In its decision on the aid scheme described above, the Commission took account of the specific problems relating to the economic and employment situation in the Mezzogiorno.

As regards the aid deemed incompatible with the common market, Council Regulation (EC) No 659/1999 of 22 March 1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty states that, where negative decisions are taken in cases of unlawful aid, the Commission must decide that the Member State concerned take all necessary measures to recover the aid from the beneficiary.

(2) OJ L 83, 27.3.1999.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2010/00
by Klaus-Heiner Lehne (PPE-DE) to the Commission
(21 June 2000)

Subject: Changing old coins into euros

No later than 1 January 2002, the old currencies in the euro zone will be changed directly into euros. According to information from Regional Central Banks in Germany, no scheme has yet been devised for changing foreign coins — i.e. coins from other Member States in the euro zone — into euros. It is quite probable that European citizens are holding in their pockets and purses foreign coins worth billions.

The Commission:
1. What does it think should happen with such coins?
2. Should not the various Central Banks be required by law to change into euros (banknotes and coins) not only banknotes from other countries in the euro zone but also coins from other countries in the euro zone?
3. What specific measures is the European Commission intending to take on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Solbes Mira on behalf of the Commission
(24 July 2000)

It is worth recalling that it has so far generally not been possible in any Member State of the euro zone to exchange coins of another Member State. The questions therefore are whether such a new service should be established on the occasion of the introduction of euro coins, what its price and its modalities should be and who should bear the costs. In view of the logistical problems of handling various coin denominations, the conversion of the stocks which exist in the Community would probably require substantial resources, regardless of whether the service would be provided by the private or the public sector, including central banks. However, the Commission is aware of the problem and is examining how to find a solution which is both economically sensible and satisfactory for the citizens.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2016/00
by Daniel Varela Suárez-Carpegna (PPE-DE) to the Commission
(21 June 2000)

Subject: EU shipbuilding industry

In his reply to my question E-2795/99 (1), Commissioner Monti said that while under Council Regulation 1540/98 (2) establishing new rules on aid for shipbuilding operating aid is to be abolished at the end of 2000, the same Regulation also provides for a range of other aids that may be granted to shipbuilding...
subject to certain conditions up until 2003, including closure and restructuring aids, aids for research and development, aids for innovation, and regional investment aids for upgrading or modernising existing yards.

Can the Commission state whether this is a closed list of the types of aid that may be authorised up to 2003, or whether other forms of aid to protect the EU shipbuilding industry may in fact be permitted, particularly in the event of South Korea continuing with its practices of unfair competition in shipbuilding after September 2000?

Can the Commission state whether it has adopted or intends to adopt special aid measures for shipyards located in Objective 1 maritime regions in the outlying parts of the Union?


Answer given by Mr Monti on behalf of the Commission

(24 July 2000)

The first paragraph of Article 2 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1540/98 of 29 June 1998 on establishing new rules on aid to shipbuilding makes it clear that the only aids to shipbuilding that may be considered compatible with the common market are those complying with the Regulation. No other types of aid are allowed.

As regards special aid measures for shipyards based in objective 1 maritime regions, regional considerations are taken into account as regards certain categories of aid covered by the Regulation. In the case of aids for research and development and aids for environmental protection, there is the possibility of top-ups above the normally applicable ceiling for yards in disadvantaged regions. In addition, the Regulation also allows investment aids for upgrading or modernising existing yards in regions eligible for regional aids under Article 87.3 (ex Article 92)(a) and (c) of the EC Treaty.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2025/00
by Charles Tannock (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(21 June 2000)

Subject: Budgetary contributions of Member States

Can the Commission indicate the net contributions or receipts of each of the Member States for the last financial year?

Answer given by Mrs Schreyer on behalf of the Commission

(24 July 2000)

The latest year for which data on budgetary balances are available is 1998.

The estimates for 1999 will be reported in tandem with the 1999 Report on the Allocation of EU Expenditure, which is currently being prepared. As in any other year, the report will probably be available at the beginning of autumn. This report is a public document and will also be available on the Commission Internet page.

Data on budgetary data related to previous years (in particular 1992-1998) can be found in the 1998 allocated expenditure report entitled 'Allocation of 1998 EU operating expenditure by Member State'. This report is available at the following address: http://europa.eu.int/comm/budget/pdf/agenda2000/statdepenses98.pdf.