

English edition

Information and Notices

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I

(Information)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN QUESTIONS WITH ANSWER

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1949/81

by Mr Cousté

to the Commission of the European Communities

*(12 March 1982)**Subject:* Stabex system

Has the Commission drawn up a report on the Stabex system, the shortcomings in its operation and the lack of necessary resources, as it told the Council it intended to do in June 1981?

What suggestions does it plan to make, and when?

**Answer given by Mr Pisani
on behalf of the Commission**

(14 June 1982)

A distinction must be made between two aspects: the first concerns the management of Stabex in respect of the 1981 year of application. The Commission has drawn up a communication on this subject which was transmitted to the Council on 31 March 1982 and, for information purposes, to Parliament's Committee on Development and Cooperation⁽¹⁾. The second concerns the future of Stabex and the re-examination of the system with a view to a new convention. The Commission is currently studying the question and hopes to draw up proposals, which will then be submitted to the ACP States in connection with the negotiations starting in September 1983.

⁽¹⁾ COM(82) 150 final.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1963/81

by Mr Donnez

to the Council of the European Communities

*(12 March 1982)**Subject:* Prisoners-of-war

Immediately after the Second World War, a great many German prisoners-of-war decided to opt for French nationality.

It would appear that both the French and German national pension funds are now refusing to take account of the period spent as prisoners-of-war by Germans who have become naturalized French citizens.

In view of this, can the Council say:

1. What decisions have so far been taken concerning these prisoners?
2. If no decisions have been taken, can the Council say whether it intends to act on this matter?

Answer*(17 June 1982)*

The problem raised by the Honourable Member concerning the account to be taken, for the purposes of retirement pensions, of periods spent as prisoners-of-war by German ex-prisoners-of-war who have become naturalized French citizens is covered by the provisions of Chapter 3 — Old Age and Death (Pensions) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 of 14 June 1971 on the application of social security schemes to employed persons and their families moving within the Community⁽¹⁾.

In effect, these provisions provide, with a view to the acquisition, retention or recovery of the right to

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 149, 5. 7. 1971.

benefits, for the totalization of worker's insurance periods where these periods have been completed under the legislation of several Member States.

Thus, the insurance periods completed under the various legislations to which the worker has been subject must be assimilated to periods completed under the legislation of the Member States under which the pension is paid out, and account must be taken of this to the necessary extent. However, to determine whether the various insurance periods are adequate for acquiring the right to benefits, reference should be made exclusively to the national legislation of the Member State under which those periods were completed.

In this particular case, German legislation is applicable for taking into account periods spent in captivity by German ex-prisoners-of-war.

Under the German pension insurance scheme, the periods spent in captivity by the persons in question are considered as substitute periods for the calculation of pensions. It should be noted in this connection that point 2 (d) of Annex V C. (Germany) to Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 stipulates that for the purpose of taking into account German substitute periods (Ersatzzeiten), only German national legislation shall apply⁽¹⁾.

(1) It should be noted that these rules of German legislation apply irrespective of the nationality or domicile of the said persons provided that certain insurance conditions are fulfilled. Under these conditions, substitute periods are taken into account:

- where a contribution has been paid prior to the substitute periods;
- or where at least one compulsory contribution has been paid during the three years following the substitute period;
- or where at least one compulsory contribution has been paid at any time after the substitute periods and where at least half the period between affiliation to the insurance scheme and realization of the risk has been covered by compulsory contributions or assimilated voluntary contributions;
- or where at least half the period which has elapsed since 1973 has been covered by compulsory contributions and there has been an insurance obligation until realization of the risk (see § 1251 Reichsversicherungsordnung (RVO) and § 9 a Arbeiterrentenversicherungs-Neuregelungsgesetz (ArVNG)).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1979/81

by Mrs Van Hemeldonck

to the Commission of the European Communities

(12 March 1982)

Subject: European Social Fund

Can the Commission confirm that in 1980 the European Social Fund received applications for training grants in respect of approximately 350

women in Belgium as against some 2 000 applications from the Netherlands, 6 000 from France and 27 000 from Germany?

How does the Commission explain the exceptionally small number of applications from Belgium for aid from the Fund to benefit women?

Is the Commission convinced that all the interested parties in Belgium, particularly the trades unions and women's movements, are aware of the possibilities offered by the Fund for the retraining of women without work, who after all account for some 63 % of the total unemployed in Belgium?

**Answer given by Mr Richard
on behalf of the Commission**

(14 June 1982)

The Ninth Report on the Activities of the European Social Fund⁽¹⁾ for the 1980 financial year sets out in Annex XVI a list of applications for assistance approved in 1980 broken down by Member State showing the number of persons involved in each application.

These figures do not correspond to the actual number of beneficiaries assisted by the Fund but are the estimated number of people involved in the applications for assistance submitted under Decision 77/804/EEC⁽²⁾ by the bodies responsible for the operations.

The actual number of women in receipt of Fund assistance in updated figures for 1980 is as follows:

Belgium	165
Federal Republic of Germany	4 469
France	3 055
Ireland	281
Italy	1 798
Netherlands	744
United Kingdom	68
Total	10 580

The number of women receiving assistance from the Fund in areas that are not specifically intended for women is not available, for the operations are intended for workers of both sexes alike without distinction.

However, training for young people includes courses designed to enable young women to take up occupations in areas where they are under-represented. In 1980, 11 000 young women participated — 11 times more than in 1979.

The initiative for submitting applications for assistance from the European Social Fund lies with the Member States.

Until 1980, only two Belgian organizations submitted applications to the ESF for assistance for women. At

(1) COM(81) 343 final.

(2) OJ No L 337, 27. 12. 1977, p. 14.

present, thanks to new measures the number of applications from Belgium has increased considerably, as shown by the following data.

	1978	1979	1980	1981
Belgium	0-007	0-006	0-481	0-785

With a view to publicizing the opportunities offered by the Fund for women job seekers and encouraging Member States to submit applications for assistance the Commission has organized an information campaign in various Member States including Belgium.

The increase in the volume of applications from Belgium may partly be attributed to this action. Nevertheless, although the information is essential it is not in itself sufficient. National authorities must be motivated by the political will to promote a policy in favour of women.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 9/82

by Mr Seeler and Mr Rogalla

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 March 1982)

Subject: Public debate on net contributions and whether they should be subject to an upper limit

1. Does the Commission share our view that its answer to our Written Question No 1260/81⁽¹⁾ on the impact of the public debate on net contributions and whether they should be subject to an upper limit leaves paragraph 4 unanswered?
2. Does the Commission also share our view that its failure to answer the question on the possibility of a scientific assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of European cooperation according to certain criteria makes the concern which the Commission has expressed over the course of this debate not entirely credible?
3. Does the Commission share the view that this debate is having a very negative effect on the public's attitude towards, and its feeling of belonging to, Europe?
4. Is the Commission prepared to answer the fourth paragraph of our abovementioned Written Question which we herewith table again?

5. Does the Commission agree with us that the method it has been using to calculate the individual Member States' contribution has helped to create and perpetuate certain misunderstandings amongst the public? Examples of this include the customs duties levied in Dutch ports on goods bound for the Federal Republic of Germany which are counted as part of the Netherlands contribution to the Community and the Community's expenditure on buildings and staff in Brussels, in Belgian francs, which are counted as a payment by the Community to Belgium.

**Answer given by Mr Tugendhat
on behalf of the Commission**

(16 June 1982)

1. In its answer to Written Question No 1260/81 the Commission pointed out the problems involved in any attempt to quantify the non-budgetary advantages of Community membership.

This, in its opinion, also constituted an answer to paragraph 4 of the question.

2. No.

3. Yes.

4. The breakdown of own resources among the Member States was discussed in the late 1960s during the initial negotiations on the transfer of customs duties and agricultural levies to the Community budget.

The technical impossibility of devising a sufficiently accurate method of allocation without trammelling the free movement of goods was one of the reasons why the decision was taken at that time to aggregate the resources in the Community budget; without verifying the actual destination of goods, there was no way of calculating with any accuracy the incidence of the 'Rotterdam effect' (where the place and country of consumption differ from the place and country of importation) and correcting the revenue figure for each Member State accordingly.

Any other attempt to quantify the Rotterdam effect would be bound to run into difficulties because of variations in trade flows from one year to the next, which will affect agricultural levies in particular.

Similarly, any quantification of non-budgetary benefits and cost of membership is difficult if not impossible to undertake. Within the Commission it is not possible to carry out such a study. However, in drawing up future study programmes, the Commission will take due account of the wishes expressed by the Honourable Members.

5. The Commission has consistently drawn attention to the problems involved in trying to calculate contributions. However, in response to requests from Member States and from Members of

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 3, 7. 1. 1982, p. 4.

the European Parliament⁽¹⁾, the Commission has used a comparatively simple formula which, for example, deals with customs duties and administrative expenditure in the way described by the Honourable Member.

The question of customs duties was gone into in paragraph 4. As regards administrative expenditure, a number of possibilities were explored: suggestions included excluding them entirely from the expenditure side of the budget, attributing them partly (50 %) to Belgium and Luxembourg, or attributing them more or less wholly to Belgium and Luxembourg. None of these approaches was wholly satisfactory; in the end the latter course was adopted. In order to emphasize the importance of this item, with its attendant problems, a note is always attached to the figures for Belgium and Luxembourg to indicate what proportion of the expenditure ascribed to these two Member States consists of the administrative expenditure of the institutions.

(1) For example, Written Questions Nos 607/78, (OJ No C 28, 31. 1. 1979, p. 2), 1911/81 (OJ No C 156, 21. 6. 1982) and 1975/81 (OJ No C 174, 12. 7. 1982).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 25/82

by Mr Habsburg

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 March 1982)

Subject: EG Magazin

The front cover of issue 11 December 1981 of *EG Magazin*, the Christmas issue, shows a picture reminiscent of the Nativity, with Brezhnev as Mary, President Reagan as Joseph and a bat representing bankruptcy taking the place of the Angel. Among the shepherds we see Chancellor Schmidt and other politicians, while atom and neutron bombs form the background to the crib.

1. Is the Commission aware that this kind of irreverent ridicule of a central Christian theme is bound to outrage all Christian Europeans?
2. Is the Commission aware that a magazine funded by our taxes may not take the liberty deeply to offend many readers in the name of freedom of the press?
3. Is the Commission prepared to investigate why those responsible did not prevent the publication of a caricature of this kind in a Community document which, unbeknown to them we hope, was bound to give the impression that the Community condoned this approach?
4. Is the Commission prepared to give an assurance that this kind of insult to religious feelings will not be permitted in future?

Answer given by Mr Natali on behalf of the Commission

(17 June 1982)

1. The Commission takes the view that by their very nature cartoons use exaggeration to portray human weakness or shortcomings, the message being conveyed by means of humour, irony or sarcasm. As intended by the author, the cartoon on the first page of the December number of the EC magazine did as much. The editor certainly had no intention of offending readers' religious feelings. If that indeed was the effect of the cartoon, the Commission sincerely regrets it.

2 and 3. The Commission bears the political and editorial responsibility for its publications. Within that framework contributors and staff enjoy complete freedom of expression. The fact that these two principles can quite easily clash means that their competing claims have to be weighed up and a balanced solution sought; this, of course, is a problem that no one in the publishing world can avoid.

4. The Commission takes care to ensure that its publications do not belittle or hurt the feelings of anyone, whatever his or her origin or religion.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 26/82

by Mr Collins

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 March 1982)

Subject: Environmental policy

In the area of environmental policy will the Commission list the names of the various committees of experts, advisory committees, etc., they presently have in operation, how many members serve on these committees in total and can they also say on whose authority they are appointed?

Will the Commission also say how the statutes governing these committees are determined and on what date they were established?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 27/82

by Mr Collins

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 March 1982)

Subject: Consumer policy

In the area of consumer policy will the Commission list the names of the various committees of experts, advisory committees, etc., they presently have in

operation, how many members serve on these committees in total and can they also say on whose authority they are appointed?

Will the Commission also say how the statutes governing these committees are determined and on what date they were established?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 28/82

by Mr Collins

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 March 1982)

Subject: Health policy

In the area of health policy will the Commission list the names of the various committees of experts, advisory committees, etc., they presently have in operation, how many members serve on these committees in total and can they also say on whose authority they are appointed?

Will the Commission also say how the statutes governing these committees are determined and on what date they were established?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 29/82

by Mr Collins

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 March 1982)

Subject: Agricultural policy

In the area of agricultural policy will the Commission list the names of the various committees of experts, advisory committees, etc., they presently have in operation, how many members serve on these committees in total and can they also say on whose authority they are appointed?

Will the Commission also say how the statutes governing these committees are determined and on what date they were established?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 30/82

by Mr Collins

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 March 1982)

Subject: Energy policy

In the area of energy policy will the Commission list the names of the various committees of experts, advisory committees, etc., they presently have in operation, how many members serve on these committees in total and can they also say on whose authority they are appointed?

Will the Commission also say how the statutes governing these committees are determined and on what date they were established?

**Joint answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission
to Written Questions Nos 26/82, 27/82, 28/82, 29/82
and 30/82 by Mr Collins**

(17 June 1982)

A list of Council and Commission committees was published in Supplement 2/80 to the *Bulletin of the European Communities*. The committees referred to by the Honourable Member appear on this list, which also shows the date on which each committee was set up and the formal act which established it. The total number of members and the authority appointing them are indicated in the relevant *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

For easy reference to the committees set up in the various fields of Community policy about which the Honourable Member is enquiring, the Commission is sending him and Parliament's Secretariat-General a copy of Supplement 2/80 annotated by sector of activity, with updatings.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 77/82

by Mr Notenboom

to the Commission of the European Communities

(25 March 1982)

Subject: Customs clearance of goods in France

When clearing their goods with French customs, importers eligible to use the French 'duty exemption credit' scheme which permits them to defer payment of customs charges for thirty days are nonetheless obliged to pay in return a 'remittance' equal to one-thousandth of the amount of duty and tax involved. In accordance with the provisions of the French customs code this 'remittance' is distributed between the public accountants and the Treasury.

1. Is the Commission aware of these provisions and of any similar scheme in other Member States?
2. Does the Commission consider it normal or even moral that a Member State should introduce or continue to apply charges when part of the proceeds is paid directly to its civil servants?
3. Does the Commission not consider such a measure to be incompatible with Community law and indeed tantamount to a tax equivalent to a customs duty incompatible with the Treaty and especially inadmissible in intra-Community trade? Will the Commission take measures to remedy this situation and, if so, what form will they take?

**Answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission**

(15 June 1982)

1 and 2. The Commission is not aware of the existence in any Member State other than France of provisions similar to those mentioned by the Honourable Member involving a 'remittance'.

3. The Commission is examining whether this French measure is compatible with Community law. Should it transpire that this measure contravenes Community rules, the Commission will of course take appropriate steps.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 167/82

by Mrs Lizin

to the Council of the European Communities

(1 April 1982)

Subject: Benguela-Labito railway

Can the Council state what position has now been reached in the second phase of the abovementioned Community project? What importance does the Belgian presidency attach to further progress being made on this project? Are there plans to relaunch the project and, if so, how? When is the project likely to be relaunched and which associated countries and public and private financial institutions will be involved?

Answer

(17 June 1982)

So far, cofinancing by the Community and certain other parties providing capital has made it possible to meet the requests submitted by Zaire and Zambia. The Council has not to date been informed of any requests submitted by the countries concerned regarding a second phase as referred to by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 195/82

by Mr Pedini, Mr Filippi and Mr Del Duca
to the Commission of the European Communities
(5 April 1982)

Subject: Community service in countries of the European Economic Community

The European Parliament has repeatedly stressed the importance of the experience obtained in many countries of the EEC with community service schemes for young people, and it put forward some

specific ideas in the Pruvot report of February 1981.

Does the Commission intend to promote exchanges of information and experience between organizations interested in such forms of service while respecting the national character of initiatives of this kind?

Does it intend to encourage pilot projects in this field?

**Answer given by Mr Richard
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 June 1982)

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Members about the value of community service schemes for young people. The Commission is actively considering ways of developing such initiatives on a Community-wide basis, within the framework of the response it is preparing to the parliamentary resolution on young people, adopted on the basis of the Pruvot report.

The Commission's response to the Pruvot report will be presented to the European Parliament in this autumn.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 205/82

by Mr Battersby

to the Commission of the European Communities
(5 April 1982)

Subject: Aid to Nepal

In view of the good, close and friendly relations between the Community and the Kingdom of Nepal;

In view of the fact that Nepal has been declared by the United Nations one of the least developed countries in the world;

In view of the difficult internal communications problems in Nepal and the high level of poverty and infant mortality in that country;

Can the Commission state what aid it has so far provided to Nepal, and what aid it intends to provide over the next two years?

**Answer given by Mr Pisani
on behalf of the Commission**

(15 June 1982)

With an average *per capita* income of US\$ 130 (1979), the 14 million inhabitants of Nepal are among the poorest in the world, which means that this country has always been eligible for the

Community's financial and technical assistance to the non-associated developing countries. So far Nepal has received financing for two projects being cofinanced with the Asian Development Bank under the 1979 and 1980 programmes, namely the Sagamartha integrated rural development scheme (EEC contribution: 3 million ECU) and the livestock development scheme (EEC contribution: 2.2 million ECU).

Nepal has also received 8 000 tonnes of cereals under the 1980 food-aid programme. In 1981, under a special programme for the least developed countries, an amount of 250 000 ECU was earmarked for food aid to Nepal. It should be noted that there is no acute shortage of cereals in the country.

Over the last five years the EEC has also provided a total amount of 188 000 ECU in financial support for eight schemes run by Member States' non-governmental organizations; these involve trade promotion, technical assistance in assessing the country's productive capacity for certain products and assistance with marketing and trade fairs.

The Commission's departments are currently trying to identify one or two development operations which could be considered for financing in 1982 and beyond.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 220/82

by Mr Newton Dunn

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 April 1982)

Subject: Conservation of wild birds in the Wash

Is the Commission aware of the many plans at present being put forward to reclaim saltmarsh areas in the Wash on the east coast of England?

Does the Commission consider that this area falls under the obligations accepted by Member States under Directive 79/409/EEC⁽¹⁾ on the conservation of wild birds, and what representations has the Commission made to the United Kingdom on this subject?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 103, 25. 4. 1979, p. 1.

**Answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission**

(15 June 1982)

Yes, the Commission has been informed that there are plans for the reclamation of a number of saltmarsh areas in the Wash.

A study concerning bird areas in the Community has demonstrated the considerable importance of the Wash flats and marshes for a great number of bird species that are protected under the provisions of Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds.

The area has, however, not been included in the list of wetlands of international importance, which was communicated to the Commission services by the United Kingdom authorities in the framework of the implementation of the Council resolution of 2 April 1979 concerning the aforementioned Directive⁽¹⁾.

The Commission has contacted the competent United Kingdom authorities on the matter in order to examine whether the Wash area will be included in the definitive list of special protection areas to be designated under the terms of the Council resolution and how the area will be protected.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 103, 25. 4. 1979, p. 6.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 221/82

**by Mr Lomas, Mr Balfe, Mrs Buchan, Mr Caborn,
Mr Megahy and Mr Seal**

to the Council of the European Communities

(5 April 1982)

Subject: Anti-poverty programme

In reply to a question from us (No 1537/81⁽¹⁾), asking if it was true that 23 years after the establishment of the EEC there are now more than 30 million of its citizens living in poverty, the Commission stated that that was the figure by the mid-1970s but that it was 'an underestimate for the position today'. In view of this, why did the Council refuse to continue the anti-poverty programme and what plans has it to combat poverty in the EEC?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 85, 5. 4. 1982, p. 9.

Answer

(17 June 1982)

The anti-poverty programme which originated with the Council resolution of 21 January 1974⁽¹⁾ has been dealt with in Council Decisions 75/448/EEC of 22 July 1975⁽²⁾, 77/779/EEC of 12 December

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 13, 12. 2. 1974.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 199, 30. 7. 1975.

1977⁽¹⁾ and, lastly, 80/1270/EEC of 22 December 1980⁽²⁾.

On completion of the programme, in accordance with Article 6 of the Decision of 22 July 1975 as amended by Decision of 12 December 1977, the Commission submitted a report to the Council giving an assessment of the results obtained.

The Council has still to take a decision in the light of that report.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 322, 17. 12. 1977.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 375, 31. 12. 1980.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 228/82

by Mrs Nielsen

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 April 1982)

Subject: Equality amongst Commission interpreters

Whilst I thank Commissioner Richard for his answer to my Oral Question No 23 (H-671/81)⁽¹⁾, I would ask the Commission to prove that interpreters receive equal treatment *de facto* as well as *de jure* by providing the following information:

1. How large a percentage of Commission interpreters from each Member State currently exercise their right to learn Spanish and/or Portuguese during working hours?
2. How many established Danish interpreters in the Commission exercise this right?
3. How many interpreters from each Member State have applied to follow courses in these languages but been turned down?
4. If it transpires that a relatively small percentage of Danish, Dutch, Greek or Italian interpreters exercise this right, will the Commission encourage its established interpreters to apply to attend courses in these languages and, if not, what will the Commission do to ensure equality of employment amongst interpreters following the planned accession of Spain and Portugal?

⁽¹⁾ Debates of the European Parliament, No 1.282 (March 1982).

Answer given by Mr Burke on behalf of the Commission

(14 June 1982)

As the Commission stated in its answer to the Honourable Member's Oral Question H-671/81, interpreters can attend language courses in accordance with the provisions of Article 24 of the Staff Regulations.

The Commission can provide the following information in answer to the question asked:

1. The percentages, by nationality, of staff interpreters currently taking part in language training courses in Spanish and Portuguese are as follows:

(a) *Spanish*

- 2% of the interpreters of Belgian nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Danish nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of German nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Greek nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of French nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Irish nationality,
- 2% of the interpreters of Italian nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Luxembourg nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Dutch nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of British nationality.

(b) *Portuguese*

- 4% of the interpreters of Belgian nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Danish nationality,
- 14% of the interpreters of German nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Greek nationality,
- 11% of the interpreters of French nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Irish nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Italian nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Luxembourg nationality,
- 0% of the interpreters of Dutch nationality,
- 11% of the interpreters of British nationality.

2. None.

3. The number, by nationality, of interpreters whose applications to follow training courses in Spanish

and Portuguese in 1981/82 were not accepted are as follows:

(a) *Spanish*
None.

(b) *Portuguese*
5 interpreters of Belgian nationality,
0 interpreters of Danish nationality,
4 interpreters of German nationality,
0 interpreters of Greek nationality,
0 interpreters of French nationality,
0 interpreters of Irish nationality,
14 interpreters of Italian nationality,
0 interpreters of Luxembourg nationality,
1 interpreter of Dutch nationality,
1 interpreter of British nationality.

4. The addition of Spanish and Portuguese to the Community's seven official languages will pose considerable difficulties for conference interpreting. Unfortunately, greater use will have to be made of interpreting by 'relay' and, for this to be accomplished as smoothly as possible, interpreting from the new Community languages should generally be into those most widely understood by the interpreters — this will obviate the need of having to resort to a 'double relay'. For reasons connected with the proper functioning of the service as referred to in Article 24 of the Staff Regulations, it was therefore decided that, for the sake of efficiency and because a comparatively large number of interpreters already have Spanish as one of their working languages, emphasis should initially be given to a special Portuguese course for a group of English, French and German-language interpreters.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 229/82

by Mr Van Rompuy

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 April 1982)

Subject: Authorization of sales outlets for newspapers

An application to operate a sales outlet for newspapers in Belgium has to be submitted to a joint consultative committee of newspaper and periodical publishers and sales organizations. Certain criteria are applied in such cases for example the distance between two sales points. In some cases these criteria have been observed and in other cases not. The publishers duck the issue by saying that they only act

in an advisory capacity and that they retain their right to supply or not. In practice this means that all decisions are quite arbitrary and that in all likelihood the 'Agence Messagerie de la Presse' (AMP) exploits its virtual monopoly to decide whether outlets are supplied or not.

1. Does the Commission not agree that such a situation violates the rules of competition?
2. In the May 1981 edition of *Europa*, it was reported that a newsagents' association had complained to the Commission about agreements designed to prevent any further spread of sales outlets.

Can the Commission announce what progress it has achieved with its investigation into this matter and what decisions it intends to take?

**Answer given by Mr Andriessen
on behalf of the Commission
(15 June 1982)**

As it indicated in its answers to Written Questions No 388/81 by Mrs Scrivener⁽¹⁾ and No 515/81 by Mr Beyer de Ryke⁽²⁾, the Commission has received a succession of complaints against the acceptance system which is applied in Belgium to prospective newsagents, and particularly against the existence of 'regional advisory committees for the establishment or relocation of newsagents premises', which are bodies with no legal status made up of representatives of magazine and newspaper publishers, wholesalers and retailers. The most recent and most important of these complaints, which comes from a chain store, reached the Commission as recently as 19 March of this year.

The Commission's investigation of this matter has proved particularly difficult and complex, given the number of firms and groupings involved, the uncertain character and the regional variations of the criteria which are applied by the so-called advisory committees or the different groups of firms represented on them, the absence of legislation at national level, the need to make a precise assessment of the dominant influence exercised at least at the importation stage by the press distribution group to which the Honourable Member refers, and the question whether the selection criteria currently applied in this trade in Belgium constitute objective criteria of the kind referred to in the judgment in 'Salonia'⁽³⁾.

(1) OJ No C 210, 19. 8. 1981.

(2) OJ No C 222, 2. 9. 1981.

(3) Court of Justice of the European Communities, Judgment in Case 126/80, 16. 6. 1981.

The investigation is now almost complete. A decision may be taken shortly initiating proceedings under Article 3 of Regulation No 17⁽¹⁾ against the firms and groups of firms which have been the subject of complaints.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No 13, 21. 2. 1962, p. 204.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 241/82

by Mrs Ewing

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 April 1982)

Subject: Domestic electricity price ranges

Will the Commission publish details of the ranges of domestic electricity charges within the various Member States?

**Answer given by Mr Davignon
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 June 1982)

The Commission publish electricity prices within the Member States since 1973, with details on tariffs, taxes etc. The Honourable Member is suggested to refer to the last publication 'Electricity prices 1973—1978' (EUROSTAT 1980)⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Cat. CA-28-79-196-2A-C.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 285/82

by Mr Deleau

to the Council of the European Communities

(26 April 1982)

Subject: Operation of the Luxembourg financial market

Is the operation of the Luxembourg financial market likely to facilitate the attainment of European monetary union?

Answer

(17 June 1982)

The Council thinks that with regard to European monetary union the situation of the Luxembourg financial market is no different from that of other Community financial markets.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 286/82

by Mr Deleau

to the Commission of the European Communities

(26 April 1982)

Subject: Creation of a Luxembourg exchange institute

Following its talks with the Luxembourg authorities, can the Commission state whether or not the setting up of an exchange institute in Luxembourg is intended to lead ultimately to the creation of an independent currency?

**Answer given by Mr Ortoli
on behalf of the Commission**

(16 June 1982)

The Luxembourg franc has been and remains a legally distinct currency within the Belgo-Luxembourg monetary union, an important element of which is the fixed parity relationship between the two participating currencies.

The establishment of a Luxembourg Monetary Institute is a positive step in strengthening the union as it allows Luxembourg's monetary responsibilities to be centralized in one institution. This will encourage increased cooperation between the two partners.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 294/82

by Mrs Walz

to the Commission of the European Communities

(26 April 1982)

Subject: Foreign investment in the USA

According to the US Conference Board, investment by foreign companies again fell substantially in 1981 compared with the previous year (to 348 projects, in money terms by US\$ 1 900 million to US\$ 4 700 million).

1. What percentage share was held by Community-based companies in 1981?
2. How large is the fall in Community investment compared to 1980?

3. What are the essential causes and measures specific to the United States — i. e. apart from the general deterioration in the world economic situation — to which the Commission attributes the decline in investment by European companies in the United States?

**Answer given by Mr Haferkamp
on behalf of the Commission**

(14 June 1982)

Official figures for direct investment in 1981 in the United States by foreign business are not yet available. The figures to which the Honourable Member refers do not have official status. They are based on a sampling by the conference board which although enjoying the highest reputation, does not claim to be aware of the total picture. The United States Bureau of the Census reports figures usually in August for the preceding year.

The Commission is not surprised that there should be a slackening of the growth of investment by Member States in the United States in 1981. The principal reason for this is the great strength of the dollar throughout, which began in the third quarter of 1980 and still continues. This has made investment in the USA less attractive. The effect of the dollar's strength on the competitiveness of United States production has been so pronounced that there have been cases where European companies have returned production to Europe.

There have been no legislative measures taken by the United States which would have the effect of deterring foreign investment, although from time to time, in the American press, in business circles and even in Congress, opinions are voiced against it.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 299/82

by Ms Quin

to the Commission of the European Communities

(26 April 1982)

Subject: Subsidies granted by EEC member countries to shipowners

Since subsidies to shipowners are outside the scope of the current EEC shipbuilding directive, can the Commission state if there are any direct subsidies given by EEC countries to their shipowners in order to encourage them to place new shipbuilding orders in their country?

If so, what is the extent of such subsidies and what regulations govern their operation in the countries concerned?

**Answer given by Mr Andriessen
on behalf of the Commission**

(15 June 1982)

All seafaring Member States operate, for the purpose of enhancing the modernization of their fleets, various schemes of aids to their shipowners. Article 8 of the Council Directive on aid to shipbuilding (81/363/EEC) ⁽¹⁾ rules that aid granted to shipowners in connection with the acquisition of new ships must not lead to distortions of competition between shipyards in the Community nor frustrate the objectives pursued by the Directive with regard to the adaptation of the shipbuilding industry to prevailing market conditions.

The Commission monitors the application of this provision. In accordance with the provisions of Directive 81/363/EEC the Commission draws up regular reports on the aids granted to shipbuilding in the EEC.

Should the Commission become aware of any aid being given to shipowners with the aim to encourage them to place their shipbuilding orders in their own country, the Commission would be obliged to take action in order to prevent this, since such provisions would be conflicting with the Treaty's objective of non-discrimination with regard to competition.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 137, 23. 5. 1981, p. 39.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 325/82

by Mr Beyer de Ryke

to the Commission of the European Communities

(27 April 1982)

Subject: Competition between official Commission information and the accredited correspondents

Several Members of Parliament have already expressed concern over this matter (see Written Questions Nos 1816 ⁽¹⁾ 1817 ⁽²⁾ and 1818/81 ⁽³⁾ by Mr Michel.

As a professional journalist I share the concern of my colleagues on this matter. Can the Commission provide immediate information on the action which its Directorate-General for Information (DG X) has taken in response to the legitimate concern expressed by journalistic profession?

Is there a plan to restructure this directorate-general?

What sort of collaboration is envisaged with a view to restoring a proper balance and fair competition between all the accredited agencies?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 126, 17. 5. 1982, p. 16.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 129, 19. 5. 1982, p. 14.

⁽³⁾ OJ No C 138, 1. 6. 1982, p. 6.

**Answer given by Mr Natali
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 June 1982)

The Commission can do no more than to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions Nos 1816/81 and 1817/81 by Mr Michel, in which it clearly stated that its activities in the audio-visual sector were in no way intended to compete with professional journalists. It gave a similar reply to the journalists' professional association which had also raised the matter with it.

There is therefore no reason why it should consider any reorganization of the Directorate-General for Information or take any further action in this matter.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 338/82

by Sir Peter Vanneck

to the Commission of the European Communities

(27 April 1982)

Subject: North Sea cod fishing

1. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that there will not be a total ban on North Sea cod fishing in the latter part of this year with all the attendant hardships that this would cause to local fleets in the Cleveland constituency, such as those in Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool?
2. Is the Commission satisfied with the reporting of catches of individual species from the North Sea by each Member State?
3. How recently has each Member State reported these catches?
4. What are the relevant figures for cod for the years 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1981?

**Answer given by Mr Contogeorgis
on behalf of the Commission**

(16 June 1982)

1. In the agreement establishing fishing arrangements between the European Economic Community and the Kingdom of Norway on which the Parliament has given a favourable opinion⁽¹⁾ both parties have allocated the total allowable catch of North Sea cod between them. When this agreement is approved by the Council, the Community will be bound to prohibit all fishing by Community vessels for a stock for which a TAC has been established in the agreement as soon as the share of the TAC available to the Community is exhausted.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 87, 5. 4. 1982, p. 108.

The Honourable Member will be aware that it is a fundamental principle of the Commission's proposals that the Council should decide on the allocation of the fishing possibilities available to the Community between the Member States and that the latter will be responsible for the detailed administration of their respective quotas. Under this principle, and provided the Council fulfils its responsibility, it is possible for Member States to administer their quotas in such a manner that due account is taken of the situations of various categories of fishermen.

Within this framework, Member States have therefore the possibility to take the appropriate measures to cope with the difficulties pointed out by the Honourable Member.

2 and 3. The Commission is not fully satisfied with the working of the catch reporting system established in conformity with Council Regulation (EEC) No 753/80⁽²⁾. It has, however, noted the efforts which all Member States have made in speeding up the procedures for the collection and transmission of the data required.

At the date of 30 April 1982, the Commission has received the catch reports from all Member States fishing in the North Atlantic up to February 1982; only Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom have submitted the catch reports up to March 1982, as provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 753/80.

4. The catch reporting system has been established on a Community level only since 1980.

The catches of cod in the area IV (North Sea, Community zone and Norwegian zone) are as follows:

	Bel- gium	Den- mark	Ger- many	France	Ire- land	Nether- land	United King- dom
1980	9 524	57 325	24 637	11 233	—	45 793	94 930
1981	8 943	61 083	28 622	10 949	—	38 777	110 975

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 84, 28. 3. 1980, p. 33.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 381/82

by Ms Quin

to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 April 1982)

Subject: Index to the *Official Journal of the European Communities*

Would the Commission confirm that no index was published for the *Official Journal of the European Communities* from June to December 1980? Why did this situation occur?

**Answer given by Mr Burke
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 June 1982)

The June to December 1980 numbers of the Official Journal were indexed directly in the full yearly edition of the Methodological Tables for 1980.

In its answer to Written Question No 519/81 ⁽¹⁾ the Commission already explained to the Honourable Member why it decided to dispense with Monthly Tables of 1980 for that period.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 264, 15. 10. 1981,

WRITTEN QUESTION No 382/82

by Mrs Théobald-Paoli

to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 April 1982)

Subject: Midwives

The European statute for midwives is due to be adopted in 1983 with a view to harmonizing the conditions for establishment and exercise of this profession in the EEC countries.

French legislation at present grants midwives medical status within specific limits.

Does the proposed European statute for midwives also recognize the medical nature of midwifery?

**Answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 June 1982)

Council Directives 80/154/EEC and 80/155/EEC of 21 January 1980 ⁽¹⁾ concerning the freedom of movement of midwives which are to be incorporated into national legislation by the Member States by 22 January 1983 specify the minimum activities that may be performed (Article 4 of Directive 80/155/EEC). However they do not establish the status of midwives which continues to be the responsibility of each Member State.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 33, 11. 2. 1980.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 390/82

by Mr Purvis

to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 April 1982)

Subject: Community taxation of Scotch whisky

1. Will the Commission state the sums of money levied on Scotch whisky by way of taxation in excess of that imposed upon competing indigenous spirits during the period 1 January 1978 to 31 December 1981 in:

- (a) France,
- (b) Italy,
- (c) Denmark?

2. Is the Commission satisfied with this state of affairs?

**Answer given by Mr Tugendhat
on behalf of the Commission**

(14 June 1982)

1. The statistical data available to the Commission is insufficiently detailed to permit a reply to this part of the question.

2. Since 1972, the Commission has consistently proposed ⁽¹⁾ that spirits such as Scotch whisky should be subject, in a given Member State, to a single rate of excise levied by reference to the pure alcohol content. The Council having failed, at its meeting on 21 October 1981, to reach agreement on these proposals, the Commission has been obliged to pursue infringement procedures under Article 169 of the EEC Treaty in respect of those provisions applied by certain Member States which are in breach of Article 95.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 43, 29. 4. 1972, p. 23 ff.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 415/82

by Mr Christopher Jackson

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 May 1982)

Subject: Contracts awarded to EC Member States under EDF IV and EDF V

Will the Commission state, for each EC Member State and for the last three years for which figures are available:

1. the share of contracts awarded by value to Member States under the EDF categorized as
 - works contracts
 - supply contracts
 - technical contracts,
2. the share of total contracts,
3. the share of total EDF funding?

**Answer given by Mr Pisani
on behalf of the Commission**
(15 June 1982)

The information requested by the Honourable Member for EDF IV was published for the years 1978, 1979 and 1980 respectively in the following editions of the *Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Communities*: S 88, 10 May 1979, S 127, 7 July 1980, S 161, 24 August 1981. Statistics relating to 1981 will be published in June. It is expected that the first statistics for contracts awarded under EDF V will be published at the end of 1982.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 416/82
by Mr Prag
to the Commission of the European Communities
(5 May 1982)

Subject: Supply of poliomyelitis vaccines to the Third World

Poliomyelitis continues to afflict many African and Asian countries. What steps is the Community taking to assist international organizations with the transportation and refrigeration of vaccines, and will the Commission consider establishing a long-term plan for the reduction of this disease in countries where it is endemic?

**Answer given by Mr Pisani
on behalf of the Commission**
(17 June 1982)

The Commission has received no requests for intervention in this field either from international organizations or from national governments.

The responsibility for long-term planning is essentially within the scope of the appropriate international organizations. However, if a developing country were to ask for aid in this context the Commission would be willing to examine such a request in a positive spirit.

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