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(Information)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN QUESTIONS WITH ANSWER

WRITTEN QUESTION No 421/80

by Mr Flanagan

to the Commission of the European Communities

*(19 May 1980)**Subject:* 'Ecological' vehicles for the 1980s

On 17 December last year, the Council of Ministers for the Environment invited the Commission to forward suggestions to the Council as soon as possible on 'ecological' vehicles for the 1980s.

Can the Commission state what progress it is making on this request?

Answer given by Mr Natali on behalf of the Commission

(23 September 1980)

In its statement at the meeting of the Council (Environment) on 17 December 1979, the Federal Republic of Germany invited the Commission to state its thinking on the best car for the environment in the 1980s – at least in outline – at the next Council meeting.

In the opinion of the Commission future generations of cars must meet the following four requirements:

- (a) levels of pollutant and noise emission in line with the capabilities of the best available technology;
- (b) improved safety – both for the occupants and for other road users;
- (c) less use of energy;
- (d) rational use of materials for increased recycling.

Community regulations on air pollution were adopted in 1970 and have been strengthened several times; the present limit values became operative on 1 October 1979. A further reduction in them is being considered with the Economic Commission for Europe, Geneva. The Member States and the Commission recently decided upon a common line on the ECE's work on this subject, on which basis agreement should shortly be reached at Geneva about the limit values and the date on which they become operative. The Commission will then take this decision into consideration for the subsequent amendment of the relevant Community law.

The measures on the permissible noise level of vehicles adopted by the Council in 1977 became operative on 1 April 1980; they make the Community rules on this subject some of the most stringent in the world. The

Commission has nevertheless begun work to enable the Community to comply with the Council's 1977 commitment on limit values for 1985.

With regard to the improvement of vehicle safety, as in the past the Commission will periodically adapt the Community's provisions on this subject to technical progress.

In the field of energy saving the Commission has decided to provide the Member States with a standard method of measuring fuel consumption so as to permit the monitoring of compliance with the motor industry's voluntary undertakings to reduce it by 10 to 15 % between now and 1985.

Efforts must be directed towards meeting the four

requirements set out above, though without prejudice to technological developments in hand. To do so the Commission must take account of how the regulations will affect the competitiveness of the European motor industry, which, to maintain its competitive position, must be able to keep up the required level of technical quality for its products. This dictates a detailed investigation of the energy and economic impact of the proposed solutions, implying in particular a forecast of vehicle actual pollutant emissions and noise level.

The preparatory work has begun, but it will take time to collect or generate the data in the Member States. How the various possible approaches will work out in energy terms cannot be analysed in detail without an accurate picture of the present position and of what may happen in the medium term.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 432/80

by Miss De Valera

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 May 1980)

Subject: Effect of new technology on working hours

Does the Commission agree with the opinion expressed by the workers' representatives who attended the Standing Committee on Employment meeting on 26 February 1980, that the introduction of new technology will increase the need for the reduction of working hours?

Answer given by Mr Vredeling on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

The Commission's view on the point raised in the question was set out in the relevant paragraphs of the document 'Employment and the new micro-electronic technology' ⁽¹⁾, submitted by the Commission to the Standing Employment Committee.

Another aspect of the technology is the flexibility of operation that it makes possible, and the consequent scope it gives for the development of more flexible employment patterns, including additional part-time jobs.

In situations where older workers lose their jobs as a result of technological change and alternative job prospects are limited, flexible retirement schemes may be appropriate.

The increases in productivity which may be associated with the new technology will have to be considered in relation with the discussion on the reduction of annual working time and overtime, whilst respecting concerns for competitiveness.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. COM(80) 16 final.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 442/80**by Mr Ansart****to the Commission of the European Communities***(19 May 1980)*

Subject: Excessive imports of china and ceramic ornaments from Taiwan and South Korea

Between 1975 and 1979 imports of china and ceramic ornaments by the EEC from Taiwan and South Korea have increased alarmingly, endangering in particular the production of several French pottery works, for example at Saint-Amand-Les-Eaux in the north of France, where 500 workers are employed.

Can the Commission state the quantity of china and ceramic ornaments imported into the Community from Taiwan and South Korea?

What measures does the Commission intend to take to provide protection against these excessive imports?

Answer given by Mr Haferkamp on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

The Commission would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that importation has not been liberalized at Community level for all tableware and ceramic ornaments (classified under tariff heading No 69.11, 69.12 or 69.13 ⁽¹⁾), consequently, in cases where Community or national liberalization would not apply, imports from certain third countries are still subject to national arrangements. Any changes in these arrangements may be made within the context of current Community rules.

According to the Commission's information, total imports into the Community of tableware and ceramic ornaments originating in Taiwan or South Korea were as follows: 2 257 tonnes, 5 938 000 EUA in 1975; 5 471 tonnes, 12 859 000 EUA in 1976; 8 454 tonnes, 20 556 000 EUA in 1977; 13 491 tonnes, 28 012 000 EUA in 1978, 29 658 tonnes, 57 552 000 EUA in 1979 ⁽²⁾.

In 1978 Community production in the sector amounted to 582 066 tonnes, with imports from and exports to countries outside the Community of 50 262 tonnes and 107 160 tonnes respectively; apparent consumption could thus be calculated to be 525 168 tonnes.

From the above data, it can be seen that over the last few years there has been an increase in imports into the Community of the products in question from third countries, this increase being more marked in the case of products originating in Taiwan or South Korea (imports from the two countries in 1978 were equal to 2.3 % of Community production). A similar trend can be observed with regard to the French market, which was cited in particular by the Honourable Member. According to the information available, imports of tableware and ceramic ornaments from third countries as a whole accounted for 1.2 % of the French market in 1978 and 1.3 % in 1979.

⁽¹⁾ In the case in point, Council Regulation (EEC) No 926/79 of 8 May 1979 on common rules for imports (OJ No L 131, 29. 5. 1979, p. 15).

⁽²⁾ Community imports from third countries as a whole were: 1975: 30 723 tonnes; 1976: 44 250 tonnes; 1977: 50 262 tonnes; 1978: 56 805 tonnes; 1979: 81 150 tonnes.

The Commission considers that, while the Community market in the products in question has experienced an increase in imports – in conformity with the trade and tariff rules in force – notably from Taiwan and South Korea, its present situation is not such as to warrant protective measures at this stage.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 469/80**by Mr Früh****to the Commission of the European Communities***(27 May 1980)*

Subject: Production of rectified grape must concentrate

1. Can the Commission confirm the accuracy of the figures on market organization costs given in the report on reducing surpluses on the Community wine market by means of sugar production (rectified grape must concentrate) prepared by the Institute for agricultural policy, market research and economic sociology of the University of Bonn in October 1979?

If this information is correct, can the Commission state:

- (a) Whether it is still its long-term aim to allow wine only to be improved by the addition of rectified grape must concentrate instead of saccharose even though, as the abovementioned report indicates, this method is the most uneconomical one?
- (b) Whether it really believes that it is right to set up plants for the manufacture of rectified grape must

concentrate when this product can be marketed only with the help of permanent subsidies?

- (c) Whether it is likely that a reduction in stocks of other products of which there is a structural surplus (milk, fruit) will be encouraged by subsidies for sugar manufacture?

If not, what steps does the Commission intend to take to clarify this matter?

2. Can the Commission state what measures are to be taken to minimize the environmental pollution caused by the manufacture of rectified grape must concentrate using ion exchangers and whether and to what extent the Community will grant assistance for the construction of such production plants?

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

It is not, in principle, unreasonable to make wine from vine products rather than from sucrose.

The Commission considers that the study referred to by the Honourable Member is based on doubtful hypotheses, and for this reason it cannot accept the conclusions which are drawn in it.

It pointed out in the Action Programme 1979 to 1985 for the Progressive Establishment of Balance on the Market in Wine ⁽¹⁾ that 'prohibition of the use of sucrose for enrichment, which is the Commission's aim, will not be technically feasible until the necessary capacity for producing rectified concentrated must has been created'.

The Commission would also add that aid for concentrated grape musts and rectified concentrated grape musts for enrichment may be granted only 'if it appears necessary, on the basis of crop forecasts, to enrich a large proportion of production' ⁽²⁾.

Any projects for the establishment of units for producing rectified concentrated grape must could qualify for Community aid under Regulation (EEC) No 355/77 of 15 February 1977 on common measures to improve the conditions under which agricultural products are processed and marketed ⁽³⁾. No such project has so far been submitted to the Commission.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. COM(78) 260 final, 31. 7. 1978.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EEC) No 337/79, Article 14, OJ No L 54, 5. 3. 1979, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 51, 23. 2. 1977, p. 1.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 519/80**by Mr Curry****to the Commission of the European Communities***(9 June 1980)**Subject: Import duties*

Can the Commission explain why they feel it is necessary to impose a high level of duty on products which have a low level of self-sufficiency in the common market?

Examples:	Canned mandarin oranges	21·8 % (Full duty)
	Peaches	22 % (Full duty)
	Tuna	24 % (Full duty)
	Corned beef	26 % (Full duty)

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

In principle, the duties laid down in the Common Customs Tariff were fixed at the arithmetic mean of the duties which applied in the original customs territories before the establishment of the Community.

The following comments can be made on the examples mentioned by the Honourable Member:

- Canned mandarin oranges and common oranges: the Community is a major producer of these. Italy, the leading producer, is making efforts to reorganize its citrus-fruit production, replacing seed-bearing varieties (which include mandarins) by seedless varieties (Satsumas and clementines), which are more popular with consumers.

The duties charged on products processed from fruit and vegetables are the only means of protection, since no quantitative restrictions or import levies are applied (except for the levy on added sugar, which is generally of minor significance).

A GATT agreement provides for a 20 % reduction, spread over a period of eight years, in the duties on products falling within subheading 20.06 B II b) 3, which covers the products concerned. The Community has also agreed to an 80 % reduction in the Common Customs Tariff in respect of comminuted tinned oranges and mandarins. The following countries are concerned: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Israel. In the case of Turkey, the duty has been reduced to 20 %. No duty is charged on products from Greece and the ACP countries.

- Peaches: as regards customs duties on fresh peaches, the Commission feels that the present level is essential in order to maintain sufficient protection for Community growers. The higher prices at the beginning and end of the season make it possible to achieve a profit at present production costs: these prices could not be maintained without this element of protection against bulk imports of the product from non-member countries. The Community does not impose any quantitative restrictions in this sector.
- Tuna: at present there are no common import arrangements in respect of tuna. In accordance with the general rule, the Member States will retain their present systems. The 24 % rate for tinned tuna, bound under the GATT, has been fixed for many years in order to provide an adequate degree of protection for the Italian processing industry, which depends entirely on sources outside the Community for its raw material, and for France, which has a major tuna-processing and tuna-production industry.
- Corned beef: The 26 % customs duty in force in this sector has been bound under the GATT since the 1960s in order to protect the Community's beef/veal processing industry. The Community imports approximately 400 000 tonnes of beef/veal per year under international agreements. The aim of the protective rate is to allow the industry to supply itself from home sources and to remain competitive with imports from non-member countries.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 528/80
by Mr O'Connell
to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 June 1980)

Subject: Directive on quality of bathing water

It has become clear that the Directive on the quality of bathing water will not be effective if Member States choose to apply a narrow interpretation for definitions of the waters covered by the Directive.

In Ireland, residents of Kilrush are alarmed over the threat posed by a sewage scheme to nearby bathing waters. In reply to representations by the people of Kilrush the Commission replied that it did not 'seem appropriate for the Commission to comment on the action undertaken by the Irish Government'. Does the Commission not agree that it should pursue a much more dynamic approach regarding the implementation of this Directive? Would the Commission agree to undertake a detailed examination of the case presented by the residents of Kilrush who fear the Irish Government is failing to implement fully the Community Directive?

Answer given by Mr Natali on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

The Commission does not have sufficient information on the local situation to enable it to come to any conclusion on the complaints presented by the inhabitants of Kilrush.

It is always open to them to bring the matter formally to the attention of the Commission by means of a complaint. The Commission would then be able to study all the circumstances surrounding the works in question and decide whether or not the beach at Kilrush should be covered by the provisions of the Directive on the quality of bathing water.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 529/80

by Mr van Aerssen
to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 June 1980)

Subject: Deepening of the Lower Rhine

The Federal Transport Ministry passed on to the Commission the project for deepening the Lower Rhine as part of the improvement of European transport bottlenecks.

Can the Commission indicate when a decision will be taken on this project?

Answer given by Mr Burke on behalf of the Commission

(23 September 1980)

It is true that the Federal Minister of Transport quoted the Lower Rhine as an example of an inland waterway bottleneck and underlined the value of deepening this section of the Rhine in the preparations for the Commission's report to the Council on bottlenecks and possible solutions to this problem.

The Commission report will be presented shortly to the Council. Its aim is to inform the Council about traffic problems in networks of Community interest. The report will not contain assessments of particular projects.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 549/80

by Mr Caillavet

to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 June 1980)

Subject: Reduction in the proportion of Community tobacco used in manufactured products

The proportion of Community tobacco used in manufactured products, which was estimated at 30 % in the period 1967 to 1969 (i.e. before Community rules were applied), is now thought to be 25 %.

Can the Commission explain why an increasing quantity of European tobacco is exported or bought in by the intervention agencies, thus entailing additional costs for the EAGGF, at a time when imports of tobacco from third countries are steadily rising?

Does not the Commission agree that the premiums paid to buyers are insufficient to bridge the gap between world prices and Community prices and that the Community preference system is therefore no longer providing the protection it should?

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission

(23 September 1980)

1. The main characteristic of the Community and international markets in tobacco resides in the specific nature of manufacturers' requirements. These are not solely a function of the different varieties (for example American-type bright tobacco, dark tobacco, etc.) but also of the intrinsic characteristics of these varieties (for example neutral reaction tobacco, aromatic tobacco, high nicotine content tobacco, etc.). It follows that the balance between supply and demand on this market is closely related to the qualitative aspects of production. This explains why the Community sometimes exports and may even have a surplus of certain varieties and qualities of tobacco, although the total quantity it produces is less than internal demand. The soil and climatic conditions in the Community limit its production mainly to neutral reaction tobaccos used by the manufacturing industry as filler tobacco while imports are mainly aimed at satisfying the requirements in respect of aromatic or strongly flavoured tobaccos.

2. In view of the foregoing, it is difficult, in calculating the premium, to make an exact comparison between Community varieties and competing varieties on the world market; it is thus not possible to make a purely mathematical calculation of the amount of the premium in order to ensure Community preference. Moreover, the premium is also an essential factor, together with the prices policy, in steering Community production towards the varieties most in market demand.

To conclude, we would draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the fact that between 1970 and 1980 the premiums for the varieties which are most typical of the Community crop (Paraguay and Burley I) increased by a far greater percentage (146 % for Paraguay and 151 % for Burley) than the prices recorded on the world market for competing varieties (about 5 % on an annual basis). Consequently, the Commission considers that the Community preference has been ensured.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 560/80

by Mr Jürgens

to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 June 1980)

Subject: Surplus production of apples in the Community

1. Does the Commission feel that the inclusion of dessert apples in the system of countervailing duties is still out of the question, and, if so, why?

2. Does the Commission agree that the competitiveness of German fruit growers will be reduced as a result of measures to promote the conversion or replanting of apple orchards in Member States other than the Federal Republic of Germany, and what possibilities does it see for the restoration of equal conditions of competition?
3. What is the Commission's assessment of the danger of non-member countries increasing their sales of dessert apples on the Community market given the failure to conclude voluntary restraint agreements with apple-exporting countries in the southern hemisphere?
4. What steps has the Commission taken to date and what action will it take in future to deal with the problem of surplus apple production in the Community and to prevent a further rise in excess production?

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

1. In its Decisions on the monetary compensatory amounts, the Court of Justice has accepted monetary compensation only where this is necessary to protect the market organization and in particular the intervention system, which is an essential factor in sectors where differential compensatory amounts are applied.

As regards apples, intervention consists merely of the system of the withdrawal price, set at only about 50 % of the price normally obtained on the market, and this has always been the main reason why these products are not subject to monetary compensatory amounts.

For this reason and also because Commission policy is to work towards the dismantlement of monetary compensatory amounts wherever possible, the Commission does not consider that monetary compensatory amounts are necessary for apples.

2. The Commission is studying the problem at present together with the authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany. It will inform the Honourable Member of the outcome.

3. Before each marketing year, the Commission and the main supplier countries in the southern hemisphere consider estimates of these countries' exports to the Community. On the basis of this information and of estimates of Community production, and taking into account general price trends, the Commission decides whether or not to conclude or to attempt to conclude voluntary restraint agreements with suppliers.

It does not therefore think that there is a danger of non-member countries increasing their sales of apples on

the Community market beyond what the market can absorb without serious disruption.

4. The Commission would remind the Honourable Member of the two measures which it took in 1969 and 1976 ⁽¹⁾ on the reorganization of fruit production, which led to the grubbing of about 63 000 hectares of apple trees.

It would also point out that with an almost stable production potential, the harvest can vary considerably from one year to the next depending on the weather.

The Commission feels that too sharp a reduction in production potential might endanger apple supplies in the Community in years with bad harvests.

The Commission has also tried to adjust supply to consumers' needs by encouraging the setting up of producer groups, which have an important role to play, and by providing for preventive withdrawals of apples at the beginning of the marketing year in certain conditions.

It has also put forward a proposal to the Council, which has been accepted, for a smaller increase in the basic and buying-in prices for apples than for other fruit and vegetables, so as to discourage producers from extending their apple orchards without due consideration.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EEC) No 2517/69 of 9 December 1969 laying down certain measures for the reorganization of Community fruit production (OJ No L 318, 18. 12. 1969, p. 15).

Council Regulation (EEC) No 794/76 of 6 April 1976 laying down further measures for the reorganization of Community fruit production (OJ No L 93, 8. 4. 1976, p. 3).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 561/80**by Mr Jürgens****to the Commission of the European Communities***(9 June 1980)*

Subject: Harmonization of provisions governing the marketing of apples

1. What steps has the Commission taken to date and with what success to ensure that the Community quality control rules for apples are applied strictly right up to the retail stage?
2. Does the Commission agree that the exclusion of lower quality apples from the market helps to relieve pressure on the market and what further action does it propose to take to improve the present situation?
3. What are the effects on competition of the various rules on plant health and foodstuffs in the Member States which must be taken into account by apple growers, and when will these rules, which impose unequal burdens on fruit growers in the individual Member States, be harmonized?

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission*(23 September 1980)*

1. The Commission would remind the Honourable Member that quality control for apples and for all other fruit and vegetables which are subject to common quality standards is the sole responsibility of the authorities appointed for the purpose by the Member States.

The Commission has reminded the Member States on several occasions of the importance of the proper application of quality standards, whatever the destination of the product within the Community.

At present it is considering amending Regulation (EEC) No 2638/69 laying down additional provisions on quality control for fruit and vegetables marketed within the Community, so as to be kept better informed of measures adopted by the Member States in this sector.

2. The Commission agrees that it would be useful to relieve pressure on the market by excluding low-quality apples and has in fact taken the following measures in this direction.

— Since 1970 it has not permitted quality category III apples, as defined by the common quality standard, to be marketed for supply fresh to the consumer (this quality category is however available for industry);

— Market intervention by producer groups is at the same prices for category I as for category II products, and thus is an incentive to the groups to withdraw first the products which obtain the lower price, that is those of poorer quality;

— Preventive withdrawals, the principle of which was introduced into the Community rules in 1979 and whose aim is to withdraw some of the surpluses in the early months of the marketing year, cover quality II category products only.

3. There are still certain disparities in Member States' legislation regarding pesticide residues in and on fruit and vegetables. The Commission's staff, working with the Member States, is at present looking into ways in which this deficiency can be made good by provisions supplementing Council Directive 76/895/EEC of 23 November 1976 relating to the fixing of maximum levels for pesticide residues in and on fruit and vegetables ⁽¹⁾.

As regards legislation on protective measures against the introduction of harmful organisms on plants or plant products, in Council Directive 77/93/EEC of 21

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 340, 9. 12. 1976, p. 26.

December 1976 ⁽¹⁾, as amended by Council Directives 80/392/EEC and 80/393/EEC of 18 March 1980 ⁽²⁾, the Community set up a harmonized Community system applicable to intra-Community trade and to imports from non-member countries of plants and plant products

including apples and their reproductive material. The Directives also lay down certain conditions which have to be met with regard to production.

The Commission will consider, in the light of the working of this scheme, which came into force on 1 May 1980, the case for harmonized plant health measures applicable in respect of sales within the member countries as well.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 26, 31. 1. 1977, p. 20.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 100, 17. 4. 1980, pp. 32 and 35.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 581/80

by Mr Flanagan

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 June 1980)

Subject: Controversial weed-killers

There is considerable disquiet about weed-killers which contain 2,4,5-T, either alone or mixed with 2,4-D (the mixture which was the base for the US defoliants in Vietnam).

1. Did Holland and Belgium notify the Commission that they had banned the use of these weed-killers under agreements of 28 May 1969 and 5 March 1973?
2. Did the Commission notify the other Member States (and specifically Ireland) of the ban and warn of the apparent dangers involved in the use of these weed-killers?
3. In the enquiry which the Commission is to undertake on the weed-killer 2,4,5-T, will it be examining the alleged effects of 2,4,5-T, with its dioxin impurity, on miscarriages and birth deformities in humans and animals?
4. Does the Commission plan to submit any proposals, using urgent procedure, to the Council of Ministers for the banning of these weed-killers on Community territory?
5. If research has been undertaken by the Commission, are any results available?

Answer given by Mr Vredeling on behalf of the Commission

(23 September 1980)

1 and 2. Although the Netherlands did not formally notify the Commission in 1978 of the prohibition, Commission departments were aware of it through other normal information channels. The Commission is satisfied that the Netherlands' action was similarly known at the time to the competent authorities of other Member States, in particular Ireland.

According to the information available to the Commission, Belgium has not prohibited the use of herbicides containing 2,4,5-T.

3. Yes.

4. The Commission has already put in hand the review by its departments of all available evidence to establish a scientific basis for possible Community action. To this end, it formally referred the matter to the Scientific Committee for Pesticides on 8 May 1980.

Legislation providing the Community with the means to prohibit, if necessary, the marketing and use of hazardous or environmentally harmful plant protection products already exists and any proposal to apply this legislation with respect to 2,4,5-T is attendant upon the outcome of the abovementioned review.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 582/80

by Mr Cronin

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 June 1980)

Subject: Commission initiatives aimed at liberalizing trade in leather goods

Further to the answer to my Written Question No 1169/79 ⁽¹⁾, will the Commission provide information on the initiatives it is pursuing with the objective of liberalizing trade in the leather goods market given the restrictive trade practices of certain third countries in respect of raw material exports or imports of goods made of leather which have created tensions in the world's free markets?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 98, 21. 4. 1980, p. 13.

Answer given by Mr Haferkamp on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

The Commission would like to assure the Honourable Member that it is still closely following the evolution of the situation of the world market of raw hides and skins and leather articles.

The Community is continuing in its efforts in aiming to maintain free trade in the area of leather goods. To this end, the Commission is continuing contacts and pursuing discussions with third countries in relation to existing limitations on imports of these products, in order to avoid possible new limitations and to achieve progressive elimination of the existing barriers.

With regard to export restrictions in respect of hides and skins as practised by certain third countries, the lifting of the prohibition by Argentina and also the taking of more lenient measures by Brazil recently, both being important suppliers in the world hide market, have certainly improved the situation of this market. The Community is interested in maintaining this result and in improving the possibility of a better access to this commodity. It is in any case worthwhile noting that in relation to the same period this time last year, the prices for raw skins and hides on the world market and the market tension then existing appear strongly reduced.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 593/80

by Mr Moreland

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 June 1980)

Subject: Draft Regulation on the harmonization of certain social provisions relating to goods transported by inland waterway

In evidence to the House of Lords' Select Committee on the European Communities representatives of the United Kingdom Department of the Environment claimed that if all the

provisions of the Regulation were applied in the United Kingdom, costs to operators would rise by an average of 40 % and the Regulation would cause a move to other modes of transport ⁽¹⁾.

Does the Commission agree with these claims?

Does the Commission intend to propose derogations to the Regulation to reflect the obvious differences between United Kingdom waterways and continental waterways and between the large and small waterways of the Community?

⁽¹⁾ Page 3 of the 36th Report of the House of Lords, Session 1979/80, paragraph 11.

Answer given by Mr Burke on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

While a reading of the House of Lords' Select Committee report ⁽¹⁾ shows that statements in evidence were made as mentioned by the Honourable Member, the Commission itself does not possess factual material establishing the figures used or conclusions drawn, and is not able to comment on the accuracy or pertinence of those statements.

As to the relative position of different transport modes, one of the purposes of the Council's decision on the harmonization of certain provisions affecting competition in transport by rail, road and inland waterway of 13 May 1965 ⁽²⁾, from which proposed Regulations on working conditions stem, was to harmonize the conditions of competition by eliminating distortions of competition both within each mode of transport and between the various modes of transport.

⁽¹⁾ Select Committee on the European Communities, Session 1979/80, 36th Report.

⁽²⁾ OJ No 88, 24. 5. 1965, p. 67.

The proposal for a Council Regulation on the harmonization of certain social provisions relating to goods transported by inland waterway ⁽³⁾, as amended by the proposal of 16 August 1979 ⁽⁴⁾ was the subject of the Parliament's report and resolution of 7 March 1977 ⁽⁵⁾.

As to possible derogations, the Commission points out that the general exemption for vessels of under 150 tonnes in Article 4 of the proposed Regulation would exclude many of the inland waterway vessels used in the United Kingdom. Given the present stage of discussion of this proposal in the Council, it would be premature to forecast the definitions and any derogations that may finally be arrived at.

⁽³⁾ OJ No C 259, 12. 11. 1975, p. 2.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ No C 206, 16. 8. 1979, p. 3.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ No C 57, 7. 3. 1977, p. 9.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 609/80

by Mr Seal

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 June 1980)

Subject: Belgian textile development plan

Is the Commission aware that the Belgian Minister for Economic Affairs has published a five-year development plan for the textile industry?

Can it give details of the content of the plan and indicate whether or not it considers the proposals to be in conflict with the Treaty of Rome? What is the Commission's attitude to the plan?

Answer given by Mr Vouel on behalf of the Commission*(23 September 1980)*

The Belgian authorities have repeatedly informed the Commission that they are preparing a programme for restructuring the textiles and clothing industry.

The programme will be sent to the Commission once it is complete. If it provides for assistance from public funds, the Commission will have to be notified in accordance with the rules of the EEC Treaty governing public aid. The Belgian Government has assured the Commission that this will be done.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 622/80**by Mrs von Alemann****to the Commission of the European Communities***(16 June 1980)*

Subject: Use of natural gas

The Commission has adopted a number of texts recommending increased use of natural gas as a source of energy.

Does the Commission intend to present specific proposals to promote this development?

Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

The Honourable Member is referred to the 'Communication from the Commission to the Council concerning Community action in the natural gas supply sector' ⁽¹⁾ which sets out guidelines for Commission policy in the natural gas sector.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. COM(80) 295, sent to Parliament on 11 June 1980.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 632/80**by Mr Vernimmen****to the Commission of the European Communities***(16 June 1980)*

Subject: Recognition of the eligibility of the Aalst district for regional aid

industrial zones with the help of substantial state aid and diversify its industrial structure.

The expansion legislation of 1959, and subsequent legislation, provided the district of Aalst with interesting opportunities to modernize its infrastructure, set up new

It would have a paralysing effect on this region if it were now to be deleted from the list of regions entitled to receive regional aid.

All the economic indicators underline the fact that the Aalst district, with its 263 571 inhabitants, was still a problem area as at 1 January 1978. In 1977, it had:

- a net emigration of 387 people,
- an employment rate of only 62.4% indicating a downwards trend compared with 63.3% in 1970.

Thus, after the Thuin and Borgworm district, Aalst has the lowest employment rate in Belgium as a whole (90.9%) and in the Flemish region (84.2%).

In passing, I should point out that the employment situation in Flanders is as bad as in Wallonia: the true employment rate in Flanders in 1977 – 84% – was as high, or rather as low, as in the Walloon region.

The average income in the district of Aalst was also considerably lower than the Belgian average.

Does the Commission not feel, therefore, that these arguments are sufficient justification for problem area status being retained for the district of Aalst?

Answer given by Mr Vouel on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

At the present stage in the procedure under Article 93 of the EEC Treaty for examining the eligibility of regions in Belgium for regional aid (a necessary prerequisite to the grant of any assistance from the European Regional Development Fund) the Commission has not yet taken any decision concerning the district of Aalst. It is not, therefore, in a position at the moment to answer the Honourable Member's question.

It would point out however that, contrary to what is implied in the question, the district of Aalst was not recognized as an area eligible for assistance by the Commission in its Decision of 26 April 1972 relating to the Belgian regional aid system. The only areas in the district deemed eligible were a number of communes situated in the immediate vicinity of, and regarded as being socially and economically dependent on, the district of Oudenaarde.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 647/80

by Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 June 1980)

Subject: Production capacity in the car industry

1. Can the Commission provide information about present production capacity of the car industry in the Community, in the three applicant States and in other OECD countries?

Does it have any information regarding plans for expanding production capacity?

2. Can the Commission comment on the probable relationship between this production capacity and demand, which in many areas is not capable of much greater expansion, and would it conclude, as I do, that the future will bring surplus capacity and therefore loss of jobs?

3. Does the Commission share my opinion that, in view of the key role occupied by the car industry in the development of the economies of the Community and entire regions, the industry should be required to provide information about new investments in the Community, and that a Community industrial policy is long overdue for this sector?

Does the Commission agree that it is ridiculous to wait until damage and upheavals occur in a specific branch of industry before coming forward as a Community with emergency plans?

Answer given by Mr Davignon on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

1. The Commission has no specific information on current production capacity in the Community or in other countries. It would also be difficult to calculate capacity from any information that might be available on the scale of investments in production facilities, since capacity depends on the utilization of such investments in relation to (a) the quality and quantity aspects of demand and (b) working conditions.

Information is provided indirectly by production levels, which are a reliable indicator because of the upward trend of demand in recent years. The Honourable Member is referred to the table below which gives production levels for OECD countries since 1970.

2. The Commission realizes that a number of medium-term forecasts show a probable slackening of demand in certain markets, including Europe. But the car market is increasingly becoming a world market and forecasts do not, overall, appear to be pessimistic about world demand. It is therefore essential for European firms to have the will, and the ability, to remain highly competitive, otherwise they might not keep their share of

the market and might consequently no longer be able to play their major role as providers of industrial employment. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's answer to Written Question No 1664/79 by Mr Debré ⁽¹⁾.

3. With the exception of the information which it is empowered to request in certain cases which are subject to the Treaty provisions on State aids, the Commission has no legal power to introduce compulsory investment declaration by the motor industry. Nor does the Commission intend in the near future to propose that the Council should confer such powers upon it.

As Mr Davignon told the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs on 5 June, the Commission is watching the situation to ensure that the European motor industry retains its place in the economy and as an employer. The Commission has undertaken to submit a paper containing detailed and more precise information to the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 150, 18. 6. 1980, p. 21.

Car and commercial vehicle production of the principal producing countries

1. Cars

	('000)		
	1970	1973/74(*)	1978/79(*)
Federal Republic of Germany	3 529	3 245	3 912
France	2 245	2 783	3 160
Italy	1 707	1 727	1 495
United Kingdom	1 641	1 640	1 147
Belgium ⁽¹⁾	764	863	1 044
Netherlands	67	95	91 ⁽²⁾
EUR-9	9 953	10 353	10 849
Japan	3 179	4 202	6 076
USA	6 550	8 496	8 805
Other	3 529	4 551	5 906
World	23 211	27 602	31 636

(*) annual average.

⁽¹⁾ assembly.

⁽²⁾ estimate.

2. Commercial vehicles

('000)

	1970	1973	1978/79 (*)
Federal Republic of Germany	314	299	307
France	292	393	395
Italy	134	135	149
United Kingdom	458	417	396
Belgium	27	38	22 ⁽¹⁾
Netherlands	12	13	11 ⁽¹⁾
EUR - 9	1 237	1 295	1 280
Japan	2 110	2 612	3 377
USA	1 734	3 014	3 382
Other	1 400	1 890	2 485 ⁽¹⁾
World	6 476	8 812	10 524

(*) annual average (estimate).

⁽¹⁾ 1978 figure.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 649/80

by Mrs Weber

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 June 1980)

Subject: Directive on asbestos

In 1977 the European Parliament's Committee on Public Health drew up an own-initiative report on the health risks of asbestos and invited the Commission to prepare a Directive on the use of asbestos, a substance which is known to be carcinogenic even though industry denies the fact.

1. What progress has the Commission made in its work on this question?
2. Has the Commission made enquiries to ascertain whether any research is being carried out on alternative products?
3. Does the Commission have any information regarding:
 - the quantity of asbestos used in the Community?
 - products which contain asbestos?
 - the number of employees or users who have developed cancer after inhaling asbestos dust?
4. In the absence of any Directive, have the Member States taken measures to provide better protection and information for employees and consumers with regard to the health risks of asbestos?

Answer given by Mr Vredeling on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

The Commission has addressed certain aspects of points 1, 3 and 4 in its reply to Written Question No 838/79 by Mr Boyes ⁽¹⁾. The following additional information covers new elements raised in the present question:

1. On 7 March 1980 the Commission submitted to the Council a proposal limiting the placing on the market and use of asbestos ⁽²⁾. The Commission further more intends to submit to the Council in the

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 178, 16. 7. 1980, p. 2.⁽²⁾ OJ No C 78, 28. 3. 1980, p. 10.

- near future a specific proposal for a Directive to protect the worker from harmful exposure to asbestos.
2. The Commission is aware that much research is being carried out on asbestos substitutes. To date it has not been demonstrated conclusively that these substitutes are safer than asbestos.
 3. In the absence of detailed statistics, the Commission is at present not in a position to indicate the total number of workers who have suffered cancer as a result of the inhalation of asbestos dust. However, the latter of the Commission's two proposals referred to under point 1 will provide the setting up of a register for asbestos-related diseases.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 650/80

by Mr Hänsch

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 June 1980)

Subject: Aid to North Rhine-Westphalia from the Regional and Social Funds

1. How much aid does North Rhine-Westphalia receive from the Regional and Social Funds?
2. To which undertakings does the aid goes?

Answer given by Mr Giolitti on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

1. From 1975, the year in which the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was established, to May 1980, the Commission granted Fund assistance totalling DM 43·10 million to investment projects in North Rhine-Westphalia.

The Commission does not possess the necessary information on the regional breakdown of assistance granted from the European Social Fund (ESF), since Member States have not as yet been required to provide details of the distribution of assistance between regions and areas.

2. In the case of ERDF assistance to investment in industry and commerce, projects are eligible only if they involve investments in industrial, craft or service activities which are economically sound, which benefit from State regional aids and which satisfy certain criteria (amount of investment, creation or maintenance of jobs). In addition, the investments must form part of a regional development programme that permits an assessment of

their contributions to economic development (Articles 4 (1) (a), 5 and 6 of the Fund Regulation ⁽¹⁾).

In the case of North Rhine-Westphalia, the 'regional action programmes' for the following areas satisfy these requirements:

- Nördliches Ruhrgebiet–Westmünsterland–Kleve;
- Nordeifel–Grenzraum Aachen;
- Ostwestfalen–Oberbergisches Land.

As stated in the answer to Written Question No 455/79 ⁽²⁾, the details of each grant approved by the ESF are published in the Annual Report on the Activities of the Fund.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EEC) No 724/75 of 18 March 1975 (OJ No L 73, 21. 3. 1975), as amended by Regulation (EEC) No 214/79 of 6 February 1979 (OJ No L 35, 9. 2. 1979, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 31, 3. 12. 1979, p. 5.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 656/80**by Mr Seal****to the Commission of the European Communities***(20 June 1980)*

Subject: Community import surveillance system

Does the Commission operate an independent check on the implementation by Member States of the Community import surveillance system?

Answer given by Mr Haferkamp on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

A number of Community Regulations provide for the institution, according to various procedures, of surveillance of import trends in certain economic sectors. The authorities of the Member States are responsible for running these surveillance systems in accordance with the Regulations in question; this gives rise to an on-going exchange of information between the Member States and the Commission. However, while there is close cooperation between the Commission and the national authorities in this field, the Commission does not operate an independent check on the activities of the Member States' departments.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 658/80**by Mr Seal****to the Commission of the European Communities***(20 June 1980)*

Subject: Dumping of electric motors from Eastern Europe

Could the Commission give details of the price undertakings given by Eastern European suppliers of electric motors following Commission Decision 80/252/EEC? ⁽¹⁾

Why are different undertakings given to different Member States when the anti-dumping duty, for which the undertakings are a substitute, is applied uniformly? Is this not likely to lead to distortion of the market in electric motors within the Community?

In view of the continuing disquiet of electric motor manufacturers (see 'Financial Times' 16 May 1980) what further action does the Commission intend to take?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 53, 27. 2. 1980, p. 21.

Answer given by Mr Haferkamp on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

1. The Commission regrets that it is unable to publish details of undertakings given by East European exporters under the anti-dumping procedure concerning imports into the Community of certain standardized

multi-phase electric motors, since such undertakings, which relate to the prices which these exporters charge their importers, are by nature confidential.

Under Article 8 (2) (a) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3017/79 of 20 December 1979 ⁽¹⁾ on protection against dumped or subsidized imports from countries not members of the European Economic Community, neither the Council, the Commission, the Member States nor the officials of any of these may divulge information concerning such undertakings.

2. The object of increasing the minimum import prices fixed in the undertakings given by the various exporters is to eliminate the injurious effects suffered by Community producers. As the injury varies from one Member State to another, it is normal that the minimum

price levels should vary according to the import markets concerned.

In the case of undertakings, a modulated, flexible solution is feasible. It is clearly not so in the case of the application of an anti-dumping duty, given the uniform nature of the Common Customs Tariff.

3. The Commission would assure the Honourable Member that, in accordance with Article 10 (5) of the abovementioned Regulation, it will verify that such undertakings are strictly fulfilled. If the Commission finds that the undertakings have not had an effect on the market and therefore have not eliminated the injury to Community producers, a proposal may be made for their amendment or a decision taken concerning their termination.

In the latter case, it would be for the Commission to take the appropriate measures.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 339, 31. 12. 1979, p. 1.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 660/80

by Lord O'Hagan

to the Commission of the European Communities

(20 June 1980)

Subject: Price for beef

The Council, in its defence in Case 49/79 ⁽¹⁾, stated that the guide price for beef, laid down in units of account, 'is the common price which corresponds to the common agricultural policy'. It then claimed that 'in settling representative rates under Regulations No 129/62/EEC ⁽²⁾ and (EEC) No 2543/73 ⁽³⁾ it is allowed wide discretion'.

Does the Commission consider that the Council has the wide discretion it claims to fix widely differing national prices for beef, as it has over the past several years, under an agricultural regime based upon a common price throughout the common market?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 112, 5. 5. 1979, p. 10 and OJ No C 76, 26. 3. 1980, p. 5.

⁽²⁾ OJ No 106, 30. 12. 1962, p. 2553/62.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 263, 19. 9. 1973, p. 1.

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

Setting representative rates which are not in line with economic reality disrupts the unity of the market. This is why the Commission has repeatedly made proposals to achieve the convergence this requires. The Commission is glad that the decisions taken by the Council and the greater degree of monetary stability since the European Monetary System was set up have enabled a good number of the problems arising, at any rate in connection with Case 49/79, to be solved.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 676/80
by Mrs Lizin
to the Commission of the European Communities
(20 June 1980)

Subject: Improvement of the conditions under which agricultural products are processed and marketed

Has the Commission received information from Belgium on the application of Council Regulation (EEC) No 355/77 ⁽¹⁾?

Can the Commission say to what extent the development of the specific programmes provided for in Articles 2 and 3 of the Regulation is in accordance with the Commission's objectives for the development of a policy on the marketing of agricultural products? In particular, is the Commission aware of the regional disparities created by the application of this Regulation in Belgium?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 51, 23. 2. 1977, p. 1.

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission
(24 September 1980)

The Commission has been informed about the application of Council Regulation (EEC) No 355/77 in Belgium.

The Belgian Government has:

- presented to the Commission four programmes covering the entire country for the following sectors: milk, eggs and poultry, fruit and vegetables (auction sales), potatoes;
- announced that a number of other programmes are being prepared, the intention being to cover all of Belgium's agriculture.

The four programmes submitted, two of which have already been approved, involve no disparity between regions in treatment of operators. Furthermore, pursuant to Article 13 of the Regulation, the Belgian Government has submitted applications for aid for a number of projects, which have resulted, in the first two years of application of Council Regulation (EEC) No 355/77 (1978 and 1979), in aid from the Fund being allocated in a balanced way throughout Belgium.

In the opinion of the Commission there would seem to be no such regional disparities as referred to by the Honourable Member.

Indeed, the Commission considers that the definition of 'specific programmes' laid down in Articles 2 and 3 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 355/77, this being the definition actually proposed by the Commission to the Council, constitutes a realistic and suitable basis for improving structures for processing and marketing agricultural products.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 680/80**by Mr John D. Taylor****to the Commission of the European Communities***(20 June 1980)*

Subject: Where is Northern Ireland?

Is it correct that the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ireland to the Community has made representations to use in all references and correspondence the term 'Ireland' when referring to the nation in the southern part of the island of Ireland? Has the Commission agreed to these representations and have the Commission staff been instructed accordingly?

Is the Commission aware that such a decision is offensive to Community electors in Northern Ireland? The Northern Irish electorate is over 1 million voters. Since Northern Ireland is not in England; Wales or Scotland and, if the term Ireland is now to be restricted to the southern part of the Irish island where, in Commission terminology, is Northern Ireland?

Answer given by Mr Jenkins on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

The Commission designates the Member States by the names set out in the Treaties establishing the Communities. The Commission has no discretion in the matter. In all the relevant provisions of the Treaties establishing the European Communities reference is made to 'Ireland'.

The United Kingdom acceded to the Treaties in 1973 under the title of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 690/80**by Mr Damseaux****to the Commission of the European Communities***(4 July 1980)*

Subject: Chicken war

Is there a danger that the 'chicken war' between the United States and the Community may break out afresh inasmuch as the latter is exporting chickens to the traditionally American markets of East Asia?

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

It is true that a number of East Asian countries (Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore) represent important export markets for American chickens. In 1979 these three countries imported a total of 10 209 tonnes of fowls and 56 333 tonnes of poultrymeat from the United States.

Community exporters also have access to these markets, which are of particular interest since demand is strengthening as populations with appreciable purchasing power expand rapidly. In 1979 the Community exported a total of 890 tonnes of fowls and 5 664 tonnes of poultrymeat to the three countries in question, Singapore and Hong Kong being the main customers. The poultrymeat exports from the Community consist almost entirely of wings and edible offals, the commercial value of which is not very high but for which there is a particular demand in Hong Kong and Singapore.

In view of this situation, the Commission does not feel that there is any danger at present of the trade difficulties to which the Honourable Member refers arising once again between the Community and the United States.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 700/80

by Mr Damseaux

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 July 1980)

Subject: Multifibre Arrangement

Does the Commission share the view expressed in the annual report of the firm 'Enka Glanzstoff' that, after the slight recovery in 1979, further deterioration in the West's textile industry is to be expected in view of the short-term economic outlook, the recession in the United States and the increase in the volume of imports following the extension of the Multifibre Arrangement.

Answer given by Mr Davignon on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

The Commission considers that sectoral forecasts of the kind made in the Enka Report fall within the province of private experts or businessmen. It regards such forecasts as one factor in evaluating the economic position of a given sector.

It should be noted that short-term economic outlook for the textile fibre industry referred to in the report is seen as the result of the general economic situation for 1980, and it is difficult to express a longer-term view on this situation.

It must be noted that the extension of the Multifibre Arrangement has not yet been negotiated and that, in any case, it will only take effect in 1982. The bilateral agreements which currently limit the growth of textile imports from certain non-member countries expire at the end of 1982. No link can therefore yet be established between the content of these future agreements or arrangements and the medium-term trend of the Community market for synthetic fibres.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 702/80**by Mr Damseaux****to the Commission of the European Communities***(4 July 1980)*

Subject: Aid to manufacturers of animal feedingstuffs using peas and field beans produced in the Community

Regulation (EEC) No 1119/78 ⁽¹⁾ provides for the granting of aid to the manufacturers of animal feedingstuffs using peas and field beans produced in the Community. The farmers benefit indirectly from this aid because of the obligation on the manufacturers to conclude contracts with them stipulating observance of a minimum price.

1. How much has Community production of peas and field beans increased following the granting of Community aid?
2. What quantities of peas and field beans in each of the Member States have benefited from such aid?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 142, 30. 5. 1978, p. 8 amending OJ No L 259, 22. 9. 1978, p. 32.

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

1. The measures provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 1119/78 apply to only some of the peas and field beans grown in the Community, i.e. those used by feed manufacturers in respect of which a minimum price has been paid to growers. The Commission's official statistics, on the other hand, relate to total production of dried peas and field beans. These statistics show an increase in production of dried peas in 1979 and a decrease in production of field beans.

EUR-9, production ('000 tonnes)

	1977	1978	1979
Dried peas	224·2	232·7	252·5
Field beans	373·2	443·1	410·8

Source: SOEC

2. There is a certain time-lag before the Commission receives figures relating to the quantities of peas and field beans for which aid has been granted. However, the situation can also be assessed on the basis of aid applications. The figures are as follows:

Quantities in respect of which aid was applied for under Regulation (EEC) No 1119/78 during the 1978/79 marketing year (tonnes)

	Peas	Field beans
Federal Republic of Germany	0	12 177
France	6 022	3 584
Italy	0	12 917
Netherlands	40 170	51 971
BLEU	25 141	5 065
United Kingdom	2 591	2 304
Ireland	0	0
Denmark	1 981	590
EUR-9	75 905	88 608

Source: Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture.

The figures so far available for 1979/80 indicate similar quantities of field beans and an increase to about 150 000 tonnes for peas.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 717/80

by Mr Lalor

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 July 1980)

Subject: Third country imports of fish into the Community

1. Will the Commission provide information on the extent of third country imports of fish into EEC countries to date in 1980 compared with 1979?
2. Will the Commission also provide information on the extent of withdrawals of fish from the Community market in 1980 to date and for the same period in 1979?

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

1. Official statistics for the first two months of this year for imports of fish (fresh, frozen, salted and smoked) from third countries into the Community show an increase of about 25 % over the same period last year and reached about 106 000 tonnes. Provisional figures for the first four months of the year show an increase of imports of 20 %.
2. According to information from Member States about 12 500 tonnes of fish were withdrawn at Community withdrawal prices in the first four months of this year. The main species withdrawn in both periods were anchovies, mackerel and whiting.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 718/80**by Mr Lalor****to the Commission of the European Communities***(4 July 1980)*

Subject: Collection of MCA's on consignment of live cattle from Ireland to UK

Due to a 'go slow' by UK customs, the customs' T5 forms for the consignment of 625 cattle from Ireland were not stamped until 12 April 1979, although the cattle were exported on 7 April 1979. A copy of Mersey Harbour Board's portal dues account establishing the time and date of arrival of the consignment was submitted to the CAP Division Customs and Excise on 8 April. The amount of subsidy payable to traders was at the rate in operation on 12 April 1979. As the Commission is aware, there is a considerable reduction, viz. £4·786 per 100 kilograms, in the amount of subsidy payable between 7 and 12 April.

1. Does the Commission approve of this unjust type of situation?
2. Was it consulted by the respective national authorities on the matter?
3. Does it not agree that it is impossible for exporters to be aware of industrial unrest of this nature?

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

1. The matter was one for determination by the United Kingdom authorities according to national provisions.
2. The Commission was not consulted by the United Kingdom authorities but representations were made subsequently by the Irish authorities.
3. The Commission can agree that it might be impossible for an exporter to be aware of certain types of industrial action but it is understood that, in this case, the exporter's agents were aware of the industrial action in question in advance of shipment.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 729/80**by Mrs Fullet****to the Commission of the European Communities***(4 July 1980)*

Subject: Occupational diseases

1. Could the Commission furnish a list of the occupational diseases currently recognized by all the Community Member States?
2. Can it indicate the measures taken by the Member States in the light of this list?

Answer given by Mr Vredeling on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

Detailed information on the list of occupational diseases currently recognized by all Member States is given in the reports concerning the action taken by the Member States pursuant to the EEC recommendations of 23 July 1962 and 20 July 1966 on the conditions governing compensation to persons suffering from occupational diseases ⁽¹⁾. These reports were based on the replies to questionnaires drawn up by the Commission.

It should be noted that the Commission intends to ask the Member States once again about their recent action pursuant to the abovementioned recommendations. It should also be stressed that in some Member States the lists used for the purposes of fixing compensation do not strictly match those used for prevention purposes.

⁽¹⁾ Reports numbered SEC(73) 2015 final of 30. 5. 1973 and V/1310/75 of 1. 10. 1975 respectively.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 738/80**by Mr Loo****to the Commission of the European Communities***(4 July 1980)*

Subject: Community aid for the protection and defence of Mediterranean forests

Further to my Written Question No 662/79 ⁽¹⁾ to the Council of the European Communities, I was told that allowance could not be made in the Regulation for the ecological function *per se* of Mediterranean forests and that the appropriations in the regulation must be used to finance programmes which 'contribute to the improvement of agricultural structures and especially of soil and water conservation without detriment to the other aspects of the environment'.

Despite the fact that the Commission is carrying out studies with a view to amending the Community Regulation to include the ecological function, the French Government is still operating on the basis of the outline

programme which it has drawn up and from which the coastal regions are excluded.

With a view to including protection of regions such as the Marseilles coastline or the coastal areas of Corsica in any future activities, I should like to know:

1. What progress the Commission has made in its studies aimed at amending Regulation (EEC) No 269/79 ⁽²⁾ to include the ecological function of the Mediterranean forests?
2. Once the Community Regulation has been amended in this way, how can the Commission encourage the Member States, and in particular France, to extend the geographical zones provided for in its outline programme?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 27, 4. 2. 1980, p. 9.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 38, 14. 2. 1979, p. 1.

Answer given by Mr Gundelach on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

1. The Commission has no plans at present to amend Council Regulation (EEC) No 269/79 along the lines suggested by the Honourable Member.

As stated by the Council in its answer to the Honourable Member's Written Question No 662/79, allowance can still not be made in the Regulation for the purely ecological function of woodlands in Mediterranean areas.

The Commission does intend to carry out studies on closer links with the environment, and the findings may well be useful in the areas mentioned and in similar cases.

2. If either of the Member States concerned so wishes, it may apply to the Commission for approval of an amendment to its outline programme pursuant to Article 5 of the Regulation.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 739/80

by Mrs Ewing

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 July 1980)

Subject: Remuneration of nurses

Will the Commission, in view of the proposed harmonization of the training of nurses in the Community, comment on the discrimination practised against nurses in Scotland and in the United Kingdom in regard to the low remuneration they receive in comparison with certain other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Vredeling on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

Contemporaneously with Council Directive 77/452/EEC of 27 June 1977 concerning the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates, and other evidence of the formal qualification of nurses responsible for general care ⁽¹⁾ the Council adopted Directive 77/453/EEC ⁽²⁾ aiming at laying down provisions in order to coordinate the conditions governing the training of nurses responsible for general care. The two Directives are based on Articles 49, 57, 66 and 253 of the EEC Treaty and cover both self-employed and salaried nurses.

The adoption of these Directives, which are meant to facilitate as far as possible the free movement of professional persons within the Community, does not imply, however, that working conditions are equalized within the Community as a whole. In fact a glance at the publications of the Statistical Office of the Community on wages and labour cost teaches that wide pay differentials exist between Member States in practically all branches of activity. This situation is quite comprehensible since the pay structures depend to a great extent on the national labour market. EEC Directives as the two mentioned above might eventually help to create a uniform labour market in the EEC with the result that pay rates might tend to approach each other for the same or similar activities. In the present and foreseeable situation, however, the solution to the question posed has to be found within the British system of labour relations.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 176, 15. 7. 1977, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 176, 15. 7. 1977, p. 8.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 743/80

by Mrs Ewing

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 July 1980)

Subject: Land purchase of schools in the Highlands of Scotland

1. Is the Commission aware of the recent decision by the British Government that the Highland Regional Council Education Committee in Scotland will have to purchase its own

school properties from Highland landowners on the expiry of the leases of these properties and that this will have a dire effect on the finances of the Education Authority, causing it serious difficulties in providing proper educational facilities in the area?

2. In view of the Commission's responsibilities under Article 128 of the EEC Treaty for ensuring the harmonious development of the common market and the importance in this connection of ensuring that education in an already disadvantaged region is not worsened, will the Commission take appropriate action, including the making of grants from the non-quota section of the European Regional Development Fund?

Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the Commission

(24 September 1980)

1. The Commission shares the concern of the Honourable Member to preserve adequate educational facilities in the less advantaged areas of the Community.

2. The Commission does not consider that action to compensate for the effects of a national decision regarding land purchase come within its responsibilities under Article 128 of the EEC Treaty concerning general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy.

The non-quota sector of the European Regional Development Fund can only be used to finance actions corresponding to the principles established by Article 13 of the regulations of the Regional Fund Regulation ⁽¹⁾. The financing of actions of the type foreseen by the Honourable Member do not *a priori* fit into this framework.

⁽¹⁾ Consolidated version of Council Regulation (EEC) No 724/75 of 18 March 1975 establishing a European Regional Development Fund – OJ No C 36, 9. 2. 1979, p. 12.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 764/80

by Mrs Viehoff

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 July 1980)

Subject: Slippage of nuclear programmes

In point 10 (page 3) of its communication to the Council of 8 May 1980 COM(80) 235 final) the Commission observes: 'The continuing slippage of nuclear programmes remains a further source of concern'. Could it indicate the reasons for this continuing slippage?

Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the Commission

(23 September 1980)

There are various reasons, which differ from country to country, for the slippage of nuclear programmes in some Member States referred to in document COM(80) 235, point 10. They can be broadly summarized as follows:

- reduction in electricity requirements compared with 1974 forecasts as a result of the recession;
- extension of administrative procedures which has caused delays in the granting of building permits and the continuation of building;
- opposition by some sections of the public and certain local authorities to the siting of nuclear power stations.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 788/80**by Mr Remilly****to the Commission of the European Communities***(10 July 1980)*

Subject: The mandate given to the Commission by the Council to determine structural modifications to the common policies

Under the mandate it has received from the Council to determine structural modifications to the common policies, does the Commission intend to propose the preservation of the fundamental achievements of the common policies and in particular of the common agricultural policy?

When does it expect its first deliberations to bear fruit?

Answer given by Mr Jenkins on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

The Council, in the conclusions to its meeting of 29 and 30 May 1980, gave the Commission the mandate to examine the development of Community policies with a view to resolving recent problems through structural change. The conclusions specified that the examination should not call into question the common financial responsibility of policies financed from the Community's own resources, nor the basic principles of the common agricultural policy.

The Council has asked the Commission to fulfil its mandate by 30 June 1981.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 813/80**by Mrs Boot****to the Commission of the European Communities***(10 July 1980)*

Subject: Study of the introduction of regional quotas to replace national quotas as the distribution key for allocating aid from the ERDF

1. Does the Commission admit that national criteria, as opposed to Community criteria, are still used for deciding on the allocation of resources from the European Regional Development Fund?
2. To what extent is the allocation of aid from the ERDF based on the results of studies?
3. Is the Commission prepared to examine the consequences of replacing national quotas by regional quotas as the basis for allocating resources from the ERDF and to provide an indication of the advantages and disadvantages of such a change?
4. Will the Commission also take account of the fact that regional quotas should be determined on the basis of Community criteria?

Answer given by Mr Giolitti on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

1. The national quotas laid down in Article 2 of the Fund Regulation ⁽¹⁾ reflect the relative situation of the regions as compared on a Community-wide basis. The distribution of Fund resources among the various regions of a single State is largely determined by the Member States themselves on the basis of their regional aid systems, in accordance with Article 3 (1) of the Regulation.
2. Assistance from the Fund is decided on by the Commission on the basis of the criteria laid down in Article 5 of the Fund Regulation.
3. The Commission does not exclude the possibility of carrying out an analysis of the consequences of replacing the national quotas by regional quotas as a basis for distributing the ERDF resources. If such an analysis were undertaken, the Commission would not fail to inform the Honourable Member of the results.
4. The Commission could not comment on the question whether regional quotas are needed until such time as an analysis of this kind has been carried out.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EEC) No 724/75, as amended by Regulation (EEC) No 214/79: OJ No C 36, 9. 2. 1979, p. 12.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 843/80**by Mr Provan****to the Commission of the European Communities***(11 July 1980)*

Subject: Discrimination against Community-produced spirituous beverages by the American authorities

What recent representations has the EEC Commission made to the American authorities about the continued application of this Act, which discriminates against Community-produced spirituous beverages?

Answer given by Mr Haferkamp on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

Negotiations on the question of government procurement practices, such as the Buy-American Act of 1933, during the multilateral trade negotiations resulted in a GATT code which will take effect from 1 January 1981. In addition, in an exchange of letters with the US authorities, the Commission expressed concern regarding the extension of preferences. Subsequently the question was raised by the Commission during a visit by Governor Asken, the US trade representative in February 1980. Also, formal protests were made to the US administration, on 5 June 1980 against Buy-American legislation passed by the State of New York, and on 18 June against a similar measure proposed in California; in each case attention was drawn to the potential damage to Community trade.

The application of Buy-American rules may have an impact on Community-produced spirituous beverages through purchases by the Defence Department. In fact, purchases by governments for defence contracts are excluded from the GATT code. To the knowledge of the Commission's services the impact of the measures on this trade is small.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 844/80**by Mr Provan****to the Commission of the European Communities***(11 July 1980)*

Subject: Import of certain Community-bottled spirituous beverages into New Zealand

What recent representations has the EEC Commission made to the New Zealand authorities about its restrictive import-licensing procedures, which prevent the import of certain Community-bottled spirituous beverages?

Answer given by Mr Haferkamp on behalf of the Commission

(23 September 1980)

The Commission made representations to New Zealand concerning the operation of the import licensing system during the Tokyo Round multilateral trade negotiations and obtained some improvements. The Commission did not, however, specifically press the issue of the application of the licensing system to spirituous beverages.

It may be pointed out that imports of rum, brandy and whisky, in bottles, having a fob price of more than NZ \$ 2.75 a litre are in fact exempt from licensing under the 1980/81 New Zealand Import Licensing Schedule. In the case of rum, brandy and whisky, in bottles, having a fob price of less than NZ \$ 2.75 a litre, and other spirituous beverages in bottles, importations under the 1980/81 Import Licensing Schedule may be made at a level of 125 % of the value of the 1979 licences.

New Zealand imports indeed significant quantities of bottled spirituous beverages from the Community.

It may also be noted that New Zealand has become party to the MTN agreement on import licensing procedures.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 846/80**by Mr Damseaux****to the Commission of the European Communities***(11 July 1980)*

Subject: Research programme on possible energy savings

In Canada 'energy laboratory' buses travel from place to place visiting small businesses to identify potential energy savings and encourage company directors to make the investment required to achieve them. The reason why these travelling laboratories call mainly on small businesses is that the latter have little, if any, cash available for assessing potential energy-saving opportunities themselves.

The difficulty lies in the need to develop the computer programme which is one of the key elements in the system.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it has been asked by certain Member States to support the introduction of such programmes, and if so, whether it has agreed; and
2. what assistance of this kind would be worth in ECU's, and how would it be covered by the budget?

Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the Commission

(19 September 1980)

1. The Commission has launched a Community energy bus programme – directed particularly at small and medium-sized firms – to promote consultation and technical assistance on the rational use of energy.

This programme is embodied in a Commission recommendation which will be sent to Parliament for perusal.

As part of the programme, the Commission will supply participants free of charge with computer programs developed by the Canadian Ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources for its own energy bus. This has been made possible by the Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation between the European Community and Canada on the energy bus signed on 17 December 1979.

2. The Joint Research Centre, Ispra will be responsible for the free distribution of Canadian computer programs to the national organizations involved and will take part in work on adapting the programs to European conditions.

This will be carried out under the section of the JCR's 1980 to 1983 programme ⁽¹⁾ entitled 'Specific support for the Commission's sectoral activities'.

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision of 13 March 1980, OJ No L 72, 18. 3. 1980, p. 11.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 898/80

by Mr Deleau

to the Commission of the European Communities

(22 July 1980)

Subject: Complicated tender procedures

Can the Commission explain why, in its invitations to tender for energy-saving programmes, it is asking applicants to submit 25 copies of the tender documents, in two languages?

What are these 25 copies for? Are 25 people authorized to give their views?

Does it not think that this complication is at variance with the Commission's oft-professed concern to simplify administrative procedures?

Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

In accordance with Article 5 (2) of Regulation (EEC) No 1303/78, the Commission decides whether to grant or refuse support for projects after consulting the Advisory Committee on the Management of Demonstration Projects which is made up of 30 representatives of the Member States. Copies of the documents have to be sent to each of them in a language they understand.

Several additional copies have to be sent to the various Commission departments responsible for analysing the administrative and technical content of projects.

If one considers that the Commission receives some 300 proposals in reply to each of its invitations to submit demonstration projects in the field of energy-saving, it becomes clear that asking applicants to submit 25 copies in two languages speed up the aid allocation procedure.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 900/80**by Mr Ansquer****to the Commission of the European Communities***(22 July 1980)*

Subject: Growth of textile imports

In connection with renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement, does the Commission intend to link the rise in imports to the trend in consumption, to prevent the development of imbalances harmful to all concerned, including the exporting countries themselves?

Answer given by Mr Haferkamp on behalf of the Commission*(23 September 1980)*

The Commission is currently studying the whole range of problems arising in connection with the renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement (MFA). It has transmitted to the Council a communication entitled 'Report on two years' operation of the Multifibre Arrangement by reference to the textile policy objectives established by the Community in 1977' ⁽¹⁾. The Commission intends shortly to deal with the question in depth with the Council in preparation for the talks which, in accordance with Article 10 of the MFA, will begin when the GATT Textiles Committee meets in Geneva at the end of 1980 to consider whether the MFA should be extended, modified or discontinued.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. COM(80) 438, 17. 7. 1980.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 901/80**by Mr Ansquer****to the Commission of the European Communities***(22 July 1980)**Subject: Steel complex at Bagnoli*

The Commission has recently given a favourable opinion on the extension of the steel complex at Bagnoli. How can it reconcile this opinion with its previous findings that such an extension would add to existing overcapacity in flat rolled steel?

Answer given by Mr Ortoli on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

The opinion delivered by the Commission on investment at the Bagnoli steel complex was based on a consideration of the economic forecast with regard to securing in due course a competitive position in a difficult market, especially as far as hot rolled coils are concerned.

Nevertheless, in order to take account of the imbalance in Community supply and demand for coils forecast by the General Objectives for Steel as revised for 1983, the Commission, before giving this favourable opinion, obtained an undertaking from Italsider that it would reduce some of its capacity, particularly in those other mills producing flat hot rolled steel, and delay the entry into service of its new coil mill for at least 12 months. This will not therefore come into production until the end of 1983 and, according to current forecasts, will not reach maximum capacity before the first quarter of 1986.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 923/80**by Mr Remilly****to the Commission of the European Communities***(23 July 1980)**Subject: Improving rail travel facilities within Europe*

Does the Commission intend to improve rail travel facilities within Europe by removing certain obstacles which prevent some passengers from buying a ticket in one European country for a specific destination in a different European country?

Will the Commission contact the various railway companies with a view to ending this situation which in no way contributes to the popularity of Europe?

Answer given by Mr Burke on behalf of the Commission*(24 September 1980)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question No 874/79 by Mr Van Minnen and Mr Albers ⁽¹⁾ on the issue of international tickets at all but very small railway stations.

If the Honourable Member's question covers problems other than those referred to in the abovementioned question, the Commission is ready to do what it can to answer a more detailed question.

It would, however, point out that the railways are free to make their own commercial decisions.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 66, 17. 3. 1980, p. 21.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 957/80**by Miss De Valera****to the Commission of the European Communities***(23 July 1980)*

Subject: EEC research projects in Irish universities

Will the Commission give details of all the research projects that have been entrusted to Irish universities since Ireland became a member of the Community?

Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the Commission*(23 September 1980)*

As the reply to the Honourable Member's question includes a large number of tables, the Commission will send it directly to her and to the Secretariat General of the Parliament.
