

Bulletin  
of the European Communities

Supplement 5/77

Commission Report  
on the Establishment  
of a European Foundation

sent to the European Council  
on 17 November 1977

COM(77) 600  
17 November 1977

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
Commission

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*Printed in Belgium 1978*

Catalogue Number: CB-NF-77-005-EN-C

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## Preface

At its meeting in Rome on 26 March 1977 the European Council<sup>1</sup> instructed the Commission to draw up a report on the terms of reference, nature and funding of a European Foundation along the lines suggested by Mr Tindemans in his report on European Union<sup>2</sup> for presentation at its end of the year meeting.

At its own meeting on 30 March the Commission instructed the President to appoint a group of outside experts to assist with the preparation of the report. Meetings of the group were held on 1 July, 3 October and 27 October under the chairmanship of Mr Olivi, Adviser *hors classe*. The list of members is given below:

Mr P. Nyboe Andersen	Chief General Manager of Adelsbanken, Copenhagen; one-time Danish Minister
Lord Asa Briggs	Provost of Worcester College, University of Oxford
Mr H.G. Buiters	Burgomaster of Groningen; one-time Secretary-General of the European Trade Union Confederation
Professor Etienne Cerexé	University of Louvain; Private Office of the Belgian Prime Minister
Mrs Colette Flesch	Member of the Luxembourg Parliament and Mayor of Luxembourg; Member of the European Parliament
Mrs Katharina Focke	Member of the Bundestag, one-time Federal Minister for Youth, Family Affairs and Health
Professor Geoffrey J. Hand	Former Chairman of the Irish Council of Arts; European University Institute, Florence
Mr G.D. Jurgensen, Ambassador	Paris
Mr Max Kohnstamm	Chairman of the European University Institute, Florence
Dr Arrigo Levi	Editor of 'La Stampa', Turin
Professor Heinz Maier-Leibnitz	President of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Bonn
The Right Hon. Geoffrey Rippon	Member of the UK Parliament; Member of the European Parliament

<sup>1</sup> Bull. EC 3-1977, point 2.3.4.

<sup>2</sup> Supplement 1/76 — Bull. EC.

Prof. Sen. Giovanni Spadolini                      Chairman of the Senate Education Commission; one-time Minister of Cultural Assets

The following attended as observers:

*for the Hague Club (private foundations):*

Dr Thorwald Risler                                      (Steering Committee) Secretary-General of the Stiftverband für die deutsche Wissenschaft

*for the Council of Europe, Strasbourg:*

Mr Maitland Stobart                                      Directorate of Education and of Cultural and Scientific Affairs

Discussions produced a general agreement on the main characteristics, objectives, working methods and structure of the European Foundation and the Chairman was instructed to draw up a report accordingly. The Commission would like to express its gratitude to the Group for its valuable contribution to the preparation of this Report.

The Commission has studied and approved the report for submission to the European Council.

## Introduction

1. The idea of a European Foundation was mooted by Mr Leo Tindemans, Belgium's Prime Minister, in the conclusion to Chapter IV (A Citizen's Europe) of his report on European Union.<sup>1</sup>

The chapter comes between the section of the report outlining political proposals for progress towards European Union and the final section dealing with strengthening of the institutions. In other words Mr Tindemans turns from the realm of politics to consider the attitude of the man in the street to the European venture as a whole. 'The fact that our countries have a common destiny is not enough', he writes. 'This fact must also be seen to exist.'

It will take a long time and a lot of effort to create this new European awareness and the energies of the largest possible number of organizations and private individuals will have to be harnessed. This is why Mr Tindemans suggests the creation of a European Foundation, independent of the existing Community institutions and the future institutions of the Union, with the object of making European integration 'a matter for us all' by—initially at least—'promoting greater understanding among our peoples'.

The following report takes a close look at the terms of reference, nature and funding of a European Foundation along the lines suggested by Mr Tindemans.

It is important to underline the fact that this Report follows Mr Tindemans' proposals *to the letter*. This has meant studying the extremely wide range of objectives indicated by the Belgium Foreign Minister. A procedure has been suggested in this Report which should facilitate the decision of the European institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> Supplement 1/76 — Bull. EC.

## A European Foundation: tasks and objectives

### Needs

*To strengthen understanding of, and support for, the work of the Community*

2. The initial creation of the Community would never have been possible had there not been a deep and widespread revulsion against the disastrous effects of repeated conflict between European States. In carrying out their Treaty commitments governments have been able to count on a continuing high level of popular support in most member countries. *There are now many citizens in the Community, however, who have no personal experience of the miseries of a divided past*; some show signs of disappointment with the performance of the Community; in some of the newer member countries support has never been as high as in countries which were original members, and in recent years the *economic crisis* has diverted attention to the immediate problems of rising prices and falling employment.

In addition, much of the day-to-day work of the Community remains invisible to most of its citizens. Unlike national states it neither offers direct services to, nor makes direct demands on, the great majority of them. *Nor does it have even a symbolic presence in their midst: no flag, no currency, not even (as yet) a common passport.* It is hardly surprising that, in spite of the efforts made by the institutions themselves to provide information about their activities, *the Community for many remains a remote and bureaucratic structure.*

In these conditions, a continued high level of popular support for the Community cannot be taken for granted. Direct elections to the European Parliament will offer an important occasion to renew interest in, and support for, it. But such elections will only take place every five years.

A sustained effort is needed, on a much larger scale than in the past. *An independent Foundation equipped with sufficient resources to reach the grass roots of European public opinion would provide a means of making all citizens aware of the meaning of*

*Europe in the widest sense and of firing their interest in it.* Its work should seek to develop the European citizen's sense of belonging to one and the same community with a common heritage from the past and a common destiny for the present and future. This Community feeling is still largely lacking and hence it is sometimes difficult for Europeans to grasp that the achievements of the European Community apply to all its members.

*To strengthen understanding between the citizens of the Community*

3. Support for the Community among the general public is directly related not only to their attitudes to it as a set of institutions, but also the attitudes of the citizens of each member country towards those of the other Community countries. The sense of sharing a common destiny and a common purpose has already been forged among those who are involved in the work of the institutions of the Community but it is very much weaker among the great mass of the population of the member countries who have not had this experience. The fact that most people still live and work in a purely national context are serious barriers to increased understanding and mutual confidence

*Many events, (some very recent) show how little progress has been achieved in mutual understanding between peoples.* Recent opinion polls confirm how the ancient evils rooted in historical prejudice very often seem to reassert themselves with unsuspected force. Both national governments and many voluntary bodies, including private foundations, have been working hard over the years to multiply human contacts between the countries of the Community, but the task is immense; and these contacts very often operate on a bilateral basis, without any Community dimension. The Community institutions have made, and are making, a contribution also, but this is limited both by resources and their own terms of reference. *A new Community-based initiative designed further to extend the opportunities for meaningful contacts between citizens of the Member States would not only show its desire seriously to contribute to the creation of a 'citizens' Europe', but also to help to strengthen a sense of social cohesion within it.*

