

European Community

No. 4

April 1978

Myths ancient and modern



European Community Contents



European Community is published on behalf of the Commission of the European Communities.

London Office: 20 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 4QQ
Tel. 01-727 8090

Cardiff Office: 4 Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF1 9SG
Tel. (0222) 371631

Edinburgh Office: 7 Alva Street, Edinburgh EH2 4PH
Tel. (031) 225 2058

Dublin Office: 29 Merrion Square, Dublin 2. Tel. 76 03 53

Intended to give a concise view of current Community affairs and stimulate discussion on European problems, it does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Community institutions or of its editor. Unsigned articles may be quoted or reprinted without payment if their source is acknowledged. Rights in signed articles should be negotiated with their authors. In either case, the editor would be glad to receive the publication.

Printed by Edwin Snell printers, Yeovil, England

European Community also appears in the following editions:

30 Jours d'Europe, 61 rue des Belles Feuilles, 75782 Paris Cedex 16.
Tel. 553 5326

Comunita Europea, Via Poli 29, 00187 Rome. Tel. 68 97 22

Europa Gammel Torv 4, Post Box 144, 1004 København K.
Tel. 14 41 40/14 55 12.

EG Magazin, Zitelmannstrasse 22, 53 Bonn
Tel. 23 8041

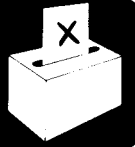
Europese Gemeenschap, Lange Voorhout 29, The Hague.
Tel. 070-46 93 26

Comunidad Europea, 200 rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels. Tel. 35 00 40

Europaiki Koinotis, 200 rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels. Tel. 35 00 40
Avrupa Toplulugu, Bogaz Sokak No. 13, Kavaklidere-Ankara.
Tel. 27 61 45-27 61 46

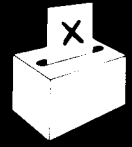
European Community, 2100 M Street, NW, Washington DC 20037
Tel. 872 8350

Politics



Yugoslavia and the Community
New talks begun. pp 3-4

Politics



Myths ancient and modern
Some scare stories refuted. pp 8-12

News



The month in Europe.
p 5

Consumer Affairs



Aid for art
European action campaign.
pp 13-15

Economic Affairs



Easing road/rail Transport
Commission proposes 'Ferroustage'
Directive be permanent. pp 6-7

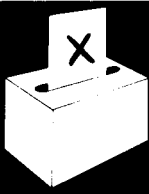
Science & Technology



Aviation research
The Commission plans a programme. p 16

The Community in May

May 2	Foreign Affairs Council
May 8-12	European Council
May 22	Finance Council
May 22 & 23	Agriculture Council
May 29	Research Council
May 30	Environment Council
May 30	Economy Council



Yugoslavia and the Community

New talks begun

The Community has opened negotiations with Yugoslavia designed improve trade and cooperation.

Politically, Yugoslavia is unique. Not only is it a European and Mediterranean country, but it is also a developing and non-aligned one. Its government has constantly expressed its desire to extend political and economic cooperation with the Community, already begun with the signing of a trade agreement which came into force on October 1, 1970, and was renewed three years later. That agreement, which expires on August 31, 1978, provides for the liberalization of trade on the basis of most-favoured-nation treatment, adjustment of the Community levy in order to foster Yugoslav exports of beef and veal, and a clause providing for developing economic cooperation complementary to trade.

Meanwhile, the Belgrade Joint Declaration of December 2, 1976, expressed a mutual desire to extend political and economic cooperation. The present negotiations based on Commission proposals approved by the Council of Ministers earlier this year, are being conducted with the principles of the Declaration in mind.

Some problems

Yugoslavia already benefits considerably from the Community's system of Generalized Preferences

and has recently received a loan from the European Investment Bank towards the construction of an electricity transmitter, as part of an EIB decision at the end of 1976 to lend her up to 50 million units of account (about £33m — 1ua = 65p) towards projects of common interest.

Recession

But economic recession has hit Yugoslavia hard, with her trade deficit with the Community rising from \$886m in 1973 to \$2,233m in 1975.

Despite some improvement in 1976, the position deteriorated again in 1977.

Exports	Imports Balance	
(in million US \$)		
1973	1,022	1,908 — 886
1974	1,039	3,023 — 1,984
1975	930	3,163 — 2,233
1976	1,326	2,877 — 1,551
1976/6 months	648	1,356 — 708
1977/6 months	747	1,864 — 1,117

Difficult

The Commission admits that it is difficult to deal with this imbalance of trade with Yugoslavia to mutual satisfaction because what she has to offer, particularly in agricultural products (such as beef and veal), do

not complement the Community's needs. Internal economic recession and the prospect of enlargement are other factors in the equation that have to be taken into account.

Between 1973 and 1976 the Community share of Yugoslav exports fell from 36 to 27 per cent while her export share to Comecon countries rose from 31 to 40 per cent. There was a comparatively small decline — from 42 to 39 per cent — over the same period in the Community share of the Yugoslav market. This, the Commission suggests, reflects Yugoslav difficulties in finding comparable sources of supply in Eastern Europe where the share of the Yugoslav market has remained comparatively constant since 1970, though it is now beginning to rise.

Balance

The shifting balance in trade with Eastern European countries has worried the Yugoslavs, as it runs counter to their traditional policy of holding an economic balance between Eastern and Western Europe. They have, therefore, asked the Community to re-examine its relations with their country.

Proposals

The Commission is proposing an agreement that differs in certain respects from those concluded with other countries, though the social provisions affecting Yugoslav workers

abroad, follow closely the Maghreb agreements with Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, and suggestions for economic cooperation are based on agreements signed with Mexico and Canada.

Cooperation

The Yugoslavs have requested that the agreement should be non-preferential, but within the general framework there would be specific provision for industrial, agricultural and financial cooperation, and for cooperation in the fields of transport, the environment, labour and fisheries.

Committee

The present Joint Committee would be replaced by a Joint Co-operation Committee; the agreement would last for five years and during that time no area of cooperation would be excluded from consideration. The effect of the agreement would be to give more precise institutional form to evolving trade under the present system.

Visits

Visits to Belgrade by Mr Wilhelm Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission and of M. Henri Simonet, then President of the Council of Ministers, last September, indicate the importance the Community attaches to finding a satisfactory solution.

Quotation of the Month

'The EEC should provide a framework within which we can secure our national position, not at the expense of other members but by working with them.'
Frank Judd, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in the House of Commons on February 23, 1978.



The month in Europe

EEC yacht home

The Community boat *Traité de Rome* reached Portsmouth during the night of March 27-28, 1978, at the end of the round-the-world yacht race. It was finally placed third on overall handicap.

Youth Orchestra

The European Community Youth Orchestra — 108 musicians mainly aged between 14 and 20 from the nine Community countries — will give Gala Concerts in Britain next summer, on August 6 at the Royal Albert Hall and on August 10 at the Music Hall, Aberdeen. Their conductors in each case will be Lorin Maazel and the Rt Hon. Edward Heath, MP.

Aid for non-Lomé

On December 15, twenty conventions for aid to non-Lomé and non-associated less-developed countries were signed in Brussels. They form part of aid plans begun in 1976, since when the budgetary provision for this purpose has been increased by 200 per cent.

Pact with Japan

After two weeks of tough talking, the Community has signed an agreement with Japan whereby the latter will reduce her trade and current-account surpluses during the coming year, and double her official foreign aid over the next five years. She will also 'negotiate actively' in the current multilateral tariff-cutting negotiations in GATT.

Statistic of the Month

How do you get to work?

In all countries of the Community, more men travel to work by car than by any other single means. In Belgium, Denmark, France, and Luxembourg this is also true for women; in Britain and Germany, more women travel by bus; in Italy and Ireland, on foot; and in the Netherlands, by bicycle. The overall Community percentages are:

	Men	Women		Men	Women
Foot	13.3	25.5	Train	2.6	2.5
Bicycle	14.8	10.7	Other	2.6	0.2
Car	51.6	30.5	Several	2.7	2.8
Bus	14.5	27.8	Total	100.0	100.0



Easing road/ rail transport

Commission proposes 'Ferroutage' Directive be permanent

In February 1975, the Council of Transport Ministers laid down in a Directive a set of rules, to last until the end of 1978, to encourage the development of combined road/rail goods transport — a technique known as 'Ferroutage'.

Progress

A Commission progress report presented at the end of last year finds that this combined carriage has developed in the intervening period and recommends that the Directive should be made permanent. It outlines how the Directive was applied, fairly successfully, by member States and sets out the problems encountered in consultations with railways, road hauliers and others. It finds that Ferroutage has many advantages to railways, hauliers and users.

Ferroutage

It is not easy to measure the exact scope of combined road/rail carriage or how materially it has been enlarged. Even so, there is no doubt that combined traffic is increasing. An analysis of figures from five of the major commercial transport companies specializing in road/rail carriage showed an increase in com-

bined traffic from 4.45 million gross tonnes in 1973, 4.66 million in 1974, a dip in 1975 to 4.3 million and then a sharp increase to 5.33 million gross tonnes in 1976. The indications are of a decided upward trend. Of this, about 19 per cent was international traffic in 1976 and the indications for 1977 would put the figure now at over 22 per cent.

Although this is a tiny proportion of total freight traffic, it is a more significant proportion of its own market — that is, long distance heavy freight.

Companies

There are six major companies specializing in Ferroutage, with varying shares of the international market. They are: Kombiverkehr in Germany; TRW in Belgium; Novatrans in France; Ferpac in Italy; Trailstar in the Netherlands; and Hupac in Switzerland. Since 1970 these have been joined by ASG in Sweden to form the 'Union Internationale des Transports Combinés Rail/Route' — UIRR.

These, together with the railways of the nine member States and those of Switzerland and Austria have formed a committee to coordinate

efforts at international level to develop combined rail/road carriage.

There are some 2,300 wagons in use in this traffic, of which 25 per cent are assigned to international traffic.

Distribution

There is a wide distribution of this traffic between the large commercial centres throughout the Community — 76 major links in all, 29 of which concern Italy. There are links which connect outside the Community with both Spain and Switzerland. Most of the carriage used falls either into the category of wagons adapted to road vehicles — like the French 'Kangaroo' wagons or the German wagons of the 'Aachen' type (both of which are 'dropped axle' wagons); or they are road vehicles which adapt to rail use; like the German 'Flexi-Van' (which is a 'swop body'). The 'Flexi-Van' however is becoming increasingly popular in all countries.

There are about 60 terminals for road/rail interchange — half of them in France and 16 in Germany, but there are studies for a possible further 10, in Italy, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and also Spain.

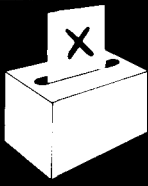
How it works

The theoretical advantages of Ferroutage are as follows. Combined carriage uses rail for long distance. Block trains on well selected routes are good business for the railways, have the advantages of safety, regularity and speed, and are less affected by bad weather or traffic conditions. There is also some reduction in road traffic, which makes a contribution to the environment and is also in

line with general policy for energy conservation and regional development. It brings the advantage to the user of a 'door to door' service; and yet it can also be to the advantage of road hauliers because it reduces their operating costs, especially labour costs, which are of particular significance to them.

Problems

However, there are problems. The commercial parties involved in combined goods traffic are mainly: the railways of member States; the hire-and-reward road hauliers; users and hauliers operating on their own account; and the combined road/rail companies of the UIRR. The railways are generally in favour of combined traffic and would operate on lower revenue than that of their other traffic, but they say that liberalizing the quota system has also meant an increase in competitive 'pure' road haulage. They wish combined traffic to be treated as 'pure' road haulage and deducted from road traffic quotas. The railways do not, however, wish to interfere with the commercial management of the road hauliers. The hire-and-reward road hauliers on the other hand, while in favour of developing combined carriage in a neutral market, fear that future authorizations could be biased against them or that the railways might fail to promote or improve the service, which would then affect their independence. This is roughly the view also of the own-account representatives, who feel that the development of this form of carriage should be decided by the open market. The companies of the UIRR, as might be expected, like the streamlining of bureaucracy in the system introduced and want it continued.



Myths ancient and modern

Some scare stories refuted

Myths die hard — and none more so than myths about the European Community and its supposed effects on the British way of life. Even after five years of Community membership, old myths recur and new ones arise.

Most of them are based on distrust or misunderstanding. Very often, the Commission — or ‘the Brussels bureaucracy’ — is blamed for decisions which are taken by the Council of Ministers with the agreement of HMG. Sometimes, the Commission is credited with proposals which it has not made and has no intention of making: sometimes, the Community is blamed for changes initiated by purely national authorities, often before Britain joined. In other cases, even where the Commission is in fact responsible for the proposals in question, the motives for them are misinterpreted, and it is accused of ‘wanting to harmonize everything in sight’.

The notes that follow are an attempt to disentangle some cases of fiction from fact.

District nurses

Myth

‘The EEC plans to phase out district nurses because they do not exist on the continent.’

Fact

Not true. There have been talks

within the Community about the training of general nurses, but there have been none about district nurses, nor any planned. The Department of Health and Social Security, in association with the other Health Panels, is in fact studying proposals to *extend* training of district nurses.

Doorstep deliveries

Myth

‘The European Commission is trying to stop doorstep milk and paper deliveries in Britain.’

Fact

Not true. In January 1977, the European Commission made proposals to the Council of Ministers with a view to protecting the consumer from unscrupulous doorstep salesmen, who might talk a householder into buying something he or she did not want. These proposals were never intended to stop small, continuous transactions such as milk or newspaper deliveries. The wording of the proposals, however, seemed to some people ambiguous enough to foster such a fear. After discussions in the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee the Commission amended its proposals.

The main provisions of the proposals remain the same — namely that contracts for which oral negotia-

tions have taken place away from business premises on the initiative of the trader would have to be made in writing. The written agreement would have to contain certain information of concern to the consumer, who would have the right to cancel the contract within a period of at least seven days after having signed the agreement. The proposals would not apply to transactions of 15 European units of account (about £10) or less (the level to be triennially reviewed) and certain other transactions — contracts relating to real property and so on. The Commission has now also specifically excluded a further category of transactions, i.e. *foodstuffs and drinks delivered by regular roundsmen*, without reference to the price limit above. This means that British milk deliveries would be safe and those depending on roundsmen for their groceries and vegetables would have nothing to fear; nor would the lemonade lorries of the north, the paper boy or any others who have been alleged to be in danger of extinction.

The Commission's amendments to its proposals do not, however, deal with the particular problems at present worrying insurance companies in Britain, i.e. doorstep selling of insurance policies. Big companies such as the Pearl and Prudential claim that to insist on a seven-day 'cooling off' period before an insurance contract can be signed would waste manpower and increase costs. They claim that they already have in-built safeguards for the consumer and that the Commission proposals, if adopted, would bring no added advantage. This matter is still under discussion with the Commission, which considers that a cooling off period is still in the interests of the consumer.

Food

Myth

'Because of the Common Market, gardeners are no longer allowed to grow King Edward potatoes in their gardens or allotments.'

Fact

Not true. The British Government introduced a ban on the use of King Edward potatoes in gardens and allotments in England and Wales in 1973, but removed it in 1974. The ban was first imposed because Ministry of Agriculture plant health officials thought it would ease the application of EEC rules against potato wart disease, but it proved unnecessary. A ban has applied in Scotland for many years, but this is to protect the seed potato industry.

Myth

'The EEC has outlawed the Bramley apples from our shops.'

Fact

Not true. Bramley apples can come in curious shapes and sizes, so there were fears that they might not fit in with the grading standards laid down under Community rules and that the shops might be short of supplies. This has proved unfounded; most of the crop has proved quite saleable within the standards, so there has been no need to adjust them. There was never a question of excluding these apples from the market.

Myth

'Many old British varieties of vegetable seed have been forbidden by EEC legislation.'

Fact

Not true. International rules on seed sales lay down that a specific variety of seed should be sold under a single name, whereas in many cases in the past different names had been used by different breeders for the identical variety. The international rules have

been taken over by the Community in establishing its 'common catalogue' of seeds, so some names have disappeared, but the varieties themselves have only disappeared if the breeders have decided to withdraw them. Indeed, the common catalogue has widened the selection of vegetable seeds in British catalogues, because it allows free trade throughout the Community.

Myth

'British ice cream will soar in price because in the Common Market only dairy products are to be permitted in its manufacture.'

Fact

Not true. There was a Commission proposal that foods which purport to be milk products should really be so. This would have caused difficulties for British ice cream manufacturers, some of whose products are made from animal or vegetable fats. The early proposal has been superseded by a revised proposal which would lay down stricter labelling. This would mean that British ice cream could still be called ice cream, but that the consumer would know exactly what kind of ice cream he or she was buying. This Commission proposal has still to be adopted by the Council of Ministers.

Myth

'There'll be no more fresh turkeys at Christmas because of EEC rules.'

Fact

Not true. So-called 'New York dressed' poultry will be available, although the Community regulations on poultry slaughter lay down strict rules for inspection and hygiene in poultry slaughterhouses. Most poultry, whether fresh, chilled or frozen, will reach the consumer completely plucked and dressed, rather than New York dressed (plucked but not gutted). But

special exemptions have been made for the sale by producers of their own 'dry plucked' poultry, for instance those who sell direct to final consumers, or through a local market or butcher, or who slaughter and pluck on their own premises and provide their name and address with the birds. This dry plucked poultry is the type which is sold predominantly at Christmas.

Myth

'Under EEC agricultural policy, good potatoes can be dyed, sent for animal feed and taken off the market to keep the price up. Imports are often banned.'

Fact

This is the system used under *British agricultural policy* to maintain market prices for potatoes. There are no EEC arrangements.

Going metric

Myth

'Metrication is the result of Community membership.'

Fact

Not true. In reality, the British Government decided in principle to go metric in 1965, and the Metrication Board was set up in 1969.

This had nothing to do with the Community but followed the recommendation of the General Conference of Weights and Measures (CGPM) — an international body set up in 1875 — which in 1960 sought to provide a rational International System of Units (SI) based on units of the metric system — the one commonly used by the majority of countries in the world.

By the time the UK Government made its decision, some 25 countries had passed or were preparing legislation to make the SI the only official system of measurement and according to a British Standards

Institution booklet of January 1969 (PD 5686) it was a 'logical choice' for the United Kingdom to make. The BSI also pointed out that, for Britain, 'the essence of the change-over operation is to line up with the current international practice as a means of improving our competitiveness in overseas markets.'

Britain finally adopted decimal coinage in February 1971. The change-over in other fields — lengths, volume, area and so on, while already adopted in certain industries, became linked to the Community timetable with British membership of the EC. A few sensitive areas still remain — such as the mile and the pint — to be reconciled with the metric system.

At the end of 1970 the Commission sent proposals to the Council of Ministers of the Six urging 'the approximation of the legislation of the member States relating to units of measure', largely based on SI units. The Council, representing the member States, adopted the Directive on July 27, 1971; but at Dutch instigation, it was accompanied by a special minute taking account of the problems which would arise for candidate countries for enlargement at that time, notably the UK and Ireland.

The Council Directive required the adoption, for official use, over a transitional period of 7 basic units and their multiples already endorsed by the CGPM. These were the metre (length); the kilogram (mass); the second (time); the ampère (intensity of electric current); the kelvin (thermodynamic temperature); the candela (intensity of light) and the mole (quantity of matter). Other unit measures were given terminal dates to disappear by December 31, 1977.

In 1976, to take account of the units of measurement of the Imperial system in use in the UK and Ireland

and to incorporate further SI units proposed at the 15th Conference of Weights and Measures in 1975, the 1971 Directive was amended by the Council, representing all member States including Britain.

The Council's new 1976 Directive laid down an agreed timetable for the change-over to common units of measurement throughout the Community. The situation as it affects Britain is outlined below. The units are listed in four chapters:

Chapter A

The 7 basic units mentioned above, plus some specialized units and symbols — all to be adopted for official use at the latest by April 21, 1978. Britain has already introduced the necessary regulations here.

Chapter B

Units of measurement for length, area, volume, mass, pressure, force and power which should have disappeared from official use by December 31, 1977. A number of these measurements are already obsolete in Britain. The cubic yard, however, is still used in calibrated lorries carrying sand and ballast and will not be phased out here until the end of 1978. British regulations implementing this chapter are expected shortly.

Chapter C

Imperial units to be phased out of official use by December 31, 1979, such as the yard, cubic inch, stone, quarter, hundredweight, therm, and degree fahrenheit. Transition here has been going on for some time and is expected to be completed by the end of 1979.

Chapter D

Imperial units to be *reviewed* — but not necessarily dropped from official use — by December 31, 1979, such as the inch, the foot and the mile, the acre, gill, pint and gallon, the

ounce and the pound (weight).

As far as miles and kilometres are concerned, Mr William Rodgers, the Minister for Transport, has made it clear that the Government will not be reviewing the matter until required by the terminal date and that he would then envisage a further five year period of transition if a change were to be made at all.

As regards the pint, the likelihood seems to be that for purely legislative purposes the Government will refer to the pint as '0.568 litres', but that the pint will continue in practical use. But this too, is a matter for Britain: the European Community is not imposing any rules.

North Sea oil

Myth

'The Community wants to steal British oil.'

Fact

Not true — any more than that the Community wants to steal our coal. In reply to a question put by Lord O'Hagan in the European Parliament, the Commission, on March 12, 1974, made the position clear — and it has not changed since. The Treaty of Rome clearly stipulates that member States have sovereign rights over their continental shelf — where British oil is found — for the purpose of economic exploitation, including the exploration and development of oil resources.

Of course, as a member of the Community, Britain has to abide by the other provisions of the Treaty of Rome regarding trade and fair competition. As a commodity, oil is subject to these, as are all traded goods. But, the Commission made plain, natural resources from the continental shelf are the *sole property* of the member States concerned and they are entitled to derive all the

economic benefits from them, such as fees, taxes and improvements in the balance of payments. Neither is there anything to prevent a member Government nationalizing.

Meanwhile, major British firms concerned with the oil industry have received over the period 1975-77, support grants from the Community of up to 40 per cent of total investment on hydrocarbon projects, designed to improve the overall energy position of the Community, including North Sea oil. The grants total 16,174,526 units of account (approximately £10.8 million).

State aids to industry

Myth

'The Commission is stopping the British Government from protecting jobs through State aids to industry.'

Fact

Not true — although the Commission is frequently placed in a difficult position. In the case of the British Temporary Employment Subsidy (TES), for example, the Irish and the Danes made complaints to the Commission that it contravened the rules of fair competition under the Rome Treaty.

Under Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty the Commission must scrutinize industrial aids given in the member States to prevent unfair competition and distortion of trade between Community countries. The Treaty recognizes the social reasons for introducing *temporary aids* and these are permitted for short periods despite distortion. The problem arises when the *temporary* appears to be becoming *permanent*, as might appear to be the case with the TES.

In this case, the Commission has agreed that the TES be extended in a modified form with more emphasis on job creation.



European action campaign

The Commission has just launched a three-pronged action campaign in support of artists, craftsmen, and the preservation of their works.

Its main features cover:

- Preservation* of existing works of art by means of the successful but comparatively little known process of nuclear irradiation.
- Protection* of museum and private collections through new EEC measures to thwart international art thieves.
- Promotion* of artists' and craftsmen's rights in such fields as international copyright, export sales and job opportunities.

Nuclear tonic

Europe's priceless marble statues, irreplaceable wood carvings and noble façades of the kind to be seen crumbling in Venice can now be saved by a process of nuclear radiation, the costs of which are being met in part from EEC funds.

In some cases the stone, marble or wood has only to be irradiated. In others, it is first soaked, before irradiation, with a substance which hardens inside when treated with gamma rays.

The treatment puts an end to deterioration, increases resistance to weathering, strengthens objects by hardening them and, in the case of wood, means death for the death-watch beetle and other parasites.

Moreover, once an object has been treated, it can withstand restoration work which would have been impossible in its previous fragile state. The restorer can use traditional methods in safety. It is therefore possible to attend to the most urgent cases first and to save a large number of objects quickly, even though the money for complete restoration may not be available till later.

Treatment by radiation can in no way cause radioactivity in the object treated, and the appearance of the surface remains unchanged.

The techniques of nuclear conservation have been practised with success for the past ten years by the Centre d'Etudes Nucléaires (Nuclear Research Centre) in Grenoble, a section of the University linked to the Commissariat à l'Énergie Atomique (CEA).

There, an experienced team using high performance equipment has perfected techniques superior not only to those in use elsewhere in the Community but throughout the world. Moreover, their process is not a finicky small-scale affair but can be used on large quantities of objects on an industrial scale. The Grenoble plant, for example, operates with two shielded impregnation tanks measuring $4 \times 4 \times 3$ metres, a horizontal vessel 3 metres long and 80cm in diameter and a vertical

vessel 2.5 m tall and 1.2 m across.

For years, French works of art and objects sent by the Institut Royal du Patrimoine Artistique de Belgique have been renovated in Grenoble but, astonishingly enough, the enormous possibilities of 'nuclear conservation' remained almost entirely unrealised by the rest of the Community.

The EEC became interested as part of its campaign to preserve the cultural heritage of Europe — and thus its unity. In May 1977 it was decided to award Community scholarships to enable architects, engineers and town planners of member States to be trained in new conservation and restoration techniques. They attend courses given by the Centre d'Etudes sur la Conservation du Patrimoine Architectural et Urbain (Centre for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Buildings) at the College of Europe in Bruges, and the course in architectural preservation given by the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property at the University of Rome. Scholarships for craftsmen are also available from the European Centre for Training Craftsmen in the Conservation of the Architectural Heritage which opened last September. This centre is located in Venice, itself a research centre as well as a crisis area. Students there have valuable opportunities for working on site and for carrying out useful and practical tasks.

Scholarship holders also receive lectures from engineers from Grenoble on the nuclear techniques.

Meanwhile, at the end of 1976, the EEC Commission made a grant to the CEA in Grenoble to allow it to carry out a large scale information

campaign, and a booklet and prospectus describing the possibilities of nuclear conservation have been prepared and circulated to the environmental and cultural sectors of member Governments, to local authorities and to private owners.

In addition the EEC has offered to split with the CEA the expense of taking on an extra engineer to deal with the extra inquiries and requests for assistance to be expected as a result of the information campaign, queries which might involve anything from a Churchill statue to a piece of Chippendale.

Thwarting art thieves

International art thieves are becoming more daring and successful than ever before in their efforts to steal and dispose of works of art. In France alone thefts reported to the police quadrupled from a mere 1,261 in 1970 to 5,190 in 1974 (to say nothing of the 119 Picassos stolen from the Palais des Papes in Avignon on January 31, 1976). In Italy where reported art thefts also quadrupled between 1970 and 1974, it is calculated that the total number of works of art stolen since the end of World War II has now reached 44,000. Many more archaeological treasures vanish (some even before the authorities have known of their existence).

Stolen cultural goods are usually bought and sold a number of times to 'wash' them and give them respectability. The parties to the initial sales, which are kept secret, know that they are handling stolen property, but these transactions often lead, after the goods have crossed one or more frontiers, to regular sales conducted openly, but preferably in one of the EEC countries which has not yet ratified either the 1969 Council

of Europe Agreement on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage or the 1970 UNESCO Convention on measures to be taken to prohibit and prevent the import, export and transfer of illegally acquired property.

The Commission recommends the ratification of both these agreements, but does not want to wait until this occurs. It is already preparing a standard record card on which the necessary details relating to any work of art can be filled in, with photographs and possibly a detailed description attached.

Each museum curator or private collector could, if he wished, obtain a supply of these cards and fill them in. Then, in case of theft he could hand the relevant card to the local police for transmission to the national customs authorities and, through Interpol, to the customs authorities of other member States.

A central register would be set up in one of the member States to hold the cards for all missing treasures. It could be consulted by anyone wishing to safeguard himself from buying stolen property.

Artists' rights

A new deal for artists and craftsmen covering jobs, export sales, taxation and copyright within the EEC is also planned.

As far as *jobs* are concerned, artists, cultural workers and craftsmen, like other self-employed workers, are free in theory to work in any EEC country of their choice. But they seldom know in advance what work is available in the country they plan to visit. The Commission therefore hopes in future to fit cultural workers, in so far as they can be accurately classified, into SEDOC, the EEC organization for matching

up job vacancies with those qualified.

In the field of *taxation*, officials believe that the circulation of works of art would be unduly handicapped if VAT were charged on the total value of the item sold. They would like to ensure that when original works of art, antiques or collectors pieces are sold, VAT would be charged only on the dealer's profit margin. Then, when it comes to exporting works of art, both artists and dealers face problems when they try to move goods across frontiers even inside the EEC. There are so many formalities that they usually have to employ a special clearing agent to do the job. EEC officials are currently studying ways of simplifying the regulations — with help from a Customs Legislation Committee.

Finally, the problems of *copyright* have become infinitely more complicated in recent years. Books and documents are reproduced by photocopying machines and micro-copiers not only in libraries and universities but by private individuals. Gramophone records and tapes are copied, programmes re-transmitted and books lent out by libraries without any arrangements for fees to be paid to the author or artist concerned.

Clearly it is no easy task to find a system universally acceptable throughout the Community. But Commission officials have already begun consultations throughout the spectrum — with writers, composers, sculptors, photographers, choreographers, stage artists on the one side and dealers, auctioneers, publishers, librarians and producers of films, stage shows, records, videotapes and radio and television programmes, to strike the right balance between what the public would pay and what the artist deserves.



Aviation research

The Commission plans a programme

The Commission has forwarded to the Council an initial programme of technological research in aeronautical manufacture. It covers two important priority areas: helicopters and airframes. These have been chosen because the major European companies are already involved in industrial collaboration here.

The Commission also points out that certain infrastructure facilities need to be supported in the Community. The most important of these is a large trans-sonic wind-tunnel, where cost and scale do not justify any one nation's going it alone.

The overall aim is to promote collaboration between industry and research centres in areas in which there would otherwise be wasteful duplication; to improve the efficiency of research expenditure and the use of research facilities in the member States; and to encourage collaboration at the industrial level on future civil programmes.

The objectives for the helicopter sector are to widen the scope for use of helicopters in the civil field by improvements in fuel economy, safety, instrument flight capability and environmental improvements relating to noise and vibration.

The airframe proposals are aimed at increasing structural life and reducing maintenance costs through

a better understanding of fatigue and fracture mechanics in metal and composite structures.

The proposals are for a programme lasting four years and totalling 36.7 million units of account. Of this sum 14.7 million is for helicopters and 22 million for airframes. 8 million units of account were already earmarked in the budget for 1977, and the remaining 28.7 million will need to be written into future budgets.

Although national research programmes are generally 100 per cent government-financed, the Commission will seek a financial participation from industry amounting to 20 per cent of the total cost.

Programme management would be under the responsibility of the Commission, which would make the maximum possible use of the technical experience in the member States.

The work would be carried out by industrial groups under contract to the Commission. It urges that the helicopter programme should be carried out by a consortium of the four main European helicopter manufacturers: MBB, Aérospatiale, Westland, Agusta; and that the airframe work be carried out by consortia involving the main European airframe contractors.