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COMPLEMENTARY INFORMATION PROGRAMME FOR 1975

(Commission communication to the Council)

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COMPLEMENTARY INFORMATION PROGRAMME FOR 1975

When the information programme for 1975 was adopted, it was announced that it would be followed up by a complementary programme based on the additional appropriations allocated by the European Parliament following completion of the new budgetary procedure.

The bulk of these appropriations, which amount to 1 050 000 u.a.¹ in all, should largely allow information, aimed primarily at the general public, to be disseminated on an appreciably larger scale throughout the Member States. A lesser, but substantial, proportion of the funds will be devoted to the dissemination of information in non-member countries, where certain political developments or events have created a new demand.

It should be noted that the measures outlined below reflect the Commission's new attitude to the dissemination of information. The goal of this more dynamic attitude is to ensure a greater degree of association of public opinion in the widest sense.

I. PRIORITY FOR LARGE-SCALE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AT POPULAR LEVEL
(within the Community)

Greater use will be made of the mass media as part of the additional effort to make the European public more aware of how Community activities affect them in their daily lives.

The measures adopted for this purpose will mainly involve the establishment or in some cases, consolidation of popular approaches to the dissemination of information among the public, making use of the mass media, which have a direct impact on the "average European" (press, television, radio, video-cassettes).

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¹ Including immediately available funds of 380.000 u.a. under Item 2720 "Information" and 50.000 u.a. under Item 2730 "Information and Young People" - and 620.000 u.a. under Chapter 98, which will be the subject of a proposal for transfert in the usual way.

1. "General-public" information campaigns directed at citizens in the regions

In addition to their specialized character, these campaigns, which are as diversified as the countries at which they are aimed, all share the common goal of arousing interest and establishing contact with leading administrative and executive circles at regional level.

In Belgium, the inauguration of two new mobile exhibitions will be accompanied by the setting-up of a small, temporary team whose task it will be to establish contact with regional radio and television stations.

In Denmark, an "information railway coach" modelled along exhibition lines, complete with publicity material, and manned by a team of promotional and reception personnel will tour the main cities and towns, thus constituting a genuine "mobile branch" of the Copenhagen Office. The itinerary will be announced in the regional press and there will be back-up support in the form of meetings and conferences with local organizations (political parties, trade unions, teachers, youth movements, etc.). Important interviews with prominent personalities will be a feature at some of the main venues."

In the Federal Republic of Germany, a new travelling exhibition involving audio-visual techniques will be visiting some twenty cities and towns. Posters will be put up announcing the arrival of the exhibition and the regional press will carry a special supplement. In addition, a series of folders and brochures will be distributed at the exhibition itself.

In France, work is under way on preparations for a competition (devoted to the various aspects of the Community) which will be aimed at readers of the major regional daily newspapers. The competition will conclude with a prize-giving ceremony accompanied by a series of functions in the main provincial cities and towns. These events will be closely followed by the regional radio and television stations.

In Ireland, a mobile exhibition will visit the country's main exhibition centres. Simultaneously, a local press campaign will be launched, consisting in the main of the preparation of features specially adapted to the different regions.

In Italy, despite the fact that the possibility of new, large-scale campaigns in the immediate future will be limited in view of this year's impending regional elections, a series of projects will be prepared and the necessary contacts established, with a view to launching a full-scale campaign towards the end of the year. In addition, an important competition is planned in collaboration with the youth press (see § 4).

In Luxembourg, efforts will concentrate on promoting campaigns of an interregional nature, in collaboration with neighbouring countries.

In the Netherlands, tours by the new exhibitions will be stepped up and accompanied by a series of meetings involving the regional press, radio and television.

The United Kingdom is to be regarded as a special case in view of the forthcoming referendum due to be held in June, which places any large-scale campaign by the Commission beyond the bounds of practical policy, especially in view of the public reaction which any such step might produce. Nevertheless, provided the results of the referendum are positive, plans are afoot to disseminate information on a regional basis by organizing meetings and conferences with various local personalities holding positions of responsibility. In particular, the timing of the campaign is planned to coincide with the opening of the Cardiff and Edinburgh branch offices.

In addition, there would also appear to be a strong case, during the second half of the year, for starting work on the production of a supporting film devoted to the European Community and specially geared to the British public.

2. Campaigns directed at people on the job

The chief aim here is to institute instructional sessions for organisers at trade union level. Information material specially devised for this purpose would be made available (audio-visual material consisting of slides with sound-track and printed material).

By progressively stepping up these activities, due to be launched under the 1975 programme, it will be possible to ensure that European affairs play an increasingly important and regular role in the curricula of trade union educational establishments throughout the principal regions. Subsequently, the aim will be to reach the grass-roots of the trade union organizations.

These activities will be supplemented by a general stepping-up of efforts to involve trade union organizations. Efforts in this area are seen by the Commission as among the top priorities as far as its information policy is concerned.

3. Campaigns directed at the domestic consumer

As a prelude to introducing the necessary measures, i.e. adoption by the Council of the consumer protection programme, a survey is to be carried out with a view to obtaining a better idea of how the consumer views the practical effects of the European Community on his everyday life. This survey will also prove valuable as far as the work of the Environment and Consumer Protection Service is concerned.

4. Campaign directed at the coming generation (young ex members of the public)

Clear possibilities now exists for preparing and disseminating programmes on video-cassettes among the student public and social and socio-educational associations, where the establishments in question are equipped to use this type of material. Such facilities are now being provided on an increasing scale in certain Community countries, although in others they are found only in exceptional cases, or are still in the experimental stage (stress here being laid on the preparation of slides incorporating a sound-track commentary). Initially, a significant effort will be made to ensure that, particularly in secondary educational establishments, and as far as technical and political considerations permit, European programmes are made available on an increasingly regular basis. As a first step, it is proposed to introduce such programmes in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands. Furthermore, preparations are also under way in Italy, in collaboration with some of the principal young people's weeklies, to organize a competition involving the three following stages: publication of information on the Community; dispatch of informative literature specifically designed to help young people compile their answers to the questions; presentation of prizes (coupled with the preparation of a publicity film, also aimed at young people).

II. NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND NEW NEEDS
(in non-member countries)

The additional appropriations available should make it possible to meet the new demand for information, in the following main areas:

1. ACP countries

As a result of the Lomé Agreement, the number of countries associated with the European Community by an overall cooperation agreement has increased from 19 to 46.

The Agreement was highlighted by a particularly marked degree of cooperation with the television stations, designed to give the widest possible coverage of the event. Furthermore, it is intended to produce a film on the subject for systematic distribution in both the ACP countries and Europe, in order to ensure that maximum publicity is accorded to this event, in the long term.

A wider and more systematic publicity campaign will also be conducted throughout the new signatory countries. It will be aimed at leading business and administrative circles (through brochures, documentary material and information handouts) and also at the public at large (chiefly through the medium of radio and television).

In addition, there will be an appreciable step up in the supply of information to the European public. In the main, this task will be entrusted to private organizations specializing in development problems.

Otherwise, an effort will also be made to make the Lome Agreement better known in third countries, in particular through the channels of the international organisations concerned.

2. Other non-member countries

It will now be possible to extend and diversify the information programmes already launched in the case of Turkey, Greece and Portugal.

Accordingly, it is planned to take part in this year's Salonica International Trade Fair and to organize an European Day to mark the occasion.

In the case of Turkey, a study is currently under way to determine whether it would be possible to arrange detailed fact-finding visits for a number of journalists, a substantial period during the visits to be spent at the seat of the institutions.

Approaches may also be made to the Portuguese university authorities, with a view to organizing study visits to Brussels.

As regards the Arab countries, where there is clear evidence of the need to ensure a regular flow of information, plans and preparations are currently afoot to attend the Casablanca International Trade Fair. Already a study is being made of the possibility of following this up with a series of visits by journalists.

In Latin America, the recent establishment of a Press and Information Department attached to the Community Delegation in Santiago (Chile), coupled with the allocation of additional appropriations, will ensure that the demand for information from this area is met on a larger scale.

As far as the Community's main trading partners are concerned, and pending the establishment of a Press and Information Department in Ottawa, the chief beneficiary of the additional budgetary funds available will be Japan. The funds in question

will be used to help towards the cost of participating in the Okinawa International Exhibition, to be held from 19 July 1975 to 18 January 1976 on the theme "The Sea and its Future". The Community's participation in the Okinawa event will serve to reinforce the recent establishment of the Tokyo Delegation, while the Press and Information Department will play an active part in highlighting this participation.

III. OTHER PROJECTS

In addition to the projects mentioned above, it should be pointed out that the Commission will take every opportunity to organize, or associate itself with, events and functions calculated to highlight the "European renaissance".

It is thus studying broad topics such as : - The Community's role in a changing European society : discovering citizens' aspirations and furthering their realisation - Europe's regions : what regional traditions and cultures, through factors they have in common, can contribute to tomorrow's Europe .

Furthermore, a series of measures will be taken during 1975 to highlight the Community's chief preoccupation in the context of "International Women's Year".

To conclude, the Commission intends to involve itself closely in the current preparations for the 25th anniversary of the Schuman Appeal, due to be celebrated next May .