence was a violation of human rights. This landmark



Sue Cunningham/SCP



document — signed by both the EU and many of the applicant states — established a principle that was only implicit in both the 1949 UN Convention on Human Rights and 1950 European Convention.

The next major step forward came in 1995 at the fourth world conference on women held in Beijing. At that meeting governments from the EU, the candidate countries and many other nations made a series of commitments to combat violence against women. At the follow-up conference, held in Madrid in 1998, all participants reaffirmed their, “commitment to implement and reinforce legal instruments and other measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, including its consequences in their respective countries”.

The three years that separated the Beijing and Madrid conferences saw a flurry of activity within the EU aimed at stamping out violence against women and children.

In 1996 EU governments agreed to set up a Union-wide scheme, the STOP programme, designed to combat trade in human beings and end sexual exploitation (see separate article). STOP in some ways was seen as a

direct precursor of Daphne. The two schemes have been designed to work in tandem.

At the same time a number of important new laws on women's and children's rights were passed by several EU member states.

The Daphne initiative itself was established following on the inclusion by the European parliament in the EU budget for 1997 of €3m to combat violence against women and children. This decision followed the Stockholm world congress on the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The tragic affair known as the Dutroux case in Belgium — which involved the deaths and abductions of young girls — also helped to galvanise both public and political opinion. Strong calls for action on a European as well as member state level were heard from many concerned groups and individuals. The combination of the Dutroux case — coupled with the exposure of similar cases and a general outrage within the Union to the problem of paedophiles, concerns over pornography (over the Internet and other sources) and the general rise in violence against women and children (in particular most recently in war-torn Africa and closer to home, former Yugoslavia) has given the initiative an added political momentum. ■

STOP stops sexual exploitation

STOP is an incentive and exchange programme for persons responsible for combating trade in human beings and the sexual exploitation of children. The programme covers the period 1996 to 2000 with a budget of period is €6.5m. The 1999 budget totals €1.5m

The aim of STOP is to encourage and reinforce networks and practical co-operation between the various persons responsible for action against the trade in human beings and the sexual exploitation of children in the EU. It seeks to improve and adapt the training and skills of persons responsible for combating this form of crime.

The main objectives are to:

- provide incentives to acquire an operational knowledge of the languages of the countries of origin of victims of trade in human beings and the sexual exploitation of children
- promote knowledge of other member states' legal systems (in particular the functioning of judicial proceedings and procedures relating to immigration and border controls and social and tax legislation)
- encourage the establishment of networks of persons responsible for this area to stimulate different forms of co-operation
- encourage exchanges of experience between those

responsible for training and joint preparation of specific training

- further scientific and technical research and disseminate new techniques through the production of manuals
- promote the dissemination of information and the creation of databases.

Grants are awarded in five areas — training, exchange programmes and training courses, organisation of multidisciplinary meetings and seminars, studies and research and dissemination of information.

Project leaders may be public or private institutions such as establishments providing training for the legal profession and the judiciary, or bodies whose function is to prevent or combat trade in human beings and the sexual exploitation of children those which assist the victims or provide treatment for perpetrators.

Persons responsible in countries applying for EU membership may be associated with the projects. ■

More information on STOP from the secretary of the programme, (Tel: (322) 296 6701; Fax: (32-2) 295 0174; web site: http://europa.eu.int/comm/sg/tfjail/project/stop_en.htm).

Victims of violence

Taboos need breaking

“A husband who does not beat his wife, does not love her.” This and other folk sayings, can still be heard in Europe and specifically in many Polish towns and villages. According to the Warsaw-based Women’s Rights Centre (WRC), which has been campaigning for women’s rights in Poland since 1994, domestic violence and violence against women are not adequately recognised as a grave social problem in Poland.

Despite other major social changes in the country, violence against women remains a taboo subject. In many small towns and villages — like elsewhere in the EU — the issue is surrounded by a tradition of shame and guilt that prevents women speaking about mistreatment.

Similar taboos encompass the issues of sexual and physical abuse of children, making it hard for young people to approach authorities when they have been mistreated. It is difficult to estimate the actual number of incidents of violence against women in Poland, as the official system for gathering such statistics is not well developed. However, research carried out in 1993 and 1996 by the Public Opinion Research Centre did yield some results. The centre questioned a representative sample of 1,087 adult women in ongoing relationships, 18 per cent of whom admitted to being victims of domestic violence. Of that number, half said they had been battered regularly during their relationship while the other half reported sporadic beatings.

The survey also questioned a representative sample of divorced women who were asked the same questions.

Here the number of women who reported they had been victims of domestic violence was much higher. Women in relationships are often afraid or ashamed to talk about the treatment they endure. Some 41 per cent of the divorced women questioned alleged that their husbands had repeatedly beaten them, while 21 per cent reported sporadic battering. In addition 32 per cent of those questioned cited physical abuse as the reason for ending their marriages.

Official statistics on the number of women and young people subjected to sexual exploitation — for example being forced to work as prostitutes against their will — are inadequate. Nevertheless, WRC argues that evidence of such abuse is clearly visible in most major cities in Poland — and often along the route of transiting lorries. “Although pimping and forcing another person to prostitute themselves is a crime, the law is not respected in practice. For example, brothels are often disguised as, say, massage parlours and there are many advertisements in newspapers for prostitutes. The criminal justice system and police often do not respond at all to prostitution-related crimes, often completely ignoring the obvious indicators of pimping and forcing somebody else into prostitution,” argues a recent WRC report.

The issue of children becoming involved in prostitution is also serious in Poland. In the western part of the country, there is a major problem with young people who travel to Berlin to prostitute themselves for the weekend. One newspaper reported recently that the practice is so widespread that many schools in the region regularly have high absenteeism rates every Friday. ■



Sue Cunningham/SCP

EU citizens have similar attitudes to violence

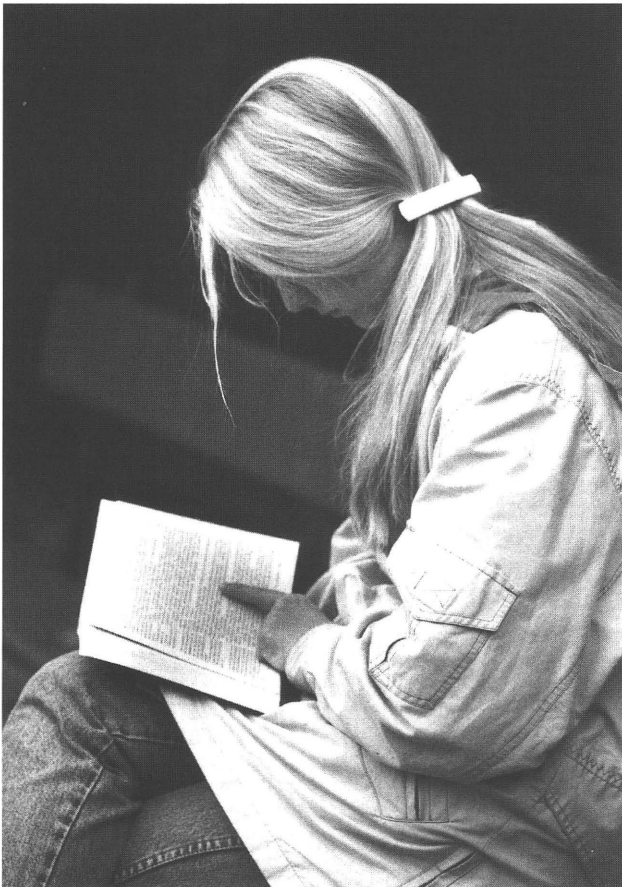
Two recent Eurobarometers on the attitudes to violence against women and children, conducted under the Daphne initiative, show a massive condemnation of violence, and in particular sexual violence, against both women and children. A vast majority of Europeans are aware of the fact that this problem exists and hold the view that this type of violence is fairly widespread.

However, most people have become aware of the problem through information in the media, while the subject still seems to be little discussed among friends and family. Only few claim to know any victim of violence.

Contrary to the actual situation, most people believe the victims are most at risk from people they do not know. Alcohol, drugs, unemployment, poverty and social exclusion top the list of circumstances seen as the main causes for violent behaviour.

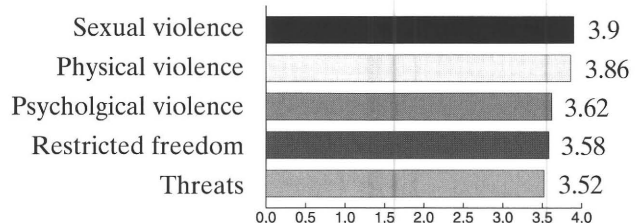
Only 4 per cent of Europeans have never heard of domestic violence against women. Of those that had, most had heard of it through television (89 per cent), the press (65 per cent) and radio (44 per cent).

One in two thought this type of violence was fairly common (50 per cent), one in four (24 per cent) that it was very common and only 19 per cent answered "not very common or not at all common".



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Seriousness of the various types of violence (respondents were asked their opinion on how serious they thought different types of violence were)



Note: For each respondents were asked to specify whether they thought they were "very serious", "fairly serious", "not very serious" or "not at all serious". A weighting, from one to four, was attached to each of the four possible responses, so that European and national averages could be calculated for each type of violence. The mid-point on the scale is 2.5.

Sexual violence against women was considered very serious by 90 per cent of the Europeans, physical violence by 87 per cent, psychological violence by 65 per cent, restricted freedom by 64 per cent and threats of violence by 58 per cent.

As for the causes of domestic violence, most cited alcohol (96 per cent), drug addiction (94 per cent), unemployment (79 per cent), poverty/social exclusion (73 per cent) and having oneself been a victim of violence (73 per cent).

Sixty-two per cent of Europeans considered domestic violence against women to be unacceptable in all circumstances and always punishable by law, against 32 per cent who considered it unacceptable in all circumstances but not always punishable by law.

As for how to combat domestic violence, 95 per cent thought punishing the perpetrator served a useful purpose, 91 per cent thought tougher enforcement of existing laws did and 91 per cent believe in teaching young people about mutual respect.

Roughly two out of three Europeans (67 per cent) felt the EU should get involved in combating domestic violence against women. However, 79 per cent were unaware of any such policy measures put forward by the EU.

On the subject of violence against children, only 1 per cent of respondents had never heard of violence against children.

Practically all Europeans (over 97 per cent) consider sexual abuse of children as a form of violence. Bullying by other children (88 per cent), corporal (74 per cent) and psychological (75 per cent) punishment are also high on the list. Only 59 per cent consider physical punishment by parents to be violence.

Question: *In your opinion, are there special laws in your country regarding the prevention of domestic violence against women?*

	Yes	No	Don't know
Belgium	28.8	42.7	28.2
Denmark	30.9	42.8	26.3
western Germany	30.6	45.1	23.9
Germany	30.5	45.0	24.1
eastern Germany	30.1	44.6	24.9
Greece	26.6	55.6	17.8
Spain	30.4	49.3	20.2
France	47.8	34.9	17.3
Ireland	44.6	32.5	22.8
Italy	23.8	49.1	27.1
Luxembourg	30.1	40.9	29.0
Netherlands	27.5	36.1	36.4
Austria	37.6	37.3	25.1
Portugal	20.2	48.6	31.2
Finland	60.0	23.9	16.2
Sweden	30.4	46.8	22.8
UK	40.7	30.3	29.0
EU 15	33.8	41.7	24.4

Seventy-seven per cent believe violence against children is very or fairly common. Contrary to the actual situation, most people believe the children are most at risk from people they do not know (74 per cent) or from stepfathers (71 per cent).

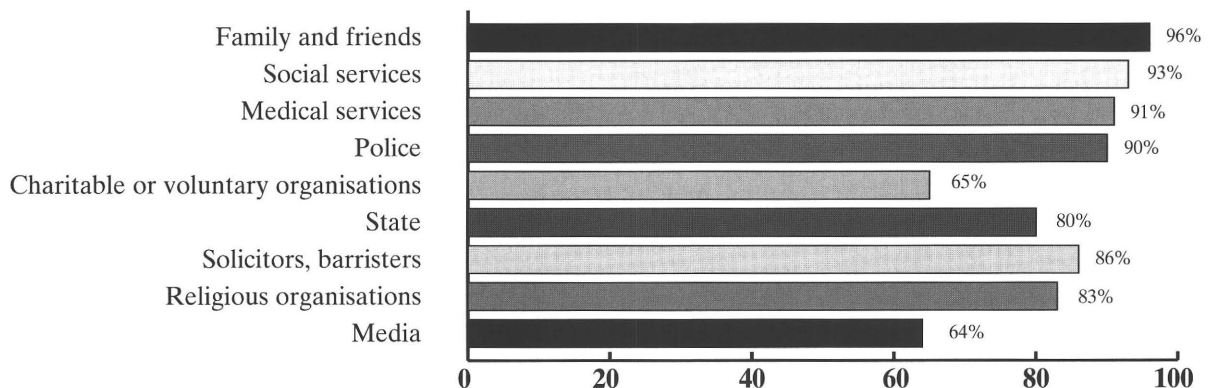
On the causes of violence, alcohol (94 per cent) and drugs (93 per cent) are at the top of the list. Seventy-seven per cent believe the perpetrator has been a victim of violence as a root cause.

Sixty-one per cent consider violence against children to be unacceptable in all circumstances and always punishable by law while 30 per cent regard it as unacceptable in all circumstances, but not always punishable.

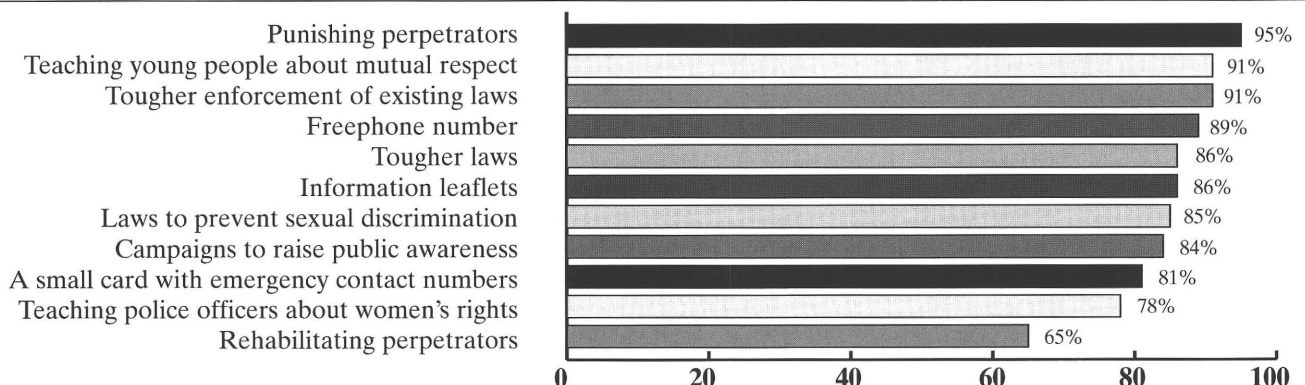
A majority in all member states (average 64 per cent) believe legislation against sexual violence is insufficient in their country and 91 per cent believe stricter application of existing laws would be effective. Ninety-four per cent think tougher punishment is an appropriate response to violence.

A large majority in all member states (91 per cent) believes the EU should certainly or probably be involved in combating violence against children. ■

Institutions/groups that should help women who are victims of domestic violence



Ways of combating domestic violence against women (respondents were asked whether each of the 11 instruments proposed was useful in combating domestic violence against women)





Question: Do you consider that the law in your country is effective in punishing adults who inflict sexual violence on children?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Belgium	21.7	70.5	7.7
Denmark	26.4	64.2	9.4
western Germany	52.0	37.6	9.9
Germany	50.9	38.8	9.8
eastern Germany	46.5	43.5	9.3
Greece	61.6	33.1	5.3
Spain	29.6	55.8	14.6
France	33.1	61.7	5.2
Ireland	34.0	53.7	12.3
Italy	25.3	64.4	10.3
Luxembourg	34.9	45.2	19.9
Netherlands	31.4	58.0	10.6
Austria	40.5	45.0	14.5
Portugal	24.3	54.7	20.9
Finland	32.8	59.4	7.8
Sweden	26.0	62.2	11.8
UK	28.0	58.1	13.9
EU 15	4.8	54.5	10.6

Source for all information regarding violence against children: Eurobarometer 51.0: Europeans and violence against children report by INRA (Europe), European co-ordination office for the secretariat-general of the Commission. It was managed and organised by the information, communication, culture and audio-visual media (public opinion analysis unit), June 4 1999. The data was collected from all EU member states between March 12 and May 4 1999.



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Source for all information regarding violence against women: Eurobarometer 51.0: Europeans and their views on domestic violence against women. Prepared by the Commission's information, communication, culture and audio-visual media department, June 1999. Data was collected from all EU member states between March 12 and May 4 1999. INRA (Europe), European co-ordination office, was responsible for general co-ordination. The original version of the report is in French. Copies of the report are available in English or French from the Women's Information Sector (Fax: (322) 299 3891; Email: infofemmes@eu.cec.be; Web site: [http:// europa. eu.int/ comm/dg10/women/index_ en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/women/index_en.html)).

Question: In your opinion, should the EU get involved in combating violence against children?

	Yes, definitely	Yes, probably	No, probably not	No, definitely not	Don't know
Belgium	76.8	18.8	0.8	0.1	3.6
Denmark	61.6	23.9	5.6	5.7	3.3
western Germany	67.6	19.5	2.3	2.0	8.6
Germany	68.8	19.1	2.5	1.7	7.6
eastern Germany	73.5	17.8	3.3	0.8	4.2
Greece	72.6	21.9	1.2	0.4	3.8
Spain	78.6	15.6	1.0	0.7	4.1
France	76.9	17.7	1.6	0.8	3.0
Ireland	78.3	13.5	2.0	0.9	5.3
Italy	77.5	17.5	0.9	0.3	3.8
Luxembourg	66.8	22.0	2.2	3.0	5.9
Netherlands	76.4	14.8	3.9	1.8	3.1
Austria	67.4	19.1	3.6	2.2	7.6
Portugal	72.9	17.8	1.2	0.1	8.0
Finland	81.9	14.4	1.4	0.5	1.8
Sweden	78.9	12.2	4.4	2.0	2.4
UK	59.3	24.6	5.1	3.0	8.0
EU 15	72.1	18.8	2.4	1.4	5.3



Sue Cunningham/SCP

Welcome to Europa, the *European* *Union's* server



The Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors and other bodies of the European Union (EU) invite you to their server.

News

- brings you the official press releases of the European institutions, and information on the main up and coming events.

Abc

- provides simple answers to key questions:
- What are the objectives of the Treaty on European Union?
- How will it affect citizens' rights?
- How to get documentation?

Institutions

- presents the different institutions and other bodies of the Union, and explains their specific roles. From here, you enter directly into the institution of your choice.

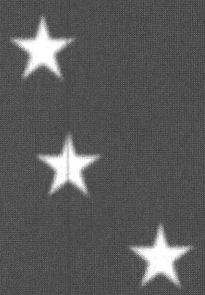
Policies

- offers you information on the Union's activities in economic and social matters, security and foreign policy, justice and home affairs.

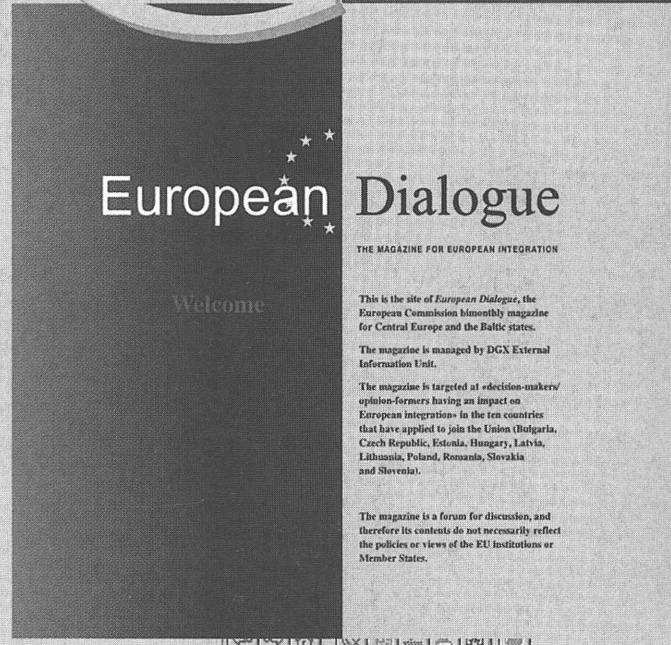
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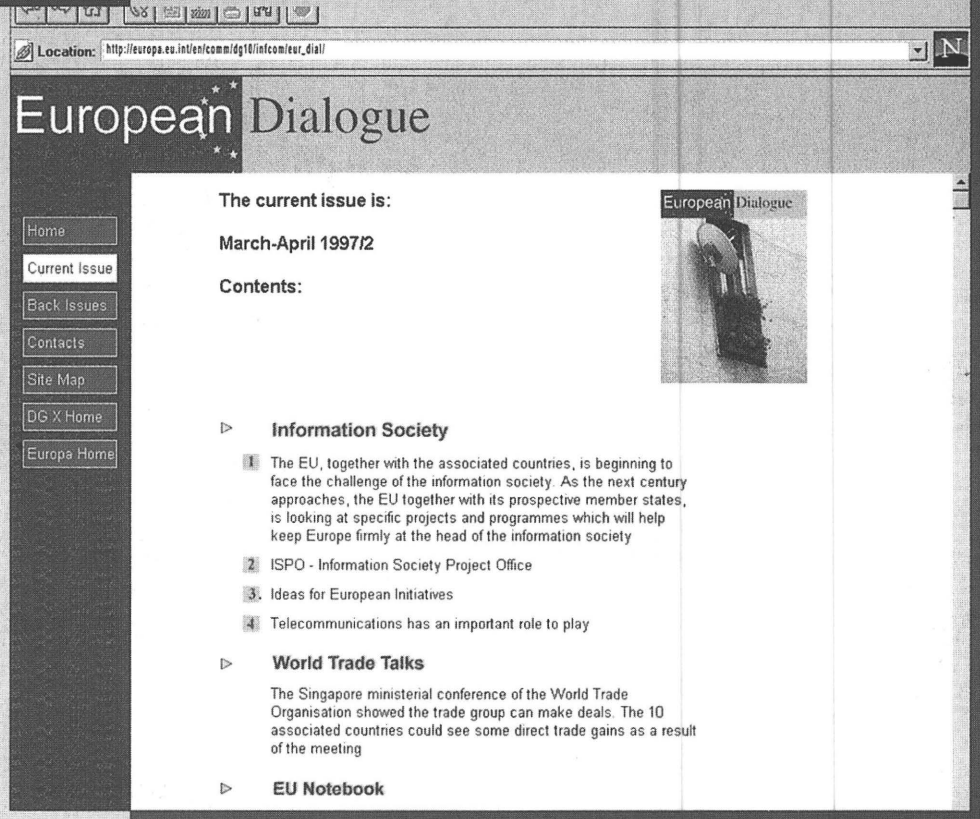
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