

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY

BULLETIN

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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 the Secretariat-General of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities (rue Ravenstein 2, B-1000 Brussels) in the official Community languages.

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I. 289th Plenary Session of 25 and 26 September 1991

The 289th Plenary Session of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities was held in Brussels on 25 and 26 September 1991. At this session, Piet Dankert, Dutch Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, outlined the views of the Dutch Presidency of the Council. He said that the Committee was growing in importance: 'It must not be subordinate to, or dependent on, the Council'. Manuel Marín, Commission Vice-President, spoke in the debate on the Opinion which the Committee adopted on the common fisheries policy — an Opinion which deplores the absence of any social provisions.

On this occasion, the Committee adopted the following Opinions.

1. STATUS OF THIRD-COUNTRY MIGRANT WORKERS (Additional Opinion)

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

A Community policy of integration and free movement should be founded on the principle of equal rights and equal opportunities for legally resident immigrant workers from third countries.

A Community legal framework should be drawn up which:

- (i) lays down the rights of immigrants from third countries;
- (ii) fosters adaptation (*inter alia* on the basis of international conventions) of EC legislation and approximation of Member States' legislation on residence, employment and living conditions of immigrants;
- (iii) provides effective measures to combat illegal and undeclared work;

¹ CES 1122/91.

(iv) promotes the fight against racism and xenophobia.

The Community should affirm and pursue equality of rights between EC and non-EC workers as an independent political choice, and should accept the principle of extending the Community Social Charter to immigrant workers and their families. The basic rights which are not included in the Charter because they are peculiar to immigrants should also be defined.

The adaptation and harmonization of legislation should be pursued in two stages:

- (a) definition of a common core of provisions;
- (b) upward alignment of national legislation.

Preliminary proposals are outlined as follows:

- Immigrant workers should be guaranteed the right of residence, once the legal conditions for acquiring this have been met. Permanent residence should be granted automatically after two years.
- Family members authorized to join the immigrant should also be granted permanent residence.
- Immigrants legally resident in a Member State should be able to move within the Community as freely as EC nationals, and, after having been legally resident in a Member State for two years or longer, should have the right of access to employment in another Member State. In such cases, the immigrant worker and his family should be granted temporary residence by the second Member State.
- Legal residence (even if temporary) should entitle immigrant workers to benefit from the same employment and training services as the Member State offers to other workers.
- EC and Member States' legislation should grant immigrant workers (including those with temporary residence) the right to the same treatment (equal pay, working conditions, social security and health care) as EC workers. Equal treatment should also extend to social protection measures and social assistance.
- The right of immigrant children to attend State schools and to follow the normal curriculum should be backed by provisions to help them integrate and to provide support.
- All legally resident immigrant workers should be guaranteed the right of access to accommodation.

- Member States' health services should guarantee health care, under the same conditions as nationals, to all legally resident immigrant workers.
- The right of immigrants to maintain and enhance their cultural identity, to practise their religion and to deepen their knowledge of their country of origin should be enshrined in a common legislative base.
- The gradual acquirement of civil and political rights goes hand in hand with integration in the host country. Common rules are needed to help the immigrant to play an informed part in this process (right of association, personal dignity). Precise rules, simple procedures, and definite time-limits should be applied for the granting of citizenship to immigrants from third countries. The right of appeal should be guaranteed.

A Community programme of positive action is also needed to promote the economic and social integration of immigrants, particularly as regards:

- (a) full access to all EC cultural, education and training programmes, and all programmes designed for young people;
- (b) employment policy;
- (c) health services (including the use of information campaigns);
- (d) short-term accommodation;
- (e) district planning, to avoid excessive concentrations of immigrants in certain areas;
- (f) education;
- (g) civil, social and cultural life;
- (h) knowledge of their country and culture of origin;
- (i) reception centres;
- (j) assistance with voluntary return to the country of origin.

A Community policy of the type outlined calls for EC coordination of national policies in terms of:

- (i) exchanges of information and experience;
- (ii) joint action and research;
- (iii) criteria and procedures for regularizing the position of clandestine immigrants.

Before establishing a Community immigration policy, it is necessary to make the best use of the present institutional powers of the

Community and to identify and fully implement the duties incumbent on the Commission.

This Opinion, adopted by 48 votes for, 2 votes against and 36 abstentions, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social, Family, Educational and Cultural Affairs, chaired by Mr Vasco Cal (Portugal — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Andrea Amato (Italy — Workers).

2. POLITICAL UNION: FOR A PROVISION SPECIFIC TO CONSUMERS (Own-initiative Opinion)

The completion of the internal market and the protection of consumers

Purpose of the Own-initiative Opinion

Following a hearing at the Environment Committee of the European Parliament attended by representatives of the Economic and Social Committee, and a subsequent statement by Mr Barlebo-Larsen, Director of the Consumer Policy Service at an Environment Section meeting, it was agreed that the Environment Section should draw up an Own-initiative Opinion on 'The completion of the internal market and the protection of consumers'.

This will serve to convey the Committee's views on the subject to the intergovernmental conference (IGC) which will be held during the current year to discuss modifications to the Treaty of Rome which will hopefully include a consumer dimension.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The aim of this Own-initiative Opinion is to consider how far consumer interests can be genuinely promoted by the single market and to draw conclusions which will serve as a basis for discussion at the current intergovernmental conference on political union. The Committee makes the following recommendations and calls on:

(1) the governments of the Member States

to incorporate a provision devoted specifically to consumer policy in the Treaty on Political Union;

¹ CES 1115/91.

to stipulate that the Committee must be consulted on Commission proposals involving consumer interests;

to introduce a procedure for adoption by qualified majority and to recognize the principle of minimum harmonization;

(2) the Council of Ministers

to hold regular meetings devoted specifically to dossiers concerning consumer interests;

to adopt a Community consumer budget;

(3) the Commission, the Parliament and the Council

to draw up legislative instruments which clearly define rights and obligations;

(4) the European Parliament

to take the budgetary requirements of the Consumer Policy Service into consideration;

(5) the Commission;

to start work on identifying what needs to be done to protect consumers in their dealings with public services, in particular the representation of users in public enterprises;

to provide in its budget proposals the funds necessary for the Consumer Policy Service to operate effectively, for consumers to participate in the standards process, and for the support of consumer organizations in the southern Member States and Ireland;

to consult the Consumers' Consultative Council (CCC) systematically;

to forward the CCC's opinion to the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee for information;

to provide the CCC with the requisite funds to carry out its duties efficiently and promptly;

to organize joint meetings between the CCC and the Consultative Committee on Distribution (CCD) as well as other industry and service committees;

to submit the results of its work on the integration of consumer policy in other common policies;

to attach to all its proposals a statement assessing the impact on consumers;

to continue its efforts to secure greater uniformity and coordination in the implementation of Community legislation;

to step up its efforts to provide consumers with more effective protection in cross-border disputes and to work towards the signing and ratification of the Brussels and Rome Conventions by those Member States which have not yet done so;

to study the feasibility of introducing, at Community level, power of representation for consumer organizations in consumer disputes;

to make full use of the results of the pilot schemes on access to the courts which it has funded;

to work towards the protection of consumers in respect of guarantees and after-sales service in the wake of the opening-up of Community frontiers and the internationalization of consumer contracts;

to start work on extending the scope of the Directive on liability for defective products and to study the feasibility of setting up a Community fund to compensate the victims of defective products;

(6) *the Member States*

to apply, as part of their national policy, the rules of consumer/user protection to the products and services of public and private sectors alike;

to appoint persons professionally engaged in the field of consumer interests to the Economic and Social Committee when the Committee is next renewed;

to implement Community laws and initiatives within the prescribed deadline, and in particular the Resolution on consumer education in schools.

This Opinion, adopted by 44 votes for, 2 votes against and 10 abstentions, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Francisco Ceballo Herrero (Spain — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Manuel Cabaçadas Ataíde Ferreira (Portugal — Various Interests).

3. EUROPE 2000 (Commission communication)

Europe 2000: outlook for the development of the Community's territory
(COM(90) 544 final)

Gist of the Commission document

The Commission presented the communication in the light of the impact of the internal market on regional development. It argues that, in this context, forward-looking scenarios on the changing pattern of land use and development of the territory should be prepared, serving as a framework for national and regional authorities.

The information required for physical planning will be collated in a Community reference framework.

The Commission intends to examine in more detail the relationship between land use and physical planning and Community policies in the fields of:

- population and migration,
- mobility of economic activity,
- urban problems,
- rural development,
- border areas,
- transport networks,
- energy infrastructures,
- telecommunications,
- research and innovation,
- quality of the environment,
- coastal areas dependent on fisheries.

In summary, the document argues that Community regional policy should not only provide financial assistance via the funds, but also 'address issues reflecting the use and development of Community territory as a whole' (COM(90) 544 final, p. 3 (English version)).

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee welcomes the Commission document as a first step towards the development of a Community physical planning policy and accepts the need for a summary and assessment of EC regional development trends and related programmes. It supports the proposed formulation of a Community reference framework and calls for wide involvement of all the regional interests concerned, especially the two sides of industry and the general public. It also expects to be directly involved in further work on the Europe 2000 reference framework.

In addition the Committee recommends the establishment of an observatory for the European territory linking research institutes in the Member States and calls on the Commission to implement the regional database project.

The Committee sees the Community's essential task as the definition of general guidelines which take due account of national and regional responsibilities. This will necessitate further clarification to establish the physical planning remits of the regions, the Member States and the Community.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Regional Development, Town and Country Planning, chaired by Mr Robert J. Moreland (United Kingdom — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Eugène Müller (Luxembourg — Various Interests).

4. EC RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (Additional Opinion)

Gist of the Committee Opinion ²

This is an Additional Opinion to one the Committee gave in March 1990 when it gave its recommendations on the economic and social strategies to adopt towards Central and East European countries both immediately and in the medium term. Between then and now the Committee's Section for External Relations has drawn up an information report on the current economic and social situation in eight Central and East European countries. Added to that, the

¹ CES 1127/91.

² CES 1119/91.

Committee drew up an Opinion on the Community and German unification.

The Committee believes that at a time of major political changes and regeneration in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where the aim is to introduce market economies and democratic social systems, the historic opportunity must be seized to: (a) forge closer and more stable relations with these countries; and (b) lay the foundation for a common Europe which accepts all European countries and leaves no one out in the cold.

The Opinion looks first at the economic prospects in Central and Eastern Europe, and follows with what one might now see as a natural development from the Joint Declaration between the European Community and the Council for Mutual Economic Aid (25 June 1988), to the Association Agreements (called 'European Agreements') now being negotiated with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

The Committee endorses the opening of association negotiations with Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary. It approves in principle the content of the draft treaties negotiated so far, provided that its critical comments and recommendations are duly heeded.

The Committee welcomes the idea of Association since it is calculated to secure and promote closer political, economic and social relations between the European Community and its Eastern neighbours.

The European Agreements also form the institutional framework for political dialogue and can provide a platform for the discussion of pressing bilateral and multilateral problems.

The Committee urges the contracting parties also to refer in the preamble to the social dimension of European unification and to mention the Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers adopted, if not unanimously, by the Heads of State or Government of the European Community in September 1989. Closer relations with our Eastern neighbours and the Community aid measures should not be limited to economic, technical and financial issues but should also take account of the many social aspects.

The Committee further proposes that the preamble should contain a statement to the effect that the contracting parties of Eastern Europe unconditionally accept the *acquis communautaire* and undertake to approximate their respective countries as closely as

possible to the current level of Community integration over the two five-year stages envisaged.

It calls upon the contracting partners to ensure that economic and social interest groups are brought within the organizational framework covering institutions of association. It recommends the creation of a consultative committee, made up of ESC members and members of a similar grouping from the associated countries.

As regards the provisions of the European Agreements covering the free movement of goods, the Committee would emphasize the following points in particular:

in the case of sensitive sectors — textiles, ECSC products and agriculture — the Committee would draw attention to the relevant GATT provisions that no sector can permanently be protected from the open market;

the Committee wonders whether trade in textiles might not benefit from a speedier opening-up of markets than originally proposed. The liberalization process could certainly be speeded up in the case of outward processing traffic;

the Committee believes that the solution to the problem of steel supplies would be to dispense with voluntary restraint agreements with our three partners in Eastern Europe after a transitional period which would make sufficient allowance for the restructuring and rationalization of their steel industries. At the same time, the Community's East European partners would have to agree to stop all GATT-incompatible practices in their trade with Community countries. This would be achieved in particular by accepting the ECSC rules on aid;

the Committee shows understanding for the compromise proposal to suspend import duties on coal during the first five-year period of the European Agreements, after which quotas and similar measures should be applied more flexibly — subject to constraints set out in the Agreements — with a view to their complete elimination by the end of the 10-year transitional period;

since agricultural products have a vital role to play in the foreign trade of the three East European Countries, the Committee agrees with the European Commission that these three associated countries and the Community will have to make mutual concessions regarding agricultural products covered by EC market regimes. In agreeing on concessions account will have to be taken of the sensitivity of the products, the common agricultural policy and the outcome of the GATT-Uruguay Round. In this connection, the

European Commission must ensure that the difficult problems associated with the CAP are not aggravated.

The Committee welcomes the accompanying measures proposed in connection with the creation of a free-trade area. It assumes that the GATT anti-dumping and subsidy codes will be fully observed. It also thinks that the East European partners should align their national competition law as closely as possible on the corresponding Community rules from the outset. In addition, it endorses their call for cumulative rules of origin.

On the free movement of persons, services and capital in the European Agreements, the Committee warns that certain passages in the Agreements have been made too abstract in an attempt to achieve a compromise.

The Committee thinks that the proposal to facilitate immigration, should be accompanied by a reference to the fact that the Community has limited scope for action, even in the medium term, as regards freedom of movement.

In view of the redundancies brought about by reform in the East European States, Western Europe must not only provide financial and technical aid, but must also ensure sustained support for the necessary training of workers.

With regard to the freedom to provide services, the Committee supports the proposed liberalization but assumes that the Association Council will at all times prevent social dumping.

With regard to economic cooperation, the Committee welcomes the explicit assurance of the contracting parties that the environmental aspects of economic measures will be taken into consideration from the outset. Environmental policy affects the whole of Europe and must be integrated in other policy areas. At the same time, the Committee feels justified in questioning whether joint projects can be implemented in all the economic areas (approximately 150) specified in the 1990s. It therefore calls for a rigorous action plan based on attainable priority objectives. In the first place these objectives should relate to infrastructure, nuclear energy or education and training.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for External Relations, Trade and Development Policy, chaired by Mr Robert D'Hondt (Belgium — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Jens Peter Petersen (Germany — Employers).

5. ECO-LABEL

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on a Community award scheme for an Eco-label
(COM(91) 37 final)

Gist of the Commission proposal

This is a proposal to establish a Community-wide award scheme under which an 'Eco-label' can be affixed to environment-friendly products for mass consumption.

The proposal sets out the details concerning:

the product groups to be covered,

the elaboration of specific criteria,

the procedures for granting the award through competent bodies, an independent jury and the European Environment Agency

provisions on confidentiality, publication, advertising, consumer information, etc.

The Eco-label exists at present in only one Member State — Germany. It is relevant both to the environment and to consumer affairs.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The introduction of a Community Eco-label has the Committee's full approval. It represents a free-market instrument for environmental policy which should ensure a widespread increase in public awareness.

Nevertheless, the Committee feels that the Commission draft needs to be improved if its stated objective is to be fully achieved.

The Committee cannot understand why the Commission proposal does not provide for the involvement of economic and social interest groups in the establishment of the product groups and specific criteria. Such participation already exists in countries with highly successful Eco-label schemes.

The acceptance of the Community Eco-label as an instrument which interested manufacturers or importers are free to use to indicate the environmental acceptability of their products will

¹ CES 1116/91.

largely depend on the involvement of the economic and social interest groups in the decision-making process from an early stage. In this connection, the Committee would recommend a procedure which significantly involves these interest groups both in the establishment of the product groups and thereafter in the definition of the eligibility criteria for the award of the label.

The procedure for the award of a Community Eco-label should therefore be as public and unbureaucratic as possible. In the Committee's view, it should take the following form:

- (i) a board made up of representatives of the economic and social interest groups is assigned joint responsibility with the Commission for establishing product groups on the basis of proposals submitted by the Commission, national governments, associations of European manufacturers, dealers and consumers or environmental associations. The European Environment Agency should also have a say in the decision;
- (ii) with expert assistance from the European Environment Agency or, until the latter becomes operational, a comparable scientific body at Community level, this board and the Commission define in detail the specific criteria which products in individual groups must satisfy to be eligible for the Community Eco-label; whilst compliance with protective legal provisions is essential in this context, it must not constitute the sole criterion for the award of the label;
- (iii) labels are awarded in respect of individual products and services and, in particular, contracts for the use of markings are concluded solely on the basis of these criteria, with the Commission being responsible for verifying the uniformity of award procedures. The Committee thinks that decisions should involve a purely technical assessment of whether specific products or services satisfy the relevant eligibility criteria.

All products and services which satisfy the specific environmental criteria applicable to their groups must be eligible for the award of the Community Eco-label. The Committee thus rejects the idea contained in the Commission proposal that the most eligible of the proposed products should be determined by a sort of 'competition'.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for the Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Francisco Ceballos Herrero (Spain — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Klaus Boisseree (Germany — Various Interests).

6. LIMITATION OF AEROPLANE NOISE

Proposal for a Council Directive on the limitation of the operation of Chapter 2 aeroplanes (COM(90) 445 final)

Gist of the Commission document

The purpose of the proposed Directive is to set out a uniform Community approach further limiting noise from civil subsonic jet aeroplanes; it follows on a set of provisions adopted on the basis of Directive 80/51/EEC on aeroplane noise.

Apart from the exemption in Article 1 (aeroplanes of 34 000 kg or less), the derogations applicable to the LDCs and those provided for in Articles 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, the proposal seeks to ban the operation, from 1 April 1995, of low by-pass ratio engined aeroplanes which do not meet the standards set out in Chapter 3 of Annex 16 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

Where the individual certificate of airworthiness was first issued not more than 25 years before the date of operation, aeroplanes must comply with the standards specified in Chapter 2 of the above Annex.

From 1 April 2002, *all* civil subsonic jet aeroplanes operating from airports situated on the territory of Member States must comply with the standards of Chapter 3.

The proposal is based on studies carried out by a joint working group, comprising representatives of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) and the European Commission.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee approves the proposal, and welcomes the fact that it accords with its Opinion of 13 July 1989 on the same subject. The earlier Opinion stressed the need for the Commission and ECAC to resolve their differences, and for the measures to be introduced gradually.

The proposed period of 25 years for the useful life of an aircraft appears reasonable. However, it should not be taken as a limit on

¹ CES 1124/91.

the technical life of an aircraft, as this is determined more by use and maintenance than age.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for the Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Francisco Ceballo Herrero (Spain — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Javier Velasco Mancebo (Spain — Workers).

7. COMMON FISHERIES POLICY

Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the common fisheries policy

Gist of the Commission communication

The Commission's guidelines are based on two key points: the serious deterioration in the EC's fishery stocks, and the need to reduce the capacity of the EC fishing fleet by at least 40%. However, there is no question of abolishing the quota system — which remains the only way of managing a rare resource — after 1992.

The Commission proposes to step up monitoring and technical measures, and to control fleet capacity by means of multiannual guidance programmes. This tightening-up of the common policy will be backed by flanking economic and social measures. To implement these, the Commission wishes to bring fisheries into the reform of the structural Funds, the main plank of which is the doubling of resources.

The Commission also proposes strengthening links with third countries (which account for 25% of the Community's fishing activity). The Community must envisage new trade openings, and must step up its policy on research and aquaculture.

The new guidelines do not involve new ideas as such, but are rather the continuation of a policy which has been under way for 10 years. The Commission recommends:

- (a) greater use of the principle of subsidiarity where appropriate;
- (b) the use of satellites for surveillance operations;
- (c) financing of withdrawal from fishing activity.

The communication is divided into two main parts:

- (i) analysis of the present situation: a group of experts set up by the Commission in May 1989 concluded that for more than 90% of the main stocks caught in the North Atlantic, the mortality rate was excessive. In the case of herring, cod, haddock and plaice, mortality was at least four times higher than the level needed to preserve stock balance. The group of experts concluded that fleet capacity should be reduced by an average of at least 40% throughout the Community. The multiannual guidance programmes only aim at a 3% reduction in tonnage and a 2% reduction in engine power by 1991.

The Community fleet depends on external waters for 25% of its catch. The Community is a net importer of fish (the 1988 deficit equalled 16% of consumption), and the world's main importer of fishery products;

- (ii) future guidelines: the Commission wishes to tighten up management and surveillance of fishing activity by strengthening measures for enforcement of TACs and quotas, stepping up controls under the multiannual guidance programmes, and improving transparency by the transmission of data on catches. At the same time, the Commission proposes to provide economic and social support, made possible by the integration of fishing activity in the reform of the structural Funds.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee welcomes the Commission communication. It stresses, however, that the failure of the common fisheries policy to take account of the social dimension is a serious shortcoming since its success is contingent on support from both shipowners and fishermen.

The Committee agrees that a proper policy for conservation and management of fish-stocks should be buttressed by advances in scientific knowledge, the protection of the marine environment and water quality.

The Committee believes that the present TACs and quotas system should be maintained. Despite its shortcomings, it has been instrumental in curbing the disastrous effects of overfishing of cer-

¹ CES 1121/91.

tain stocks and in sharing out fishing resources fairly among the Member States.

The Committee advocates the introduction of an annual 'carry-over' scheme (positive or negative) for each Member State. It feels that coefficients for quota swaps (laid down in tonnes of cod equivalent in 1983) should be adjusted in so far as market trends have enhanced or depressed the price of species which are now held in differing regard on the market. The Committee also suggests the introduction of multispecies and multiarea quotas, the establishment of authorized by-catches in respect of fish caught for human consumption and a Community licensing system for sensitive areas.

Turning to structural policy, the Committee warns against uniform application of the average 40% reduction in fleets advocated by Community experts. This reduction should vary from country to country and should take account of the position of the multiannual guidance programmes in each Member State.

Commenting on relations with third countries, the Committee insists that all future agreements should respect the principle of 'access to fishing grounds in return for access to markets'.

This Opinion, adopted by a majority less two abstentions, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture and Fisheries, chaired by Mr André Laur (France — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Augusto Gil Bensabat Ferraz Da Silva (Portugal — Workers).

8. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONS — FOURTH REPORT

The regions in the 1990s — Fourth periodic report on the social and economic situation and development of the regions of the Community
(COM(90) 609 final)

Gist of the Commission document

The Commission has recently adopted its fourth periodic report on the economic and social situation in the regions, after three years instead of the usual two and a half. A three-yearly interval seems appropriate for this type of exercise.

The report is always eagerly awaited. Using specific indicators, it provides a snapshot of the differing situations in the regions, and attempts to explain divergences and predict future developments.

The report begins by noting that, despite the economic recovery of the late 1980s, disparities continued to grow, refuting the theory that the effectiveness of regional policy depends on the health of the economy.

The report attributes the widening disparities mainly to the rise in unemployment — particularly among young job-seekers — and the inadequacy of school education and vocational training. Another reason is the poor spread of research and development centres and the resulting absence of new technologies in the disadvantaged regions. The more dynamic regions thus retain their competitive edge and continue to grow richer.

The disadvantaged regions must alter their development strategy at all costs in order to face the new situation in the post-1992 internal market. The Community is ready to step up its contribution here, more particularly by offering additional funds to meet the costs of German unification.

For the first time, the report also acknowledges that the poorer regions cannot be expected to grow faster than the wealthy regions — at least according to the report's cautious assessment — in the next 20 years.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

In its Opinion the Committee carries out a critical assessment of the Commission's report, which differs markedly from the three earlier reports. After making a number of specific observations, the Committee draws the following conclusions:

- (a) regional disparities have not diminished and it is clear that the regional policy is not yet operating in a fully efficient way nor has it achieved its optimum form;
- (b) the goal of economic and social cohesion, as set out in Article 130a of the EEC Treaty, must be resolutely pursued in all EC and national policies;
- (c) there is a need for more effective consultation and involvement;

¹ CES 1112/91.

- (d) the methods of compiling statistics must be harmonized at both regional and EC levels;
- (e) the famous 'synthetic index', which provides a means of measuring the relative prosperity of the regions, must be reintroduced, even if it gives rise to disputes and even if it would be easier for the Commission to discontinue its use;
- (f) in future reports a clear distinction should be made between sections which are purely descriptive and sections which are prescriptive or represent projections.

Finally, it is proposed that the next report should provide a more detailed analysis of the diverse rates of development in Objective 1 and 2 regions and that it examine problems relating to migration in regions situated on the Community's external frontiers and to regional vocational training structures.

In order to improve the procedures for compiling the various data and assessing the impact of EC aid, it is proposed that 'regional observers' be deployed.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Regional Development, Town and Country Planning, chaired by Mr Robert J. Moreland (United Kingdom — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Göke Frerichs (Germany — Employers).

9. MID-1991 ECONOMIC SITUATION (Additional Opinion)

Economic situation in the Community — Mid-1991

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

This Additional Opinion aims:

- (i) to brief the Council on the economic and budgetary policy measures which representatives of economic and social activity in the Community propose and deem appropriate. By issuing its Opinion half-way through the year, the Committee can make its views on economic policy known to the Economic Policy Committee and the Coordination Group of the Council in time for them to take these views into account in their final discussions on the preliminary budget;

¹ CES 1120/91.

- (ii) to alert the Commission to the view of workers, employers and other socio-economic groups on economic issues, when the Commission is drafting the annual economic report;
- (iii) to brief the Economic and Social Councils and the trade organizations of each Member State on the Committee's analysis of economic developments throughout the Community. It is hoped that forwarding the Committee Opinion to the national consultative bodies will permit them to take account of this European economic policy statement and possibly incorporate it into their national budget proposals to their governments.

The Opinion presents economic forecasts for 1991 and 1992, and these indicate lower growth and higher unemployment in the Community. The Community's overall economic situation will be determined by a mixture of converging and diverging developments in the individual Member States. Its GDP will not grow by more than 1.4% and real growth in gross fixed capital formation will fall, with a particularly marked deterioration in the UK.

1992 will see a revival of growth in all the Member States, with the exception of Germany and the Netherlands where a slowdown is forecast.

Inflation will fall slightly and unemployment is expected to go on rising to reach 9.2% of the labour force in 1992. Several Member States continue to run large deficits and the Community's current account will show a small deficit in 1991 and 1992.

The next decade should see a substantial increase in the free movement of individuals, goods, services and capital, provided that effective action is taken to ensure the completion of the internal market by 1 January 1993. The delays affecting preparatory work on the free movement of individuals, transport and veterinary and plant-health measures are causing concern.

The Community's growing economic importance is increasing its political significance and thus necessitating the improvement of its decision-making machinery in order to ensure a balance between economic and political unity.

The efficiency and transparency of the Community's decision-making process is important for the economic and social interests and, in this context, the Committee enhances policy efficiency and promotes understanding between the socio-economic groupings through its advisory role.

The ESC's role in establishing and maintaining convergence between national economic and social policies is examined in the light of the Additional Opinion on economic and monetary union. The goals of Community economic and social policy and their interaction should be clearly stated and brought to public attention with a view to their acceptance by the citizens of Europe. The central objectives are:

- (a) sustained and balanced economic growth;
- (b) full employment;
- (c) balance of payments equilibrium;
- (d) price stability;
- (e) economic and social cohesion.

The Committee's involvement in the coordination of economic and social policies is particularly appropriate owing to its dual function as a representative of national socio-economic groupings and as an adviser on Community policy and should be covered by the revised Treaty.

The establishment of a European Economic Area deserves to be supported and agreement on outstanding issues is confidently expected. The Committee welcomes the numerous initiatives and measures adopted by the Community in response to events in Central and Eastern Europe and stresses the need to support and consolidate the changes taking place.

The results of the eighth round of GATT negotiations are of particular importance for the Community's longer-term future because of the great number of Community interests at stake in many sectors.

It seems increasingly necessary to make cooperation with, and support for, the developing countries a Community policy objective in view of the deteriorating situation which they face.

This Opinion, adopted by a majority, with 6 votes against and 15 abstentions, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Economic, Financial and Monetary Questions, chaired by Mr Jean Pardon (Belgium — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Bernardus Pompen (Netherlands — Various Interests).

10. CREDIT INSTITUTIONS — LARGE EXPOSURES

Proposal for a Council Directive on monitoring and controlling large exposures of credit institutions
(COM(91) 68 final — SYN 333)

Gist of the Commission proposal

Monitoring and control of exposure to risks is very important for credit institutions. Too great a concentration of exposures to any one party could jeopardize the independence of the credit institution's management and, if that party were to fail, could cause it such a loss as to threaten its stability.

Monitoring rules should be harmonized at Community level, and specific mention of this was made in the Commission's White Paper on completing the internal market. Harmonization can also prevent clear distortion of competition: as the rules governing the division of risks are primarily intended to limit the assistance which a credit institution may grant a given client, another institution would have a competitive advantage if it were subject to less stringent rules.

Common rules on monitoring and controlling exposures of credit institutions were initially introduced in a Commission Recommendation of 22 December 1986. This was designed to prepare credit institutions and Member States gradually for the adoption of binding standards, setting up new systems without disturbing the Community banking system. That stage is now over, and a binding instrument should be adopted which is applicable to all Community credit institutions.

The present proposal for a Directive contains stricter standards than those set out in the Recommendation. The absolute limit on exposures to a single client has been set at 25% of the lending credit institution's own funds (the corresponding percentage in the Recommendation was 40%), while the threshold at which an exposure is considered to be a large exposure has been reduced to 10% of the lending institution's own funds (from 15% in the Recommendation). This reinforcement of standards is in response to the earnestly expressed wishes of the Banking Advisory Committee and is also supported in a document on sound practices presented by the Basle Committee on banking supervision at the recent world conference of bank inspectors in Frankfurt. Stricter standards can only reinforce the solidity and stability of the Community's banking system.

Nevertheless, the significant reduction in the ceiling compared with that in the Recommendation may pose adjustment problems for some credit institutions or, in a more structural manner, for certain banking systems or parts of banking systems. Furthermore, assistance already granted in excess of 25% of own funds cannot always be reduced quickly by credit institutions which are contractually bound to the recipients of that assistance. Accordingly, the proposal contains a provision authorizing the competent authorities to grant credit institutions a maximum period of five years in which to bring existing exposures into line with the limits laid down; in addition, loans of longer maturity with contractually binding terms for the lending institutions, may be held until maturity.

Stricter limits (20% of own funds, as against 25% normally) are laid down for lending to a parent undertaking or to other subsidiaries of that parent undertaking. However, these limits do not apply to exposures incurred by the credit institution to a financial holding company which is the parent undertaking and to other subsidiaries of that financial holding company which are credit institutions, financial institutions or undertakings providing ancillary banking services, provided that these bodies are the subject of supervision on a consolidated basis.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee understands and approves the Commission's desire to help strengthen existing prudential rules by submitting a Directive designed to prevent credit institutions from becoming exposed to the risks which arise when they commit a major part of their own funds. It congratulates the Commission on the quality of its work in a complex regulatory area.

However, because of the complexity of this field and the difficulties of understanding all the economic and financial implications of an approach which perforce is more concerned with regulatory rather than economic criteria, the Committee is obliged to make certain comments which are, in its view, essential.

The Committee first points out that the Commission proposal is inspired by the Basle Committee. But the latter's text, without saying so explicitly, is addressed to large credit institutions operating on an international scale. The Commission's proposal concerns all credit institutions in the EC, irrespective of their size. It therefore

¹ CES 1117/91.

takes no account of the specific nature of institutions which, although only limited in size or operating on a regional scale, play a vital role in financing their economic environment, especially small or medium-sized firms, by incurring exposures which are considerable in relation to their own funds. If the Directive were applied, these institutions would be faced with such problems that their very existence could be jeopardized unless the supervisory authorities were allowed to grant exemptions and additional periods for adjustment.

The Committee also draws the Commission's attention to the risks of competition between EC and non-EC credit institutions being distorted if the proposed Directive is adopted.

As regards the limit of 25%, the Committee proposes that the 40% limit in the Recommendation of 22 December 1986 be maintained, both for external risks and for the group's risks. This ceiling would allow the authorities greater discretion to take account of the structures peculiar to each of the Member States.

As regards the date of application of the Directive, the Committee considers that, if the 25% figure is retained despite the Committee's Opinion, there should no longer be any reference to the date of the Directive's publication; a general deadline for compliance of 5 years from 1 January 1993 should be laid down, with the possibility of exemptions for loans maturing after this date.

In general the Committee feels that it is difficult to underestimate, from a purely economic point of view, the dampening effect on the initiative, indeed the dynamism, of a profession whose vocation is, by definition, to finance economic development and business investment by taking risks.

It is feared that the banking sector will be subject to such constraints that its dynamism at European level will be seriously affected. The sectors which play a decisive role in the progress of our society often involve risks. But it is these vital sectors which might be deprived of the financing which they need.

One may also wonder about the question of 'large exposures', for experience has shown — especially in the USA — that the really large exposures are those involving a whole sector suffering from recession — such as the building industry — rather than a massive commitment to one or a few borrowers.

The Committee would like to see consultations with the Commission Directorates responsible for economic and financial affairs, particularly DG II, which assesses the economic impact of Com-

munity policies. The purpose of these consultations would be to use simulations based on a sample of EC credit institutions to measure the impact on banking activities of all the prudential directives submitted to the Economic and Social Committee, including, of course, those which are the subject of this Opinion.

This Opinion, adopted by a majority, with 2 votes against and 4 abstentions, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mrs Ann Robinson (United Kingdom — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Robert Pelletier (France — Employers).

11. OWN FUNDS — CREDIT INSTITUTIONS

Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 89/299/EEC on the own funds of credit institutions (COM(91) 188 final — SYN 344)

Gist of the Commission document

The aim is twofold:

- (i) to facilitate, indeed enable, transformation of the handful of Danish mortgage credit institutions into public limited companies;
- (ii) to set up a regulatory committee to assist the Commission with technical amendments to the Directive on own funds of credit institutions.

As regards the first objective, Article 4(1) of Directive 89/299/EEC allows credit institutions organized as cooperatives, or funds, to include their borrowers' joint and several commitments in their own funds, as defined in Article 2(1.7) of the Directive.

The Danish Government has recently expressed a strong interest in having Danish mortgage credit institutions organized as corporate societies or funds, transformed into public limited companies. This would involve a temporary derogation allowing borrowers' joint and several commitments to be included in the institutions' own funds; this is necessary, given that Directive 89/299/EEC has no provisions for handling such commitments in the event of a credit institution, organized as cooperatives or funds, being transformed into a public limited company. This temporary derogation should not affect competition between credit institutions.

As regards the second objective, the Commission feels that given the special characteristics of the banking sector, the committee provided for under Article 22 of the second Directive on banking should be instructed to assist it (the Commission) with the exercise of the implementing powers vested in it under Article 2, III(b) of Council Decision 87/373/EEC of 13 July 1987, laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee endorses the first objective of the Commission proposal in view of its limited, temporary and diminishing nature.

The Committee has reservations as to the proposed changes to the 'committee procedure' set up under Article 8 of Directive 89/299/EEC. It is regrettable that the Commission is taking advantage of certain decision-taking delays by the Council to assume powers not conferred on it by the Treaty. The Committee therefore sees no reason to waive the procedure adopted by the Council in the second Directive on banking coordination (89/646/EEC) and the Directive on solvency ratio (89/647/EEC).

This Opinion, adopted by a majority with 1 abstention, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mrs Ann Robinson (United Kingdom — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Jean Pardon (Belgium — Employers).

12. ELECTROMAGNETIC COMPATIBILITY

Proposal for a Council Directive amending Council Directive 89/336/EEC of 3 May 1989 on the harmonization of the laws of the Member States relating to electromagnetic compatibility
(COM(91) 126 final — SYN 342)

Gist of the Commission document

Council Directive 89/336/EEC provides for complete harmonization relating to electromagnetic compatibility. For this Directive to be applied uniformly, harmonized standards must be available.

¹ CES 1109/91.

These standards will not be available by the date of application of the Directive. Moreover, the Directive has not provided for a transitional period during which manufacturers could place on the market apparatus manufactured in accordance with national requirements applicable before the entry into force of this Directive.

Because of these difficulties, the Commission proposes an amendment to Directive 89/336/EEC designed to fix a transitional period up to 31 December 1995. This extra deadline will allow Cenelec to complete the standardization work assigned to it.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee reiterates the urgent need for European standards in the field of electromagnetic compatibility, and supports the Commission proposal.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mrs Ann Robinson (United Kingdom — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Philip H. Noordwal (Netherlands — Employers).

13. UNITS OF MEASUREMENT

Proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to units of measurement
(SEC(91 1047 final))

Gist of the Commission proposal

The consolidation of rules that have frequently been amended is essential if Community law is to be clear and transparent.

The European Parliament has expressly called for the simplification and transparency of Community law, and this, plus the particular relevance to national administrations of Council Directive 80/181/EEC of 20 December 1979 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to units of measurement and repealing Directive 71/354/EEC, has prompted the Commission to prepare a consolidated version of this Directive after its second amendment.

¹ CES 1108/91.

The proposal aims at legislative consolidation: the existing Directives would be replaced by one new one, which would leave their substance untouched but would assemble them into a single text, making only the formal amendments required by the act of consolidation.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

The Committee approves the Commission proposal.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mrs Ann Robinson (United Kingdom — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Georges Proumens (Belgium — Employers).

14. SLOT ALLOCATION

Proposal for a Council Regulation on common rules for the allocation of slots at Community airports (COM(90) 576 final)

Gist of the Commission proposal

The growing imbalance between the expansion of the air transport system in Europe and the lack of adequate airport infrastructure to meet that demand poses operational difficulties to airlines and reduces the effectiveness of the policy of lowering barriers of market entry and of stimulating competition.

One of the important ways of regulating air traffic in Europe — especially in congested airports — is through the allocation of slots. Today, this allocation takes place under the auspices of IATA, where scheduling procedures guidelines have been developed and in which process the airport coordinators play a key role.

Among the most important factors considered in the allocation of slots is the historical precedence ('grandfather rights') and the priority given to new entrants.

The Commission has consulted various organizations and authorities. The conclusions of this consulting procedure is that the

¹ CES 1110/91.

scheduling procedures as developed among airlines in Europe provide for a reasonable system of schedule coordination.

However, the emphasis on historical precedence — although it ensures a stable and undisrupted operation — also favours established carriers, thus discouraging new initiatives. Secondly, the fact that the system works in a voluntary manner results in the procedures not always being applied, although it does create the necessary flexibility. Third, the system depends heavily on the neutrality of the airport coordinator: being appointed by an airline helps guarantee his expertise but not his neutrality. Finally, controlling the allocation of slots between the six-monthly conferences is often difficult.

These problems have led the Commission to propose a code of conduct for allocation.

This implies defining conditions for airport coordination and, in the case of the coordinated airports, appointing airport coordinators. It furthermore opens up the possibility of setting up a scheduling committee that will assist the airport coordinator in a consultative manner. The airport coordinator will be responsible for the allocation of slots at the coordinated airports and shall act in accordance with the regulation in a neutral, non-discriminatory and transparent way.

It also implies establishing a common slot pool containing newly created slots, unused slots, etc., to be distributed among applicant carriers with at least 50% of these slots to be allocated to new entrants. If the number of slots requested by new entrants exceeds the number of available slots, the Member State shall, under certain conditions, make available the necessary slots, even if this may infringe on 'grandfather rights'.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

The Committee Opinion differs fundamentally from the Commission proposal.

Basically, the Opinion does not believe that Community legislation is necessary in regulating a field which works satisfactorily in its present form.

¹ CES 1118/91.

The Opinion questions the Commission's use and definition of the concept of competition. It is not in favour of external intervention (rather than having coordinators appointed by governments, the Committee would prefer appointments to be made by all the airlines which use the airport concerned) and does not share the Commission's view on the severity of the congestion of European airports.

Consequently, the Opinion proposes several changes in the Commission's text.

This Opinion, adopted by 65 votes for, 14 votes against and 24 abstentions, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr Eike Eulen (Germany — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Ulbo Tukker (Netherlands — Employers).

15. ADMISSION TO THE OCCUPATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT OPERATOR

Proposal for a Council Directive on admission to the occupation of road haulage and road passenger transport operator in national and international transport operations

(SEC(90) 1864 final)

Gist of the Commission proposal

The Council and the Commission aim to simplify Community law and make it clearer to ordinary people by consolidating acts which have been amended several times in a single legal instrument.

Directives 74/561/EEC and 74/562/EEC concern the admission of people to the occupation of road haulage and road passenger transport operator in national and international transport operations and are of great interest to businessmen and national administrations.

As these Directives have been amended three times, the Commission has now produced a consolidated version. This has involved a slight reworking of the annexes of the old Directives but the content is virtually unchanged.

Any changes in wording have been highlighted in the new version.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The consolidated version will enable the Council to take a position on the entire range of Community legislation in the field, and the Committee supports this proposal.

The Committee is pleased to note that the comments in the Committee Opinion (OJ C 318, 12.12.1988, p. 11) have been largely followed up.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr Eike Eulen (Germany — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr René Bleser (Luxembourg — Workers).

16. EXPLOITATION OF R&TD PROGRAMMES

Proposal for a Council Decision on the dissemination and exploitation of knowledge resulting from the specific programmes of research and technological development of the Community
(COM(90) 611 final — SYN 323)

Gist of the Commission proposal

The proposed Decision relates to the definition and implementation of centralized action for the dissemination and exploitation of knowledge resulting from the specific R&TD programmes contained in the third framework programme.² General arrangements for dissemination and exploitation of this knowledge are also included (Article 7 of the proposal).

The legal basis of the proposal is given in the first four recitals.

The general aim of the centralized action is to provide the necessary continuity for some of the measures carried out under the Value programme. It also introduces new topics concerned particularly with the repercussions of R&TD activities and their results on society as a whole.

It will be conducted in accordance with three guiding principles defined in Annex I: horizontality, complementarity and subsidiarity.

¹ CES 1111/91.

² Decision 90/221/Euratom, EEC: OJ L 117, 8.5.1990, p. 28.

The centralized action expands on the activities contained in the Value programme (research/industry interface), and introduces other new activities relating to the interfaces between research and society, and between research and the scientific community.

Activities relating to the interface between research and industry include the setting-up of a network of relay stations to promote Community R&D.

Activities relating to the interface between research and the scientific community are designed to apply the disciplines of law, political sciences, social, human and economic sciences to a series of R&D aspects. Logic, semiotics and epistemology will also be used to analyse the communication of research.

The interface between research and society covers measures designed to identify and study the impact on society of the new scientific and technological knowledge acquired as a result of Community activities. The work will be in three parts: assessment of social impact; communication with the public; and analysis of public demand and new requirements.

The Committee issued an Opinion on the initial Commission proposal for the Value programme (1989-92)¹ on 27 October 1988.²

The final Council Decision was adopted on 20 June 1989,³ and incorporated a number of amendments proposed by the Committee.

The present proposal also reflects the Committee's recommendations on support for economic and social cohesion, consideration of small firms, and the need for confidentiality in the dissemination of results, and for effective coordination between the new programme and existing ones dealing with similar activities.

Also in line with the Committee's suggestions is the inclusion in Annex I of the new proposal of a more detailed description of the programme's implementing arrangements.

¹ OJ C 184, 14.7.1988, p. 12.

² OJ C 337, 31.12.1988, p. 12.

³ OJ L 200, 13.7.1989, p. 23.

Community expenditure on centralized action is estimated at ECU 57 million (1% of the total budget for the third framework programme), broken down as follows:

Research/industry interface	70-75%
Research/scientific community interface	15-12%
Research/society interface	15-12%

This sum includes staff costs, which may amount to a maximum of 6%. The implementing period will run from the date of publication in the Official Journal of the first Decision adopting a specific programme under the third framework programme (1990-94) until 31 December 1994.

Before the end of 1992, the Commission will review activity and submit a report on the results of this review to the Council and the European Parliament, together with any proposals for changes.

At the end of the action, the Commission will also send a report on results to the Council and Parliament. These reports will be drawn up with regard to the objectives set in Annex I of the proposal.

Lastly, the proposal provides for the setting-up of an advisory committee. The composition and tasks of the committee are described in Articles 4, 5 and 6.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee approves the proposal for a centralized action in principle, and welcomes the Commission's initiative in building on the foundations laid by the Value programme. It has a number of comments however concerning the practical implementation of the action and its future development:

- It is regrettable that no report on the Value programme and the experience gleaned from it is yet available; such experience cannot therefore be brought into play in assessing the current draft Decision.
- The Committee calls on the Commission, however, to apply the experience gained from the Value programme as it becomes available.
- The Committee also urges that thought be given to the appropriateness of extending the system for the dissemination

¹ CES 1125/91.

and exploitation of knowledge derived from R&TD to the Community as a whole and not just results from specific Community programmes.

- Ways need to be found of enabling the proposed centralized action to exert its integrating and stimulating effect, and opportunities should be sought for cooperation with similar national bodies.
- Concern is expressed as to the practical application of these principles. Particularly in the case of internal complementarity a highly specific approach will be necessary in order to avoid either duplication or gaps. This can only be achieved by real cooperation between centralized actions and the specific programmes. Subsidiarity means cooperation between the various levels of responsibility. The main target group for information and assistance should be the SMEs.
- The lack of detail in the Commission document on how the network of relay stations is to be set up is regrettable. It is suggested that a relatively dense but affordable network of flexible and user-friendly relay stations is needed. These relay stations should adapt to local needs, cooperate with and make use of national bodies and Community information services, as well as exploiting experience in the field of communications technologies.
- The Committee feels that, before the setting up of a whole network of relay stations can be contemplated, experience should be gathered via pilot projects under various local conditions.
- The Committee expresses the hope that the new programme will help publicize Community research, an aspect much neglected in the past.
- The Committee urges that the research-scientific Community and research-society interfaces be strengthened and developed.
- Once again the Committee regrets that the text of the proposal does not make provision for sending it the reports (Article 3).
- Finally, the Committee suggests that specific reference be made to the objectives of Articles 130a and 130f of the EEC Treaty, i.e. strengthening the scientific and technological basis of European industry and encouraging it to become more competitive.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Energy, Nuclear Questions and

Research, chaired by Mr Aldo Romoli (Italy — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Klaus Benedict von der Decken (Germany — Various Interests).

17. CONTROL OF CERTAIN ANIMAL DISEASES

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) introducing Community measures for the control of certain animal diseases
(COM(91) 138 final)

Gist of the Commission proposal

The Commission seeks to prevent the spread of, and even eradicate, certain exotic animal diseases by emergency slaughtering and by carefully controlling the movements of animals.

The Commission proposal stresses the preventive aspect, noting the importance of taking immediate and effective action as soon as an outbreak is confirmed.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee approves the Commission proposal, at the same time urging it to introduce stricter rules in respect of, for instance, the period of quarantine and movements from vaccinated areas.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture and Fisheries, chaired by Mr André Laur (France — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Cornelius Scully (Ireland — Various Interests).

¹ CES 1113/91.

18. COMBATING NEWCASTLE DISEASE

**Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) introducing
Community measures for the control of Newcastle disease
(COM(91) 137 final)**

Gist of the Commission proposal

The proposed measures aim to eradicate and prevent the spread of Newcastle disease in the event of outbreaks occurring. This will be done by 'stamping-out', with or without the use of vaccine, and by carefully controlling the movement of poultry, poultry products, vehicles and any other substance liable to transmit Newcastle disease virus. Measures must be introduced as soon as the presence of Newcastle disease is suspected so that immediate and effective action can be taken.

Gist of the Committee Opinion ¹

The Committee approves the Commission proposal which attempts to introduce effective measures to check or eradicate a disease which has very considerable economic consequences.

Since intra-Community trade in poultry is hindered by the fact that Ireland and Denmark do not carry out vaccinations and consequently ban imports from other Member States, the Committee proposes that the Commission evaluate the possibility of authorizing exports to these two countries of poultry inoculated with inactivated vaccine, covering the difference in the cost of these vaccines by the adoption of appropriate financial measures.

This Opinion, adopted unanimously, was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture and Fisheries, chaired by Mr André Laur (France — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Georges Proumens (Belgium — Employers).

¹ CES 1114/91.

II. Presence and influence of the ESC

Activities of the Chairman and the Secretary-General

1 July 1991 — Brussels: meeting at the Austrian Mission to the EC with Mr Leopold Maurer, Ministerial Adviser on Trade and Industrial Affairs, and Mr Leopold Maderthaner, President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber.

2 July 1991 — Brussels: meeting at ESC headquarters with members of the Legal Affairs Committee of the German Federal Diet.

3 July 1991 — Brussels: participation in the opening of the Liaison Office of the Brussels-Europe Region Executive.

5 July 1991 — Luxembourg: participation in the working meeting of the Luxembourg Economic and Social Council.

9 July 1991 — Luxembourg: meeting with Mr Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Chairman of the Liberal, Democratic and Reform Group of the European Parliament.

11 July 1991 — Brussels: meeting at ESC headquarters with the chairman and general secretaries of national economic and social councils.

17 July 1991 — Paris: talks with Ms Elisabeth Guigou, Ministerial Delegate for European Affairs.

9 September 1991 — Brussels: participation in the interinstitutional conference.

10 September 1991 — Strasbourg: talks with Mr Christian de la Malène, Chairman of the European Democrats Group of the European Parliament.

10 September 1991 — Strasbourg: meeting with Mr Jean-Pierre Cot, Chairman of the Socialist Group of the European Parliament.

17 September 1991 — Brussels: talks with Mr Alavanos, Chairman of the Coalition of the Left Group of the European Parliament.

20 September 1991 — Brussels: participation in the meeting of the EFTA contact group.

Other activities

3 September 1991 — at ESC headquarters, Brussels: statement by the Dutch Minister of Transport and Public Works, Mrs Maij-Weggen, to the Section for Transport and Communications.

4 September 1991 — at ESC headquarters, Brussels: statement by the Commission Vice-President, Mr Martin Bangemann, to the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services.

6 September 1991 — at ESC headquarters, Brussels: statement by Commissioner Karel Van Miert on consumer protection and the completion of the single market to the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs.

10 September 1991 — at ESC headquarters, Brussels: statement by Commissioner Peter Schmidhuber on the development of the Community budget to the Section for Economic, Financial and Monetary Questions.

11 September 1991 — at ESC headquarters, Brussels: statement by the Director of Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training), Mr Ernst Piehl, on the centre's work programme to the Section for Social, Family, Educational and Cultural Affairs.

12 September 1991 — at ESC headquarters, Brussels: declaration by Mr Juan Prat, Director-General of Commission DG I (External Relations), on North-South relations to the Section for External Relations, Trade and Development Policy.

17 September 1991 — at ESC headquarters, Brussels: report on the activities of the European Investment Bank, presented by the EIB's Vice-Chairman, Mr Duborg, followed by a statement on national aids for regional purposes by Mr Claus Dieter Ehlermann, Director-General of Commission DG IV (Competition).

16-20 September 1991 — at ESC headquarters, Brussels: European Citizen's Week.

III. Visits to the ESC

During the period under review the following fact-finding visits were made to the ESC:

- 1 July 1991: Key to Europe (International Association for Education, Training and Research on European Cooperation and Integration), Brussels
- 2 July 1991: Unterausschuß 'Europarecht' des Rechtsausschusses des Deutschen Bundestages (Legal Affairs Committee of the German Federal Diet), Bonn
- 3 July 1991: Information Office of the State of Baden-Württemberg
- 4 July 1991: Engineering Employers' Federation, London (United Kingdom)
- 4 July 1991: German Members of the Socialist Group of the European Parliament
- 5 July 1991: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Strasbourg and Bas-Rhin (France)
- 5 July 1991: Association Galicienne d'Etudes Européennes, Brussels
- 9 July 1991: University of Bonn (Germany)
- 9 July 1991: Studentenhaus Birkbrunn, Vienna (Austria)
- 10 July 1991: Colegio Mayor Bonaigua, Barcelona (Spain)
- 11 July 1991: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung of the State of Schleswig-Holstein, Kiel (Germany)
- 8 August 1991: Japanese delegation

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- 4 September 1991: PTT Union of the Federal Republic of Germany, Frankfurt
- 11 September 1991: Groupama 56, Paris (France)
- 11 September 1991: Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte für Niederösterreich, Vienna (Austria)
- 11 September 1991: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung of the State of Schleswig-Holstein, Kiel (Germany)
- 11 September 1991: Bagsværd Gymnasium (Denmark)
- 13 September 1991: Consejo Andaluz de Relaciones Laborales, Seville (Spain)
- 16 September 1991: Ost West Arbeitskreis e.V., Bochum (Germany)
- 17 September 1991: Haus Rissen, Hamburg (Germany)
- 17 September 1991: Bildungsdienst und Sozialwerk des Deutschen Beamtenbundes, Bonn (Germany)
- 18 September 1991: Social Committee of the Norwegian Parliament
- 19 September 1991: The Promotion Public Corporation for Small and Medium Enterprise, Saitama Prefecture (Japan)
- 19 September 1991: Centrepoint, Belle Isle Community Centre, Leeds (United Kingdom)
- 20 September 1991: USSR Study Trips, Montreuil (France)
- 20 September 1991: Lycée Beaumont (France)
- 23 September 1991: Landesapothekerverband Baden-Württemberg e.V., Stuttgart (Germany)
- 23 September 1991: American University, Washington DC (USA)
- 23 September 1991: Support mission for training and development in integrated Mediterranean programmes, Montpellier (France)

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- 25 September 1991: Institute for International Social Cooperation (Icosi) (France)
- 25/26 September 1991: Hans-Böckler Foundation, Düsseldorf (Germany)
- 27 September 1991: Heads of the State and Senate Chancelleries of the German Federal States
- 27 September 1991: Executive Committee of the French Mutuals Association
- 27 September 1991: Ennepe-Ruhr regional executive of the ÖTV (Public Service and Transport Workers Union) (Germany)
- 27 September 1991: Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CCRE), Brussels
- 27 September 1991: Danish trade unionists

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS AND BROCHURES

Available from the ESC

General documentation

The other European Assembly (CES 90-024)
Leaflet on the ESC

Opinions and studies

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