

PRESS RELEASE

4358/80 (Presse 5)

621st Council meeting

- Agriculture -

Brussels, 21 and 22 January 1980

President: Mr Giovanni MARCORA,
Minister for Agriculture
and Forestry
of the Italian Republic



The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Albert LAVENS Minister for Agriculture
and Small Firms and Traders

Denmark:

Mr Poul DALSGER Minister for Agriculture

Germany:

Mr Hans-Jürgen ROHR State Secretary,
Federal Ministry for Food,
Agriculture and Forestry

France:

Mr Pierre MEHAIGNERIE Minister for Agriculture
Mr Jacques FOUCHIER State Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

Ireland:

Mr Ray MacSHARRY Minister for Agriculture

Italy:

Mr Giovanni MARCORA Minister for Agriculture
and Forestry
Mr Ferruccio PISONI State Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture and
Forestry

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Luxembourg:

Mr Camille NEY

Minister for Agriculture,
Viticulture, Inland Waterways
and Forestry

Netherlands:

Mr A.P.J.M.M. van der STEE

Minister for Agriculture and
Fisheries

United Kingdom:

Mr Peter WALKER

Minister for Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food

Mr Alick BUCHANAN-SMITH

Minister of State,
Ministry of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food

Commission:

Mr Finn Olav GUNDELACH

Vice-President

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CHANGES TO THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

The Council held an in-depth discussion on the communication submitted by the Commission on 4 December 1979 on changes to the common agricultural policy to help balance markets and streamline expenditure. It examined the various aspects of this communication, and particularly those relating to milk products, sugar and isoglucose.

In conclusion, the Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to continue at the earliest opportunity its examination of the problems relating to certain other products, such as beef and veal, cereals, starch products and processed fruit and vegetables, and to examine in greater detail the suggestions concerning milk products, sugar and isoglucose, having particular regard to today's discussion. The Council will resume its examination of the entire dossier at its next meeting. By that date, it should also have received the Commission proposals for 1980/1981 prices and related measures.

SHEEPMEAT

The Council, after a detailed exchange of views on the market situation and the progress of work on common arrangements in the sheepmeat sector, agreed to return to this matter at its next meeting, scheduled for 18 and 19 February 1980.

TRANSFER OF SKIMMED MILK POWDER TO ITALY

The Council agreed to an amendment to Regulation (EEC) No 1763/78 as regards the transfer of skimmed milk powder to the Italian intervention agency.

This amendment covers the remainder (60,000 tonnes) of the initial amount of 100,000 tonnes and restricts its use to the feeding of calves. The transfer will be extended over a whole year, with 20,000 tonnes being transferred immediately and the remaining 40,000 tonnes being transferred at the rate of 5,000 tonnes a month from 1 May 1980.

This measure was taken because of the development of the market situation of skimmed milk powder and the suspension, already decided upon by the Commission, of sales by the intervention agencies of skimmed milk powder intended for feeding pigs and poultry.

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WINE

In a general exchange of views on the market situation in the wine-growing sector, the Council paid particular and urgent attention to the possible triggering of distillation operations pursuant to Article 15 of Regulation (EEC) No 337/79.

The Commission having stated its intention of submitting proposals to this effect in the near future, the Council agreed in principle to such a measure and instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to give further examination to the announced proposal in the light of developments on the wine market and the comments of the delegations during that day's debate.

The Council also held an exchange of views on the amendment of the provisions on the implementation guarantee. Having established that the opinions of the Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament were to be issued shortly, the Council agreed to return to this question in due course after detailed examination by the Special Committee on Agriculture, including the budgetary aspects.

CEREALS LEVY

In response to a request by the Italian delegation, the President instructed a Working Party to study the questions relating to the cereals levy as a matter of urgency.

SALE OF FROZEN MEAT

In reply to a question by the Italian delegation, the Commission supplied certain clarifications regarding the sale of frozen meat on the Community market.

CEREALS MARKET

Mr GUNDELACH, Vice-President, informed the Council of the talks the Commission was holding at international level and of the line of action it was following to apply the decisions on cereals taken by the Council (Foreign Affairs) on 15 January 1980.

STRUCTURAL POLICY

Further to its discussions at previous meetings and on the basis of a report from the Special Committee on Agriculture, the Council examined certain specific questions relating to the general issue of structures, namely:

- amendments to Directive 72/159 as regards aid to farmers following a development plan;
- amendments to be made to Directive 75/268 on mountain and hill farming and farming in certain less-favoured areas.

With regard to Directive 72/159, the Council discussed the main questions raised by the Commission proposals to lower the threshold for access to development plans and to fix a new upper limit, so that Community financial aid would be restricted to farms which really needed it to carry out development plans. Concluding its discussion, the Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to study the possible solutions in greater depth in the light of the Council's discussions, to prepare for a decision to be taken as part of the set of structural measures before the Council.

The Council also discussed the various amendments proposed by the Commission to Directive 75/268/EEC, particularly as regards raising the ceiling of the compensatory allowance and reducing the minimum size of holdings eligible for that allowance. During the discussion delegations were able to compare their various interpretations and requirements, thus progressing towards the attainment of common positions on many points under discussion. In conclusion, the Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture also to study the possible acceptable solutions in greater depth, to facilitate the taking of a decision in the general context of other structural measures at one of the Council's forthcoming meetings.

Winding up the discussion, the President stressed the importance for protection of the environment of finding adequate and urgent solutions to the problems arising in socio-structural policy in agriculture and urged that the Council deal with these issues - particularly those relating to mountain and hill farming - as a matter of priority.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Relations with Southern Rhodesia

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation on trade arrangements between Southern Rhodesia and the European Economic Community. The Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community meeting within the Council also adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision opening tariff preferences for products covered by that Community originating in Southern Rhodesia.

The Council thus formalized the substantive agreement reached at the meeting on 15 January 1980 (see Press Release No 4194/80 (Presse 3) of that date).

Agricultural and fisheries policy

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation extending until the date of entry into force of the new Co-operation Agreement between the Community and the Federative Republic of Yugoslavia or until 30 June 1980 whichever is the earlier Regulation (EEC) No 2862/77 on levies applicable to imports of certain adult bovine animals and beef from Yugoslavia.

The Council decided to sign two fisheries agreements in the form of exchanges of letters between the European Economic Community and Canada extending the two existing agreements and to apply them provisionally as from the signing.

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the following animal health directives ⁽¹⁾:

- amending Directive 72/461/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in fresh poultry meat;
- amending Directive 77/99/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in meat products;
- on animal health problems affecting intra-Community trade in meat products;
- amending Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat (Foie gras);
- introducing Community measures for the control of classical swine fever;
- prolonging, in respect of swine fever, certain derogations granted to Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom;
- amending Directive 64/432/EEC as regards tuberculosis and brucellosis.

⁽¹⁾ See Press Release No 11462/79 (Presse 160) dated 11 December 1979.

Establishment and services: midwives

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities

- the Directive concerning the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications in midwifery and including measures to facilitate the effective exercise of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services
- the Directive concerning the co-ordination of provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action relating to the taking up and pursuit of the activities of midwives;
- the Decision setting up an Advisory Committee on the Training of Midwives;
- the Decision amending Decision 75/365/EEC setting up a Committee of Senior Officials on Public Health.

The Council thus formalized the substantive agreement reached at its meeting on 18 December 1979 (see Press Release No 11782/79 (Presse 171) of that date).

Appointment

Acting on a proposal from the Belgian Government, the Council appointed Miss Liliane DEKEYSER, Conseiller Adjoint auprès de la Fédération des Entreprises de Belgique, as alternate member of the Advisory Committee on Social Security for Migrant Workers to replace Mrs LAMBERT-BEAUFILS, alternate member who has resigned, for the remainder of her term of office, which runs until 14 October 1981.

