

European Communities

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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31 October 1980

DOCUMENT 1-524/80

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

**on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-426/80) for a decision on the restructuring of the system of agricultural surveys in Italy**

**Rapporteur: Mr A. COLLESELLI**



By letter of 18 September 1980 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision on the restructuring of the system of agricultural surveys in Italy.

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Agriculture as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion.

On 24 September 1980 the Committee on Agriculture appointed Mr Colleselli rapporteur.

The Committee on Agriculture considered the proposal at its meeting of 20-22 October 1980 and unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution.

Present: Sir Henry Plumb, chairman; Mr Fröh, vice-chairman; Mr Colleselli, rapporteur; Mr Barbagli (deputizing for Mr Ligios), Mr Battersby, Mr Clinton, Mrs Cresson, Mr Dalsass, Mr Delatte, Mr De Keersmaeker (deputizing for Mr d'Ormesson), Mr Gatto, Mr Gautier, Mr Helms, Mr Hord, Mr Maffre-Baugé, Mr Provan, Mr Skovmand and Mr Woltjer.

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets is attached.

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The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement :

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision on the restructuring of the system of agricultural surveys in Italy

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(80) 445 final),
- having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 1-426/80),
- having regard to the report by the Committee on Agriculture and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 1-524/80),
- whereas restructuring of the system of agricultural surveys in Italy, by bringing Italian statistics into line with the European system, will improve the comparability of such statistics and make it easier to keep abreast of developments, in particular structural developments, in agriculture,

approves the Commission's proposal.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. The tendency in Italy hitherto has been to carry out separate surveys on individual subjects. The expansion of the number of surveys and the growth in Community requests for agricultural statistics make it advisable to collate the various independent surveys and set up a structure based on permanent sampling techniques applied to agricultural holdings linked to the general census, and on conducting annual surveys with a common set of questions, with the option of secondary samples for specific areas of inquiry.

2. No such permanent structure exists in Italy. Whenever the Community requests statistical information, each sample has to be taken from scratch, with the risk that the longer the time that has elapsed since the previous general agricultural census, which is carried out every ten years, the less reliable the sample will be.

National experts can then produce estimates of, for example total production, on the basis of, say, estimates of average output. The figures obtained are generally reliable, but they are difficult to compare at European level, since they are based on procedures not harmonized with those used in the other countries.

3. Following studies by Italian expert on the possibility of establishing a permanent, general-purpose research network, the Italian Istituto Centrale di Statistica (ISTAT) and the appropriate Community departments reached a joint agreement on the possibility of establishing such a network and on operational details and timing.

4. The proposal now under consideration is the result of this agreement and provides for restructuring of the **data-collection** system now in use in Italy so as to create a more reliable statistical basis for assembling information, and improve the comparability of data at Community level. To this end, between 1981 and 1986 a technical-administrative infrastructure relying on **trained interviewers** will be set up in Italy at regional level with a view to establishing a coherent programme of statistical surveys based on appropriate sampling techniques. The Italian government will be required to submit an annual programme specifying all surveys to be carried out in the coming year, together with the results obtained in the programme for the preceding year.

5. The Community will make a financial contribution not exceeding 20 million EUA to be drawn on Chapter 31 of the budget (Expenditure in the agricultural sector) and not from the EAGGF. ISTAT will collaborate closely with the Community Standing Committee for Agricultural Statistics and with the Commission Directorate-General for Agriculture on drawing up and implementing the annual programmes.
6. The Committee on Agriculture supports this proposal which forms part of a package of measures to improve conditions in Italian agriculture, in particular in the Mezzogiorno. It is worth recalling that the measures already approved by the Council of Ministers under the so-called 'Mediterranean package' in favour of the southern regions of Italy include the programme for the development of agricultural advisory services in Italy<sup>1</sup>, the common measure for forestry<sup>2</sup>, the regulations on a common measure to improve public amenities in certain rural areas (road network, electrification, potable water, supplies, etc.)<sup>3</sup> and on the irrigation programme<sup>4</sup> and producer groups and associations<sup>5</sup>.
7. The project proposed has every chance of being a success since it will entail close cooperation between national and Community authorities, the obligation to submit statistics on an annual basis, which will facilitate supervision of the figures for the previous year, and the continuing improvement of the methods and instruments used; the flat-rate Community financial contribution should obviate the difficulty of finding funds nationally and make it possible to keep within deadlines.
8. For all these reasons the Committee on Agriculture approves the Commission's proposal.

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<sup>1</sup>Reg. No. 270/79, OJ L 38, 14.2.1979

<sup>2</sup>Reg. No. 269/79, OJ L 38, 14.2.1979

<sup>3</sup>Reg. No. 1760/78, OJ L 204, 28.7.1978

<sup>4</sup>Reg. No. 1362/78, OJ L 166, 23.6.1978

<sup>5</sup>Reg. No. 1360/78, OJ L 166, 23.6.1978

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

Letter from the committee chairman to Sir Henry PLUMB, chairman of the Committee on Agriculture

18 November 1980

Subject: Proposal for a Council decision on the restructuring of the system of agricultural surveys in Italy (Doc. 426/80)

Dear Chairman,

At its meeting of 17 November 1980 the Committee on Budgets considered the proposal for a Council decision to introduce a contribution to restructure the system of agricultural surveys in Italy.

This proposal is based on the fact that a range of statistical techniques which would allow data from all Member States to be compared is of vital importance to the Community. The immediate justification for the proposal is that the Italian Republic's economic and budgetary situation prevents it providing the resources needed to set up such a system.

The proposal would involve a financial commitment on the part of the Community to the Member State concerned of a lump sum of 20 million EUA payable over a period of 6 years from 1982 onwards. Thus the annual appropriations in the general budget of the Communities would be relatively low. In 1982 and 1983 for example the appropriations would be limited to 1 million EUA.

It should however be noted that, since this proposal requires the Italian Republic to submit each year a plan showing the measures necessary to implement the programme (Article 4 of the proposal) and provide precise information on the data to be compiled in the following year, it is still too soon to allocate a fixed sum of 20 million EUA as this might not be fully taken up or might be distributed appropriately over the six years envisaged for the implementation of the action.

Our committee therefore took the view, while expressing a favourable opinion on the proposal as a whole, that it would be better if appropriations were specified and approved each year as part of the budgetary procedure.

It therefore decided to urge the committee to incorporate the amendment attached to this opinion.

Yours sincerely,

Harry A.C.M. NOTENBOOM

Present: Mr NOTENBOOM, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr ARNDT, Mr BROK (deputizing for Mr RYAN), Mr FORTH, Mrs HOFF, Mr HOWELL, Mr MOTCHANE, Mr NORD, Mr J.M. TAYLOR and Mr TUCKMAN.

