

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY

# BULLETIN

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## 258th plenary session

The 258th plenary session of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities was held in the Committee building, Brussels, on 28 and 29 September 1988. The Committee Chairman, Mr Fons Margot, presided.

### *ADOPTION OF OPINIONS*

#### 1. MACHINE SAFETY

**'Proposal for a Council Directive concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for the use by workers of machines, equipment and installations (second individual Directive within the meaning of Article 13 of Directive ...)'**

[COM(88) 75 final — SYN 125]

#### **Gist of the Commission document**

The aims of the proposal are as follows:

- (i) improvement of the health and safety of workers when using equipment;
- (ii) introduction of a social element in relation to several Directives aimed at the completion of the internal market in equipment.

The proposal aims to improve the safety and health of workers at the workplace by establishing minimum requirements for the use of equipment. The Directives concerning the completion of the internal market through the elimination of technical barriers to trade are based on the new approach, which lays down essential safety requirements (described in detail in harmonized European standards); these Directives concern the safe design, manufacture or construction of products with a view to their initial placing on the market and their free movement. According to the Commission, the introduction of this social element ensures the safety and

health of workers at the workplace with regard to the use of all products, including products already in use or bought second-hand. The proposal constitutes a social supplement to several 'internal market' Directives on different types of machines and devices used at the workplace.

In drawing up this proposal the Commission has taken account of the specific nature of smaller firms. To this end, the proposal provides that the application of its provisions may be modulated to take account of the size of the undertaking and 'socio-economic factors'. Member States should apply the same principles when implementing the provisions at national level.

As provided for in Article 118a of the EEC Treaty, the proposal contains minimum requirements.

The proposed measures aim to protect workers in all undertakings.

According to the Commission, the broad scope of the proposal is attributable to the structure of the Annexes which leave room for subsequent additions or amendments; by making additions or amendments to one or more of these Annexes, it is possible to add a social element to any internal market Directive, without having to draft a complete new Directive on social aspects each time. As they stand at present, the Annexes relate mainly to the free movement of machines in general.

Annex I is compulsory, Annex II serves as a guideline.

Annex I lays down minimum safety and health conditions for equipment in use or bought second-hand (new products are covered by the more detailed requirements of the internal market Directives).

Annex II contains safety and health references as a basis for selecting the right equipment to suit the characteristics and conditions of use in each undertaking.

All these provisions are a means of achieving the gradual implementation provided for in Article 118a of the EEC Treaty. According to the Commission, the proposal's Annexes can be expanded to allow specific minimum requirements to be established for equipment.

## Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>

The Economic and Social Committee adopted this Opinion by a large majority, 8 voters against and 3 abstentions.

It welcomes this 'machine safety' Directive as a necessary addendum to the proposal on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to machinery (General Machinery Directive). In this connection it feels that the Directives on placing machines on the market and their use must come into force simultaneously.

While acknowledging that the proposal contains a number of important principles for guaranteeing worker health and safety, the Committee thinks that further provisions on protection must be added, in respect of:

- (i) the proposal's field of application;
- (ii) the definition of the terms;
- (iii) the deadlines for implementing the planned provisions;
- (iv) the responsibilities of employers and workers;
- (v) the content and presentation of written instructions;
- (vi) worker information and consultation;
- (vii) the roles of the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work and the Economic and Social Committee with regard to the adaptation of the Annexes and information on the Directive's implementation;
- (viii) scope and content of the Annexes.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Social, Family, Education and Cultural Affairs, chaired by Mr Carroll (Ireland — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Flum (Germany — Workers).*

<sup>1</sup> CES 960/88.

## 2. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

**'Proposal for a Council Directive concerning the minimum health and safety requirements for the use by workers of personal protective equipment'**  
[COM(88) 76 final]

### **Gist of the Commission document**

The proposal has a two-fold objective:

- (i) the improvement of the safety and health of workers at work through the adequate use of personal protective equipment;
- (ii) the introduction of a social element in relation to the Directive which aims at the completion of the internal market for personal protective equipment.

The proposal is designed to improve the safety and health of workers by establishing minimum requirements with a view to ensuring the selection of personal protective equipment most appropriate to the risks present and improving the conditions in which such equipment is used.

The proposal accords first priority to collective means of protection (technical or organizational means), regarding personal protective equipment as a 'second line of defence' in the protection of safety and health at work. According to the Commission, in many undertakings there are numerous circumstances where, for either technical or economic reasons, or both, the risks to safety and health are not overcome, or are not sufficiently overcome, by collective means of protection; in such cases, personal protective equipment must be used instead of or in addition to collective means to provide greater protection for workers.

According to the Commission, using unsuitable personal protective equipment can be at least as dangerous as not using protective equipment at all, since the worker, believing himself to be protected when in fact he is not, will take less care than he would otherwise. For this reason, the proposal aims to ensure that only the personal protective equipment best suited to the risks present in the undertaking is selected.

The proposal also aims to ensure that the personal protective equipment chosen is suitable from not only a technical but also a human point of view; the cooperation of the workers is essential to the effectiveness of this equipment.



The Directive aiming at the completion of the internal market through the elimination of technical barriers to trade in personal protective equipment is based on the new approach, which provides for essential safety requirements (to be specified in the harmonized European standards); this Directive concerns the design, manufacture or construction of new products and provides for the placing on the market and free movement of such products. The proposal introduces a social element into this Directive.

In drawing up this proposal, the Commission has taken account of the specific nature of smaller firms. To this end the proposal provides that the application of the provisions of the Directive may be modulated to take account of the size of the undertaking and 'socio-economic factors'. Member States should apply the same principles when implementing the provisions of the Directive at national level.

As provided for in Article 118a of the EEC Treaty, the proposal contains essential minimum safety requirements, with regard to Member States and employers, for the use of personal protective equipment; these are expressed in global terms and details concerning implementation are left to national legislations.

The proposal also includes the following four annexes:

- (i) Specimen risk analysis table for the use of personal protective equipment (Annex I);
- (ii) Non-exhaustive list of items of personal protective equipment (Annex II);
- (iii) Non-exhaustive information for evaluating personal protective equipment (Annex III); and
- (iv) Non-exhaustive guide list of activities and sectors of activity referred to in Article 6 (1) (Annex IV).

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

Following an Opinion of the ESC, adopted by a large majority, 2 votes against and 3 abstentions, the involvement of the social partners, together with the development of appropriate collective or professional agreements and the implementation of additional measures provided for by the Directive, are all-important.

<sup>1</sup> CES 961/88.

Both risk prevention and the optimal use of personal protective equipment require clear, understandable and up-to-date information and continuous training, for management and the workforce. This is especially the case as regards small and medium-sized undertakings. The Commission might therefore consider providing special assistance to this category, and for the involvement of employers and workers in general, along the following lines:

- (i) distribution of Community information brochures and check-lists on risk assessment at the workplace and on the appropriate use and quality of protective equipment;
- (ii) promotion of relevant EC-sponsored training courses, distance and programmed learning 'packs', pilot projects, etc.;
- (iii) EC aid and guidance in training specialized personnel and in developing preventive group occupational medical services in this field.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Social, Family, Educational and Cultural Affairs, chaired by Mr Carroll (Ireland — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Schade-Poulsen (Denmark — Employers).*

### 3. VISUAL DISPLAY UNITS

**'Proposal for a Council Directive concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for work with visual display units (fourth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 13 of Directive ...)'**  
[COM(88) 77 final — SYN 127]

#### **Gist of the Commission proposal**

The main aims of the proposal are to:

- (i) improve the safety and health of workers at VDU work stations;
- (ii) to provide a 'social element' in connection with the internal market.

In drawing up the proposal, the Commission has taken account of the circumstances of small firms. To this end, implementation of the Directive may be adjusted to firm size and 'socio-economic factors'. Member States should apply the same principles when implementing the provisions of the Directive at national level.

As provided for in Article 118a of the EEC Treaty, the proposal sets out minimum requirements.

The Commission states that the increasing use of VDUs and new office technology has affected the working conditions of many workers in the Community. The proposal gives guidelines for the characteristics of the equipment to be used, work-station design, and organization of working time in order to optimize working conditions from the point of view of safety and health.

High ergonomic standards for all equipment used at VDU work stations in the Community will be encouraged in order to ensure greater protection of workers' safety and health.

The proposal contains an Annex giving minimum requirements for:

- the display screen,
- the keyboard,
- the work desk,
- the work chair,
- lighting,
- reflections and glare,
- noise,
- humidity,
- operator/computer interface.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion by 71 votes for, 56 against and 1 abstention.

After recalling its position on the framework Directive, the Committee welcomes the fact that future EC provisions will apply to all work on VDUs, thanks to the very broad definition in the proposal.

In its specific comments, the Committee particularly deals with the following matters:

- (i) the field of application of the proposed Directive;
- (ii) information for, and consultation of, workers and their representatives;
- (iii) redesigning of existing work stations;
- (iv) procedures for examining the eyes; and

<sup>1</sup> CES 962/88.

- (v) the content and scope of the appendix on the minimum rules for work on visual display units.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Social, Family, Educational and Cultural Affairs, chaired by Mr Carroll (Ireland — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Meyer-Horn (Germany — Employers).*

#### 4. HANDLING OF HEAVY LOADS

**‘Proposal for a Council Directive on the minimum health and safety requirements for handling heavy loads where there is a risk of back injury for workers (fifth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 13 of Directive ...)’**  
[COM(88) 78 final — SYN 128]

##### **Gist of the Commission document**

The main aims of the proposal are:

- (i) to reduce in so far as is reasonably practical the manual, and therefore mechanically unassisted, handling of heavy loads;
- (ii) to reduce the risk of back injury caused by the manual handling of heavy loads.

In drawing up this proposal, the Commission has taken account of the specific nature of SMUs. To this end, the proposal provides that the application of the provisions of the Directive may be modulated to take account of the size of the undertaking and ‘socio-economic factors’. Member States should apply the same principles when implementing the provisions of the Directive at national level.

As provided for in Article 118a of the EEC Treaty, the Proposal sets out minimum requirements.

Back injuries are one of the main causes of unfitness for work in the Community. Many such injuries could be avoided, with considerable economic benefits for society, by modifying working methods and by better organization of work. The proposal gives guidelines concerning preventive measures in this area.

The proposal has three Annexes which concern:

- (i) characteristics of the load and the physical effort involved (Annex 1);
- (ii) reference factors referred to in Article 3;

(iii) workers referred to in Article 4(2).

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion**<sup>1</sup>

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion by 79 votes for, 41 votes against and 9 abstentions.

Back complaints are one of the main causes of unfitness for work in the Community.

The Commission ought, therefore, to reconsider the title of its proposal, the term 'heavy' being somewhat restrictive.

The Committee stresses that all workers should be covered by the Directive, irrespective of the sector or size of the firm in which they work.

Nevertheless, special consideration should be given to the special features of small and medium-sized firms.

The Committee specifically urges:

- (i) limiting the handling of heavy loads without mechanical assistance;
- (ii) regular information and training for workers involved;
- (iii) the need for employers to keep abreast of technical, technological and ergonomic progress;
- (iv) frequent medical check-ups;
- (v) proper labelling of loads;
- (vi) worker participation in the drawing-up of measures pursuant to the Directive.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Social, Family, Educational and Cultural Affairs, chaired by Mr Carroll (Ireland — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Carvalho Vidal (Portugal — Various Interests).*

<sup>1</sup> CES 963/88.

## 5. ACCESS TO CREDIT INSTITUTIONS

**'Proposal for a Second Council Directive on the coordination of laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to the taking up and pursuit of the business of credit institutions and amending Directive 77/780/EEC'**

[COM(88) 715 final — SYN 120]

### **Gist of the Commission document**

This Directive is a continuation of the first banking Directive setting out a common prudential criteria for the establishment and operation of banks in Member States and forming, with its corollaries on supervision and accounting, the foundations of the internal financial market.

The linchpin of the new proposal is the concept of a single banking licence founded on the principle of home-country control. Under the single community licence, the authorization initially delivered by the country of origin (the 'home-country') is fully and automatically valid for the whole Community. In other words a bank established in a Member State can open a branch in another Member State without any authorization from that Member State. It will be supervised from the home Member State, as the branch is part of a single legal entity based there. Home-country control means that the supervisory authority of the Member State granting the licence is solely responsible for the prudential control of branches established in another Member State.

This system has been made possible and acceptable through the high degree of harmonization of prudential rules which has already been achieved under the first banking Directive of 1977, and the Directive on supervision on a consolidated basis of 1983, or is being prepared by a number of Community measures (own funds, solvency ratio, large exposures and deposit guarantees).

The single Community banking licence will be valid for a whole range of activities. The list is extensive and includes such things as leasing, portfolio management and advice, and trading in securities (both for the bank's own account, and for customers).

The system works as follows: any activity on the list covered by the authorization granted in the home country is automatically valid in the host country. In other words, if the licence given to a bank allows it to trade securities in its home country, the branch set up by this bank in another country will be allowed to do the same even

if these activities are not open to the national banks of that country. It goes without saying that pressure from national banks will soon ensure that all the activities on the list are open to all banks.

The draft Directive also deals with the conditions under which banks from third countries can be granted the single Community banking licence and establish themselves in the Community. Third country banks wishing to open subsidiaries in the Community will file the relevant application for a licence with the supervisory authority of the particular Member State in which they want to be established. But the actual granting of the licence by that supervisory authority will depend on a Community procedure which will evaluate whether banking institutions from all Member States enjoy reciprocity in the State of the applicant, and what measures might be taken if this is not the case.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

The Committee Opinion (adopted by 105 votes for, 10 votes against and 3 abstentions) to a great extent approves the draft Directive, but calls for simultaneous implementation of:

- (i) a Directive on own funds of credit institutions;
- (ii) a specific Community law on solvency ratios;
- (iii) the control of large exposures;
- (iv) deposit guarantees.

The Committee also feels that the Council should, as a matter of urgency, adopt the Directive concerning freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services in the field of mortgage credit.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr Kazazis (Greece — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Pardon (Belgium — Employers).*

<sup>1</sup> CES 964/88.

## 6. CONTRIBUTION TO FINANCE SOCIAL MEASURES CONNECTED WITH THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE STEEL INDUSTRY

**'Proposal for a Council Decision on a contribution from the general budget of the Communities to the ECSC to finance social measures connected with the restructuring of the steel industry'**

[COM(88) 343 final]

### **Gist of the Commission proposal**

In the three-year period 1988-90 the Commission now estimates the cost of supplementary social aid for some 55 000 workers expected to lose their jobs as a result of restructuring (Article 56(2)(b) ECSC) during this period at ECU 50, 55 and 60 million in the three successive years, a total of ECU 165 million. The supplementary aid will be needed to help finance early retirement for some workers and re-employment premiums for others.

Given the limitations on the action of the Structural Funds, the Commission is of the view that the ECSC's budget must be reinforced in order to meet the special needs in the social area which have arisen from the restructuring of ECSC industries.

It therefore proposes to finance the total of ECU 165 million mentioned above by means of:

- (i) an increase in the levy in 1989 and 1990 (ECU 80 million, equally divided between the two years);
- (ii) the grant to the ECSC in 1989 and 1990 of the equivalent of a part of the new receipts of customs duties on ECSC products (ECU 85 million: 65 to cover 1988 and 1989 commitments, 20 to cover 1990 commitments) — the total of these receipts is now estimated at ECU 80 million a year net of collection costs;
- (iii) an advance on ECSC reserves, of ECU 50 million maximum, could be made available, exceptionally and for one year only, to cover commitment requirements in 1988, it being understood that this amount will only be made available if the decisions in the two paragraphs above are adopted.

The present draft Decision accordingly provides the legal basis for transferring the equivalent of a part of the ECSC customs duties from the Communities general budget to the ECSC operating budget.



## **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

In an Opinion adopted unanimously, the Committee defined an overall social policy which will be capable, in this case as in others, of coping with all the consequences of the restructuring measures made necessary by economic constraints.

The Committee supports the resolution adopted by the ECSC Consultative Committee on 21 June 1988 which requests that the transfer of customs duties be high enough to meet the overall requirements of the complementary social measures.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Economic, Financial and Monetary Questions chaired by Mr Goris (the Netherlands — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Arena (Italy — Employers).*

## **7. MUNICIPAL WASTE INCINERATION**

**'Proposal for a Council Directive on the prevention of air pollution from new municipal waste incineration plants'**

and on the

**'Proposal for a Council Directive on the reduction of air pollution from existing municipal waste incineration plants'**

[COM(88) 71 final]

## **Gist of the Commission proposals**

The Commission document [COM(88) 71 final] sets out two proposals, presented jointly, for Directives on the prevention of air pollution from (i) new and (ii) existing municipal waste incineration plants.

The objective in respect of new plants is to ensure effective protection of the environment by requiring an EIA (environmental impact assessment) and the establishment of the necessary conditions for plant operation. The objective in respect of existing plants is to establish time limits for their adaptation to the best available technology.

<sup>1</sup> CES 950/88.

## Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>

In an Opinion, adopted unanimously, the Committee issued the following comments:

- (i) in taking economic factors into account, waste disposal cannot be expected to be profitable. The Opinion lists a number of cost factors which should be considered;
- (ii) to avoid transport of waste over long distances, incineration plants are often sited close to population centres, so that particularly stringent rules are needed to protect the public;
- (iii) the Commission's proposals are not sufficiently based on the state of the art; in its specific technical comments on the Articles of the Directive the Opinion draws attention to a number of anomalies concerning the state of the art;
- (iv) finally the Committee urges the Commission to tackle the problem of the disposal of waste other than domestic waste, as soon as possible.

*The Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Jaschick (Germany — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Boisseree (Germany — Various Interests).*

## 8. EDUCATION/ENVIRONMENT

**'Proposal for a Council Decision on preventing environmental damage by the implementation of education and training measures'**  
[COM(88) 202 final]

### Gist of the Commission proposal

*Aim:* The proposal seeks to define a coherent set of education and training measures which will contribute effectively to the prevention of environmental damage.

The key components of environmental education and training must be incorporated in general education and vocational training at all levels (including training for adults).

<sup>1</sup> CES 951/88.

## Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>

In its Opinion, adopted unanimously, the Committee welcomes the proposal, which it sees as a first positive response to the recommendations in its previous Opinion on the Fourth Environmental Action Programme.

The integration of environmental subjects into all appropriate areas of education and vocational training provides an opportunity to give people an early and comprehensive awareness of environmental problems.

The Commission, in collaboration with the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, should undertake an immediate, systematic study of the content and suitability of training courses for specialists. A special effort should be made to develop and try out teaching and learning aids which cover more than just one Member State, including in particular those to be used for instructing teachers in environmental matters. Information on pilot projects already carried out should be compiled and published.

The Committee proposes a special Commission measure which goes beyond the vocational training of specialists and lays down the preconditions for freedom of movement in the Community as well as standards for training and further training.

*The Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Jaschick (Germany — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Nierhaus (Germany — Workers).*

## 9. AIDS FOR COMBINED TRANSPORT

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation modifying Regulation (EEC) No 1107/70 on the granting of aids for transport by rail, road and inland waterways'**  
[COM(88) 117 final]

### Gist of the Commission proposal

Regulation (EEC) No 1107/70, as modified by Regulation No 1658/82, allows Member States to develop combined transport

<sup>1</sup> CES 952/88.

by the granting of aids related to investment in infrastructure and in fixed and mobile equipment needed for trans-shipment.

However, this system is temporary and must only be applied for an initial phase which is long enough to enable this form of transport to strengthen its position on the market. Article 3(1)(e) of Regulation No 1107/70 required the Commission to make a progress report to the Council on the implementation up to the end of 1986 of the provisions on aids for combined transport. This report would also contain a proposal on the continuation, modification or discontinuation — as the case may be — of the system.

The Commission report, annexed to this proposal, shows that several Member States have made use of the provisions laid down in Article 3(1)(e) of Regulation No 1107/70 and that some have announced plans for further aids under this scheme.

Despite the growth in combined transport in recent years, the initial operating phase for the Community as a whole is not yet over, particularly in the new Member States where the infrastructure needed for combined transport is less well developed. The Commission therefore proposes an extension of the present aid system up to the end of 1992, and a broadening of it to include the possibility of subsidizing the use of combined transport in some cases.

The present aid system should be reconsidered by the end of 1992, given that the new and definitive system of market organization for inland transport, including combined transport, has to be introduced in 1993.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

In its Opinion, adopted unanimously, with one abstention, the Committee once again confirms its fundamental endorsement of the further development of combined transport and approves the draft Regulation, subject to the comments set out below.

The Committee wonders whether trans-shipment installations may not be regarded as forming part of the infrastructure to be provided and financed by the public authorities, especially bearing in mind that though terminals provide for the trans-shipment from one mode of transport to another, the necessary financial investment is largely met by only one of the modes of transport.

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<sup>1</sup> CES 955/88.

The extension of the aid provisions to encompass the payment of grants in respect of operating costs in particular cases can be justified by the fact that this would enable all modes of transport to benefit in the same way. The proposed extension of the aid facilities would also be beneficial as it would make it possible to give financial aid to the cost of trials of modern techniques which would promote the further development of combined transport.

The Committee would, however, draw attention to the fact that aid towards operating costs must only be granted in accordance with the underlying purpose of the Regulation; it must not create distortions in transport or other areas of the common market.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr L.J. Smith (United Kingdom — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Haas (Germany — Various Interests).*

## 10. INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation on structural improvements in inland waterway transport'**  
[COM(88) 111 final]

### **Gist of the Commission proposal**

The proposal is designed to deal with the surplus of vessels in the canal network which extends through Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

The measures will include coordination at Community level of the various national scrapping schemes, with funds totalling ECU 50 to 55 million administered at the national level, with special conditions for operators wishing to expand their fleets.

Surplus capacity in the network of waterways at the heart of the Community is estimated at about one million tonnes, about 20% of the combined tonnage of the five countries concerned. This over-capacity is eroding the economic position of the inland waterway transport industry. Latest market trends and demand forecasts show no signs of improvement unless urgent measures are taken to cut excess capacity.

Member countries have introduced various schemes for reducing over-capacity, based partly on a 1968 Commission recommendation on the subject. National scrapping schemes still operate in Germany and the Netherlands, and France has a modest programme

for buying vessels, but these schemes are not coordinated, and one member country may allow an expansion of its fleet while another is contracting, all within the same waterway network.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

In an Opinion adopted unanimously, with one abstention, the Committee calls on the Commission to amend or supplement certain important points in the proposal, and in particular to ensure that Luxembourg too applies the Regulation and takes part in a scrapping fund.

The Commission must also ensure that bilateral agreements between Member States and Eastern bloc States do not destroy the effects of any scrapping scheme.

The Committee draws attention to the fact that the main reasons for the excess capacity in inland shipping are tax concessions (mainly in Germany and the Netherlands) and investment grants. The Commission proposal should therefore state that such concessions must be abolished and may not be restored for inland shipping.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr L.J. Smith (United Kingdom — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Tukker (the Netherlands — Employers).*

## **11. RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL BOATMASTERS' CERTIFICATES**

**'Proposal for a Council Directive on the reciprocal  
recognition of national boatmasters' certificates for the  
carriage of goods by inland navigation'**  
[COM(88) 171 final]

### **Gist of the Commission document**

Boatmasters plying the inland waterway system of the Community often find themselves unable to work their vessels in another Member State because their qualifications are not recognized by the authorities there. The Commission therefore proposes that qualifications obtained in one Member State should be recognized

<sup>1</sup> CES 966/88.

by all the other Member States. This would be an important step towards the establishment of a single European market for waterborne transport.

Inland navigation is mainly governed by regulations on technical standards for vessels and by provisions regarding professional qualifications granted by the national authorities. The Central Rhine Commission has also established a Rhine navigation licence for boatmasters. This licence is already recognized not only for the Rhine but for almost all the other inland waterways in the Community with the exception of some maritime areas and some river sections in Germany. However, a master who does not use the Rhine and therefore has no such licence may find it difficult to enter another Member State.

The Commission's long-term aim is to establish qualifications at a European level although it will take time to work out an acceptable framework for Community licences in view of the different types of vessel and different areas covered by existing national licences. As a first step, the Commission merely lists the Dutch, French and German certificates which should be mutually recognized and the type of vessels which they should cover.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion**<sup>1</sup>

In its unanimous Opinion, the Committee wonders whether there is really any point in attempting to achieve reciprocal recognition of certificates which do not yet have any legal force, if indeed they exist at all.

The Committee answers this question in the negative and says that it would make more sense for the Commission to attempt to ensure that existing gaps are filled and to encourage the Member States to introduce boatmasters' certificates as soon as possible. Care must be taken to ensure uniformity of the requirements and rules. It is important that the criteria to be met by the certificates should first be established (e.g. using the Rhine Navigation Certificate as a model).

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr L.J. Smith (United Kingdom — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Tukker (the Netherlands — Employers).*

<sup>1</sup> CES 957/88.

## 12. SPES PROGRAMME

**'Draft Council Decision for a European stimulation plan for cooperation and interchange between researchers in economic science (SPES) (1989-92)'**  
[COM(88) 98 final — SYN 121]

### **Gist of Commission proposal**

In October 1987, the Commission proposed a plan to stimulate the requisite international cooperation and interchange between European researchers (Science) (1988-92).<sup>1</sup>

Based on support measures (*inter alia* financial), the stimulation plan aims to decompartmentalize European research, encourage transnational mobility of researchers and establish intra-Community cooperation and interchange networks.

Like the previous plan covering 1985-87, this new stimulation plan, which was endorsed by the Committee in December 1987,<sup>2</sup> only concerns the exact and natural sciences. In the communication accompanying the proposal, the Commission did however announce its intention of launching a parallel campaign for economic sciences following guidelines which were set out in detail.

This draft decision is the result. The stimulation plan for economic science (SPES) is geared towards the same objectives as the Science plan of which it forms part, i.e. increasing the mobility of, and cooperation between, Community researchers.

Initially proposed for an experimental phase of three years (1989-92), the SPES plan provides for the implementation of the following measures:

- (i) European doctoral scholarships for Community students pursuing a doctorate at a university in a Member State other than their own;
- (ii) post-doctoral grants for Community researchers working at a research institution in a Member State other than their own;
- (iii) support for research projects and research networks of European interest;
- (iv) support for information measures: conferences, seminars, 'workshops', including access to data banks;

<sup>1</sup> COM(87) 443 final/2.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 35, 8.2.1988, p. 5.



(v) support for high-level training courses.

These measures are to be funded from the Community budget. Estimates indicate that appropriations of up to ECU 6 million will be required to implement the plan (including the cost of two staff).

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

In an Opinion adopted unanimously, the Economic and Social Committee, whilst recognizing the merits of the proposed measures, would nevertheless encourage the Commission to turn the Statistical Office of the European Communities into a reference point for all European economic science researchers. The lack of any such reference point is one of the reasons for the relatively weak performance of economic science in Europe.

The Committee also makes a number of more specific comments:

- (i) warning that funds allocated to the programme could be wasted by being too thinly spread over a large number of stimulation measures and research projects;
- (ii) expressing doubts as to whether the composition of Codest makes it suited to the task of assisting the Commission in executing the programme, and calling for changes in Codest's composition to reflect more closely the field of the programme;
- (iii) requesting that the Commission make express provision for the forwarding of research programme reviews to the ESC.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Energy, Nuclear Questions and Research, chaired by Mr Romoli (Italy — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Velasco Mancebo (Spain — Workers).*

<sup>1</sup> CES 959/88.

### 13. GSP 1989

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) applying generalized tariff preferences for 1989 in respect of certain industrial products originating in developing countries'**

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) applying generalized tariff preferences for 1989 to textile products originating in developing countries'**

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) applying generalized tariff preferences for 1989 in respect of certain agricultural products originating in developing countries'**

**'Draft Decision of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community, meeting within the Council applying for 1989 the generalized tariff preferences for certain steel products originating in developing countries'**

[COM(88) 352 final]

#### **Gist of the Commission proposals**

Each year, the Community adjusts the generalized tariff preferences which it applies to imports from certain developing countries. The Commission proposals are based on Article 113 of the Treaty of Rome, and the Council Decision can thus be adopted by a qualified majority.

In drawing up the GSP scheme the Community has to reconcile three requirements:

- (i) to improve the access to its market for developing countries whose exports can be encouraged by the reduction of duties;
- (ii) to ensure that the competition created does not lead to excessive pressure on certain sensitive economic sectors;
- (iii) to take into account the preferences granted to the Lomé and Mediterranean Agreements.

Having taken into account the progressive reduction of import tariffs, the benefit ensured by the GSP has occasionally lost its impact. The GSP can not resolve the trade problems confronted by developing countries on its own. Whilst obviously of service to the developing countries, the GSP is in no way the key for the development of their exports.

It can only play this role to the full if, on the one hand, the producers and exporters have sufficient freedom to adapt to market requirements — that is to say, if an adequate administrative and economic framework exists in the developing countries themselves — and if, on the other hand, all the other elements of the production/trade chain are present.

The latter is plainly essential for the diversification and growth of exports from developing countries, in particular in the case of new products or markets. This is why the Community follows an active policy of promoting, at the same time, trade and industrial cooperation in favour of these countries. Such a policy aims at promoting investments there, improving the quality of exportable products and facilitating their marketing — a policy that the Community intends to further intensify in the coming years.

Certain developing countries have arrived at such an advanced stage of production, in several sectors, that the GSP has finally become a negligible element in their export strategy. The Community has therefore gradually readapted its GSP offer to the real needs of developing countries, at the same time taking into account their level of development and the general economic context.

If the economic situation is characterized in certain developing countries — particularly in South-East Asia — by a very clear revival of economic activity as well as success in exports, it is still marked in most cases by increased economic difficulties. These are rendered more worrying by the drop in primary product prices and by the extent of debt.

The Community itself is suffering to a certain extent from static or falling economic growth levels. The trade surplus of the Community decreased in 1988 and will almost disappear completely in 1989. Growth will therefore not be enough to allow a significant reduction in unemployment which will remain at its present level.

In these conditions, the Commission does not envisage fundamental and substantial changes in its GSP for 1989, especially when the revision of the GSP should start soon for the decade 1991-2000. Some important improvements have however been included in the Commission's proposals. The following five paragraphs indicate more or less the Commission's main intentions as regards the 1989 GSP proposals:

- (i) to improve market access, thereby encouraging exports from developing countries, within the limits imposed by the economic situation of the Community, its agreements with ACP and Mediterranean countries, as well as restructuring its

- agricultural policy, which will moreover benefit developing countries;
- (ii) to take into account the fact that these industrial and agricultural GSP schemes have been practically re-run in 1988 due to the technical exercise of transposing the harmonized system and, as a consequence, further increasing its GSP offer in 1989;
  - (iii) to follow its policy of differentiation in the industrial scheme according to the principles and criteria decided by the Council in 1986/87;
  - (iv) to complete the implementation of the new textile scheme agreed in 1987 for the MFA products — the first phase of which has been applied in 1988 — and to adapt the scheme for non-MFA products in the same way;
  - (v) to carry out a more Community-oriented management of its GSP by not allocating the industrial tariff quotas — in the form of fixed duty free amount — and by the introduction of a substantial reserve in the case of agricultural and textile tariff quotas. These changes will take place equally in the perspective of the internal market of 1992, from which the developing countries will, without doubt, benefit greatly.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

In an Opinion, which was adopted by a large majority, with 3 votes against, the Economic and Social Committee feels that the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) should be part of a coherent and comprehensive system of Community aid to development geared to the poorest developing countries and to those in a position to progress beyond the confines of underdevelopment.

With respect to the GSP scheme for industrial products, the Committee is against some of the Commission proposals concerning ailing sectors. It reiterates its hope that GSP treatment will be automatically withdrawn from countries which are the subject of an official dumping verification procedure.

The Committee is surprised that some extremely competitive countries with a higher level of development than some EEC countries and regions continue to benefit from the GSP. Criteria for exclu-

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<sup>1</sup> CES 958/88.

sion should include, *inter alia*, labour and wage policies which violate ILO Conventions and particularly aggressive export policies.

Lastly, the Committee supports the idea of gradually switching to the Community quota system for all products, but feels that this would require the computerization and standardization of the Community customs services and measures to prevent a possible increase in exports to the Community and unfair trade practices.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for External Relations, chaired by Mr Kenna (Ireland — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Cavazzuti (Italy — Workers).*

#### 14. 12th DIRECTIVE — COMPANY LAW

**'Proposal for a 12th Council Directive on company law concerning single-member private limited companies'**  
[COM(88) 101 final]

##### **Gist of the Commission document**

The proposal seeks to introduce one-man companies throughout the Community. The proposal also relates to the SME action programme, for its main aim is to make it easier to form small businesses, thereby creating more jobs.

The individual entrepreneur who does not form a company under the law has no means of limiting his or her financial liabilities. The proposal makes a distinction between company and private assets and thus enables the entrepreneur to limit his or her liabilities to the equity capital.

The Directive will apply only to private limited companies.

In some countries, however, a public limited company can be owned by one person and is a form regularly adopted by small businesses. In order to prevent the protection of third parties' interests differing throughout the Community, these Member States will have to abide by the provisions of the Directive.

In Member States where a one-man company is not allowed, a one-man private limited company will be a possible alternative. However, in this case, guarantees equivalent to those demanded by Community company law must be provided, especially with regard to the publication of annual accounts.

The proposal states that either a natural or a legal person can be the sole shareholder.

One-man companies whose sole shareholder is a legal person cannot set up other one-man companies, however.

Third parties dealing with a one-man company will benefit from the guarantees usually offered under company law.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion on this matter unanimously, with 5 abstentions.

Promoting the spirit of enterprise by permitting the access of individual entrepreneurs to the status of company will, provided protection of third parties is ensured, represent an appropriate framework for business development and employment growth in the internal market.

The legal technique used by the Commission is to limit single-member companies as far as possible to natural persons but allow single-member companies for legal persons under certain more stringent circumstances.

The Committee is, however, of the opinion that the Commission, given the wide divergence in the levels of minimum capital in the Member States, should undertake a harmonization in this area in order to set up a system sufficiently capable of guaranteeing obligations to third parties.

Given the increasing number and importance of private limited companies and the fact that such harmonization has already been undertaken for public limited companies, the Committee considers such harmonization to be essential in order to avoid distortions of competition and, indeed, circumvention of the Directive.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr Kazazis (Greece — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Speirs (United Kingdom — Various Interests).*

<sup>1</sup> CES 953/88.

## 15. ADMISSION TO THE OCCUPATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT OPERATOR

**'Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive No 74/561/EEC on admission to the occupation of road haulage operator in national and international transport operations, Directive No 74/562/EEC on admission to the occupation of road passenger transport operator in national and international transport operations, and Directive No 77/796/EEC aiming at the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications for goods haulage operators and road passenger transport operators, including measures intended to encourage these operators effectively to exercise their right to freedom of establishment'**

[COM(88) 95 final]

### **Gist of the Commission Proposal**

The Commission is proposing a number of changes to the Community rules governing admission to the occupations of road haulage operator and road passenger transport operator. The existing legislation (Directives 74/561/EEC, 74/562/EEC and 77/796/EEC) lays down the general criteria which must be met by anyone wishing to set up business as a transport operator, but the Commission is proposing that these rules should be more clearly defined as we move towards a single market for road transport from 1992 onwards.

The proposals reflect the calls made by the Council of Ministers for more harmonization of the conditions of competition between road hauliers and road passenger transport operators established in the various Member States and should be viewed in conjunction with the proposals for vehicle taxation and for tightening up the social regulations.

In connection with the implementation of freedom to provide transport services, which includes the admission of non-resident carriers to national transport in the Member States (cabotage), it is important to coordinate or even harmonize, as far as possible by means of common rules, the essential aspects of admission to the occupation of carrier and of withdrawal of the authorization to pursue this occupation.

The Commission proposes:

- that the existing requirement that a new entrant should be of ‘good repute’ should be related more specifically to transport, by requiring that the person should not have been convicted during the previous three years of any offence which would make him or her unsuitable for the occupation, such as offences against drivers’ hours, road safety or management obligations;
- that the ‘appropriate financial standing’ required by the original Directive should be supplemented by a financial guarantee representing 10% of the value as new of each vehicle used in the enterprise;
- that anyone wishing to set up business as a road transport operator should automatically have to take an examination in a range of subjects set out in the original Directive. Under present legislation an examination is not specifically required, although most Member States require one in practice. The Commission adds the transport of dangerous substances and road safety questions to the list of subjects.

In addition to these new criteria, the Commission is proposing that Member States should exchange information on offences committed by non-resident operators which could lead to suspension of the operating licence. All other Member States should be informed when an operating licence is withdrawn.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

In an Opinion, adopted by a large majority with 3 votes against and 9 abstentions, the Committee endorses the thrust of the proposed amendments but would stress that harmonization must be brought about by upward alignment.

The proposal for a Directive lays down the minimum financial requirements to be met by carriers. To this end the Commission proposes introducing a financial guarantee equal to 10% of the purchase price of each vehicle used by the firm.

The Committee feels it is not sufficient to fix a financial guarantee, no matter what form it takes. A healthy balance should be established between the financial guarantee required and the firm’s obligations (especially commitments to banks).

The Committee also wonders why the Commission has seen fit to introduce a loophole. Financial guarantees are not needed for

<sup>1</sup> CES 954/88.



major undertakings, but to prevent a large number of small, financially precarious, firms from swamping the market or remaining in business when they are not economically viable. The Committee is therefore opposed to exemptions.

As far as the guarantee of adequate minimum professional standards is concerned, the Committee endorses the idea of a written examination but feels that it is not enough for knowledge to be acquired through a course and relevant work in a transport undertaking for at least five months.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr L.J. Smith (United Kingdom — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Bleser (Luxembourg — Workers).*

## 16. INTERNATIONAL COMBINED TRANSPORT AGREEMENT

**'Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Economic Community, Finland, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden and Yugoslavia on the international combined road rail carriage of goods (ATC)'**  
[COM(88) 247 final]

### **Gist of the Commission document**

The Council Decision of 26 March 1981 on the opening of negotiations between the European Economic Community and third countries on the establishment of common rules for certain types of combined road/rail carriage of goods authorized the Commission to open negotiations with Yugoslavia, Austria, Finland, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden and Spain with a view to the conclusion between the European Economic Community and these States of one or more Agreements laying down common rules applicable to the combined road/rail carriage of goods.

The objective of the negotiations was to develop combined road/rail carriage of goods as defined by Council Directive 75/130/EEC on the establishment of common rules for certain types of combined

road/rail carriage of goods between Member States,<sup>1</sup> as amended by Council Directive 79/5/EEC<sup>2</sup> and Council Directive 82/3/EEC.<sup>3</sup>

An agreement with Spain was concluded on 14 December 1984 and approved by the Council on 19 January 1985.<sup>4</sup> With the accession of Spain to the European Economic Community this agreement became null and void.

In the case of Austria, account should be taken of the possibility that it will not sign the ATC Agreement. The Commission will continue its efforts to persuade Austria to participate in the Agreement, especially in view of the problems that the non-participation of that country might cause for the development of combined transport relations and the application of the ATC Agreement to traffic with Greece and Italy. Also Yugoslavia could be affected by such problems.

Under the Agreement the Community regime freeing from all authorizations and quota restrictions initial and terminal road transport operations in the framework of international combined road/rail carriage is extended to combined transport operations between the Community, Finland, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden and Yugoslavia and in transit through these countries or one or more non-contracting States. In Yugoslavia the liberalization of transport operations related to the carriage by rail of road vehicles, as well as trailers, semi-trailers and swap bodies is restricted to a zone around Ljubljana.

Another purpose of the Agreement is to harmonize at European level monitoring procedures and requirements with regard to international combined rail/road transport documents.

The Commission states that the beneficial effect which the Agreement will have on the development of combined transport in Europe will be similar to that resulting from a Directive at Community level.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>5</sup>**

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion on this subject unanimously.

<sup>1</sup> OJ L 48, 22.2.1975, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 5, 9.1.1979, p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 5, 9.1.1982, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 34, 7.2.1985, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> CES 956/88.

The Committee, like the Commission, welcomes the conclusion of an Agreement with the majority of the relevant third countries which will extend the Community combined goods transport regime to traffic between the Community and these countries. This Agreement, which gives combined transport the encouragement that the Committee has always advocated, creates the basic political conditions for facilitating combined goods transport between the Community and third countries, even though not all commercial and technical aspects have been covered.

Here the Committee regrets that Austria has not so far decided to accede to the Agreement. It has also drawn attention to the importance of, and the need for, involvement of Austria, Switzerland and Yugoslavia in Community transit traffic.

The Committee would also wish the Agreement to be extended to cover carriage by inland waterway.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr L.J. Smith (United Kingdom — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Haas (Germany — Various Interests).*

## 17. GATT/URUGUAY ROUND

**'The current position and future prospects of the GATT/Uruguay Round negotiations from the viewpoint of relations between the European Community and the main industrialized, developing and State-trading countries'**

### **Reasons for and aims of the work**

The present phase in these important multilateral trade negotiations started two years ago in Punta del Este (Uruguay) and was expected to cover four years in all. The socio-economic implications of the discussions in progress in Geneva and the possible outcome are considerable; the various subjects to be examined impinge in fact on all aspects of world trade and even on production and services.

These negotiations also pose specific problems in economic relations between the industrialized countries, the developing countries and the State-trading countries. The Committee therefore has to take a stand on the position to be discussed during the review of progress at the half-way stage. This review is to be carried out at Montreal on 5 December 1988. In the second phase of the negotia-

tions, scheduled for the following two years, the various subjects are to be gone into in greater depth with the aim of arriving at agreements. It is not impossible that before these agreements materialize the Committee will have to take a stand again on specific aspects or on the negotiations as a whole.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion <sup>1</sup>**

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities calls for rigorous observance of the principle that the GATT negotiations should be treated as a single package, as pledged in the Declaration of Punta del Este. The Committee's Own-initiative Opinion was adopted unanimously. The Opinion comes in the run-up to the ministerial mid-term review to be held in Montreal on 5 December, which is to assess progress at the half-way point to the GATT/Uruguay Round negotiations (1986 to 1990). Some ESC members feel that the Committee should take part in this review, it emerged during the Plenary debate. The Committee's Opinion helps to define the European Community's position *vis-à-vis* the other participants in the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) negotiations.

The Opinion analyses the current situation and future prospects of the GATT/Uruguay Round negotiations, with reference to relations between the European Community and the main industrialized countries, the developing countries and the State-trading countries. During the Plenary debate members noted that the Opinion did not tackle monetary, industrial, and above all agricultural policy. The latter will be considered in a separate Own-initiative Opinion to be discussed at the new Plenary Session.

Relations with the industrialized countries are based on the principles of non-discrimination ('most-favoured nation' clause) and reciprocity. Past negotiations concentrated on the reduction of tariff barriers. A more complicated problem now is how to restore order in the jungle of non-tariff barriers. The Committee notes that the most developed nations have differing opinions and theories on this point. Some in-depth clarification must thus be made, and a preliminary consensus sought on a few basic issues between the major industrialized countries. Failure to do this would mean continuing to look for piecemeal or compromise solutions when questions of principle have not yet been tackled or resolved. Other important subjects which affect relations between the industrialized

<sup>1</sup> CES 965/88.

countries include subsidies, State aid and discriminatory public procurement policies, not forgetting the tendency of some leading nations to push through national legislation (such as the US Congress's Trade Act) in breach of multilateral commitments. The European Community should clarify the future course of international economic relations with the United States, Japan and other leading nations, first and foremost with the United States, as the adoption of the Trade Act is a step in the wrong direction. The Committee urges the Community institutions to clarify this key point with the incoming US Administration. In the mean time, the EC Commission should give immediate consideration to the adoption of similar provisions.

The Opinion goes on to consider relations with the developing countries, whose spontaneous moves to form a grouping regardless of their individual conditions prompts the Committee to call for a distinction to be drawn between the most and least developed members, with action being tailored accordingly. At the same time, the discussions must not overlook issues of concern to the developed countries, such as the protection of intellectual property rights and the problem of social dumping. The Committee calls for reciprocity from the developing countries who seek freer access to Western markets without accepting their own responsibilities. This applies particularly to those which have already reached a high degree of growth, production, consumption and financial balance. The Committee feels it important to integrate the developing countries into the world trade network, as this can boost the world economy. The European Community can play a full role here.

Turning to the State-trading countries' participation in GATT, the Committee considers that this has so far been little more than an empty gesture which has been tolerated because of the political importance of maintaining a forum for talks with these countries. The economic, demographic and political importance of countries such as the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union means that the situation must change. At the same time, care must be taken to ensure that the mass entry of the State-trading countries does not lead to the politicization of relations between GATT members.

Finally, the Committee notes that there must be no conflict between the completion of the Community's internal market by 1992 and its participation in the Uruguay Round.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the work prepared by the Section for External Relations, Trade and Development Policy, chaired by Mr Kenna (Ireland — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Romoli (Italy — Employers).*

## **External relations**

### **Official visit by ESC President to Greek Government**

Mr Alfons Margot, President of the ESC, paid an official visit to Greece from 5 to 7 September 1988. He was accompanied by the two Vice-Presidents, Mr Poeton and Mr Zufiaur Narvaiza, and the Secretary-General, Mr Jacques Moreau.

The delegation met Mr Yorgos Yennimatas, Minister for Labour, Mr Theodourous Pangalos, Minister for European Affairs, Mr Roumeliotis, Minister for National Economic Affairs, and Mr Yannos Papantoniou, Deputy Minister for the National Economy.

Greece holds the presidency of the Council of Ministers for the second half of 1988 and the delegation spoke of the Economic and Social Committee's hopes and aspirations for the progress of the European Community.

During its visit to Athens, the presidential party had talks with the top leadership of the country's socio-economic bodies: the trade union confederation, the employers' association, the farming organizations, the consumers, shipowners, etc.

On 7 September, at the conclusion of the visit, Mr Margot gave a press conference in Athens.

### **Meeting in Athens on integrated Mediterranean programmes**

The ESC Section for Regional Development held a meeting in Athens on 3 and 4 September to assess the Community's scheme for integrated Mediterranean programmes (IMPs), designed to coordinate assistance from local, regional, national and EC authorities for certain areas affected by the Community's enlargement. Its main impact has been in the field of agriculture. The meeting was chaired by Mr Dassis, the Section's President. The Committee will in due course draw up a report on the IMP experiment with Mr Saïu (France) as the rapporteur.

### **Study Group on economic situation meets in Athens**

A Study Group of the Economic and Social Committee's Section for Economic and Financial Questions met in Athens on 19 and 20 September 1988 to prepare a report on the economic situation in Greece. The Study Group was chaired by its President, Mr Hans-Peter Petersen (Germany). The Committee draws up such a report on each Member State while it holds the presidency of the Council of Ministers.

### **Study Group on 'solvency' meets in Portugal**

A Study Group of the Economic and Social Committee under the chairmanship of Mr Bento Gonçalves (Portugal) met in Lisbon on 12 and 13 September 1988 to prepare an Opinion on 'the Solvency Ratio for Credit Institutions'. The rapporteur of this Opinion is Mr Pardon (Belgium).

### **Activities of the Chairman and the Secretary-General**

The Secretary-General, Mr Jacques Moreau, met Mr Michel Rocard, French Prime Minister, and Mrs Edith Cresson, French Minister for European Affairs, in Paris on 8 September 1988.

On 9 September, the ESC Chairman, Mr Alfons Margot, attended a debate of the Association régionale agréée de l'Union des professions libérales (Regional Association of the Union of Liberal Professions) in Besançon, France, which was followed by a dinner. On 10 September, he took part in the 'Journées européennes' of the Chambers of Commerce, Trade and Agriculture at Aix-les-Bains.

On 14 September, Mr Margot attended the 'Provinciale Mid-denstandsdag' (Provincial Small Firms' and Traders' Day) in Ghent (Belgium), where he gave a speech on the economic and social context of 1992.

On 23 and 24 September, Mr Margot and Mr Moreau attended the meeting of French ESC Chairmen and Secretaries-General in Paris.

On 30 September, Mr Moreau spoke at the Round Table organized by the Social Sciences Faculty of Grenoble University. The theme of his address was 'Europe in search of its identity'.



### **Forum des entreprises, Paris**

The Economic and Social Committee was represented with a stand in the exhibition hall at the Forum des entreprises of the French Trade Union Confederation (CFDT) in Paris from 26 to 28 September. By this means it was able to reach a wide public and inform them through its publications and a video film about its aims and projects.

### **1988 EC Paris-Luxembourg Cycle Tour**

The Economic and Social Committee was represented at the EC Cycle Tour, which started near Paris on 9 September and finished in Luxembourg on 18 September. The main aim of this Commission-sponsored sports event was to make the people of Europe more aware of the part the EC plays in their daily lives. This year each of the 12 stages was dedicated to a different Member State. Three ESC members helped with the prize-giving: Mr Saïu (France), Mr Proumens (Belgium) and Mr Jaschick (Germany).

## **New requests for Opinions**

Since the last Plenary Session, the Council decided to consult the Economic and Social Committee on the following subjects:

**'Memorandum on the internal market and industrial cooperation — Statute for the European Company — Internal market White Paper, point 137'**

[COM(88) 320 final]

**'Green Paper on copyright and the challenge of technology — Copyright issues requiring immediate action'**

[COM(88) 172 final]

**'Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a specific research and technological development programme in the field of energy — non-nuclear energies and rational use of energy — 1989-92 (Joule)'**

[COM(88) 388 final/2 — SYN 143]

**'Proposal for a fifth Council Directive on summer time arrangements'**

[COM(88) 401 final — SYN 141]

**'Proposal for a Council Decision adopting the pilot phase of a programme of strategic research and technology in the field of aeronautics'**

[COM(88) 393 final — SYN 144]

**'Proposal for a Council Decision relating to the continuation of the Community action programme on cooperation between universities and enterprises regarding training in the field of information technologies'**

**'Proposal for a Council Decision relating to the opening of Comett II to the EFTA countries and to cooperation with international organizations'**

[COM(88) 429 final]

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 815/84 on exceptional financial support in favour of Greece in the social field as regards its period of validity and the**

**use of certain expenditure receiving Community financial support'**  
[COM(88) 412 final]

- (a) **'Proposal for a Council Regulation on coordination of the activities of the different structural Funds between themselves and with the operations of the European Investment Bank and the other existing financial instruments'**
- (b) **'Proposal for a Council Regulation on the European Regional Development Fund'**
- (c) **'Proposal for a Council Regulation laying down provisions for implementing Council Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 as regards the European Social Fund'**
- (d) **'Proposal for a Council Regulation laying down provisions for implementing Council Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 as regards the EAGGF Guidance Section'**

**'Proposal for a Council Decision instituting a specific multiannual programme for the research and development of statistical expert systems (Doses)'**  
[COM(88) 410 final — SYN 149]

**'Proposal for a Council Decision concerning a specific multiannual programme in the field of strategic analysis, forecasting and evaluation in matters of research and technology in the European Economic Community (Monitor)'**  
[COM(88) 386 final — SYN 147]

**'Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a specific research and technological development programme of the European Economic Community in the fields of industrial manufacturing technologies and advanced materials applications (Brite/Euram) (1989-92)'**  
[COM(88) 385 final — SYN 142]

**'Proposal for a Council Decision on Community implementation of the main phase of the strategic programme for innovation and technology transfer (Sprint) (1989-93)'**  
[COM(88) 426 final]

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) concerning veterinary checks in intra-Community trade with a view to the completion of the internal market'**

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on intensifying controls on the application of the veterinary rules'**

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 1468/81 on mutual assistance between the administrative authorities of the Member States and cooperation between the**

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[COM(88) 383 final]

**'Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a research and technological development programme for the European Atomic Energy Community in the field of the decommissioning of nuclear installations (1989-93)'**

[COM(88) 415 final]

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 804/88 on the common organization of the market in milk and milk products'**

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 857/84 laying down general rules applying to the milk sector levy specified in Article 5c of Regulation (EEC) No 804/88'**

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 237/88 establishing, for the period running from 1 April 1988 to 31 March 1989, the Community reserve for the application of the levy referred to in Article 5c of Regulation (EEC) No 804/88 in the milk and milk products sector'**

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing, from 1 ... 1988, the intervention price for butter'**

**'Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1079/77 concerning a co-responsibility levy and measures intended to enlarge the markets in the milk and milk products sector'**

[COM(88) 466 final]

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#### *Information reports*

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EEC/Mediterranean relations



## News of members

### **In memoriam**

The members and secretariat of the Economic and Social Committee were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Mr Basil de Ferranti on 24 September 1988. He was among the first United Kingdom members to enter the Committee in 1973 and served first as President of the Energy Section and then as President of the Committee from 1976 to 1978. He was a dedicated European and left the Economic and Social Committee in 1979 to become a Member of the first directly-elected European Parliament where he served until his death, occupying the position of Vice-President from 1979 to 1982.

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