



Reforming the Maastricht Treaty

An opportunity for Europe

by Marcelino Oreja, Member of the European Commission

Europe's citizens are now taking an interest in its construction; this is an opportunity — but it is also a major political issue. I do not believe that one can still think of the building of Europe as a wholly idealistic venture or a gadget devised by enlightened intellectuals. It is, however, a major issue for society; it is about the need to be present effectively on the international stage and to develop and promote our model of society. None of our Member States, from the largest to the smallest, is in a position to realize these objectives on its own. And yet these objectives are needed if we are to keep our individuality, develop our economy and exercise our sovereignty.

Facing up to reality

The occasionally illusory interplay of politics leaves us with the impression that the national framework is often less complicated, more open to claims, and that one is better off without being subject to restrictions imposed by 'Brussels'. I am not so sure that this is the case. The constraints of globalization, of an international society that is increasingly competitive, and of a technological revolution that is taking place faster than we can assimilate it, cannot be handled by taking refuge behind our frontiers. For far too long frontiers have been able to prevent the free movement of people — but not of ideas, innovations and fresh challenges. This is why I believe it is urgent to strengthen the political union of Europe, create a single currency, enlarge the Union and do what the European Commission has been proposing for years but not as successfully as one might have hoped — give an additional impetus to the improvement of our transport, information and communication infrastructures.

The Intergovernmental Conference [by means of which the Fifteen are seeking to reform the Maastricht Treaty — editor's note] is aimed essentially at creating a strong institutional structure, in order to provide Europe with the means to face up to a rapidly changing situation which is affecting daily our living conditions, culture and economy. We must, to begin with, become aware of the dynamic nature of this situation, of the enormous opportunities that it can generate for our companies, our workers and those who remain jobless; for those who create our works of art, who innovate and undertake research. And we must then draw the necessary conclusions, even in constitutional terms.

Guaranteeing freedom of movement

It seems to me that an entity as large as the Union with its 15 Member States — or 30, after enlargement — requires a solid social basis above all. The time when the Community was run without transparency is over. For me, the key issue before the Conference is how to shift a Union based on cooperation between States increasingly to one that is the common heritage of its citizens.

We must also implement more quickly our policy of eliminating all obstacles to freedom of movement. This is essential not only from the point of view of markets but also people. We must also guarantee that this movement takes place within an area of liberty and security, as otherwise this freedom of movement runs the risk of being called into question sooner or later. In this connection there are two major proposals on the conference table, which need to be more clearly defined. On the one hand there is the possibility of dealing with immigration policy and checks at the EU's external frontiers within the Community system of decision-making, whose effectiveness is known, and, on the other, strengthening cooperation in the fight against organized crime, terrorism and drug trafficking.

The Conference is still going on; the die is not yet cast. Vigilance and determination are still needed to arrive at a result which is positive for European society. And that also goes for the creation of the single currency, enlargement and the review of the Structural Funds. These are not 'decisions by Brussels' which the Member States must impose, in spite of themselves. They represent major opportunities for all of us. All of us must look upon the building of Europe as our daily business.

■ Quicker, more reliable money transfers

From July 1999, at the latest, bank transfers between two European Union countries will be quicker and more reliable, as long as the sums in question do not exceed ECU 50 000 (ECU 1 = GBP 0.73 or IEP £ 0.74). On that date the Fifteen will have begun to implement the Directive on cross-border transfers which was approved definitively on 16 January, following an agreement between the European Parliament and the EU Council of Ministers. This Directive lays down the precise rules which banks and other credit institutions must respect. Thus the beneficiary's account must be credited within six working days, failing which the originator's bank must pay interest. Banks must not charge clients twice over, the victim being entitled to a reimbursement. And 'lost' transfers that fail to reach the beneficiary's bank must be reimbursed in full, up to a ceiling of ECU 12 500. As for the information to be provided to clients, banks must state in writing the time needed to transfer funds, the basis on which all commissions and charges are calculated, the redress procedures available, and how to access them. A survey conducted by the European Commission in 1994 showed that 36% of 1 048 bank transfers, each of ECU 100, had resulted in unauthorized double charging, while 15.4% of them had taken more than six working days to complete.

■ National accounts and EMU

From 1 March the Fifteen will have to apply the rules set on 3 February by Eurostat, the European statistical office, for classifying eight types of accounting operations. Eurostat's decision is in reply to demands for clarification from several European Union Member States on how to classify certain operations for the purposes of assessing their public deficit and public debt. This assessment will determine next year which EU countries will take part in the euro as from 1999, the last stage of economic and monetary union (EMU). Eurostat's clarifications make it possible to classify operations which are not clearly described in the European accountancy handbook, and to do so in a harmonized manner throughout the 15-nation EU. National statistics will be fully comparable as a result. Eurostat has decided, for example, that income from sales of gold held by central banks cannot be used to reduce the public deficit. The principle underlying this decision, currently of interest to Belgium, applies to all Member States.

■ Trade in vegetables made safer

The authorities in the 15 European Union countries should pay more attention hereafter to the health of plants and plant products sent to another Member State. The EU in fact will financially help any Member State which has to combat contamination caused by harmful organisms originating in another Member State, under the terms of an amendment to an existing regulation, adopted by the EU ministers on 20 January. If it turns out that the necessary inspections were not carried out with sufficient care in the country in which the goods originated, the latter will have to repay the costs incurred by the EU. The amended text also provides for the EU's financial contribution to strengthening the infrastructure for plant-health inspections at the Union's external frontiers.

■ Single market for two-wheelers

The single market for two or three-wheel motor vehicles seems near at hand. The European Parliament and EU Council of Ministers reached agreement on 4 February on a Directive which completes the harmonization of national technical standards, covering as it does the 12 remaining components and characteristics of such vehicles. They include, in particular, tyres, fuel tanks and permissible sound levels. The way is now open for a Community type-approval for new models. Once the Directive has been formally adopted by Parliament and Council, it will apply to mopeds, auto-cycles and motor-cycles, with or without a sidecar, as well as the motorized tri-cycles and quadricycles ('voiturettes'), for which no driving licence is needed.

■ Protection for a further 16 food products

The designations of 16 agricultural products, typical of six European Union countries, are now safe from imitations, thanks to a registration system adopted by the European Commission on 24 January. The products, which include cheeses, fruit and oysters, come from Germany, Greece, Italy, Austria, Finland and the United Kingdom. They are being added to the 382 products already protected by decisions taken in 1996. The designations in question are either protected geographical indications (PGI) or protected designations of origin (PDO). Registration implies that the use of these registered names is limited to producers in a defined area, who comply with closely defined production rules and criteria.

■ Pressure equipment: the way is clear

In just over two years from now pressure cookers, portable fire extinguishers, boilers, industrial piping and other items of pressure equipment will finally be able to move freely within the 15-nation European Union. The European Parliament and EU Council of Ministers reached agreement on 4 February on a Directive that sets out the basic safety requirements which the equipment in question must satisfy. The Directive also sets out conformity assessment procedures and the criteria to be met by the bodies responsible for assessing conformity. The Directive does not cover equipment assembled on the user's site. Nor does it cover such equipment and products as carbonated-drink containers, radiators for hot-water heating installations and aircraft.

■ Rules for distance selling contracts

A directive adopted by the EU Council of Ministers on 23 January, following an agreement with the European Parliament, guarantees consumers a certain level of protection when entering into sales or hire contracts through distance selling. They have seven working days in which to back out of such contracts without penalty; the right to information in writing before signature and to the fulfilment of the contract within 30 days at most. The directive applies, for example, to goods and services offered by mail, over the telephone or on the Internet. It covers virtually all such goods and services, with the exception of financial services and real estate.

THE EUROPEAN UNION'S COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY (II) ¹

The *European Parliament* is kept regularly informed by the Council Presidency and the Commission about CFSP developments. The European Parliament may ask questions of the Council or make recommendations to it and holds an annual debate on the CFSP. There is an ongoing dialogue on topical foreign affairs issues between the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy and the Commission. The Committee holds regular discussions with the Council Presidency to ensure that the European Parliament's views are 'duly taken into consideration' by the Council. Members of the European Parliament may also participate in European Union delegations at international conferences. A question time on foreign and security policy is held at each monthly part-session. Parliament has subcommittees which deal with human rights, security and disarmament. It maintains contacts with many non-Community countries through its interparliamentary delegations. Observer delegations have been sent to monitor elections in Russia and the Palestinian Territories. Parliament regularly raises human rights violations and comments on current international crises in its emergency debates. It has repeatedly called on the Member States to adopt a consistent common position. Parliamentarians have a particular interest in central and eastern Europe's accession to the EU, the peace process in the former Yugoslavia and stability and security in the Mediterranean region.

Security policy

It was in Maastricht in 1991 that Member States agreed for the first time to include security and defence matters in the Treaty. The CSFP covers all matters which affect the EU's security and, in the longer term, will include *the framing of a common defence policy* which might eventually lead

The European Parliament considers its right to be consulted under the Treaty is far from observed in practice. It has called for the procedures for such consultation to be defined by interinstitutional agreement. MEPs believe the intergovernmental character of the CFSP is responsible for the European Union's failure to play a coordinated and effective role on the international stage. Abolition of the unanimity rule for the CFSP is therefore one of the European Parliament's central demands for the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference.

to a common defence (Article J.4(1) of the Treaty on European Union). The present Union, which counts neutral and non-aligned countries among its members, is not, however, a defence alliance and does not have any military structures. Decisions and measures with defence policy implications are prepared and implemented, at the Union's request, by the Western European Union (WEU) in which Member States of the Union are represented either as members or as observers. This Western European alliance, which was established in 1954, evolved from the Brussels Treaty Organization founded in 1948. It now forms an integral part of the EU's development. According to the wishes of its members, which belong to both the EU and NATO, it will form both the European Union's defence component and assume the role of NATO's European pillar. This is in keeping with the EU Treaty, which requires European Union security policy to take account of policy established by NATO. In 1992 the WEU confirmed NATO's responsibility for collective self-defence and formally decided to confine its operations to peacemaking, crisis management and protection for humanitarian operations (Petersberg tasks). One example of

¹ The first part of this article was published in issue No 2/1997.

the WEU's role can be seen in the police contingent it provided for the European Union's joint action on the administration of the Bosnian city of Mostar.

Financing the CFSP

The administrative costs arising from the CFSP are borne by the European Communities' budget. Operational expenditure is met either from the Community budget or from Member States' contributions at the Council's discretion. In practice it is also being increasingly financed by the Community budget.

Reform of the CFSP

An Intergovernmental Conference has been meeting since March to discuss reform of the European Union. An important objective of this Conference is to find ways of improving the operational efficiency of common foreign and security policy.

The Commission has undertaken an analysis of the CFSP's achievements and has presented its conclusions and proposals for reform to the Intergovernmental Conference.

The Treaty on European Union calls on the Union to assert its identity on the international scene. The greater influence the Member States might bring to bear through concerted action has eluded them as they still, in many cases, continue to act independently.

The Intergovernmental Conference has a simple and clear objective: to enable the European Union to act instead of simply reacting, in order to defend the interests of its citizens better.

Areas in which varying degrees of common uniform foreign policy exist are trade, economic assistance and humanitarian aid. Other areas such as common foreign and security policy are still at a very early stage.

A stronger common foreign and security policy

A common foreign and security policy will not be established unless there is political resolve on the part of the Member States and clear objectives are set.

The Council Presidency and the Commission must work together if this policy is to have a hope of getting off the ground. Procedures from the preparation to the adoption and implementation

of decisions need to be refined. The Presidency and the Commission must act in a coordinated and efficient fashion. The Commission is working on its own procedures to meet this challenge. The Conference must therefore consider how the Presidency, which is served by the Council Secretariat, can be strengthened.

Preparation of decisions

Decisions must be undertaken on the basis of more detailed analysis carried out jointly by the Member States of the Union.

A joint analysis unit made up of experts from Member States and the Commission should be set up. This common forum, to which the Western European Union might also contribute, would provide the Presidency and the Council with valuable assistance in the preparation of coordinated proposals.

Adoption of decisions

In the Commission's view, qualified majority voting should become the rule rather than the exception in common foreign and security policy. Special rules will, however, be required for aspects with military implications.

A small group of Member States may act together in certain situations in certain areas. Such initiatives should also come under the mantle of the European Union provided they are appropriate and are compatible with the Union's general interests.

Creation of a European identity on security and defence matters

The Union's foreign policy suffers from its inability to project credible military force. Events in recent years have made this abundantly clear. A genuine European identity in the security and defence field is indispensable. It requires clear political will on the part of Member States.

NATO remains at the centre of Europe's defence arrangements, and a European pillar should be developed in it. In this context, the WEU plays a key role as already set out in the Treaty. As matters stand, Member States do not, however, have the same defence commitments in relation to NATO and the WEU. The Commission believes that a proper common foreign and security policy has to extend to common defence.

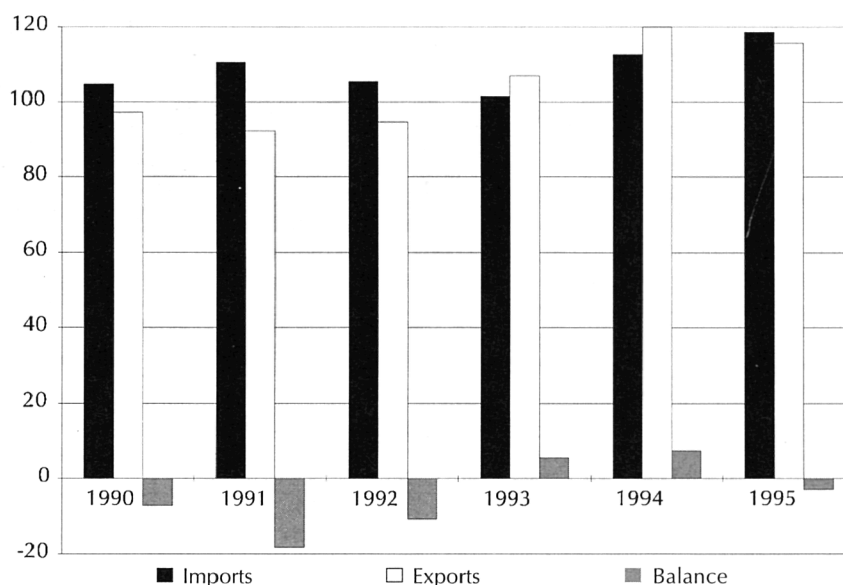
In 1995, the EU recorded a ECU 2.9 bn trade deficit with the North American Free Trade Area, (NAFTA: USA, Canada and Mexico)

This deficit resulted from a 5.3% rise in EU imports to 118.6 billion together with a 3.6% fall in exports to 115.6 billion

The biggest surpluses were achieved by Germany and Italy (respectively ECU 11 billion and 5.8 billion). The largest deficits were recorded by the UK and the Netherlands (7.3 billion each).

European Union trade with NAFTA

EU trade flows with NAFTA : in billion ECU



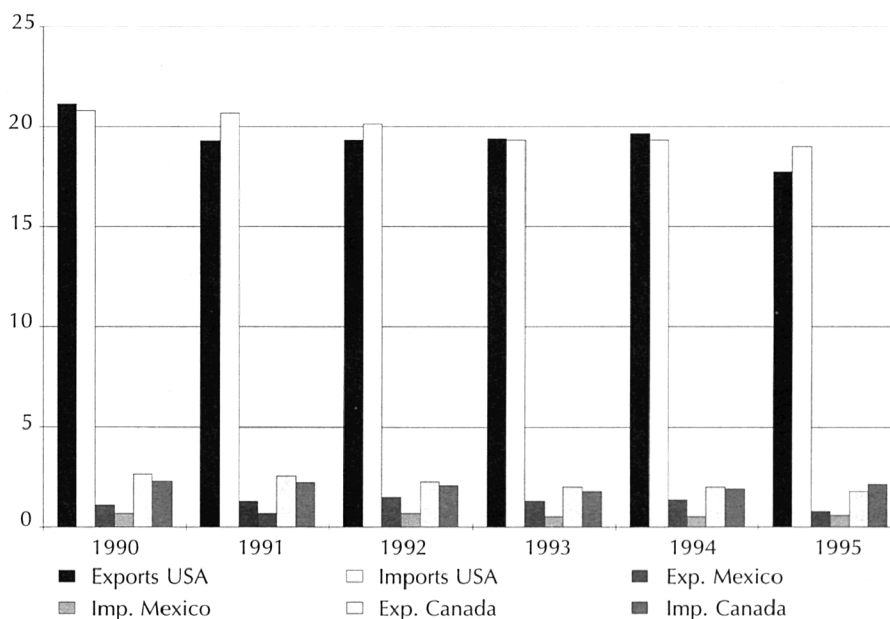
EU trade balance with NAFTA - 1995 : in billion ECU

	F	B	NL	D	I	UK	IRL	DK	EL	P	E	S	FIN	A	EUR 15
USA	-0.7	-3.1	-6.7	9.9	5.3	-6.0	-1.2	0.0	-0.4	0.0	-1.9	1.5	0.9	-0.3	-2.6
Canada	-0.1	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3	0.3	-1.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.4	0.1	0.1	-1.6
Mexico	0.4	-0.2	-0.2	1.4	0.2	-0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	1.3
NAFTA	-0.4	-3.8	-7.3	11.0	5.8	-7.3	-1.0	0.1	-0.5	-0.1	-2.2	2.0	1.0	-0.3	-2.9

Trade between the EU and NAFTA is very important. In 1995 it covered some 21% of EU total trade: 18% with the USA, 2% with Canada and nearly 1% with Mexico

Almost a quarter of EU imports from NAFTA went to the UK - it was the most important EU market for the USA and Canada. Germany's share was nearly 19%, followed by France (14%) and the Netherlands (11%). Germany was the biggest exporter - nearly 29%. Next came the UK (19%), France (14%) and Italy (13%).

NAFTA share of the total extra-EU trade



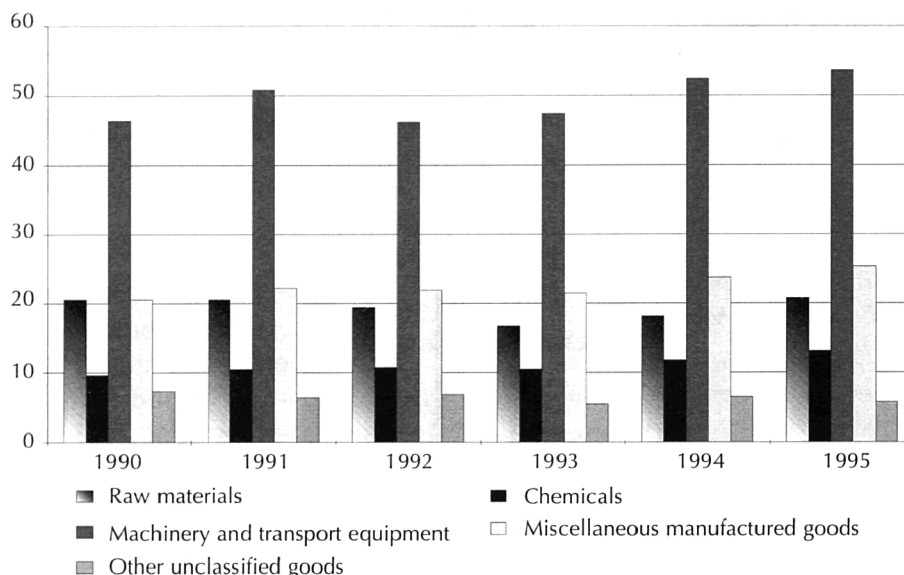
Imports and exports EU - NAFTA in billion ECU - 1995

	F	B	NL	D	I	UK	IRL	DK	EL	P	E	S	FIN	A	EUR 15
Imports	16.30	9.11	12.89	22.16	9.19	29.04	4.17	1.63	0.74	0.99	5.93	3.31	1.29	1.79	118.55
Exports	15.94	5.26	5.61	33.17	14.99	21.76	3.14	1.71	0.29	0.92	3.69	5.32	2.29	1.54	115.63

EU trade with NAFTA was concentrated on manufactured products representing 78% of total imports. Machinery and transport equipment represented 45% of EU imports

Leading EU imports were office machinery and computers (ECU 12.7 billion producing a deficit of 8.4 billion); electrical machinery and appliances (10.2 billion); other transport equipment, mainly aircraft (7.4 billion); and power generating machinery and equipment (6.9 billion).

EU imports from NAFTA by product groups in billion ECU



EU imports from NAFTA by product groups in billion ECU - 1995

	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
NAFTA	118.55	20.77	6.16	11.41	3.20	92.02	13.19	53.54	25.29	5.76
USA	103.63	14.81	4.95	7.45	2.41	83.89	12.28	49.65	21.96	4.93
Canada	11.71	4.95	0.87	3.81	0.26	6.03	0.57	3.05	2.41	0.73
Mexico	3.21	1.02	0.34	0.14	0.53	2.11	0.35	0.85	0.91	0.09



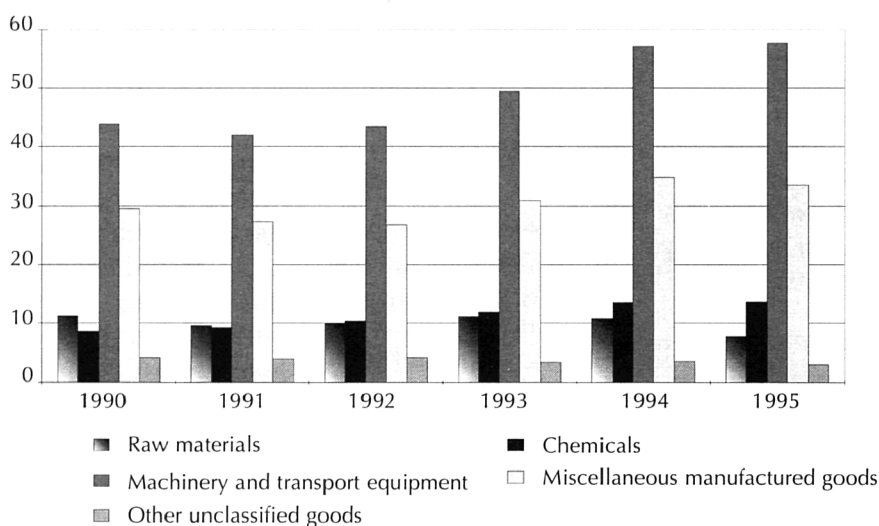
1: Raw materials; 2: Food, beverages, tobacco; 3: Crude materials except fuels; 4: Mineral fuels; 5: Manufactured products; 6: Chemicals; 7: Machinery and transport equipment; 8: Miscellaneous manufactured goods; 9: Other unclassified goods.

Manufactured products represented 90% of EU exports to NAFTA (ECU 104.8 billion).

Machinery and transports equipment represented almost 50% (57.7 billion) of the exports

Top EU exports were road vehicles (12.4 billion leading to a 9 billion surplus); specialized machinery for particular industries (8.3 billion); electrical machinery and appliances (6.9 billion); and general industrial machinery and equipment (6.7 billion).

EU exports to NAFTA by product groups in billion ECU



EU exports to NAFTA by product groups in billion ECU - 1995

	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
NAFTA	115.63	7.83	5.44	1.42	0.98	104.88	13.66	57.69	33.52	2.92
USA	101.01	6.48	4.45	1.17	0.86	91.99	11.65	50.92	29.42	2.55
Canada	10.13	1.07	0.75	0.21	0.11	8.75	1.35	4.31	3.09	0.30
Mexico	4.49	0.28	0.23	0.04	0.01	4.14	0.67	2.46	1.01	0.07



1: Raw materials; 2: Food, beverages, tobacco; 3: Crude materials except fuels; 4: Mineral fuels; 5: Manufactured products; 6: Chemicals; 7: Machinery and transport equipment; 8: Miscellaneous manufactured goods; 9: Other unclassified goods.

Source : European Union trade with NAFTA : Statistics in focus, External trade, no 12/96

□ IN BRIEF

An employee who works in several countries of the European Union, under the terms of the same work contract, can take his employer to court in the country in which he spends most of his working time, even if the country in question is not that of his employer. The fact that the employee has an office, which is at the centre of his activities, is to be taken into consideration. This was the interpretation given by the European Court of Justice, in a ruling it delivered on 9 January, of the 1968 Convention regarding judicial competence in the European Union.

The rules under which companies have access to competition files which concern them, as regards an understanding between firms, dominant positions and concentrations, were clarified by the European Commission in a communication announced on 23 January. The aim is to define objectively the categories of documents which can be communicated.

INITIATIVES

● An action plan for the run-up to 1999

The European Commission will submit an action plan, aimed at completing the single market on 1 January 1999 at the latest, to the Heads of State or Government of the 15 European Union countries when they meet in Amsterdam on 16 and 17 June. This was stated by the European Commissioner with responsibility for the single market, Mario Monti, at a meeting of the EU's industry ministers on 1 February. The plan covers four areas of action: (1) the transposition and effective implementation of internal market legislation; (2) simplification of the legislative framework at European and national level; (3) completion of the European legislative framework and (4) the development of important European policies for the single market. These four areas of action, drawn from the Commission's communication on the impact and effectiveness of the single market, adopted on 30 October 1996, were the object of a consultative conference, held on 7 March. The conference brought together employers, trade unions, consumers and public authorities.

● Threat of European sanctions

The threat of financial penalties now hangs over those European Union Member States that fail to comply with earlier rulings of the European Court of Justice, finding them guilty of infringements of EU legislation. The European Commission adopted on 8 January a method of calculating penalty payments. This is done on the basis of a flat rate of ECU 500 for each day's delay, adjusted to take into account the seriousness and duration of the infringement and the dimensions of the Member State concerned. The penalty could amount to a maximum of ECU 70 783 per day for Ireland and of ECU 534 344 per day for the UK. The Commission asked the European Court of Justice on 29 January to impose such penalties, and this for the very first time, on Germany and Italy. The reason: after having been found guilty by the Court of failing to comply with environmental Directives, the two countries have not yet complied with the Court's judgment. The system of financial penalties, to be imposed on recalcitrant Member States, was introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, in force since November 1993.

● VAT and non-EU telecoms operators

Call-back telephone services, which involve calls being routed via the United States, will become more expensive, should the Fifteen adopt the proposal amending VAT rules for telecoms services, presented by the European Commission on 29 January. However, the cost of subscriber and on-line services would not increase, even when provided by American operators. The current position is that while European tele-

coms operators charge their clients VAT, operators based outside the EU do not (since most third countries do not levy VAT on telecoms services). In order to provide a level playing field, and at the same time put an end to the considerable loss of VAT receipts for Member States, the Commission is proposing to tax all telecoms services supplied to a client located within the EU. At the request of Member States the Commission is also proposing emergency measures, so that the changes can be introduced more quickly.

● What about distribution agreements?

Should the European rules under which certain distribution agreements are exempt from the general ban on agreements between undertakings, contained in the EU Treaty, be retained or modified — and, if so, along what lines? This is the central question posed by the European Commission in a Green Paper on EU competition policy and vertical restraints, adopted on 22 January. The Commission has posed the question because the EU regulations covering exclusive distribution and purchase agreements expire on 31 December, while the Regulation concerning franchise agreements expires at the end of 1999. Individuals, companies and organizations wishing to submit their views to the European Commission can do so before 31 July. The postal address is: Green Paper on vertical restraints, Directorate-General for Competition, European Commission (C 150), 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels, Belgium. Internet: vertical-restraints@dg4.cec.be

● 'Green' taxes and the single market

A European Commission paper on environmental taxes (COM(97) 9), adopted on 29 January, shows European Union Member States how to apply the 'polluter pays' principle, without necessarily disrupting the operation of the single market. For the Commission, the Fifteen have considerable room for manoeuvre in the use of fiscal instruments to promote environmental protection. It points out that 'green' taxes must not be used to discriminate against products from other EU countries. The Commission also points out that the Fifteen do not have the right to use these ecological measures to help domestic firms — by exempting them from the taxes in question, for example, or by transferring the income from such taxes to them. In any case, Member States must notify the Commission of taxes which could amount to State aid to firms, have an impact on technical standards and regulations and which transpose European Directives into national law.

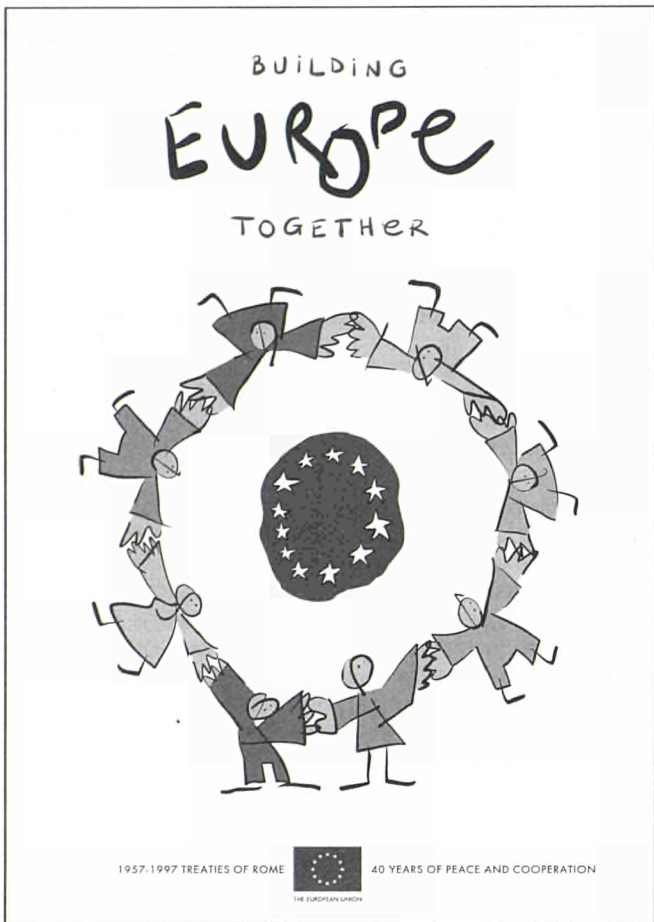
○ IN BRIEF

The European Commission announced on 27 January that it had appointed a European jury in order to select euro coins in a competition. It will be up to the EU Council of Ministers to make the final selection in May.

The European Investment Bank loaned ECU 20.9 billion in all in 1996, an increase of 13% over 1995. Seventy per cent of the funds went to projects located in disadvantaged areas of the EU. Investments in industry accounted for ECU 3.8 billion, and included ECU 2.6 billion allocated to some 12 000 small and medium-sized enterprises.

Representatives of the European Union and Switzerland initialled on 22 January an agreement which adds to the 1972 free trade agreement a protocol providing for mutual administrative assistance in customs matters. For the EU, it was a question of closing a breach in the fight against customs fraud, Switzerland being the last European partner country to conclude such an agreement.

The European Commission published on 24 January the first directory of European non-profit interest groups. Available in English, French and German, the directory lists more than 600 European non-profit organizations which seek to defend the views or interests of a sector or category. Entitled



SEEN FROM ABROAD

► Pressure from the east is growing

The countries of central and eastern Europe are showing signs of impatience in their desire to join the European Union. Hungary's prime minister, Gyula Horn, was in The Hague on 30 January to plead his country's case, given that the Dutch hold the EU's rotating presidency until June. The prime minister stressed the sacrifices agreed to by the Hungarians in order to make their country's adhesion to the EU possible. They must now be rewarded, he added. The new president of Romania, Emil Constantinescu, visited the European Commission in Brussels on 3 February for his part. He presented the new government's reform programme, aimed at consolidating democracy and liberalizing the economy. The Bulgarian president, Petar Stoyanov, was also on a visit to the European Commission. He declared on 30 January that his country perhaps would not be among the first group of new EU Member States. But he hoped that 'one would not wait too long, as that might discourage the Bulgarian population'. Besides, according to a survey published on 17 January, 56.4% of Slovaks favour EU membership for their country, as against 12.4% who are opposed to it and 23% of don't knows. In addition, 72% of Slovaks would like a referendum on EU membership.

Directory of interest groups, the volume is on sale at the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, L-2985 Luxembourg. It is priced at ECU 23, excluding VAT.

In order to encourage the 15 European Union Member States to **help their disadvantaged regions benefit from the information society**, the European Commission adopted on 22 January a communication setting out its own activities in this field. Already 29 regions are drawing up action plans with the aid of the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are being encouraged to use the Internet under the WOLF project.

A **Eurotransit 97** conference was held in Brussels on 6 and 7 February, at the initiative of the European Commission. Its aim was to bring out features of a reformed transit system. This system for the movement of goods throughout the European Union has given rise to considerable fraud.

TO OUR READERS

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