

English edition

## Information and Notices

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## I

*(Information)*

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

## WRITTEN QUESTIONS WITH ANSWER

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1945/86****by Mr Stephen Hughes (S—GB)****to the Commission of the European Communities***(21 November 1986)**(89/C 36/01)**Subject:* Closure of High Spen Garage in the Durham Euro constituency

Is the Commission aware that the Northern General Transport Company are considering the closure of one of their depots at High Spen which is within my constituency?

Can the Commission confirm that part of the cost of building this depot was borne by the Community through either grant aid or subsidized loans?

In general terms what redress does the Commission have against companies who successfully apply for grants/loans for specific projects which are then either mothballed or closed down in a relatively short period of time. Would the Commission not agree that an undertaking should be given by such applicants to the effect that they will guarantee the continued use of such grant-aided facilities for a specific period (say five years)?

**Supplementary answer given by Mr Schmidhuber on behalf of the Commission***(26 September 1988)*

Further to its answer of 19 February 1987 <sup>(1)</sup>, the Commission can now inform the Honourable Member that a full examination of the status of the investment has now been carried out which has established the following situation.

Prior to the project which was aided by the European Regional Development Fund, the depot could handle only single-decker buses for which even so the maintenance facilities were inadequate. Faced with a choice of either

closing the depot or improving it, the operators chose the latter course. As a result of the work thereby undertaken and the installation of new equipment the future use of the depot was assured.

In July 1988, eleven double-decker and eleven single-decker buses were operating out of High Spen depot using 47 drivers, and averaging 1 000 miles per vehicle per week. Depot personnel engaged in maintenance, cleaning and administration numbered twelve.

The bus company now considers the depot as a key installation in providing a service to High Spen and several other communities in the area, linking them to Gateshead and Newcastle and to the Tyne and Wear integrated public passenger transport system.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 177, 6. 7. 1987.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 694/87****by Mr Willy Kuijpers (ARC—B)****to the Commission of the European Communities***(29 June 1987)**(89/C 36/02)**Subject:* Customs frauds at the Dutch-Belgian border

In order to arrest a recipient of goods in Eindhoven who was suspected of organizing a 'merry-go-round' system to evade VAT by carrying out (national) border crossings several times with the same items, the Dutch customs authorities at the Postel border crossing called on the assistance of a driver employed by VIDEKOM, a subsidiary of RADELCO in Antwerp. The driver was taking a consignment of goods to the customer in question (who was perpetrating the fraud). After the



goods had been delivered and paid for by cheque the recipient in Eindhoven was arrested. The merchandise was, it was later revealed, confiscated and disposed of by public sale.

The cheque, which was paid into the VIDEKOM account was not honoured and about 10 days later VIDEKOM's account was once more debited.

In the meantime, more than one year after these events, the transport company concerned has still received no payment which means that it has suffered a loss of Bfrs 600 000.

Can the Commission confirm whether such procedures are standard practice and how the transport undertaking concerned can be compensated for its losses?

**Supplementary answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

(28 March 1988)

Further to its reply of 4 September 1987<sup>(1)</sup>, the Commission is now in a position to inform the Honourable Member of the results of its research.

According to information supplied by the Dutch authorities, VIDEKOM received appropriate compensation at the end of August 1987.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 295, 5. 11. 1987.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1256/87**

**by Mr Alberto Tridente (ARC-I)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(11 September 1987)

(89/C 36/03)

*Subject:* Transportation of uranium hexafluoride between Italy and France

1. Is the Commission aware that approximately every three weeks uranium hexafluoride is transported by lorry from Rome, by the firm of Borghi, to Novara, and from there by train to Pierre-Latte in France?
2. Does the Commission know where this substance comes from?
3. Is the Commission aware that the necessary safety precautions for this kind of transportation — defined in the IAEA guidelines on the transportation of radioactive material as 'Yellow Category III' and as 'extremely dangerous' — are not being adhered to?

4. Why has the Commission not intervened to ensure that the basic safety standards for this kind of transportation are observed?

5. What immediate action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that transportation is carried out according to Community rules and to the international safety standards drawn up by the IAEA?

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1257/87**

**by Mr Alberto Tridente (ARC-I)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(23 September 1987)

(89/C 36/04)

*Subject:* Transportation of radioactive waste from Caorso to Mol and Siefield

1. Has the Commission checked what safety precautions have been taken for the transportation of over 10 000 drums of radioactive waste of low and medium activity from the Caorso nuclear power station (Italy), for incineration at the Mol (Belgium) and Siefield (Federal Republic of Germany) centres?
2. Can the Commission describe these safety precautions?
3. Is it true that both the drums filled at Caorso and the containers in which they are carried are tested for external radiation?
4. If this is true, why is transportation still allowed to take place?
5. What emergency measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the safety precautions are strictly adhered to when, from the beginning of September, transportation from Caorso to Belgium and the Federal Republic of Germany is carried out daily?

**Joint Answer to Written Questions Nos 1256/87 and  
1257/87**

**given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(9 June 1988)

The Council directive laying down the basic safety standards for the health protection of the general public and workers against the danger of ionizing radiations<sup>(1)</sup> applies to all operations involving radioactive materials, including transport. However, this directive does not contain specific technical requirements and does not require the Commission to be informed about transport of radioactive materials within the Community. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued in

1961 and regularly updated its 'Regulations for the safe transport of radioactive materials' <sup>(1)</sup> detailing among other things the maximum radiation level on the external surface of the packages or containers and the labelling requirements.

Within the Member States of the Community, the transport of radioactive materials, including waste, is regulated by national regulations which take account of the basic safety standards directive and are based on the IAEA regulations. International transport is subject to international conventions which incorporate the IAEA regulations. The Commission continues to pursue activities, on-going since several years, consisting of:

- cooperation with the IAEA on the periodical updating of the Agency's regulations;
- promotions of the harmonized application of the IAEA regulations throughout the Community via a special permanent working party composed of representatives of Member States.

The Commission is aware that a quantity of low specific activity radioactive waste has been shipped from Caorso to the CEN-SNK at Mol for processing and conditioning.

Shipments of radioactive material need to be checked for external radiation by the competent national authorities to ensure that they conform with the current regulations.

The Honourable Member is referred to the statement made by the Commission to the European Parliament at the plenary session of January 1988 on the shipment of radioactive waste to the CEN plant at Mol and to the evidence given by the Commission to the European Parliament's Committee of Inquiry into the Handling and Transport of Nuclear Material, most notably the statements made by Commissioner Mosar and Commissioner Clinton Davis on 10 March 1988.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 246, 17. 9. 1980 and OJ No L 265, 5. 10. 1984.

<sup>(2)</sup> IAEA Safety Series No 6, 1985.

What measures are being considered or have been taken to prevent this pollution which stems mainly from industry in Roubaix and Tourcoing?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

*(9 February 1988)*

There are now three Community Directives setting limit values and quality objectives for metal discharges into the aquatic environment — Directives 82/176/EEC <sup>(1)</sup> and 84/156/EEC <sup>(2)</sup> for mercury, and Directive 83/513/EEC <sup>(3)</sup> for cadmium.

The 'master' Directive 76/464/EEC on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community <sup>(4)</sup> leaves it to the Member States to choose between the 'limit value' and 'quality objective' approaches.

All three Member States on the Scheldt (Belgium, France and the Netherlands) have opted for the limit value approach.

There are also a number of Directives on the quality of surface water for various uses <sup>(5)</sup>. Each of these sets limit values for a number of metals, though they apply only in water expressly designated for the specific use in question by the Member States, which is not the case with the Scheldt.

Consequently, the only direct measures which could be taken at present would be based on checking compliance with the discharge limit values.

Before taking any measures necessary, the Commission will have to ask the Member States concerned for information.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 81, 27. 3. 1982, p. 29.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 74, 17. 3. 1984, p. 49.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ No L 291, 24. 10. 1983, p. 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ No L 129, 18. 5. 1976, p. 23.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ No L 194, 25. 7. 1975, p. 26; OJ No L 31, 5. 2. 1976, p. 1; OJ No L 222, 14. 8. 1978, p. 1; OJ No L 281, 10. 11. 1979, p. 47; OJ No L 229, 30. 8. 1980, p. 11.

#### WRITTEN QUESTION No 1317/87

by Mrs Marijke Van Hemeldonck (S—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

*(2 October 1987)*

*(89/C 36/05)*

*Subject: Pollution of the Scheldt*

It emerged from the Scheldt symposium held in Terneuzen in late May that the upper reaches of the Scheldt are already heavily polluted, mainly with metals.

#### WRITTEN QUESTION No 1586/87

by Mrs Danielle De March (COM—F)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

*(6 November 1987)*

*(89/C 36/06)*

*Subject: Imports of horticultural produce and flowers*

The 25% rise in imports of horticultural produce and flowers into France in 1986 has nullified the efforts of

producers to improve the quality of their produce and win new markets.

These imports are further aided by a widespread distribution network which exploits the inadequate protection offered at Community frontiers and the distortions of competition among the Member States exacerbated by the enlargement of the EEC to include Spain and Portugal. What measures will the Commission take to remedy this situation?

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

(7 June 1988)

The Honourable Member's question requires separate treatment for each of the product groups concerned:

*Non-edible floricultural products, including flowers*

As regards protection of Community frontiers, the regulations impose customs duties. For sensitive products, namely fresh cut flowers, the duties are:

- 24 % from 1 June to 31 October,
- 17 % from 1 November to 31 May.

Under the Mediterranean agreements, the Community has linked the tariff quotas for cut flowers, in the cases of roses and carnations, to compliance with minimum prices.

In 1986, the imports of the enlarged Community originating in non-member countries totalled 341 million ecus, with exports running at 712 million ecus.

France imported 16 million ecus worth of such products from non-member countries, and deliveries originating in the other Member States came to a total value of 417 million ecus.

Thus, France's share in imports of products grown in non-member countries is small, while at the same time it imports 17 % from other Community countries.

As a result, competition for France derives more from intra-Community trade than from imports of products grown in non-member countries.

*Fresh fruit and vegetables*

It is true that French imports of fresh fruit and vegetables coming under Regulation (EEC) No 1035/72 on the common organization of the market for these products did increase between 1985 and 1986, but the overall figure requires analysis.

The Community's official statistics show that French imports of fruit increased by 13%. Imports of vegetables rose by only 3%.

These increases, recorded in 1986, are undoubtedly accounted for in part by the fact that French production of fruit and vegetables in that year fell short of that in 1985.

During this period, total exports of vegetables from France rose by 20% in 1986 and exports to Spain actually doubled. As for fruit, although it is true that exports tended to mark time, the figures for Spain show an increase of 35%.

As regards protection at frontiers, it should be noted that in addition to the customs duty on all products, the most sensitive products are also subject to a reference price system. This applies to all non-member countries and to Spain and Portugal during the transitional period. Also, Article 22 of Regulation (EEC) No 1035/72 authorizes the retention of national restrictions in certain circumstances.

The Commission takes the view that no other action should be planned at the present stage. The arrangements made in the Act of Accession suffice to ensure gradual and harmonious integration of Spain and Portugal into the Community. The Honourable Member mentions distortions of competition among the Member States, but the Commission has no evidence to this effect.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1658/87**

**by Mr Kenneth Stewart (S—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(12 November 1987)

(89/C 36/07)

*Subject:* Council of Europe Convention on the transfer of sentenced persons between Member States

The Commission is no doubt aware of various newspaper reports that, if the British subjects now awaiting trial in Louvain Prison in Belgium are found guilty, they could serve their sentence in the UK. Would the Commission state whether the Council of Europe Convention on the transfer of sentenced persons has been ratified by the UK and the Belgian Government?

If this convention has not been ratified, would it be possible for reciprocal arrangements to be made between

the Member States, bearing in mind the hardship perpetrated on the families of prisoners detained in another Member State?

**Answer given by Mr De Clercq  
on behalf of the Commission**

(25 July 1988)

The Council of Europe Convention of 21 March 1983 on the transfer of sentenced persons has been ratified by the United Kingdom. Belgium has not yet lodged an instrument for its ratification. Unless such an instrument is lodged, the Convention cannot be an appropriate legal basis for allowing the British defendants to serve their sentences in the UK in the event of their being given non-suspended custodial sentences which are longer than the period already spent in custody awaiting trial. It should also be noted that in the case referred to in the question, the accused have been released on bail.

The Commission notes that the transfer of sentenced persons is at present a matter for Member States. An Agreement on this point was drawn up by the Community's twelve Member States in the European political cooperation context, and has been open for signature since 25 May last year. It has been signed by Belgium and the United Kingdom, but has not yet entered into force.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1822/87**

**by Mr Carlos Robles Piquer (ED—E)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(30 November 1987)

(89/C 36/08)

*Subject:* Retraining of customs staff

The achievement of the desired goal of the single internal Community market by 1992 inevitably raises questions of the most diverse nature with regard to its consequences.

One of them — certainly not the least important — concerns the professional future of the staff employed by the existing customs structures of the European Economic Community. The relevant trade union sources estimate that about 100 000 members of existing customs staff will lose their jobs when the desired goal of the dismantling of intra-Community frontiers is attained on achievement of the above-mentioned single internal market.

Has the Commission made provision for a special retraining programme for the above group of customs

workers, so as to prevent them from becoming victims of an achievement which will be of such crucial importance for the consolidation of our Community?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

(8 June 1988)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question No 1617/87 by Mr Klinkenborg (<sup>1</sup>).

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No C 332, 27. 12. 1988.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1943/87**

**by Mr Domènec Romera i Alcàzar (ED—E)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(22 December 1987)

(89/C 36/09)

*Subject:* Lack of road safety and accident blackspots on certain Community roads as a result of over-narrow roads and poor road surfaces

Lack of road safety is an increasingly acute problem on many roads in certain Community countries as a result of over-narrow roads, road surfaces in poor condition, lines of trees bordering the roadside, poor signposting, insufficient barriers at danger spots, etc.

Statistics for recent years reveal that accidents caused by defects in the road infrastructure have continued to increase, with serious loss of human life.

Will the Commission introduce rules requiring the Member States authorities to standardize road safety provisions and policies and does it not consider it necessary to compile and publish a list of accident blackspots in the European road network?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(5 July 1988)

In its activities on road safety the Commission has been giving priority to the factors with the greatest impact on road accident frequency and severity, i.e. driver behaviour, including driving licence standards, speed limits, alcohol, safety belts and certain passive safety measures such as roadworthiness tests for private cars.

Naturally, the Commission is aware of the importance of infrastructure quality to safety, but it has adopted no

provisions on safety standards for road infrastructure so far.

In 1986 the Commission decided to mark European Road Safety Year by demonstrating the importance which it attaches to infrastructure as a factor in road safety. To set an example it granted Member States financial aid towards projects to remove blackspots.

Generally, the competent authorities in each Member State have a list of the blackspots on their roads, but the Commission has not yet considered collecting or publishing them.

The Commission attaches the utmost importance to modern traffic management systems, particularly telecommunications systems to improve the traffic flow and to route traffic. This is the idea behind the Drive (Dedicated Road Infrastructure for Vehicle Safety in Europe) research programme.

Later this year the Commission will be financing a study to pinpoint bottlenecks on Europe's roads and to assess the road infrastructure investment needed in road infrastructure.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2053/87**

**by Mr John Marshall (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(12 January 1988)

(89/C 36/10)

*Subject:* Level of tobacco consumption in the EEC

What is the level of tobacco consumption in each EEC country and what are the trends over the past five years?

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

(26 August 1988)

The information supplied below (particularly the tables) should give the Honourable Member an idea of the level

and trend of consumption of tobacco products in the Member States.

Table 1 shows expenditure on tobacco products as a proportion of total final consumption of households for two years, 1977 and 1985 (for some countries, only figures for the years indicated in brackets are available). The figures are at constant 1980 prices.

Table 2 gives volume index numbers by country which indicate the trend of consumption of tobacco products, again at constant 1980 prices.

These figures show that consumption of tobacco products fell in five countries (Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) in the period 1977—85, whilst remaining constant in Spain.

The data in table 3 shed light on the level of consumption of tobacco products and changes in expenditure on and prices for those products.

The *per capita* volume index (line 2 of that table) is calculated for each country on the basis of real consumption values (i.e. allowing for possible price differences between countries) per head of population, values which are then related to average *per capita* expenditure in all Community countries.

Where, for a given country, the index number is higher than 100, the volume of tobacco products consumed is greater than the Community average. The high index number for Luxembourg is due to purchases made by foreigners (principally from neighbouring countries) in the economic territory of that country.

As regards prices (line 3 of the table), certain countries experienced a considerable increase between 1980 and 1987.

Line 4 of table 3 gives price index numbers for 1985 (EUR 12 = 100). These index numbers show that price levels in certain countries — such as Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal, where prices have risen spectacularly in recent years — are still well below the Community average in some cases.

TABLE 1

## Expenditure on tobacco products as a proportion of total final consumption of households

Country Year	(%)											
	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
1977	1,9	3,5	1,6	3,9	1,2 (80)	1,4	4,1	3,7	1,5	2,2	1,7	3,1
1985	1,5	3,4	1,5	5,3 (84)	1,2 (83)	1,5	3,9 (84)	3,6	2,4 (82)	1,6	2,0 (80)	2,2

TABLE 2

## Index numbers of volume for the period 1977—85

Country Year	(1980 = 100)											
	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
1977	106,6	113,7	88,9	85,5	—	92,4	94,3	90,6	82,2	109,4	—	95,5
1979	100,4	106,5	97,6	96,2	100,0 (80)	97,6	100,0	97,8	89,9	108,1	—	102,9
1981	97,6	101,8	102,9	110,2	98,0	101,4	98,0	102,3	108,6	96,1	—	92,7
1983	102,1	106,3	96,4	127,1	100,0	106,6	88,9	101,9	146,7 (82)	92,4	—	84,7
1985	96,6	108,5	98,5	134,6 (84)	—	117,0	91,6 (84)	103,8	—	83,3	—	79,6

TABLE 3

## Other information on consumption of tobacco products

	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
<b>1. Absolute expenditure</b>												
(a) 1980												
— million ecu	872	911	5 911	462	1 227	3 072	354	3 375	33	1 388	246	6 847
— million NC (*)	35 400	7 130	14 920	27 433	122 (*)	18 029	239	4 013 (*)	1 319	3 830	17 075	4 098
(b) 1985												
— million ecu	1 192	1 320	8 539	946	2 001	4 895	711	6 325	74	1 776	247	10 358
— million NC (*)	53 554	10 582	19 010	100 065	259	33 265	509	9 159	3 302	4 460	32 111	6 100
— ecu per capita	121	258	140	95	52	89	201	111	201	123	26	183
<b>2. Per capita volume in 1985 (EUR 12 = 100)</b>												
	108	107	84	133	78	87	83	89	222	97	78	86

	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
3. Price index 1980 = 100												
1981	107,3	103,2	100,1	115,2	138,2	114,5	133,2	120,5	112	107,7	118,2	123,5
1982	117,7	106,2	118,9	138,7	151	137,5	165,9	160,6	130,6	111,3	148,3	142,5
1983	132,4	126,2	129,6	168,9	169,3	150,2	195,1	188,7	143,2	117,6	179,8	152
1984	143	133,9	127,5	208,3	180,4	159,5	218	204,1	156,8	133,9	232,7	168,6
1985	154,6	140,7	129,5	235,6	193,8	157,6	247	222	166,1	140,4	287,1	176,5
1986	167	151,0	133,7	279,4	217,1	167,8	271,8	235,1	178,2	141,4	340,1	201,6
1987	175,1	154,2	133,5	324,3	233,8	176,4	287,5	259,0	182,7	145,3	383,6	208,0
4. Price level in 1985 (EUR 12 = 100)	81	175	121	52	48	73	176	90	65	91	77	153

(<sup>1</sup>) Billion.

(<sup>\*</sup>) National currency.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2078/87**  
by Mr Leen van der Waal (NI—NL)  
to the Commission of the European Communities  
(2 December 1987)  
(89/C 36/11)

*Subject:* Establishment of a fraud unit

1. Is it correct that the Commission intends to set up a special 10-man fraud unit?
2. If so, which Commissioner will have responsibility for this unit?
3. What powers will it be given and in what areas will its activities be concentrated?
4. Can the Commission give an estimate of the scale of fraud each year and an indication of the areas in which it occurs most frequently?
5. In view of earlier statements referring to the need for a flying squad of 80 people, does the Commission consider that a group of 10 people will be able to deal with the fraud problem satisfactorily?

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

(5 September 1988)

- 1, 2 and 3. The Commission's decisions regarding the setting up of an antifraud unit are set out in its report on tougher measures to fight against fraud affecting the Community budget (<sup>1</sup>).

4. The Honourable Member will find the answers to his question on the scale of fraud affecting the Community budget in the EAGGF Guarantee Section financial report, which is presented to Parliament each year, in the Commission report referred to above, and in the answers to Written Questions Nos 1528/87 by Mr Vandemeulebroucke (<sup>2</sup>) and 2116/87 by Sir James Scott-Hopkins (<sup>3</sup>).

5. Ten officials will be assigned to the unit from the outset. This will in no way preclude the assignment of additional staff to the operational departments and the coordinating unit at a later stage.

(<sup>1</sup>) COM(87) 572 final, 20. 11. 1987.

(<sup>2</sup>) OJ No C 195, 25. 7. 1988.

(<sup>3</sup>) OJ No C 244, 19. 9. 1988.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2130/87**  
by Mr Hemmo Muntingh (S—NL)  
to the Commission of the European Communities  
(28 January 1988)  
(89/C 36/12)

*Subject:* Ecology and development in Central and Latin America

1. For what projects in Central and Latin America, with the exception of the Amazon region, has funding been requested from the ECSC or institutions associated with the ECSC?
2. In each case, who has applied for funding?

3. Which requests have been granted by the ECSC and why?
4. Which requests granted by the ECSC are being co-funded by institutions other than the ECSC? Which institutions?
5. Will the Commission indicate for each (co)-funded project:
- the sums involved;
  - over what period;
  - for which parts of the projects concerned; and
  - the stage reached in the funding?

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

(1 July 1988)

Funding has not been requested from the ECSC or institutions associated with the ECSC for any other project in Central or South America.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2183/87**

**by Mrs Margaret Daly (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(1 February 1988)

(89/C 36/13)

*Subject:* Birds Directive

Is the Commission satisfied that the EEC Directive on birds has been properly implemented and is being fully observed in all Member States? If not, what action is the Commission taking or intending to take to ensure compliance with Community law?

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2291/87**

**by Mr Alasdair Hutton (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(5 February 1988)

(89/C 36/14)

*Subject:* Slaughter of migrant birds

In view of the fact that the United Kingdom Government is the only one in the European Community which has

reported annually on any exceptions made to its laws and every three years on how it has implemented Directive 79/409/EEC (1) on the conservation of wild birds, what action does the Commission propose to take to ensure that all Member States comply with the terms of the Directive and bring to an end the wanton slaughter of migrant birds?

(1) OJ No L 103, 25. 4. 1979, p. 1.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2312/87**

**by Mr Richard Cottrell (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(8 February 1988)

(89/C 36/15)

*Subject:* Implementation of the wild birds Directive

Six years after the deadline for implementing the Directive concerning the conservation of wild birds, it is clear that Member States are effectively ignoring its provisions. Two Member States have been found guilty of disobeying the Directive, only one has reported annually, as required, and only one has classified suitable habitats as special protection areas. This is hardly a suitable endorsement of European Environment Year. What steps will the Commission now take to ensure adequate enforcement of the Directive?

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2400/87**

**by Mr Christopher Jackson (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(22 February 1988)

(89/C 36/16)

*Subject:* The preservation of wild birds

There have recently been disturbing reports that European Community legislation relating to the preservation of wild birds, and in particular prohibition of netting, snaring and shooting certain species, is being disregarded in certain Member States.

1. Is the Commission in a position to comment on these reports?
2. What action does it propose to take?



**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2408/87**

by Mr Edward Newman (S—GB)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(24 February 1988)

(89/C 36/17)

*Subject:* Conservation of wild birds

Can the Commission supply information, for each of the Member States, concerning implementation and enforcement of Council Directive 79/498/EEC<sup>(1)</sup> and its various amendments and supplements?

Can the Commission also indicate whether this Directive is giving sufficient protection to wild birds in all Member States?

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No L 103, 25. 4. 1979, p. 1.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2519/87**

by Mr Christopher Beazley (ED—GB)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(2 March 1988)

(89/C 36/18)

*Subject:* Council Directive of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds

Could the Commission please detail the level of compliance of the Member States with the Directive of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds and state what action it has taken or proposes to take against those countries which have not complied with the actions required by the Directive.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2735/87**

by Mr Llewellyn Smith (S—GB)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(18 March 1988)

(89/C 36/19)

*Subject:* Conservation of wild birds

Regardless of the directive on the conservation of wild birds, the destruction of habitats and the killing of hundreds of millions of birds each autumn are still continuing in many European countries, six years after the deadline set for governments to provide legislation prohibiting this mass destruction of wildlife.

Can the Commission name the Member States who have not complied with the Directive which requires governments to report every three years on the implementation of national legislation?

Please also indicate what steps are being taken to urge top priority for the implementation of Europe's bird protection laws.

**Joint answer to Written Questions Nos 2183/87, 2291/87, 2312/87, 2400/87, 2408/87, 2519/87 and 2735/87**

given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission

(27 July 1988)

The Commission has decided to make implementation of Community Environment Policy a priority item under the Fourth Action Programme in order to have Community directives for the environment fully implemented in all Member States. In its Resolution on the Fourth Action Programme, the Council has approved this approach<sup>(1)</sup>.

With regard to the implementation of Directive 79/409/EEC<sup>(2)</sup> on the conservation of wild birds and Directive 85/411/EEC<sup>(3)</sup> amending Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, it has become obvious that the actual transposition of the directives is being undertaken in several Member States with considerable delay.

A new updated list including the infringement proceeding based on Directives 79/409/EEC and 85/411/EEC is being sent directly to the Honourable Member and the Secretariat-General of the Parliament.

The provisions of these directives are considered adequate for the purpose of protection of species of birds and their habitats in the European territory of the Member States.

As a result of actions undertaken by the Commission in order to enforce the implementation of Directive 79/409/EEC, the Court of Justice delivered on 8 July 1987 two judgments<sup>(4)</sup> condemning Italy and Belgium for failing to adopt within the prescribed period all necessary legislative acts in order to comply with the directive.

Judgments condemning the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands for failure to implement the directive had already been issued on 17 September 1987 and 13 October 1987<sup>(5)</sup>.

A case against France<sup>(6)</sup> was initiated on 27 July 1983 and was brought before the Court of Justice on 13 August 1985. The Commission considers that a number of legal provisions are not in conformity with the directive and in particular those regulating the list of hunted species and hunting methods.

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No C 289, 29. 10. 1987, p. 3.

(<sup>2</sup>) OJ No L 103, 25. 4. 1979, p. 1.

(<sup>3</sup>) OJ No L 233, 30. 8. 1985, p. 33.

(<sup>4</sup>) OJ No C 204, 31. 7. 1987, p. 3.

(<sup>5</sup>) OJ No C 274, 13. 10. 1987, p. 4.

(<sup>6</sup>) Case 252/85.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2204/87**

by Mrs Hedy d'Ancona (S—NL)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 February 1988)

(89/C 36/20)

*Subject:* Mobility allowance for disabled persons in Britain

The mobility allowance paid to disabled persons in the United Kingdom is intended to cover part of the costs of transport. It has come to my attention that a disabled person of British nationality resident in the Netherlands (where his British disability pension is transferred every month) is not entitled to the mobility allowance because the entitlement is restricted to the territory of the United Kingdom.

Does the Commission agree that if the British authorities decide to make a cross-frontier transfer of a disability pension, there are no grounds for restricting the entitlement to an allowance such as the mobility allowance to the territory of the United Kingdom?

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

(29 June 1988)

Council Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71<sup>(1)</sup> on the application of social security schemes to employed persons, to self-employed persons and to members of their families moving within the Community stipulates in Article 4 (4) that benefits provided under social and medical assistance schemes are excluded from its scope. The mobility allowance granted to disabled persons residing in the United Kingdom is a benefit covered by social and medical assistance.

The Commission's proposal for a Council Regulation<sup>(2)</sup>, which has been before the Council since 1985, aims to introduce into the substantive scope of Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 benefits described as non-contributory benefits of a mixed type and, in particular, those specifically designed to protect disabled persons.

However, the proposal is intended only to ensure that these benefits are granted on the territory of the Member State in which the person concerned resided and does not provide for their exportation.

For lack of unanimity, the Council has been unable to adopt the proposal.

As it stands, Community legislation has no provision which obliges the British authorities to pay a mobility

allowance to any person residing outside the United Kingdom.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 230, 22. 8. 1983 (Council Regulation (EEC) No 2001/83 amending and updating Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 and Regulation (EEC) No 574/72).

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No C 240, 21. 9. 1985.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2206/87**

by Mrs Hedy d'Ancona (S—NL)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 February 1988)

(89/C 36/21)

*Subject:* Educational grants and EC competition

In most Member States educational grants are legally defined forms of assistance of a social character. Such grants are also made available for courses at commercially run educational institutes; this type of activity can be defined as a form of 'industrial service'.

Does the Commission agree that grant-aided courses of study at commercially run educational institutes infringe the rules of competition, e.g. as laid down in Article 92 (2) (a) of the Treaty of Rome, if the entitlement to an educational grant is restricted to the territory of the Member State awarding the grant?

In this connection what are the Commission's views on Article 9 (1) (e) (3°) of the Dutch Educational Grants Act?

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

(19 July 1988)

The Member States' policy with regard to the allocation of national educational grants covering students' maintenance expenses falls within the competence of the Member States, to the extent that it corresponds with the Community rules applicable to migrant workers and their families.

The Commission considers, however, that in the context of increased mobility for Community students, greater flexibility in the allocation of grants across Community frontiers is generally to be welcomed.

More specifically, an important first step has been taken at Community level with the adoption of the Erasmus Programme which stipulates, among the conditions for the allocation of Erasmus grants to students, that

'maintenance grants available to a student in his own country will continue to be paid to Erasmus students during their period of study at the host university'.

On the basis of the information at its disposal, the Commission considers that state grants of the type covered by Article 9 (1) (e) (3°) of the Dutch Educational Grants Act are in no way such as to be considered incompatible with the common market within the meaning of Article 92 (1) of the EEC Treaty.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2230/87**  
**by Mr José Lafuente Lopez (ED—E)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(4 February 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/22)*

*Subject: Social security and tax expenses of European companies*

A recently published comparative study of the cost to employers of meeting their social security and tax obligations in the US, Japan and the EEC countries has shown that, while in the Member States of the European Economic Community it was on average as high as 50% of the corresponding rate per employee, it was 40% in the US and a mere 30% in Japan.

This is clear proof that American and Japanese companies are enabled to achieve a higher degree of competitiveness and productivity than their European counterparts.

Does the Commission believe that consideration should be given to treating companies in the Community on the same basis, as far as tax and social security expenses are concerned, as applies to Japanese and American companies, in order to place business in the Community on an equal footing with our main competitors at world level.

**Answer given by Mr Schmidhuber**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(1 July 1988)*

The structure of charges payable by companies partly reflects the political choices made for financing social security systems. Some Member States give precedence to direct taxation (including tax on profits) whilst others

finance their social expenditure through levies on labour costs. Thus, the difference between the labour costs paid by the employer and the net earnings received by the employee can vary quite considerably from one country to another: in 1984, the net earnings of an employee, married with two children, represented 56,8% of the corresponding labour costs to the employer in the Federal Republic of Germany, against approximately 63% in France and Italy, 67,3% in the United Kingdom and 73% in Greece (see table 1). These differences in the structure of labour costs between the Member States are therefore as least as large as those which exist in comparison with the United States and Japan; they are due above all to the different role played by social contributions (paid by both employer and employee) and the level of taxation.

Moreover, the differences between the Member States as regards direct taxation of firms (rates of tax on profits) are also considerable (see table 2); they can be explained at least as much by the rate of taxation applied as by the methods used to define book profit.

In these circumstances, any change to the tax and social contributions payable in respect of labour costs alone can only be envisaged in the long term. Moreover, if taxation policies influence the variety of services offered to all economic operators, these services have in their turn a favourable impact on company productivity. There is consequently a range of possibilities, with varying degrees of state involvement, for financing the social security system, since there is nothing to prove that one system is necessarily more efficient than any other.

Finally, other elements (inflation rates, money wages, exchange rates) are also significant in determining competitiveness. Money wages have quickly adjusted to the fall in inflation rates since the beginning of the 1980s and, since real wages have increased much less quickly than average labour productivity, the costs situation of European firms has considerably improved.

The gradual fall in the value of the dollar since 1985, which has been speeded up by events on the international financial markets since 19 October 1987, has highlighted a further decisive factor for the competitiveness of firms. The pressure on firms to adapt their operations and costs has no doubt increased. The Commission will examine these aspects in greater detail in its communication on the economic situation to be presented to Parliament and to the Council in July 1988.

TABLE 1

## Social contributions payable by firms — 1984

Comparison between average labour costs to the employer and net earnings to the married employee with two children (single income family)

1984	B	DK (*)	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
Labour costs to the employer												
— in ecu per month	1 719	1 732	2 008	623	.	1 734	1 423	1 545	1 574	1 891	386	1 417
— Percentage	100	100	100	100	.	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Vocational training costs	0,4	1,9	1,6	.	.	1,6	1,3	0,3	0,5	0,4	2	1,5
Social contributions (employer)	24	5,7	21	18	.	28,1	14,7	33,5	14,9	24,4	18,4	14,6
Social contributions (employee)	9,8	1,5	13,3	12,2	.	10,2	7,0	6,3	9,9	20,4	9,2	7,5
Tax (employer)					.			0,5	0,5		2,7	
Tax (employee)	15,0	39,9	10,0	2,3	.	0,0	14,9	9,6	2,6	7,0	3,0	15,1
Subsidies (employer)	1,1	0,3			.			8,1				0,1
Family allowances (2 children)	8,2	0,0	3,5	6,4	.	5,4	2,5	7,1	7,0	5,8	3,1	7,0
Miscellaneous charges and costs	1,4	0,4	0,7	1	.	2,3	1,4	1,2	1,3	2,3	3	1,2
Net earnings to the employee	58,7	50,9	56,8	73,0	.	63,2	63,2	63,8	77,3	51,2	64,8	67,3

(\*) Worker, living alone, average wage.

Source: Eurostat.

TABLE 2

## Level of company taxation — 1984

(% of GDP)

	B	DK	D	F	IRL	I	L	NL	UK
Burden of taxation on profits	1,8	2,6	1,7	1,7	1,5	1,0	5,0	2,6	4,6

## WRITTEN QUESTION No 2290/87

by Mr Christopher Jackson (ED—GB)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 February 1988)

(89/C 36/23)

*Subject:* Application of biotechnology to agro-industrial development

In July 1986, DG XII of the Commission invited expressions of interest in the application of biotechnology to agro-industrial development, the intention being that grant aid would be made available in due course.

A firm in my constituency submitted an expression of interest in October 1986. No acknowledgement was received. In March 1987 I wrote to an official at the Commission to enquire when the results of the expression

of interest and the awards of funds would be known. I received no response.

Would the Commission please state as a matter of urgency:

1. the current position with this programme;
2. whether they will take measures to ensure that letters from the public and MEPs are acknowledged and answered more reliably?

Answer given by Mr Narjes  
on behalf of the Commission

(1 August 1988)

1. On 18 December 1987 the Commission presented to Council and Parliament the proposal for a first multi-

annual programme (1988—1993) of biotechnology based agro-industrial research and technological development, 'ECLAIR' (European Collaborative Linkage of Agriculture and Industry through Research) <sup>(1)</sup>. As a specific research programme within the Framework Programme 1987—1991 adopted by Council on 28 September 1987, the Commission proposal falls under the cooperation procedure. In order to adopt a common position, the Council is presently waiting for the opinion of the European Parliament. Once the common position has been adopted, the Commission intends to seek, through the publication of a call for proposals in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*, the widest possible participation in the programme. This call will be conditional upon completion of the second reading and Council Decision on the programme. At that time, interested organizations such as the firm in the Honourable Member's constituency should submit their proposals for Community participation in financing projects compatible with the aims of the programme.

2. The Commission regrets that the expression of interest submitted by the firm in October 1986 and the letter of March 1987 from the Honourable Member were apparently not received. A total of 856 expressions of interest were received and acknowledged. All respondents received the report on the results of the call, published in March 1987.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM(87) 667.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2315/87**

**by Mrs Caroline Jackson (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(8 February 1988)*

*(89/C 36/24)*

*Subject: VAT on educational tours*

Could the Commission state what will be the position regarding the payment of VAT on educational tours with effect from 1 April 1988 and, in particular, whether it is possible for such tours to be exempt from VAT and whether any Member States allow such an exemption at the moment?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

*(20 July 1988)*

Under the terms of the Sixth VAT Directive <sup>(1)</sup>, educational tours organized by a travel agency and made within the Community are in principle subject to VAT.

Special arrangements based on Article 26 of the abovementioned Directive apply to travel agents who deal with customers in their own name. Under those special arrangements, the taxable amount is the travel agent's margin.

The Commission is aware that the United Kingdom has amended its VAT arrangements applicable to tour operators with effect from 1 April 1988 in order to comply with Community law.

For a transitional period, Member States may continue to exempt services supplied by travel agencies in respect of journeys carried out within the Community (Article 28 (3) and point 27 of Annex F to the Sixth Directive). Three Member States (Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands) are currently making use of that option.

<sup>(1)</sup> Directive 77/388/EEC, OJ No L 145, 13. 6. 1977, p. 1.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2330/87**

**by Mr Michel Debatisse (PPE—F)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(8 February 1988)*

*(89/C 36/25)*

*Subject: Cost of fraud to the Community budget*

In November 1987, the Committee on Budgetary Control estimated that the cost of fraud recorded in connection with the payment of Community aid and other funds might amount to 10% of the Community budget.

An inquiry conducted by the EEC in southern Italy revealed the extent of fraud. Out of a sample of 439 farms, only 151 farmers had given correct figures for the area of land under cultivation. Thus, of the 300 000 hectares declared, only 210 000 had actually been sown. The loss totalled 17 billion lire (130 million ecu).

The fraud takes the form of the declaration of exaggerated figures for areas under cultivation or of multiple applications for subsidies for a single farm.

Can the Commission give a precise estimate of the cost of this fraud? What steps does it intend to take to eradicate it? Does it intend to institute more effective control procedures and introduce penalties designed to act as a deterrent?

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

*(6 September 1988)*

The Honourable Member will find the answers to his questions in the Commission's report on tougher

measures to fight against fraud affecting the Community budget <sup>(1)</sup>, and in the answers to Written Questions Nos 1528/87 by Mr Vandemeulebroucke <sup>(2)</sup>, 2116/87 by Sir James Scott-Hopkins <sup>(3)</sup> and 2078/87 by Mr Leen Van der Waal <sup>(4)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM(87) 572 final.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No C 195, 25. 7. 1988.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ No C 244, 19. 9. 1988.

<sup>(4)</sup> See page 8 of this Official Journal.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2351/87**

**by Mr Michael Hindley (S—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(22 February 1988)

(89/C 36/26)

*Subject:* Cooperative development agencies

Could the Commission give precise details of the funding given to Cooperative Development Agencies in the North-West of England over the last five years? Could the Commission state what are the monitoring and auditing procedures concerning such funds? Could the Commission give details of the monitoring and auditing of funds given to Cooperative Development Agencies in the North-West of England over the last five years?

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

(7 July 1988)

The Commission is sending direct to the Honourable Member and to the Parliament Secretariat the list of ESF contributions granted to Development Agencies in the North-West of England in the 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987 financial years.

Aid from the Fund may not exceed the amount of financial assistance provided by the authorities of the Member State concerned, which guarantees performance of the operations. As regards the applications for final payment, the Member State is responsible for verifying and auditing the information therein.

National institutions are primarily responsible for monitoring of Commission contributions. The Commission may also carry out on-site inspections.

No ERDF aid was granted to Development Agencies in the North-West of England over the last five years.

Procedures concerning monitoring of the operations and on-site inspection for ERDF grants are covered by Article 32 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 1787/84 on the ERDF <sup>(1)</sup>, which allocates responsibilities for, and states the aims of, such enquiries.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 169, 28. 6. 1984, p. 1.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2403/87**

**by Mr Dieter Rogalla (S—D)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(24 February 1988)

(89/C 36/27)

*Subject:* Allergic diseases

1. What information does the Commission have on the treatment of such allergic diseases as asthma, eczema and hay fever?
2. Does the Commission have any contact with self-help groups or specialist associations to ensure that information is disseminated as widely as possible and, if so, with which groups?
3. Does the Commission intend to take action in this area as part of its social and health policy and, if so, what steps will it take?

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

(5 July 1988)

1. The Commission has no information on the problems related to the treatment of allergies. However, a complete list of allergens has been drawn up under the health and safety at the workplace and toxicology programmes.

2 and 3. The Commission cooperates closely with the World Health Organization on allergens and methods of assessing such substances. No further initiatives are planned at present.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2409/87**

**by Mr Ingo Friedrich (PPE—D)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(24 February 1988)

(89/C 36/28)

*Subject:* Dangers of '00 colza'

In a number of press releases the Bavarian Federation for the Protection of Birds has alleged that '00 colza' in seed form is fatally poisonous to birds and animals.

1. Is it true that '00' colza seed is fatal to birds, probably owing to the use of a corrosive agent?
2. Is it also true that this 'lethal colza' is the only variety cultivated with the help of European Community subsidies?
3. If so, can the Commission indicate what measures it intends to take with a view to eliminating this danger to birds and animals?
4. Is it true that the poisonous effects of the corrosive agent contained in the seed have been known for a long time and that this agent has now been prohibited in the United States?

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

(29 July 1988)

The Commission draws the attention of the Honourable Member to its replies to Written Questions Nos 2543/86 by Mr Mertens and 2634/86 by Mr Zarges <sup>(1)</sup> which deal *inter alia* with alleged causal relationship between deaths of certain species of wild animals in the Federal Republic of Germany and elsewhere in the Community and the cultivation of '00' rape varieties.

The Commission is aware of reports in 1986 in the Federal Republic of Germany of bird deaths which have been attributed to the use of '00' rapeseed treated with the insecticide carbosulphan. Following label changes and an

intensified campaign by the responsible authorities to improve agricultural practices in order to avoid exposure of birds to treated seed, as far as it is known, there have been no reports of bird deaths following the 1987 seeding. However, the Commission is aware of the possible limitations of one season's results and intends to follow closely developments.

According to information available to the Commission, preparations containing the active substance carbosulphan have never been authorized in the USA.

European Community subsidies are granted both for '00' varieties and for other varieties of rapeseed. The Commission has indicated its intention to restrict support only to '00' varieties of rapeseed from 1991 onwards. However, the rapeseed itself and particularly '00' varieties are not relevant to the problem raised here.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 23, 28. 1. 1988, p. 8.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2422/87**

**by Mr François Roelants du Vivier (ARC—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities**

(24 February 1988)

(89/C 36/29)

*Subject:* Financial balance-sheet of ecological damage

Is the Commission aware of the following balance-sheet (drawn up by Wicke in 1986) giving a financial breakdown of ecological damage in the Federal Republic of Germany?

1. Damage	Estimate of damage (DM billions annually)
<i>Air pollution</i>	48,0 billion DM in round figures
— damage to health	in excess of 2,3—5,8
— material damage	in excess of 2,3
— damage caused to open field vegetation	in excess of 1,0
— damage to forests	in excess of 5,5—8,8
<i>Water pollution</i>	well over 17,6 billion DM
— damage to rivers, seas and lakes	in excess of 14,3
— damage caused in the North Sea and the Baltic	well over 0,3
— damage to ground water	in excess of 3,0
<i>Destruction of the soil</i>	well over 5,2 billion DM
— Chernobyl and the costs involved in preventing repercussions from the disaster	in excess of 2,4
— rehabilitation of old refuse tips	in excess of 1,7
— the costs involved in the conservation of biotopes and species	in excess of 1,0
— soil contamination	well over 0,1

1. Damage	Estimate of damage (DM billions annually)
<i>Noise</i>	in excess of 32,7 billion DM
— depreciation of housing value	in excess of 29,3
— productivity losses	in excess of 3,0
— the costs of compensation to individuals for noise disturbance	in excess of 0,4
Total estimate of damage	well over 103,5 billion DM

What is the Commission's view of this analysis?

Is the Commission aware of other similar 'balance-sheets' drawn up for other EEC countries?

Could the Commission supply a similar financial breakdown for the EEC as a whole?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(8 June 1988)

1. The balance sheet drawn up by Wicke to which the Honourable Member refers is controversial in the Federal Republic of Germany, because — by its very nature — it contains a number of uncertainties. These concern both the quality of the data used and methodological aspects of the overall damage calculation.

Despite the methodological shortcomings, the study does at least situate the damage in the correct range. In fact, in most cases the damage has tended to be underestimated, and certain factors as yet unquantifiable in money terms such as the disappearance of species or psycho-social damage have not been taken into account at all. Thus, in the final analysis, when the overestimates and underestimates are balanced, the study probably greatly underrates the effective annual damage. It can therefore confidently be assumed that the damage caused by environmental pollution in an industrialized country such as the Federal Republic of Germany amounts to at least 6—8% of gross domestic product.

2. A similar comprehensive estimate of ecological damage has not yet been undertaken in the other Member States. While the figures for Germany cannot simply be applied to other countries by straight transfer, they might be a true reflection for the following reason: while the damage caused by environmental pollution ought to be less severe in less populated and less industrialized countries of Europe than in Germany, other things being equal, the question is whether all other things are indeed equal, in particular whether other countries have equally stringent pollution control standards. It is to be assumed that the less populated and less industrialized Member States do not have as strict environmental legislation as

Germany and that their pollution control technology is not so efficient. Thus the effects probably balance out, and it seems quite plausible that the cost of ecological damage (as a percentage of gross domestic product) is in the same league in the other Community countries as in Germany. At any rate, the estimates we have for individual damage appear to bear out this theory.

Even though such calculations will always be open to dispute owing to the high degree of uncertainty regarding the causal links, in scientific terms estimates of this type doubtless have an important indicator function. They at least emphasize the high degree of probability that expenditure on environmental protection falls well short of the threshold at which the economic wisdom of further environmental protection measures becomes questionable. The existence of such estimates should therefore help to boost efforts in the environmental field and improve their chances of being implemented.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2476/87**

by Mr José Alvarez de Eulate Peñaranda (ED—E)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(24 February 1988)

(89/C 36/30)

*Subject:* Social security for unemployed young people

The precarious position of thousands of unemployed young persons is made more difficult by certain related difficulties arising from their dismal social situation.

One such difficulty, and perhaps the most worrying, concerns their entitlement to medical cover under social security schemes, which some countries surmount by granting unemployed young persons entitlement on the strength of their parents' contributions, though usually only up to the age of 26.

Since young people may remain unemployed beyond the age of 26 and may run the risk of having no medical cover under the social security schemes of their respective



countries, does the Commission not think that harmonization within the Community is necessary to resolve this problem, together with a contribution from EEC funds to the social security schemes of the various Member States, in order to ensure social security cover for young people who remain unemployed beyond the age of 26?

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

(5 July 1988)

In nearly every Member State young unemployed people are entitled to health care, either as registered unemployed workers or as nationals of the Member State in question. The only exceptions are Spain and Portugal where unemployed workers who are not in receipt of unemployment benefit are not covered by health insurance unless they are regarded as dependants of another insured person.

The Commission is directly forwarding to the Honourable Member and the Secretariat of Parliament the Comparative Tables of the Social Security Schemes in the Member States of the European Communities.

The countries concerned regard a general health insurance coverage as a stated objective of their social protection system but for the time being they are hampered by budgetary constraints.

The Commission considers that the problems of social protection should be examined together but it would stress that the social protection system is the individual responsibility of each Member State.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2513/87**

**by Mr Willy Kuijpers (ARC—B)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(2 March 1988)

(89/C 36/31)

*Subject:* Asbestos in brake linings

Sweden has announced a ban, subject to certain exceptions, on the use of asbestos, to apply for instance, to the use of asbestos in brake and friction materials. In 1988 cars with components containing asbestos may no longer be sold in Sweden.

What are the Commission's views on this decision and are there plans for similar measures within the EEC?

Can the Commission inform us of any available figures for readings relating to asbestos in brake linings, and how these figures are evaluated?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

(7 September 1988)

The Commission has been informed by the Swedish authorities of the ban on the use of asbestos in cars.

This ban, which is aimed at brake linings and pads and clutch linings has been justified by the Swedish authorities as being a necessary precaution from a health protection standpoint. However — although asbestos fibres present a certain risk when inhaled and although according to specialists, there is no threshold level for those effects — the products at issue, whose fibres are released during normal use, do not represent a significant source of exposure for the population as things currently stand, except, perhaps, where work is carried out in repair shops. These are subject to the regulation on the 'workplace'. Moreover, it has been noted that, for various reasons, the industry concerned is moving towards replacement of asbestos in the components referred to above. Nevertheless, this type of ban seems to be out of proportion to the aim pursued and could constitute a barrier to trade.

At the stage currently reached by the Commission in this area there can be no thought of banning these products. The Commission is monitoring developments in this area very closely in order to take the necessary measures concerning the various uses of asbestos.

The Commission has not had those measures mentioned by the Honourable Member implemented, nor does it have in its possession any information on measures carried out by other bodies.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2518/87**

**by Mr Pieter Dankert (S—NL)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(2 March 1988)

(89/C 36/32)

*Subject:* The financial consequences of non-compliance with Community legislation in respect of the superlevy on milk and milk products

On page 55 of the Sixteenth Financial Report on the EAGGF (<sup>1</sup>), the Commission states that in 1986 it initiated

infringement procedures against the Member States which, in its opinion, had not applied (Italy) or had not applied properly (Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands, Denmark and France) Community legislation on the superlevy on milk and milk products.

1. What financial consequences does the Commission think this will have in respect of the accounts clearance procedure?
2. Is the Community legislation in question currently being applied properly?

If not, what are the (financial) consequences?

(<sup>1</sup>) COM(87) 533 final, Brussels, 17 November 1987.

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

(9 September 1988)

1. Any financial implications of the cases of infringements mentioned by the Honourable Member will be determined when the accounts for the relevant year are cleared in accordance with the rules followed by the Commission in this field.

2. Proper implementation of Community regulations by the Member States is verified when the accounts are cleared. The accounts clearance work now being carried out relates to 1986.

Although from the beginning of 1987 a number of Member States undertook to bring their own legislation into line with requirements, the Commission is not in a position at the present time to confirm that all the Member States are in fact implementing the provisions concerned properly. In view of the fundamental importance which the Commission attaches, however, to compliance by the Member States with their obligations as regards the milk quotas, the Commission has made representations to the governments of several Member States to remind them of this point.

Unless and until the Member States comply with the Community rules, the Commission will determine any appropriate financial implications.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2522/87**

by Mr Angelo Carossino (COM—I)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(2 March 1988)

(89/C 36/33)

*Subject:* Recent crash of an ATR 42 in the mountains surrounding Lake Como

Having regard to the grave and tragic accident of the ATR 42 on a flight from Linate airport in Milan to

Cologne which crashed in the mountains surrounding Lake Como killing 37 people;

Whereas ATR 42 is one of the new generation of planes recently entered into operation and fitted with the most modern and sophisticated flight and safety technology, and this accident is giving rise to disturbing questions amongst the public;

Having regard to the European Parliament's resolution adopted at the September part-session on air transport safety (Doc. A 2-135/87/A).

Does the Commission not consider that it should assist the national authorities in the enquiries into this and other recent airline accidents with a view to establishing conclusions designed to improve air transport safety within the Community, in cooperation with international organizations?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(5 July 1988)

At present participation in aircraft accident enquiries is based on the ICAO's international recommended standards and practices, as set out in Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. Enquiries are the responsibility of the State on whose territory the accident occurs. Provision is made for the participation of the States of registration, of the operator and of the manufacturer of the aircraft and of any State which, on request, assists in the enquiry. It is also recommended that the participation of States whose nationals were killed in the accident should be authorized.

As the Honourable Member emphasized, the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 15 September 1987 on Community measures in the field of air transport safety (<sup>1</sup>) called for the establishment of a European Accident Investigation Board. This question was discussed at the Air Safety Symposium convened by the Commission on 26 and 27 November 1987. It emerged from the discussions and from subsequent contacts between Commission staff and the parties concerned that there is a need and a desire to pool experience and available information within the Community. The Commission will shortly be holding consultations in order to determine more precisely the scope for Community action in this area.

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No C 281, 19. 10. 1987, p. 51.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2540/87**  
**by Mrs Marie-Noëlle Lienemann (S—F)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(2 March 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/34)*

*Subject:* Marginalization of redundant workers

Workers who are made redundant and are unable to find alternative employment, particularly in the over-50 age group, frequently become alienated. There is, in fact, a growing rate of vagrancy among such workers.

Has the Commission been able to compile statistics on the matter for the Community as a whole?

**Answer given by Mr Marin**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(1 August 1988)*

The Commission does not have the specific information on new forms of poverty requested by the Honourable Member.

Nevertheless, the Commission is keeping a close watch on the phenomena in question and organized a seminar on 28—29 April on new poverty in the Community in collaboration with the Université Libre of Brussels.

The Commission is forwarding directly to the Honourable Member and the Secretariat-General of the European Parliament basic documents prepared for this seminar by independent experts, which contain information and statistics currently available in the Member States.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2545/87**  
**by Mrs Hedy d'Ancona (S—NL)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(2 March 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/35)*

*Subject:* Ban on the recruitment of HIV-positive job applicants by Philips Nederland

Philips Nederland has sent a circular to its medical officer stating that applicants whose blood is found to contain antibodies to the AIDS virus must not be recruited, despite the fact that, at the same time, it 'admits' that HIV infection does not render a person unfit for work in the sense that the person in question might constitute a

danger to those around him or her. A spokesman for Philips Nederland said that the ban on recruitment was connected with the possible future burden on Philips' sickness insurance scheme.

Does the Commission agree that a ban on recruitment based on a possible increase in sickness payments rather than a person's fitness for work constitutes a violation of the principle of 'equal access to employment' — a basic European right which, according to the communication on its policy on AIDS (COM(87) 63 final), the Commission is determined to defend?

Will the Commission inform Philips Nederland of its reaction and state how European legislation may be used to counter this practice?

**Answer given by Mr Marin**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(20 July 1988)*

According to the most recent information available to the Commission, Philips Nederland has abolished the condition referred to by the Honourable Member. It is therefore unnecessary for the Commission to adopt a position on this question.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2591/87**  
**by Mrs Vera Squarzialupi (COM—I)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(9 March 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/36)*

*Subject:* Accusations by the Liberian Minister of Health concerning the radioactive contamination of powdered milk imported from the European Community

Can the Commission truthfully deny the accusations of Mrs Martha Belih, the Republic of Liberia's Health Minister, that supplies of powdered milk imported from the European Community have proved to contain levels of radioactive contamination requiring a ban on their sale in Liberia?

**Answer given by Mr Andriessen**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(20 July 1988)*

The precautionary measures taken on the initiative of the Liberian Ministry of Health on 26 January 1988 — with no prior testing — were lifted on 3 February.

Information provided by the Commission had rapidly reassured the Liberian authorities as to the safety of milk powder exported by the Community.

The withdrawal of the ban on sales was widely publicized locally.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2632/87**

by Mr Lambert Croux (PPE—B)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 March 1988)

(89/C 36/37)

*Subject:* Proportion of ERDF appropriations for the financing of programmes

Have the various Member States submitted the requisite number of applications for financial assistance for programmes pursuant to Article 6 of the ERDF Regulation, to ensure that the proportion of aid paid from the European Regional Development Fund for the financing of programmes actually amounted to at least one-fifth of the total appropriations granted by the Fund at the end of 1987?

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

(27 June 1988)

In view of the fact that Regulation (EEC) No 1787/84 <sup>(1)</sup> came into force on 1 January 1985 and that programme preparation and adoption both at national and at Community level has followed a new procedure, it is important to note that the share of ERDF funds for programme financing reached, in 1987, 17% of the total ERDF budget for that year. In addition, in 1987 almost all Member States ensured that more than 20% of the ERDF funds allocated to them went to programmes, the exceptions being the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal — the latter two Member States having only two years to attain the 20% objective.

During the period 1985—87, all twelve Member States submitted applications for ERDF aid in the form of national programmes of Community interest, some of them within the framework of the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes or integrated operations.

It should also be pointed out that reform of the structural Funds will probably result in a further increase in the proportion of ERDF aid earmarked for programme financing.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 169, 28. 6. 1984, p. 1.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2640/87**

by Mr Jean Besse (S—F)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 March 1988)

(89/C 36/38)

*Subject:* Internal market in electric energy

What specific measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure the completion of a genuine internal market in electric energy by 1992?

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

(1 August 1988)

The Commission recently sent to the Council and European Parliament a working paper on the internal market in energy <sup>(1)</sup>. In it the Commission identified four spheres for action which, taken concurrently and progressively, should enable the internal market for energy to be made a reality by 31 December 1992. In this context the Commission will also make suitable proposals for bringing about a genuine internal market for electricity.

The Commission recently adopted a proposal on the opening-up of public procurement in the energy field, which covers works contracts relating to electricity <sup>(2)</sup>. Within the energy sector, however, the purchase of electricity poses specific problems in that there exist identifiable obstacles to cross-frontier purchases. These obstacles will have to be removed by the end of 1992. The Commission will therefore propose, in the course of 1989, action to achieve this objective.

Moreover, before the end of the year the Commission will submit to the Council a detailed report on price transparency in the energy sector, including electricity prices.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM(88) 238 final.

<sup>(2)</sup> COM(88) 335 final.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2656/87**

by Mrs Johanna Maij-Weggen (PPE—NL)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(14 March 1988)

(89/C 36/39)

*Subject:* Restrictions on the import of goods by frontier-dwellers

Dutch people who live within a radius of fifteen kilometres of the frontier are allowed to import fewer goods from the neighbouring country than those who live further away.

Thus every Dutch citizen may import tax-free goods to the value of Fl 890 from another Community country every time and three hundred cigarettes.

People living on the frontier are subject to restrictions: they may bring in goods to the value of only Fl 125 per day and no more than a hundred cigarettes.

Does the Commission know whether such restrictions also apply to frontier-dwellers in other countries?

Can the Commission say whether this is in accordance with Community law?

Does the Commission not think that these measures are extremely hard and inflexible, especially when it is considered that in some regions the frontier runs through the middle of villages and people are obliged to buy certain products (clothes, shoes, etc.) on the other side of the border?

Does not the Commission also think that these measures have unnecessarily increased the number of frontier checks, which is contrary to Community policy?

Is the Commission prepared to ask the Netherlands to scrap this measure so that frontier-dwellers are treated in the same way as other Dutch citizens?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission  
(7 July 1988)**

According to the Commission's information some other Member States do apply a reduced allowance for residents of border areas.

The Dutch rules referred to by the Honourable Member comply with Article 5 of Council Directive 69/169/EEC of 28 May 1969<sup>(1)</sup>. That Article allows Member States to reduce the value or quantity of goods which may be admitted free of tax to not less than one-tenth of the value or quantity otherwise allowed, where the goods are imported from another Member State by a person resident in a 'frontier zone' or by a frontier worker. But these restrictions do not apply where the traveller produces evidence to show that he is travelling beyond the frontier zone or that he is not returning from the frontier zone of the neighbouring country.

In Case 54/84: Paul v. Hauptzollamt Emmerich, the Court of Justice held that the expression frontier zone had to be interpreted as meaning a circular zone having a radius of 15 km and its centre at the customs crossing.

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that in a genuine internal market consumers must be able

to buy goods in any Member State and to import them freely. For this reason the Commission's 'tax package'<sup>(2)</sup> already proposes that tax rates be aligned more closely and that VAT payment at borders be ended, which would mean that tax-free allowances for travellers within the Community would cease to apply after 31 December 1992.

At present there are wide divergences in taxation, and prices can therefore vary quite substantially between Member States. In such a situation the granting of tax-free allowances to people living in border areas can increase the distortion of competition and give rise to deflection of trade. The reduction of the allowances granted to such travellers can of course make additional checks necessary at internal Community borders. However, at the present stage of harmonization, the Commission takes the view that it would not be appropriate to propose the ending of these reduced allowances for frontier zones.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 133, 4. 6. 1969, p. 6.

<sup>(2)</sup> COM(87) 322 final/2.

#### WRITTEN QUESTION No 2698/87

by Mrs Beate Weber (S—D)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(14 March 1988)

(89/C 36/40)

*Subject:* Cooperation between the European Community and EFTA in environmental-crime investigation

1. In the Fourth Environmental Action Programme, the Commission points to the need for environmental cooperation between the European Community and EFTA, including that in connection with marine pollution. How can the Commission ensure that, in the case of a Greek tanker which has polluted Swedish waters, the necessary evidence is obtained when the tanker is docked in a French port for lading?

2. In the same example, how can the Greek Government be induced to cooperate more effectively and provide law-enforcement assistance?

This question is based on an actual case, in which, on 10 September 1987, a Greek tanker discharged oil off the western coast of Sweden in territorial waters. The Swedish authorities attempted to obtain assistance from Marseilles, the vessel's next port of call. However, the French police did not respond until pressed to do so by Interpol and the Swedish Embassy, by when it was too late to intervene. Assistance was requested from the Greek authorities, but no response was forthcoming.

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(26 August 1988)

The cooperation between the European Community and the EFTA countries in the field of the environment has so far been of a purely informal nature. In a case such as that described by the Honourable Member, various instruments exist for international cooperation, assuming that the incident is considered by the authorities of the country in whose waters it occurred, to be serious enough to invoke the cooperation of other countries' authorities: The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto. This convention deals in a general way with the prevention of pollution from ships (Sweden, Greece and France have all signed the Protocol, which has entered into force on 2 October 1983; the Commission does take part in the work of the Convention but the Community is not a Contracting Party).

Agreement for cooperation in dealing with Pollution of the North Sea by Oil and other Harmful Substances, signed in Bonn on 13 September 1983, by, amongst others, France, Sweden and the Community. This Agreement has not come into force yet, and would only be relevant if the incident had taken place within the area covered by it. In such a case, however, both Sweden and France as Contracting Parties to the 'old' Bonn Agreement of 1969, which will be replaced by the 1983 Bonn Agreement mentioned above as soon as it has come into force, would have the obligation of mutual information on incidents such as those cited by the Honourable Member, and — if need be — of mutual assistance in cleaning-up operations.

The Memorandum of Understanding on Port-State Control, Paris, came into force on 1 July 1982, signed by all EC Member States (except Luxembourg), Finland, Norway and Sweden (the EC did not sign, but the Commission participates in the work of the Committee set up by this Memorandum.

Section 5 of the Memorandum (Operational Violations) reads as follows: 'The Authorities will, upon request of another Authority, endeavour to secure evidence relating to suspected violations of the requirements on operational matters of Rule 10 of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978, relating thereto. In case of suspected violations involving the discharge of harmful substances, an Authority will, upon the request of another Authority, visit in port the ship suspected of such a violation in order to obtain information and, when appropriate, to take sample of any alleged pollutant'.

The Commission's opinion is that in case of incidents such as those cited by the Honourable Member, the existing international framework provides instruments for a State, which considers itself as having suffered damage from such an incident, to act and/or to invoke the cooperation of other States adhering to the relevant international agreements.

The Commission at the same time recognizes that there are some problems concerning the implementation or effectiveness of the existing regulations and wishes to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the Commission's answer to Mr Remacle's Written Question No 2463/87 (\*) giving information on the Commission's intentions in this matter.

(\*) OJ No C 283, 7. 11. 1988.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2736/87**

**by Mr Ben Visser (S—NL)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(18 March 1988)

(89/C 36/41)

*Subject:* Tax exemptions within the Community for certain means of transport temporarily imported

Council Directive 83/182/EEC (\*), the Commission proposal (Doc. C 2-215/86 — COM(87) 14) and the second Cassidy report (Doc. A 2-173/87) indicate that there is still a maximum tax exemption of six months in any twelve for means of transport temporarily imported into one Member State from another when there is no commercial link with the country concerned. However, the Member States are free to allow such exemptions for a longer period than six months. The Netherlands thus applies a maximum of twelve month in any twelve-month period whereas in France the maximum of six months applies.

1. Does the Commission not agree that the maximum period of six months should be extended, for example, to nine months, always provided that there is no commercial link?
2. Will the Commission take action to persuade the French Government and other countries applying the six month period to extend it in the near future?
3. If necessary, will the Commission itself submit a proposal to extend the period concerned from six months to, for example, nine months?

(\*) OJ No L 105, 23. 4. 1983, p. 59.

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

(24 June 1988)

1. The arrangements concerning the temporary importation of private vehicles for private use introduced by Directive 83/182/EEC <sup>(1)</sup> are granted, as a general rule, solely to persons having their normal residence outside the Member State of temporary importation and only for a period of six months in any 12 months (the 'private use' criterion not being directly relevant in this specific case).

As regards the 'normal residence' criterion, Article 7 (1) of the Directive contains general rules for determining such residence, i.e. '... the place where a person usually lives, that is for at least 185 days in each calendar year, because of personal and occupational ties ...'.

On the basis of those general rules, it may therefore be said, for example, that a tourist who imports his vehicle into a Member State for his own private use will be entitled to application of the temporary importation arrangements only if he is present in that Member State for no more than 184 days in any calendar year. A longer period would transfer his normal place of residence to the Member State in question, and he would consequently lose such entitlement.

This is why the Commission considers that, in general, the period of six months in any 12 months is adequate as regards the personal use of a vehicle for private purposes, although provision is made for longer periods (for students and in cases where a person uses his vehicle regularly in the territory of the Member State of temporary importation to travel from his normal residence to his place of work, and vice versa).

Moreover, it should be noted that the second sentence of Article 9 (1) makes provision for the Member States to extend the period during which the vehicle may be present in their territory, if the importer so requests.

2 and 3. Consequently, the Commission does not consider it appropriate to take steps to extend the period from six to nine months.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 105, 23. 4. 1983, p. 59.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2779/87**

**by Mr Lambert Croux (PPE—B)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(25 March 1988)

(89/C 36/42)

*Subject:* First programme for the promotion of scientific and technical cooperation networks

On page 3 of its Communication to the Council concerning the Science Plan 1988—1992 (COM(87) 433

final), the Commission states that, within the framework of an initial plan to stimulate cooperation, 346 joint research and development projects had brought together 2550 research scientists by May 1987 and that of these 32 had led to the setting up of cooperation and exchange networks.

Can the Commission indicate:

1. to which sectors or fields of research and development these networks relate (indicating the subject of the research),
2. to what sort of institution (universities, research centres, industry) the research scientists concerned mainly belong,
3. to which Member States the research scientists involved in these networks belong and whether it is possible to establish reasons for any differences in the level of interest shown by each of the Member States?

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

(7 July 1988)

1. Like the new Science plan (1988 to 1992) <sup>(1)</sup>, the plan to stimulate European scientific and technical cooperation and interchange (1985 to 1988) <sup>(2)</sup> covers all disciplines and in particular biology, chemistry, scientific instrumentation, mathematics, oceanography, optics, physics, the earth sciences, etc.

2. About 60% of the scientists who have received financial support under the 1985—1988 plan belong to universities and about 35% to research centres, the remaining 5% being employed in industrial laboratories. The representatives of industry, who have been involved in the programme since it first started, themselves asked that the basic research activities and training through research in the fields in which they were particularly interested be carried out in universities and research institutes. However, the Commission is pleased to note that their direct participation in the programme is also currently increasing.

3. All of the Member States of the Community play an active part in the 1985—1988 plan, the levels of participation varying from one year to another, with that of the new Member States being particularly high as a rule.

The Commission is sending the Honourable Member and the Secretariat-General of Parliament graphs to give a clearer picture of the situation between 1983 and 1987,

including that of the experimental Community action to stimulate the efficacy of the European Economic Community's scientific and technical potential<sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM(87) 443.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 83, 25. 3. 1985, p. 13.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ No L 181, 6. 7. 1983, p. 20.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2793/87**

**by Mr Thomas Raftery (PPE—IRL)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(25 March 1988)*

*(89/C 36/43)*

*Subject:* Hormone ban — establishment of a Technical Experts Group

The US has asked for the establishment of a Technical Experts Group (TEC) under the GATT Standards Code to examine the scientific justification for the hormone ban. However, this initiative has been blocked by the EEC. Should the Commission not play by the rules and agree to a neutral investigation of the scientific facts or do they fear that the outcome of the TEC's investigation will undermine the Directive?

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

*(15 July 1988)*

The United States did indeed request that a technical group be set up under the GATT Code on Technical Barriers to Trade to examine Directive 88/146/EEC on hormones.

The Community was against the request because the Code as such cannot be applied to production processes and methods but only to standards which refer to the characteristics of a finished product when imported; the ban on using hormonal substances in livestock farming refers to production conditions and does not constitute a standard to be applied to imported products.

Although the Community cannot, therefore, accept that the Code be extended in this way in order to set up the technical group, it has said it is willing to accept a legal panel which would examine whether the Directive is compatible with the sole provision of the Code which applies to production processes and methods (Article 14.25) and which concerns cases where a production process or method is used to circumvent the obligations laid down by the Code. The United States has not yet accepted such a solution.

There is, therefore, a wide divergence of views between the Community and the United States regarding the Code's scope, which goes back to when the Code was being negotiated. The Community finds it unacceptable that while the Uruguay Round of negotiations is under way, one of its partners should obtain a considerable advantage by having the scope of the Code extended through questionable use of the dispute settlement system. This is the basis for the Community's stance, which concerns questions of fundamental interest going far beyond the hormones Directive itself.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2796/87**

**by Mr Florus Wijsenbeek (LDR—NL)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(25 March 1988)*

*(89/C 36/44)*

*Subject:* Licence for combined road/rail carriage of goods between Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany by railroad via third countries

Under the road transport agreements between the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy, transport operations carried out by a Netherlands road haulier between the Federal Republic of Germany are not permitted without a Community licence. Under Community Directive 75/130/EEC<sup>(1)</sup> on the carriage of goods, combined road/rail carriage is not subject to quotas and does not require a licence.

Would the Commission not agree that this means that where goods are transported between Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany via third countries by a Netherlands operator using the existing railroad and where the whole vehicle (lorry and trailer) is put on the train, no licence and hence no Community authorization is required?

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 48, 22. 2. 1975, p. 31.

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

*(7 July 1988)*

In the German national legislation implementing Council Directive 75/130/EEC of 17 February 1975, it is foreseen in paragraph 4 of the 'Verordnung über den grenzüberschreitenden Kombinierten Verkehr' in the new version of 18 February 1988, that if motorized road vehicles are to



be transported by rail (*Rollende Landstrasse*) these are free to execute an initial or terminal road trip without needing an authorization. Consequently and in line with Directive 75/130/EEC, it is possible for Dutch hauliers to carry out road transport operations from the Federal Republic of Germany to Italy using the *Rollende Landstrasse* without a Community authorization.

in the past — to take this aspect into consideration when approving development projects and also when dealing with the livestock sector.

A list of livestock and livestock related projects financed by the Commission in Botswana is being sent directly to the Honourable Member and the Secretariat-General of the European Parliament.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2811/87**

by Mr Jaak Vandemeulebroucke (ARC—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(28 March 1988)

(89/C 36/45)

*Subject:* Community aid for game and cattle rearing in Africa

In Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe there are various projects to rear African game over large areas of tens of thousands of hectares.

In addition, in countries such as Botswana, there is a risk that the intensive cattle breeding practised in the dry savanna will in the course of time create a Sahel situation.

A Cites biologist has described Community sponsorship of these projects as insane.

How far is the Commission involved in such projects? What are the sums involved? What is the objective? Is there really a danger of creating a Sahel situation?

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

(7 September 1988)

The prime concern of the Commission in its development assistance to Botswana is to devise a balanced approach between development and the conservation of natural resources. The National indicative Programmes for implementation of the Community aid and especially the one covering the Lomé-III period, duly reflect this approach.

Since Botswana joined the Lomé Convention in 1975, the Commission has financed a number of livestock projects or inter-related wildlife projects, all having the objective of improving range management techniques, prevention of overgrazing, better animal husbandry techniques, improvement of marketing for cattle as well as small stock (sheep and goats), etc.

The Commission is fully aware of the fragility of the ecosystem in Botswana and will continue — as it has done

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2825/87**

by Mrs Ludivina Garcia Arias (S—E)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(28 March 1988)

(89/C 36/46)

*Subject:* ECSC aid for housing granted to Spain during 1986 and 1987

Could the Commission give as detailed an account as possible of the applications received for the purchase or building of ECSC housing, stating where aid was granted and describing the administrative machinery created specifically for Spain during 1986 and 1987?

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

(6 July 1988)

By Commission Decision of 9 September 1986, the following amounts were granted to the ECSC industries in Spain as part of the second instalment of the tenth programme of subsidized housing for workers in ECSC industries for the years 1986 to 1988:

- coal: 3 000 000 ecu (Pta 413 172 000),
- steel: 3 500 000 ecu (Pta 482 034 000).

On the basis of this Decision, loan agreements have been concluded or are being prepared for the regions in which the ECSC industries are located:

- Asturias: Pta 247 903 200 (coal) and Pta 192 813 600 (steel),
- Basque country: Pta 241 017 000 (steel),
- Castilla-Léon: Pta 123 951 600 (coal),
- Catalonia: Pta 41 317 000 (coal) and Pta 48 203 400 (steel).

In collaboration with the regional governments which are responsible for housing, regional committees have been

set up on which the government and the two sides of industry are represented. These committees advise the Commission as regards the rules for the granting of loans, the financial intermediary and the checking of files.

The committee has to give its opinion on each application sent to the Commission for approval and therefore plays an important role as an interlocutor of the Commission.

Any person wishing to obtain an ECSC housing loan applies to his employer who has application forms and who, after certifying them, sends them to the regional committee which ensures that the criteria for the granting of loans have been met. The financial intermediary examines the application from the point of view of solvency and security. If the opinion of the above-mentioned bodies is favourable, the application is sent to the Commission to obtain approval and arrange payment.

Payments began in January 1988; up to now ECSC loans have been granted for the construction of 58 dwellings and the modernization of one dwelling, all located in Asturia.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2838/87**

by Mr Jaak Vandemeulebroucke (ARC—B)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(28 March 1988)

(89/C 36/47)

*Subject:* Study on urban poverty

At the meeting of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Local and Regional Council Members concerning the Community and the consequences of decline in large conurbations, it was stated that the results of a study, financed by the Commission, on the trends in social problems in the Community's crucial urban zones were being kept confidential. The study was intended to assess the feasibility of making an urban poverty map.

Can the Commission indicate the results of this study?

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

(27 July 1988)

The study referred to by the Honourable Member was concerned only with the feasibility of establishing and maintaining an up-to-date map of 'critical zones' within the Community, marked by an accumulation of quantifiable social problems. A first phase indicated that,

while it would be possible to set up and maintain an appropriate data base, substantial additional expenditure would be required.

Other pressures on scarce budgetary resources apart, it was felt that such a separate exercise could not be justified in parallel with the work of establishing priorities, also on a geographical as well as a target group basis, for the purposes of the reform of the structural funds.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2843/87**

by Mrs Marijke Van Hemeldonck (S—B)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(28 March 1988)

(89/C 36/48)

*Subject:* Law on the establishment of hypermarkets

Is there a law in all the Member States on the establishment of large department stores and hypermarkets in order to protect small traders?

What criteria are used concerning the number of such establishments in relation to population density, establishment in residential areas, along major roads, etc.?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

(7 July 1988)

The Commission would ask the Honourable Member to refer to the answers given to Written Questions No 576/78 by Mr Damseaux <sup>(1)</sup>, No 202/79 by Mr Schyns <sup>(2)</sup>, No 1300/79 by Mr Damseaux <sup>(3)</sup>, No 2292/83 by Mr Curry <sup>(4)</sup> and No 1632/85 by Mr Mühlen <sup>(5)</sup>. It is sending direct to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat copies of the following studies in the 'Commerce and Distribution' series:

- No 4/1978: 'The aspects of establishment, planning and control of urban retail outlets in Europe';
- No 8/1982: 'Changes in the structure of the retail trade in Europe';
- 'Measures taken in the field of commerce by the Member States of the European Communities — 1987 updating' (extract concerning 'Provisions concerning the building of new business premises').

These studies contain the answers to his questions.

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<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 257, 30. 10. 1978.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No C 214, 27. 8. 1979.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ No C 86, 8. 4. 1980.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ No C 173, 2. 7. 1984.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ No C 106, 5. 5. 1986.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2849/87**  
**by Mr Florus Wijsenbeek (LDR—NL)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(28 March 1988)

(89/C 36/49)

*Subject:* Monitoring of driving and rest periods in the road transport sector

Is the Commission aware of the technical possibilities for monitoring driving and rest periods in the transport sector offered by the 'black box' (a vehicle monitoring device with data cassette).

Does the Commission not consider that such a device would be more suitable for monitoring purposes than the present tachograph discs?

Is the Commission considering measures to promote or make compulsory the use of the black box in the road transport sector?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis**  
**on behalf of the Commission**

(7 July 1988)

The Commission is aware of the technical developments mentioned by the Honourable Member.

Discussions have begun within the Committee for the adaptation of Regulation (EEC) No 3821/85<sup>(1)</sup> to technical progress, and it is too early to express a final opinion on the matter.

Before officially authorizing the use of this or any other equipment, the Commission will carefully assess not only the technical and reliability features but also all other aspects of the problem, and in particular the economic and social implications of making it compulsory to use such equipment.

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No L 370, 31. 12. 1985, p. 8.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2870/87**

**by Mr Llewellyn Smith (S—GB)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(28 March 1988)

(89/C 36/50)

*Subject:* Nuclear safeguards documentation

What is the Commission's policy on the release to the European Parliament of safeguards documentation including full texts of facility attachments for each of the following sites in the EEC:

- Sellafeld, Dounreay reprocessing plants (UK);
- Mol reprocessing plant (Belgium);
- Cap de la Hague; Marcoule reprocessing plants (France);
- Karlsruhe reprocessing plant (Federal Republic of Germany);
- Ahaus, Karlsruhe, Gorleben and Vergassen spent nuclear fuel plants (Federal Republic of Germany)?

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

(26 July 1988)

Facility attachments are concluded between the Community and the IAEA under Article 39 of the Verification Agreements concluded between the Community, its Member States and the IAEA. These attachments cover the practical conditions under which individual facilities are inspected (flux, location, conditions under which nuclear materials are treated, equipment, confinement and monitoring measures, etc.). Facility attachments are therefore confidential and the Commission is not at liberty to release them.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2871/87**

**by Mr Llewellyn Smith (S—GB)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(28 March 1988)

(89/C 36/51)

*Subject:* Alternative energy sources and rational use of energy

Can the Commission indicate the funding year by year from 1974 to 1987 for research into the use of renewable forms of energy and the rational use of energy and the budget for 1988, 1989, 1990 and beyond for:

- (a) research and development on a shared cost basis on alternative energy sources broken down by research field and country;
- (b) research and development on a shared cost basis on rational use of energy broken down by research fields and country;
- (c) demonstration projects on alternative energy sources broken down by research areas and country;

- (d) demonstration projects on rational use of energy broken down by research areas and country;
- (e) research development and demonstration of alternative energy sources and rational use of energy at the Joint Research Centres broken down by research area.

Can the Commission also indicate how the performance of demonstration projects is assessed, how information on successful projects is distributed and what other action is taken to encourage Member States to replicate projects.

Has the Commission carried out any research into the replications of the demonstration projects in the Community? If so, what have the studies shown?

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

*(29 August 1988)*

The Commission is sending direct to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat the statistics up to 1987 that he requested.

For shared-cost projects in the field of non-nuclear energy and the rational use of energy, a fourth programme for 1989—92 <sup>(1)</sup>, following on from the first three programmes, is now being prepared, for which an estimated 122 million ecu will be required.

In the proposal for specific research programmes for the period 1988—91 now before Council and Parliament, activities for the Joint Research Centre are set out in the chapter called 'Reference method for non-nuclear energy sources'.

The necessary financial contribution for these specific programmes is estimated at 10,6 million ecu. Additional resources could come from work for third parties.

Under Council Regulation (EEC) No 3640/85 on the promotion, by financial support, of demonstration projects and industrial pilot projects in the energy field <sup>(2)</sup>, the amount of 350 million ecu was decided on for the period 1986—89.

Concerning successful energy demonstration projects, there are several ways in which the information is disseminated:

- By way of publication of (i) 'flag brochures' giving the basic data on individual projects; (ii) the final reports with detailed information on these projects; and (iii) sectoral catalogues providing information on all contracted projects in specific sectors;
- By the Commission's on-line Sesame database, the use of which is being widely promoted;
- By a more direct method of transfer of information in the form of workshops organized by the Commission at the site of successfully completed projects.

The Commission also participates in several conferences every year in order to publicize the availability of results from the demonstration scheme. Finally, the Commission participates regularly at exhibitions and fairs where an interested audience may be expected.

Early in 1988 the Commission established a contact network with organizations in all Member States serving as focal points. These are national organizations involved in promoting energy efficiency and the use of new and renewable energy in their countries; they will include information on the Commission's programme in their activities.

For the evaluation of demonstration projects, most of which are still running, the Commission is preparing a proposal based on independent expert opinion. The aim will be to assess the impact of these projects on future developments in the field, in particular as regards Member States' programmes.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM(87) 491 final/2.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 350, 27. 12. 1985.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2880/87**

**by Mr James Ford (S—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(8 April 1988)*

*(89/C 36/52)*

*Subject:* Proposed introduction of poll tax in the United Kingdom

Would the Commission comment on the legality of the dual use of the electoral register, both for enfranchisement and as a means of levying taxation, implicit in the proposed introduction of a poll tax (the Community tax) by the United Kingdom Government?

Would the resultant pressure upon poorer members of the society not to register in effect constitute a threat to their basic human rights?

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

(30 November 1988)

The Commission takes the view that it has no jurisdiction in this matter.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2884/87**

**by Mr Willy Kuijpers (ARC—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities**

(8 April 1988)

(89/C 36/53)

*Subject:* Sand erosion on the Belgian coast

For many years the Belgian coast has suffered from the problem of sand erosion. For example, the storm in January washed away 30 000 — 40 000 m<sup>3</sup> sand from just 1,2 km of the 14 km coastline of De Haan local authority.

The problem of sand erosion which is also adversely affecting Het Zwin nature reserve, which is slowly silting up, calls for a structural approach in view of the effect on the environment in general and tourism on the coast in particular.

Public works department engineers are currently working on solutions requiring investments of Bfrs 1 — 1,5 billion.

Are there similar problems in other Member States and what approaches have been evolved for a structural solution to the problem?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(27 July 1988)

The problem of coastal sand erosion has been tackled by other Member States as an important aspect of the general problem of coastal erosion.

Two reports which the Honourable Member may find useful have been published on this subject: a report by the Italian National Research Council in 1981 which makes technical recommendations for coastal protection, and a report on the Crest project financed by the EEC in 1976 on the protection of the coast and the sea-bed against erosion.

In addition, the Corine programme adopted by the Council in 1985 contains a coastal erosion project which began in January 1988 and will make it possible to update the above documentation.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2886/87**

**by Mr Willy Kuijpers (ARC—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities**

(8 April 1988)

(89/C 36/54)

*Subject:* Combating acid rain

For a number of years there have been policy developments at both national and European level aimed at controlling air pollution caused by acid rain. Some countries have gone further than others.

Which Member States have already taken steps to combat the underlying problem, what, precisely, do the measures entail and what effect will they have? Which countries have so far failed to take in this respect?

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2887/87**

**by Mr Willy Kuijpers (ARC—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities**

(8 April 1988)

(89/C 36/55)

*Subject:* Statistics on acid rain

Acid rain has been very much in the news in recent years because of the disastrous effect it has on the environment.

In the light of the most recent statistics, how is this problem developing in each country? Is it possible — again per Member State — to quantify the economic and ecological damage over the last five years?

**Joint answer to Written Questions Nos 2886/87 and  
2887/87**

**given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(6 September 1988)

Since the problem of acid precipitation was first recognized, a great deal of research has been conducted with a view to gaining greater insight into the causes of, and processes culminating in, acid rain.

It is now accepted that the problem is not simply one of acid rain but that dry depositions of sulphur and other acidic compounds are also involved. The more general term, 'acid deposition', has therefore been adopted.

The Commission would remind the Honourable Member that, under the multiannual research and development programmes in the field of the environment (1986—90) <sup>(1)</sup>, a number of concerted actions are under way, particularly on the physico-chemical behaviour of atmospheric pollutants and their effects on ecosystems.

It is now possible to describe in general terms the cycle of emission, transport, reaction and deposition involved in the process of acid deposition.

By contrast, it is much more difficult to evaluate the acidity distribution of the rain in the European Community, the recorded trends in acid deposition levels or the real effects of the process on the environment.

Evaluation of this type is rendered difficult by the absence of consistent data. The monitoring stations designed to measure the phenomenon have only been in operation for a few years and there are not yet very many of them. Also, major variations in the acidity of sulphur depositions have been recorded over short periods, so that it is often difficult to obtain average values or significant trends.

In one study involving 120 sites for which we have data covering at least five years, only 29 sites have exhibited a statistically significant increase in the level of acidity.

The Commission is not in a position to give an individual breakdown of the situation, trends or measures taken for each Member State; this would be an entire study in itself. At the most, using the data and models of the European Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (EMEP) in particular, certain points may be made to give some idea of general trends.

The highest values have been recorded in a belt lying across the northern part of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Benelux countries, northern France and the eastern United Kingdom. To some extent this reflects the distribution of sources of sulphur dioxide, but it is clear that a large proportion of the sulphur deposited in these areas arises further away. Estimates obtained with the help of the EMEP model indicate that up to 77% of the sulphur deposited in the Netherlands originates in other countries whilst some 64% of the sulphur deposited in Denmark originates abroad. It would seem that the main emitters are the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany and certain non-Community countries.

In view of the uncertainty mentioned above, it is difficult to evaluate the effect of these acid depositions on the environment and the economy. Nevertheless, the Table below gives estimated costs in the case of buildings.

	Cost per year (million ecu)	Source <sup>(1)</sup>
European Community	550-2 800	ERL
Belgium and Luxembourg	830	OECD
Denmark	475	OECD
Netherlands	900	OECD
United Kingdom	4 500	OECD
France	325	OECD
Federal Republic of Germany	7 250	OECD

<sup>(1)</sup> ERL — Environmental Resources Ltd. (1983), London;  
OECD — Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (1985), Paris.

Where forests are concerned, the Community recently set up a network to observe the damage caused particularly by atmospheric pollution, as provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 3328/86 of 17 November 1986 <sup>(1)</sup>. But the network has only been in operation since 1987 and it is therefore too early to draw any definite conclusions as regards either the extent of the damage or its causes. In addition, specific projects have been set up to provide a better understanding of soil acidification in a forest environment and to devise appropriate ways of restoring damaged forests.

Given the complexity of the phenomena involved in the process of acid deposition, it is not possible to determine which of the measures taken by the Member States are intended specifically to reduce deposition levels. Clearly, any measure to reduce emissions will help improve the situation.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 159, 14. 6. 1986, p. 30.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 326, 21. 11. 1986

#### WRITTEN QUESTION No 2933/87

by Mr Llewellyn Smith (S—GB)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 May 1988)

(89/C 36/56)

*Subject:* Environment

How much direct or indirect financial support has British Nuclear Fuels plc (BNFL) received, in each year since 1973 from the EEC to support:

- programmes to reduce radioactive releases in liquid or gaseous form;
- social or Community programmes for North West Cumbria?

**Answer given by Mr Varfis  
on behalf of the Commission  
(23 September 1988)**

British Nuclear Fuels has so far received financial support for one project only from the European Social Fund.

In 1987, £ 25 739 was approved for a vocational training programme for 29 young persons of under 25 years of age lacking the necessary experience to carry out skilled jobs requiring the application of new technology. The aid was to enable the recipients, in this case 'technical draughtsmen', to follow a CAD course of training at North Cheshire College and thereby enhance their job qualifications.

Given that unlimited regional priority attaches to this type of project and that one application only has been received, the Commission is therefore unable to provide a regional breakdown of the aid granted.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2935/87  
by Mrs Marijke Van Hemeldonck (S—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities  
(14 April 1988)  
(89/C 36/57)**

*Subject:* Death of vast quantities of fish in the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal

At the beginning of June 1987 vast quantities of fish died in the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal.

In my Written Question No 1099/87<sup>(1)</sup> to the Commission, I asked the Commission to urge the Dutch and Belgian authorities to carry out a detailed investigation and to take the necessary steps to prevent a recurrence of this type of incident.

On 15 January 1988 I received an answer from Mr Clinton Davis stating that the Commission was not aware of what had happened and that it would carry out an investigation in the Member States concerned.

What were the results of this investigation?

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 93, 11. 4. 1988, p. 44.

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission  
(6 July 1988)**

The Commission has still not received the information which it asked the Member States to provide on this matter. It will write direct to the Honourable Member at the appropriate time.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2938/87  
by Mrs Francesca Marinaro (COM—I)  
to the Commission of the European Communities  
(14 April 1988)  
(89/C 36/58)**

*Subject:* Discrimination against immigrant workers by the Luxembourg trade associations

Under the legislation in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, all workers employed in Luxembourg are regarded as belonging to the relevant trade guilds, irrespective of nationality and are obliged to pay a contribution to the association (through their employer). Despite these provisions, only workers of Luxembourg nationality are entitled to vote or stand for election in such associations. This means that although immigrant workers are obliged to join trade guilds they are denied any legal right to participate in their activities and are consequently prevented from defending their own interests. Would the Commission not agree that the situation described above constitutes discrimination on grounds of nationality which is prohibited under Article 48 of the Treaty and by Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68<sup>(1)</sup> on freedom of movement for workers? Does the Commission not consider that all workers have the right to participate in the constitution of bodies whose sole aim is to defend their interests?

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 257, 19. 10. 1968, p. 2.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 45/88  
by Mr Alonso Puerta Gutiérrez (COM—E)  
to the Commission of the European Communities  
(22 April 1988)  
(89/C 36/59)**

*Subject:* Request for proceedings against the Luxembourg State for violation of the rights of EEC workers to equality of treatment

Pursuant to Article 3, first paragraph, of the law of 4 April 1924 of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, all workers gainfully employed on its territory are considered to be members of their respective occupational associations, without distinction as to nationality. Consequently, they are required to pay contributions to these associations, deducted at source by their employers.

Foreign workers, despite being subject to this general obligation, are deprived, pursuant to Article 5 and 6 of the same law, of the essential advantage of membership of these associations, viz. the right to vote and stand for election. As a consequence, they have no means of ensuring that they are fairly represented in these associations, which nevertheless benefit substantially from their contributions and are supposed to stand up for their interests.

In the opinion of the former judge of the Court of Justice of the European Communities, Mr Pierre Pescatore, there can be no doubt that this difference in treatment constitutes — at least for nationals of Member States of the Community — a form of discrimination prohibited by Article 7 of the EEC Treaty and the rules of law derived therefrom, in particular Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 concerning the free movement of workers, which applies the principle of equality of treatment to all 'social advantages', including membership of worker-representation organizations.

Will the Commission consequently be prepared to open proceedings against the Luxembourg State, requiring the latter to recognize the legal rights of foreign workers — or at least of EEC workers — to vote and stand as candidates in occupational association elections?

**Joint answer to Written Questions Nos 2938/87 and 45/88  
given by Mr Marin  
on behalf of the Commission  
(8 July 1988)**

The Commission has been informed of the situation described in the questions by the Honourable Members and has taken action accordingly.

A letter was sent to the Luxembourg authorities dated 8 April 1988 informing them that in the Commission's opinion the situation could be incompatible with Community law.

The Commission is awaiting the Luxembourg authorities' reply stating the measures adopted to comply with Community provisions.

The Commission will not fail to notify the Honourable Members of the information it receives.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2944/87  
by Mr Gilbert Deveze (DR—FR)  
to the Commission of the European Communities  
(18 March 1988)  
(89/C 36/60)**

*Subject:* Co-responsibility levy for cereals

As part of its system of agricultural stabilizers, the Commission is proposing an additional co-responsibility levy (5% for 1988—89 and 7,5% from 1989—90 onwards), and the European Parliament has approved an increase in the existing co-responsibility levy. This being the case, does the Commission think it right for the Community to continue importing cereal substitutes amounting to 27,5 million tonnes in 1986, higher than the

corresponding figures for 1984 and 1985, duty-free or at extremely low rates of duty?

What steps will the Commission take to reduce drastically imports of cereal substitutes which compete unfairly with Community produce because they are not subject to co-responsibility levies or customs duties?

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

*(8 September 1988)*

The Commission is monitoring carefully the progress of imports of cattle feed, notably grain substitutes.

In matters concerning imports, the Community must comply with its commitments to other trading countries, in particular under the GATT Treaty, and in the present circumstances it is hard to see what other action can be taken than that of seeking an improvement of the situation within the GATT Uruguay Round.

In connection with the decisions taken regarding the 'stabilizers', the Council called upon the Commission to submit proposals designed to promote the incorporation of cereals into animal feed. The Commission now awaits a decision from the Council on a proposal it has laid before it. Parliament rendered an opinion in connection with the 1988/89 prices package.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 22/88  
by Mr Stephen Hughes (S—GB)  
to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(22 April 1988)  
(89/C 36/61)*

*Subject:* Incidence of skin cancer associated with used motor oil

Is the Commission aware of research carried out by Ford International in Switzerland into the link between used motor oil and skin cancer? Is it also aware of other research carried out by various oil companies, including Mobil, concerning the hazards to both professional motor mechanics and DIY practitioners?

Given that the majority of motor oil sold in the United Kingdom carries no warning of the potential link between exposure to used motor oil and skin cancer, has the Commission considered a directive enforcing the placing of a hazard warning on cans of motor oil sold to the general public? If not, will the Commission outline its thinking on this issue and give reasons why it has decided against taking action in this field?



**Answer given by Mr Marin  
on behalf of the Commission**  
(22 July 1988)

The Commission is aware of the research which has been conducted on the possible correlation between certain types of skin cancer and the handling of certain kinds of used motor oil.

The Commission is very sensitive to this problem while being aware that the only effective means of reducing the incidence of this type of complaint is by preventing cancer among workers exposed to such substances.

In this connection the Commission has put before the Council a proposal for a Directive on the protection of workers from the risks relating to exposure to carcinogens at work (sixth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 8 of Directive 80/1107/EEC) <sup>(1)</sup>. The proposal laid down rules for the minimum protection of workers with respect to a list of carcinogenic agents and to certain activities.

Under the Directive, the list is likely to be updated as and when the carcinogenic nature of substances is established. Used motor oils may thus appear on the list, if they are shown to be carcinogenic.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM(87) 641 final; OJ No C 34, 8. 2. 1988, p. 9.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 50/88**  
**by Mr Domènec Romera i Alcàzar (ED—E)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
(6 April 1988)  
(89/C 36/62)

*Subject:* Harmonization of legislation governing freedom of expression

In view of the existence in all the Member States of legislation governing freedom of expression, which principally affects the media, and of the confusion caused by the varying criteria employed and the advisability of standardizing these criteria before 1992, does the Commission intend to legislate on this matter?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**  
(8 September 1988)

The EEC Treaty does not directly guarantee freedom of expression as such. The Treaty applies to any gainful activity irrespective of the economic, cultural, social or other sector concerned. Gainful activities which consist in expressing and propagating opinions, for example the

press and broadcasting, enjoy the freedoms guaranteed by the Treaty, in particular the free movement of goods and freedom to provide services. These freedoms are interpreted and implemented by the Community in the light of the fundamental rights enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, for example the freedom to receive or impart information and ideas regardless of frontiers (Article 10) <sup>(1)</sup>.

In this context, the Commission would point out that newspapers, like sound and audiovisual recordings, benefit from the free movement of goods (Articles 30 to 36). Moreover, further to its Green Paper on 'Television without frontiers' and various resolutions of Parliament, the Commission presented a proposal for a Directive on broadcasting <sup>(2)</sup>, an amended version of which <sup>(3)</sup> was drafted in the light of the opinion delivered by Parliament on 20 January 1988. This Directive aims to guarantee completely free movement of programmes broadcast within the Community, thereby facilitating the exchange of ideas and awareness of the different national cultures and traditions. The Commission considers that the free flow of information across frontiers objectively and necessarily strengthens the pluralism of information in each of the Member States. The Commission ensures, through application of the competition rules, that firms in the media sector do not commit acts which may affect trade between the Member States and which have the effect of preventing, restricting or distorting competition and, consequently, the pluralism of information.

<sup>(1)</sup> As regards the application of this principle to the movement of broadcasting services, see the Green Paper entitled 'Television without frontiers', COM(84) 300 final, 14. 6. 1984, pp. 128 to 136.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No C 179, 17. 7. 1986, p. 4.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ No C 110, 27. 4. 1988, p. 3.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 51/88**  
**by Mr Domènec Romera i Alcàzar (ED—E)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
(22 April 1988)  
(89/C 36/63)

*Subject:* Rising number of railway accidents

Europe is currently faced with major and significant developments in rail transport, e.g. the Advanced Passenger Train and the Channel Tunnel.

Nevertheless, improvements at main network level are paralleled by an unacceptable deterioration in the secondary network due to the passage of time, and the number of accidents has risen in recent years. Black spots

and sections of line which are in urgent need of modernization must either be dealt with or taken out of service.

Does the Commission not think it would be useful to draw up an inventory of urgent measures for the safety of Europe's rail network and to demand that the Member States, with Community assistance, undertake the required improvements?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

*(4 July 1988)*

Compared with the roads, safety in rail transport is very satisfactory and is not one of the priorities of the Commission's current programme.

The Commission is currently financing a study of the levels of traffic on, and the capacity of, the road and rail networks and their infrastructures in order to identify the most critical points where action is most urgently needed. Exploitation of the results of this study could have an effect on safety in rail transport.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 56/88**

**by Mr Kenneth Stewart (S—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(10 May 1988)*

*(89/C 36/64)*

*Subject:* Peruvian seamen stranded on Merseyside

Is the Commission aware that the vessel 'El President José Pardo' was seized by the British Admiralty Marshall when it docked last October in the United Kingdom due to debts owed by the shipping line of the Peruvian steamship company to Britain, Holland and Germany?

The 18 000-tonne vessel remains in the North Canada Dock, Bootle, Merseyside. The crew of 29 are suffering hardship, having received no pay for over a month. Their children's school fees have been stopped by the company. They are receiving food aboard the ship but heating has been cut to 4,5 hours a day.

With no money and huddled in overcoats to keep warm, no recreational facilities available, conditions are getting worse each day.

Does the Commission not consider that when such action is taken in a Member State, the State concerned should be

responsible for treating the crew members on a par with its own citizens' social provisions, to ensure they are afforded a reasonable standard of living which is the entitlement of any human being in that position.

Would the Commissioner investigate the situation with a view to ensuring that individuals are not subjected to this hardship in the future in civilized Member States?

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

*(13 September 1988)*

As the Honourable Member has rightly pointed out, it is up to the Member State concerned to assure that seamen, who find themselves in circumstances as referred to in his question, are treated in a correct manner.

However, as seizures of ships with a crew from third countries can occur in other European ports as well, the Commission will investigate if this subject could usefully be discussed in the Port State Control Committee, the executive body instituted by the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control.

The Commission will attempt to ascertain through the Committee the extent to which, as reported last year by the ILO Director-General, 'the recession in the shipping industry has led to an increase in the number of seafarers stranded abroad as a result of a shipowner's financial troubles, shipwreck or dispute with the owners or authorities.' (Report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference: 74th (Maritime) Session, 1987.)

In view of this trend and of the consequent hardship suffered by seafarers, the Commission attaches great importance to the speedy adoption and application by Member States of the ILO Seafarers' Welfare at Sea and in Port Convention, 1987 (No 163) and Repatriation of Seafarers (Revised) Convention 1987 (No 166), as well as the related Recommendations. These instruments, if applied, are a response to the type of situation outlined by the Honourable Member.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 59/88**

**by Mr André Fourçans (LDR—F)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(10 May 1988)*

*(89/C 36/65)*

*Subject:* Experiments on human beings

The head of a hospital department has recently carried out an experiment on an unconscious human being. The public has, quite rightly, expressed serious concern.

What information does the Commission possess on the laws of the Member States governing experiments on human beings?

If insufficient information is available, does the Commission intend to study the laws of the Member States, and indeed those of all democratic states, governing experiments on human beings?

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

(22 August 1988)

The information available to the Commission shows that the legislation in force in the Member States with regard to clinical experimentation on persons in a coma or apparently dead is disparate. Some Member States have specific legislation on this matter, while others have none.

The Commission is aware of the delicate ethical problem posed by experiments on persons in a coma or apparently dead. However, the Commission, as it already had occasion to state in reply to Written Question No 1580/86 by Mr Glinne<sup>(1)</sup> and Oral Question H-951/87 by Mr Killilea<sup>(2)</sup> on very similar subjects, feels that it should not take the place of bodies competent for these matters (medical ethics committees, *ad hoc* expert committees, etc.).

Generally speaking, the Commission maintain close relations with several bodies in which these questions are discussed, such as the Council of Europe.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 112, 27. 4. 1987.

<sup>(2)</sup> Debates of the European Parliament, *in extenso* minutes of the sessions of 9 March 1988.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 61/88**

**by Mr Carles-Alfred Gosòliba i Böhm (LDR—E)  
to the Commission of the European Communities**

(10 May 1988)

(89/C 36/66)

*Subject:* Consignments of basic foodstuffs for Romania

What steps does the Commission intend to take to ensure that consignments of basic foodstuffs for Romania, which until January were being sent by the Spanish Society for Human Rights (SEDH), can continue to be sent in future, given the fact that the licence granted to the 'Quelle' company, which distributed the parcels from the SEDH/IGFM, was revoked by the Romanian authorities at the beginning of January this year?

**Answer given by Mr De Clercq  
on behalf of the Commission**

(1 July 1988)

The Commission is aware that the Romanian people are suffering from a shortage of basic foodstuffs. In December last year the International Society for Human Rights asked the Commission to participate in a food aid operation for the Romanian people.

Following this request the Commission examined the possibility of such a scheme and contacted the Romanian authorities. They, however, informed the Commission that the Romanian government refused to accept foreign food aid. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany received the same reply from the Romanian authorities. The Romanian Government has, moreover, stopped lorries transporting food from the Federal Republic of Germany from entering the country.

In these circumstances the Commission has had to accept that it is impossible for the Community to provide the Romanian people with food aid or for NGOs to distribute such aid to those most in need. The information provided by the Honourable Member on the cancellation of the licence granted to Quelle provides further confirmation of the situation. The Commission has expressed its regret to the Romanian authorities at this state of affairs.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 71/88**

**by Mr François Roelants du Vivier (ARC—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities**

(10 May 1988)

(89/C 36/67)

*Subject:* Packaging made from CFC plastic foam

A number of packaging products made from plastic foam make use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC).

Does the Commission have any information relating to:

1. the exact quantities and types of packaging of this nature marketed in the Community;
2. possible substitutes;
3. legislative or voluntary measures specifically adopted to discourage such packaging?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

(6 September 1988)

The Commission is not in a position to state the quantities of plastic foam packaging containing CFC's which are sold on the EC market or to describe the various segments of that market.

Among the promising substitutes for this form of packaging are plastic foams which contain little or no fully halogenated CFC's. In this context possible substitute gases include carbon dioxide, HCFC 22 and blends of CFC and hydrocarbons. In view of the requirements for testing, notably with regard to toxicity, it is likely that considerable time will be needed to develop such substitutes.

The Commission in keeping with the worldwide consensus that production and consumption of CFC's should be regulated by controls of CFC supply has no plans for regulatory initiatives applying to particular CFC uses such as packaging. However various enterprises, such as MacDonaldis, have announced voluntary restrictions on specific uses of foam packaging containing CFC's.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 78/88**

by Mr Horst Seefeld (S—D)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 May 1988)

(89/C 36/68)

*Subject:* Delays in landing at international airports

There are increasingly long delays at airports in various countries of the Community. Has the Commission any information as to:

- which airports are worst affected,
- whether air safety is seriously jeopardized by this,
- what can be done to tackle the problem, and
- what proposals the Commission intends to put forward to solve existing difficulties?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(22 August 1988)

The Commission is aware of capacity shortfalls either already existing or likely to occur in the near future in a

number of European airports. This is due to the continuous and sustained increase in air traffic in recent years (e.g. 10% last year).

Capacity insufficiencies in any of the basic airport elements (runways, aprons, terminals) or the air traffic control services can cause airport congestion — even if residual capacity exists in other elements — which eventually results in delays both for aircraft landings and take-offs.

IATA has developed a list of (over 30) airports where airlines currently experience — or are expected to do so — serious difficulties in scheduling new services; at least 10 of these airports are considered to have runway constraints.

Munich appears to be top of the list, being unable to accept any additional services.

Frankfurt, Heathrow, Gatwick and Palma de Mallorca have also recently had major scheduling problems.

Furthermore the percentage increase in planned aircraft movements for summer 1988 over summer 1987 in Paris (Charles de Gaulle), Paris (Orly), Milan (Linate), Manchester, Barcelona, Alicante and Malaga being between 10% and 16% indicates that capacity insufficiencies might very well occur in these airports.

However, it is clear that substantial airport investments are already underway as stated in the ICAA submission to the Transport Committee of Parliament concerning the effects on airports of 1992.

It is generally accepted that congestion in airspace, particularly in the proximity of airports, can increase the risk of aircraft accidents.

In this context the role of Eurocontrol appears essential providing airports with vital data and timely warnings so that they can take appropriate remedial measures to maintain a high standard of air safety. So far the Community air transport system has been able to cope.

Following the excellent report of the European Parliament (rapporteur: Mr Anastassopoulos) and the Air Safety Symposium organized by the Commission in November 1987, a number of suggestions have been made in order to further improve the situation. The Commission is currently studying all proposed measures.

Furthermore the Commission has prepared two proposals for Council directives which will hopefully contribute positively towards an improvement of the situation.

Firstly the directive on interregional air services is expected to result in an increase of regional air services to

benefit directly the small airports (which are likely to expand) and indirectly to give relief to the busier hubs where congestion is expected to decrease.

Secondly the proposed directive on airport consultation is intended to encourage the involvement of users including *inter alia* the airlines in airport planning. This is seen as a positive step towards a concerted action to match supply and demand in a rapidly changing environment and to ensure the most efficient arrangement and operation of the scarce airport resources.

Finally the Commission is reconsidering the position of Eurocontrol within the Community framework in view of its key present and future potential importance in the efficient and safe functioning of the European air transport system.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 98/88**

**by Mr James Ford (S—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(10 May 1988)

(89/C 36/69)

*Subject:* Importing of zebras from Namibia

Can the Commission confirm or refute reports that recently imported zebras from Namibia have proved to be diseased, and threaten to infect zoo animals around Europe?

Would the Commission advise what safeguarding action it is taking if this is the case?

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

(26 September 1988)

The importation in July 1987 of ten zebras from Namibia into Spain via Lisbon has been circumstantially linked to outbreaks of African Horse Sickness (AHS) in the Madrid and Toledo regions of Spain. The two zebras taken to Toledo harboured AHS virus and were destroyed as were the remaining eight which were taken to Alicante. Thus there is no direct threat to European zoo animals from this importation.

The Spanish authorities have taken appropriate action to limit the disease including the elimination of infected and suspect equines and the vaccination of some 38 000 head in the affected region. Post-eradication surveillance

measures are now being implemented to ensure that residual infection is absent. The resumption of free trade in equines from Spain should then be possible.

The Commission's Veterinary Service has constantly monitored the situation and the Member States through the Standing Veterinary Committee have been fully involved. The Commission in addition hosted a Scientific Workshop on AHS in Paris on 10—11 March when European and African experts participated and pronounced satisfaction on the measures taken to date.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 118/88**

**by Mrs Sylvie Le Roux (COM—F)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(17 May 1988)

(89/C 36/70)

*Subject:* Organization of the market in fishery products

Council Regulation (EEC) No 3796/81<sup>(1)</sup> on the common organization of the market in fishery products makes provision for granting financial compensation to producers' organizations on certain conditions laid down in Article 13.

In particular, the regulation stipulates that the withdrawal price applied by these organizations shall be the Community withdrawal price with a margin of tolerance extending 10% below and 5% above this price.

In order to allow producers' organizations to take into account seasonal variations in the market and contribute to market stability, will the Commission propose, in connection with the reform of the CMO, that the margin of tolerance be fixed at 10% below and 10% above the Community withdrawal price?

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 379, 31. 12. 1981, p. 1.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 119/88**

**by Mrs Sylvie Le Roux (COM—F)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(17 May 1988)

(89/C 36/71)

*Subject:* Carry-over premium for certain fishery products

Processing and storage aid to encourage consumption of fresh products withdrawn from the market should make it possible to avoid the destruction of fish of considerable commercial value. Yet the fact is that, since its implementation, Council Regulation (EEC) No 3796/81<sup>(1)</sup> has only been applied on rare occasions in particular cases.

In order to avoid the destruction of fish, which is detrimental to fishermen and to consumers as well as being a drain on the Community budget, will the Commission propose improvements in the regulations concerned: (EEC) No 3796/81 and (EEC) No 3321/82<sup>(1)</sup>, to facilitate the granting of the carry-over premium?

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 379, 31. 12. 1981, p. 1.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 351, 11. 12. 1982, p. 20.

**Joint answer to Written Questions Nos 118/88 and 119/88  
given by Mr Cardoso e Cunha  
on behalf of the Commission**

(20 June 1988)

The market organization for fishery products makes the producers' organizations responsible for day-to-day management of the market. At present the producers' organizations may apply the Community withdrawal price with a tolerance of from 10% below to 5% above it without losing entitlement to financial compensation from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF). The tolerance is permitted mainly to enable the producers' organizations to take account of seasonal fluctuations in market prices. Experience suggests that it might be worthwhile examining whether it would be easier for the producers' organizations to manage the market if the margin were extended to 10% above the withdrawal price.

The carry-over premium is a suitable means of enabling the producers' organizations to have limited quantities which have been withdrawn from the market either processed or stored so as to prevent their being destroyed.

In view of the market situation for fishery products in the Community as a whole and the particular difficulties experienced in disposing of certain species, the Commission is at present studying ways of making it easier for producers' organizations to obtain the normal carry-over premium.

The Commission will take appropriate measures, as necessary, to adjust these two schemes.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 144/88**

**by Mr Johanna Maij-Weggen (PPE—NL)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(17 May 1988)

(89/C 36/72)

*Subject:* Delays in the award and payment of pensions to the widows of Dutch frontier workers

Is the Commission aware that the Dutch widows of frontier workers who have worked in the Federal

Republic of Germany and Belgium sometimes have to wait almost a year for their pension to be awarded and paid?

Is it aware that, as a result, those concerned can experience severe financial difficulties?

Does the Commission know of any similar case occurring in the other Member States?

Would it be able, in consultation with the relevant benefit offices in Germany and Belgium, to ensure that these widows pensions are dealt with more rapidly?

If so, what actual steps does the Commission intend to take?

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

(20 July 1988)

The Honourable Member is referring to widows of workers who were resident in the Netherlands but carried out their occupational activities in Belgium or the Federal Republic of Germany.

Under Dutch law, any person who is resident in the Netherlands and has reached the age of 15 is insured under the General Survivors' Pensions Scheme (AWW).

This implies that, with regard to the risk of widowhood, virtually all the frontier workers concerned are insured, not only in Belgium or the Federal Republic (by virtue of their occupation), but also in the Netherlands (by virtue of being resident — from the age of 15).

The processing of social security dossiers, particularly with regard to pensions, takes more time for persons who have been insured in more than one country, than for those who have been insured in only one country. This also applies within the Community, although coordination procedures between national systems have been considerably improved and special bodies, on which national institutions are represented, have been set up to resolve the problems which arise within the context of this coordination.

To speed up administrative procedures, Community regulations on the social security of migrant workers<sup>(1)</sup> provide for a number of procedures, such as:

- (a) the use of standard forms<sup>(2)</sup>;
- (b) measures designed to accelerate the award of benefits in accordance with Article 50 of Regulation (EEC) No 574/72. The conditions for implementing these provisions are set out in Decisions Nos 117 and 118

of the Administrative Commission on Social Security for Migrant Workers<sup>(1)</sup>;

- (c) the provisional payment of benefits and advance payments of benefits in accordance with Article 45 of Regulation No 574/72.

The Commission takes a close interest in the way in which these procedures are being implemented, in particular those relating to the collection and transmission of data which lend themselves specifically to the use of modern technology, thereby progressively improving the situation.

(<sup>1</sup>) Regulations (EEC) No 1408/71 and (EEC) No 574/72 — OJ No L 230, 1983, as last amended by Regulation (EEC) No 3811/86 — OJ No L 355, 16. 12. 1986.

(<sup>2</sup>) OJ No L 192, 15. 7. 1986.

(<sup>3</sup>) OJ No C 238, 7. 9. 1983; OJ No C 306, 12. 11. 1983.

#### WRITTEN QUESTION No 170/88

by Mr Ernest Glinne (S—B)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 May 1988)

(89/C 36/73)

*Subject:* Significance of the treaty establishing a special association between Italy and Argentina

On 10 December 1987, President Alfonsín and the Italian Prime Minister signed a treaty whose avowed object is to provide an example of North-South cooperation.

1. The preamble of this document, indeed, contains a number of revealing passages.

Firstly, there is a solemn declaration on the need to consolidate democratic institutions in Argentina. Secondly, the desire to establish between Argentina and Italy a special association in the light of the 'bonds of blood and culture' which unite them (a reference to the substantial immigrant population of Italian origin).

The text of the agreement describes this association as a new model of North-South cooperation, involving an industrialized country and a country oppressed by its foreign debt.

2. In terms of specifics, the following characteristics are apparent: the objective of the agreement is a programme of support of Argentina's economic development by investment in Argentina amounting to 5 billion dollars over the five years between 1988 and 1992. This investment will consist, in more or less equal proportions, of grants of Italian aid, direct investment — both private and public — encouraged by guarantees on

the repatriation of capital and dividends, and Argentine investment amounting to the equivalent of either the grants of aid or the direct Italian investment.

The two parties will work to encourage joint ventures in the industrial sector and the relevant programmes will favour projects submitted by small and medium-sized enterprises, thus encouraging the renewal and modernization of Argentinian industry.

The Argentine Government will guarantee Italian investors freedom to repatriate their capital and dividends. The treaty will not be confined to economic matters, but provides for developments in political, social, cultural, technological and scientific relations (especially through the creation of an 'Italian-Argentinian Technological Club'). The proposal for inter-university agreements and the possibility of mutual recognition of degrees are also worth mentioning.

As for the working of the treaty, there will be a joint permanent secretariat, headed by a representative of the Argentine Foreign Ministry, to monitor the application of the treaty and to make suggestions to the existing range of Italian-Argentinian joint committees. There is provision for annual summit meetings of the President of Argentina and the Italian Prime Minister.

Would the Commission state its opinion on the significance of this bilateral agreement and the possibility of following the example it sets by a similar agreement between the Community and all the democratic countries of South America as a group?

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

(28 July 1988)

1. The agreement between Italy and Argentina comprises a framework treaty and, according to press reports, twelve implementing agreements which give the framework treaty its economic and technical content.

The Italian Government has not yet sent the Commission the economic and technical implementing agreements and so the Commission cannot give an informed opinion on the effective overall impact of this agreement.

2. The Commission would remind the Honourable Member that the Community has concluded cooperation agreements with all the democratic countries of Latin America either on a bilateral basis, as in the case of Brazil,

Mexico and Uruguay, or on a regional basis, as in the case of the Andean Pact and Central American countries.

unemployment has increased or decreased in each Member State in each of the last 10 years?

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 201/88**

by Lord O'Hagan (ED—GB)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 May 1988)

(89/C 36/74)

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

(18 July 1988)

*Subject:* Unemployment

Will the Commission indicate the extent to which

The enclosed table shows the trend in the number of jobless registered with employment offices in the individual Member States since 1975.

**Number of registered unemployed in accordance with national legislation**

(Annual average)

	EUR 12	Belgium	Denmark	Germany	Greece	Spain	France	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Netherlands	Portugal	United Kingdom
Number of unemployed ('000)													
1975	5 018	201	122	1 086	35	257	840	96	1 107	265	260	107	909
1976	5 791	257	129	1 055	29	373	934	108	1 182	457	278	183	1 265
1977	6 239	297	161	1 030	28	540	1 072	106	1 145	821	271	228	1 361
1978	6 812	322	186	989	31	819	1 167	99	1 306	1 166	273	283	1 337
1979	7 150	341	152	870	32	1 037	1 350	90	1 452	1 055	281	304	1 241
1980	8 093	369	176	899	37	1 277	1 451	102	1 580	1 094	325	285	1 591
1981	10 430	454	235	1 296	43	1 566	1 773	128	1 790	1 559	480	250	2 415
1982	12 590	535	253	1 855	51	1 873	2 011	157	2 163	2 039	655	245	2 792
1983	14 237	590	277	2 264	62	2 207	2 068	193	2 475	2 476	801	253	3 047
1984	15 237	595	272	2 265	71	2 475	2 340	214	2 721	2 695	822	300	3 160
1985	15 856	557	242	2 305	85	2 642	2 458	231	2 959	2 588	761	342	3 271
1986	16 122	517	212	2 223	108	2 759	2 517	236	3 180	2 290	711	368	3 289
1987	16 110	501	216	2 233	110	2 924	2 622	247	3 297	2 660	686	319	2 953
Change on previous year (%)													
1976	15,4	28,3	5,6	-2,9	-18,6	45,4	11,2	12,1	6,8	72,5	6,8	71,3	39,3
1977	7,7	15,4	25,3	-2,4	-2,8	44,6	14,8	-1,3	-3,1	79,6	-2,4	24,6	7,5
1978	9,2	8,4	15,6	-3,9	11,6	51,7	8,9	-6,8	14,0	42,0	0,7	24,2	-1,8
1979	5,0	5,9	-18,6	-12,0	2,3	26,7	15,7	-9,7	11,2	-9,5	2,9	7,6	-7,2
1980	13,2	8,3	15,6	3,3	17,7	23,1	7,5	13,3	8,8	3,7	16,0	-6,2	28,2
1981	28,9	23,2	33,9	44,1	14,2	22,6	22,2	26,0	13,3	42,5	47,4	-12,5	51,8
1982	20,7	17,8	7,5	43,1	19,1	19,6	13,4	22,4	20,9	30,8	36,4	-1,9	15,6
1983	13,1	10,2	9,7	22,0	21,7	17,9	2,8	23,1	14,4	21,4	22,3	3,3	9,1
1984	7,0	0,9	-2,1	0,0	15,6	12,1	13,2	11,2	9,9	8,8	2,7	18,5	3,7
1985	4,1	-6,3	-10,9	1,8	19,8	6,7	5,1	7,7	8,8	-4,0	-7,5	14,1	3,5
1986	1,7	-7,3	-12,2	-3,6	26,7	4,4	2,4	2,5	7,5	-11,5	-6,6	7,6	0,5
1987	-0,1	-3,1	1,7	0,4	1,9	6,0	4,2	4,6	3,7	16,2	-3,5	-13,3	-10,2

Source: Eurostat.



**WRITTEN QUESTION No 222/88**  
**by Mr Karel de Gucht (LDR—B)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(25 May 1988)

(89/C 36/75)

*Subject:* Labour market contribution — New Danish regulation concerning employment contributions

According to my information, companies which have a VAT registration number in Denmark are liable to an additional tax of 2,5% on their turnover in Denmark. This tax is reduced in proportion to the investment made or jobs created in Denmark.

In practice, this means that Danish companies can achieve almost total exemption from the tax, whereas foreign companies, with a limited presence in Denmark, have to pay virtually the full amount. In other words, the measure aimed at promoting employment actually conceals real discrimination between Danish companies and companies from other EEC Member States.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? If so, does it consider that this regulation is contrary to the Treaty.

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield**  
**on behalf of the Commission**

(16 September 1988)

The Commission is fully aware of the Danish tax in question and has already been in contact with the Danish authorities with a view to clarifying the situation.

The matter, including the aspect raised by the Honourable Member, is at present being examined in the light of the information provided by those authorities, and the Commission will of course take any measures that appear necessary in order to ensure correct application of Community law.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 224/88**

**by Mr Lambert Croux (PPE—B)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(25 May 1988)

(89/C 36/76)

*Subject:* Sahel monitoring units

During and after the major drought in the Sahel countries in 1984—1985, the Commission decided, as part of its recovery programme, to finance two projects to allow the

rapid detection of dangers to food supplies. These projects were based on the idea of Sahel monitoring units — an early warning and information system for crisis situations developed by the Belgian section of the organization 'Medecins sans frontières'. A total of 2,5 million ecu was reserved for these projects (1 million for Chad and 1,5 million for Mali) and the duration was to be one year.

Has the Commission now started to assess these projects?

What findings and decisions have emerged and does the Commission intend, on the basis of the experiences gained, to make additional funds available for similar initiatives?

At that time the Commission announced that a study was being carried out on the introduction of such an early warning system, which could be used to set up a detection model geared to the particular area.

Can the Commission state whether the study in question has now been completed and the progress with regard to the design of the detection model?

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

(6 July 1988)

Initially the Commission financed a project in Chad from April 1986 to July 1987 at a cost of one million ecu for the rapid detection of dangers to food supplies in the Sahel northern prefectures.

Financing was subsequently provided for a second year, at a cost of 460 000 ecu. There will be a thorough evaluation of the project before a decision is taken on whether it should be extended. The evaluation will be carried out by August this year.

An early warning system (EWS) has now been set up in Chad. It works by using various indicators simultaneously and in combination and the resulting information is published every month.

Close cooperation is maintained in Chad between the EWS and the regional 'Permanent Diagnosis' project (covering the countries of the CILSS), with a view to incorporation of the two systems into a single programme in 1989.

In Mali the early warning system has been in operation since June 1986 in eighteen circles (administrative areas) under greatest threat from drought in the north of the country.

The monthly information on the situation in these areas results in recommendations for action and enables the government to take well-founded decisions on emergency aid. It provides foreign donors with a useful, continuous indication of aid requirements in the threatened areas.

After an initial launching period in which the Community bore all the costs of the systems, financing has been taken over, as from February this year, by food aid donors participating in the project to restructure the cereals market (PRMC), the aim of which is to improve coordination between structural food aid and emergency food aid.

The early warning system will be incorporated into a broader-based market intelligence system, designed to improve market transparency and thus enable private sector trade to meet a larger proportion of food requirements.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 239/88**

by Mr Arturo Escuder Croft (ED—E)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(3 June 1988)

(89/C 36/77)

*Subject:* The situation in the Community's ports

Completion of the internal market by 1992 will make it necessary to modify the legislation governing maritime transport.

This form of transport is influenced to a considerable degree by the state of existing infrastructure in the ports of the Community.

- Is the Commission considering drawing up a report on the present situation in the mainland and island ports of the Member States?
- Is the Commission considering updating the report drawn up and published in September 1977 on the situation in the different ports of the Community?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(5 September 1988)

A report of an enquiry into the current situation in the major Community sea ports was drawn up by the Port

Working Group in 1977. This Working Group composed of representatives of the port authorities and chaired by a representative of the Commission revised and enlarged the original report in November 1986 to include information on Greece, Portugal and Spain. The Commission is sending a copy of the report to the Honourable Member and the Secretary General of the European Parliament.

The Commission is also examining a possible study into the existing and future infrastructure needs of medium and small size ports in the Community in the context of the setting up of the Single Market.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 270/88**

by Mr Gijs de Vries and Mr Florus Wijsenbeek  
(LDR—NL)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(31 May 1988)

(89/C 36/78)

*Subject:* Shop-opening hours

With a view to the completion of the internal market, does the Commission intend to harmonize the legislation with regard to shop-opening hours in the Community?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

(4 July 1988)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions Nos 467/84 by Mr Franz <sup>(1)</sup> and 225/83 by Mrs Rabbethge <sup>(2)</sup>, oral question H-330/83 by Mr Seligman <sup>(3)</sup> and Written Questions Nos 226/84 by Mr Albers and Mrs Viehoff <sup>(4)</sup>, 331/84 by Mr Hooper, 567/84 by Mr Franz <sup>(5)</sup> and 1991/86 by Mr Bachy <sup>(6)</sup>, all on this subject.

In connection with the last of the above answers, the Commission would remind the Honourable Member that it has in the meantime sent the Council a communication entitled 'Internal and External Adaptation of Firms in Relation to Employment' <sup>(7)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 328, 10. 12. 1984.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No C 219, 16. 8. 1983.

<sup>(3)</sup> Extract from the report of proceedings of Parliament's sitting of 16 November 1983.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ No C 232, 3. 9. 1984.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ No C 188, 16. 7. 1984.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ No C 133, 18. 5. 1987.

<sup>(7)</sup> COM(87) 229 final.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 278/88**  
**by Lord O'Hagan (ED—GB)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(31 May 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/79)*

*Subject: Anti-fouling paint*

It is now clear that anti-fouling paint on boats harms oysters and other organisms in water courses and at sea.

1. What legislation on this pollutant exists in Member States?
2. What legislation has the Commission proposed?
3. Is the Commission satisfied with progress?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(1 August 1988)*

1. Two Member States (France and the United Kingdom) have specific legislation on the use of anti-fouling paints containing organostannic compounds on small craft (less than 15 or 18 metres long).

In the Netherlands, these paints are classified as pesticides and, as such, are subject to the national type-approval procedures and any rules adopted on their use.

Germany has no legislation on the subject, but a voluntary agreement has been reached between the Ministry of the Environment and the industry not to use organostannic paints on small craft.

2. In early January the Commission sent the Council a proposal<sup>(1)</sup> to amend the Annex to Directive 76/769/EEC on restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations<sup>(2)</sup>. This proposal would prohibit the use of the abovementioned anti-fouling paints on:

- (a) the hulls of boats of an overall length, as defined by ISO 8666, of less than 25 metres;
- (b) cages, floats, nets and any other appliances or equipment used for fish or shellfish farming.

The proposal goes on to provide that such preparations could not be sold retail to the general public but could be sold only to professional users in packages of not less than 20 litres and marked:

'Not to be used on boats of an overall length of less than 25 metres or on any appliances or equipment used in fish or shellfish farming.'

3. The Economic and Social Committee is the only Community institution to have examined the proposal to date. Subject to a number of technical points, it unanimously endorsed the proposal on 27 April 1988.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM(88) 7 final.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 262, 27. 9. 1976, p. 201.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 300/88**  
**by Mrs Undine-Uta Bloch von Blottnitz (ARC—D)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(31 May 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/80)*

*Subject: Support for pilot projects on hydrogen technology*

There are large numbers of test projects concerned with producing energy from renewable energy sources by using hydrogen technology.

1. Are there any European programmes which promote pilot projects based on hydrogen technology in connection with generating power from renewable energy sources (water power, wind power and photovoltaic power)?
- 2) What projects are currently being supported under such programmes in Europe?
3. How many projects are eligible for support under such programmes, and for what amount?

**Answer given by Mr Narjes**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(29 August 1988)*

The Community R&D subprogrammes on hydrogen within the framework of the multiannual programmes in the field of non-nuclear energy and the programmes of the Joint Research Centre have been concluded. It is therefore no longer possible to provide financial support for such projects.

The results obtained have raised European technology to a very high level, in particular in the field of the production of hydrogen by water electrolysis.

The industrial application of these technologies, which are currently not competitive in terms of price for conventional uses, these being essentially in the chemical industry, depends on the relative changes in the cost of

the hydrogen thus produced and of other forms of energy. The Commission does not at the moment have any programmes to provide funding in this sector.

More generally and by way of evaluation, the Commission is currently studying, together with research organizations and industry in the Member States, the possibility of setting up a joint project, within an appropriate framework, with the Quebec authorities to study a pilot project on the conversion of hydroelectric energy at low cost into hydrogen.

This fuel would have to be transported over long distances in liquid form or in the form of a chemical compound to the points of use. If the study, which is expected to take two years, shows the technical and economic outlook for the project to be favourable, it is planned to construct a pilot installation with a power of 100 MWe.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 326/88**

**by Mr Luc Beyer de Ryke (LDR—B)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(6 May 1988)

(89/C 36/81)

*Subject:* Development of a revolutionary radar system for tractors — EEC aid

With the aid of the Lannion public authorities, a French farm equipment company, Sparex (Nord-Finistère), has developed a radar for tractors.

This equipment makes it possible to calculate the speed of real movement, taking any wheel slip into account. Information received allows an onboard computer to calculate the distance travelled and the area covered and to control the output of a seeder or spray compared with the speed of the vehicle.

Other applications of the radar are being considered: automatic discharge of animal feedstuffs, remote-controlled animal health checks, etc.

Is the Commission aware of this invention?

Does the Commission intend to assist its development and industrialization, which may open up interesting prospects for farm management?

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

(8 September 1988)

The Commission is aware of the technical tests carried out in certain Member States in order to maximize the

efficiency of agricultural tractors and machinery. Measuring equipment incorporating advanced technology is used for that purpose.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 330/88**

**by Mr Carlos Robles Piquer (ED—E)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(3 June 1988)

(89/C 36/82)

*Subject:* Aid to the Self-Governing Urban Community of Villa El Salvador in Lima, Peru

Has the Commission given any type of aid — donation, loan, technical or other form of cooperation — to the Self-Governing Urban Community of Villa El Salvador, in the vicinity of the city of Lima in Peru?

If so, could it say when and how the aid was granted?

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

(4 July 1988)

The Commission is acquainted with the well-known efforts being made by the men and women of the Villa El Salvador urban community to achieve integrated self-reliant development through their own initiative and efforts.

The Commission has granted the requests for co-financing presented so far by European non-governmental organizations. In 1986 it granted 8 000 ecus to co-finance with a United Kingdom NGO (Save the Children Fund) an operation to improve living conditions in the suburbs of Villa El Salvador.

In 1987 the Commission made a grant of 12 468 ecus to co-finance with a French NGO (Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Développement) an operation to help the people's organization Via Desco in Villa El Salvador.

A number of European NGOs are now studying, with the people of Villa El Salvador, further operations on a larger scale for which co-financing is to be requested this year. The Commission will welcome the requests and examine them with great interest.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 331/88**  
**by Mr Florus Wijsenbeek (LDR—NL)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(3 June 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/83)*

*Subject: Aid for seaports*

Did the Commission take note of the article in *The Times* of 1 February 1988 on differences in aid to seaports in the Community?

Does the Commission not think that the differences in aid granted to seaports in Belgium, the Netherlands, France and the Federal Republic of Germany on the one hand and in the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark on the other constitute a distortion of competition?

Do the last-mentioned countries receive forms of aid other than those mentioned in the article?

Does the Commission intend to submit proposals to ensure that seaports receive aid and funding on an equal basis?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(22 September 1988)*

The Commission is currently examining the general question of State aids and Community seaports including the kind of points raised by the Honourable Member.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 335/88**  
**by Mr Fernand Herman (PPE—B)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(4 July 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/84)*

*Subject: Unfilled vacancies in the Commission*

Several posts currently vacant (Specialized Head of Service in DG XII/Section A/3, Head of Division in DG XXI/Section C/3) are not established.

A number of separate sources concur in suggesting that these posts have been frozen until the end of the year to allow temporary officials working in Commissioners' private offices to gain backdoor entry into the European civil service.

Can the Commission confirm that these rumours are entirely without foundation and that both promotion and recruitment are being implemented in accordance with the statutory procedures and in a scrupulously impractical manner?

**Answer given by Mr Christophersen**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(20 September 1988)*

The vacant posts to which the Honourable Member refers were advertised internally in accordance with Article 29 (1) (a) and Article 29 (1) (c) of the Staff Regulations respectively:

- the post of Head of Specialized Department XII-A-3 was advertised in July 1987;
- the post of Head of Division XXI-C-3 was advertised in November 1987.

After careful examination the Commission concluded that none of the applications received for these posts was suitable and decided to organize open competitions in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Staff Regulations.

The notice of competition for the DG XII post appeared in *Official Journal of the European Communities* No C 128 of 17 May 1988 and the notice of competition for the DG XXI post in *Official Journal of the European Communities* No C 145 of 2 June 1988.

The Commission will take its final decisions on the appointments in question on the basis of the results of these competitions which, in view of the time which has to elapse prior to the closing date for the submission of applications and the date of the tests, should be known in the autumn.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 336/88**  
**by Mr Fernand Herman (PPE—B)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(3 June 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/85)*

*Subject: Recruitment of a financial controller*

DG IX has opened the procedure for recruiting a temporary A 5-4 official in DG XX — financial control of food aid.

1. Is it logical to recruit outside the Institution when a number of officials already in post have the necessary knowledge and experience to carry out the duties required?
2. Is it normal practice to give a post requiring a high degree of independence to a temporary official whose status is by definition insecure and the renewal of

whose contract can be subjected to all kinds of pressures?

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

(29 June 1988)

A temporary A 5/4 post is indeed vacant in the Directorate-General for Financial Control (control of food aid). As the post is temporary, it cannot be filled by an established official.

Given that all the basic obligations of the Staff Regulations also apply to temporary staff, the Commission does not believe that a member of the temporary staff would be unable to perform his/her duties in this sector with the required degree of independence.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 400/88**

**by Sir James Scott-Hopkins (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(9 June 1988)

(89/C 36/86)

*Subject:* The Jessi Project

What is the Commission doing to help the formation and development of the Joint European Semiconductor Silicon (Jessi) project?

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

(4 July 1988)

After a first year of feasibility investigations, following its notification at the Ministerial Conference in Stockholm in December 1986, Jessi entered in January 1988 the phase of planning and definition. This phase, to be completed by this summer, should be followed by the detailed formulation of technological objectives and an action strategy.

The Commission has been maintaining close contact with the companies and administrations concerned, with a view to identifying ways of collaboration and establishing synergy with the work carried out in Esprit. The results of the consultations now under way will not be determined until the planning and definition phase is completed.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 411/88**

**by Mrs Vera Squarzialupi (COM—I)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(13 June 1988)

(89/C 36/87)

*Subject:* Serious accidents caused by carbon fishing rods in Italy

As the Commission noted in its answer to Written Question No 1215/84 <sup>(1)</sup>, the Italian Fishing Federation has prohibited the holding of fishing competitions in the proximity of high-tension lines since 1980. However, fishing in general is not prohibited in such areas, which means that other fishermen — the latest incident occurred in February this year — have suffered severe burns when fishing lines on carbon rods become caught up in power lines.

Can the Commission:

- (a) say whether in connection with the application of the Directive on the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer products, any Member States have supplied information on accidents which have occurred and on measures taken with regard to carbon fishing rods?
- (b) inform the Member States of the number of deaths and injuries caused by the use of such fishing rods (there have been ten or more deaths in Italy alone over the last five years)?
- (c) find out what rules govern the labelling of carbon fishing rods in the Member States and what information is given on labels?
- (d) say whether there is a 'map' showing the distribution of high-tension lines, indicating their height above the ground?
- (e) say whether it does not consider that the height of such lines should be standardized?
- (f) say whether it does not consider that it should be compulsory for fishing rods to be shorter, since some accidents have been caused by direct contact between rods and power lines and not only by contact between fishing lines and power lines?
- (g) say whether shorter fishing rods will have to be notified as an amended technical specification within the meaning of Directive 83/189/EEC <sup>(2)</sup>?

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 115, 9. 5. 1985, p. 1.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 109, 26. 4. 1983, p. 8.

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

(6 October 1988)

Within the context of the system for the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer

products, the Commission has received no notifications concerning prohibitions or restrictions on the marketing of the fishing rods to which the Honourable Member refers in her question. It should be pointed out that under Article 1 of Decision 84/133 (1), which set up the system, only urgent steps taken to prevent, restrict or attach particular conditions to the marketing or use of a product have to be notified. Consequently, bans on fishing in specific places are not notified under the system, nor are accidents in this connection.

According to information provided by the Ehlass system (European Home and Leisure Accident Surveillance System), 46 cases of accidents have been identified involving fishing rods out of a total of about 230 000 domestic and leisure accidents recorded via a sample of 50 hospitals throughout the Member States. However, none of these accidents was a result of contact between the fishing rod and power lines.

The Commission has received no notification from any Member State concerning the introduction of a system of labelling in relation to carbon fishing rods and accordingly takes the view that it has no official obligations concerning special information to be indicated on these articles. In view of the above, the Commission does not see the need to take any initiative as regards standards to be applied to this product. Any provisions intended to limit the length of carbon fishing rods which might be considered by a Member State would have to be notified under Directive 83/189/EEC.

Maps indicating the distribution and height above the ground of high-tension power lines are kept by the distributors of electricity.

For technical and economic reasons, in particular the tension of high-tension power lines, it is impracticable to standardize the height of such lines.

(1) OJ No L70, 13. 3. 1984, p. 6.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 439/88**  
by Mr François Roelants du Vivier (ARC—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(13 June 1988)  
(89/C 36/88)

*Subject:* Work on VDUs

Many people complain of eye-strain and other forms of discomfort or irritability after working on visual display units.

Does the Commission not think that various steps should be taken at European level to deal with these health

problems and that, in particular, the use of anti-reflection filters should be encouraged or even made compulsory?

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

(8 July 1988)

The Commission has adopted and put before the Council on 17 March 1988 a proposal for a Council Directive (1) concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for work with visual display units.

This proposal is one of the 'individual Directives' provided for under Article 13 of the proposal for a framework Council directive on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at the workplace (2).

(1) OJ No C 113, 23. 4. 1988.

(2) COM(88) 73 final.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 443/88**  
by Mr Juan de Dios Ramirez Heredia (S—E)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(13 June 1988)  
(89/C 36/89)

*Subject:* European Youth card

In March 1988, Spain, France, Belgium, Greece and Portugal signed an agreement in Paris on the use of the 'European Youth Card' granting young people under 26 special reductions for travel in many European countries. Holders of this card are also entitled to substantial reductions when buying certain products or paying for certain services. Italy and Luxembourg are to sign the agreement in the near future.

- What role did the Commission play in creating this card?
- If the Commission was involved in this scheme, what are its views on the advantages offered to young people in Europe?

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

(14 September 1988)

The document signed in Paris in March 1988 was a declaration in support of the European Youth Card rather than agreement as to its launch or joint recognition. The

technical agreement regarding the mutual recognition and harmonization of certain technical aspects of the Youth Cards has been signed by six bodies issuing the cards (Netherlands, France, Portugal, Spain, Flanders and Scotland) in Lisbon in June 1987. It should be noted that half of these issuing bodies are not government organizations.

The Commission supported the movement towards the harmonization and convergence of Youth Cards as a first step towards a European Youth Card as specified in the Council decision of 16 June 1988 adopting an action programme for the promotion of youth exchanges in the Community — Youth for Europe Programme <sup>(1)</sup>. The Commission subsidized meetings held in Edinburgh (November 1986) and Marly-le-Roi (March 1987) in preparation for the Lisbon agreement. It also subsidized a meeting of issuing bodies in Antwerp (January 1988) to promote the technical coordination.

The Commission considers that, with the present trend towards convergence, the future European Youth Card should lead to more participation by young people in European society since it:

- (a) facilitates the access of young people to services or opportunities otherwise beyond their reach; the services could concern a variety of areas: culture and information, travel and various types of financial service. Several cards also provide for services such as legal aid or travel insurance;
- (b) through the mutual recognition of cards, it promotes the mobility of young people thus improving understanding between young Europeans.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 158, 25. 6. 1988, p. 42.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 445/88**

**by Mr Fred Tuckman (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(13 June 1988)*

*(89/C 36/90)*

*Subject: Ageism*

The Community has shown courage in its fight against many forms of discrimination, particularly concerning race, religion, nationality and sex but prejudice against older people at work persists unchallenged.

Does the Commission accept that the tendency of companies throughout the Community not to consider people above 45 is both wasteful and discriminatory?

Is the Commission aware that such discrimination is increasing and that the age at which it operates is continually being lowered?

Does the Commission intend to use its experience in the handling and diminution of unjustified discrimination in this field?

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

*(14 September 1988)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question No 2450/87 by Mr Megahy <sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 1, 2. 1. 1989, p. 12.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 478/88**

**by Mr Richard Cottrell (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(17 June 1988)*

*(89/C 36/91)*

*Subject: Equalization of retirement ages*

Does the Commission intend to proceed with proposals to equalize retirement ages for men and women throughout the Community?

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

*(22 August 1988)*

On 23 October the Commission presented a proposal for a Council Directive completing the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in statutory and occupational social security schemes <sup>(1)</sup>.

Article 9 of this new proposal embodies two possible solutions to the problem of equal treatment in respect of pensionable age.

The first solution is to fix an identical pensionable age for men and women. Since such a measure could lead, for workers of a given sex, to a reduction or increase in that age, it was deemed necessary to provide for temporary safeguards for those who, having reached a certain age, close to retirement, might wish to claim their pension at the age previously prescribed. The proposal also provides for gradual implementation in order to ease the transition.

The second solution leaves the choice of age to the beneficiaries, within a prescribed period ('flexible



retirement'). The conditions, in particular with regard to contribution years, must be identical for both sexes. Under certain national systems, an individual is entitled to a pension, irrespective of age, subject to the completion of a given number of contribution years. This so-called 'retirement pension' solution is fully in line, also, with the principle of equal treatment. It completely eliminates the problem of retirement age.

(<sup>1</sup>) COM(87) 494 final.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 500/88**  
**by Mr Robert Delorozoy (LDR—F)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(17 June 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/92)*

*Subject:* Expulsion of aid organizations from Eritrea and Tigre by Ethiopia

The recent decision of the Ethiopian Government to expel humanitarian organizations from the dissident northern provinces of Tigre and Eritrea, which are suffering from a serious drought, means that a population of three million is threatened with starvation.

The nine organizations affected by this measure have expressed the desire to continue their humanitarian aid and requested the Ethiopian Government to reverse this decision.

The latter replied that only Ethiopian organizations would henceforth be authorized to provide aid to the northern provinces and that UN aircraft would henceforth be limited to flights from the capital.

In view of this tragic situation, can the Commission indicate what measures it intends to take to ensure that Community aid is not diverted away from the disaster areas of Eritrea or Tigre for which it is intended?

**Answer given by Mr Natali**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(1 August 1988)*

When the decision became known, the Commission immediately called on the Ethiopian Government to allow the expatriate staff of the humanitarian organizations to continue their relief operations in Tigre and Eritrea. Mr. Natali renewed the Commission's request when he visited Ethiopia recently.

The Commission is most concerned that the measures adopted by the Ethiopian Government may hinder the

channelling of relief to the people who need it. It considers the situation to be so serious that a disaster will be inevitable unless all available help is mobilized in an operation to back up the resources of the government and the Ethiopian NGOs. This means the return to practical operations of the United Nations staff and resources — now partly achieved — and of the expatriate NGO staff.

With particular reference to Community aid, the Commission delegation has been authorized to make regular visits and is able to monitor effectively the distribution of the aid, which in the areas concerned is still in the hands of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission and the Joint Relief Partnership (a local association of churches), very shortly to be joined by the Ethiopian Red Cross under the auspices of the League of Red Cross Societies. This involvement of the League is aimed at filling the gap left by the departure of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Commission will be providing financial support, notably for improving the staffing of the Ethiopian Red Cross and monitoring relief operations.

The Commission would also point out that two of the five Hercules aircraft bringing relief to Mekele are being paid for by the Community on behalf of Ethiopian NGOs.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 503/88**  
**by Mr Juan Garaikoetxea Urriza (ARC—E)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(20 June 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/93)*

*Subject:* National programme of Community interest for the Basque Country

In July 1987, the Commission manifested its interest in funding a national programme of Community interest for the Basque Country under Article 10 *et seq.* of ERDF Regulation No 1787/84. Can the Commission give a progress report on the preparations for this programme? When is this programme to be submitted, and what is the Commission's present position concerning the approval of this programme?

**Answer given by Mr Schmidhuber**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(6 September 1988)*

As the Honourable Member knows, National Programmes of Community Interest (NPCIs) are drawn up on the initiative of the Member States, who submit them to the Commission for appraisal.

The Commission is aware of the plan to draw up an NPCI for the Basque Country, having contributed to the preparation of this programme by providing technical assistance.

Once this NPCI is submitted by the Spanish Government, the Commission will carry out an assessment and give its approval, if appropriate, as soon as possible.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 543/88**

**by Mr José Cervera Cardona (NI—E)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(20 June 1988)

(89/C 36/94)

*Subject:* European Parliament initiative on nuts

What stage has been reached in the process of adopting the proposal for a regulation, approved by the European Parliament in December 1987 on the basis of the report by Mr de Pasquale (PE 111.008), on the problems and prospects for the growing of hazel-nuts and other nuts in the Community?

What sort of timetable could reasonably be drawn up for the final adoption of this proposal?

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

(12 September 1988)

The Commission is currently reviewing problems as regards nuts.

It is studying carefully the draft regulation prepared by Parliament and the suggestions put forward by several Member States. It has undertaken to submit to the Council, by 31 October 1988, a report with proposals for adjusting production to the present market situation.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 551/88**

**by Mr Luc Beyer de Ryke (LDR—B)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

(20 June 1988)

(89/C 36/95)

*Subject:* SAHEL — regeneration of eroded soil — plant research and EEC aid

In tropical countries, most notably in the Sahel, the soil, eroded by drought and overworked by farmers, is being

impoverished at a dramatic rate. This applies particularly to its nitrogen content, an element essential to plant growth.

A researcher at the Office of Overseas Scientific and Technical Research, ORSTOM, in Dakar has discovered that a plant, *Sesbania Rostrata*, directly fixes nitrogen from the atmosphere. This plant may therefore serve as natural green fertilizer for tropical soils. In view of the immense amount of information which this plant contains for molecular biologists, a world congress was devoted to it last month.

Is the Commission aware of this research? Does it intend to support it, given the key role which the cultivation of *Sesbania Rostrata* may play in fertilizing farming land in Africa and, indeed, throughout the Third World?

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

(1 August 1988)

The Commission is aware of the research being conducted on *Sesbania rostrata* and has co-financed research as part of the first programme of science and technology for development (STD) (1983 to 1986)<sup>(1)</sup> and, more particularly, the subprogramme on horizontal schemes and better use of the environment.

Schemes supported by the Commission have been covered by two contracts with the bodies and on the subjects listed below:

- ORSTOM<sup>(2)</sup>, Dakar: regeneration and protection of marginal tropical soils by stimulation of symbiotic nitrogen-fixation, essentially concerning *Sesbania rostrata*;
- University of Ghent: rhizobium genes and nodulation of *Sesbania rostrata*.

These projects have helped in studying the properties of this plant for agronomic use as a green fertilizer and for use as a model for understanding the genetic mechanisms involved in symbiotic nitrogen-fixation.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 352, 14. 12. 1982, p. 24.

<sup>(2)</sup> Office of Overseas Scientific and Tropical Research; now the French Scientific Research Institute for Development and Cooperation.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 583/88****by Mr Alfons Boesmans (S—B)****to the Commission of the European Communities***(22 June 1988)**(89/C 36/96)**Subject: Emergency plan for Central America*

During the Hamburg talks with the Central American countries, under the San José agreement, the European Community agreed in principle to take part in an emergency plan that the five Central American countries proposed to the international community.

Can the Commission say how and what amounts the European Community plans to contribute under each of the headings of this plan: relaunching of economic development, foreign debt, energy requirements, etc.

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

*(29 July 1988)*

A reconstruction plan for Central America (the Ocampo Report) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 12 May. It calls for the international community to contribute towards efforts to restore stability in Central America. The plan is divided into stages in line with the priorities laid down by the Central American countries, and only the emergency section was presented in Hamburg, when the Community agreed in principle to provide help in three specific areas: food aid, the repatriation of refugees and the setting up of the Central American Parliament. The dossiers are being studied and it is not yet possible to indicate exact amounts. A decision will very shortly be taken regarding food aid after the specific requirements of the various countries have been evaluated. Decisions have so far been taken on allocations for two countries, which are up on previous years. Projects concerning refugees can be evaluated only as and when voluntary repatriation takes place, and there must be close coordination with the specialized international organizations, in particular the Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Commission and the European Parliament are working together to determine the exact nature of the support which the Community can provide for the organization of elections to the Central American Parliament, pending the ratification by all the countries concerned of the treaty setting up the Parliament.

As for the reconstruction plan itself, the Community will have to await international coordination among the various donors before adopting a position. The

Community is unlikely to be able to help in areas such as foreign debt, infrastructure or energy supply, either because it is not competent in these fields or because it lacks sufficient budget resources. On the other hand, it will continue to work on projects in the various economic and development cooperation sectors covered by the cooperation agreement between the two regions.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 592/88****by Mr Jack Stewart-Clark (ED—GB)****to the Commission of the European Communities***(22 June 1988)**(89/C 36/97)**Subject: Seat-belt legislation in the Community*

A young English woman from my constituency recently acted as a courier for a travel company between Paris and Rome. She spent the journey in the 'guide' seat of a coach which faced the rear of the coach and had no safety-belt. Had there been an accident she would have been severely injured.

Can the Commission state whether it is legal under current national or EEC provisions for tour coaches to have an unprotected seating arrangement of this nature? If there are no existing regulations to give such protection, will the Commission state whether it is taking any action on this matter to ensure proper seat-belt protection for travel couriers of the Community and others who may use such front seats?

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

*(26 August 1988)*

The Commission has drafted a proposal for a Directive, which will shortly be submitted to the Council, with a view to harmonizing the compulsory use of seat-belts by users of the front and back seats of passenger cars and of the front seats of vans and minibuses up to 3,5 tonnes.

The Commission is also having a study carried out concerning child-restraint systems in cars, so as to assess the effectiveness of such systems and to supplement the abovementioned proposal for a Directive.

There are no Community provisions at present concerning the use of seatbelts by occupants of the front seats of coaches.

The Commission had not envisaged taking steps at the moment concerning the specific aspect mentioned by the Honourable Member, but as it realises that the occupants of such seats may not be adequately protected it has taken note of this question, will have a study carried out and, where appropriate, will consider taking practical steps.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION No 619/88**

**by Mr Emmanuel Maffre-Baugé (COM—F)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(24 June 1988)*

*(89/C 36/98)*

*Subject:* Encouraging the cultivation of castor seeds in the Community

According to production and processing experts, there are guaranteed outlets for castor seeds. Rather than setting aside land, should not the Commission encourage this alternative crop by reviving the regulation of 19 December 1977 which lapsed in 1984?

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

*(13 September 1988)*

The Commission does not deny that 'there are guaranteed outlets for castor seeds' produced in the Community.

But the question that arises is at what farmgate price production of this kind would be viable. Experience of the Community arrangements operated from 1977 to 1983 showed that a scheme of this kind, providing for payment to the farmer of a price balancing the prices paid, in particular, for the other oilseeds, was too low to promote the Community production of castor seed. In addition, production of this item was hampered by technical problems.

The Commission has no information to the effect that this situation has changed since then and therefore has no plans, at least for the present, to reactivate the 1977 scheme.

On the other hand, the Commission is prepared to study ways and means of extending to castor seed any schemes that will be adopted in connection with the policy designed to encourage farmers to switch to non-surplus products.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 624/88**

**by Mr Jaak Vandemeulebroucke (ARC—B)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(24 June 1988)*

*(89/C 36/99)*

*Subject:* Japanese-American agreement on public works contracts

The Commission is no doubt aware that there is a sort of agreement between Japan and America which enables American firms to perform public works contracts in Japan.

Is the Commission currently able to assess to what extent this involves discrimination against European firms?

Can it be regarded as a reaction to the further progress being made towards a genuine European internal market?

**Answer given by Mr De Clercq  
on behalf of the Commission**

*(19 September 1988)*

The Commission is fully aware of the agreement between the US and Japan concerning big construction projects and has followed the negotiations attentively. It has repeatedly asked for and received assurances from both sides that the agreement, which is meant to provide improved access for foreign firms to the big Japanese infrastructure projects, will be applied in a non-discriminatory manner.

The Commission intends to watch the application of the agreement closely in order to make sure that EC companies which bid for contracts will benefit in fair and open competition from the business opportunities opened by the agreement. Should there be reason for complaint the Commission will take up the matter with the Japanese authorities.

At the same time the Commission intends to intensify its efforts to facilitate European firms' market access by the appropriate means at its disposal, such as the gathering and dissemination of early information on major infrastructure projects.

The Commission does not consider this agreement a reaction against the internal market.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 682/88**

by Mrs Marijke Van Hemeldonck (S—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 June 1988)

(89/C 36/100)

*Subject:* Application procedure for pensions for the widows of frontier workers

In the Netherlands, the procedure for granting a pension to the widow of a frontier worker, when other EEC countries are involved, is extremely protracted.

Will the Commission provide information on the relevant procedures in the various Member States? Is any work being done on a uniform (and rapid) procedure, with the prospect of 1992 in mind?

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

(16 September 1988)

The Honourable Member appears to be referring to the widows of workers who in the course of their working lives were insured in both Belgium and the Netherlands.

The processing of social security cases, particularly as regards pensions, takes longer where the persons in question were insured in more than one country than where they were insured in only one. This phenomenon persists within the Community, although techniques for coordination between national laws have been considerably improved and specialized bodies, on which national institutions are represented, have been set up to solve the problems presented by such coordination.

To speed up administrative processes, Community regulations on social security of migrant workers<sup>(1)</sup> provide for several procedures, including:

- (a) the use of standard forms<sup>(2)</sup>;
- (b) the establishment of measures aimed at speeding up the payment of benefits pursuant to Article 50 of Regulation 574/72. Conditions for the application of these procedures were laid down in Decisions Nos 117 and 118 of the Administrative Commission of the European Communities on Social Security for Migrant Workers<sup>(3)</sup>;
- (c) the payment of benefits on a provisional basis and advances on benefits pursuant to Article 45 of Regulation 574/72.

The Commission is keeping a close watch on the application of these procedures, especially those relating

to the registering and transmission of information, in respect of which the use of modern technology should gradually improve the situation.

<sup>(1)</sup> Regulations (EEC) No 1408/71 and (EEC) No 574/72; OJ No L 230, 22. 8. 1983, as last amended by Regulation (EEC) No 3811/86, OJ No L 355, 16. 12. 1986.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 192, 15. 7. 1986.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ No C 238, 7. 9. 1983 and OJ No C 306, 12. 11. 1983.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 690/88**

by Mr Jesús Cabezón Alonso (S—E)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 June 1988)

(89/C 36/101)

*Subject:* Timescale, financing and implementation of projects

Various bodies, companies and institutions involved in running projects co-financed by the Community have complained of the length of time between the approval of a project and payment by the Community Institutions, which causes financial difficulties for those promoting the project.

If such complaints are true, is it not possible to adjust Community financing to the promoters' own deadlines for payments relating to the implementation of their projects?

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

(5 October 1988)

Payments made by the structural Funds are subject to strict rules laid down in the Regulations governing the activities of those Funds and in the Financial Regulation.

The Regulations on the Funds specify the basic procedures for making advance payments to facilitate funding of the start-up and ongoing costs of the work carried out by the promoter. These procedures, which generally lead to a rapid succession of advance payments, will be harmonized and improved as the reform of the Funds is implemented.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 691/88**

by Mr Jesús Cabezón Alonso (S—E)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 June 1988)

(89/C 36/102)

*Subject:* Networks for contracting workers illegally

At the beginning of May, the Spanish media published serious evidence of a network in Cantabria (Spain) for contracting Portuguese woodcutters illegally.

The victims appear to be 10 Portuguese workers aged between 16 and 28 employed in forestry in the mountains, whose working conditions and salaries contravene the legal requirements of both their own country and Spain.

Quite separately from the administrative and legal steps which the Spanish authorities must take, does the Commission know whether such networks for contracting workers illegally exist in other Community countries? What measures does the Commission envisage to prevent such abuses which seriously affect the freedom of movement of workers within the Community and represent a form of exploitation which respects neither their social, labour nor trade-union rights?

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

(15 September 1988)

For lack of concrete facts the Commission is unable to express an opinion on a specific case.

However, the Commission is aware of the problems raised by clandestine immigration and the illegal employment of migrant workers. Its position was set out in 'Guidelines for a Community policy on Migration' (1) and it intends to continue its thoughts on this topic with the Member States as part of the consultations on migration policy and implementation of the White Paper.

Furthermore, in the case to which the Honourable Member refers, the recruitment of seasonal workers is subject to the assessment of the national authorities; it is up to those authorities to see to it that recruitment is not illegal, to authorize the recruitment of Community workers who do not already legally reside on national territory and to see to it that the terms of the contract are in line with what the law prescribes.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 711/88**

by Mr Andrew Pearce (ED—GB)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(29 June 1988)

(89/C 36/103)

*Subject:* EDF 4 and EDF 5 — Outstanding payments

(a) At 1 January 1988, what sums relating to EDF 4 and EDF 5 respectively had not yet been called upon to be paid by, respectively, each of the Member States?

(b) What percentage of the funds originally offered did these represent?

(c) How much was lost by the developing countries in terms of interest lost and loss by inflation from these balances being unspent?

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

(30 September 1988)

(a) At 1 January 1988, all contributions due by Member States under the terms of the convention and decisions covering the 4th EDF had been called and fully paid. Of the resources allotted to the 5th EDF, 1 383 500 000 ecus remained to be paid by Member States at 1 January 1988 as follows:

	(ecus)
Belgium	80 519 700
Denmark	34 172 450
Federal Republic of Germany	386 273 200
Greece	18 538 900
France	349 472 100
Ireland	8 162 650
Italy	156 888 900
Luxembourg	2 767 000
Netherlands	100 995 500
United Kingdom	245 709 600

(b) The contributions to the 5th EDF outstanding as at 1 January 1988 represented 29,3% of the amount allotted to this Fund.

(c) The Honourable Member seems to start from the hypothesis that the funds allocated to a Convention should ideally be instantly committed and spent. In fact it is normal that the completion of projects and programmes extends over a period of maybe several years, depending

on their composition, and may even go beyond the duration of the Convention. This being so, the idea of interest lost and loss by inflation put forward by the Honourable Member appears to be largely theoretical.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 723/88**

**by Lord O'Hagan (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(5 July 1988)*

*(89/C 36/104)*

*Subject: European expenditure*

There is widespread concern that the European Community wastes a lot of money.

1. Is it true that the European Community spends half its budget on storing and destroying food?
2. Is the proportion of the budget devoted to these purposes growing or decreasing?
3. What steps is the European Community taking in recent years to reduce the amount of money it spends on the storing and destroying of food?

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

*(16 September 1988)*

1. No. In 1987 expenditure on storage amounted to: 750 million ecus for private storage aids, and 1 046 million ecus for public storage.

Withdrawal operations in the fruit and vegetable sector may sometimes lead to destruction of the products because of their perishable nature. These operations cost a total of 59 million ecus in 1987.

Withdrawal and storage costs altogether therefore amounted to 1 855 million ecus or 5,2% of the Community budget for that year.

2. The proportion of the Community budget spent on these measures fell from 7,2% in 1986 to 5,2% in 1987.
3. The recent reforms of the CAP, including production quotas, budgetary stabilizers and set-aside, are intended to control surpluses. At the same time old stocks are being sold or their book value being reduced. All these measures will lead to reduced expenditure in the future on storage of surplus products.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 724/88**

**by Lord O'Hagan (ED—GB)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(6 September 1988)*

*(89/C 36/105)*

*Subject: Common agricultural policy*

Is it possible to estimate the cost of the common agricultural policy to the average family in the EEC or in the United Kingdom?

Is this cost £ 11,50 per week?

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

*(20 September 1988)*

Overall appropriations for the agricultural policy in 1988 amount to 28 700 million ecus for the EAGGF Guarantee Section and 1 200 million ecus for measures financed by the EAGGF Guidance Section. Since there are 114,7 million households in the Community of Twelve, the cost of the CAP to the Community budget may be estimated at an average of approximately 250 ecus per household per year, or approximately £ 3 per household per week. If account is also taken of national expenditure on agriculture, most of which goes to improving production structures and developing rural areas, the overall budget cost of agricultural policy in the Community may be put at around 380 ecus per household per year, or approximately £ 5 per household per week. As a comparison, the cost of agricultural policy in the United States during the period 1984—86 averaged out at 750 ecus per household per year, or approximately £ 10 per household per week.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 739/88**

**by Mr François Roelants du Vivier (ARC—B)**

**to the Commission of the European Communities**

*(5 July 1988)*

*(89/C 36/106)*

*Subject: Export of Dutch waste to Suriname*

In its answer to Written Question No 601/87 (\*) by Mr Willy Kuijpers, the Commission stated that it did not know whether Suriname had adopted an official position concerning imports of Dutch waste into its territory.

1. Has the situation changed since then?

2. What official positions have been adopted by various Third World countries regarding the possible conveyance to their territory of waste produced in developed countries?

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No C 86, 4. 4. 1988, p. 14.

Pearce (<sup>1</sup>) and the answer to Oral Question H-135/88 put by Mr Elliott at Parliament's part-session in May (<sup>2</sup>).

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No C 1, 2. 1. 1989.

(<sup>2</sup>) Debates of the European Parliament No 2-365 (May 1988).

**Answer given by Mr Clinton Davis  
on behalf of the Commission**

(26 September 1988)

1. There has been no follow-up to the plan to transport Dutch waste to Suriname. Neither the Surinamese nor Dutch Government has received any application or notification of such movement of waste.
2. At its 48th meeting in Addis Ababa on 19 May the Organization of African Unity adopted a resolution on the dumping of nuclear and industrial waste in Africa condemning such dumping as a crime against Africa and Africans. The resolution calls on African countries to refuse permission for the dumping of such waste on their territories.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 775/88**

by Mrs Ursula Braun-Moser (PPE—D)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(22 July 1988)

(89/C 36/107)

*Subject:* Network of filling stations selling lead-free petrol in the EEC

1. Does the Commission have at its disposal figures showing the number of filling stations selling lead-free petrol in the individual Member States of the EEC, and how much more expensive such petrol is in those countries?
2. Does the Commission intend to exert an influence in both these areas in the interests of tourists and business travellers?

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

(10 October 1988)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the answer to Written Question No 115/88 by Mr

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 782/88**

by Mrs Christine Crawley (S—GB)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(22 July 1988)

(89/C 36/108)

*Subject:* Prevention of Terrorism Act

Is the Commission aware that, in 1988, persons with Irish names travelling between Britain and Ireland, two Member States of the European Economic Community, have been required, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, to translate their Irish names into English and to produce passports within a separate common travel area?

Does the Commission agree with me that such a discriminatory practice is against the spirit of the free movement of persons within the EEC?

**Answer given by Lord Cockfield  
on behalf of the Commission**

(28 September 1988)

The fact that persons travelling between Britain and Ireland have been required to produce their passports at the internal frontier of the 'Common travel area' is not contrary to Community law: both Article 3 of Council Directive 73/148/EEC of May 1973 (<sup>1</sup>) and Article 3 of Council Directive 68/360/EEC of 15 October 1968 (<sup>2</sup>) provide that the Member States shall grant to the persons covered by these Directives the right to enter their territory 'merely on production of a valid identity card or passport'.

With respect to the other elements of her question, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply to Written Question No 138/88 of Mr Columbu (<sup>3</sup>).

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No L 172, 28. 6. 1973, p. 14.

(<sup>2</sup>) OJ No L 257, 19. 10. 1968, p. 13.

(<sup>3</sup>) OJ No C 1, 2. 1. 1989.



**WRITTEN QUESTION No 783/88**  
**by Mr Thomas Megahy (S—GB)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(10 July 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/109)*

*Subject: Aid to Malaysia*

What, if any, aid programmes is the European Community financing in Malaysia? Has the Commission had any discussions with the Malaysian Government regarding tropical rain forest management and the effects of forestry on indigenous people or wildlife?

**Answer given by Mr Cheysson**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(30 September 1988)*

Malaysia does not qualify to be a direct beneficiary under the normal EEC aid programme to Asia and Latin America (Article 930).

However, Malaysia is an active partner in the relatively limited Asean regional programme financed under the same budget heading.

There are currently 6 Asean projects in implementation:

1981 Scientific and Technical Cooperation: 2,8 million ecus

1981 Post Harvest Research and Training: 4,3 million ecus

1983 Timber Technology Centre: 7,5 million ecus

1986 Regional Aquaculture Development and Coordination: 4,77 million ecus

1986 Industrial Standards and Quality Assurance: 5,00 million ecus

1986 Regional Marine Fisheries Resource and Training: 6,65 million ecus

One of those projects, the Asean Timber Technology Centre, is located in Kuala Lumpur. The Centre is now fully operational, conducting research and training activities to reinforce the technical capacities and productivity in this sector throughout the Asean region. It is working in parallel with a Canadian-financed Asean Institute for Forestry Management (7,3 million Canadian dollars) also based in Kuala Lumpur, where the questions of forest management are tackled.

In April 1988 the Commission received a delegation of Malaysian representatives with a view to discussing the tropical rain forest management and related issues.

On this occasion it was agreed on the importance of ensuring the long-term conservation of the forest resources, associated with a sustainable exploitation.

In this context both delegations expressed their interest in the prospect of better cooperation and understanding in the framework of ITTO.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 822/88**  
**by Mr James Ford (S—GB)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(1 September 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/110)*

*Subject: EEC production of bread wheat*

Will the Commission say what measures are being taken to increase the proportion of wheat of bread-making quality as a proportion of all wheat grown within the EEC and what progress has been achieved already?

In the Commission's opinion, could an investment in bread wheat be a valid alternative to the set-aside policy for agricultural land?

**Answer given by Mr Andriessen**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(14 September 1988)*

The Commission has for a number of years pursued a quality policy promoting the production of breadmaking wheat in the Community.

Since 1986 the quality criteria have been strengthened, in particular as regards the standard quality for wheat.

Furthermore, a quality premium of 2% of the intervention price is given to high quality wheat.

The Community is in surplus of breadmaking wheat. Between 70—80% of a total production of 65—70 million tonnes of wheat is considered to be of breadmaking quality. For that reason, and because the yield difference between breadmaking and non-breadmaking varieties is narrowing further, promotion of production of breadmaking wheat would not be a valid alternative to the policy of set-aside for agricultural land.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 845/88**

by Mr Francesco Compasso (LDR—I)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 September 1988)  
(89/C 36/111)

*Subject:* Reduction in the intervention price of durum wheat

Ninety per cent of farmland in the Mezzogiorno and the Italian islands is devoted to the cultivation of durum wheat. This Mediterranean crop is the only form of agricultural production which is possible in large areas to the south of the Community, and is concentrated in the regions of southern Italy, where incomes are already low, with serious implications in respect of the social situation and employment. The 12,5% increase in Community aid fails to compensate for the reduction of the intervention price, only a third of which is refunded. In the light of this, will the Commission review the new farm price proposals for 1988/89 and maintain the intervention price of durum wheat at last year's level, since a reduction would be unacceptable, bearing in mind that it would penalize a large agricultural sector in the south which has no possibilities of alternative production?

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

(19 September 1988)

In the Community production of durum wheat exceeds demand. The 1987 harvest (7,4 million tonnes) was a new record, adding a further 271 000 tonnes to the 1986 record.

The Community's self-sufficiency in this product is now 143%. Stocks held by the intervention agencies exceed 2 million tonnes.

Production has increased in the Community mainly because more and more land has been sown to durum, a trend prompted by the price relationship between durum and common wheat. As a result, the Commission has no choice but to propose a lower intervention price for durum in order to pursue its policy of bringing closer together the prices of durum and common wheat, although half of the resulting income losses for farmers will be offset by an increase in the aid per hectare payable in the southern areas of the Community.

The balanced approach taken by the Commission in its price proposals for 1988/89 has been endorsed by the Council.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 864/88**

by Mr François Roelants du Vivier (ARC—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(2 August 1988)  
(89/C 36/112)

*Subject:* Strategic studies as part of the anti-poverty campaign

The Commission is doubtless familiar with the report by the French Economic and Social Council entitled 'Extreme poverty and economic and social instability'.

Does it not think that a similar study should be carried out at European level?

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

(28 November 1988)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question No 85/88 by Mr Alvarez de Eulate Peñaranda (<sup>1</sup>).

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ No C 1, 2. 1. 1989.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 905/88**

by Mr Fernand Herman (PPE—B)  
to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 September 1988)  
(89/C 36/113)

*Subject:* Notice of open competition COM/A/635 for a Head of Division

1. Notice of Open Competition COM/A/635 for a Head of Division for the Elimination of Fiscal Frontiers and the VAT Clearing System has recently been published in *Official Journal of the European Communities* No C 145 of 2 June 1988.

2. This notice of Open Competition follows the Notice of Vacancy COM/104/87 for which applications were submitted by several Commission officials and subsequently rejected.

3. According to rumours reported by trade-union publications, this competition was intended to establish permanently a temporary British member of staff employed in a Commissioner's Office.

4. Can the Commission:
- indicate the number and nationality of officials who applied for the post advertised in Notice of Vacancy COM/104/87 and for what reasons they were rejected?
  - confirm that no British candidate applied for the post advertised in the above notice of vacancy?
  - confirm that the rumours referred to in point 3 are totally unfounded and that recruitment procedures will respect the letter and spirit of Article 27 of the Staff Regulations which states that no posts shall be reserved for nationals of any specific Member State?

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

(19 September 1988)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question No 654/88 by Mrs Marinaro and Mr Raggio<sup>(1)</sup> and, in particular, to point 1 thereof.

In reply to point 4 of the question, there were 14 internal candidates: four German, eight Italian, one Belgian and one Irish.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 24, 30. 1. 1989.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 911/88  
by Mr Arturo Escuder Croft (ED—E)  
to the Commission of the European Communities  
(18 August 1988)  
(89/C 36/114)**

*Subject:* Community imports of footwear from Taiwan

It appears that in the early months of this year Community imports of footwear from Taiwan rose appreciably.

Since these imports affect a sector of European industry which is currently experiencing difficulties, would the Commission state:

1. How many pairs of shoes were imported from Taiwan in the first five months of 1987 and 1988 respectively and what was their value in ecus?

2. Whether the Commission intends to take steps to protect the European footwear industry from the imports from Taiwan?
3. What was the quantity value and destination of footwear exports from each Member State over the same periods of time?

**Answer given by Mr De Clercq  
on behalf of the Commission**

(26 September 1988)

1. In 1987 Community imports of all types of footwear originating in Taiwan reached 106 million pairs costing 450 100 000 ecus while in 1986 the Community imported only 57 million pairs costing 333 000 000 ecus.

2. The Commission authorized Italy on 29 February 1988<sup>(1)</sup> and France on 30 June 1988<sup>(2)</sup> to institute a system for the authorization of imports of footwear originating in South Korea or Taiwan.

In accordance with the requests made by several Member States, the Commission has initiated a Community investigation into imports of footwear originating in South Korea and Taiwan<sup>(3)</sup>.

3. Exports from the Community in 1987, broken down by Member State, (*source:* Eurostat) are as follows:

	'000 pairs	'000 ecus
France	18,5	258,3
Belgium-Luxembourg	0,6	5,4
Netherlands	0,9	12,0
Federal Republic of Germany	14,1	241,7
Italy	112,3	1 489,0
United Kingdom	5,8	77,0
Ireland	0,1	1,3
Denmark	3,1	43,3
Greece	2,3	24,4
Portugal	7,9	82,0
Spain	47,6	409,9

*Source:* Eurostat.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 54, 1. 3. 1988, p. 59.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 166, 1. 7. 1988, p. 6.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ No C 215, 17. 8. 1988, p. 6.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1002/88**

by Mr Willy Kuijpers (ARC—B)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(18 August 1988)

(89/C 36/115)

*Subject:* Separation of powers

The separation of the three powers, the legislature, the judiciary and the executive, is enshrined in the Belgian Constitution as a fundamental principle. In a democratic constitutional state, these principles have to be guaranteed in order to safeguard parliamentary democracy and the harmonious operation of the various governmental bodies.

At a recent hearing in the Belgian Parliament, a journalist claimed that the Belgian security services kept files on politicians, including Jean Gol, Belgian Minister of Justice, his predecessor, Mr Moureaux, and others.

Does the Commission think that this violation of the principle of the separation of powers enshrined in the constitution poses a threat to the democratic operation of the governmental bodies?

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

(14 October 1988)

The Commission has no comments on statements made during the course of national Parliamentary procedures.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1056/88**

by Mr Gerd Walter (S—D)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 September 1988)

(89/C 36/116)

*Subject:* EEC funds for Schleswig-Holstein

What funds were granted to Schleswig-Holstein in 1986, 1987 and 1988 from:

- the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF),
- the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund — Guidance Section (EAGGF),
- the European Social Fund (ESF)
- European Community research programmes, and
- other European Community programmes,

and for which measures or projects?

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

(9 December 1988)

In view of the length of its answer, which includes a number of tables, the Commission is sending it direct to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1081/88**

by Mrs Vera Squarcialupi (COM—I)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 September 1988)

(89/C 36/117)

*Subject:* Broadcasts to the Community using wavelengths allocated to third countries

A number of frequencies are allocated to countries which do not belong to the Community but can be used for broadcasts to it. This applies in particular to the Principality of Andorra, whose two Co-Princes are Community citizens. The question thus arises as to who ultimately has power over these frequencies and the machinery for the control over their use which could be exercised by the Community.

Does the Commission not consider that allocation of these frequencies should be the responsibility of the elected Andorran authorities instead of the Co-Princes? Since the present authorities are not elected with full democratic safeguards, does the Commission plan to protect the use of these frequencies, which is at present determined by two Community citizens?

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

(20 October 1988)

It is true that a number of frequencies have been allocated to the Principality of Andorra by the International Telecommunication Union. Andorra does not currently use these frequencies: Radio Andorra ceased transmissions in 1981.

It is also correct that the President of France and the Bishop of Seo d'Urgel, as Co-Princes, are responsible for the Principality's external affairs.

However, it does not follow that the two Co-Princes should be regarded as having some sort of personal control over the frequencies concerned, as the Honourable Member's apparently ironic interpretation of the responsibilities laid down by the Andorran constitution seems to suggest.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1382/88**  
**by Mr Erik Blumenfeld (PPE—D)**  
**to the Commission of the European Communities**  
*(20 October 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/118)*

*Subject:* Answers to written questions in the form of letters to Members of the Commission

Can the Commission say how long it takes to answer letters from Members of the European Parliament to a Member of the Commission, including the Commission President? Is there a fixed timetable for this purpose?

**Answer given by Mr Delors**  
**on behalf of the Commission**  
*(5 December 1988)*

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply to the oral question H-568/88 by Lord Bethell, which it gave during question time at Parliament's October I part-session (<sup>1</sup>).

(<sup>1</sup>) Debates of the European Parliament No 2-356 (October I 1988).

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 1428/88**  
**by Mr Ernest Glinne (S—B)**  
**to the Council of the European Communities**  
*(20 October 1988)*  
*(89/C 36/119)*

*Subject:* 'Strategically important' minerals and the Community's dependence on South Africa

Because of their use in key industries such as the car and aeronautical industries or in the manufacture of weapons,

about ten minerals are generally held to be 'strategically important': chrome, platinum, industrial diamonds, manganese, titanium, cobalt, chrysotile asbestos, etc. It is often suggested that, as a supplier of these minerals, South Africa would have a means of retaliation against any Community anti-apartheid sanctions that were effective, coordinated and efficiently applied.

Can the Commission supply a list of minerals considered strategically important by the European institutions, in the light of the Community's needs? Would such a list be different from the ten-point list drawn up by the US Department of State? Are the institutions aware of the report by the economist Paul Jourdan of the Zimbabwe Institute of Mining Research, according to which the Southern Africa countries outside the influence of the government in Pretoria have all the mineral resources and mining capacity required, with growing independent export potential?

Mr Jourdan claims that the Western countries that need South African 'strategic' minerals could, if they had the political will to plan alternative supplies without delay, circumvent the intention or power to retaliate that is sometimes casually attributed to South Africa. To what extent does the Community currently depend on South African suppliers for each 'strategically important' product, and what are the possibilities for ample and rapid diversification of sources of supply for ores and substitute products?

**Answer**  
*(9 December 1988)*

The Council has not discussed the matters raised by the Honourable Member in his question.