



TOGETHER IN EUROPE



EC NEWSLETTER FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

STRUCTURED DIALOGUE WITH CEEC APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE

The EU General Affairs Council approved "in principle" during its meeting in Luxembourg on 4 October the modalities for structural dialogue with the associated countries of CEEC. This is judged as a key step in the process which would lead to the adoption of a strategy to integrate the associated countries into the European Union. The discussion was based on the strategy proposal transmitted to the Council by the Commission this summer, and on the German Presidency's "non-paper". The "Non-Paper" concentrated on that part of the Commission's Strategy proposal which deals with the Creation of a Structured Dialogue and proposes concrete meetings as well as modalities for their preparation.

Several preparatory meetings held during September in the Council's working group "Central Europe" revealed that while there is a strong common will to accelerate the integration of CEEC into the EU, the individual Member Countries continue to raise various questions and demand that further analytical work by the Commission is performed.

We have suggested in the last issue that the discussions in the Council on 4-5 October would be more or less an exchange of views and that more decisive discussions should be expected only at the next meeting of the General Affairs Council on October 31. Nevertheless, the last Council reconfirmed the need for a pre-accession strategy and it has also become clear that the Commission will present a "White Paper" by the end of the French Presidency, in June 1995. In words of Sir Leon Brittan, the EU's experience has shown that closer economic ties required much more than a simple lifting of customs duties. Thus the goal of the "White Paper" will be to highlight the provisions which shape the EU's Internal Market and which will need to be gradually adopted by the associated countries seeking accession.

An article on "EU Competition Policy and Central and East European Countries" published in this issue tries to outline the process of adoption in the field of competition policy and state aids.

The discussion in the Council suggested that the preparation of CEEC on accession is firstly a matter for the authorities of these countries. Some member countries made it clear that in this

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context the adoption of EU common policies to requirements of the acceding countries shall not be considered. Sir Leon Brittan put this in his statement following the Council Meeting in somewhat milder form and said that the provisions of the Internal Market highlighted by the White Paper for gradual adoption by the associated countries would allow each of the associated countries to establish a timetable and priorities adapted to their situation in order to be ready for accession when it comes. The EU, for its part, will thus be able to monitor the process.

The Commission has already managed to supply the Council with at least seven analytical papers on different topics involved in the proposal to set up a pre-accession strategy. During the Council Meeting individual ministers restated their earlier calls for further analytical papers, which were not yet supplied by the Commission. The key one is the repeatedly requested study on the impact of the accession of associated countries on the EU's common agricultural policy.

The analytical papers already supplied to the Council include details of aligning the European Agreements concluded with Bulgaria and Romania with Europe Agreements concluded with the four central European countries; analysis of the multiannual programming for Phare; analysis of the impact of an eventual decision to abandon the 15% limit in Phare for financing of investments in associated countries; the analysis of inter-regional economic cooperation, as well as analysis of macroeconomic assistance etc. The Commission is believed to be also working on the analysis of the necessary adaption of Europe Agreements to the Uruguay Round results, as well as an analysis of the necessary adaption of the Europe Agreements to the situation of the current enlargement. These two adoptions could in fact mean

a difficult discussion on compensation. Hungarian Foreign Minister Kovac said to us that this will not mean a renegotiation of the trade part of the Europe Agreement, but that compensatory improvements in market access will be necessary. It is believed in Brussels that the German Presidency seeks compensation in the form of accelerated liberalisation of *trade in textiles*, and in full liberalisation of *trade in steel*, occurring not on 1 January 1996, but one year earlier. The Commission is requested to make an additional effort in presenting the study on the cumulation of origin which was requested in the conclusions of the Copenhagen Summit.

During the last Council, French minister Mr. Alain Juppé called for a separate discussion on the problem of security and requested an additional White Paper on WEU.

In this context the agreement "in principle" on the structured dialogue shall be seen as an important step forward together with the intensity and the political will in which the respective bodies examine the individual above mentioned documents. The process offers assurances that it will result in important decisions at the Essen Summit in early December.

The Council Meeting on 31 October shall therefore be more substantial. This suggestion is also supported by the seriousness in which the meeting with the foreign ministers of the six associated countries is being prepared. The Hungarian Foreign Affairs Minister emphasised to us that the joint meeting with the EU Council will be the first one in which the associated countries could influence the discussion within the Council. It will be the first time that the ministers will meet one day before the Council's meeting, and not afterwards, as has been the case in the past. ■

ITALIAN ANTONIO MARTINO THINKS THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR A EUROPEAN AGREEMENT WITH SLOVENIA MIGHT BEGIN SOON

Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Martino noted in a speech before an Italian parliamentary committee that, since there has been progress in the Slovenian attitude, the negotiation of a "European agreement" with this former republic of Yugoslavia might soon be initiated. Martino, after a series of talks with Slovenian leaders, was satisfied with the decisions taken about changes in the Constitution that would be swiftly approved in order to allow the purchase of land and dwellings in Slovenia by foreigners, and was also able to signal progress on the Italian claim that former Italian owners should get some of their assets in Slovenia back. But bilateral negotiations between Italy and Slovenia which could last four or five months are still needed, even if the General Affairs Council of 31 October could already approve the mandate authorizing the European Commission to negotiate a "European agreement". ■

EU'S COMPETITION POLICY AND CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

The process of accession of associated countries of central and eastern Europe will much depend on the speed in which the associated countries could be fully integrated into the internal market. This foresees their adoption of the "acquis communautaire". However, before accession, the associated countries could be able to benefit from a "wide European market" in a similar way as the EFTA countries have been included in the EU internal market and where obstacles to trade such as anti-dumping and anti-subsidy duties do not apply.

This at least which seems to be the aim of the European Commission, and it has already made a significant effort in finalising its proposal to the European Council which will be held in Essen in early December.

The Commission's document on *"Preparing the associated countries for accession"* points out that it will be inevitable that on accession, each associated country adopts the "acquis communautaire" which exists at that time. However, concerning the stage of pre-negotiation for accession during which, for example anti-dumping and safe-guard measures have special importance, the Commission's document states that **"the strengthening of competition, state aids and other relevant parts of the acquis communautaire which are related to the internal market will help to eliminate the need for anti-dumping and safeguard action"**.

The final document which will be presented to the EU Heads of State and Government at Essen would indicate that **the European Union maintains its commercial policy instruments until the associated countries have been integrated into the internal market.** This in fact means until such time as they apply the EU rules of competition policy and the rules on state aid, and at the same time a proper procedure is established which guarantees that the rules are enforced.

The principal competition rules are contained in the Europe Agreements. These provisions are basically the provision of the Rome Treaty and it is stated that "any practice contrary to this Article (ie Competition Article) shall be assessed on the basis of criteria arising from the application of the rules of Articles 85, 86, and 92 of the EC Treaty". Paragraph 3 of the same Article requests that the Association Council adopts, **within three years of the entry into force of the Agreements, the necessary implementing rules.** Until such rules are adopted, each party may deal on their respective territories with practices incompatible to Articles 85, 86, and 92 of the EC Treaty, according to their respective legislation. The paragraphs which follow then stipulate derogations (for example during the first 5 years the associated countries are treated as EU less developed areas as concerns the granting of public aid). But paragraph 6, and its indent 2 states that in the absence of such implementing rules, the injured party may take (after consultation within the Association Council) appropriate measures.

In the case of the four associated countries from central Europe the transition period of three years during which the **enforcement rules are to be adopted** will expire soon. The framework of Joint Committees set up under the provisions of the Interim Agreements has been used for drafting such rules.

What has been already done :

It seems that in the case of competition rules applied to undertakings the biggest progress has been achieved so far with Poland.

DG IV of the European Commission, which is responsible for competition policy, and the Polish Anti-monopoly office already prepared, in 1993, the first draft of the rules, and this draft was submitted to the Joint Committee and approved already in January 1994. Following the entry into force of the full Europe Agreement in February this year, the rules are now being incorporated and reconfirmed in the text of the Europe Agreement.

Similar progress has been made this year with Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovakia. Drafts of the rules have been submitted to the joint bodies set up under Interim Agreements and the texts are now at the stage of the approval. A similar process also started recently with the Czech Republic. It is believed in Brussels that by the end of this year the texts of implementing rules will be approved with all six associated countries of central and eastern Europe.

Importance of implementing rules :

The importance of the implementing rules is that on the one hand the association agreements apply Community competition rules on practices incompatible to the EU legislation, on the other hand the associated countries have their own competition laws. Each party for the time being applies their own laws, but the proper application of principles of the EU competition rules shall be

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assured through cooperation procedure which is dealt with by the implementing rules.

In principle the implementing rules deal with three situations:

- European Commission and the associated country's Anti-monopoly office have jurisdiction in the same case.

- a case in which only one authority is competent (ie either the European Commission, or associated country's respective competition authority), but measures taken by such authority **affect substantially the interest** of the party whose anti-monopoly office is not competent in this case.

- none of the Authorities of both Parties is competent in the particular case.

The process of the adoption of the implementing rules indicated that in case 1 (ie competition bodies of both Parties are competent for a particular case), the solution has been found mainly along the example given by the already existing agreement on competition policy between the European Union and the United States.

Thus the parties will proceed with the notification of cases to the respective authorities, will exchange information, and will hold consultations. DG IV of the European Commission indicated the possibility of a recourse to the "principles of negative and positive comity". This in principle will mean that for example the EC Commission may request the associated country to **exercise restraint in the application of its law, or even to take positive action**, if certain practices incompatible to the EU competition rules seriously affect EU interest. This procedure will thus guarantee that conflicts among the parties over the implementation of competition rules would be brought to the Association Council only as a last resort.

In the case 2 (only one Authority is competent), similar principles are being used and it is clear that this case offers a much bigger scope for the **positive comity** in the situation of violation of interest of the Party whose authority is not competent in the case.

Specialists of the European Commission say that case 3 (no Authority of the two Parties is competent) is rather difficult to imagine, but nevertheless the rules still provide for the possibility to discuss such cases in the Association Council **"without prejudice to the rights of EU Member States"**.

The rules concerning undertakings allow that the principles of **EU block exemptions** shall be taken over by the associated countries. There will also be rules assuring confidentiality and full cooperation in the cases of merger control.

In order to discuss one of the latest developments in the "EU block exemption" we discuss in a separate article the case of **car distribution**.

State Aids :

In this area the cooperation between the EU institutions and the competent bodies of the associated countries has progressed significantly less than in the case of the competition rules applied to undertakings. On the one hand, the associated countries have not been keen on taking an initiative in this field, on the other hand, the provisions of the Europe Agreement give lenient treatment to the state aids carried out by the associated countries, provide for longer transition periods and many exemptions.

It is also felt in the EU that in their current economic situation and under the economic policy aiming at the transition from the state-economy to free market

economy, the associated countries of central and eastern Europe do not have the budgetary means to pay large subsidies, and also do not have the inclination to do so.

However, there is a pressure from the EU industry and agriculture sector to speed up the implementation of the rules on state aid. It is being said that while the associated countries currently do not have sufficient budgetary means to provide huge subsidies, **they have already developed and continue to expand a network of various support mechanisms such as tax reliefs, non-pursual of debt owed to the state etc, which will be classified as state aids in the EU.**

The policy which will be submitted for approval by the European Council will include the requirement that the EU and the associated countries speed up their cooperative effort in this field so that number of steps aiming at transparency of aid and at implementing state aid controls compatible to the EU rules in the medium term.

The policy is that the Commission and the relevant bodies of the Associated Countries speed up work in drawing up of **an inventory of state aids**. The Commission backed by PHARE technical assistance will provide the necessary expertise and financial aid.

Once this inventory of state aid is available, the Commission's experience with the problems of state aids and their control in the countries which have been accessing the Community could be used to define the individual types of aid and to draw the limits which could be considered as suitable for the very concrete situation of the associated countries of central and eastern Europe.

There is likely to be a request that each associated country empowers a **single authority to**

monitor and control all state aids. The concrete task for this authority will be to assess each aid scheme considered in the associated country according to the obligations which result from the Europe Agreement, and also to determine if the state aid scheme considered is potentially compatible to Article 92 of the EC Treaty which gives the rules on state aid. Consequently, before this evaluation has been made by this appropriate single authority, no final authorisation of the state aid scheme can be given.

The European Commission seems to realise that the area of state controls is not only very sensitive politically, but that in particular, this is an area where awareness of the problem needs to be strengthened and above all, a change of mentality will firstly have to come.

Spirit of cooperation :

Both the associated countries of central and eastern Europe and the European Union share the will to prepare well the forthcoming accession process and to

avoid disturbing measures. It is clear that the use of anti-dumping and safe-guard measures creates political problems and slows down the benefits from the growing markets integration.

The European Commission proposes that in order to increase awareness of the problem, for example of state aids, the EU sets up a proper competition policy training programme in each associated country and that this programme is funded by PHARE and supported by competition authorities in EU Member States.

The Commission's paper states that "for cases in sensitive sectors the associated countries should be offered the option to undertake a joint analysis with the Commission". The proposal already put by the Commission to the EU Council of Foreign Ministers demands that the Council approves a policy which will allow that "the Commission would accept not to use countervailing duties against vetted cases, to the extent that the policy conclusion of the joint analysis are fully implemented. Furthermore, in

appropriate cases, without impeding any anti-dumping proceedings which have already started, the Commission could consider agreeing not to use anti-dumping measures in new, future cases where the agreed action has been fully implemented".

These proposals are still being considered by the Council, which will again discuss them during its next meeting on October 31. It is expected that during the joint meeting with the foreign ministers of the associated countries, which will be held on the same day, the principles of the new policy will also be discussed. There is a strong probability that the European Council held under the German Presidency in early December would approve the policy which, in the field of competition and state aids, could allow by the late 1990s the forgoing by the EU of the use of commercial dependence instruments against the associated country, which would offer similar and compatible guarantees against unfair competition which exist inside the Single Market. ■

EU ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL

At the recent Council on the Environment (6-7 October) in Luxembourg, a joint group of experts was charged with examining the draft "Conclusions" concerning a "structured dialogue" to be set up in the field of the environment between the EU and Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. This was simultaneous to the General Affairs Council's approval of the general principle of structured dialogue with these countries.

It was the first meeting of "structured dialogue" launched after the Copenhagen and Corfu summits. The ministers of the countries that have concluded their accession to the Union and representatives of the EIB and EBRD also took part. This meeting allowed for discussion with a view to promoting the coherent implementation of European association agreements in the environmental field. Conclusions reached were unanimous.

The President of the Council, Klaus Töpfer, said it was particularly appropriate that environment ministers should have priority in establishing the bases of structured dialogue as they are often called upon to examine cross-border issues. Work will be continued systematically, he said, and results will be submitted to the European Council of Essen. The aim, said Mr Töpfer, is to ensure sustainable development in Europe, preserve the natural heritage, and prevent accidents on industrial sites. The question of cooperation in global issues such as the climate was also discussed, as well as transport infrastructures. The associate countries all expressed concern about the need for financial cooperation in the management of environmental projects. Commissioner Paleokrassas pointed out that, under the Phare programme, Ecu337m had been devoted to environmental projects, that is, 12% of the overall resources budget for 1990/94.

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Regarding the approximation of environmental standards, Mr Töpfer confirmed that the question of derogations had been raised by associate countries, but he felt that the impact of such standards should be examined before this kind of approach is taken into consideration. According to the Czech Minister, Frantisek Benda, the question is not always to realign the rules of these countries at higher levels given that legislation is often similar in East European countries and sometimes even stricter.

Nevertheless, it seems that Mr. Benda, the Czech Minister for Environment, had to return to Prague with a strong feeling of support from the 12 member countries of the European Union and the four acceding EFTA countries. His problem was that only a few days before the joint Council Meeting, the Czech Government refused to consider the draft environment policy submitted by Mr. Benda. This draft environment policy was more or less based on the EU rules and experience, and many of these points were unanimously accepted by the associated countries during the joint meeting with the EU. The Czech Premier Minister Mr. Vaclav Klaus justified in September the refusal to consider the specific

environment policy by stating that the free market economy system now in force in the Czech Republic, and the process of privatization and existence of private owners, are the best guarantees for the proper environment protection, and not some rules and legislation imposed by the bureaucrats.

The "Conclusions" adopted at the joint meeting amounted to a total of 15 points.

The ministers who attended the meeting, recognised the need to adopt the advanced environmental standards and to harmonize the environmental legislation of the associated countries with that in force in the EU. One of the conclusions indicated the readiness of the associated countries to apply progressively and enforce the EU rules on car pollution (exhaust gas and noise pollution). There was also an agreement to investigate the possibilities of reduction of long distance truck traffic and to promote the reorientation of long-distance transport towards ways which are less harmful for the environment (combined transport, railways etc.) There was also an agreement to cooperate in the development of strategy which would allow the stabilization of CO₂ emissions. ■

EC SUPPORT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN ESTONIA, LATVIA AND SLOVENIA

In appreciation of the increased awareness of the importance of environmental protection in Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia, the EC will substantially increase its assistance for environmental protection in these countries. It has decided to allocate Ecu2.5m for Estonia to be used for projects pertaining to the introduction of environmental sustainability into forestry, fish and peat exploitation.

Ecu2.5m has been allocated to Latvia for projects concerning the reduction of pollution levels entering the Baltic Sea.

Ecu 2m has been allocated to Slovenia for energy programmes covering funding for projects concerning inter alia, preparatory studies related to energy saving strategy and clean coal studies.

In addition, Ecu3m has been allocated to Estonia, Ecu3m to Latvia and Ecu4m to Lithuania for vocational training and educational reform programmes. ■

NO PROGRESS YET ON OUTWARD PROCESSING OF TEXTILES

In recent issues we placed considerable attention on the Commission proposal made to Council in early July to implement a conclusion made during the Copenhagen Summit to "exempt from customs duties, from the beginning of 1994, products concerned by outward processing operations (cf No 54, pp.5-6 where

data is also given indicating the importance of these flows for EU commercial relations with the associated countries).

The Council failed to adopt this proposal in July and the Commission adopted a somewhat modified proposal for the following Council meeting. However, the EU General Affairs Council of

October 5-6 could only conclude that it is not yet able to find the necessary qualified majority vote to approve the proposal from the Commission. However, it is felt that the forthcoming Council meeting on October 31, will finally give its approval and the decision could thus be presented to the foreign ministers of the associated

countries during a meeting held on the same date.

During the Council meeting at the beginning of October four member countries fully supported the proposal from the Commission and requested its rapid approval.

Readers will recall that in July the Council was to approve the proposal from the Commission on measures which will harmonise terms under which the member states may allow their clothes producers to send unfinished garments abroad for further processing, and then allow the finished products to return to the EU without restrictions. This was not adopted and the Commission, in order to speed the adoption, modified the proposal so that it related only to the tariff conces-

sions. Consequently the modified proposal extended the tariff exemptions to products not covered by quotas and this was to be applied retroactively from January 1 1994. This also meant an effective and preferential separation of the associated countries from the other countries involved.

However, just before the meeting some 6 member countries, while supporting the conclusions of the Copenhagen Summit to improve the access for finished textiles originating in the associated countries, were not in a full agreement on the proposal that the associated countries be treated separately. These six countries were Spain, Portugal, Greece, Ireland, France and Belgium. But it is believed that some changed their position during the meeting. The German Presidency

undertook the task to formulate a new global proposal so that the approval could come during the Council meeting of October 31, or during Council scheduled for November 28-29 at the latest.

Following the Council's meeting it was believed that Belgium was ready to cast favorable vote and state its precise position (see No 54) in the minutes of the meeting. The Belgian vote would allow the necessary qualified majority vote in favor to be reached. However, Belgium preferred not to make its declaration official until the Court of Justice has made its opinion on the question of responsibilities raised in the context of the ratification of the Uruguay Round. Thus everything is now set for approval by the end of October. ■

EU POLICY TOWARDS CROATIA

The European Union is considering a cautious improvement in relations with Croatia, and this policy is likely to culminate by signing of a Cooperation and Trade Agreement sometime in 1995.

Mr. Hans Van den Broek, the Commissioner responsible for Foreign Political Relations, told the European Parliament's Committee of Foreign Affairs and Security, that the time has come to explore the possibility of intensifying relations with Croatia. The Commission announced that it was going to propose to the EU Council of Ministers that exploratory talks with Croatia should be held, in view of not only including Croatia in the EU's Phare assistance programme and in the Tempus Programme, but also in view of negotiating a Trade and Cooperation Agreement similar to that which now exists between the EU and Slovenia.

The Commissioner, however, made it clear, that these developments are conditional on the human rights situation in Croatia and by favorable developments in respect of freedom of the press and information in general.

Together in Europe recalls that the Trade and Cooperation Agreement will be a non-preferential agreement based on MFN-treatment and GATT provisions, but which will improve the access of Croatian products (judged semi-sensitive and sensitive) on the EU market. It is likely to contain a Financial Protocol which would help to finance development of infrastructure in Croatia, and in particular projects in favour of improved transit of goods. The provisions of the Cooperation Agreement would also fundamentally improve the security for foreign investors in Croatia.

The European Union is the principal trade partner for Croatia. Croatia's trade data indicate that during the first eight months of 1994, the country's exports were worth \$2.4 billion, of which exports to the EU amounted to \$1.2 billion (and exports to Germany were worth over \$0.5 billion). While Croatia's imports so far this year declined, imports from the EU expanded. In particular imports from Germany expanded by 15.5% during January-August. This permitted Germany to overtake Italy as the most important source of imports. Imports from Italy were worth \$553 million during the first 8 months of this year. ■

<p style="text-align: center;">DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE EC</p>
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A MAJORITY OF FINNS VOTES IN FAVOUR OF JOINING THE EUROPEAN UNION

A forthright, if not massive, majority of Finnish people approved, at the 16 October referendum, the country's accession to the European Union. Finns (74% of them went to the polls) were asked to say "yes" or "no" to accession along the terms negotiated by their government and the present Union members; 57% of them answered "yes", and 43% "no". A vote in the Finnish Parliament will still be necessary to confirm this response, since the referendum is only consultative, but president Athisaari said that the referendum's result engaged both government and Parliament politically as well as morally (the vote in the Finnish Parliament will take place at a date yet to be decided). Many observers, of course, immediately drew from the Finnish "vote" positive conclusions for the referenda to be held in Sweden on November 13 and in Norway on November 28, but president Delors, asked about the outlook in those two countries, said that he preferred to be "more cautious".

Norwegian and Swedish leaders themselves, though, were more optimistic after Finland's referendum. After this, said Swedish Prime Minister Ingar Carlsson, I would be very surprised if my own country could go on being on the sidelines of Europe. And in Norway polls showed that 46% of the people would say "yes" to accession to the European Union if the Finnish and Swedish response is positive. Many of those who welcomed the outcome of the Finnish referendum also stressed that, because of this enormously important political decision, Finland would gain influence and a bigger role at the heart of Europe.

President Athisaari, speaking on television, said that he was convinced of that, and noted that accession does not mean a jump in the dark, but joining a decision-making process which will be decisive for the future of the whole Continent. The positive impact on security, stability

and prosperity were stressed by many leaders, such as Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, who said the Finnish vote was a "very important political signal for Northern Europe and for the whole of Europe".

European Commission President Jacques Delors, paying tribute to the Finnish people for having been able to forge their own identity at very adverse times, assured them that this identity would not be lost in the larger Union to which they would belong in the future. All of you are both Finnish and European, he said, stressing that Europe does respect diversity and the nation-State.

And, while stating his respect for each single vote, President Delors said that he thought that the Finns who had voted "no" had done it not only for fear of losing their identity, but also because their personal uncertainty about

their professional future. To this group of people, he said that an isolated Finland would be even less able to maintain in the future special protection regimes or advantages for its own people. I realize that some groups, such as farmers, are worried, and "indeed a farmer that I met there showed me that he was not at all convinced by the compensations that were agreed upon during the accession negotiations", noted Mr Delors.

Klaus Hänsch, the President of the European Parliament, was very pleased to see that a majority of Finns had seized the opportunity to "pass through that open door", and said that he expected their full contribution to the decisions that will be taken in 1996 concerning the strengthening and the democratization of the Union; "I believe that the qualities embodied by Finland - its unswerving commitment to democracy and to human rights, its openness and its internationalism - will make a very positive contribution to the European Union", he declared.

Pauline Green, the leader of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, also expects much from the new Members in terms of openness, democratization, social dialogue, and the leader of the Liberal Group, Gijs de Vries, stressed the security aspect, noting that, with Finland's accession, the European Union will have a 1,300 kilometer border with Russia, and that this will make a real common foreign and security policy more necessary than ever. ■