

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

## COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL POLICY AND REGIONAL PLANNING

### OPINION

for the Political Affairs Committee

on

- (a) the seat of the European Trade Mark Office
- and
- (b) the seat of the European Regional Development Organization

Draftsman: Mrs E. BOOT

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2.6.1983

On 28 January 1983, the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning appointed Mrs Boot draftsman.

The committee considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 27 May 1983.

It adopted the conclusions by 7 votes in favour with one abstention.

The following took part in the vote: Mr De Pasquale, chairman; Mr Costanzo, vice-chairman; Mrs Boot, draftsman of the opinion; Mr Chanterie (deputizing for Mr Friedrich); Mr Gendebien, Mr Krykos, Mr Papaefstratiou (deputizing for Mr Kazazis) and Mr Pöttering.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning was requested to deliver an opinion for the Political Affairs Committee on 12 motions for resolutions on the seat of the European Trade Mark Office and one motion for a resolution, tabled by Mr Lezzi and Mr Ruffolo (Doc. 1-299/82), on the seat of a European Regional Development Organization.

2. From the outset the draftsman would point out that joint consideration of possible seats for the two organizations referred to in the motions for resolutions would appear to imply that a balance should be struck in selecting locations for bodies to be set up by the European Community.

While it cannot be denied that it would be desirable for European Community organizations to be evenly distributed between the Member States, this criterion should not automatically outweigh that of efficiency, especially since it is not known what other bodies will be set up in the near future.

3. The draftsman takes the view that the European Parliament should first of all decide on a general policy for selecting the location of bodies to be set up by the Community.

For this reason, joint consideration of the two bodies seems premature at this stage, and the draftsman has decided to consider them separately, devoting particular attention to criteria concerning regional planning and economic policy in the regions.

## II. Proposals for the choice of a seat for the European Trade Mark Office

4. Background: Since November 1980, when the Commission of the European Communities tabled its proposal for a first Council Directive to approximate the laws of the Member States relating to trade marks and its proposal for a Council Regulation on Community trade marks (COM(80) 635 final), five Member States have applied for the seat of the Community Trade Mark Office: Belgium (Brussels), France (Strasbourg), Italy (Venice), the Netherlands (The Hague) and the United Kingdom (London).

In addition, 12 motions for resolutions on this subject have been tabled to the European Parliament, of which 8 suggest various locations in the United Kingdom for the future Community Trade Mark Office; in the motion for the resolution tabled by Mrs Théobald-Paoli (Doc. 1-905/82), the French city of Toulon is proposed; in two further resolutions, (Doc. 1-1045/82) by Mr Schön and others and (Doc. 1-1154/82 rev.) by Mr Bocklet and others, Saarbrücken and Munich are proposed; in the twelfth motion for a resolution, (Doc. 1-54/83) tabled by Mr Geurtsen and others, The Hague in the Netherlands is proposed.

5. Selection criteria: when selecting the location of the bodies to be set up by the European Community, a choice must always be made between various criteria, some of which may conflict with each other. In the case of the European Trade Mark Office, these criteria relate to the need to ensure efficiency by means of a functional infrastructure and to regional planning and economic policy in the regions.

6. With regard to the functional criteria, it is necessary to select a location possessing the necessary infrastructure for swift and efficient communications throughout the Community. Properly qualified personnel must be available so that the Trade Mark Office can be run as efficiently as possible. It should also be located near those institutions with which it is expected to maintain frequent contacts.

7. The Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning does not, however, consider that the question of functional criteria falls within its area of competence.

8. As regards the criteria relating to regional policy and regional planning, the most obvious criterion would appear to be the creation of jobs, while the question of commuting may also be of importance.

9. As regards the seat of the Community Trade Mark Office in particular, the overall objectives of regional policy and regional planning scarcely seem likely to arise. These criteria are likely to be of relevance only if the choice of a particular location happens to coincide with the regional policy or regional planning objectives of the Member State in question.

10. The Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning considers that while account should be taken of functional criteria, the Community Trade Mark Office should be located in an area where the criteria referred to in points 8 and 9 are of decisive importance.

### III. Proposal for the choice of the seat of the European Regional Development Organization

11. The motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Lezzi and Mr Ruffolo refers in particular to the need to create a European Regional Development Organization to enable the Community to fulfil its task of restoring balance between the regions. The motion for a resolution also calls on the Commission to consider the city of Naples as a suitable location for this organization.

12. Although the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on the creation of a revolving fund for the benefit of Mediterranean countries calls on the Commission to consider the advisability of such a fund<sup>1</sup>, to date, no communication or proposal on this subject has been submitted by the Commission.

13. The Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning deeply regrets that no action has been taken so far on the resolution adopted by Parliament on 16 February 1982. As a result, it is unclear whether a European Regional Development Organization will be set up in the future.

Your draftsman therefore considers it premature to deliver an opinion on criteria for the location of this organization until the Commission has made no proposals on the matter.

### IV. Summary and conclusions

14. The Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning hereby requests the Political Affairs Committee to include in the final version of its motion for a resolution the criteria set out in points 8 and 9.

15. The Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning hopes that in the near future the European Parliament will take a decision on a general policy for the location of organizations to be set up by the European Community.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 66, 15.3.1982, p. 26

