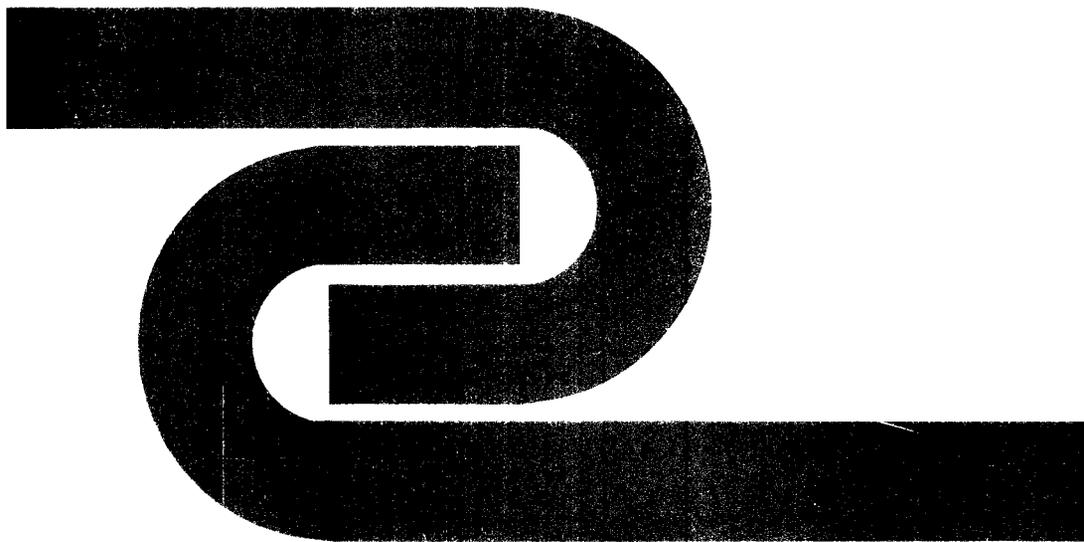


ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

ISSN: 0256-5846

BULLETIN



Brussels - No 1/1985

The Bulletin reports every month (10 issues yearly) on the activities of the Economic and Social Committee, a Community consultative body. It is edited by Secretariat-General of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities (2, rue Ravenstein, B-1000 Brussels) in the official Community languages.

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Catalogue Number: ESC-85-003-EN

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European
Communities, 1985

Catalogue number: EX-AA-85-001-EN-C

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Printed in Belgium

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Mr Gerd Muhr addresses the Dooge Committee and the Adonnino Committee

Mr Gerd Muhr, Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee, addressed the EC *Ad hoc* Committee on Institutional Affairs (Dooge Committee). Mr Muhr assured the committee that the major European economic and social forces would give European Union their full support. The following is a summary of Mr Muhr's address to the hearing of 31 January 1985 in Brussels:

'We firmly advocate fuller and deeper integration of our economies, social systems and societies within a European Union based on political solidarity and increasingly closer integration between our peoples.

We believe that political union is the vital political and institutional scenario without which the peoples of Europe will in the long term become disillusioned with the European Community and any political compromise within the Community bodies will become increasingly difficult to secure.

We are convinced that the Community is no mere customs union but a political objective. The Community institutions must give top priority to keeping citizens aware of this.

We are therefore firmly convinced that European Union must also have a European dimension for informing citizens via the mass media and the press. Otherwise it will be impossible to create the appropriate awareness among our peoples.

The European Union must provide a framework to allow the Community's planning and legislature institutions to develop a balanced, consistent, overall Community policy reflecting the legitimate interests of our citizens and the Member States, without these policies being based on a mere line-up of the various national interests.

In other words, we believe, like the European Parliament in its resolution preceding the Treaty for European Union, that it is essential to imbue the European venture with a new dynamism via the European Union.

This dynamism must have a two-fold impact: it must foster the expansion of existing policies and the framing of new policies. It requires a new institutional balance designed ultimately to improve the synchronization of the Community's legislative process.'

Mr Muhr concluded as follows:

'We know that your Committee is currently formulating proposals for submission to the Heads of State or Government, in order to bring the European Community further along the path towards European Union.

Will the Heads of State merely issue another declaration? Or will you provide the requisite economic, social and socio-political objectives and instruments to encourage the Heads of Government to take forward-looking decisions?

On behalf of the millions of Community citizens in our associations which embody the vital forces of our society, we urge you to take the latter, more courageous path and to propose the necessary decisions capable of extricating us from the present chronic crisis.

Our views, as far as we know, coincide closely with yours. You will have the full support of the major economic and social groups in Europe behind you if you succeed in persuading the Heads of State or Government to advance towards European Union.'

Mr Gerd Muhr, has promised the *Ad hoc* Committee on People's Europe set up by the Heads of State or Government the full support of the Community's socio-economic groups. Mr Muhr concluded his speech to the *Ad hoc* Committee in Brussels on 18 December as follows:

'Finally, on behalf of the Economic and Social Committee, I would like to stress that we have consistently worked for a "People's Europe", in our proposals regarding freedom of movement for persons, goods and services in the EEC; consumer protection and information; the quality of life in the face of dangers from industry, transport and the environment; increased rights for entrepreneurs and workers in the Community; a European dimension to information policy; and the ECU as a European currency.

We have the impression that, out of the host of proposals we have made, affecting the daily lives of most of us, there are some which could



(Photo Yves SMILS, Photo News, Bruxelles)

Mr Gerd Muhr, ESC Chairman

be adopted by the Heads of State or Government without undue difficulty.

However, we also have the impression that the real difficulty lies in the inertia of some of the national bureaucracies which determine the rate of progress of the Council of Ministers. Another factor is the lack of courage and confidence in the future of the European Community on the part of some leading national politicians. The consequences are a reluctance to take decisions, immobility or opting for the easy way out.

We believe, however, that progress towards Community-wide, sensible solutions can be made by the political representatives of the peoples of Europe, meeting in the European Parliament, and by the representatives of the socio-economic groups, meeting in the ESC. Much greater use should be made of these opportunities.

223rd PLENARY SESSION

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities held its 223rd plenary session on 30 and 31 January 1985. The Chairman, Mr Gerd Muhr, presided.

Opinions adopted

1. MEDITERRANEAN POLICY OF THE ENLARGED COMMUNITY

“Commission proposals concerning the implementation of a Mediterranean policy for the enlarged Community”⁽¹⁾

Gist of the Commission proposals

At the request of the Council the Commission has held a number of ‘exploratory conversations’ with a number of Mediterranean countries whose exports to the Community are likely to be heavily affected by the enlargement of the Community to include Spain and Portugal.

These conversations have revealed that there are particular problems in the agricultural sector (wine, fruit and vegetables, olive oil) and in the textile sector.

Significant repercussions are also feared in the food-processing industry as well as in other industrial sectors where the Mediterranean countries will be faced with competition from the new Member States of the Community.

The Commission makes a number of proposals on trade and also puts forward ideas on how to involve itself in the development of the countries concerned.

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽²⁾

A far-sighted Mediterranean policy should aim to reduce imbalances not only between the North and South but also within the Mediterra-

⁽¹⁾ COM(84) 107 final.

⁽²⁾ Doc. CES 92/85.

nean basin. Its basic aim should be to utilize local human and material resources, including the utilization of such resources on the international market. Finally, it should contribute to the peace, security and stability of the Mediterranean region. This is the gist of the Economic and Social Committee's opinion which has been adopted by 80 votes in favour and 4 abstentions. The Committee stresses that action must be taken (a) to cushion the impact of enlargement on the Mediterranean countries; (b) to improve the operation of bilateral EEC-Mediterranean agreements which have frequently failed to live up to expectations.

The Committee notes that the agreements concluded with NMCs have not checked their growing trade deficit with the Community which has roughly trebled in 10 years. In 1982, EEC imports from the Mediterranean were worth 22 000 million ECU, and exports totalled 29 000 million ECU. If oil products are excluded, the Mediterranean trade deficit with the EEC totals 19 000 million ECU and imports from the EEC are covered by exports to the tune of only 33%.

On the industrial front, the Committee endorses the Commission's comments on the need:

- to reaffirm the principle of preferential access to the EEC market for Mediterranean industrial products;

- to re-establish the confidence and trust of the partner countries and investors (particularly those from the Community) in these agreements, especially against the background of the forthcoming enlargement of the Community;

- to provide as far as possible for a gradual return to the arrangements set out in the agreements on textiles;

- to set up effective procedures for constant consultation with the partner countries to prevent crises arising in other sensitive sectors.

The Committee highlights the importance of industrial cooperation; it allows minerals and basic agricultural products to be processed on the spot and it consolidates the growing complementarity between the Mediterranean countries and their traditional suppliers of industrial products.

On the agricultural front, the Committee refers specifically to the impact of enlargement on fruit and vegetables, olive oil and wine. The Committee feels that the Commission should lose no time in drafting proposals designed to:

- establish what repercussions imports from NMCs would have on the production targets of the enlarged Community;

- evaluate the cost of the operation both to the Guarantee Section of the EAGGF and to development policy.

The Committee also stresses the need to encourage self-sufficiency in food (*inter alia* by investments in the agri-food industry).

Turning to the social aspect, the Committee stresses the importance of non-discrimination between workers on the basis of origin, nationality, race, religion or political beliefs. It insists that Mediterranean migrants be given the right to join unions and that unions be given the right to negotiate collective agreements on working conditions. It also stresses:

- safety at work, job security (social security, etc.);
- human rights and the need to observe minimum labour legislation in line with ILO conventions and recommendations;
- the need for joint action to combat illegal unemployment, clandestine migration and manpower trafficking.

Finally the Committee states that the cost of the Mediterranean policy should be borne by the Community rather than by farmers, particularly those in the Mediterranean regions. The relevant legislation should be framed in consultation with Spain and Portugal before the current enlargement negotiations are completed. Negotiations should not however be held up as a result.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for External Relations, chaired by Mr Zinkin (United Kingdom - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr Briganti (Italy - Various Interests).

2. REHABILITATION OF RAILWAYS/FINANCIAL RELATIONS/STATE AIDS

“Proposal for a Council decision amending Decision No 75/327/EEC on the improvement of the situation of railway undertakings and the harmonization of rules governing financial relations between such undertakings and States

and the

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 1107/70 on the granting of aids for transport by rail, road and inland waterway”⁽¹⁾

Gist of the Commission’s proposal

The Commission’s present initiative refers back to its 1981 proposals, which are still before the Council, for (a) a regulation setting the time

⁽¹⁾ COM(83) 764 final.

limit and conditions for the achievement of financial balance by railway undertakings and (b) a decision amending Council Decision No 75/327/EEC.⁽¹⁾ Both proposals have been the subject of an EEC opinion.⁽²⁾

The new proposals are also based on the findings of a series of recent bilateral consultations between the Commission and the governments of the Member States and on the most recent developments in the financial situation of railways, as characterized by (a) a worsening financial position and (b) greater financial dependence on the State.

As regards Decision No 75/327/EEC, the main aims of the Commission's proposals are:

to transfer responsibility for railway infrastructure costs to the State, with the railway companies bearing at least the marginal costs of using infrastructure;

to complement the definition of 'financial balance' by setting out exactly the various expenses and proceeds involved;

to clear debts incurred by the railways in the past; and

to review periodically railways' public service obligations and change them into contractual arrangements.

The Commission proposes that the following amendments be made to Council Regulation (EEC) No 1107/70:

deficit subsidies should only be granted subject to the Commission's approval; and

such subsidies should only be granted if they are to be used to improve the situation of the railways and if they are accompanied by flanking measures.

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽³⁾

The Commission's initiative is the first attempt for years to try to help solve the railways' problems, maintains the Economic and Social Committee in its opinion which was adopted unanimously with one abstention.

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities welcomes more equal terms of competition between the different modes of transport but has some criticism to level at the Commission document.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 37, 20.2.1981, p. 7.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 343, 31.12.1981, p. 6.

⁽³⁾ Doc. CES 88/85.

According to the ESC, State funding of infrastructure costs will not directly solve the financial problems of railway undertakings nor will it by itself remove the root causes of the problems. The main aim of this provision is basically greater transparency and a clearer delimitation of responsibilities. At the same time, however, infrastructure modernization schemes designed to achieve greater efficiency should not be held back.

The Committee is particularly surprised that the Commission's method of calculation disregards external social costs. The Commission's exclusive concern with commercial considerations ignores the overall economic impact of each individual mode of transport.

The Commission proposal should not lead to the creation of a fragmented railway network insofar as financial responsibility is concerned. However, when the State takes over financial responsibility, the existing legal and organizational structures of the railways should not be disregarded.

The Committee is also of the view that several Commission provisions should be couched in more concrete, more binding terms.

Finally, the Section maintains that the replacement of public service obligations by contractual arrangements could be a positive step towards (a) clarifying relations between the State and the railways, (b) bringing railway services more into line with actual needs, and (c) making a clearer-cut distinction between public and commercial services. Nevertheless the implementation of this provision must under no circumstances be allowed to lead to a situation where public service obligations themselves are called into question. The Committee likewise accepts the need to introduce sensible rationalization measures but is afraid that the provision might go even further and lead to a dropping of some or all of the railways' public service obligations.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mrs Weber (Germany - Workers): The Rapporteur was Mr von der Decken (Germany - Various Interests).

3. 16th VAT DIRECTIVE

“Proposal for a 16th Council directive on the harmonization of the laws of the Member States relating to turnover taxes — Common scheme for certain goods on which value-added tax has been finally paid and which are imported by a final consumer in one Member State from another Member State”⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ COM(84) 318 final.

Gist of the Commission document

The Commission proposal seeks to implement a scheme to eliminate double taxation in intra-Community trade.

The proposal covers goods imported from one Member State, where VAT has been paid on them, to another Member State, by an individual (final consumer), who has acquired them from a taxable person or from another final consumer.

The proposal's aim would be attained by setting up machinery to reimburse residual VAT upon exportation and tax goods at importation on the basis of their total residual value.

The proposed refund mechanism would take account of changes in the value of goods. As a general rule, goods lose value over time, but a few goods increase in value, e.g. works of art, antiques, collectors' items, etc.

For this category of goods, the exporting Member State will not refund VAT collected, and to avoid double taxation the importing Member State will tax only the difference in value over their last taxed value.

To sum up, the proposal defines the scope of the directive, importer of goods, and the main concepts (final consumer, taxable person, last taxed value, etc.), and shows where residual VAT is refunded on exportation and the taxable amount to be considered on importation of goods.

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽¹⁾

In its opinion, adopted unanimously with one abstention, the Committee welcomes the proposal. By abolishing the double taxation of used goods it will contribute to the harmonization of VAT systems, improve the position of private individuals and facilitate intra-Community trade.

The Committee makes a number of recommendations:

extension of the period of 30 days during which goods purchased are excluded from the scope of the directive; this is designed to reduce fraud;

the improvement of the definition of 'final consumer';

combination of the proposed two categories of goods with a view to simplifying procedures and ensuring fair treatment of all goods;

⁽¹⁾ Doc. CES 94/85.

simplification of the proof requirements for obtaining VAT refunds.

In conclusion, the Committee recommends that the directive be applied without delay and without exceptions.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Economic and Financial Questions, chaired by Mr Marvier (France - Workers). The Rapporteur was Mr Della Croce (Italy - Workers).

4. CAPITAL DUTY

“Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 69/335/EEC concerning indirect taxes on the raising of capital (capital duty)”⁽¹⁾

Gist of the Commission document

The Commission has submitted a draft directive on the harmonization of capital duty with the aim of facilitating the raising of risk capital, reducing the tax burden on companies and promoting investment.

The abolition of capital duty, which has been approved by the Commission, cannot at present be entertained by all the Member States for budgetary reasons. The Commission therefore proposes the following measures:

replacing the common rate of 1% by a rate which may be fixed by the Member States at between 0% and 1%, so as to enable Member States which so desire to do away with the tax completely;

mandatory exemption of all transactions currently subject to the reduced rate, which would be abolished;

mandatory exemption of the transactions in respect of which the charging of capital duty is optional, on the understanding that transactions currently subject to capital duty in a Member State could continue to be taxed;

mandatory exemption of companies which supply public services or pursue cultural, charitable, relief or educational objectives.

These measures are to come into effect from 1 January 1986.

⁽¹⁾ COM(84) 403 final.

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽¹⁾

In its opinion, adopted unanimously with 3 abstentions, the Committee welcomes the Commission's proposal.

It regrets that the Commission has not felt able to propose the complete abolition of the duty, as the Committee has in the past repeatedly and unanimously urged.

Whilst the Committee would regard the Commission's proposal as an acceptable second best, it proposes a phasing out of the capital duty in two stages. Initially the duty would be reduced from 1% to 0.5%, with an understanding that it would be abolished completely on 1 January 1989. This way of proceeding would have the advantage of not impairing fiscal harmony between Member States.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Economic and Financial Questions, chaired by Mr Marvier (France - Various Interests). The Rapporteur was Mr Elkan (United Kingdom - Various Interests).

5. LIVESTOCK/MARKETING OF FEEDINGSTUFFS

“Proposal for a Council directive amending Directive 74/63/EEC on the fixing of maximum permitted levels for undesirable substances and products in feedingstuffs, Directive 77/101/EEC on the marketing of straight feedingstuffs and Directive 79/373/EEC on the marketing of compound feedingstuffs”⁽²⁾

Gist of the Commission document

The Commission states that certain provisions of Community legislation on animal feed are out of step with the current situation or contain provisions which could jeopardize its objectives, namely, to protect animal or human health, to improve the quality of animal feed and to provide the user with information on the products in question.

The proposed directive aims to remedy the situation by:
amending the rules for labelling compound feedingstuffs, particularly pet foods, with a view to providing livestock farmers with more detailed information on the characteristics of the feed on offer and to align existing provisions on current trade practices;

⁽¹⁾ Doc. CES 94/85.

⁽²⁾ COM(84) 445 final.

making animal feed safer by introducing provisions governing the presence in the raw materials used to manufacture compound feedingstuffs of certain substances considered undesirable on grounds of toxicity;

reflecting the provisions contained in Directive 82/471/EEC concerning certain products used in animal nutrition;

aligning the definitions of straight feedingstuffs and various compound feedingstuffs on those proposed in the third Council directive amending Directive 70/524/EEC concerning additives in feedingstuffs.

The most significant amendments involve Directive 74/63/EEC on undesirable substances and products, the aim being to extend its scope to include raw materials used in the preparation of animal feed and to fix maximum permitted levels for undesirable substances and products, particularly aflatoxin, contained in certain raw materials.

In addition to fixing maximum levels, the proposed amendments to Directive 74/63/EEC are designed to regulate the distribution and marking of contaminated raw materials.

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽¹⁾

In its opinion adopted by 78 votes, with 12 abstentions, the Committee supports the Commission proposal for stricter controls on aflatoxin levels — as these are needed to ensure that any food of animal origin is uncontaminated. These measures will also allow agricultural products to be exported freely to non-EC countries with similarly stringent rules for aflatoxin residues.

The Committee considers that extensive, uniform checks should be instituted in all the Member States to ensure implementation of the directive.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture, chaired by Mr Lauga (France - Various Interests). The Rapporteur was Mr Wick (Germany - Employers).

6. VETERINARY MATTERS/ MEAT PRODUCTS FROM THIRD COUNTRIES

“Proposal for a Council directive on public health and animal health problems affecting the importation of meat products from third countries”⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ Doc. CES 89/85.

⁽²⁾ COM(84) 530 final.

Gist of the Commission proposal

The present proposal is designed to prevent the introduction of exotic animal diseases into the territory of the Community through the import of meat products. Meat products produced with meat obtained from third countries or areas of third countries where exotic animals' diseases occur will have to be subject to additional guarantees ensuring that the products is safe to eat.

Besides the animal health aspects, this proposal aims to ensure that the meat products imported from third countries do not endanger public health. Fresh meat used for the production of meat products must be obtained from authorized slaughterhouses and meat products must be obtained from authorized establishments. These requirements are the same as those laid down for the production of meat products in the Community.

Checks to ensure that animal health and public health requirements in the exporting third countries are respected will be carried out on the spot by Community inspectors.

Furthermore, the meat products must be shipped to the Community under cover of certificates of animal and public health. These certify that the conditions of the directive have been respected.

Finally, when the products enter the Community they must be submitted for an inspection, carried out according to Community procedures, after which they may be released for intra-Community trade.

The Commission feels that this proposal is necessary to ensure common health conditions for the importing of meat products from third countries, conditions which are essential for the achievement of a common Community market.

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽¹⁾

The Committee adopted its opinion unanimously with 2 abstentions. It welcomes the Commission's submission of a specific directive designed to ensure that imports of meat products from non-EC countries do not endanger public health or introduce any exotic infectious animal disease into the Community.

The draft directive complements the existing directives on intra-Community trade in meat products and the corresponding rules for the importation of cattle, pigs and fresh meat from non-EC countries.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. CES 90/85.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture, chaired by Mr Lauga (France - Various Interests). The Rapporteur was Mr Wick (Germany - Employers).

7A. COMMON ORGANIZATION OF THE MARKET IN WINE

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 337/79 on the common organization of the market in wine

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 338/79 laying down special provisions relating to quality wines produced in specified regions

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) introducing a derogation to the scheme provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 456/80 on the granting of temporary and permanent abandonment premiums in respect of certain areas under vines and of premiums for the renunciation of replanting

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the granting for the 1985/86 to 1989/90 wine years of permanent abandonment premiums in respect of certain areas under vines

Amendment of the proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 337/79 on the common organization of the market in wine”⁽¹⁾

Gist of the Commission proposals

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 337/79 on the common organization of the market in wine (COM(84) 515 final)”

The Commission proposal:

introduces the principle of a freeze on table wine guide prices, to apply as long as the total volume of table wine distillation — which is a reflection of the surpluses — exceeds 10% of table wine production;

⁽¹⁾ COM(84) 515 final and COM(84) 539 final.

provides for a 10-year restriction on the right to replant. The right in question would be reduced by 30% in the case of dry land and by 50% in the case of areas which can be irrigated, i.e. which can produce very high yields, which are not conducive to an acceptable level of quality;

specifies the extent of the compensation payable to growers in respect of the restriction on their right to replant.

In addition, in order to increase the consumption of grape juice, and therefore musts, the proposal provides that part of the aid for musts should be used to finance promotional campaigns.

Lastly, the proposal contains a series of measures designed to increase the natural alcoholic strength of products intended for wine-making.

Convinced that a return to a more normal state of affairs will only be possible once the price of the products used for enrichment is equal to if not greater than that of grapes, the Commission proposes the abolition as from the 1989/90 wine year of both chaptalization and the aid arrangements for the use of concentrated must and rectified concentrated must.

Banning the use of sucrose will not only put an end to expenditure under the aid arrangements for musts, but will also result in an appreciable drop in surpluses, since large quantities of must (4-5 million hl) will be used instead of sucrose as a means of wine enrichment.

However, in order to mitigate the effects of a sudden abolition of the aid for must used for enrichment, the Commission is proposing that such aids be progressively reduced during the remaining period of application of the arrangements now in force.

During that period, and in order to restore a balance between producers, the Commission proposes the introduction, in the regions where the use of sucrose is authorized, of a tax on all the wine marketed by producers who achieve yields on their holdings in excess of 80 hl/ha; the proceeds of the tax will be used to finance intervention expenditure in the wine sector.

Lastly, and in order to avoid helping producers who have obtained the highest yields but the lowest natural alcoholic strengths, this proposal specifies the maximum quantity of sucrose which may be used per hectare under cultivation.

“Amendment of the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 337/79 on the common organization of the market in wine (COM(84) 539 final)”

Following wide-ranging discussions held on the basis of the Commission's report to the Council on the situation and outlook for the Community's wine market and the proposals deriving from this, the Commission has decided to make an addition, under the second paragraph of Article 149 of the Treaty, to its proposal for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 337/79 on the common organization of the market in wine (COM(84) 515 final).

The proposal includes measures for the direct control of production through market management instruments which will strengthen, by their immediate effect, the structural measures already proposed by the Commission. These measures are based on the compulsory distillation provided for in Article 41 of Regulation (EEC) No 337/79, and are as follows:

- introduction of a guarantee threshold of about 100 million hectolitres for table wine production for the next three wine years; whenever the guarantee threshold is exceeded, compulsory distillation will be automatically activated;
- reduction of the buying-in price of wine sent to compulsory distillation from 60% to 50% of the guide prices, in order to strengthen the deterrent effect;
- reduction in the buying-in price for certain quantities sent for distillation when the wine concerned comes from very high-yield vineyards.

In due course the Commission may, as appropriate, propose for application from the beginning of 1985/86 onwards, other amendments to Regulations (EEC) Nos 337 and 338/79, concerning a number of technical points, in order to improve the general internal consistency of the technical and economic proposals made since 1981 still pending in the Council.

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 338/79 laying down special provisions relating to quality wines produced in specified regions (COM(84) 515 final)”

Experience has shown that the maximum yields per hectare fixed by the Member States have not always been compatible with a high standard of quality and are often exceeded by a considerable margin, leading to the marketing of large quantities of quality wines which are in direct competition with table wines and making it more difficult to manage the market in the latter.

This proposal for a regulation is designed to overcome these problems by:

fixing maximum yields per hectare for all quality wines psr in the Community and prohibiting in principle the granting of quality wine psr designations to wines produced in quantities exceeding the stipulated maximum yields;

providing for quality wine psr designations to be granted within the limits laid down to wines produced in quantities exceeding the stipulated maximum yields where the yield is not exceeded by more than 20% and provided that the way in which the excess quantities are disposed of is precisely defined and rigorously observed.

The regulation further provides, to prevent further pressure on a market which is already manifestly overburdened, that the recognition of new designations of origin will henceforth be subject to authorization by the Community and confined to wines for which there is every assurance of their finding genuine outlets.

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) introducing a derogation to the scheme provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 456/80 on the granting of temporary and permanent abandonment premiums in respect of certain areas under vines and of premiums for the renunciation of replanting (COM(84) 515 final)”

The need to speed up the abandonment of certain wine-growing areas in order to accelerate the reduction of the Community's wine-growing potential requires that the measures provided for in Council Regulation (EEC) No 456/80 on the granting of temporary and permanent abandonment premiums in respect of certain areas under vines and of premiums for the renunciation of replanting be replaced by new, more incisive, measures applying to all areas under vines in the Community. In parallel with the proposal for a regulation laying down such new measures, the Commission is submitting to the Council this proposal, the principal aim of which is to bring forward the expiry of the temporary abandonment scheme provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 456/80.

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the granting for the 1985/86 to 1989/90 wine years of permanent abandonment premiums in respect of certain areas under vines (COM(84) 515 final)”

The Commission proposal increases the incentives aimed at securing a swift reduction in production potential. It consists of the following measures:

the granting of premiums until the end of the 1989/90 marketing year but for permanent abandonment only;

extension of the scope of these premiums to cover the grubbing up; areas under vines of all categories used for the production of wine grapes;

areas under vines used for the production of table grapes, grapes for drying and grapes for the production of wine spirits with a designation of origin (Charentes region);

an increase in the amount of the permanent abandonment premiums introduced by Regulation (EEC) No 456/80 and the differentiation of premiums on the basis of the yields obtained on the areas being abandoned, the aim being to concentrate the measure on the higher-yielding vineyards, the production of which weighs most heavily of the market;

an increase in the premium amounts where the area covered comprises the whole of the area under vines cultivated by the recipient;

a compensatory payment to wine cooperatives that have to reduce their operations substantially as a result of reduced supplies from members receiving the permanent abandonment premium;

an increase in the financial contribution from the EAGGF (60% instead of 40% at present), with the EAGGF contribution being paid to Member States on presentation of proof that the vineyard has been grubbed instead of as at present as reimbursement on the production of evidence that the premiums have been paid.

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽¹⁾

In its opinion, adopted by 56 votes in favour, 9 against and 8 abstentions, the Committee endorses the Commission's comment on the imbalance between available quantities and employment in the wine sector. It therefore believes that the Ten must take measures to restore a balance between production and demand. The new wine policy must also provide an example for our future partners who have serious surpluses.

The Committee stresses that the Commission proposals on market balance seek merely to achieve a proportional reduction of wines put on the market, irrespective of their quality. This is certainly one of the major shortcomings of the Commission proposals and it creates an unsatisfactory situation for both consumers and producers.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. CES 91/85.

The Commission's proposal on applying compulsory distillation appears to be overcomplicated. The Committee advocates more straightforward arrangement based on qualitative selection, taking account of objective criteria based on analysis and backed up by tasting.

The Committee notes that, contrary to practice in respect of other agricultural products, quantities up to the guarantee threshold do not attract any price guarantee. In addition the price freeze recommended by the Commission will not take account of production cost trends. A policy of quotas will adversely affect wine producers' incomes, firstly because of the drop in the volume of aid and secondly because of the tendency for prices to align on the price paid for preventive, or even compulsory distillation.

In order to avoid this situation, the Committee suggests that the new table-wine marketing arrangements should include the possibility of guarantee or price support measures.

As regards structural measures, the Committee believes that the introduction of the vineyard abandonment programme must be accompanied by discussions with the interested parties and their organizations (trade organizations, groupings, cooperatives, banks, etc.). These discussions should focus on reconversion programmes for the areas released by the abandonment of vineyards, for which Community aids could be considered. Given that considerable sums will be earmarked for grubbing-up and reconversion, the Committee stresses the need to secure a genuine, significant reduction in the Community vineyard. This requires (a) effective abolition of the areas for which grants have been paid, and (b) no replanting of equivalent areas. But the Committee is not in favour of replanting rights being limited by fiat as planned by the Commission. Bearing in mind the above views and the special conditions in each region, the Committee recommends a general policy of grubbing-up, reconversion and restructuring adapted to individual regions.

As regards the production of quality wines psr, the Committee approves the Commission's proposals. It also stresses the need to limit new plantings in existing quality wine areas, the assessment of which is still a matter for the Member States alone.

The Committee feels that excessive quantities should be held off the market, and that compulsory distillation should be avoided as far as possible.

The Committee considers that the use of concentrated musts and rectified concentrated musts for sweetening quality wines psr (as provided for in Article 9(2) of Regulation 338) is a desirable measure.

7B. COMMON ORGANIZATION OF THE MARKET IN WINE (second opinion)

“Third amendment to the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 337/79 on the common organization of the market in wine” (COM(84) 515 final of 12 September 1984) (COM(84) 775 final)

Amendment to the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 337/79 on the common organization of the market in wine” (COM(84) 515 final of 12 September 1984) (COM(84) 539 final of 28 September 1984)

Amended proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 338/79 laying down special provisions relating to quality wines produced in specified regions” (COM(84) 515 final of 12 September 1984) (COM(84) 714 final)”

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽¹⁾

On 22 January 1985 the Council decided to consult the Economic and Social Committee on three proposed amendments to Regulations Nos 337/79 and 338/79, presented by the Commission to the Council.

The above proposals replace the first amendment presented by the Commission on 28 September 1984 (COM(84) 539 final), on which the Section for Agriculture and the Economic and Social Committee delivered opinions on 10 January 1985 (CES 1222/84 fin) and on 30 January 1985 (CES 91/85) respectively.

Following a request by the Federal Republic of Germany, the Commission is now proposing a further extension of the period during which it would be permitted to enrich wines by adding sucrose in aqueous solution. This last proposal is the subject of the aforementioned document COM(84) 714 final.

The Committee adopted by 44 votes for, with 1 against and 17 abstentions the following opinion.

Concerning the third amendment to Regulation No 337/79 (cf. COM(84) 775 final), the Committee notes that the present proposals, which follow from the policies adopted at the Dublin Summit, do not warrant amending the comments or policy suggestions made in its

⁽¹⁾ Doc. CES 96/85.

earlier opinion on the Commission proposals of 12 September 1984 (CES 91/85).

Concerning the amendments to Regulation No 337/79 and Regulation No 338/79 (cf. COM(84) 714 final), the Committee would recall that it has on several occasions called for an end to the practice of enrichment by the addition of sucrose in aqueous solution.

It urges that this latest derogation be the last.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture, chaired by Mr Lauga (France - Various Interests). Mr De Grave (Belgium - Workers) was Rapporteur and Rapporteur-General for both opinions respectively.

8. HYDROCARBONS (Information report)

“Hydrocarbons exploration and production in the Community: the need for a new impetus; the role of the Community”

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽¹⁾

Innovative projects for oil and natural gas should be supported by the European Community, whether they concern the exploration, production, transport or storage of hydrocarbons. This was one of the recommendations made in a report approved unanimously by the Economic and Social Committee. It also proposes a code of practice to encourage governments to review and modify their policies so as to create stable conditions for both the exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons.

The report opens the possibility of contributing European Community funds for seismic and drilling operations in deep sea or peripheral areas of potential interest which fail to attract commercial concerns. One possible method of funding suggested would be for the Community to match contributions from host governments and commercial bodies.

‘The prime aim of European governments’, says the report, ‘should be to interest both small and large operators in the continuing attractiveness of European on-shore and off-shore resources’. Too heavy fiscal burdens and too strict regulations could easily discourage such exploration. It calls on Member States to revise and update recent policies and ‘remove any unnecessary obstacles which may have inadvertently crept in over the years’.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. CES 834/84 fin and appendix.

The report warns against taxation becoming so heavy that it dissuades companies from tackling more difficult oil or gas deposits. Operators are equally discouraged by such arrangements as production or marketing constraints or the obligation to sell to public agencies at non-market prices. 'A proper balance has to be found between the interests of governments wishing to maximize both production and revenue and those of the companies themselves which require reasonable profits in return for the heavy technical and financial risks they assume.'

Predicting that the proportion of oil and gas imports would rise at the beginning of the next century and that future discoveries of oil in Europe would be small compared with existing ones, the report highlights the corporate buying power of the Community and the possibility of buying natural gas on behalf of Member States so as to create the best possible conditions for imports. Security of supply has for long been a priority for the Community. The report suggests that it play an even bigger role here by researching into the future availability of oil and gas and by extending the network of gas pipelines as a security measure. There could also be benefit in assisting the finding of strategic investment to safeguard supplies in such matters as network connections, provision of surplus capacity at some critical locations, or limited provision for reverse flow.

While an energy tax to finance these measures was ruled out earlier by the Committee the possibility of a low tax from current users to benefit those in greater need in the future is not discounted. A levy of 0.1% on the retail price of motor spirit and DERV would yield approximately 150 million ECU a year. However, the report considers that it would be more useful to create a generally positive climate for exploration through special legal and fiscal arrangements than to provide direct public funds for operations which companies can finance on their own.

The report, which, by a unanimous decision, will be submitted to the Commission and the Council, was presented to the Committee by Mr Ian Campbell (United Kingdom - Employers).

9. INTEGRATED OPERATION IN CLWYD (WALES) (Information report)

"Integrated operation for the County of Clwyd (North Wales)"

Gist of the Committee Opinion⁽¹⁾

The information report considers that the socio-economic conditions in the county of Clwyd in Wales are ripe for an integrated approach. The various Community financing instruments (European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, European Investment Bank loans), together with national aid and local grants, should be used in an integrated manner to revive economic development and relieve unemployment in the area.

A study group of the Committee, headed by Mr David P. Schwarz, OBE, toured Clwyd in June 1984 and met representatives of the Welsh Development Agency, the County Council, the various district councils, as well as of industry and the trade unions. A major reason for selecting Clwyd for an integrated operation is the fact that unemployment in the county rose from 4% in 1974 to 19.3% in 1984, largely because of closures in three of the most vulnerable industries in Western Europe — steel, coal and textiles.

Improvement of communications' infrastructure is crucial to the development of industry, tourism and the countryside, the report states. It must centre on the main roads linking the coastal, rural and industrial areas, and with the national road network, particularly the M56; rail connections; telecommunications; services, particularly in rural areas (post offices, banks, schools, etc.); sewers; services linked to industrial development, particularly on sites of old and new industrialization (e.g. Whitegates, Deeside, Shotton Park); public transport services between towns and new industrialization areas.

The report concludes that the Community should make available the funds needed to support the planned measures and the operative file should include programmed expenditure and resources over a period of several years. The Welsh Office, representing the British Government, should accord priority to the integrated operation in Clwyd, and allocate resources additional to those normally transferred to the local authorities. Clwyd could then be a major example of the favourable results which can be achieved when regional recovery policies bear witness to a political commitment at all levels; and a test for subsequent application for integrated operations in the Community.

This Information Report was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Regional Development, chaired by Mr Milne (United Kingdom - Workers). The Committee unanimously decided to submit the report, which was presented by Mr Regaldo (Italy - Employers), to the Council and the Commission.

(¹) Doc. CES 474/84 fin.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

ESC Chairman and EP President meet

Mr Gerd Muhr, Committee Chairman, and Mr Pierre Pflimlin, European Parliament President, met in Strasbourg on 18 January 1985.

The main topics were coordination of the work of the two bodies and the steps to be taken to promote adaptation of the Community economy to the new technologies, following the Brussels conference on this subject hosted by the Committee in November 1984.

Mr Muhr was accompanied by Mr Roger Louet, Committee Secretary-General.

Other activities

Mr Wagner (France) represented the Committee at the inaugural session of the European Regional Development Centre (19 January, Strasbourg).

Mr Emo Capodilista, Mr Van Der Mensbrugge and Mr Vercellino, all Committee members, attended the meeting held in Bujumbura from 28 to 31 January by the Joint Committee of the ACP/EEC Consultative Assembly. Mr Graziosi, a Secretariat official, accompanied them.

Mr Etty and Mr Hilken, Committee members, attended the eighth consumers' forum hosted by the German Consumers' Association and the European Bureau of Consumers' Unions during Berlin's 'Grüne Woche'.

NEW CONSULTATIONS

Since the last plenary session the Council has requested the Economic and Social Committee to deliver opinions on the following subjects:

“Commission memorandum on income taxation and equal treatment for men and women” (COM(84) 695 final).

“Draft Council recommendation on social security for volunteer development workers” (COM(84) 710 final).

“Proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2617/80 instituting a specific Community regional development measure contributing to overcoming constraints on the development of new economic activities in certain zones adversely affected by restructuring of the shipbuilding industry;

Proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 219/84 instituting a specific Community regional development measure contributing to overcoming constraints on the development of new economic activities in certain zones adversely affected by restructuring of the textile and clothing industry;

Proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2619/80 instituting a specific Community regional development measure contributing to the improvement of the economic and social situation of the border areas of Ireland and Northern Ireland;

Proposal for a Council regulation instituting a specific Community regional development measure contributing to the development of new economic activities in certain zones affected by the implementation of the Community fisheries policy” (COM(84) 715 final).

“Proposal for a Council directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to modified starches intended for human consumption” (COM(84) 726 final).

“Proposal for a Council directive on specific training in general medical practice” (COM(84) 654 final).

“Proposal for a Council directive amending the First Council Directive of 23 July 1962 on the establishment of common rules for certain types of

carriage of goods by road between Member States (carriage to or from a Community seaport of goods imported or exported by sea);

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 3568/83 as regards the liberalizing of the rate-fixing system for carriage to or from a Community seaport of goods imported or exported by sea;

Proposal for Council directive on the organization of the markets for the carriage to or from a Community seaport of goods imported or exported by sea” (COM(84) 688 final).

“Proposal for a Council directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to infant formulae and follow-up milks” (COM(84) 703 final).

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the entry in the accounts and terms of payment of the amounts of the import duties or export duties resulting from a customs debt” (COM(84) 739 final).

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending for the third time Regulation (EEC) No 1430/79 on the repayment or remission of import or export duties” (COM(84) 737 final).

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) laying down measures to discourage the release for free circulation of counterfeit goods” (COM(84) 705 final).

PROVISIONAL FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

FEBRUARY 1985 PLENARY SESSION

Opinions upon consultation

- Worker protection
- Tax treatment: company losses
- Road transport
- Dangerous substances
- Toxicology
- Motorcycle noise
- Frozen food
- EAGGF

Information reports

- European Monetary System
- Fisheries policy

Own-initiative opinion

- Acid rain (additional opinion)

SUBSEQUENT PLENARY SESSIONS

Opinions

- Equal tax treatment
- Social insurance — VSO
- Migration policy
- Regional development
- Starch
- Infant formulae
- Accident information

- Training of general practitioners
- Reimbursement of import or export duties
- Counterfeit goods
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- Cross-frontier company mergers
- Relaxing of identity checks
- Common rules — transport
- Farm surveys in Greece
- High-technology medicines
- Economic and social situation in the regions
- 9th ERDF annual report
- Air transport
- Protective devices on tractors
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- Strengthening of EEC-Latin American relations
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- Acid rain (2nd additional opinion)
- Shipbuilding aids (additional opinion)
- Telecommunications standards

Information reports

- National regional development aids
- Energy options: environmental constraints
- Shared-cost research programmes
- Development of upland areas

Own-initiative opinions

- TV without frontiers
- Occupational cancer
- GATT

PERSONAL NOTICES

Mr Pfeiffer

Mr Alois Pfeiffer, Committee Vice-Chairman till October 1984, became a member of the Commission on 1 January 1985.

New titles for UK members

Mr Chapple and Mr Murray, former members, were made life peers in January. Mr Zinkin, Chairman of the Section for External Relations, has received the OBE for services to the Committee.

Deaths

Lord Allen (UK), a former Committee member, died on 15 January.

Mr Fog-Petersen (Denmark), a former Committee member, died recently.

PUBLICATIONS OBTAINABLE FROM THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

General documentation

- The Economic and Social Committee (leaflet) (January 1980)
- The Economic and Social Committee (December 1982) (a descriptive brochure) 16 pp.

Opinions and studies

- Irish border areas (Information report) (February 1984) (ESC 84-002)
- Tourism (Opinion) (June 1984) (ESC 84-004)
- Consumer-producer dialogue (Opinion) (January 1985) (ESC 84-011)
- Europe and the new technologies — Conference report (January 1985) (ESC 84-016)
- Inaugural conference — 1983: the European Year of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (Proceedings) (December 1983) (ESC 83-016)
- The economic and social situation in the Community (2 opinions) (July 1983) (ESC-83-013)
- Youth employment (Opinion) (June 1983) (ESC-83-011)
- Transport policy in the 1980s (Opinion) (March 1983) 99 pp. (ESC 83-003)
- Inaugural conference — 1983: The European Year of SME (February 1983) 27 pp. (ESC 83-002)
- Guidelines for Mediterranean agriculture (4 opinions) (September 1982) 64 pp. (ESC 82-010)
- The economic and social situation of the Community (2 opinions) (July 1982) 57 pp. (ESC 82-008)
- The promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises (Opinion) (June 1982) 70 pp. (ESC 82-007)
- Agricultural aspects of Spain's entry into the EC (Opinion) (February 1982) 107 pp. (ESC 81-017)
- The EEC's external relations — Stocktaking and consistency of action (Study) (January 1982) 139 pp.
- Genetic engineering (Colloquy) (October 1981) 120 pp. (ESC 81-014)
- Economic pointers for 1982 (Opinion) (August 1981) 32 pp. (ESC 81-010)
- Problems of the handicapped (Opinion) (September 1981) ± 46 pp. (ESC 81-013)
- Present situation in the Community's building sector (Opinion) (September 1981) ± 24 pp. (ESC 81-011)
- Community competition policy (Opinion) (ESC-81-008)
- Development policy and working conditions (September 1980) (Opinion) 61 pp. (ESC 80-012)
- The organization and management of Community R&D (February 1980) (Study) 168 pp. (ESC 80-001)
- Agricultural structures policy (November 1979) (Opinion) 90 pp. (ESC 79-003)
- Enlargement of the European Community Greece-Spain-Portugal (September 1979) (Study) 75 pp. (ESC 79-002)
- The Community's relations with Spain (June 1979) (Study) 112 pp. (ESC 79-001)
- Community shipping policy — flags of convenience (April 1979) (Opinion) 170 pp.
- Youth unemployment — Education and training (November 1978) (5 opinions) 97 pp.
- The stage reached in aligning labour legislation in the European Community (June 1978) (Documentation) 60 pp.
- Monetary disorder (June 1978) (Opinion) 98 pp.
- Industrial change and employment (November 1977) (Opinion) 98 pp.
- EEC's transport problems with East European countries (December 1977) (Opinion) 164 pp.
- Systems of education and vocational training (August 1976) (Study) 114 pp

**Obtainable from GOWER Publishing Co. Ltd., 1 Westmead, Farnborough,
Hants GU 147RU:**

Community Advisory Committee for the Representation of Socio-
Economic Interests (UKL 8.50)
European Interest Groups and their relationship to the Economic and
Social Committee (UKL 25)

Obtainable from EDITIONS DELTA, 92-94 Square Plasky, 1040 Brussels:

Action by the European Community through its financial instruments
(Brussels 1979) (BFR 425)
The Economic and Social Interest Groups of Greece (BFR 350)
The Right of Initiative of the ESC (BFR 400)

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