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I

(Information)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN QUESTIONS WITH ANSWER

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1593/90

by Mr Herman Verbeek (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 June 1990)

(93/C 292/01)

Subject: Protests by Dutch and German animal welfare organizations against Harlan CPD, a dog breeding concern at Austerlitz (Netherlands)

In answer to questions by Mrs Seibel-Emmerling (S) and Mrs Bloch von Blotnitz (ARC) (No 939/88) ⁽¹⁾, Mr Clinton Davis, on behalf of the Commission, told Parliament on 7 December 1988 that the Commission would advise Parliament when it had received a report from the Dutch authorities on conditions at the Harlan Sprague Dawley dog breeding establishment at Austerlitz in the Netherlands. It appears that Parliament has not yet received this information.

1. Has the Commission already received the report from the Dutch authorities and, if so, when did it inform Parliament of the contents?
2. Does it appear from the report that the beagles at this establishment are being kept in accordance with the conditions set out in Directive 86/609/EEC ⁽²⁾?
3. Have improvements have been made in the animals' conditions in the meantime?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 276, 30. 10. 1989, p. 5.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 358, 18. 12. 1986, p. 1.

Answer given by Mr Paleokrassas
on behalf of the Commission ⁽¹⁾

(6 July 1993)

The Commission has been in correspondence with the Dutch authorities competent for the implementation of Directive 86/609/EEC concerning the housing of animals by

Harlan Sprague Dawley (HSD) at Austerlitz. Their response can be summarized as follows:

- (a) Since November 1989, the housing of laboratory animals has to comply with Article 5 of Directive 86/609/EEC. This requires that Member States should follow the guidelines set out in Annex II. to the Directive. According to paragraph 6 of the introduction to Annex II, the guidelines have an advisory status only.
- (b) The housing of dogs within the HSD facility at Austerlitz is not inconsistent with Article 5 of the Directive. There are, however, some discrepancies with Annex II — of which the guidelines are not mandatory — particularly with regard to the advice on cage and pen sizes and the use of grid floors.
- (c) On 6 April 1990, the Dutch authorities came to an agreement with HSD, under which HSD should *inter alia* in due course be obliged to satisfy the guidelines in Annex II to the Directive. The Dutch Veterinary Chief Inspectorate is discussing this with HSD.
- (d) The Dutch Veterinary Chief Inspectorate discussed with Dutch scientists the use of grid floors in dog housing. Special attention was given to floors with vinyl-coated expanded metal grates. The outcome of this discussion was that some types of grid floors have no negative impact on the welfare of dogs and can even be recommended. Therefore, the Inspectorate decided that a grid floor may only be used if its type has been approved by the Inspectorate.
- (e) A new regulatory act on the housing of laboratory animals will be prepared in the Netherlands further to the outcome of the International Workshop on the Housing of Laboratory Animals, held in Berlin on 17—19 May 1993 and further to the discussions within the Multilateral Consultation at the Convention of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, on 29 June/2 July 1993.

⁽¹⁾ The Commission regrets the delay in supplying the answer to this question.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1790/91
by Mr Gijs de Vries (LDR)
to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 September 1991)
 (93/C 292/02)

Subject: EC strategy towards Japan

In view of the importance and the nature of EC-Japanese relations, would the Commission state how many officials currently employed with DGs I, III, IV, and XIII, respectively, have a working knowledge of Japanese?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1/93
by Mr Gijs de Vries (LDR)
to the Commission of the European Communities

(3 February 1993)
 (93/C 292/03)

Subject: EC strategy towards Japan

On 2 July 1991 I asked the Commission, in view of the nature and importance of EC-Japan relations, how many officials in Directorates General I, III, IV and XIII had a working knowledge of Japanese. The Commission has not yet answered my question (Written Question No 1790/91).

1. Does the Commission agree that the fact that it has not yet replied to my question after one-and-a-half years indicates a lack of strategic thinking in its ranks as regards relations with Japan?
2. Will the Commission now give a prompt reply to my question?

Joint answer to Written Questions
Nos 1790/91 and 1/93
given by Mr Van Miert
on behalf of the Commission

(28 July 1993)

1. The Commission has no statistics to give an exact picture of officials' proficiency in non-Community languages.
2. As part of its strategy with respect to Japan, the Commission agrees with the Honourable Member concerning the need for Japanese-speaking staff and does what it can to help staff to acquire a command of that language.
3. Courses in Japanese are available for staff serving in Brussels as part of the programme of regular foreign-language courses organized by the Training Unit. There are currently four standard courses in progress at levels 1, 2, 3 and 6 in addition to two courses designed to improve comprehension and oral proficiency. In all, some

60 officials from all the Directorates-General attend these courses. Those officials who reach the higher levels emerge with a good basic command of Japanese.

4. Furthermore, since 1987—88, the Commission has regularly allowed an official assigned to the Commission's Delegation to Japan to take part in its Executive Training Programme in order to acquire a working knowledge of Japanese before taking up duties in Tokyo.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1837/91
by Mrs Christa Randzio-Plath (S)
to the Commission of the European Communities
 (1 September 1991)
 (93/C 292/04)

Subject: The destruction of the tropical rain forest of Sarawak (Malaysia)

What has the Commission done in order to pursue the demand of the European Parliament for a special foundation on tropical rainforest with its own funds and its own judicial structures?

Answer given by Mr Marín
on behalf of the Commission
 (19 July 1993)

The Community's budget decisions taken in 1992 on Parliament's initiative made it possible to launch substantial tropical forest cooperation schemes, mainly as a result of a specific budget heading for tropical forests, for which the Commission proposed a regulation. The schemes include the setting-up of, or contribution to, funds of various types (in particular the Rain Forest Trust Fund for implementing the pilot tropical forest conservation programme in Brazil and the Fondo Amazónico in Colombia). It should at a later stage be possible to determine on the basis of this experience whether it might be worth establishing a specific foundation.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2772/91
by Mrs Mary Banotti (PPE)
to the Commission of the European Communities
 (22 November 1991)
 (93/C 292/05)

Subject: Alcohol advertising

Approaches to alcohol advertising differ widely among the Member States. In the context of EC health policy is the

Commission prepared to draw up proposals to harmonize the different Member State approaches, in order to protect the health of young people in particular against the excessive use of alcohol?

**Answer given by Mr Flynn
on behalf of the Commission**
(29 July 1993)

A survey on the consumption of alcohol among children of 11—15 years of age reveals that 27% of 15 year olds consume regularly (i.e. at least once per week) beer or cider and that 31% of 11 year olds consume beer or cider occasionally. There is a steady increase in alcohol consumption with age and little difference between girls and boys.

The Commission is aware of the need for prevention of alcohol abuse especially among children and young people, and has already developed several actions in this field following the Council resolution of 29 May 1986 on alcohol abuse ⁽¹⁾, and the Council resolution of 23 November 1988 concerning health education in schools ⁽²⁾.

Directive 89/552/EEC of October 1989 on the coordination of certain provisions relating to the pursuit of broadcasting activities ⁽³⁾ includes provisions stating that television advertising shall not encourage behaviour prejudicial to health or to safety and sets out criteria to which television advertising for alcoholic beverages shall comply. This Directive has been in force since 3 October 1991.

Furthermore, in addition to carrying out or supporting a range of preventive actions, the Commission has set up an inter-service working group which is charged with following closely developments in the field of advertising, including alcohol advertising, in order to create appropriate and timely recommendations for further action.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 184, 23. 7. 1986.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 3, 5. 1. 1989.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 298, 17. 10. 1989.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 857/92
by Mr Carlos Robles Piquer (PPE)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(14 April 1992)
(93/C 292/06)

Subject: Payment of subscriptions to scientific journals as part of aid to the former Soviet Union

Towards the end of 1991 the journal *Nature* started publishing an advert asking its readers to pay, on an

individual or collective basis, for annual subscriptions to the journal for individual researchers or scientific institutions in the former Soviet Union. The reason given for the request was that Russia's great scientific culture was in danger of disappearing.

Could the Commission arrange for practical aid to researchers and scientific institutions in the former Soviet Union to be financed by the Community in the form of subscriptions to a broad range of specialized reviews which, for economic reasons, may be beyond the reach of these people or institutions?

**Answer given by Sir Leon Brittan
on behalf of the Commission**
(5 July 1993)

The Commission is aware of the lack of scientific journals in the countries of the former Soviet Union. The Commission's Programme for Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) focuses on the transfer of know-how essential to economic reform. In close collaboration with the recipients, the priority sectors and guidelines for technical assistance were established. The countries of the former Soviet Union have indicated that the most important need is for projects which will facilitate the transition to a market economy. In this context, the financing of subscriptions to scientific journals cannot be funded under the Tacis programme.

Projects for cooperation in the fields of science and technology may be presented to the International Association for cooperation with scientists of the former Soviet Union. This association has Belgian legal personality and its seat is in Brussels. The Community and its Member States are founding members.

The Association is currently being created, with the first general Assembly of its members envisaged to take place in Luxembourg on 29 and 30 June 1993. Project proposals concerning the acquisition and distribution of specialized publications have already been formulated. These will be examined in the framework of the activities of the Association.

Furthermore, some funds from the Tacis programme have been reserved for small, individual requests for help, particularly from those groups which would not usually be able to receive grants from Tacis. These funds are administered by the Community Delegation in Moscow. In exceptional cases, in line with the objectives of the Tacis programme and, thus, essential to economic reform, Russian scientists could submit requests for subscriptions to the Delegation, which would consider these subject to their guidelines, the available budget and competing requests for help.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1031/92

by Mr Willi Rothley (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(27 April 1992)

(93/C 292/07)

Subject: EEIG

Council Regulation (EEC) No 2137/85 ⁽¹⁾ of 25 July 1985 on the European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) was the first instance of the Community providing a legal framework for a form of association. It would therefore be interesting to know whether industry has shown any interest in this particular form of association.

1. How many EEIGs have been formed in the Community in the intervening period?
2. What is the breakdown of EEIGs by Member State?
3. Are figures available for the total numbers employed in EEIGs?
4. Are there any figures for the average number of employees in an EEIG?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 199, 31. 7. 1985, p. 1.

Answer given by Mrs Scrivener
on behalf of the Commission

(29 July 1993)

1. To the Commission's knowledge, and on the basis of data published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*, 277 EEIGs have so far been formed in the Community. This is an encouraging figure considering how new the structure is.

The breakdown by Member State is as follows:

Belgium: 93 + 2 EEIGs registered in another Member State

Netherlands: 62 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

France: 55 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

Germany: 23 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

United Kingdom: 22 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

Spain: 10 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

Italy: 5 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

Denmark: 2 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

Ireland: 2 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

Portugal: 1 + 1 EEIG registered in another Member State

Not too much should be read into this breakdown at the present stage. The small number or inexistence of EEIGs in certain Member States can sometimes be attributed to the late adoption of national measures implementing Regulation (EEC) No 2137/85.

2. Apart from figures for the registration of EEIGs, the Commission does not have any systematic or complete data on the numbers employed by EEIGs. Nevertheless, the preliminary results of a general survey on the use of the structure launched by the Commission in June 1991 indicate the following.

Of the 195 EEIGs then in existence, 58 sent in replies. These had a total of 40 employees of their own (of which three part-time) and 60 people working for them on secondment from the EEIG's members (of which one part-time). The number of EEIGs with their own staff was 26, each with one or two employees. This falls well short of the 500-employee limit laid down by Article 3 (2) (c) of Regulation (EEC) No 2137/85.

For the 20 EEIGs without employees, the head office seems in almost all cases to coincide with the head office of one of the members. This is the most simple form of using the structure: no offices are opened or staff engaged and the financial commitment remains minimal, at least at the initial stage of cooperation. The limited number of EEIG employees is perhaps also due to the fact that most of the EEIGs having replied to the survey were set up in services and the distributive trades.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1066/92

by Mr Joaquim Miranda da Silva (CG)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 April 1992)

(93/C 292/08)

Subject: Protection of the cultural and natural heritage

The Commission intends to draw up proposals for regulations and directives on conserving the heritage of each Member State with a view to the completion of the single market. The deterioration or disappearance of features of the cultural or natural heritage is a loss for all the peoples of the world. In view of this, new provisions must be adopted to establish an effective international system to protect the world's cultural and natural heritage.

What progress has the Commission made in drawing up the relevant proposals? Have internationally recognized bodies such as Unesco and related organizations (e.g. the International Council of Museums), which have scientific expertise in the study and appreciation of the world heritage been consulted? Has account been taken of the Conventions for the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972 and 1985?

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

(29 July 1993)

The Council has adopted Regulation (EEC) No 3911/92 on the export of cultural goods ⁽¹⁾ and Directive 93/7/EEC on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State ⁽²⁾.

In addition, as part of its activities to protect Europe's cultural heritage, the Commission consults experts and specialist bodies such as ICOM and ICOMOS as well as working together with Unesco and the Council of Europe.

The new Article 128 inserted in the EC Treaty by the Treaty on European Union (in process of ratification) requires the Commission to encourage cooperation between Member States and, where appropriate, to support and supplement their activities in the area of preserving European cultural heritage. But the Commission does not plan to launch any new initiatives for harmonizing Member States' laws and regulations on this matter.

It should be noted that before the adoption of these measures, the Commission had, in 1989 in its Communication on the protection of national treasures possessing artistic, historical or archeological value ⁽³⁾, put forward a series of guidelines designed to reconcile the fundamental principle of the free movement of goods with the principle of protecting 'national treasures' in the run-up to the completion of the single market.

On this basis, a series of seminars with Member States has been held for relevant experts and groups to air their views. The work carried out by other international bodies such as the Council of Europe and Unesco has been watched closely. For example, the Commission has attended, in an observer capacity, the proceedings of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (Unidroit), which was asked to examine how the provisions of the 1970 Unesco Convention on the redistribution of cultural property might be improved.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 395, 31. 12. 1992.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 74, 27. 3. 1993.

⁽³⁾ COM(89) 594 final, 22. 11. 1989.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1197/92

by Mr Arturo Escuder Croft (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 May 1992)

(93/C 292/09)

Subject: Participation of the European Parliament in the Community's EXPO 92 Pavilion and the quinqucentenary events

At its sitting of 14 October 1988, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the participation of the Community institutions in the celebrations to mark the five-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America (Doc. A-174/88) ⁽¹⁾.

Given the imminence of these celebrations, can the Commission say:

1. whether it has drawn up a programme of action for the Community Institutions as part of the celebrations of the five-hundredth anniversary?
2. whether provision has been made for Parliament and the Council to be represented in the Community's EXPO 92 Pavilion in Seville and, if so, what form this will take?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 290, 14. 11. 1988, p. 178.

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

(27 July 1993)

1. The Commission commemorated the five hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America within the limits of its budgetary possibilities.

Its action was mainly geared to seminars, conferences, programmes for young people, inter-university cooperation, data base networks, Euro-Latin-American libraries and other cooperation measures.

2. The Community pavilion at the Universal Exposition in Seville was designed and made to represent the Community as a whole and did not therefore include special sectors for each Community institution. The exhibits in the Community pavilion provided an overall view, supplemented by an information and documentation centre offering visitors publications, interactive terminals and

access to data bases which included material on the European Parliament and the Council.

The pavilion staff also included Parliament and Council officials.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1246/92

by Lord O'Hagan (ED)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 May 1992)

(93/C 292/10)

Subject: Drafting of EC legislation

1. To what extent is the European Commission using outside consultants to draft proposals for EC Law?
2. Is this a satisfactory practice?
3. Are those who are going to benefit from the legislation too closely involved in its preparation?
4. Is the Commission forced to use outsiders, retained on a temporary basis, because it has inadequate permanent staff?

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

(29 July 1993)

The Commission has outlined its position on the use of external staff in two communications to Parliament and the Council ⁽¹⁾. In the second of them, it announced its intention of restoring balance in its resources by converting appropriations used to pay 2 000 such staff into permanent posts by 1997. The 1993 budget authorized 500 of these conversions.

For the impact of monetary problems on the Commission's human resources, the Honourable Member is referred to the general introduction to the preliminary draft general budget for 1994 ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ The Commission's approach to the management of resources: SEC(90) 1876 final. Outside staff and the transfer of administrative appropriations from Part B to Part A of the budget: SEC(92) 769 final.

⁽²⁾ COM(93) 400.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1439/92

by the following members: Jessica Larive
and Jan Bertens (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 June 1992)

(93/C 292/11)

Subject: Dangers to nuclear safety in the CIS

In the CIS the greatest dangers — apart from those associated with other types of nuclear power station — are those involving 16 RBMK power stations of the Chernobyl type. According to Western experts (such as the IAEA), they present an acute danger and cannot be improved. Nonetheless, the Russians, for example, are not prepared to close them down, arguing that they have no alternative source of energy supply.

In the longer term, energy supplies can be secured by various means, including energy saving measures and alterations to those nuclear power stations which lend themselves thereto, in order to ensure compliance with Western safety standards. The Commission is contributing towards this longer-term objective, *inter alia* through the technical cooperation programme.

Is the Commission taking action, in view of the urgent nature of the problems, with a view to improving energy supply in the short term as well to such an extent as to overcome the problem of the reduction in energy production attendant on the closure of unsafe nuclear power stations?

What else is it doing to promote or enforce the immediate closure of the 16 most dangerous power stations?

What action would it take in response to a refusal by the relevant authorities?

**Answer given by Sir Leon Brittan
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 July 1993)

The Commission agrees that nuclear power plants with RBMK reactors are not of an overall safety standard that would allow them to run up to the end of their design life. This is especially true for the earlier of these reactor designs. The Commission has launched a comprehensive safety assessment of the reactors and will be in a position to make a fuller statement on the safety of these reactors when the results are available.

It is not possible for the countries operating such reactors to close these plants immediately, given the energy situation and their economic obligations. Some of these countries rely on the electricity produced for earning revenues for the national economy.

The Commission has, therefore, taken a number of initiatives to help the countries concerned reinforce the security of existing reactors, and within the Phare and Tacis programmes to enhance energy conservation and to improve the efficiency of energy production.

The combination of these measures should not only reduce the threat of accident but also decrease the dependency on the reactors, enabling them to be closed down at the earliest possible date.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1534/92

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 June 1992)

(93/C 292/12)

Subject: EFTA in the Media programme

The Community Media programme, which was set up in 1988, will involve seven new countries which are not members of the EEC. These are EFTA members which, because of the recent Community agreement with EFTA, have acquired from the beginning of the year automatic rights to participate in the programme. The programme's budget for the years 1991—95 is ECU 200 million and proposed expenditure for 1992 is expected to amount to ECU 45 million while the contribution made by these countries will amount to some 14%. Funding for the programme, which currently has 16 subsidiary programmes, is considered inadequate. In view of the above, is the Commission about to propose an increase in overall appropriations to the Council of Ministers?

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

(22 July 1993)

It is true that Article 9 of Annex M of the Agreement on the European Economic Area provides for the participation of EFTA members in the Media programme introduced by Council Decision 90/685/EEC of 12 December 1990. The negotiations concerning the arrangements for participation are well advanced so that participation can become effective as soon as the Agreement on the European Economic Area comes into force. The Commission would point out that the EFTA financial contribution will be added to that of the Community. The overall amount will thus be increased in accordance with Article 82 of the Agreement which states that 'the amount of the contribution of the EFTA States shall be additional, both in commitment appropriations and in payment appropriations, to the amounts entered for the Community in the general budget on each line corresponding to the activities concerned' (i.e. the

Community programmes in which these States participate). This contribution will be made each year.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1607/92

by Mr Yves Verwaerde (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(24 June 1992)

(93/C 292/13)

Subject: General system for the recognition of higher education diplomas — French law doctorate

How does the Commission intend to treat the French law doctorate within the general system for the recognition of higher education diplomas within the Community?

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**

(29 July 1993)

Directive 89/48/EEC⁽¹⁾ on a general system for the recognition of higher-education diplomas awarded on completion of professional education and training of at least three years' duration relates only to the recognition of diplomas for professional purposes.

The French diploma of doctor of law is an academic diploma which is not required in order to take up and pursue the profession of lawyer. Academic recognition of such diplomas is a matter for the Member States and is not covered by Directive 89/48/EEC.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 19, 24. 1. 1989.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1648/92

by Mr Llewellyn Smith (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 July 1992)

(93/C 292/14)

Subject: Codex/GATT: Rewriting of Codex rules in the context of HACCP

Has the Commission seen and/or commented upon draft proposals that rewrite Codex general principles of food

hygiene in the context of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points?

**Answer given by Sir Leon Brittan
on behalf of the Commission**
(19 July 1993)

At the October 1991 meeting of the Codex Alimentarius Food Hygiene Committee in Washington the United Kingdom was mandated to carry out a fundamental rewrite of the General Principles document on Food Hygiene. The object was to relate the general principles more clearly to risk factors (microbiological, chemical and foreign bodies) and refer specifically to HACCP.

The United Kingdom Department of Health has organized a workshop on this subject in July 1992 in which the Commission participated.

During this session the working group prepared a document which was presented to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene during its 26th session in Washington, D.C. 1—5 March 1993.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1939/92

by Mr Paul Staes (V)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(1 September 1992)
(93/C 292/15)

Subject: Aid to the Belgian enterprise Fabelta Ninove which may be incompatible with the common market

On 29 December 1983 the capital of the Belgian enterprise Fabelta Ninove was increased by Bfrs 90 666 million through the subscription of 476 993 non-voting shares by the Nationale Maatschappij voor de herstructurering van de National Sectoren (NMNS — National Company for the Restructuring of National Industries).

This capital injection formed part of a restructuring plan (although I am not certain whether or not this has been carried out).

The company (which has since been privatized) bought back these shares in two tranches:

— On 14 November 1985, 348 105 shares were transferred for Bfrs 66,1 million payable only on 1 October 1992.

— On 17 June 1986, the remaining 128 888 shares were transferred for Bfrs 24,5 million payable only on 31 October 1993.

1. Was the capital injection in Fabelta Ninove by the NMNS and the repurchase of the corresponding shares by the company notified to the EC Commission?
2. Should the injection of Bfrs 90 666 million by the NMNS not be seen as aid incompatible with the Common Market?
3. Should not the accelerated repurchase of the non-voting shares by the company be seen as further aid to the company given that shares will not have to be paid for in full until the end of October 1993?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1940/92

by Mr Paul Staes (V)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(1 September 1992)
(93/C 292/16)

Subject: The privatization of the Belgian state-owned company Fabelta Nonove

The privatization of the Belgian state-owned company Fabelta Nonove (quite apart from the repurchase of shares from the Nationale Maatschappij voor de herstructurering van Nationale Sectoren NMNS — National Company for the Restructuring of National Industries) was carried out in two phases:

— On 21 December 1984, the Gewestelijke Investeringsmaatschappij van Vlaanderen (GIMV — Provincial Investment Company of Flanders) sold 10 100 shares to the Director, Mr Van der Stichelen, for Bfrs 399 960. These shares corresponded to a capital injection of Bfrs 10,1 million (the company made a profit of Bfrs 57 million in 1984).

— On 10 July 1985, the Belgian Government sold its 205 574 shares to Director Van der Stichelen for the ridiculously low price of Bfrs 10 278 700 (payable in five equal instalments with the final one due as late as 1 September 1989!). These 205 574 shares corresponded to a capital injection of Bfrs 216 274 000! In that year, the company achieved a turnover of Bfrs 130 million and a profit of Bfrs 71 million.

Is it not the case that the state-owned shares were sold for far too low a price both times so that in fact these sales represented aid incompatible with the common market?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1941/92

by Mr Paul Staes (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 September 1992)

(93/C 292/17)

Subject: The Belgian textiles programme

As part of its textiles programme, the Belgian Government injected capital into a large number of companies via the Nationale Maatschappij voor de herstructurering van Nationale Sectoren (NMNS — National Company for the Restructuring of National Industries) and through the purchase of non-voting shares.

From the very beginning it was intended that these companies should buy back these shares in tranches after a predetermined period and at their nominal value (recycling of shares).

In early 1988, the Belgian Government gave the go-ahead for the nine share portfolios to be bought back more quickly. These sales were based on adjusted values so that the companies only paid 72,5 % of the nominal share value with the result that they were able to enjoy an additional government subsidy.

The following transactions were involved:

- UCO paid Bfrs 520,6 million for government owned shares with a nominal value of Bfrs 718 million.
- Bekaert Textiles paid Bfrs 444 million for government owned shares with a nominal value of Bfrs 612,6 million.
- The companies De Deerlijkse, Otta Carpet, Polypit, Ruga Etiket, Tentureia, TIS and Wittock van Landeghem paid Bfrs 150 million for shares worth approximately Bfrs 207 million.

Following protests from the EC Commission, the Belgian Minister for Economic Affairs suspended the recycling of shares in this manner although the recycling of shares at their nominal value continued.

1. Does the accelerated recycling of these nine share portfolios not represent aid incompatible with the common market in view of the fact that the companies paid too little for the shares?
2. Has the Commission taken any steps to compel the Belgian Government to demand additional payments for these shares from the companies concerned?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1942/92

by Mr Paul Staes (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 September 1992)

(93/C 292/18)

Subject: Aid to the Belgian company Idealspun

As part of the Belgian Textile Programme, the Belgian Ministerial Committee for Economic and Social Coordination (MCESC) decided on 9 June 1983 to inject Bfrs 174 million into the company Idealspun through the Nationale Maatschappij voor de herstructurering van Nationale Sectoren (NMNS — National Company for the Restructuring of National Industries) by buying non-voting shares and to provide an additional issue premium of Bfrs 100 million (i.e. a total of Bfrs 274 million).

In addition to this, it granted an interest subsidy of 7 % over a period of five years on an external loan of Bfrs 247,7 million. Idealspun received Bfrs 58 337 488 in the form of this interest subsidy (payment of this subsidy was stopped in 1989).

The Idealspun case has already received a great deal of attention at a European level. In its letters of 18 November 1983, 20 December 1983 and 11 January 1984 the Belgian Government defended the granting of subsidies totalling Bfrs 224 million. Although the Belgian Government had initially provided for Bfrs 224 million, the final sum paid totalled Bfrs 274 million (with a further Bfrs 58,3 million being paid via the 7 % interest subsidy).

The Belgian Government thus withheld information from the EC Commission. The EC decision of 27 June 1984 ruled that the government investment of Bfrs 224 million contravened Article 92 of the EEC Treaty. Once again the sum mentioned was the initial lower sum. This was later followed by two judgments by the European Court of Justice (9 April 1987 and 12 February 1991).

1. Why does the EC decision of 27 June 1984 only refer to a sum of Bfrs 224 million and not to the actual sum of Bfrs 274 million?
2. Is not the interest subsidy totalling Bfrs 58 337 488 also in contravention of Article 92 of the EEC Treaty?
3. What steps has the Commission taken to demand repayment of this wrongful subsidy?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1213/93
by Mr Paul Staes (V)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(18 May 1993)
(93/C 292/19)

Subject: Provisions concerning non-voting shares held by the State — approval by the Commission

Royal Decree No 20 of 23 March 1982 forms part of the textiles plan. It made it possible for the State to invest in dozens of textiles companies by purchasing non-voting shares. The decree laid down that the companies were to buy the shares within 15 years of their creation for a minimum of 80 % of their nominal value. Article 6 of the Decree of the Flemish Region laying down provisions to accompany the budget for 1993 now makes it possible for companies to buy non-voting shares for less than 80 % of their nominal value. This may constitute a form of aid to the companies concerned.

1. Was the Commission informed of the intention to adopt this measure, pursuant to Article 92 of the EC Treaty? If so, when?
2. Did the Commission approve the measure? If so, when?

Joint answer to Written Questions
Nos 1939/92 to 1942/92 and 1213/93
given by Mr Van Miert
on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 1993)

In July 1980 Belgium notified to the Commission the main features of an aid programme it intended to introduce to assist the textile and clothing industry as part of a recovery and restructuring programme for that industry (known as the Claes Plan).

After long negotiations and several alterations to the plan, the Commission informed the Belgian authorities by letter of 18 November 1981 that it did not oppose the scheme's implementation for a period of one year ending on 31 December 1982.

The plan envisaged recapitalization aid to firms in the industry in the form of low-interest state loans and/or state participation in the necessary restructuring investments.

The Commission's letter contained no conditions or rules concerning the repurchase of state holdings in firms under the plan since the Commission considered that the entire amount of the Belgian State's planned holdings (Bfrs 6,8 billion) constituted aid.

Following an action for annulment brought by Germany, the Court of Justice in its Judgment of 20 March 1984 declared the Commission's decision of 21 November 1981 void, finding that it infringed an essential procedural requirement.

As previously indicated, in its decision the Commission been silent on the conditions for the repurchase of the State's holding in firms since it considered that all such holdings constituted aid, thus encompassing any capital loss on repurchase. This aid could be accepted in the context of approval of the full restructuring programme. Recovery of the funds when the State's holdings were sold would have effectively reduced the total amount of aid. The repurchases, even at a price approaching zero, would not contain any fresh aid on top of the aid already contained in the original restructuring plan.

The Commission therefore considers that the conditions governing the repurchase of shares under the restructuring plan do not contain any fresh aid to the firms and/or private recipients in question.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2216/92
by Mr Hemmo Muntingh (S)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(1 September 1992)
(93/C 292/20)

Subject: Quality of the water of the River Meuse

The water quality in the River Meuse is still extremely worrying. A recent study by IRWA (the Association of Rhine and Meuse Water Companies) speaks of dirty and unhealthy water, the quality of which has not improved over the last decade. The IRWA calls for immediate action to clean up the sources of pollution. The national authorities in the Netherlands, Flanders and Wallonia are failing to take adequate action. In answer to Written Question No 640/92 ⁽¹⁾, the Council stated that the Commission is empowered to conduct negotiations on the quality of water courses that cross frontiers.

How does the Commission propose to step up consultations between the Member States concerned so as to improve the quality of the Meuse's water in the short-term?

What action is open to the Commission to enforce compliance with EC provisions on water quality? What action does the Commission propose to take in the short term?

Does the Commission agree that frequent monitoring of the quality of the Meuse's water at a large number of sampling points is therefore essential? Does the Commission propose to urge the Member States affected to develop a water sampling network in the short term?

Is it possible to apply for money from the LIFE fund to stimulate activities to clean up the waters of the Meuse? If so, what actions does the Commission have in mind?

(¹) OJ No C 168, 4. 7. 1992, p. 46.

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

(6 April 1993)

The Commission is aware of the talks currently taking place between the three Member States bordering on the River Meuse on the adoption of a Convention on cooperation on the management of the River Meuse and the River Schelde.

The Commission is able to make use of the procedure provided for under Article 169 of the EEC Treaty to monitor the application of Community law. Proceedings may be brought against a Member State for failure to apply one or more Directives properly, for the failure of the national implementing measures to conform to the Directives or for failure to communicate the national implementing measures.

The quality of the water of the River Meuse is frequently measured at a number of points along the entire length of the river by the authorities responsible in the Member States concerned.

The LIFE fund could provide financial support for preparatory or demonstration projects which are of Community interest or are innovative in terms of the technology or methodology used. These projects must also fall within the priority areas laid down by the Commission for 1993 and published in the Official Journal (¹).

(¹) OJ No C 336, 19. 12. 1992, clean technologies.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 2350/92
by Mrs Brigitte Ernst de la Graete (V)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(23 September 1992)
(93/C 292/21)**

Subject: E25/E40 motorway link to Liège

On 30 May 1992 work began on the first stage of the tunnel linking the E25 and E40 motorways under Cointe hill at Liège, Belgium.

On that occasion the Minister of Public Works of the Walloon Region said that the link would cost a further Bfrs 1 800 to 3 700 million, or between ECU 450 and 900 million, and that he intended to apply to the Commission for subsidies so that it could be completed by 2010.

1. Does a budget item exist for subsidies for such infrastructures in Belgium?
2. If so, does the Commission intend to give a favourable reply to the Minister's application, bearing in mind that the value of the infrastructure is disputed in the region and that no environmental impact assessment has been carried out?

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

(29 July 1993)

Council Regulation (EEC) No 3359/90 of 20 November 1990 (¹) for an Action programme in the field of transport infrastructure with a view to the completion of an integrated transport market in 1992 allows financial support to be granted to projects of Community interest. But the projects approved and listed in Article 3 of the Regulation do not include any road sections in Belgium.

On the other hand, the proposal on a trans-European masterplan for the roads does give the A602 Liège-Bastogne link, including the cross-Liège link intended to fill in the gap between the northern and southern sections. In future, the possibility of co-financing will be decided, where appropriate, by whatever instruments are put in place. In the transport infrastructure programme for 1993 (Regulation 3359/90) the Belgian authorities submitted for co-financing a project described as 'A602 Motorway at Liège (link between the E40 and the E25), including two tunnels under Cointe hill'. However, this project was not eligible under Article 3 of the said Regulation and therefore did not receive any support.

As regards the environmental question raised by the Honourable Member, it should be pointed out that, if an application is made for support from Community funds for basic infrastructure of this type, the project must comply

with all Community policies, including those on environmental protection.

(¹) OJ No L 326, 24. 11. 1990.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2363/92

by Mrs Mary Banotti (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(23 September 1992)

(93/C 292/22)

Subject: European library

Could the Commission inform whether they would be prepared to assist in the establishment of a European library which would acquire all material available in the US and Europe and make it available on electronic media to all colleges and universities in Europe?

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

(29 July 1993)

The Commission and its Offices in the Member States can contribute to synergies between European libraries.

They can also support electronic storage and communications media through area 5 of the specific programme for telematic systems of general interest set up under the third framework programme for Community RTD activities (1990—94).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2558/92

by Mr Pierre Lataillade (RDE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(27 October 1992)

(93/C 292/23)

Subject: Community aid and respect for the rights of children

The European Parliament has repeatedly condemned the intolerable situation of children in many third-world countries suffering from the problems of underdevelopment (high infant mortality, aids, exploitation for the purposes of pornography, prostitution etc.).

In its resolution of 12 July 1990 (B3-1436/90) (¹), Parliament expressed the hope that a clause would be included in cooperation agreements concluded or renewed with non-Community countries stipulating respect for the Convention on the rights of the child (in force since 2 September 1990) to which many states have already acceded.

Has the Commission met Parliament's request and does it mention in the text of the agreements that the recipient countries must devote some of the aid to 'human resources' and in particular children, with emphasis on the development of primary health care, measures to prevent disease and malnutrition, the protection of children against unfair exploitation, and the right to education?

(¹) OJ No C 231, 17. 9. 1990, p. 170.

**Answer given by Mr van den Broek
on behalf of the Commission**

(29 July 1993)

The rights of the child are an integral part of human rights: respect for such rights, and their promotion and preservation, is an essential element of relations between the Community and non-member countries.

References to this are currently being introduced into cooperation agreements with non-member countries via a clause stipulating that relations between the Community and the country concerned are based on respect for human rights, and that this is an essential element of the agreement. Including such clauses in cooperation agreements means that specific operations can be undertaken with a view to promoting the entire spectrum of human rights. Protecting the rights of the child is naturally a priority.

That is why the new agreement between the Community and Brazil contains specific provisions offering real scope for measures to help abandoned and maltreated children, a problem which is particularly acute in that country.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2686/92

by Mr Giulio Fantuzzi (GUE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(29 October 1992)

(93/C 292/24)

Subject: Compensatory payments in traditional production zones for durum wheat in Emilia-Romagna

Annex II of the recent Council Regulation (EEC) No 1765/92 (¹) lists the traditional production zones for

durum wheat entitled to the supplementary compensatory payment introduced by the reform of the CAP.

In the proposed regulation, the Commission and the Council did not accept an amendment by the European Parliament and excluded producers of durum wheat in the less-favoured areas of the Italian region of Emilia-Romagna from entitlement to such premiums, despite the fact that this crop has been grown for some time in those areas, is of high quality and is closely connected with the food industry in the region.

Given that their exclusion from such payments may have serious consequences for producers in the less developed areas, which are, incidentally, included in the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes, and that they are already operating at a lower level of profitability, with no real alternative, can the Commission give its reasons for excluding such producers and state whether such areas could be included in the production zones referred to in Annex II of the abovementioned regulation?

(¹).OJ No L 181, 1. 7. 1992, p. 12.

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

(13 July 1993)

In the decisions taken by the Council on the reform of the common agricultural policy the enhanced durum wheat aid was confined to areas which received the original durum wheat aid during the base period. Since then adjustments to the areas eligible for aid have been made in Spain, Portugal and France on the basis of a proposal by the Commission. Discussion in Parliament and Council on that proposal gave an opportunity for the claims of other regions of the Community to be considered but the final Council decision was limited to the areas initially proposed.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2698/92
by the following members: Hiltrud Breyer, Paul Lannoye,
Virginio Bettini and Marguerite-Marie Dinguirard (V)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(29 October 1992)
(93/C. 292/25)

Subject: The Tacis programme

1. (a) Why are contracts for studies and projects forming part of the Tacis programme not publicly advertised?

- (b) On what grounds are members of the Committee on Energy refused information on how contracts are awarded and the outcome of this process so that they are unable to exercise any control over the use of taxpayers' money?

2. How does the Commission justify the changes in the contracts covering refitting which absolve the firms concerned from any responsibility for any shortcomings arising from their work?

3. The final disposal of radioactive waste is a serious problem worldwide, and nowhere more so than for operators of nuclear power stations in the EC.

- (a) Does the Commission know how the former USSR and its successors have disposed of radioactive waste so far?

- (b) Does the Commission know where the nuclear dumps involved are? What are they called?

- (c) Is the practice compatible with the Commission's safety standards?

- (d) What importance does the Commission attach to the problem of the disposal of radioactive waste from CIS reactors?

- (e) How does the Commission intend to ensure that this waste is disposed of according to safety criteria which meet with its approval?

4. The safety standards for handling radioactive material vary from Member State to Member State. What safety standards does the Commission require of recipients of financial resources from the Tacis subprogramme on nuclear safety?

**Answer given by Sir Leon Brittan
on behalf of the Commission**

(3 August 1993)

1. The general procedure for the award of contracts by the Commission is an open invitation to tender to all Community enterprises. However, restricted invitation to tender may be used in particularly urgent situations: the Tacis programme is one such case, and has accordingly been the subject of a general accelerated procedure. This is provided for in Regulation (EEC) No 2157/91 of 15 July 1991 concerning the provision of technical assistance to economic reform and recovery in the Soviet Union (¹).

In addition to this use of the restricted procedure, contracts for operations of up to ECU 300 000 may be awarded by private treaty, where appropriate after an informal consultation.

Supply contracts are awarded by open invitation to tender.

The Commission systematically ensures that for every operation, the tender selected is economically the most advantageous, taking into consideration the tenderers' qualifications and the guarantees they offer, and factors such as cost, quality, the nature and conditions for execution, running costs and technical merit.

The short lists used in the restricted procedure are confidential; this is in accordance with the Commission's general Financial Regulation. Some information can, however, be made available after contracts have been awarded.

Management and implementation of the technical assistance programme is the responsibility and the prerogative of the Commission. The Court of Auditors verifies all Commission expenditure. After checking the Commission's management practices, the Court of Auditors reports its findings to Parliament.

2. The Commission has not revised its contracts or standard contracting conditions. All contracts are aimed at maximizing the transfer of know-how from the West to the recipient institutions in the former Soviet Union. They require the consultancy firm contracted to execute work for the Commission, comply with the obligations stipulated in the contract and the terms of reference for the project, and execute them precisely and completely.

As far as nuclear liability is concerned, neither the Russian Federation nor Ukraine are parties to the Vienna or Paris Conventions governing the liability of owners and operators of nuclear plants. Therefore, companies are largely unwilling to take the risk of becoming involved in nuclear safety related assistance, be it in the form of specific studies for safety improvement or on-site assistance, without adequate liability cover. Pending the accession of the two countries to these Conventions, which will take some time, the Commission is negotiating specific, bilateral ad hoc arrangements. These negotiations have resulted in a preliminary solution, enabling companies to get work under way.

3. The Commission keeps abreast of the radioactive waste management techniques employed in the USSR and its successor states through participation in IAEA working parties, papers presented at international conferences by experts from the former USSR and the abovementioned countries, and contacts with the authorities of those countries.

The Commission has in the same way acquired a certain understanding of the interim storage and final disposal methods and systems in these countries. Almost all radioactive waste is stored on-site at nuclear plants (nuclear power stations, reprocessing factories, etc.) pending disposal. Waste from research centres, industry and

hospitals has been disposed of at central overground facilities across the former Soviet Union. Spent nuclear fuel from power stations was never regarded as waste in the Soviet Union because the policy was to reprocess it with a view to recovering the unburned uranium and plutonium.

Several of the former Soviet Union's management methods fell short of the level required for safety reasons by the Community. In particular, facilities for the treatment of the solid waste produced by nuclear power stations are a recent development and only a few plants have them; some liquid waste disposal methods are no longer compatible with the latest Community thinking on final storage (the requirement that waste be immobilized by solidification prior to storage).

The Commission believes that the countries concerned should be provided with the assistance required for the development of safety regulations and technology so that they can manage and store their radioactive waste as safely as possible; the Tacis programme provides for such assistance this year and in subsequent years.

The assistance for the regulatory authorities of the countries concerned will primarily be aimed at enabling them to apply and supervise suitable safety measures in a responsible manner.

4. Assistance in the target sectors (studies of the safety of reactors, nuclear fuel cycle facilities, waste management, etc.) is coordinated by the Community. It is implemented by the Tacis programme, most often by consortia of agencies from different Member States. The Community's nuclear safety culture is thereby passed on in a coherent manner.

(¹) OJ No L 201, 24. 7. 1991.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2801/92

by Mr Marc Galle (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 November 1992)

(93/C 292/26)

Subject: Community representation at sport events

At many sport events this summer the European flag was regularly in evidence, for example on some of the bouquets presented during the Tour de France.

1. At which sports events has the Commission been represented and will it be represented in 1992?
2. At which sports events will it be represented in 1993?
3. What department has specific responsibility in this connection?
4. How many representatives are sent and what is their exact function?
5. Is staff specially recruited and, if so, in what numbers?
6. What material, e.g. for distribution, are they supplied with?
7. What is the cost on each occasion (cost of representation, staff and equipment)?

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

(7 July 1993)

1. As 1992 marked a turning-point in the process of European integration, the Community institutions, in particular Parliament and the Commission, sought to bring the Community closer to the people by taking part in major sporting events such as the Olympic Games and the Tour de France.

2. The main activities planned for 1993 include the European Yacht Race, the European Youth Olympics (both winter and summer games), the Women's Tour of the European Community, the Special Olympics and the Games of the International Sports Federation of Catholic Teaching Establishments. The Community will also lend its support to other events, in particular those for the disabled.

3. Responsibility for these activities lies with the Directorate-General for Audiovisual Media, Information, Communication and Culture, and in particular Unit X.C.4 — People's Europe: Information Campaigns, Public Awareness and Sport.

4 and 5. The number of staff involved depends on the scale of the activities in question. For some major events, the Commission lists the help of specialized agencies through invitations to tender.

6. A wide range of materials is used, including printed matter, the spoken word and audiovisual media, depending on the nature of the target audience.

7. The cost to the budget depends on the nature of the activities concerned, in particular their impact on the

general public, but is always modest when compared to the overall cost of the event.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2812/92

by Mr Freddy Blak (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 November 1992)

(93/C 292/27)

Subject: Exclusion of Danish writers from consideration for the European Prize for Literature

According to an article appearing in the newspaper *Jyllandsposten*, on Wednesday, 8 October 1992, Danish writers were not seriously considered for the European Prize for Literature for the sole reason that the jury had not been aware that there were Danish candidates until the meeting was actually taking place. According to the report, this was owing to an administrative error by the European Community.

Is it actually true that the Danish candidates for the European Prize for Literature were not included on the original list of candidates for consideration by the jury?

If Danish writers were in fact excluded from serious consideration as a result of an EC administrative error, what steps will the Commission take to correct the relevant administrative procedures in future?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2813/92

by Mr Freddy Blak (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(16 November 1992)

(93/C 292/28)

Subject: Exclusion of Danish writers from consideration for the European Prize for Literature

According to an article in the newspaper *Jyllandsposten*, of Wednesday, 8 October 1992, Danish writers have apparently been excluded from serious consideration for the European Prize for Literature. This is unjust and steps should be taken to remedy matters.

Such a mistake by EC bureaucracy can only serve to increase resistance to EC cooperation and is particularly regrettable for the Danish writers concerned. The EC should therefore

take measures as soon as possible to rectify this error and ensure that there is no recurrence in future, for the sake of both EC cooperation and public attitudes to the EC.

What steps will the Commission take to ensure that Danish writers are given another chance to be considered for the 1992 European Prize for Literature and to ensure that mistakes such as this do not occur again?

**Joint answer to Written Questions
Nos 2812/92 and 2813/92
given by Mr Pinheiro
on behalf of the Commission
(26 July 1993)**

Under the arrangements for the Aristeion European literary and translation prizes laid down by the Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, each member selects no more than three works to be submitted to an independent European panel. Each Member State establishes the necessary rules for this purpose.

In response to the Commission's request, the Danish literature information centre (Dansk Litteratur-informationscenter) nominated three Danish authors for the 1992 literature prize. They were:

— Svend Åge Madsen: *At Fortælle menneskene*

— Ib Michael: *Vanillepiggen*

— Klaus Rifbjerg: *Bjerget i himlen*

At the first meeting in Brussels on 24 June 1992, the panel drew up a final list of 32 names, including the three Danish authors.

In response to the panel's request, the Commission in cooperation with the Danish literature information centre requested independent outside experts to prepare reports on the three Danish works. The reports were received in Brussels, and English and French versions were sent to panel members on 24 August 1992 together with the reports sent by the Danish panel member.

At the second meeting on 15—16 September 1992 in Brussels, after a series of votes the panel established a short list of six works after eliminating 26 entries.

The absence of Danish entries from the short list was not due to an administrative error on the part of the Commission departments concerned, which had provided the panel with all the necessary information so that it could independently establish the short list. The exclusion of the Danish writers and of writers from other Member States was the result of an

independent decision by the panel members. They do not have to justify their decisions and they are bound to respect the confidentiality of their deliberations.

Finally, it should be pointed out that, while for the first time since 1990 no Danish title appears on the short list (six out of 32 titles), in accordance with the established competition rules, writers from five other Member States were not selected either.

It was accordingly decided that no changes should be made in the selection process for the 1993 literary prize currently under way. The entries submitted by Denmark for 1993 are:

— Peer Hultberg: *Byen og Verden*

— Klaus Høeck: *Eventyr*

— Peter Hoeg: *Frøken Smillas fornemmelise for sne.*

They were included in the panel's first list at the meeting on 4 May 1993 in Brussels. They will not receive any different treatment. The panel, which is completely independent and whose decision is final, will assess the quality of these works at the forthcoming meeting in Brussels on 14—15 September 1993. The short list will be published at the Frankfurt Fair from 6 to 11 October 1993.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3023/92

by Mrs Sylviane Ainaudi (CG)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(14 December 1992)

(93/C 292/29)

Subject: Community information and public relations campaign

The European Community presented an exhibition of its measures and projects at the Barcelona Olympic Games. The total Commission budget of ECU 15,5 million for the Olympic Games, covered aid to the organizing committees and funding for its media information and public relations campaign.

Can the Commission indicate the amount and utilization of appropriations for its information and public relations campaign for the Barcelona Olympic Games, as well as the Albertville Olympic Games and Universal Exhibition in Seville?

In allocating expenditure between the media, how does the Commission ensure a fair and balanced representation of the different communications media, depending on the country and audience?

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

(26 July 1993)

On 15 March 1989, in response to the wishes of the European Parliament and the Adonnino report on a People's Europe, the Commission decided to associate the Community with the 1992 winter and summer Olympic Games, which as large-scale media events offered enormous opportunities for communication.

The budgetary authority allocated ECU 14,5 million for the purpose. Of this amount a direct contribution of ECU 10 million was made to the Committees responsible for organizing the Games, i.e. ECU 4 million for the Organizing Committee for the Winter Olympics in Albertville, and ECU 6 million for the Organizing Committee for the Summer Olympics in Barcelona.

In return for these subsidies the Community image was to be projected in the televised mass-impact spectacles of the opening and closing ceremonies of the Games.

With a view to underlining the Community message conveyed through sponsorship of the Olympic Committees, the Commission decided to organize an information campaign on the Community and the 1992 Single Market to be conducted in conjunction with the Olympic Games for a total amount of ECU 4,5 million.

The five main activities in the campaign were:

- information activities at the Olympic sites
- information activities in the Member States
- publication of information and promotion material
- relations with the media
- publicity campaign.

As regards relations with the press, the press releases issued for the Games in Albertville and Barcelona were one of the mainstays of the operation designed to highlight the Olympic programme as a whole on the European media market. The press releases were distributed as widely as possible in the Member States (press offices, general and specialist press).

The press advertisements produced as part of the publicity campaign appeared in the daily press of the Member States, in over 40 newspapers, reaching an audience of nearly 50 million. The budget was carefully distributed among the Member States in proportion to their respective

populations. In each case the titles were selected on the basis of purely commercial criteria (circulation, readership) the aim being to reach the broadest possible section of the national population.

For the Seville Universal Exposition an appropriation of ECU 15,3 million was made available to the Commissioner-General.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3156/92

by Mr Edward Kellett-Bowman (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 January 1993)

(93/C 292/30)

Subject: G24 and G7 expenditure

Further to your reply to H-1045/92⁽¹⁾, in the administration of the G24 and G7 funds there must be some administrative expenditure by the Commission, therefore will the Commission state how much it spends in respect of administrative costs in the management of G24 and G7 funds; how much of this comes out of the G24 and G7 funds and how much out of the Commission's budget?

⁽¹⁾ Debates of the European Parliament No 3-423, October 1992.

**Answer given by Sir Leon Brittan
on behalf of the Commission**

(29 July 1993)

As the Commission explained in its answer to question H-1045/92, it has no receipts from the G24 or the G7. The coordination carried out by the Commission on behalf of these two groups thus forms part of the ordinary work of the Commission's staff.

It is not possible to give an exact figure as to the costs of this coordination work, since the work is spread through a number of the Commission departments, and many of those involved spend only a proportion (often a small proportion) of their time on such work. However, the G24 Coordination unit in the Commission's External Economic Relations Department consists of six officials (three A-grade, one B-grade and two C-grade); eight temporary staff; and 10 national officials seconded (with their salaries paid) by Member States of the G24.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3166/92
by Mr Juan Bandrés Molet (V)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(6 January 1993)
(93/C 292/31)

Subject: Waste treatment plant for Onda, Bechi and Villarreal (Autonomous Community of Valencia)

The technical report on the 'Project for a sewerage system and waste treatment plant for Onda, Bechi and Villarreal (Plana Baixa)' was published on 28 April 1992 in the Official Journal of the Province of Castellón.

The technical reports reveal that the planned installation to treat all the urban and industrial waste from the three abovementioned places has insufficient capacity and that the environmental impact study which is mandatory for this plant under Community and Valencian legislation (Royal Decree No 1302/86) has not been carried out.

The project for the construction of the waste treatment plant and sewers is receiving a large Community subsidy from the ERDF fund.

Could the Commission take action to ensure that the prescribed environmental impact study is carried out for the project and that it has the capacity to treat all the industrial and urban waste?

Answer given by Mr Paleokrassas
on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 1993)

In accordance with Article 4 (2) of Directive 85/337/EEC ⁽¹⁾, plans for waste treatment plants are subject to an environmental impact assessment if the Member States consider that their characteristics require this to be done.

The Commission has asked the Spanish authorities to let it have the results of the environmental impact assessment under the terms of the ERDF arrangements for co-financing the plant, referred to in the question, which is to be built in the Valencia region.

On 24 June 1993 the authorities replied that the technical aspects of the environmental impact assessment carried out by the Polytechnical University of Valencia had been completed but that it was necessary to await the outcome of a public enquiry before a final statement on impact could be made.

The Commission suggests, with regard to the second part of the question, that the Honourable Member contact the

national authorities concerned which are responsible for this kind of decision.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 175, 5. 7. 1985.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3212/92
by Mr Víctor Manuel Arbeloa Muru (S)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(6 January 1993)
(93/C 292/32)

Subject: Measures to promote the sponsorship of cultural activities

What measures has the European Commission adopted to promote the sponsorship of cultural activities following the resolution of the Ministers for Culture and of the Council of Ministers of 13 November 1986 ⁽¹⁾?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 320, 13. 12. 1986, p. 2.

Answer given by Mr Pinheiro
on behalf of the Commission
(29 July 1993)

In their resolution of 13 November 1986 and conclusions of 27 May 1988 the Council and the Ministers of Culture stressed the important role played by business sponsorship in respect of European cultural heritage and cultural activities in general. They asserted that this source of financing could not replace existing public funding, but should supplement it.

The Commission opted to support a system of European networking for associations and bodies already active in this area, with emphasis on promoting the exchange and distribution of information on national provisions covering this area.

To this end, the Commission initially undertook to support the setting-up of the European Committee for Business, Arts and Culture (CEREC) over a three-year period. This network brings together many associations and bodies in the Member States working to encourage sponsorship. Community support for this initiative came to an end in 1992.

Any future projects in this area will be supported in terms of the priority given by the Council (12 November 1992) and Parliament (21 January 1993) to transnational cultural networks, pursuant to the Commission Communication on new prospects for Community cultural action ⁽¹⁾ and under

section III of the Kaleidoscope Programme (encouragement for networks).

At the same time, the Commission and the Portuguese authorities jointly organized a conference on sponsorship for culture in Europe on 2 and 3 April 1992.

The aim of the conference was to enable the various parties involved in sponsorship to exchange experiences and to identify the sort of Community action which could usefully contribute to the development of sponsorship.

This issue is currently being examined in greater depth by the Committee on Cultural Affairs.

(¹) COM(92) 149 final.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3226/92

by Mr Diego de los Santos López (ARC)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 January 1993)

(93/C 292/33)

Subject: Defence of the Community rice sector

The Community has in recent years been supporting change-overs to different varieties in the rice sector.

As a result, rice producers have been receiving subsidies for growing the 'indica' variety instead of the 'japonica' variety. This was meant to meet demand for a product in which there was a production shortfall in the Community.

Regions such as the 'Marismas del Guadalquivir' in Bajo Guadalquivir (Andalusia) have made great efforts to change to a different variety in accordance with the Community guidelines.

Today this region and others in the Community are suffering a major crisis which is due to large-scale imports of this variety of rice and also coincides with the end of the subsidy arrangements. It is suspected that many of these imports are being carried out in a fraudulent manner. Can the Commission state the quantities and place of origin of rice imports for recent years?

What measures are being taken to check the origin of imports and avoid major damage to Community markets? Does the Commission possess information concerning imports for Curaçao?

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

(4 June 1993)

At the end of five direct aid campaigns for the producer in order to encourage varietal reconversion, the Community has rice production of the variety indica which enables it to satisfy 40% of the request of the aforementioned variety.

It is indeed in the Seville province that the major part (50%) of the community output is concentrated, which has to cope on the imports which, before, constituted the only source of supplies of the countries of the north of the Community.

The following table, which accounts for the trend in the imports of this variety of rice, shows that these have been decreasing for a few years, undoubtedly in consequence of the birth of community output.

All these imports are struck, to the entry, of the suitable regulating right and are subjected to the usual customs formalities.

Regarding the imports coming from the Netherlands Antilles (Curaçao) which are exonerees of the regulating right under the terms of the decision of the Council at its meeting on 25 July 1991, they amounted to 50 981 tonnes of April 1992 to 16 February 1993. Currently, the Community applies a minimum price to the import of rice originating in the Netherlands Antilles fixed at 550 ECU/t. This measure will remain in place until 31 August 1993.

Imports of rice indica (thousands of tonnes)	Origin of imports (%)	
1988: 350	United States of America	60
1989: 325	Thailand	15
1990: 316	India	8
1991: 297	Surinam	7
	Guyana	4
	Others	6

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3246/92

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 January 1993)

(93/C 292/34)

Subject: Reconciliation with the European heritage

As the 21st century approaches and European union is taking shape, the time has come to reconcile the people of

Europe with their culture, past, present and future. Given this need, what action will the Commission take to combat the confusion and/or indifference that the people of Europe feel today about the culture of their continent?

**Answer given by Mr Pinheiro
on behalf of the Commission**
(30 July 1993)

The best answer to the Honourable Member's question is to be found in Article 128 of the Treaty on European Union, which stipulates that 'the Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore'.

The Commission therefore intends to encourage cooperation between the Member States and, if necessary, to support and complement their activities to improve accessibility and knowledge of the culture and history of the European peoples. In its communication entitled 'New prospects for Community cultural action' ⁽¹⁾, it has already proposed a number of initiatives which could be implemented once the Treaty on European Union has been ratified.

The resources needed to implement this policy are currently limited, and it will be up to the relevant authorities to make the necessary budgetary provision so that action in this new area of Community activity can proceed.

⁽¹⁾ COM(92) 149 final.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3309/92
by Mr Mihail Papayannakis (GUE)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(6 January 1993)
(93/C 292/35)

Subject: Projects in the area of Prevelis

The area of Prevelis to the south of Rethimnon in Crete is well known for the Kourtaliotiko Gorge (containing the second largest palm forest in Europe) and Lake Prevelis with its rare species of flora and fauna. Work has already begun on an irrigation project in this area under the regional operational programme with funding from the IMP for Crete, which will use up most of the remaining water.

In view of the fact that:

1. Lake Prevelis, which is protected by Greek law (Official Gazette No 1242, 18. 10. 1973) suffered initial damage in 1972 as a result of an irrigation project, which used two-thirds of the water in the Kourtaliotiko Gorge, which originally flowed into this area;
2. the result of reducing the flow of water into the lake to a minimum is obvious, since the present volume is negligible compared with the original quantities and cannot guarantee the continued survival of the wetlands or the vegetation. The region will consequently undergo fundamental and irreversible deformation;
3. on 4 June 1992 at the meeting of the Envireg Monitoring Committee the improvement, development and protection of the natural environment of the Kourtaliotiko Gorge and Lake Prevelis was incorporated into the Envireg programme as part of the 'Crete natural habitat' package with a total budget of Dr 225 million;
4. according to the Greek Technical Chamber for Western Crete, no environmental impact study has been carried out. In view of this, how does the Commission reconcile the inclusion of this area in the Envireg programme for the protection of natural habitats with funding through the IMP for Crete of a development project which is damaging the environment? What steps will it take, within the scope of its powers, to secure the suspension of the project until an environmental impact study has been carried out and to prevent the deformation of this area?

**Answer given by Mr Millan
on behalf of the Commission**
(9 July 1993)

The Commission can confirm that Structural Fund (EAGGF) cofinancing is envisaged for the 'Kourtaliotis' irrigation project under the Multifund Operational Programme for Crete.

As regards the environmental aspects, Greece has informed the Commission that the competent authorities are about to have an environmental impact study carried out. Clearly, the conditions governing the implementation of the project will need to be specified once the results of this study are known.

The Commission's co-financing of this biotope project under the Envireg programme underlines its concern to safeguard the area concerned.

The Commission will take into account the results of the environmental impact assessment before any further Community funds are provided for the 'Kourtaliotis' irrigation project.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3320/92**by Mrs Concepció Ferrer (PPE)****to the Commission of the European Communities***(6 January 1993)**(93/C 292/36)*

Subject: Programmes submitted by Spain under the Interreg programme to assist customs agents

One of the specific objectives of the Interreg programme is the promotion of training and employment measures for workers affected by the abolition of internal borders as a result of the establishment of the single market.

Member States were to have submitted their programmes in this area to the Commission in the spring of 1991.

Can the Commission say what kind of programmes were submitted by Spain and which of them were approved?

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

(16 July 1993)

The Interreg initiative does allow for training and job-creation measures for those affected by the abolition of border controls, including customs officers and forwarding agents.

The joint programmes with France and Portugal under Interreg do not include specific measures for this group because provision was not made for aid from the Social Fund. However, it should be stressed that the projects submitted by the Spanish authorities as part of this initiative aim first and foremost to convert those economic activities which predominated before border controls were abolished. This strategy should help those concerned in their search for alternative employment.

Furthermore, on 17 December 1992 the Council adopted a specific regulation, with a budget of ECU 30 million, to part-finance the reconversion or restructuring of companies most affected by the abolition of border controls. To this end, the Spanish authorities have submitted a large number of practical projects which are currently being examined by the Commission.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3333/92**by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)****to the Commission of the European Communities***(25 January 1993)**(93/C 292/37)*

Subject: Imposition by Greece of a special tax on airline tickets

Hotel owners, travel agents, and above all airline passengers are protesting against the imposition of a special tax on airline tickets by the Greek authorities in order to collect national funds to be used for the construction of the new Athens airport at Spata. Will the Commission seek the abolition of that tax because it infringes the rules on competition?

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

(7 July 1993)

The Commission has not been notified by Greece of the introduction of the tax to which the Honourable Member refers.

As regards Community tax provisions, since this tax is levied when air tickets are issued, and bears no relation to the cost of the transport service provided, it can be assessed neither as VAT nor as a tax on turnover, which is prohibited under Article 33 of the sixth Directive on VAT, 77/388/EEC of 17 May 1977 ⁽¹⁾.

It would appear that this tax has to be assessed as a charge on services, and consequently cannot be examined for discrimination between domestic and international transport under Article 95 of the EEC Treaty, as those provisions apply only to products.

If the tax is to be used to prefinance the Sparta airport, it should be defined as a special airport charge. Although there is currently no Community legislation on airport fees and charges, if the imposition of the charge in question were to discriminate between domestic and Community travellers, it might constitute an infringement of Article 7 of the EEC Treaty.

The Commission has asked the Greek authorities to supply all the relevant information to enable it to examine this matter in more detail.

The Commission is currently assessing the possibility of introducing a Community framework for air transport charges which would be applicable to all Community air services.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 145, 13. 6. 1977.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3364/92

by Mr David Martin (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(25 January 1993)

(93/C 292/38)

Subject: Policy in regard to depository libraries and European Community documents

The Community currently provides copies of its publications in English to a number of libraries in the United States of America. In some cases these documents are heavily used and have become an important source for researchers working in fields related to the European Community. The documents are provided free of charge and are an important element in raising awareness of the Community overseas and in furthering understanding of the Community and its policies.

The cost of providing this documentation is now very high and the Statistical Office of the EC has apparently decided that it can no longer afford the cost of sending free copies of all its documents to depository libraries. This decision is causing problems to some university libraries in America who have come to rely on the information but are not in a position to pay the costs themselves.

Would the Commission please state whether:

1. it has investigated the possibility of overcoming the problem of cost by sending bulky documents in the form of CD-ROM,
2. it has considered negotiation of a reciprocal arrangement for European depository libraries with the US-Federal Government and with other major countries,
3. it will make available to a wider public — including depository libraries — documents currently classified as SEC documents but which are not of a confidential nature?

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

(26 July 1993)

1. Eurostat has for the last two and a half years had the possibility of storing statistical data on CD-ROM: from 1991 onwards a monthly CD-ROM has appeared with the detailed external trade statistics of the Community from 1976 until today. These data originate from the databank Comext.

A general CD-ROM appeared in March 1993 with data from all Community statistics. This CD-ROM is a kind of electronic statistical yearbook.

2. The Commission does not at present envisage such an arrangement. Nevertheless, it may consider this issue in the future.

3. SEC documents of Eurostat are the so called 'statistical documents' which contain the most detailed statistics and which are of interest only to specialists. As far as depository libraries are concerned Eurostat had to terminate the free distribution of statistical documents for budgetary reasons. Instead, Eurostat has pointed out that each relay (such as DG X for depository libraries) is responsible for the choice, reproduction and distribution of statistical documents.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3471/92

by Mr Gijs de Vries (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(28 January 1993)

(93/C 292/39)

Subject: The Commission's right to initiate legislation

According to a leading article in *The Independent* of 6 October 1992 ('Big drama, narrow stage'), the Commission submitted a total of 535 proposals to the Council of Ministers in 1992. 'The Commission found that it had initiated only about 30 measures, or 6 %, although some of these were important. Of the rest, the largest number flowed from the application of international agreements. Many others were prompted by requests from, or decisions by, the Council of Ministers . . .'

1. How many proposals did the Commission submit on its own initiative, how many at the request of the Council, and how many in implementation of an international agreement?
2. Did the Commission submit any proposals at the request of the European Parliament, and if so, which ones?
3. Which were the proposals that the Commission submitted on its own initiative?

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**

(5 August 1993)

The Commission would point out that Article 155 of the Treaty confers on it the power to initiate legislation in the areas covered by the EEC Treaty. The Commission is, therefore, legally and politically responsible for its proposals, regardless of the fact that they are drawn up at the request of the Council, Parliament or economic operators (see Commission communication on subsidiarity (1)).

But in exercising its right to initiate legislation, the Commission takes account of a whole range of factors, such as the needs of economic operators, requests from the other institutions or the outcome of international negotiations. The figures in the newspaper article referred to by the Honourable Member must be evaluated in this context.

It is not possible to make comparisons between Commission proposals drawn up at the request of the Council and Parliament. For one thing, Parliament's resolutions call on the Commission to take all manner of initiatives which do not necessarily involve requests for legislative proposals, since they range from specific action under the budget procedure to the drafting of strategic documents. The six-monthly report drawn up by the Commission on action taken on Parliament resolutions shows that the Commission follows up Parliament requests to a considerable extent. Secondly, certain initiatives taken by the Commission are in response to requests from both the Council and Parliament (for example, proposals on shipping safety or the action programme on road safety).

⁽¹⁾ SEC(92) 1990 final.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3472/92

by Mr Bartho Bronk (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(28 January 1993)

(93/C 292/40)

Subject: Opinions of the Economic and Social Committee

In what cases and with regard to which Directives has the Commission taken account of the opinions of the Economic and Social Committee during the past two years?

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

(15 July 1993)

Between 1 January 1991 and 31 December 1992 the Commission amended 111 proposals for directives on which the Economic and Social Committee had given an opinion.

In 82 instances the Commission incorporated some of the points suggested in the Committee's opinion into its amended proposals, 17 of which make specific reference to the Committee's opinion.

In 10 instances the Committee's opinion was favourable and the amendment made was in accordance with Parliament's opinion.

In the nine remaining instances the Commission did not act on the Committee's opinion.

The Commission will forward the list of the proposals for directives direct to the Honourable Member and to the General Secretariat of Parliament.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3487/92

by Mr Gerardo Fernández-Albor (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(28 January 1993)

(93/C 292/41)

Subject: Rapid road link between Galicia and Central Europe via the Cantabrian coast

The Spanish region of Galicia is geographically one of the most distant from the European Community's main economic centres. Its position on the Atlantic coast has always suggested the need for some type of action to bring it effectively closer to the nerve centres of the Community economy.

However, the Galician dream of a fast road link via the Cantabrian coast with the economic centre of Europe is still no more than a fond wish, despite the excitement felt by Galicians at the thought that such a road might be built.

In view of the above and of European Community plans for the building of major items of infrastructure to give fresh impetus to economic development throughout the Community, does the Commission not consider that the Community's list of major items of infrastructure should include a motorway link via the Cantabrian coast between Galicia and the Community's nerve centre, to link up the remote Galician economy with the most advanced economies of our Community, which are situated in Central Europe?

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

(5 August 1993)

The road link referred to by the Honourable Member is part of the map for the trans-European road network under discussion by the Council.

However, it is up to the Spanish government or the regional authorities to submit projects to the European Investment Bank with a request for aid in the framework of the new temporary loan instrument for the period 1993—94 adopted by the Edinburgh European Council.

The new instrument may be used to finance investment in trans-European transport networks and other investments in this sector that would improve access between the regions in question and the trans-European networks. To get financing going quickly, the EIB will consider projects that are already under way or about to start up in the near future.

The Spanish government may also make an application to the Cohesion Fund if it believes that a given project has a bearing on trans-European networks and is designed to promote the interconnection and interoperability of Spanish transport networks and access to these networks, taking into account the need to link Galicia to the heart of the Community.

A request for financing for these sections of motorway referred to by the Honourable Member, which passes through Galicia, Asturias and Cantabria, could also be made to the European Regional Development Fund for the period 1994—99.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 3506/92

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Commission of the European Communities
 (28 January 1993)
 (93/C 292/42)

Subject: Utility of certain adjustments in the fisheries sector

Taking into account the conclusions of the EC Council of Fisheries Ministers regarding the review of the common fisheries policy and the imperative need to maintain basic elements in its application, such as the principle of relative stabilization, the system of the Total Allowable Catch and Quotas, arrangements governing deviations from the principle of free entry to the 12 mile zone, etc., has the Commission examined the utility of certain adjustments such as the ones of the multiannual TACs and Quotas, as well as the introduction of adjustments as regards the geographical location of resources and the application of micro-quotas?

Answer given by Mr Paleokrassas
on behalf of the Commission
 (15 April 1993)

In order to focus debate within the Community institutions and authorities on possible revisions to the policy on the conservation and management of fishery resources, the Commission presented a report on the common fisheries policy (CFP) in 1991⁽¹⁾, on the basis of Article 8 of Regulation (EEC) No 170/83⁽²⁾.

For the purposes of this report, the Commission deliberately widened the scope of its analysis in order to identify the main and fundamental problems of the CFP and to suggest a number of guidelines in the light of the opinions canvassed. These guidelines, in turn, enabled the Council, having consulted Parliament, to adopt a revised regulatory framework equipped to resolve the problems which had been identified.

Regulation (EEC) No 3760/92 of 20 December 1992⁽³⁾ will preserve the foundations of the common fisheries policy laid down in Regulation (EEC) No 170/83, while at the same time enabling the necessary reforms to be carried out.

In reply to the specific questions of the Honourable Member, Articles 4 and 8 will allow the Commission, in the light of scientific, technical and also economic advice, to propose limiting the rate of activity of certain fisheries by restricting catches or fishing effort or both, as required, for the sake of greater efficiency and transparency, in particular by identifying in each individual case and on a multiannual basis the objectives to be pursued and the most appropriate strategies and management instruments for attaining them.

With regard to the methods for dividing up these restrictions among the Member States, the Commission will now be able, at the request of the Member States concerned and bearing in mind the principle of relative stability, to propose certain adjustments to particular allocation formulas to take account of the mini quotas and the regular exchange of quotas since 1983, while still respecting the overall balance of the shares.

⁽¹⁾ SEC(91) 2288 final.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 24, 27. 1. 1983.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 389, 31. 12. 1992.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 17/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Commission of the European Communities
 (3 February 1993)
 (93/C 292/43)

Subject: Commission funding for the *Liberation* newspaper in Sarajevo

At the front line of the war in Sarajevo, in the middle of ceaseless gunfire, a heroic journalist, Zladko Dizdarevic is publishing the 'Oslobodjenje' newspaper, with a staff consisting of Serbs, Croats and Muslims.

Can the Commission provide funding for this initiative, which constitutes a ray of hope in this war-torn area and, in cooperation with international press organizations, propose the awarding of prize money?

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

(27 July 1993)

The Commission shares the feelings of the Honourable Member regarding the merits of the Muslim, Croat and Serb journalists who contribute to the publication of 'Oslobodjenje' in Sarajevo.

This daily is supported by an NGO of a Member State which provides the newsprint. The Commission has given financial support for the related expenses.

In view of the immensity of the human tragedy taking place in former Yugoslavia and the general and persistent recourse to violence and atrocities, Unesco's 1993 Felix Houphouet-Boigny peace prize is likely to be awarded to the journalists of the Sarajevo daily, 'Oslobodjenje', a symbol of resistance to nationalism and xenophobia.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 24/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(3 February 1993)

(93/C 292/44)

Subject: Future of Inter-rail

A number of European organizations are concerned about the future of Interrail which is the key to mobility of young people in Europe and call for railway undertakings, notably in southern Europe, to be adequately subsidized. Given the enormous benefits of travel for young people, does the Commission intend to look into this matter and subsidize the Inter-rail network?

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

(30 July 1993)

At the meeting of the International Railway Union (UIC) Passenger Commission in April 1992, some railways participating in the Interrail scheme had announced their intention to withdraw from the agreement from 1993 onwards.

However, at the UIC Executive Committee meeting held in Warsaw on 1 October 1992, the Directors-General of the railways decided to maintain the scheme and to develop it into a system better suited to the expectations and travel patterns of young people in Europe. The Executive Committee has decided provisionally to keep the existing

Interrail formula for 1993 in order to have some breathing space to devise a more flexible scheme.

The introduction and withdrawal of railway tickets such as 'Interrail' is part of the management independence of the railway companies. The Commission has no legal basis and no funds available to subsidise this field of activity.

However, the Commission would regret it if the railway companies no longer offered Interrail or a similar scheme because it considers the Interrail ticket as good publicity for an environment-friendly mode of transport and an excellent means for young people to get to know Europe.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 40/93

**by the following members: Florus Wijsenbeek
and Rui Amaral (LDR)**

to the Commission of the European Communities

(8 February 1993)

(93/C 292/45)

Subject: Exemptions granted by the Commission in the area of maritime transport

The Commission has granted exceptions in the area of maritime transport by resorting to a loose interpretation of Regulation (EEC) No 4056/86⁽¹⁾. This decision risks adversely affecting efforts to strengthen the Community fleet, now regrettably in an advanced state of decline.

Nor is the practice of granting exemptions confined to the area of maritime transport; it is also being applied to land transport.

1. How can the Commission possibly justify this decision, which runs contrary to all efforts to liberalize maritime transport?
2. Will the Commission be prepared if necessary to review this unfortunate decision?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 378, 31. 12. 1986, p. 4.

**Answer given by Mr Van Miert
on behalf of the Commission**

(10 August 1993)

Article 3 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 4056/86 of 22 December 1986 introduces a block exemption for certain categories of agreement between members of liner conferences. The reason for the exemption is the stabilizing effect of liner conferences on the market in scheduled

maritime transport. The Regulation applies to maritime transport only, and the exemption does not cover any other business carried on by a member of a liner conference.

Although the Commission does not currently judge it advisable to propose any broadening of the scope of the Regulation, it is working on a balanced solution to the problem of multimodal transport.

It does not intend to reconsider the block exemption for liner conferences.

The Commission is anxious to see the Community fleet strengthened, and both land and maritime transport liberalized, and it will not do anything that runs counter to these objectives.

new approach to information and communication in a way that addresses the thrust of this question.

In addition, the Member of the Commission with special responsibility for Audiovisual, Information, Communication and Culture, has had a number of meetings with the President of the European Parliament with similar objectives in mind. The Commission greatly values the work on the information policy of the European Communities being done in the European Parliament's Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and the media ⁽¹⁾.

The Commission believes therefore that appropriate patterns of review and debate are already in place and will meet the challenge presented by the Honourable Member.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. EN/FR/221/221401.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 42/93

by Mr José Valverde López (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(8 February 1993)

(93/C 292/46)

Subject: Information policy of the Community institutions

It is a general phenomenon in all the Member States that those opposed to ratification of the Treaty on European Union signed at Maastricht have been complaining at the lack of information available to the public and the absence of preliminary debates. True or not, this criticism has given rise to the widely held view that there is a huge lack of information regarding the process of building Europe. In view of this situation, a thoroughgoing evaluation is needed of the information structures, programmes and activities undertaken by the Community institutions, the Commission, the Council and Parliament. Could the Commission draft a communication to the Council and Parliament in order to create a joint plan to better prepare and inform public opinion in the Community, requesting all necessary cooperation from the governments of the Member States, with a view to meeting the shared challenge of keeping the public informed and therefore jointly responsible for progress towards European Union?

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

(6 July 1993)

The Commission contributed to the Copenhagen European Council discussion of openness and has been preparing a

WRITTEN QUESTION No 176/93

by Mr Joaquim Miranda da Silva (CG)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 February 1993)

(93/C 292/47)

Subject: Community funding for regional incentive schemes (SIBR) subsidies

According to a study carried out by the Southern Electrical Industries Syndicate (SIESI) in Portugal and communicated to the Portuguese press, the conditions relating to SIBR subsidies will not be met, thereby dashing hopes of fresh employment.

Certain undertakings, having agreed to maintain jobs for a period of time in exchange for large subsidies, have, in the meantime, been authorized to release workers (for example Siemens/Évora). In certain cases, subsidies have been paid to unknown and, in fact, non-existent undertakings (Portsol, Norelco). In other cases companies created considerably fewer jobs than they had undertaken to do in exchange for subsidies (Ford Electrónica, Deloc-Remy, Tronitec).

Is the Commission aware of this? Who is responsible for modification and supervision and how is this carried out? What steps are taken in cases where companies fail to respect their undertakings or, in cases of proven fraud, what penalties are imposed on those who have improperly obtained subsidies?

**Answer given by Mr Millan
on behalf of the Commission**
(16 July 1993)

The services of the Commission were made aware of the study prepared by the Sindicato das Industrias Electricas do Sul by articles in the press and reactions published by the Ministry of the Plan and Territorial Administration, the Ministry of Industry and Energy and the IAPMEI (Institute for the Support of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Investments).

Article 23 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88 ⁽¹⁾ provides that the Member States shall take the necessary measures:

- to verify on a regular basis that operations financed by the Community have been properly carried out,
- to prevent and to take action against irregularities,
- to recover any amounts lost as a result of an irregularity or negligence.

In addition, Article 23 stipulates that the Member States shall inform the Commission of the measures taken for those purposes and, in particular, of the progress of administrative and judicial proceedings.

In the context of the partnership the Commission has asked the Portuguese authorities to clarify the nature of the cases referred to in the study.

In the case of a grant beneficiary not meeting the obligations attached to the grant or of proven fraud, the grant can be withdrawn and, if appropriate, legal proceedings opened.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 374, 31. 12. 1988.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 210/93
by Mr Alexandros Alavanos (CG)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(18 February 1993)
(93/C 292/48)

Subject: Consequences of the closure of the Syros shipyard

The Greek Minister for Industry, speaking on behalf of the Greek Government has stated that the Syros shipyard has to be sold because of the accumulation of debts and Greece's commitment to the Community to sell off all the shipyards except one that will be used for defence purposes.

Furthermore, under Articles 7 and 10 of the seventh Directive on shipbuilding, unless the shipyard is sold before 31 March 1993, the government is bound by Community rules to close it and sell its assets. In that event the Syros local economy will lose about 55 % of its revenue, associated branches of industry will be ruined and about 1 000 more jobs will be lost. Given that the Syros shipyard has a small shipbuilding capacity viewed on a Community scale but that this is very important for the local island economy and given that the cost of restructuring or contending with the collapse of the Syros local economy will be considerable, will the Commission answer the following questions.

Is the Community considering reviewing the above decision with particular reference to the Syros shipyard?

In view of the danger of creating a new region in industrial decline, what social measures and specific investment proposals does the Commission have in mind for Syros, to be financed with the resources at its disposal, primarily the new Community support framework, in order to deal with the social and economic consequences of possible closure or a drastic reduction in employment in the undertaking?

Answer given by Mr Van Miert
on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 1993)

The Commission understands the serious problems that the population of Syros is facing in the present situation, but the Commission is not in the position to review its decision as regards the Neorion Yard. As it is known the Council has laid down in Article 10 of the seventh Directive that non contract-related operating aid over the ceiling applicable to other Member States can be given to the Greek yards in 1991 if granted for the financial restructuring of these yards in connection with a systematic and specific restructuring programme linked to the disposal by sale of the yards. The Commission was able to approve of aid to the yard in the form of a Dras 16,5 billion debt write-off as the Greek Government took this decision to grant the aid before the end of 1991 and undertook to sell or to close down the yards before the 31 March 1993.

As the Commission's decision was based on the existing legal framework (seventh Directive on aid to shipbuilding) and the undertaking of the Greek Government, the Commission can not therefore review its position.

As regards counteracting measures, the Commission is ready to examine, in respect of Articles 92 and 93 EEC Treaty any proposal the Greek authorities may wish to make to ensure professional reintegration of workers who may lose their jobs, such as retraining and employment subsidies. Should the Greek authorities request financial assistance for

such measures, the Commission would be prepared to examine the request in the context of the new Community Support Framework.

previously registered in another Member State are consistent with Community law, in particular the rules concerning free movement of goods (Article 30 of the EEC Treaty).

(¹) OJ No C 281, 4. 11. 1988.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 236/93

by Mr Juan de Dios Ramírez-Heredia (S)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(18 February 1993)
(93/C 292/49)

Subject: The free movement of vehicles

Following the removal of frontiers on 1 January 1993, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. Should a Community citizen be in possession of a car legally and permanently licensed in Belgium, is he obliged to obtain a Spanish licence should he decide to take up residence in Spain? If he then, years later, moves to the Netherlands, is he obliged to obtain a third licence from the Dutch authorities?
2. Should a Spanish citizen buy a second-hand car in Germany, is he obliged to obtain a Spanish licence to enable him to drive it on a permanent basis in Spain?

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**
(27 July 1993)

As indicated in the Commission's interpretative notice on procedures for the type-approval and registration of vehicles previously registered in another Member State (¹), the vehicle must be registered in the country in which its owner is habitually resident.

This requirement remains unchanged after 1 January 1993, and a person who owns a vehicle lawfully registered in Belgium and who decides to take up residence in Spain must have it registered in Spain once the period of temporary import which the legislation of that Member State provides for has expired.

If the same person subsequently decides to take up residence in the Netherlands, he will be obliged under the existing rules to have his vehicle registered in that country.

A Spanish citizen who buys a second-hand vehicle in Germany, where it is already registered, is required to have it registered in Spain, if that is his country of residence; in order to drive freely there.

Of course, the Commission departments monitor the situation to ensure that registration procedures for vehicles

WRITTEN QUESTION No 256/93

by Mr Pierre Bernard-Reymond (PPE)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(23 February 1993)
(93/C 292/50)

Subject: Simplification of administrative formalities with a view to enhancing freedom of movement in the Community

One of the Community's key objectives is to encourage the mobility of European citizens in order to foster trade in the frontier-free single market.

However, in order to obtain the same welfare benefits as a young French citizen, such as personal housing aid, a young Community citizen resident in France must present the same documents, but also a residence permit which can be issued only on production of the following documents:

- four passport photos,
- a valid passport,
- a birth certificate giving details of his or her parents,
- a certificate of residence,
- a social security card,
- proof of income,
- a medical certificate.

In the light of this example, what measures does the Commission plan to take in order to simplify the administrative formalities with which European citizens, particularly young people, must comply with a view to enhancing freedom of movement in the Community?

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**
(27 July 1993)

As the Court of Justice of the European Communities has made clear on several occasions, a residence permit issued to

Community nationals does not in itself establish a right of residence but is merely proof of it.

Accordingly, a Community national who derives his right of residence in France from Community law may claim housing benefit without being required to produce a residence permit. Reference may be made here to the Court's Judgment in Case C-357/89 of 26 February 1992 ⁽¹⁾, in which the Court ruled that Article 7 of the EEC Treaty precludes an application for funding of study costs from being subject to possession of a residence permit.

However, according to the directives on the right of residence, each Member State is required to issue a residence permit to any national of another Member State can claim the right of residence and who intends to remain in the host country for more than three months.

The Commission will ask the French authorities for clarification on the administrative practice referred to by the Honourable Member.

⁽¹⁾ Points 41 and 42 of the grounds. Judgment not yet reported.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 303/93

by Mr Mihail Papayannakis (NI)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(1 March 1993)
(93/C 292/51)

Subject: Structural funds and the environment

In reply to questions Nos H-1051/92 ⁽¹⁾ and H-1135/92 ⁽²⁾ by Mrs Banotti on the extent to which the Commission takes into account the objectives of the directive on the conservation of natural habitats and the Berne Convention when deciding on funding from the structural funds, the Commission said that it did not take these objectives into account. The Commission also admitted that it did not take these objectives into account when taking a decision on the diversion of the Acheloos river. Directive 92/43/EEC ⁽³⁾ provides for a transitional stage before full application; however, as far as the Berne Convention is concerned, the EC submitted the act of ratification on 7 May 1982 and the Convention entered into force throughout Community territory on 1 September 1982. In its replies to the abovementioned questions, the Commission admits that it is in breach of the legislation which it was itself responsible for drawing up and ratifying and that it is in total contravention of the obligations arising from the Convention. At all events, the rules governing the structural funds stipulate that Community legislation and Community policy must be taken into account when deciding on funding for projects.

1. Can the Commission state whether or not the guidelines and objectives of Directive 92/43/EEC and the Berne

Convention apply when deciding on funding from the structural funds? Given that there are time-limits for implementation, does fulfilment of those objectives form part of Community policy?

2. How does the Commission explain the clear incompatibility between, on the one hand, its replies to the abovementioned questions and, on the other hand, its adoption and ratification of directives and conventions on nature conservation?
3. Can it confirm whether the replies in question reflected the personal views of one of its staff or whether they expressed the Community's official position?
4. If the answer to the first part of the above question is yes, how does it intend to tackle the problem of ensuring that its staff do not undermine the credibility of the European Community? If the answer to the second part of the question is yes, can it state clearly and explicitly what change has been made to Community policy in respect of the environment?

⁽¹⁾ Debates of the European Parliament No 3-423 (October 1992).

⁽²⁾ Debates of the European Parliament No 3-424 (November 1992).

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 206, 22. 7. 1992, p. 7.

Answer given by Mr Paleokrassas
on behalf of the Commission
(7 July 1993)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to oral question No 0-25/93, asked on behalf of the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, regarding the Community's environmental policy ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Debates of the European Parliament, No 3-430 (April 1993).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 316/93

by Mr Barry Desmond (S)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(1 March 1993)
(93/C 292/52)

Subject: Europass for pensioners

Does the Commission continue to seek the introduction of a European Over-Sixties Card (Europass), if so, what timetable has been set for the Card, and, could the Commission elaborate on the precise details of the Europass

as specified in the Year of the Elderly and Solidarity between Generations initiative?

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

(12 July 1993)

The Commission is continuing to discuss with Member States the introduction of a European Over-Sixties Card, in particular through the Advisory Committee on Older People where the matter of the Card is on the agenda for every meeting.

In order to make progress during the European year of Older People and Solidarity between Generations, 1993, the Commission published in June a guide to the main advantages available to older people travelling in the Community.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 397/93

by the following members: Agostino Mantovani, Franco Borgo, Nino Pisoni, Giuseppe Mottola, Joachim Dalsass, Giulio Gallenzi, Eolo Parodi, Mario Forte, Gabriele Sboarina, Andrea Bonetti and Aldo de Matteo (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 March 1993)

(93/C 292/53)

Subject: Prevention of *Ascosphaera Apis*

For some years cases of *Ascosphaeriosis* have been on the increase in beekeeping establishments in many European countries. This is a disease caused by a fungus, *Ascosphaera Apis*, which is responsible for more and more deaths among bee broods.

Since 1991 the damage caused in large areas of northern Italy (although it turns out that the disease is spreading to all Italian regions and to many EC countries) is worrying tens of thousands of bee-keepers, who remember the damage already suffered in the 1980s as a result of *Varroasis*, a serious parasitosis which destroyed hundreds of thousands of hives in all the countries of Europe.

What steps does the Commission intend to take to halt it or to encourage proper research by scientific institutions in order to prevent further loss of production not only by bee-keepers but also by farmers, who need bees as they carry out the essential task of pollinating many of their crops, without which profitable agriculture would not be possible?

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

(24 May 1993)

Chalky brood is a disease which causes a significant loss of bees and results in retarded development of the colony.

Medicinal treatments are generally ineffective or provide only temporary relief, and attempts to find a cure centre on strict disease prevention measures including the selection of cleaning bees, annual tray disinfection, periodic wax renewal, and insulating the hives from the ground.

Research has shown that the causal organism of chalky brood is widespread. It was generally considered benign, and of importance only if the colony was in poor condition. The cause of the recent increased incidence of the disease in the southern Member States is not known. One hypothesis is that this is a secondary infection, with chalky brood attacking colonies that have already been weakened by the *Varroa mite*.

In spite of substantial support for research from the Community, the *Varroa* problem has not yet been resolved. A new line of attack, seeking to select *Varroa*-resistant breeds of honey bee, will start shortly. This project is being funded under the AIR programme (the specific programme of research, technological development and demonstration on agriculture and agro-industry including fisheries 1992—1996). There will be a third call for proposals for the AIR programme towards the end of this year, and to the extent that further work can be justified, projects on *Varroa*, chalky brood, and other bee diseases will be eligible for consideration.

In addition to cost-shared research projects, other accompanying measures such as the mobility and training of researchers, and the organization of workshops on topics relevant to the programme may be encouraged.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 402/93

by Mr Reinhold Bocklet (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 March 1993)

(93/C 292/54)

Subject: Support for events to mark the entry into force of the single market

On the eve of the entry into force of the single market, celebrations were held in many Community towns and cities to mark the importance of this event.

Can the Commission state which of these events received support from Community funds and, in particular:

1. What type of events were involved?
2. In which towns and cities these events took place?
3. In each case, the amount of the subsidy provided by the Community?

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

(12 July 1993)

Several public events were held in the Member States to celebrate the arrival of 1993. The Commission gave moral or financial support to the following in particular:

'Beacon Europe'

At midnight on 31 December 1993, young people (scouts, Young Federalists and others) lit beacons at various sites across the twelve Member States, as well as in Malta and Cyprus.

The participants were also invited to plant twelve trees to commemorate this symbolic date.

Beacons were lit in the capitals and in more than a thousand other smaller places.

The event was supported by Parliament and sponsored by two members of the Commission. As it marked the end of the official programme of events organized during the UK presidency, the London beacon was lit by the British Prime Minister. A number of political figures took part and the event was widely covered by national and local media in the countries concerned.

The Commission made a financial contribution of ECU 100 000.

'Les jeux du IIIe Millenaire'

Quizzes about the European Community were held in some 500 Member State universities. After the national eliminating rounds, a European final was held in Strasbourg on 19 December 1992. The winners were awarded Erasmus grants and work experience placements.

With the cooperation of the press, the quiz received a great deal of media coverage. The participants were also

interviewed and the results were used in a book on young people in Europe called 'Imagine l'Europe'.

The Member of the Commission responsible for education and young people sponsored the event, which received a financial contribution of ECU 70 000.

'Forum des jeunes federalistes'

Delegates from all sections of the Young European Federalists met in Rome for a forum on 'Europe after 1993' and a musical event.

The Commission made a financial contribution of ECU 10 000.

Silvesterfest 'Europa ohne Grenzen'

A musical evening at the Prinzregententheater in Munich was partly televised and accompanied by public celebrations in the town centre, which was decked out in Community colours.

The Commission made a financial contribution of ECU 50 000.

'The European Community on New Year's Eve'

On New Year's Eve the Dutch television channel, Veronica, broadcast a popular variety show on the theme of 'Europe without frontiers'. The channel broadcasts throughout Holland and can be picked up in Belgium.

The producers were given ECU 30 000.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 403/93

by Mr Madron Seligman (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 March 1993)

(93/C 292/55)

Subject: UK — Limited list of pharmaceuticals

The UK Government has given notice of its intention to limit further the number of medicines available to patients within its National Health Service. It proposes to extend the categories of medicines in which there are only a limited number of medicines prescribable from seven to 17. This

will involve major classes of medicines such as contraceptives and skin disease treatment.

As part of the proposals, it is intended that the few products that remain available for National Health Service patients in the said categories will be prescribable only by use of their generic names. This means that not only will the prescriber's clinical choice of treatment be restricted, but also they will be unable to choose which brand of product they wish to use or, indeed, which manufacturer should supply the medicine.

Does the Commission consider that, as compensation for this infringement of clinical freedom and patient choice, the period of patent protection by supplementary protection certificates (SPCs) could be extended still further in certain cases?

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

(8 July 1993)

Article 7 of Council Directive 89/105/EEC of 21 December 1988 ⁽¹⁾ relating to the transparency of measures regulating the pricing of medicinal products for human use and their inclusion in the scope of national health insurance systems covers decisions by Member States to exclude individual or categories of medicinal products from the coverage of their national health insurance systems.

In particular, the national authorities must, at least every six months, communicate to the Commission a list of the products which have been excluded from the scope of their health insurance system. It was on this basis that the United Kingdom authorities communicated to the Commission the measures referred to by the Honourable Member.

As there has been no substantial change to the basic circumstances which led to the adoption of Council Regulation (EEC) No 1786/92 ⁽²⁾ concerning the creation of a supplementary protection certificate for medicinal products, the Commission is not planning any further proposals in this area at the moment.

It should be pointed out that the aim of this certificate is to protect innovation in the pharmaceutical industry for a period of 15 years from the date of the first authorization to place the product on the market, regardless of whether that product is covered by the health insurance system or not.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 40, 11. 2. 1989.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 182, 2. 7. 1992.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 407/93

by Sir James Scott-Hopkins (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 March 1993)

(93/C 292/56)

Subject: EC employees and occupational pension schemes

What plans does the Commission have to implement its proposal that company employees who are posted away from their home countries within the EC for periods of up to five years should be able to remain members of their home country's occupational pension scheme?

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**

(20 July 1993)

At the end of 1992, the Commission issued a consultation paper on the problems relating to the pensions of employees temporarily posted to other Member States of the Community.

A first discussion with Member States' experts took place in April 1993. After further discussions and consultations the Commission will consider what proposal, if any, to put forward.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 447/93

by Mr John Cushnahan (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(11 March 1993)

(93/C 292/57)

Subject: Architectural heritage grants

In view of the importance of churches for the Community's architectural heritage, will the Commission consider designating the restoration and conservation of churches as the theme for architectural heritage grants in the foreseeable future?

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

(22 July 1993)

In the framework of the annual scheme of 'Support for pilot projects to conserve the European architectural heritage' the Commission intends to designate the conservation and

restoration of religious monuments as the theme for 1995.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 476/93

by Mrs Jessica Larive (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(11 March 1993)

(93/C 292/58)

Subject: Uranium imports

How much uranium and enriched uranium is being imported into the EC without authorization from the Euratom Supply Agency?

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

(5 July 1993)

Under the provisions of Article 52 of the Euratom Treaty, the Euratom Supply Agency concludes contracts relating to the supply of ores, source materials and special fissile materials.

Given the global nature of the nuclear fuel cycle, Community users can take deliveries under those contracts both inside and outside the Community. The Agency publishes *inter alia* data on such deliveries aggregated at Community level in its Annual Report.

Substantial quantities of nuclear materials also physically enter Community territory for other purposes e.g. for reprocessing, conversion and fabrication. The existence of contracts for such operations is notified to the Supply Agency under the provisions of Article 75 of the Euratom Treaty.

All physical imports into the Community of nuclear materials in the civil cycle — regardless of the reason for their import — must be reported to the Euratom Safeguards Directorate under the provisions of Regulation (EEC) No 3227/76 of 19 October 1976 ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 363, 31. 12. 1976.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 513/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(29 March 1993)

(93/C 292/59)

Subject: Wild birds in the Community

In view of the unprecedented number of wild birds killed this year in Greece, probably by hunters, during the freezing

weather, does the Commission intend to take any steps to set up a Community regulatory framework laying down standard measures to be adopted in the event of bad weather, fires etc. for the protection of wild birds and species of fauna, irrespective of the general regulations laid down by the Member States governing hunting under normal conditions?

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

(8 July 1993)

The Commission reminds the Honourable Member that, under Article 7 (4) of Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds ⁽¹⁾, the regional or national authorities in the Member States are responsible for hunting in general, subject to compliance with the principle of wise use of the species. It therefore has no plans to propose any particular measures to provide greater protection for birds in certain conditions, such as bad weather or forest fires.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 103, 25. 4. 1979.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 517/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(29 March 1993)

(93/C 292/60)

Subject: The Greek cotton scandal

Reports in nearly all Greek newspapers (22 January 1993) claim that the Greek Government and the Ministry of Agriculture are implicated in the cover-up of the 'cotton scandal' in Greece. The reports state that, with the connivance of the Community, the Greek authorities are refusing to disclose the findings or, as the Greek Agriculture Minister, Mr A. Stavrou, likes to call them, the 'proceedings' of the joint investigations that have been going on for several months, as they are afraid (as one can well imagine) of the likely reactions of those who have information about the case. I would point out that members of cooperatives are openly declaring in Greece that the affair is being covered up and that the EAGGF and the Community will accept a political solution. They are also saying that the EC should not have any particular difficulty in unmasking all the guilty parties since this year it is taking over Drs 40 billion from Greek cotton producers owing to the increase in the co-responsibility levy, while those implicated in the scandal have 'swallowed up' around Drs 20 billion. How does the Commission intend to deal with this very serious matter? Does it not consider that, in order to get to the bottom of this affair, it should address its enquiries not only to the Greek Government authorities but also to trade union and cooperative bodies such as the Greek General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives, the Central Department for the Management of Domestic Produce,

etc.? Will the Commission call for clarification of how the matter has been handled to date?

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

(14 June 1993)

As was stated in reply to questions from several Members of Parliament on this subject, the Commission carried out an investigation into the operation of DYDAGEP and of the 'Cotton Board' and asked the Greek authorities to carry out another administrative enquiry in which the Commission took part. The results of these two enquiries showed that investigations had to be continued, and the Commission is doing this.

During the investigations, the Commission contacted the Greek public authorities as well as the ginning companies, the spinning mills and the producers.

The Commission has not yet completed the investigations mentioned above and when they are at an end it will draw all the appropriate conclusions, either by requiring the Greek authorities to recover the amounts received unduly, by proposing necessary improvements to the Greek control systems, or by amending Community legislation should this prove necessary.

incomes, so that few can support themselves on the income from this activity alone. The situation does, however, vary greatly from one Member State to the next, depending on the cultural policy that a particular country has developed.

In keeping with the principle of subsidiarity, the Commission has no powers over cultural, social or fiscal policy with regard to writers or people employed in associated activities.

It nevertheless proposes to publish shortly an 'Authors' and translators' guide to Europe' which will provide information on the different legal, fiscal and social systems applicable to authors and translators in each Member State, with the aim of better informing those concerned and in the hope that the more advanced systems in some countries will inspire others to follow their example.

Meanwhile, as part of the 'European City of Culture' programme, the Commission is collaborating with the relevant authorities to organize the 'Aristelion' prize, a European prize for literature and literary translation.

A pilot project to assist literary translation is also being organized annually to encourage Community countries to become better acquainted with each other's literature.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 533/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(29 March 1993)

(93/C 292/61)

Subject: The future of writers in Europe

Given the number of people who are unemployed or underemployed in the literary field (publishing houses, periodicals, radio, television, etc.), how will the Commission safeguard the future of writers and writers' unions in Europe?

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

(12 July 1993)

Socially and economically, writers suffer from underemployment and irregular, very unequally distributed

WRITTEN QUESTION No 551/93

by Mr Panayotis Roumeliotis (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 March 1993)

(93/C 292/62)

Subject: Problems concerning exports of Greek mussels

Northern Greek mussel producers are requesting a one-year postponement of the EEC directive relating to the compulsory distribution of exported mussels from authorized distribution centres alone to allow time for the local distribution centres to be completed.

The producers propose that the mussels provisionally be distributed from centres in Italy rather than running the risk of destroying this year's Greek production of 10 000 tonnes of mussels which is providing employment for 1500 people.

What view does the Commission take of this proposal?

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

(16 July 1993)

Article 3 (1) (b) of Council Directive 91/492/EEC⁽¹⁾ and paragraph 6 of Chapter II of the Annex thereto lay down that for the transport of batches of live bivalve molluscs from their production area to a dispatch centre, a registration document identifying the batches and issued by the appropriate authority at the request of the producer is required. The document must contain the following information:

- the producer's identity and signature;
- the date of harvesting;
- the location of the production area in as precise detail as possible.

The Directive does not rule out transport from one Member State to another.

The problem raised by the Honourable Member concerning the harvesting of mussels in northern Greece pending the completion of the dispatch centres in this region could therefore be temporarily resolved by sending the mussels to dispatch centres in Italy, as the producers propose. The mussels could be transported from the production areas in Greece to the dispatch centres in Italy, accompanied by the aforementioned registration document laid down in Directive 91/492/EEC and issued by the Greek authorities.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 268, 24. 9. 1991.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 557/93

by Mr Jean-Pierre Raffarin (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(30 March 1993)

(93/C 292/63)

Subject: Toxin in oysters on the Atlantic coast

The spread of a toxin which has been discovered in oysters on the Atlantic coast is assuming the dimensions of a natural disaster.

In the Marennes-Oléron basin (Poitou-Charantes) alone, 40 000 jobs are at stake.

This disaster is all the more devastating to the oyster growers of Charentes because they have made great efforts to raise standards (by means of quality certifications) and have embarked on a huge programme to comply with Community standards.

What financial measures is the Commission prepared to take to assist oyster growers and those working in the

industry? How soon can the Commission take action to meet this urgent situation?

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

(19 May 1993)

Having closely followed the development of the Marennes-Oléron Basin oyster crisis in France, the Commission is pleased that the health problems involved have been quickly solved, thereby allowing marketing of the oysters to resume.

As regards the request for emergency aid to be granted to oyster growers, the Commission did not feel that the decision to suspend the marketing of Marennes-Oléron Basin oysters for 15 days justified applying the provisions of Article 32 of Regulation (EEC) No 4028/86 relating to specific measures⁽¹⁾.

However, if the Member State concerned were to submit a promotional project meeting the requirements laid down in Regulation (EEC) No 4028/86 and Title IX thereof in particular, which relates to projects of this kind, the Commission would certainly consider the application.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 376, 31. 12. 1986.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 576/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(31 March 1993)

(93/C 292/64)

Subject: Amendment of Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88

A supplementary protocol to the Maastricht Treaty provides for the amendment of Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88⁽¹⁾ on the financing of industrialized regions. Does the Community intend to introduce an amendment — and, if so, how soon — which would facilitate the provision of Structural Fund resources to regions which are not yet industrialized?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 185, 15. 7. 1988, p. 9.

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

(14 July 1993)

According to Article 9 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88, the Council must re-examine this Regulation,

on a proposal from the Commission, prior to 31 December 1993 at the latest.

On 10 March 1993 the Commission sent to the Council proposals for Regulations ⁽¹⁾ amending Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 and Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88 ⁽²⁾.

As regards the eligibility criteria for regions in industrial decline, the Commission did not propose any major changes to the rules governing Objective 2. The eligibility criteria as proposed introduce certain elements of flexibility so as to take better account of specific situations.

The eligibility criteria for regions whose development is lagging behind (Objective 1) remain unchanged. Under the terms of Article 5 (2) of Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88, in such regions the regional development plans shall include measures relating to the conversion of industrial areas and the development of rural areas.

⁽¹⁾ COM(93) 67 final.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 374, 31. 12. 1988.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 626/93

by Mr Michel Debatisse (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 April 1993)

(93/C 292/65)

Subject: Imports of tomatoes from Morocco

Spain, particularly when taken together with the Canary Islands, is the centre of European Community market garden production under glass, in particular of tomatoes.

The production season coincides with Moroccan imports into Europe which, over the last five years, have tripled in volume (February and March).

Early production in southern France, which generally enjoys favourable market conditions, is an essential contributory factor to the profitability of structures in this area.

However, it is now caught in a vice between internal Community production and excessive imports thereby causing prices to tumble and greatly upsetting the financial stability of the undertakings involved.

It is essential to find a positive response to this new development in Europe.

What is the situation concerning Community preference? What tomato import management measures can be introduced during the winter period, when the reference price does not apply, to regulate supply?

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

(18 May 1993)

The Commission is closely monitoring developments in the Community tomato market during the period January to March, paying particular attention to satisfactory sales figures for Community produce.

It should be pointed out that price levels in the fruit and vegetables sector are particularly depressed this year and consumption is down owing to prevailing weather conditions.

According to the figures, there was no increase in imports of Moroccan tomatoes to the Community during this critical period. In 1992 Moroccan exports for the period from 1 January to 31 March totalled 66 893 tonnes compared with 69 400 tonnes for the same period in 1991.

According to cumulative statistics for 1993, total imports for January and February stood at 54 656 tonnes compared with 55 239 tonnes for the same period in 1992 and 53 700 tonnes in 1991. Following talks between the Community and Morocco, Moroccan exporters agreed to restrict their exports to the Community to 15 300 tonnes during the month of March. This means that total exports for the period January to March 1993 will reach 69 900 tonnes, i.e. more or less the same level as in 1991 and 1992.

Possible amendments to the import arrangements could only be considered in association with developments in the Uruguay Round of the GATT negotiations and taking account of the outcome of talks which have just begun with the Mediterranean supplier countries, in particular Morocco.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 646/93

by Mr José Vázquez Fouz (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 April 1993)

(93/C 292/66)

Subject: New fisheries agreements with the Maghreb countries

The Community's Mediterranean policy is an important aspect of its general policy. However, fisheries do not play as prominent a role as they should. There exists only one agreement — that with Morocco — and this is only a partial agreement.

Given the need to diversify the fleet, draw supplies from new fishing grounds and have access to waters other than those of Morocco, it might be useful to conclude agreements with

countries such as Algeria and Tunisia, a development which would be of great interest to Community fishermen.

Does the Commission share this view?

Would it be prepared to try to open negotiations with Tunisia and Algeria?

**Answer given by Mr Paleokrassas
on behalf of the Commission**
(12 July 1993)

The Commission fully shares the Honourable Member's opinion on the desirability of concluding fisheries agreements with certain Maghreb countries.

By a Directive of 25 November 1985 the Council authorized the Commission to negotiate fisheries agreements with a number of third countries, including Algeria and Tunisia, and in recent years there has been a certain amount of contact with both countries but the degree of interest shown has not warranted the opening of negotiations.

The Honourable Member should also bear in mind that Mediterranean geopolitical factors (absence of an exclusive economic zone, restricted or overexploited stocks, relatively large national fleets) increase the difficulty of concluding agreements with these countries.

Nonetheless within the framework of common Mediterranean fisheries arrangements the Commission is, for the purposes of rational resource management, increasing its contacts with Mediterranean non-member countries and this may lead to a change of attitude by Tunisia and Algeria to the conclusion of agreements.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 656/93

by Mrs Mary Banotti (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 April 1993)

(93/C 292/67)

Subject: Pornographic TV channels

Could the Commission inform me whether pornographic TV channels transmitting via satellite can be stopped as

being contrary to the Television without Frontiers Directive. Does the Commission intend to investigate this issue in order that such illegal broadcasting might be outlawed?

**Answer given by Mr Pinheiro
on behalf of the Commission**
(6 July 1993)

Council Directive 89/552/EEC⁽¹⁾ coordinates certain national provisions concerning the pursuit of broadcasting activities, including satellite broadcasting. As such it provides the legal framework for this type of activity in the Community by establishing common rules in a number of areas. One of these areas or 'coordinated fields' concerned the protection of minors. Article 22 stipulates that Member States shall take appropriate measures to ensure that television broadcasts by broadcasters under their jurisdiction do not include programmes which might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors, in particular with pornography or gratuitous violence. Article 2 (2) provides that Member States shall ensure freedom of reception and shall not restrict retransmission on their territory of television broadcasts from other Member States. However, it also expressly provides that retransmission may be suspended if a television broadcast coming from another Member State manifestly, seriously and gravely infringes Article 22.

Two types of situation may arise. The offending broadcaster may come under the jurisdiction of the Member State which objects to it, when the Member State can act directly against the broadcaster using national legislation, without Community law coming into play. Otherwise the programmes may be transmitted by a broadcaster under the jurisdiction of another Member State, when the Directive expressly provides for a procedure whereby the Member State of reception can, under certain specific conditions, suspend such retransmission of the incriminated broadcast on its territory.

Recently and for the first time, a Member State (in accordance with Article 2 (2) of the Directive) has informed the Commission of its intention to take action against a broadcaster which it feels infringes Article 22. This is the only example to date of use of the provisions of the Directive to restrict a television channel broadcasting via satellite programmes of an allegedly pornographic nature.

In the light of the above, the Commission considers that the Directive provides a good balance between the objective of ensuring freedom of reception — which is an essential part of the freedom of expression recognized by the European Convention on Human Rights — and its other objectives such as, for example, the protection of minors.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 298, 17. 10. 1989.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 660/93

by Mrs Christine Oddy (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 April 1993)

(93/C 292/68)

Subject: Phare programme

What proportion of parties participating in the Phare programme are public sector/private sector?

How many private limited companies have participated in the programme? What is the breakdown of where their company's registered office is located?

**Answer given by Sir Leon Brittan
on behalf of the Commission**

(6 September 1993)

The Commission is sending directly to the Honourable Member and to the Secretariat of Parliament a table containing the information requested.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 676/93

by Mr José Valverde López (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 April 1993)

(93/C 292/69)

Subject: Problems for Maghreb nationals crossing the Strait of Gibraltar in summer

Each summer, Spanish roads and the port of Algeciras have serious traffic problems because of a genuine flood of Maghreb nationals into Europe. 36,1% of all Maghreb nationals crossing the Strait of Gibraltar from Algeciras crossed this frontier point in two four-day periods over the 62 days in which this transit occurred, causing serious holdups and public disturbances. A minimum amount of planning and information is necessary for Maghreb nationals resident in European countries to prevent these difficulties. What steps could the Commission promote to encourage the necessary coordination?

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

(15 July 1993)

The situation described by the Honourable Member has been brought to the attention of the Commission, which

shares his desire to see a suitable solution to the problems connected with migrant workers in transit.

The only obvious solution in the short term, however, is greater cooperation between the Member States and the non-member countries involved.

With regard to cooperation in border matters between parts of the Community and adjacent portions of non-member countries, the Commission published a discussion paper on 16 June of this year which set out guidelines for future Community initiatives, with the intention of incorporating them into the rules for the Structural Funds from 1994. Among the ideas contained in the paper are options for a new Interreg initiative for cross-border cooperation, which will probably include greater cooperation with regions along the Community's external frontiers.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 687/93

by Mr Virginio Bettini (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(7 April 1993)

(93/C 292/70)

Subject: Transfer of ownership of second-hand cars

Following the entry into force of the single market and the free movement of goods within the Community, what steps will the Commission take to facilitate the transfer of second-hand cars between Community citizens?

The registration of such vehicles in the country of the purchaser is currently hampered by bureaucratic procedures requiring, for example, consular certification of signatures.

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**

(27 July 1993)

The rules of the EEC Treaty and, more specifically, its provisions concerning the free movement of goods also apply to the transfer of motor vehicles between Community nationals.

The Commission's interpretative notice on procedure for the type-approval and registration of vehicles previously registered in another Member State⁽¹⁾ makes it clear that Member States are required to type-approve and register vehicles previously registered in another Member State within reasonable periods of time and at reasonable costs.

The Commission does not at present plan to adopt any rules on this matter over and above the possibility already

available since 1 January 1993 of applying for Community type-approval of vehicles, this approval being valid in all Member States.

If the Honourable Member has details of administrative practices obstructing the registration of vehicles from other Member States, the Commission would be willing to examine them. On the validity of documents, the abovementioned interpretative notice states that Member States are required to accept documents accompanying the vehicle in the form and manner in which they are legally valid in the Member State in which they were prepared, provided they contain the information required for registration in the importing Member State.

(¹) OJ No C 281, 4. 11. 1988.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 690/93

by Mr Ernest Glinne (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(7 April 1993)

(93/C 292/71)

Subject: Recognition of 'Doctorate in dental surgery'

A French citizen resident in Tahiti (French Polynesia) holds a 'Doctorate in dental surgery' conferred in 1968 by the Medical Faculty of the St Joseph Jesuit University of Beirut (Lebanon).

Although it is recognized as scientifically equivalent to a French degree, it does not entitle him to practise as a dentist in France.

However, following written and oral examinations at the Dental and Stomatology Faculty of the Catholic University of Louvain, the authorities recognized his degree as being equivalent to a Belgian degree. The British and Irish authorities have also authorized him to practise on their territory.

The French authorities refuse to follow suit, taking refuge behind Article 1 (4) of Directive 78/687/EEC (¹) concerning the coordination of provisions in respect of the activities of dental practitioners. This article does not oblige one Member State to accept recognition by another of training acquired in a third country, since the Member State granting recognition cannot monitor it as closely as training acquired in its own territory. However, in this case, the applicant had taken examinations in Belgium before securing recognition of equivalence.

Do the French authorities not recognize the Belgian degree in dentistry?

Does the Commission not consider it necessary to make these Community provisions more flexible given that they are far removed from the declared spirit of the Treaty of Maastricht and the idea of 'European citizenship'?

Could recognition of equivalence not be made compulsory in cases where at least two Member States have recognized a degree as equivalent to their own national degrees?

(¹) OJ No L 233, 24. 8. 1978, p. 10.

Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission

(20 July 1993)

According to the information available to the Commission, the person concerned does not hold the statutory Belgian diploma of 'licencié en science dentaire', which the French authorities would be obliged to recognize automatically under the terms of Directive 78/686/EEC (¹), but only a certificate of recognition of equivalence issued by the competent national authorities and restricted to national territory. In the United Kingdom and Ireland he has obtained, as in Belgium, only recognition of equivalence and not the diploma stipulated by the Directive.

European citizenship does not necessarily entail the introduction of Community machinery requiring Member States to recognize automatically between themselves education and training received in third countries and hence not subject to any Community verification. Unlike the general systems for recognition contained in Directives 89/48/EEC (²) and 92/51/EEC (³), the automatic recognition of diplomas provided for in the 'dentistry' Directives requires not only the coordination of education and training — achieved through Directive 78/687/EEC with regard to dentists — but also the verification of that education and training.

In the case of education and training given outside the Community, such verification requires cooperation with the authorities in third countries. Arrangements for such cooperation do not yet exist at Community level.

The Commission has pointed out to the Committee of Senior Officials on Public Health (⁴) that the Directive in question should be amended, as should other directives specific to certain health professions, in particular to bring them into line with Directives 89/48/EEC and 92/51/EEC introducing general systems for the recognition of diplomas. These two general Directives in fact provide for the recognition, between Member States, of diplomas attesting education and training which were not received mainly in the Community, provided that the holders have three years' professional experience certified by the Member State which recognized the third-country diplomas. However, this recognition is not automatic in the same way as that provided for in the 'dentistry' Directives, since the two general Directives do not establish a minimum level of coordination of education and training and, consequently,

allow the host Member State to require, subject to certain conditions, further training to be undertaken in the event of significant deficiencies.

The detailed discussions which have taken place within the Committee have not resulted in a broad consensus that would allow consideration to be given to presenting to the Council a proposal bringing the specific Directives into line with the General Directives as regards the recognition of third-country diplomas.

The fact remains, however, that recognition granted by one Member State, or even by two or more, constitutes a Community aspect which the host Member State should not ignore by refusing to examine the education and training in question, even if it is not required, under Community law as it now stands, to grant such diplomas the automatic recognition provided for by Directive 78/686/EEC. This has not occurred in the instance referred to since, as far as the Commission is aware, the French authorities have examined the case of the person concerned and have formally notified him of their decision.

(¹) OJ No L 233, 24. 8. 1978.

(²) OJ No L 19, 24. 1. 1989.

(³) OJ No L 209, 24. 7. 1992.

(⁴) Set up by Council Decision 75/365/EEC of 16 June 1975 (OJ No L 167, 30. 6. 1975), as amended by Council Decision 78/689/EEC of 25 July 1978 (OJ No L 233, 24. 8. 1978) in respect of dental practitioners.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 748/93

by Mr Jean-Pierre Raffin (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(15 April 1993)

(93/C 292/72)

Subject: Community funding for an infrastructure project in South America (Hidrovia)

In reply to Written Question No 2509/90 (¹) by Mr Carlos Pimenta, the Commission stated that two questions remained under consideration:

- institutional aspects,
- possible financing of research into the impact of the Hidrovia waterway project on the Pantanal area.

Can the Commission say what stage it has reached in its consideration of these two questions as regards the provision of financial support?

The Commission invited the representatives of the five countries concerned to attend a conference on inland waterways and to make on-the-spot visits. Can it give details

concerning the substance of the talks and the outcome of the visits?

In order to avoid the destruction of the Pantanal area, the largest wetland area in the world, has the Commission considered alternative solutions to the canalization of the Paraguay River, or is it prepared to do so?

(¹) OJ No C 141, 30. 5. 1991, p. 12.

Answer given by Mr Marín on behalf of the Commission

(29 July 1993)

As the Honourable Member stresses, in its reply to Written Question No 2509/90 the Commission expanded on the fact that it was expecting to provide support in two areas of cooperation relating to the Hidrovia project, the one concerning institutional aspects and the other the environment.

However, in the event the CIH (Intergovernmental Hidrovia Committee) and the IDB (Inter-American Development Bank) are about to sign an agreement which includes these two areas so that the matter has automatically been taken out of the Commission's hands.

On the other hand, in May 1990 a travelling seminar was held in Europe for 15 technicians, three from each CIH country. This study trip allowed the technicians concerned to see the main inland waterway, sea and river port works executed in the Community's different countries.

The Commission will take great care to ensure that the Pantanal question is given the full attention it deserves.

Clearly, the Commission would like to help the Latin American countries in the search for a solution which might safeguard the Pantanal or at least ensure that the effect of any works is kept to the absolute minimum possible.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 752/93

by Mr Lode Van Outrive (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(15 April 1993)

(93/C 292/73)

Subject: Implementation of the Council resolution concerning the protection of the financial interests of the Community: implementation of the provisions of paragraph 9

In the above resolution of 13 November 1991 (¹), the Council conferred on the Commission the urgent task of

completing 'in the course of 1992, the study currently undertaken'. What is the study in question? Why has the study evidently not yet been completed?

Is it possible for this study to be forwarded to me?

(¹) OJ No C 328, 17. 12. 1991, p. 1.

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

(26 July 1993)

The study which the Council (Ministers for Justice) in its resolution of 13 November 1991 requested the Commission to complete in 1992 concerns administrative and criminal penalty systems of the Member States and the general principles of the Community system of penalties. The study was completed in October 1992.

The study will be transmitted to the Council and Parliament in late June or early July, at the same time as the comparative law study of the legal and administrative provisions of the Member States as requested by the Council in points 9, 10 and 11 of the resolution 'in order to see whether action should be taken to achieve greater compatibility of these provisions'. The input reports for both studies will be attached. The summary reports on the study referred to by the Honourable Member are being prepared for publication by the Publications Office of the Communities and will be available in the very near future.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 768/93

by Mrs Anne André (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(15 April 1993)

(93/C 292/74)

Subject: German VAT

Since 1 January 1993 coach operators have been faced with the unilateral decision by the German motorway authorities involving an 86 % increase in VAT payable on journeys through Germany crossing an external Community border.

Can the Commission indicate clearly whether this measure by the German Government constitutes discrimination between resident and non-resident undertakings?

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 942/93
by Mr Jaak Vandemeulebroucke (ARC)
to the Commission of the European Communities**

(29 April 1993)

(93/C 292/75)

Subject: VAT on coach journeys in Germany

Since 1 January of this year Belgian coach firms have had to pay an extra 86 % of the VAT on coach journeys through Germany if a coach crosses an external frontier.

This is a form of distortion of competition since it means that Belgian firms pay more VAT per kilometre than equivalent German firms.

Is the Commission aware of this increase? What action does it intend to take to rectify this distortion of competition?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 983/93

by Mr Gérard Deprez (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(29 April 1993)

(93/C 292/76)

Subject: Coach tours: VAT on 'transport' turnover in Germany

By decision of 1 January 1993 concerning VAT on 'transport' turnover, the FRG increased the rate from 14 to 15 % and changed the basis of assessment (8,67 instead of 5 Pfennigs per person per kilometre), thereby increasing VAT on tourist coaches crossing the German border from 0,7 to 1,3 Pfennigs per person per kilometre.

Is the Commission aware that German customs officials demand the payment of VAT on tourist coaches crossing the border which are only in transit through Germany but are to cross an external border?

In view of this, does the Commission therefore agree that VAT (15 %) on a German coach (average charge being DM 2 per kilometre) will amount to DM 0,3 per kilometre whereas a Belgian coach operator, for example, will have to pay 1,3 Pfennigs × 37 (average number passengers on the basis of official statistics from the Ministry of Communications), i.e. 48,1 Pfennigs, amounting to a 60 % additional charge for the Belgian operator?

Does the Commission not think that this situation constitutes discrimination between resident and

non-resident coach operators and that it is contrary to Article 27 of the sixth VAT directive?

**Answer given by Mr Van Miert
on behalf of the Commission**

(5 July 1993)

**Joint answer to Written Questions
Nos 768/93, 942/93 and 983/93
given by Mrs Scrivener
on behalf of the Commission
(19 July 1993)**

The Commission has already contacted the German authorities with a view to re-examining the procedures applicable since 1 January 1993 under the flat-rate scheme for passenger transport services provided by Community taxable persons in Germany in respect of journeys to a non-EC country (Austria, Switzerland, Poland, the Czech Republic, etc.),

If these contacts do not produce a satisfactory solution bringing to an end the present differential taxation scheme, the Commission is determined to take all the measures necessary to secure compliance with Community law and with the rules governing the internal market.

The Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that on 30 September 1992 it unveiled a proposal relating to VAT on passenger transport ⁽¹⁾ that is designed to replace the present arrangements, whereby VAT is calculated on a territorial basis, with arrangements for paying VAT in the country of departure. Parliament endorsed the proposal at its January part-session.

The proposal will resolve the problem at issue and will significantly reduce the amount of red tape facing the operators concerned.

⁽¹⁾ COM(92) 416.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 776/93
by Mr Yves Verwaerde (LDR)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(15 April 1993)
(93/C 292/77)**

Subject: Continuing vocational training for the Community officials in 1992

How many officials, broken down by category, took part in vocational training courses in 1992?

The number of officials, temporary staff and auxiliary staff taking part in vocational training courses organized by the Commission is shown in the tables below.

Table 1 shows the number of people (broken down by sex and category) taking part in courses other than language courses.

Table 2 shows the number of people (broken down by sex and category) taking part in language courses organized by the Commission.

The total in table 1 (4 178 people) does not include the people — of all categories — who took part in the following two types of training course organized under the Commission's 1992 vocational training programme:

- the series of talks on major issues in current European and world affairs (one held in 1992): 200 participants;
- the general training modules: the 'Grille Standard' (a modular programme organized around the Commission's main spheres of activity): 3 100 participants.

TABLE 1

**Training courses over the period 1 January 1992
to 31 December 1992**

Staff who completed a training course

Category	Men	Women	Totals
A	1 164	276	1 440
L	294	354	648
B	450	277	727
C	166	1 001	1 167
D	111	26	137
Aux.	26	33	59
Totals	2 211	1 967	4 178

TABLE 2

Language courses over the period 1 January 1992
to 31 December 1992

Staff who completed a course

Category	Men	Women	Totals
A	495	118	613
L	220	278	498
B	244	190	434
C	69	784	853
D	40	11	51
Aux.	42	79	121
Totals	1 110	1 460	2 570

WRITTEN QUESTION No 785/93

by Mr Peter Crampton (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 April 1993)

(93/C 292/78)

Subject: Fishing; saithe quota

For the past three years the French have not taken up even half of their quota for saithe.

Are there any prospects for this quota being re-allocated?

Answer given by Mr Paleokrassas
on behalf of the Commission

(18 June 1993)

Article 8 (4) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3760/92 of 20 December 1992 ⁽¹⁾, establishing a Community system for fisheries and aquaculture, states that, when allocating fishing possibilities to Member States, the relative stability principle must be observed, although account could be taken, if requested, of the development of miniquotas and regular quota swaps since 1983.

France has a relatively large share of the TAC for saithe in the North Sea, and therefore this cannot be considered as a miniquota. Nevertheless, since 1986 France has swapped certain quantities, ranging from 320 to 3 450 tonnes, with other Member States, particularly Belgium, Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom, and this could constitute

a basis for a certain adjustment of future allocation keys, if requested by the Member States concerned.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 389, 31. 12. 1992.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 791/93

by Mr Barry Desmond (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 April 1993)

(93/C 292/79)

Subject: Professional training in nursing

In reference to Written Question No 1784/91 ⁽¹⁾, Mr Diego de los Santos López raised the issue of a possible breach of Article 1 (2) of Council Directive 77/453/EEC ⁽²⁾, subsequently amended by Council Directive 89/595/EEC ⁽³⁾ of 10 October 1989, which specifies 'full-time training which must comprise a three year course or 4 600 hours of theoretical and clinical instruction'. It was stated that in the instance of Spain this training period does last three years but only comprises between 1 800 and 2 700 hours.

The response of the Commission was that Spain opted for the three-year course and that it is not therefore necessary for the training provided during the three years to comprise 4 600 hours.

1. Will the Commission endeavour to ensure that if diplomas are to be mutually recognized as an integral part of the setting up of the internal market, then there must be a 'level playing field' in areas such as these where training provides diplomas of equal value in Spain?
2. The Commission stated that it would keep the Honourable Member informed of any further action it might take on this matter. Will the Commission now update the position and also indicate if it has received any further response from Spanish authorities?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 323, 13. 12. 1991, p. 39.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 176, 15. 7. 1977, p. 8.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 341, 23. 11. 1989, p. 30.

Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission

(16 July 1993)

1. The Commission aims to take all necessary measures to ensure the respect of the provisions of the EC Treaty and the acts adopted under it. In particular it ensures that the training programme for nurses responsible for general care

set out in Directive 77/453/EEC is correctly implemented by Member States in order to achieve the coordination of nursing training in all the Member States, as envisaged by the Nurses Directive.

At present, the Commission is not aware of information which would lead it to believe that there are Member States other than Spain, which are in breach of the Directive 77/453/EEC.

2. With reference to the Commission's response to Written Question No 1784/91 the Honourable Member will see that the Commission is of the view that a Member State has the option of the three year period or 4 600 hours in order to comply with the obligation imposed by Directive 77/453/EEC. If a Member State opted for the first formula, it must nevertheless guarantee the quality and standard of training envisaged by the Directive. The Spanish authorities have responded to the Commission's query referred to in its answer to Written Question No 1784/91. The Commission is not convinced by the arguments of the Spanish authorities with respect to Community law.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 799/93

by the following members: José Vázquez Fouz and Manuel Medina Ortega (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 April 1993)

(93/C 292/80)

Subject: Aid for the small pelagic fisheries sector

The Commission and Council are doubtless aware of the crisis affecting the Community markets and production sectors relating to small pelagic fish such as sardine, mackerel and herring in Spain, Ireland, France, the United Kingdom and Germany in particular.

There is one problem which might be of particular significance for the small Canary fleet located principally in Arrecife de Lanzarote. There is very limited demand for canned fish, its main outlet, because of the large stocks of canned sardines and marketing difficulties resulting from the weakness of the traditional African market, the problems facing the markets in Eastern Europe and the general fall in demand.

Nevertheless, the Commission and Council should, it appears, take urgent measures similar to those taken on the Community market in fresh and frozen fish for other reasons.

Will the Commission take measures to solve the crisis currently affecting small pelagic species? Will it take

immediate measures to solve the problem of canned sardines in Arrecife de Lanzarote?

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

(22 June 1993)

In order to take stock of the situation in the small pelagic fisheries sector, the Commission staff have procedured two working documents, the first concerning the sardine market ⁽¹⁾ and the second relating to the herring and mackerel market ⁽²⁾.

These documents, which have yet to be examined by a group of experts from the Council, form a basis for discussion and consideration which will enable the Commission in the light of the outcome to make suitable proposals, if necessary.

The Commission is open to any cooperation in the examination of these documents and to this end is making the necessary contacts with the various sectors of the industry concerned.

At present no specific measures are anticipated to deal with individual problems that arise in the small-scale fishing fleet and the canned sardine industry at Arrecife, Lanzarote. Suitable solutions will have to be found within the scope of the general study of the situation in this sector.

⁽¹⁾ SEC(92) 2221.

⁽²⁾ SEC(93) 430.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 801/93

by Sir James Scott-Hopkins (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 April 1993)

(93/C 292/81)

Subject: Definition of secondary raw materials

Will the Commission give a definition of what is meant by the proposed 'secondary raw materials' in relation to waste disposal?

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

(6 July 1993)

Waste disposal is covered by Directive 75/442/EEC ⁽¹⁾, as amended by Directive 91/156/EEC ⁽²⁾. Directive 75/442/EEC in its Article 1 (a) gives a definition of 'waste'.

The same definition is used for the proposed directive on the landfill of waste. Since these directives deal with *waste*, not with secondary raw materials, no definition of secondary raw materials is envisaged.

However, the Commission is aware of the importance of specifying the concepts of 'product', 'secondary raw material' and 'waste' and, if possible, of defining the limits between these concepts. Currently, the question is being studied at the international level by the Commission as well as other organizations, in particular the OECD.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 194, 25. 7. 1975.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 78, 26. 3. 1991.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 802/93

by the following members: Mantovani, Chiabrando, Borgo, Forte, Gaibisso, Pisoni and Sboarina (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 April 1993)

(93/C 292/82)

Subject: Regulation of quotas under the common organization of the market in tobacco

Council Regulation (EEC) No 2075/92 ⁽¹⁾ lays down a number of fundamental changes to the common organization of the market in tobacco, including the abolition of intervention purchasing and the system of processing premiums.

The processing premium has been replaced with a premium for cultivation payable when the processor receives the tobacco from the producer.

1. Is it true to say that Articles 9 and 10 of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 3477/92 ⁽²⁾ making processors — who would otherwise forfeit their quotas (Article 3 (3) of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 3477/92) — responsible for issuing and verifying producers' 'cultivation certificates' do not distort the quota system and introduce a workable joint system of processing and production quotas or that they impose a heavy and burdensome responsibility on processors whose decisions come to be regarded as final, possibly modifying legal situations open to interpretation (Title IV of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 3477/92 — Transfer of rights).
2. Is it not true to say that there is a major discrepancy between Articles 10 (3) of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 3477/92 and Article 10 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2075/92 in so far as, in order to ensure the

contractual freedom of the producer, the quota of each processing undertaking may be exceeded, thereby infringing Article 10 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2075/92 and possibly leading to oligopolist structures, thereby economically undermining the sector.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 215, 30. 7. 1992, p. 70.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 351, 2. 12. 1992, p. 11.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 803/93

by the following members: Agostino Mantovani, Mauro Chiabrando, Franco Borgo, Mario Forte, Gerardo Gaibisso, Giuseppe Mottola, Ferruccio Pisoni and Gabriele Sboarina (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 April 1993)

(93/C 292/83)

Subject: Obligations and payments of advances under the common organization of the market in tobacco

Council Regulation (EEC) No 2075/92 lays down a number of fundamental changes to the common organization of the market in tobacco, including the abolition of intervention purchasing and the system of processing premiums.

The processing premium has been replaced with a premium for cultivation payable when the processor receives the tobacco from the producer.

1. Does the Commission consider that the drawing up and adoption of the provisions contained in Articles 6 and 7 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2075/92 and Articles 9, 10, 12 and 16 of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 3477/92 avoid imposing a burden on citizens exceeding the measure necessary to satisfy the public interests at stake (proportionality rule) bearing in mind that, under the common organization of the market, the processing sector does not enjoy preferences or priorities but is obliged to advance money against Community Funding (to the amount of the premiums)?
2. Does the Commission consider that the lack of coordination between Articles 16 and Article 12 (1) of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 3478/92 ⁽¹⁾ creates an enormous discrepancy between processors who have paid the premium to producers without requesting advances and those who have received advances under Article 12 (1) subject to the lodging of a security? In addition does Article 15 of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 3478/92 require payment of interest to the EAGGF, chargeable to the processing in cases where the

premium is paid to the producer over six weeks after receipt of the advance?

(¹) OJ No L 351, 2. 12. 1992, p. 17.

**Joint answer to Written Questions
Nos 802/93 and 803/93
given by Mr Steichen
on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 1993)**

The matters raised by the Honourable Member are the subject of an action brought by a number of Italian processors. The Commission will therefore set out its position in detail in the statement of defence that it will submit to the Court of Justice. The Commission wishes to state, however, that it considers the provisions mentioned to be in perfect conformity with Council Regulation (EEC) No 2075/92.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 805/93
by Mr Carlos Robles Piquer (PPE)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(19 April 1993)
(93/C 292/84)**

Subject: Acquisition of goods in another Member State

At a dinner-debate on 11 December 1992 in Brussels Mrs Christiane Scrivener, Member of the Commission, referring to the abolition of internal borders as of 1 January commented that there would be no more customs control on goods and travellers would have no problem in buying the goods they wished in another Member State of the Community provided that the goods were intended for their personal use ('La lettre d'Europe Avenir', No 24, February 1993, as quoted by Michel Cuperley).

In the light of experience acquired in the first two months of 1993 does the Commission consider that these forecasts have been fulfilled and that internal borders between the Twelve do in fact permit the free circulation of goods purchased by citizens of these Member States, at least when they are declared for their personal use?

**Answer given by Mrs Scrivener
on behalf of the Commission
(5 July 1993)**

The Commission considers that the Community legislation providing for the abolition of customs and fiscal checks at the Community's internal frontiers from 1 January 1993 has

operated in a satisfactory manner with regard to the right of private persons to purchase goods for their own personal use and transport them to another Member State.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 807/93
by Mr João Cravinho (S)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(21 April 1993)
(93/C 292/85)**

Subject: Delays in ESF payments to Portuguese vocational training organizers

I was recently contacted by a number of vocational training organizers in Portugal who have been awaiting ESF payments for a number of months, having been told that payment was not possible because of failure by the Community to transfer funds to Portugal.

I have also learned that the Institute for Employment and Professional Training (IEFP) has stopped approving training operations because of the lack of funds for many private Portuguese operators. A number of these organizers who are considered to make a valuable contribution because of the quality or innovative nature of the training they provide have been obliged to reduce their scope of activities for an unforeseeable length of time?

Since one of the reform objectives for 1978 was to prevent vocational training from continuing to be a seasonal activity by means of two instruments — programming and guaranteed financing for a four-year period — such a situation can only be described as anomalous.

Public opinion in Portugal blames the Commission's failure for this state of affairs. To what extent is the Commission responsible? What responsibilities, if any, do the Portuguese authorities, in particular the IEFP, have for these delays? Can the Commission give detailed justification for an explanation for the various delays in payment? What corrective measures have been taken? Will compensation be paid to those affected as a result of the malfunctioning of the system? What amounts are currently in arrears?

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

(21 June 1993)

There has been a very substantial increase in the payment of funding in Portugal over the last two years. The most recent figures received by the Commission from Portugal indicate that, for some programmes, the full amounts allocated have now been paid at national level. Portugal may thus have to take steps to avoid overspending the allocations in the funding plans for these programmes. However, the Commission is not aware of any restrictions on access to the Operational Programmes directed by the IEEP.

On the subject of transfers of ESF funds, the Commission can confirm that there has been no delay in processing applications for funding from Portugal.

Allocations from the 1993 tranche and the payment of advances for some programmes which have not yet started depend on the Portuguese authorities presenting new funding plans in accordance with the decisions reached by the Community Support Framework monitoring committee on 4 December 1992, together with the balances for 1991 and certificates of implementation for 1992.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 808/93

by Mr Sérgio Ribeiro (CG)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 April 1993)

(93/C 292/86)

Subject: Debate on the laundering of funds from illegal drug trafficking in Portugal

In view of the Council of Europe's Convention, a number of European Parliament resolutions and Council Directive 91/308/EEC ⁽¹⁾ on prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering, in view of the fact that it is extremely difficult to detect these activities since they are organized by criminal organizations with the utmost secrecy, and in view of the fact that money laundering is taking place in an increasing number of European countries, is the Commission aware of Portugal's efforts to combat these activities and of the legislative and administrative measures adopted to implement the above directive and does it consider them to be adequate?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 166, 28. 6. 1991, p. 77.

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**

(10 August 1993)

The Commission is aware that Portugal, having ratified the Vienna Convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, outlawed laundering of the proceeds of drug traffic at the end of last year. However, Portugal has not yet ratified the Council of Europe Convention on laundering, tracing, seizure and confiscation of proceeds of crime, which covers the proceeds of all criminal activities, not just drug trafficking.

Portugal has not yet communicated its national measures implementing the Council Directive on money laundering. The Commission has therefore initiated proceedings under Article 169 of the EEC Treaty.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 810/93

by Mr Gijs de Vries (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 April 1993)

(93/C 292/87)

Subject: German packaging regulation

On 21 November 1991 I tabled Written Question No 2718/91 ⁽¹⁾ on possible discrepancies between German packaging regulations and Articles 30—36 and 85 of the EEC Treaty. On 27 March 1992 Mr Bangemann replied on behalf of the Commission that its departments were currently examining the German packaging regulation in question to determine whether it infringed Community regulations and said that I would be informed of the findings of the examination. To date, practically one year later, I have not received any additional response. In the last year, however, the Commission has had ample time to complete its investigations. Can the Commission therefore give a clear answer to the question concerning compatibility of this regulation with the EEC Treaty as soon as possible?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 162, 29. 6. 1992, p. 26.

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**

(15 July 1993)

The Commission is not yet in a position to inform the Honourable Member of the final outcome of its examination of German packaging legislation. Packaging and packaging waste pose complex problems both from the viewpoint of environmental protection and from that of the free movement of goods.

The Commission would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the proposal for a Directive on packaging and packaging waste (COM(92) 278 final) which was presented to the Council on 24 August 1992 ⁽¹⁾. That proposal sets out the objectives pursued and the principles applied by the Commission in connection with free movement of goods and environmental protection.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 263, 12. 10. 1992.

The Commission would remind the Honourable Member that in its answer to Written Question No 422/91 it explained why it could not make public the names of the members of the international board of experts other than that of the chairman, who at the time was Mr Yves Boiret, Chief Inspector of Historic Monuments and an internationally renowned expert on architectural heritage conservation.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 812/93

by Mr Paul Staes (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 April 1993)

(93/C 292/88)

Subject: EEC subsidy for the Sint-Jans hospital (Brugge, Belgium)

I thank the Commission for its answer to my Written Question No 422/91 ⁽¹⁾.

1. In its answer the Commission stated that it had no reason to doubt the probity of the applicants. This was the situation in October 1991. Has the Commission received any further information since then?
2. I repeat the second part of my previous question to which I only received an incomplete answer (I was only given the name of the chairman of the board dealing with this matter and not the names of the members thereof). Can the Commission give the names of the members of the board dealing with this matter?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 20, 27. 1. 1992, p. 3.

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

(26 July 1993)

The Commission now has additional information concerning the project for the restoration of St Jan's Hospital in Bruges, Belgium. Now that restoration has been completed the building is open to the public and serves as a venue for various cultural events.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 813/93

by Mr Ben Visser (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 April 1993)

(93/C 292/89)

Subject: Imports of canned tuna

Council Regulation (EEC) No 3759/92 ⁽¹⁾ introduced import quotas for canned tuna over a four-year period as of 1 January 1993. The 1991 quota amounted to 74 000 tonnes. According to the regulation, this quota does not apply to ACP countries, which are also exempt from import levies. The quota does however apply to the Asean countries, with 1991 being taken as the reference year. It is increased annually in proportion to the rise in consumption in the EC, with a minimum of 6%.

The Asean countries object to the introduction of the import quota, claiming that it runs counter to GATT rules (Article 1 on MFN treatment, given the fact that the ACP countries are exempted from Article IX) and because the Asean countries are given less favourable treatment than the ACP countries and the Andean and Central American countries.

1. Why was a canned tuna quota introduced as of 1 January 1993? Is it justified by the situation in the fisheries sector?
2. Does the introduction of a quota for canned tuna run counter to GATT rules?
3. Why are the Asean countries given less favourable treatment than other groups of countries?
4. Is the Commission prepared if necessary to increase the import quota for the Asean countries so they are no longer given less-favourable treatment?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 388, 31. 12. 1992, p. 1.

**Answer given by Mr Paleokrassas
on behalf of the Commission
(7 July 1993)**

Article 21 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3759/91 of 17 December 1992 on the common organization of the market in fishery and aquaculture products introduced Community provisions covering the import of canned products manufactured from certain species of tuna designed to check the growth in imports of these products for a four-year transitional period prior to total liberalization of the Community market.

1. These provisions were introduced to replace, with effect from 1 January 1993, the national quantitative restrictions which existed in certain Member States for these products, and which had been notified to the GATT.

They are intended to enable the Community industry to adapt to greater international competition when the Community market is fully liberalized.

2. The provisions do not contravene the GATT rules since:

- they are of limited duration and intended to ensure a transition between national restrictive rules of unspecified duration and total liberalization of the Community market;
- they guarantee an annual increase in permitted import levels;
- their scope as regards the products concerned is identical to that of the national quantitative restrictions which they replace.

3. The Asean Member States are not treated less favourable than other third countries in that the measure or quota applies generally, without distinction by the origin of the products.

The provisions cannot, however, be applied to third countries which have signed agreements with the Community to abolish quantitative restrictions — such as the Lomé Convention or association agreements — just as the national quantitative restrictions did not apply to those countries.

4. The quota, calculated from official foreign trade statistics, proved to be lower than market needs because of the frauds in recent years involving products originating in the Asean countries relating to the nature of the product (canned tuna declared as canned bonito sarda) in order to benefit from the reduced rate of duties under the generalized system of preferences. The quota could be corrected in the light of proceedings currently being taken against these frauds.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 814/93
by Mrs Jessica Larive (LDR)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(21 April 1993)
(93/C 292/90)**

Subject: European campaign for the promotion of books and reading

Can the Commission give the exact date on which the European campaign on the promotion of books and reading in Copenhagen will be launched?

What Community initiatives have been adopted for this campaign?

Can the Commission say how the European Parliament resolution on measures to promote books and reading of 21 January 1993 (A3-0159/92) will be included in the European campaign?

**Answer given by Mr Pinheiro
on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 1993)**

The campaign for raising European public awareness of books and reading ('Reading for pleasure') was officially launched on 22 April 1993 by the Danish Minister of Culture, Jytte Hilden, in the presence of the Ministers of Culture of the 12 Member States of the European Community and a Member of the Commission.

Throughout the 18 months of the campaign the Member States and the Community will be taking a variety of initiatives to promote reading among young people, support small publishing houses, produce statistics on books or on the audiovisual media and books.

The Commission is planning to take into account Parliament's resolution on the promotion of books and reading (A3-0159/92) in preparing its future actions within the limits of its resources and competences under the EEC Treaty.

**WRITTEN QUESTION No 817/93
by Mr Peter Crampton (S)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(21 April 1993)
(93/C 292/91)**

Subject: Fisheries: suspension of third-country imports

If minimum import prices fail to stop the deterioration of the market situation in the EC fisheries sector, will the

Commission consider the suspension of certain third-country fish imports into EC markets?

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

(5 July 1993)

The Commission is of the opinion that several different elements have contributed to the present crisis in the Community whitefish market.

One element has been imports into certain Member States from third countries at very low prices. Nevertheless, according to available figures from Member States, no abnormal increase of imported quantities can be observed during the first quarter of 1993.

In these circumstances, the Commission does not consider it necessary, at this stage, to undertake measures other than those which have already been implemented on 25 February, 12 and 25 March 1993.

In addition to the market management actions pursued by the Commission, the Council of Ministers on 18 March agreed to recommend to the Member States that they improve the existing national controls in order to comply with the above mentioned actions.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 818/93

by Mr Peter Crampton (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 April 1993)

(93/C 292/92)

Subject: Fisheries: French aid to the fishing industry

The French Fisheries Minister announced in February 1993 a financial aid package of FF 272 million (£36 million) for the French fishing industry.

Can the Commission say whether such aid for the French fishing industry infringes EC rules on subsidies? Would it care to comment upon the right of Member States to offer such aid to their fishing industries?

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

(5 July 1993)

The Honourable Member is correct in thinking that the French authorities have notified the Commission, in

accordance with the procedure set out in Article 93 (3) of the EEC Treaty, of a proposal to take measures to tackle the serious situation affecting the fisheries markets. The fact is that since autumn 1992, and in particular since February 1993, the European market for sea products has seen a very sharp fall in prices.

The Commission will take a decision on this case as quickly as possible in accordance with the rules set out in the EEC Treaty.

With regard to the rules governing the examination of State aid from the point of view of their compatibility with Community law, the Commission published guidelines for the examination of State aid in the fisheries sector ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 152, 17. 6. 1992.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 820/93

by Mr Sérgio Ribeiro (CG)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 April 1993)

(93/C 292/93)

Subject: Social and economic situation in the municipality of Marinha Grande — Portugal

Marinha Grande, on the coast in central Portugal, has long industrial traditions, especially in glass which have developed with a high-tech industry, i.e. mouldings.

These two industries, together with plastics, steel and files, are of great importance to the social life of the municipality of Marinha Grande in the district of Leiria, but there is a crisis and/or indications of a crisis in these industries, particularly in the glass industry, because of the absence of an industrial policy and protective measures against a veritable invasion from Eastern European countries, Turkey and Mexico, countries which, apart from social dumping, have national or other incentive measures, which Portugal no longer has, partly because of its exchange policy.

Following the closure of the Stephens Bros 'training factory', a real attack on historical/industrial heritage, and the regrettable incidents of its auction there is an eminent risk of the closure of important units currently employing a thousand active workers, who are surviving by not paying social security payments, and who are beginning to receive their salaries late.

The foreseeable developments in this situation will have disastrous economic and social effects in this area of Portugal; it is vital for us to prevent these effects by recognizing the situation and acting now.

Could the Commission consider the urgent financing of an in-depth study into the socio-economic situation of Marinha Grande and the immediate adoption of preventive measures, in conjunction with the government of the Member State?

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

(15 July 1993)

The Commission would be willing to examine the possibility of a study on the socio-economic situation of Marinha Grande if the Portuguese authorities were to put such a proposal to it.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 834/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 April 1993)

(93/C 292/94)

Subject: The Community's chemicals industry

The Community's chemicals industry generally is going through a difficult period. Exports in particular are badly affected: whereas last year they allowed for 4,1 % of total Community exports, this year they will allow for a mere 2,5 %. Owing to the difficult situation this year, unemployment in the sector is expected to rise, a prediction already borne out by the relevant indicators: last year unemployment rose by 1,4 %, while this year it is set to rise by an estimated 1,5 %.

In view of the fact that 2,5 million workers are employed in the European chemical industry, does the Commission intend to unveil support measures as soon as possible?

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

(12 July 1993)

The Commission is aware that the European chemical industry is suffering difficulties at the present moment, as

are a number of other industrial sectors. In keeping with the pursuit of a horizontal industrial policy rather than sectoral initiatives, the Commission will seek to resolve some of the problems of the chemical industry and other industrial sectors with such programmes as the Growth initiative and an early conclusion of the GATT Uruguay Round.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 835/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(21 April 1993)

(93/C 292/95)

Subject: Energy problem facing Crete

The Greek island of Crete is facing a severe energy problem and some villages are deprived of electricity; it has been even suggested that there might be an electricity blackout during the summer period when the tourist season is at its peak. Experts have pointed out that the energy problem can be solved by exploiting solar and wind energy and other natural resources, including natural gas. In view of the above, can the Commission say whether the Greek Government has submitted for approval a programme setting out a comprehensive approach (or individual initiatives) to all the problems with Community aid?

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

(24 June 1993)

As the Honourable Member points out in his question, Crete is facing a severe energy problem. This is due to a rapid growth in consumption, increased demand during the summer months when the tourist season is at its peak and the fact that the island is not linked to the network on the Greek mainland, so none of its electricity can be supplied from there.

Under the Valoren programme (ERDF), the Greek authorities proposed building a wind park on Crete with a generating capacity of 5,1 MW. The Commission agreed to support this and the project has now been completed.

The plan to link Crete to the network of the Peloponnese was originally included within the current Community Support Framework for Greece. However, it was withdrawn because the public electricity company gave priority to the construction of a new power station on the island.

Within the framework of the Commission's energy programmes (Thermie and energy planning at regional level) several plans to harness and develop local renewable energy sources have been submitted to the Commission and approved for cofinancing in recent years.

During the forthcoming discussions concerning the preparation of the new Community Support Framework for 1994—1999, the question of Crete's energy supply could be raised by the Greek authorities.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 839/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Commission of the European Communities

(26 April 1993)

(93/C 292/96)

Subject: The state of the ancient stadium-cum-theatre in Thessaloniki

As a result of the callousness of the contractor and the indifference of the Greek Ministry of Culture, the ancient stadium-cum-theatre in Apellou Street in Thessaloniki was recently filled in with sand, transported there by lorries. Given that this unprecedented action is the first stage in a project to erect a block of flats on the site, does the Commission intend to call on the Greek authorities to preserve the archaeological finds in Apellou Street which constitute part of the historic heritage of Greece and indeed, of Europe?

Answer given by Mr Pinheiro
on behalf of the Commission

(6 July 1993)

The Commission's role in the protection and conservation of Europe's cultural heritage is spelled out in the conclusions of the Council meeting of 12 November 1992 laying down 'guidelines for Community cultural action' and in the new Article 128 inserted in the EC Treaty by the Maastricht Treaty, which is in the process of being ratified.

Community action is to encourage cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, to support and supplement their action. The role of the Member States in this area is preponderant, and action by the Community is subsidiary.

It is not, therefore, within the Commission's power to take steps to protect the ancient stadium-cum-theatre in Apellou Street, Thessaloniki, nor to intervene with the Greek

authorities to this effect. The appropriate national, regional or local authorities have sole responsibility for the management and protection of historic monuments and sites.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 841/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Commission of the European Communities

(26 April 1993)

(93/C 292/97)

Subject: Situation in Cameroon and EC economic aid

In view of previous European Parliament resolutions on democratization in Cameroon and the statement issued by the Foreign Ministers meeting in EPC expressing concern at political developments in the country, will the Commission call for Community economic aid to Cameroon to be reviewed?

Answer given by Mr Marín
on behalf of the Commission

(14 July 1993)

The Commission is following political developments in Cameroon closely. It hopes that the inquiry proposed by Parliament in its resolution of 17 December 1992 will be possible soon. The inquiry report will provide a basis for the Community authorities to evaluate the process of democratization in Cameroon and the Community's and Member States' positions on cooperation with Cameroon.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 845/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Commission of the European Communities

(26 April 1993)

(93/C 292/98)

Subject: Conversion of wetland into go-Kart track

A wetland on Lesbos is mysteriously being converted into a go-Kart track at the same time as the Ministry for the Aegean and the Community have provided Drs. 4 million under the IMP to protect and develop it. This incredible

event is taking place in a cove in the Yeras Gulf over an area of 1,6 hectares of the 'Dipi Larsos' wetland which features in dozens of programmes and activities carried out by universities and other organizations including the UN, WWF and the Goulandris Museum. According to a report drawn up by Mr Andreas Troubis of the Department of the Environment at the University of the Aegean only farming is allowed in the area chosen by the owner to set up the track.

What does the Commission intend to do to save the wetland from incalculable damage by this project?

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

(16 July 1993)

The biotope 'Dipi Lazsos' in the Yeras Gulf (Lesvos Island) has not been identified as being of Community importance under Council Directive 79/409/EEC, concerning the conservation of wild birds ⁽¹⁾, which is the only legal basis for Community intervention for nature conservation applicable at present. Nor has Greece classified the zone under consideration as a Special Protection Area according to Article 4 of this Directive.

Consequently, it is the responsibility of the Greek authorities to take the necessary measures for the wise use and protection of the biotope in question. Community intervention might only be possible after June 1994, in the event that Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ⁽²⁾ is applicable to the site in question.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 103, 25. 4. 1979.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 206, 22. 7. 1992.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 854/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(26 April 1993)

(93/C 292/99)

Subject: Regulatory framework for matters relating to the movement of capital

Given the immediate need to draw up a regulatory framework covering a number of matters relating to the movement of capital, will the Commission say whether the central banks of the Member States have finished taking decisions on harmonization measures as part of the Single Market?

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

(15 July 1993)

National measures implementing the Council Directives on the free movement of capital in banking have been adopted by the Member States either through statute law or by administrative means through royal, presidential or ministerial decrees. The transposition process has been supplemented by implementing measures taken by central banks or by other banking supervisory authorities.

The Council Directive 88/361/EEC on the free movement of capital ⁽¹⁾ was transposed into national law in most Member States by 1 July 1990. Taking the four Member States benefiting from a transitional period up to the end of 1992, transposition was completed in Spain and Ireland at the beginning of 1993 and in Portugal at the beginning of May. In Greece, which was granted an additional transitional period up to 30 June 1994 for certain transactions, transposition took place by means of presidential decree on 23 March 1993. The Bank of Greece also issued circulars on 7 May 1993 concerning procedures for declaring and monitoring capital movements.

In banking, the transposition measures adopted by the Member States have been supplemented by practical implementing measures (circulars, orders and other instruments) taken by the banking supervisory authorities, which, in seven Community countries, are part of the central bank structure. Most of those authorities have also exchanged memoranda of understanding detailing the arrangements for cooperation between them under the mutual recognition system established by Community directives.

At 1 June 1993, only Spain had not yet fully transposed into national law the second Council Directive 89/646/EEC on the coordination of banking legislation ⁽²⁾, and this has so far prevented the Spanish central bank from concluding memoranda of understanding with the corresponding authorities in the other Member States.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 178, 8. 7. 1988.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 386, 30. 12. 1989.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 856/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(26 April 1993)

(93/C 292/100)

Subject: Subcontracting of employees

Officials of the National Bank of Greece allege that the Bank's administration intends to recruit on a contractual

basis between 25 and 30 low paid computer programmers for its subsidiary, Ethno-Data, who will subsequently be subcontracted to the parent company, the National Bank. How does the Commission intend to respond to these reports, given that subcontracting of labour constitutes an unacceptable form of exploitation?

**Answer given by Mr Flynn
on behalf of the Commission**
(11 August 1993)

There is no Community instrument which governs conditions of hiring out of workers. Therefore the Commission can not intervene in the matter raised.

Questions relating to remuneration are also dealt with at national level. However, it should be noted that the Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers emphasized that all employment shall be fairly remunerated. The Commission is currently preparing an opinion on this subject.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 894/93
by Mr Carlos Robles Piquer (PPE)
to the Commission of the European Communities
(23 April 1993)
(93/C 292/101)

Subject: Discriminatory clauses against women in labour agreements

Despite the various Community principles and provisions on the subject, there is still clear evidence of discrimination in employment which greatly harms women. The principles of sexual equality are still not satisfying women's aspirations to be given equal treatment with men in matters relating to employment.

Evidence of this is provided by the fact that in one Spanish region, Andalusia, 30 % of labour agreements still contain discriminatory clauses against women, thus officially endorsing the state of affairs which is so disadvantageous to working women.

How, in the Commission's opinion, can there be official endorsement, in labour agreements, of discriminatory clauses against women, thus defeating the Community's aim

of maintaining a suitable balance in equal treatment for men and women, and what recommendation could it make to the respective national authorities to ensure that they do not endorse labour agreements contracts containing discriminatory clauses against women?

**Answer given by Mr Flynn
on behalf of the Commission**
(10 June 1993)

Directive 75/117/EEC ⁽¹⁾ and 76/207/EEC ⁽²⁾ make it clear that collective agreements play a major part in guaranteeing the principle of equality in respect of remuneration and employment conditions within the Community.

Article 4 of Directive 75/117/EEC provides that 'Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that provisions appearing in collective agreements . . . which are contrary to the principle of equal pay may be declared null and void or may be amended.'

This is reiterated in Articles 3 (b), 4 (b) and 5 (b) of Directive 76/207/EEC on equal treatment.

Spanish legislation makes provision for discriminatory agreements to be declared null and void, and provides appropriate channels for contesting an agreement or remedying any discriminatory effects (Articles 17 and 90.5 of the Law 8/80 of 10 March 'Estatuto de los Trabajadores').

The Commission therefore considers that Spain has taken the necessary steps to implement the above-mentioned provisions of the Community Directives.

It is, however, possible that collective agreements in Spain still contain elements of indirect discrimination, such as the downgrading of women's work, which are difficult to detect.

In order to obtain recent data on this important matter, the Commission has arranged for a study to be conducted into the impact of equality-oriented and discriminatory clauses in collective agreements in Spain (covering the years 1990 to 1992). The Commission will forward a copy of the study report, as soon as it becomes available, to the Honourable Member and to the Secretariat of the European Parliament.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 45, 19. 2. 1975.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 39, 14. 1. 1976.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 907/93

by Mrs Anne André-Léonard (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(27 April 1993)

(93/C 292/102)

Subject: Car taxes

According to a study published by the Association of European Motor Manufacturers, the partial harmonization of VAT rates is offset by additional taxes enforced in some countries, which gives rise to real differences in taxation within the EEC. The same differences are found on the European market for second-hand cars.

Does the Commission intend to take steps to harmonize car taxes in the twelve Member States of the European Community where there are currently blatant differences within the single market?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1079/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 May 1993)

(93/C 292/103)

Subject: Level of car tax

The European automobile industry is proposing that the level of tax on cars in the Member States should be reviewed in an attempt to eliminate discrepancies in prices. The industry claims that car tax has not been affected at all by the introduction of the single European market on 1 January 1993 while the different levels of taxation constitute the main reason for fluctuations in the prices of European cars in the EC. Will the Commission say whether it will review the level of tax on cars in the Member States?

Joint answer to Written Questions

Nos 907/93 and 1079/93

given by Mrs Scrivener

on behalf of the Commission

(19 July 1993)

As part of the approximation of indirect tax rates, which has accompanied the abolition of tax frontiers and the completion of the internal market, the disparities in VAT rates on cars have been reduced quite considerably:

- in 1987 rates ranged from 12 to 38 %;
- since 1 January 1993 they have ranged from 15 to 25 %, a narrowing in the differential from 26 percentage points to 10 percentage points.

In the run-up to the completion of the internal market, it was not deemed necessary to approximate any other taxes that might be levied on the purchase of new cars in some Member States since they did not entail checks at frontiers. The Commission will though examine the impact of such taxes on the operation of the internal market in the report it is to make shortly to the Council on the functioning of the new VAT arrangements as they affect new cars.

As regards second-hand cars, the completion of the internal market and the abolition of tax frontiers have made it possible for individuals to purchase a second-hand car without restrictions in any Member State and to return with it to their country of residence without paying VAT. This contrasts with the situation that obtained prior to 31 December 1992 in the wake of the Gaston Schul judgment.

Common arrangements for taxing second-hand cars are also laid down in the proposal for a Seventh VAT Directive, which is currently under discussion in the Council. The Commission firmly hopes that the proposal will be adopted very shortly in view of its importance for the smooth operation of the internal market.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1016/93

by Mr Iñigo Mendez de Vigo (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(3 May 1993)

(93/C 292/104)

Subject: Statements by President Delors concerning recent negotiations between the Community and Morocco

During his recent visit to the Kingdom of Morocco the Commission President, Mr Delors, announced the start of negotiations between the Commission and that country with the aim of establishing close cooperation in various sectors including agriculture.

Has the Commission properly assessed the implications of an agreement of this kind for agriculture in Community countries, and more particularly for remote and island regions such as the Canary Islands?

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

(30 July 1993)

During Mr Delors' visit to Morocco from 25 to 27 February this year, the discussions focused on closer ties between the

Community and Morocco on issues including agriculture.

Closer cooperation is likely to be in the interest of both sides, especially if it is aimed at taking advantage of existing complementarities.

The Commission will take care to ensure that such cooperation does not go against European interests.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1057/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 May 1993)
(93/C 292/105)

Subject: Restriction of the Greek cooperative movement and its effects on farmers

The extent to which structural interventions are successful depends on the extent to which farmers — with their organizations leading the way — take action to increase financial resources. In the case of Greek agriculture, these organizations are the cooperatives. Experience shows that the farmers' need for cooperative organizations increases as protection for products and support for prices decrease and the market becomes more competitive. In the Community, cooperatives account for 60 % of the collection, processing and marketing of all agricultural products. In Greece, despite the fact that cooperative organizations play a much smaller role, some state bodies are using all possible means to try and eliminate the largest cooperatives (such as KYDEP, Elaïourgiki and KEOSOE).

In the light of the above, will the Commission demonstrate the Community's profound concern at the Greek state authorities' policy of restricting the cooperative movement, regardless of the future adverse effects on structural interventions and on Greek farmers?

Answer given by Mr Steichen
on behalf of the Commission
(15 July 1993)

Community legislation on agriculture, as regards both the common organization of markets and structural policy, recognizes the importance and role of producer groups and organizations, including cooperatives.

The Community regulations on structures provide for start-up aid to producer groups and organizations in regions where there are structural problems relating to the collection and the marketing of agricultural products. In Greece, 23 producer groups and 321 organizations have been recognized, most of them cooperatives.

In the fruit and vegetable sector, producers' organizations help to stabilize markets and also effect withdrawals in connection with intervention. Thus, during the 1992/93 marketing year (position as at 23 April 1993), a total of 1 042 197 tonnes was withdrawn from the market by the Greek organizations. In the case of olive oil, the producer groups and associations help to manage Community production aid and may be given responsibility for implementing measures to improve the quality of olive oil.

As for the commercial activities of the cooperatives and their possible financing, it is Member States which take the decisions to grant national aid, within the Community rules.

It is clear, therefore, that Community legislation to promote the cooperative movement has been successful in Greece. This being so, the Commission cannot confirm that the Greek cooperative movement is being suppressed.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1076/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 May 1993)
(93/C 292/106)

Subject: The Sounion National Park in Attica

The mayors of Lavrion and Keratea recently claimed that plans are afoot to develop land in the Sounion National Park. What will the Commission do to help save the Sounion National Park from development?

Answer given by Mr Paleokrassas
on behalf of the Commission
(7 July 1993)

Greece has not classified the zone under consideration as a Special Protection Area according to Article 4 of Directive 79/409/EEC ⁽¹⁾ concerning the conservation of wild birds, which is the only legal basis for Community intervention for nature conservation applicable at present. Nor has the area in question been identified as being of Community importance under the abovementioned directive.

Consequently, and in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity (Article 130R), point 4 of the Treaty), it is the responsibility of the Greek authorities to take the necessary measures for the wise use and protection of the biotope in question.

(¹) OJ No L 103, 25. 4. 1979.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1077/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 May 1993)

(93/C 292/107)

Subject: Programmes to promote local characteristics

Does the Commission think that Community programmes to promote local characteristics — traditions, manners and customs, folklore — are being implemented satisfactorily so that individual countries do not lose their identity in a united Europe but find it a source of inspiration for their future development?

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

(11 August 1993)

The new Article 128 (on culture) inserted in the EC Treaty by the Treaty on European Union (in process of ratification) states that 'The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore.'

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, it is primarily the Member States which are responsible for developing and conserving their local cultures, traditions, customs and national folklore, since they are in the best position to identify what is at stake and to decide on what action to take.

However, Commission proposals would be conceivable if the Member States were to agree that it was necessary for activities of this type to be supported and complemented at Community level, for example for the purpose of bringing to the fore certain common elements in European cultural heritage.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1087/93
by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Council of the European Communities
(10 May 1993)
(93/C 292/108)

Subject: Rights of people from the islands of Imbros and Tenedos

The people of Imbros and Tenedos now living in Greece who have been driven from their own country have decided to claim their rights under the Treaty of Lausanne. Pursuant to Article 14 of the Treaty they have decided to create a Greek Imbros Administration. Can the Council support the aims of the Greek people of Imbros and Tenedos regarding their rights under the Treaty of Lausanne?

Answer

(28 September 1993)

The Community has no competence with regard to the questions raised by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1108/93

by Mr José Valverde López (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(29 April 1993)

(93/C 292/109)

Subject: The Commission and special interest groups

In the *Official Journal of the European Communities* (¹), the Commission published a text on dialogue between the Commission and special interest groups as part of the new policy of making Community activities more transparent.

The basic problem stemming from this does not concern the content of the communication; it lies, rather, in the fact that the Commission has stepped up its direct dealings with special interest groups.

The Community Institutions have provided a specific form for special interest groups, namely the Economic and Social Committee. In institutional terms, would it not be more proper for the Commission to channel all its contacts with special interest groups via the Economic and Social Committee, revitalizing it in the process, rather than increasing contacts with special interest groups in an isolated fashion, with all the problems that that involves in terms of 'pressure' and unrepresentativeness?

(¹) OJ No C 63, 5. 3. 1993.

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

(29 July 1993)

The Economic and Social Committee is the institutional framework provided by the Treaties for economic and social bodies to express their views. However, there are many groups representing quite specific interests which often feel the need independently to establish a direct and informal dialogue with the institutions, even in the absence of proposals or guidelines for a Community policy.

The text to which the Honourable Member refers is designed to clarify existing relations between the Commission and special interest groups.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1137/93

by Mr Thomas Megahy (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(12 May 1993)

(93/C 292/110)

Subject: European Social Fund: Allocation of funds under Objectives 3 and 4

Will the Commission list the amount of ESF allocations to each Community country for Objectives 3 and 4 in the latest year for which figures are available?

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

(7 July 1993)

European Social Fund

Amounts agreed in the Community Support Frameworks for programming by the Member States, in 1993 for Objectives 3 and 4

Member State	million ecu
Belgium	89,4
Denmark	50,8
Germany	293,9
Spain	288,7
France	447,1
Italy	300,0
Luxembourg	3,6
Netherlands	117,9
United Kingdom	525,7
Total	2 117,1

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1172/93

by Mr Panayotis Roumeliotis (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(13 May 1993)

(93/C 292/111)

Subject: Earthquake damage in Pirgos, Ilia

Most buildings in Pirgos, Ilia, were extensively damaged following three devastating earthquakes on 26 March 1993.

Initial inspections estimate that 21 % of the buildings will have to be demolished, 17 % are temporarily uninhabitable and 62 % are inhabitable but have suffered substantial damage.

The total extent of the damage is estimated at Drs 25 billion and most of the population are spending the night outdoors despite the bad weather.

How does the Commission intend to assist in this situation of exceptional need?

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

(6 September 1993)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply to the oral question H-494/93 by Mr Kostopoulos, which it gave during question time at Parliament's May 1993 part-session ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Debates of the European Parliament No 3-431 (May 1993).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1186/93

by Mrs Mary Banotti (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(13 May 1993)

(93/C 292/112)

Subject: EC emergency care card

Could the Commission inform me of the present position regarding the introduction of a European emergency care card, following the conclusions of the Council of 29 September 1989?

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

(8 July 1993)

Since previous answers on this subject have been given in response to Written Questions Nos 2017/90 ⁽¹⁾ and

1508/91 ⁽²⁾ by Mr Zeller, much progress has been made on the introduction of a European card for the provision of immediate medical care. The administrative and legal problems encountered have been solved in the Administrative Commission on Social Security for Migrant Workers. Difficulties remain because of the different levels of technological development reached in the Member States. Working Groups of the Administrative Commission on Social Security for Migrant Workers are engaged in finding a solution to these technological difficulties but it will be some time before this is achieved.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 35, 11. 2. 1991.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 311, 2. 12. 1991.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1306/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 June 1993)

(93/C 292/113)

Subject: Map of Europe leaving out Greece

The map of Europe chosen recently as the emblem for the European conference of motorists omits Greece. This omission was pointed out in Rome at the European transport conference held on 25—27 February 1993. The European organizers of the conference who designed the map are chiefly to blame. In view of this incident, does the Commission intend to press for decisive Community measures to prevent such occurrences in future?

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

(27 July 1993)

The Commission publishes a political map of the European Community. Many publishers apply for the reproduction rights which are generally accorded, or use it to produce other maps.

The Commission does not, however, have the right, nor is it possible, to take steps in the event of errors in maps of Europe published by private publishers, or organizers of events.

The Commission therefore has no means of intervening in situations of the type described by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1382/93

by Mr Wilfried Telkämper (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(8 June 1993)

(93/C 292/114)

Subject: Representation of the EC energy sector by EdF at Expo 92

For what reasons was the energy sector represented principally by EdF in the official EC section of Expo '92 in Seville, despite the fact that EdF is in no way representative and cannot claim to be representative, given its heavy reliance on nuclear power stations?

Who was responsible for taking this decision?

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

(29 July 1993)

The exhibition in the European Community pavilion at the Seville Universal Exposition was a general presentation and was not, as the Honourable Member would seem to believe, subdivided by technical category, so there was no separate energy or other section.

EdF was in fact one of the two sponsors of the Community pavilion, the other being the European Savings Banks Groups. They were selected following a scouting process undertaken by the official Expo'92 agency, Telemundi. This practice of having financial sponsors was employed by a large number of participants at the Exposition, including the Community Member States.

The decision was taken by the Commissioner-General responsible for Community participation in Expo '92 after the principle of entering into financial partnerships had been discussed in the Commission.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1392/93

by Mr Madron Seligman (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(8 June 1993)

(93/C 292/115)

Subject: Responsibility of the Commission for the success of the Maastricht Treaty

In its answer to my question No 1986/92 ⁽¹⁾ (Disgraceful behaviour at Rhodes Airport) the Commission once again sought to shelter behind the concept of having no

competence to intervene in a case where citizens of one Member State had been unreasonably treated in another Member State.

I have received similar answers to a number of questions including those calling attention to mail order fraud across EC frontiers (Written Question No 1268/92 ⁽²⁾) and apparent discrimination against British pilots in France and Germany (Written Question No 2885/91 ⁽³⁾). Many MEPs have also complained at the lack of religious freedom in a certain Member State leading to an unacceptable degree of persecution.

I submit that the Commission has done nothing to encourage a climate favourable to the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and to dispel the criticisms voiced in several Member States about the 'democratic deficit', by adopting this seemingly complacent attitude to clear evidence that the Single Market is being undermined in important respects.

If citizens' legitimate grievances are ventilated by their democratically elected Members of the European Parliament, but nothing is seen to be done to redress wrongs under the pretext of the Commission being 'without competence' (however legally correct), then citizens become disillusioned and cynical and vote against the further integration of the Community. This cynicism is enhanced when the Commission's draconian powers are evident in many other fields of activity affecting the general populations of our Community.

The Commission pays lip service to the principle of human rights in third countries. When will it recommend to the Council that it be enabled to secure the rights of European citizens within the Community itself?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 90, 31. 3. 1993, p. 21.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 345, 30. 12. 1992, p. 16.

⁽³⁾ OJ No C 269, 19. 10. 1992, p. 14.

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

(29 July 1993)

Referring to the string of questions previously tabled by the Honourable Member, the Commission stresses that it is always grateful to Members of Parliament who draw its attention to problems, difficulties and disappointments experienced by citizens of the Community in their dealings with the administrations and enforcement agencies of Member States and more particularly in situations where they are denied rights and opportunities deriving from the

treaties. The Honourable Member will no doubt be the first to acknowledge that the Commission can only act within the confines of the authority and powers entrusted to it by the treaties. That principle is indeed of utmost significance in the context of the national procedures concerning the ratification of the Maastricht treaty.

All the Member States have legal systems founded on the respect of human rights and democracy and providing for remedies through the courts and administrative procedures such as the ombudsman or petitions to Parliament for the purpose of protection of fundamental rights and benefits as guaranteed by constitutional and national law, as well as Community law and the European Convention of Human rights. The Commission does not believe that it should propose, as suggested by the Honourable Member, to become a specific enforcement agency for human rights.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1402/93

by Mrs Hiltrud Breyer (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(8 June 1993)

(93/C 292/116)

Subject: Decommissioning of nuclear power stations

1. What reserves have so far been set aside by the operators of individual European nuclear power stations for the dismantling of reactors and permanent storage of associated radioactive waste?
2. What reserves will the operators have set aside by the time these power stations reach the end of their operational life?
3. Has a light water power reactor (greater than 400 MW capacity) which had been in service for more than 12 months ever been dismantled in Europe? If so, what was the cost of dismantling and disposing of the reactor?

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

(29 July 1993)

1 and 2. Funds for decommissioning nuclear power plants are set up in Member States having such plants. Rules, procedures and amounts of these funds vary between Member States, according to the public or private structure of the industry, and the size of the nuclear programme.

3. No LWR power plant rated above 400 MW electrical rating has yet been dismantled. The largest nuclear power plant which is currently being dismantled is the Gundremmingen KRB-A Boiling Water Reactor (250 MW electrical rating). The plant is one of the four Pilot Decommissioning Projects of the Communities R&D Programme on Decommissioning of Nuclear Installation (1989—1993). The completion of decommissioning of KRB-A is scheduled for 1999; the overall cost of DM 250 million is a recent estimate (1992).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1403/93

by Mrs Hiltrud Breyer (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(8 June 1993)

(93/C 292/117)

Subject: Decommissioning of nuclear power stations

1. What is the Commission's view of the claim made by American nuclear experts that the cost of decommissioning a nuclear power station is almost as high as the construction cost, and on what studies does the Commission base its assessment of this statement?

2. By how much would the production costs per kWh for nuclear power stations be increased if operators were required to set aside reserves equivalent to the inflation-adjusted construction costs over an operational life of 25 years, with a view to subsequent decommissioning?

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

(29 July 1993)

1. Studies performed under the Community R&D programme as well as estimates made available to the OECD/NEA by various states, including the USA, have consistently shown that the cost of dismantling a nuclear power plant after normal operation is substantially lower than the construction cost at the same time.

2. The provision of funds to cover the estimated costs of decommissioning represents of the order of 1% of the electricity generating costs and is already included in the price of electricity.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1409/93

by Sir James Scott-Hopkins (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 June 1993)

(93/C 292/118)

Subject: Agricultural watch groups

What is the Commission doing to encourage the creation of 'agricultural watch' groups in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and West Gloucestershire?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1410/93

by Sir James Scott-Hopkins (PPE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 June 1993)

(93/C 292/119)

Subject: Support for agricultural machinery rings

What support is the Commission giving to the formation of agricultural machinery rings (i.e. cooperative ownership of agricultural plant and machinery) in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and West Gloucestershire?

**Joint answer to Written Questions Nos 1409/93
and 1410/93**

given by Mr Steichen
on behalf of the Commission

(9 July 1993)

The Commission is aware that agricultural watch groups are being formed in the United Kingdom for the purpose of preventing crime and vandalism. While the Commission would support the aims of such groups it is unable to offer any financial assistance.

Creation of agricultural cooperatives and in particular those for the ownership and operation of machinery is supported by the Commission under Council Regulation (EEC) No 2328/91⁽¹⁾. Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Member State. The Commission is aware of the Severn and Wye machinery ring established by the English Rural Development Commission's pilot 'Marches Countryside Employment Programme'. No Commission funding is involved in this project.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 218, 6. 8. 1991.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1429/93

by Mrs Nel van Dijk (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 June 1993)

(93/C 292/120)

Subject: Negotiations by the Commission with (Czecho) Slovakia and Hungary concerning the Gabčíkovo project

In view of the serious situation in relation to the Danube dam, including the differences of opinion about the gravity of the consequences for drinking water supplies and the woodlands bordering the river, the possibility for the Slovaks to regulate the water flow unilaterally, the apparent contradiction between the possibility of generation electricity while maintaining the previous water level in the Danube, the symbolic nature of the project for both countries, the tendency towards propaganda which can be seen in the reports to the public on both sides of the border, with the ensuing tensions and the consequences for international political relations in the region, answers to the following questions are sought as a matter of urgency:

Can the Commission indicate what progress has been made in the negotiations thus far and whether there are plans for a wide ranging study of the effects of the alternatives proposed by the committee of experts?

Does the Commission consider it possible to start an information campaign, together with the Slovak and Hungarian authorities, to enable the population on both sides of the border, on the basis of accurate information, to contribute to the discussion which must produce a solution to the conflict?

Is the Commission prepared, given the international significance of the natural habitat created in that area by the Danube, to take or support initiatives seeking to have this area declared an international nature reserve, the protection of which will be monitored by an international committee?

**Answer given by Mr Van den Broek
on behalf of the Commission**

(10 August 1993)

The Commission would refer to its statement in the plenary meeting on 11 March 1993.

Since that date, both the Slovak and Hungarian governments have, following approval by their parliaments, adopted a special agreement for submitting the case to the International Court of Justice. An agreement is also being

sought about the temporary water management regime, awaiting the ruling of the International Court.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1466/93

by Mrs Maartje van Putten (S)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(9 June 1993)

(93/C 292/121)

Subject: TVE proposal videos on environment and development

In order to promote the understanding in ACP countries of those issues concerning the environment and development in general, a proposal has been put to the Commission by TVE to continue its service of disseminating videos on these subjects free to local ACP views. Although recent national authorizing officers, the president of the Development Committee and a number of members of the European Parliament have written to you to support this initiative, as yet non funding has been made available.

Could I ask you to look at the possibilities of supporting this very important action which gives visibility to good governance and the benefits of democratic government?

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

(30 July 1993)

In response to the request of TVE for financial aid under the regional funds of EDF in favour of the project 'Moving pictures in the developing world', the Commission has been studying not only the possibility of financial aid, but also support adapted to the project's own characteristics.

In 1989, the budgetary line 'Ecology in developing countries' in fact contributed with ECU 81 500 to the experimental phase of this project. The considerable amount of ECU 200 000 per year over a two-year period requested for the second phase cannot qualify for such financing which does not figure among the priorities laid down by the Committee for Programming of the budgetary line.

The Commission would add that the project has already received two running aids under the scheme of aid to non government organizations for a total amount of ECU 185 000 plus an additional aid of approximately ECU 30 000 under the budgetary line 'environment'.

Given these considerations and bearing in mind the other financial contributions that TVE has already received, the project cannot be recommended for further assistance in this second phase.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1477/93

by Mr Paul Staes (V)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(14 June 1993)

(93/C 292/122)

Subject: Activities of the International Organization for Migration within the UN Plan of Action for Mozambique

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been asked by the Secretary-General of the UN to develop an urgent plan of action for Mozambique.

This initiative concerns the voluntary return of and aid to internally displaced persons, and aid to demobilized soldiers in need of such assistance.

1. Does the Commission agree that this plan of action is a valuable initiative?
2. Is the Commission going to support the plan of action when decisions concerning material and financial aid to Mozambique have to be made?

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

(15 July 1993)

The Commission has received the IOM's plan and is examining it along with other proposals in the same field.

1. The Commission is using all the means at its disposal to encourage Mozambican refugees to return to their places of origin. In this connection, it is giving a leading role to reintegration, and is concentrating on the rehabilitation of Mozambique's social and economic infrastructure to enable it to absorb not only the returnees but also those displaced within the country (who are present in larger numbers and are worse off than the refugees). Against this background, the OIM plan can be accepted.
 2. The Commission will provide financial support for operations in the OIM plan which seek to assist vulnerable individuals arriving in or already in the country on the same basis as projects put forward by other national or international entities.
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WRITTEN QUESTION No 1553/93

by Mr Alex Smith (S)

to the Council of the European Communities

(15 June 1993)

(93/C 292/123)

Subject: Supply of weapons to Iraq by Austria

Will the Council make it a condition of acceptance of Austria as a Member State of the European Community that it produces a full report of the role of Austrian manufacturing companies in supplying equipment and weapons to Iraq?

Answer

(28 September 1993)

The accession of Austria to the European Union implies that this country will be bound to fully apply the existing 'acquis communautaire' which, as concerns Iraq, includes a trade embargo. This embargo has been decided in conformity with resolution 661 (1990) of the UN Security Council covering *inter alia* equipment and weapons, the implementation of which is mandatory for all Members of the United Nations and therefore also for Austria.

In the framework of political dialogue with applicant countries, a meeting at expert level between the EC Troika and the four applicant countries (including Austria) on conventional arms export was held in Brussels on 23 April 1993. Although the specific issue of arms embargo on Iraq was not addressed, the issue of embargoes on third countries was discussed in general terms and it appeared from the discussion that similar criteria on the matter were adopted by the Community and its Member States and the applicant countries.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1566/93

by the following members: Mauro Chiabrandò,
Bryan Cassidy (PPE) and Tullio Regge (S)

to the Council of the European Communities

(17 June 1993)

(93/C 292/124)

Subject: Freedom of movement within the European Community

On 25 March 1993 the authors of this question received the Council's answer to Written Question No 66/93⁽¹⁾ of 9 February 1993 concerning an incident which occurred at the Italian customs office at Modane (on the border between Italy and France) involving the confiscation of a car registered in France and driven by an Italian citizen (Cordero).

The answer given appears incomplete and unsatisfactory, given that the problem had already been referred to the Commission's Directorate-General for Customs Union and Indirect Taxation (XXI-01) which, by letter of 20 November 1992 (ref. SI/mss CE/EM/92/cordero), drew the attention of the Italian Government to this incident in completely different and, in the author's opinion, more realistic and positive terms.

The author therefore requests further details and clarification, or at least a consistent answer to this question.

(¹) OJ No C 101, 13. 4. 1993, p. 42.

Answer
(28 September 1993)

In its reply to the Honourable Members' previous question, the Council described the general legal framework applicable as regards the episode to which the Honourable Members refers.

In fact, as the Council replied previously, restrictions concerning the use by a resident of a Member State of a car registered in another Member State are regrettably the consequence of the persistence of national taxes on motor vehicles other than VAT which is subject to Community harmonization.

In this particular case, the customs authorities are required to apply the national provisions in force, the conformity of which with Community law is monitored by the Commission. The Council notes that the Commission has provided detailed explanations on the subject to the persons concerned.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1588/93
by Mrs Raymonde Dury (S)
to the Council of the European Communities
(18 June 1993)
(93/C 292/125)

Subject: Selection panel for works of art for the new Council buildings

This year the Council is organizing a competition for artists. The aim is to gather proposals from creative artists, 'citizens' of the Community Member States, for works of art to be placed in the new Council building under construction in Brussels.

The works are to be selected by a Selection Committee appointed by the Council. The Committee comprises one full member and one alternate member per Member State.

National working groups, whose examiners are co-opted, have been set up by the Selection Committee to draw up the list of artists selected for the competition.

Which Council of Ministers had the responsibility and the right to take such a decision? What were the criteria for appointing the members of the Selection Committee, and how were they selected?

Finally, whatever the status of the members of the Selection Committee, is it fair on the artists and appropriate in a decision-making procedure that the Committee is not required to justify its decisions?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1719/93
by Mr Klaus Wettig (PSE)
to the Council of the European Communities

(29 June 1993)
(93/C 292/126)

Subject: Design competition (93/S 21-3373/FR): New buildings for the Council of the European Communities and its offices

In the *Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Communities* (¹), under the heading 'General announcements' the Council announced an open competition for the design of the new Council building in Brussels.

Because of the specifically individual nature of the artists profession, its organizational structures are less clear-cut than those of other professions. In addition, national artists associations are frequently short of funds. As a result, artists are therefore not always able to keep themselves regularly informed about public tenders, for example by means of regular subscription to the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

1. Would it be possible to publish such invitations to tender in specialized publications as well as in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* and the Federal Gazette, in order to improve access for those concerned?
2. On what criteria is the selection board referred to in the above tendering procedure composed?

(¹) OJ No S 21, 30. 1. 1993, p. 48.

Joint answer
to Written Questions Nos 1588/93 and 1719/93
(28 September 1993)

The Honourable Member should note that the Committee for Selecting Works of Art was set up by Council Decision of

12 June 1989. Pursuant to that Decision, the Committee has fifteen members, consisting of:

- one representative per Member State,
- one representative for the architects,
- one representative for the General Secretariat of the Council, and
- one representative for the Staff Committee of the General Secretariat of the Council.

The members were designated by the States or principals which they represent; one alternate member for each of the full members has been designated in the same way.

Under this Decision of 12 June 1989, the Committee has the task of selecting the works of art by means of a competition open to all artists from the Member States.

The resources made available for this purpose are the responsibility of the Committee. The Committee for Selecting Works of Art has accordingly drawn up the rules for the competition and these are to be published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

The Committee has also suggested that national Working Parties should see to it that the notice of competition is circulated in specialist publications in their respective countries.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1619/93

by Mr Yves Verwaerde (LDR)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(22 June 1993)

(93/C 292/127)

Subject: Monitoring of the utilization of grants made as emergency humanitarian aid

What mechanisms have been introduced as part of the financial control of the utilization of grants made as emergency Community humanitarian aid in order to ensure proper use of funds channelled through NGOs?

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

(26 July 1993)

The Commission uses exactly the same control mechanisms for emergency humanitarian aid as for other Community policies and does so in accordance with the Financial Regulation and the internal rules for implementing the budget.

The Court of Auditors also carries out audits on humanitarian aid in the same way as it does for other areas of Community activity.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1646/93

by Mr Llewellyn Smith (S)

to the Council of the European Communities

(22 June 1993)

(93/C 292/128)

Subject: Community policy on plutonium

Will the Council, as a priority, re-examine the Community policy on plutonium re-use as nuclear fuel, as set out in COM(85) 401 final, in the light of the significant changes in energy supply policy, uranium prices and proliferation concerns over trade in plutonium since 1985?

Answer

(30 September 1993)

The question put by the Honourable Member refers to the content of the Illustrative Nuclear Programme under Article 40 of the Euratom Treaty. That programme was drawn up by the Commission, which published it in 1985 after obtaining the Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee.

The periodic updates of the Illustrative Programme, the last of which was in 1990, are the Commission's responsibility.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1696/93

by Mr John Hume (PSE)

to the Commission of the European Communities

(28 June 1993)

(93/C 292/129)

Subject: Credit unions in Ireland and the United Kingdom

Will the Commission confirm that:

1. the adoption by the Council of the Commission's amended proposal for a Council regulation on the statute for a European cooperative society would have no automatic impact on the current exclusion of credit unions in Ireland and the United Kingdom from the First EEC Banking Directive?

2. if a European cooperative society which is a credit union in Ireland or the United Kingdom were established under the European cooperative society regulation, when adopted, that credit union would be covered by the current exclusion of credit unions in Ireland and the United Kingdom from the First EEC Banking Directive?

**Answer given by Mr Vanni d'Archirafi
on behalf of the Commission**

(22 July 1993)

The Commission confirms that the adoption by the Council of the regulation on the statute for a European cooperative society will have no automatic impact on the current exclusion of credit unions in Ireland and the United Kingdom from the scope of the First Banking Directive (77/780/EEC) ⁽¹⁾.

Such an exclusion will not be directly affected by the transformation of an existing credit union in Ireland or the United Kingdom into a European cooperative society when the above regulation is adopted.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 332, 17. 12. 1977.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1699/93

by Mrs Dorothée Piermont (ARC)

to the Council of the European Communities

(28 June 1993)

(93/C 292/130)

Subject: Irradiation of casual workers at EBS in Forbach (France)

While carrying out repair work at the EBS particle accelerator in Forbach, two casual workers, Daniel Leroy and Giovanni Nespola, were heavily irradiated with beta rays and suffered permanent health damage. The particle accelerator did not meet legal standards, had not been notified to the competent monitoring authorities and was not equipped to measure exposure to radiation of personnel.

Neither of the casual workers were insured, and neither had been given the slightest hint of the health risk involved in the repair work. The company has until now refused to pay the victims any compensation or call the Chairman and Managing Director and the Executive Director to account.

What measures and monitoring mechanisms are envisaged by the Council to prevent such accidents in future?

What steps will the Council take to secure suitable compensation for the victims and their families and ensure that those responsible are sentenced?

Answer

(28 September 1993)

The prevention of accidents, such as that mentioned by the Honourable Member, is covered by Directive 80/836/Euratom of 15 July 1980, as amended by Directive 84/467/Euratom of 3 September 1984, which established the basic safety standards for the health protection of the general public and workers against the dangers of ionizing radiation, and Directive 90/641/Euratom of 4 December 1990 on the operational protection of outside workers exposed to the risk of ionizing radiation during their activities in controlled areas.

The consequences under civil and criminal law of such accidents are the responsibility of the Member States concerned.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1800/93

by the following members: Leo Tindemans (PPE), Alberto Michelini (PPE), Sir Christopher Prout (PPE), Pierre Bernard-Reymond (PPE) and Friedrich Merz (PPE)

to the Council of the European Communities

(12 July 1993)

(93/C 292/131)

Subject: Malta's application to join the EC

Will the Council consider opening up negotiations for accession with Malta at the same time as with EFTA countries?

Answer

(30 September 1993)

In connection with enlargement to include countries other than EFTA countries, the European Council meeting in Lisbon took the view, if the challenges of European Union involving a larger number of Member States were to be met successfully, progress would also have to be achieved regarding the internal development of the Union and those countries' preparations for accession. The Lisbon European Council further agreed that relations with Malta would be developed and strengthened on the basis of the Association Agreement and Malta's application for accession and by intensifying the political dialogue.

At its meeting in Copenhagen the European Council confirmed that its policy on enlargement to include the EFTA countries did not affect the position of other countries that had applied for accession to the Union. Each application would be examined on its own merits.

At its meeting on 19 July 1993, having received the Commission opinions on the applications for accession from Cyprus and Malta, the Council welcomed the positive tone of these opinions on the eligibility and suitability of Cyprus and Malta to form part of the European Union. It instructed the Permanent Representative Committee to examine those opinions in the light of the Council's generally positive assessment, with a view to enabling the Council to adopt a position, at its meeting in October 1993, on the conclusions proposed by the Commission.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1901/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Council of the European Communities

(15 July 1993)

(93/C 292/132)

Subject: Need to exempt Greek island regions from the tax on carbon dioxide emissions and energy

The population of the Greek island regions, although approving the aims of an environmental policy, do not agree with the imposition of a fiscal policy incompatible with the objectives of economic and social cohesion. The Greek islanders are at present particularly worried by the proposal for a Council directive introducing a tax on carbon dioxide emissions and energy ⁽¹⁾.

They point out the proposal is unfair to the Greek islands as:

1. It provides for reductions or exemptions for 'firms with a high energy consumption',
2. It provides that the tax shall apply to the islands of the Community, but rightly exempts the French overseas departments, the Canary Islands, Madeira and the Azores etc.

Will the Council therefore on its own initiative remove from the scope of the tax all sea and air transport operations serving all the islands of the Community?

Answer

(28 September 1993)

All of the issues arising from the proposal for a Directive to which the Honourable Member refers are at present being given thorough consideration by the Council. At this stage, it is too soon to say whether the Council intends to remove from the scope of the CO₂/energy tax all sea and air transport operations serving all the islands of the Community.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1920/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)
to the Council of the European Communities

(15 July 1993)

(93/C 292/133)

Subject: Cotton cultivation in Greece

The outlook for the cultivation of cotton in Greece is uncertain, particularly following the Community's CAP reform and the recent preliminary agreement between the USA and the EC which provides for a further reduction in cotton production. High co-responsibility levies, low prices and production restrictions mean that the outlook for cotton even bleaker. Aware of this, the representatives of the Greek cotton producers are asking for the production ceiling to be raised to 1 million tonnes instead of being lowered to 701 000 tonnes and for producers to be granted prices which cover cultivation costs and provide farmers with a reasonable profit.

Will the Council improve the measures in support of Community, and especially Greek, cotton producers?

Answer

(28 September 1993)

The Council would first point out that the system of aid for cotton (see Regulation (EEC) No 1964/87) ⁽¹⁾ in any case provides for a reduction in aid in line with the amount by which the quantities guaranteed for each marketing year are exceeded.

It is true that, in its decisions on agricultural prices and certain related measures for the 1993/94 marketing year, the Council was faced with a considerable expansion of cotton cultivation in the Community and therefore agreed to increase from 15 to 20 % the maximum reduction in the norm price applied if the maximum guaranteed quantity fixed for cotton is exceeded, and to increase from 5 to 7 % the limit on the amount which can be carried forward to the following marketing year if the new ceiling is exceeded (see Regulation (EEC) No 553/93) ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ COM(92) 226 final — OJ No C 196, 3. 8. 1992, p. 1.

However, in accordance with the European Parliament's wishes, the Council has decided to postpone application of these increases until the 1994/95 marketing year and, since it is aware that the increases in the maximum reduction may affect the income of cotton producers, it has asked the Commission in its proposal on the norm price for the 1994/95 marketing year to provide it with a report on the latest situation of this market.

(¹) OJ No L 184, 3. 7. 1987, p. 14.

(²) OJ No L 154, 25. 6. 1993, p. 21.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1921/93

by Mr Sotiris Kostopoulos (NI)

to the Council of the European Communities

(15 July 1993)

(93/C 292/134)

Subject: Conviction of Greek journalist without a defence lawyer

A journalist has been convicted in Greece under circumstances grossly infringing human rights and Article 6 of the Treaty of Rome. A Greek court disregarded the right of a journalist on an Athens newspaper, Mr Mikhailis Kourmousis, to be tried with a defence lawyer and sentenced him to seven months imprisonment.

In view of this serious infringement of human rights and, of course, of the freedom of the press, what steps will the Council take to defend the rule of law and human rights?

Answer

(28 September 1993)

Since the circumstances referred to are outside the Council's remit, it is not appropriate for the Council to make any statement with regard to the question raised by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1999/93

by Mr Ernest Glinne (PSE)

to the Council of the European Communities

(19 July 1993)

(93/C 292/135)

Subject: Protection of turtles

It seems that, in October 1992, two female biologists in Mexico were abducted, raped and tortured with lighted

cigarettes. One of the abductors, Severiano Lara Hernandez, who is a professional dealer in black market turtle eggs, has been identified by one of the victims, but is being protected by the Mexican authorities, even though black market trading in turtle meat and eggs is illegal. Turtle eggs are considered a delicacy and are worth a lot of money on the unofficial market.

The violent incident recounted above occurred on the coast of the province of Chiapas, the former governor of which is now Minister of the Interior. Biologists working on a rescue and conservation project all feel intimidated, and protests by a group of about a hundred artists, led by the writer Homero Aridjis and the North American ecologist Todd Steiner, have so far produced no response from the Mexican Ministers for Fisheries and the Interior, or from the controlled press in Mexico. South of the Rio Grande, killing turtles and taking the eggs they have laid in the sand is a lucrative sport, and raping a woman is not a crime, in practice. According to officials, Mexico's image must not be tarnished now by any action the US media might take on the turtles, as the agreement on US-Mexican trade is about to be ratified (NAFTA, North American Free Trade Association); the Mexican partner's reputation must be protected come what may . . .

Turtles are in a similar situation to whales, under threat of extinction. What is the Council's attitude to the need to preserve this endangered species and to the funding by international associations of conservation projects rendered unworkable, particularly overseas, by complicity between illegal hunters and the authorities?

Answer

(28 September 1993)

As the Honourable Member is aware, the Council is currently examining a proposal for a Regulation laying down provisions applicable to the possession of and trade in species of wild fauna and flora. The Annex to the proposal lists a number of species of turtle including some whose habitat is the Mexican coast. Given the objective of the Regulation, this inclusion should maintain a high level of protection of these species, which are for the most part already included in the Annexes to Council Regulation (EEC) No 3623/82 (¹) on the implementation in the Community of the Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora (CITES), which the above proposal is designed to amend.

(¹) OJ No L 384, 31. 12. 1982, p. 1.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2183/93
by Mrs Brigitte Langenhagen (PPE)
to the Council of the European Communities
 (28 July 1993)
 (93/C 292/136)

Subject: Failure to use the German language

When German authorities/individuals respond to calls for tenders, for instance as part of the EC Joint Research Programme, they are advised by the Commission services to submit their applications in English or French because they will thus have a better chance of being considered.

Furthermore, the texts of the annexes to the calls for tenders which are supplied on request by the Commission are not usually available in German.

1. Can the Council list the number of languages in which it received applications for research projects for the period between 1989 and 1993 from the individual Member States?
2. In which languages was the research documentation available?
3. Is the Council in a position to confirm that the exclusion of an official language leads to competitive disadvantages, notably in the case of authorities/persons without access to their own translation facilities?
4. What measures does the Council intend to take to put an end to these 'discriminatory practices'?

Answer
 (30 September 1993)

As this subject comes within the competence of the Commission, it is not for the Council to answer the question raised by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2267/93
by Mr Filippos Pierros (PPE)
to the Council of the European Communities
 (1 September 1993)
 (93/C 292/137)

Subject: Viability of the Committee of Regions

The Committee of Regions, whose establishment by the Economic and Social Committee is called for in the Maastricht Treaty, is unlikely to survive the treaty's ratification by all Member States because of a lack of money,

according to the ESC's president, Suzanne Tiemann. The ESC, she said, has been appropriated less than half the ECU 24 million needed to create the Committee of Regions.

In view of the important role the Committee of Regions will play in fostering EC economic and social cohesion, and in view of the Member States' legal commitment to the organization, cannot the Council appropriate the money needed to create a viable Committee of Regions?

Answer
 (30 September 1993)

1. When establishing the draft budget for 1994 on 22 July 1993, the Council took into account the budgetary rigour prevailing at both national and Community level and, at its first reading, set the allocation for the Committee of the Regions at ECU 12 million.
2. The Council would point out that the Committee of the Regions has already been allocated ECU 2 million in the Economic and Social Committee's estimates for the current year.
3. The Council is aware of the importance of the Committee of the Regions and the part it will play upon ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, and has decided to take the necessary measures to enable it to operate in accordance with the Treaty's provisions.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2294/93
by Mr Gérard Fuchs (PSE)
to the Council of the European Communities
 (1 September 1993)
 (93/C 292/138)

Subject: Converg programme

The conversion of the armaments industry and military bases is currently a crucial problem for a large number of French and European regions affected by the crisis in this sector, with 350 000 jobs being directly or indirectly threatened in the Community.

The introduction of the Converg programme may meet certain requirements. However, many areas where the arms industry is firmly established and has been directly affected by the recession and the reduction in the number of orders are not among the regions traditionally eligible for Structural Fund assistance under Objectives 1 and 2.

What steps will the Council take to deal with these situations? What are its short- and long-term projects for military reconversion zones? Is it possible to introduce an element of geographical or sectoral flexibility into the criteria for Structural Fund aid?

Answer*(30 September 1993)*

1. The KONVER initiative (ECU 130 million for 1993 from the ERDF and ESF) is designed to provide aid to regions affected by the decline of activities linked to defence and the building of military bases.

This type of initiative does of course have its limits as mentioned by the Honourable Member, from which it may be concluded that there is a need to act with a degree of flexibility in the geographical distribution of the regional programmes according to sectoral crises.

2. These considerations have led the Commission to propose a consequent amendment to Article 11 of the coordinating Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88 of 19 December 1988. This revised Regulation, incorporating the proposed amendment, was adopted by Council Regulation (EEC) No 2082/93 of 20 July 1993 in the framework of the reform of the Structural Funds ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 193, 31. 7. 1993, p. 20.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2296/93

by Mr Gérard Fuchs (PSE)

to the Council of the European Communities

*(1 September 1993)**(93/C 292/139)**Subject:* Eurocontrol

Is it true that following its invitation to tender for the refurbishing of 70—80 workstations at the Maastricht Control Centre and 150—200 control stations in Eastern Europe, Eurocontol is about to award the contract to an American tenderer?

Should not Community preference be a deciding factor in this field which is vital to European technology?

What steps will the Council take in response to these developments, which are particularly alarming for our industry?

Answer*(28 September 1993)*

The Council has not been informed, from the point of view of the powers conferred on it, of the invitation to tender

from Eurocontrol and of the action which will be taken regarding that invitation.

It should be noted as a point of general information that on 19 July 1993 the Council — following the conclusions reached at its meeting on 29 March 1990 — adopted a Directive on the definition and use of compatible technical and operating specifications for the procurement of air traffic management equipment and systems.

Implementation of the Directive will constitute an essential stage in the harmonization of air traffic systems with a view to functional integration of the European air traffic system as a whole which will remedy the problems of overcrowding of the skies and improve traffic flow in the short term.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2527/93

by the following members: Mario Melis (ARC),
Andrea Raggio (PSE) and Virginio Bettini (V)
to the Council of the European Communities

*(1 September 1993)**(93/C 292/140)**Subject:* Abuse of dominant position by the 'Cartiere Burgo' paper mills

Having regard to Article 86 of the Treaty establishing the EEC,

given that the production and marketing of white paper for telephone directories is dominated in Italy by the 'Cartiere di Burgo' firm's de facto monopoly,

given that, as the sole telephone concessionary service, SEAT-STET (in which the State has a majority holding) is the only purchaser of this paper,

given that the 'Cartiere Burgo' company has achieved this monopoly through abuse of an economically and legally dominant position by taking over the Arbatax paper mills' share of production for supplies to SEAT-STET at a time when both paper mills were run by the same board of directors,

given that this monopoly is disrupting a significant part of the common market (i.e. the Italian market for the entire sector), to the detriment of consumers (Lit 100 per kg above the Arbatax price) and the economic and social resources of a vast area in a region coming under Objective No 1 (redundancy payments and prospect of dismissal of workers at the Arbatax paper mills due to shutdown),

given that the limited purchase of paper for yellow pages (not produced on the Italian market) does not lessen the

abuse of dominant position by the 'Cartiere di Burgo' firm,

does the Council not intend to make appropriate representations to the Italian Government to ensure that free market conditions are restored by allowing the Arbatax papermills and any other interested company to offer the SEAT-STET company, in which the State has a majority interest, the supplies which it currently purchases from the Burgo monopoly?

Answer

(30 September 1993)

With regard to the division of powers between Institutions laid down by the EEC Treaty the Council can only inform the Honourable Member, that under Articles 86 and 89 of the EEC Treaty, this matter falls within the purview of the Commission.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2631/93

by Mrs Brigitte Ernst de la Graete (V)

to the Council of the European Communities

(1 September 1993)

(93/C 292/141)

Subject: Right of asylum and concept of safe country of origin

The conclusions adopted in Edinburgh on 12 December 1992 included among the criteria determining in which countries there is a serious risk of persecution, the number of refugees and the number of previous recognitions.

This criterion seems contrary to the Geneva Convention, and the Belgian State was itself condemned by its Court of Arbitration for applying the 'twice 5%' rule, whereby requests submitted by nationals of a country representing, in the previous calendar year, at least 5% of applicants for asylum and of which less than 5% had been recognized in Belgium were to be removed from the normal examination procedure.

What is the Council's intention as regards the harmonization of European policies on the right of asylum and the concept of safe country origin?

How does it intend to ask the Member States to review their harmonization policy with a view to respecting Article 3 of the Geneva Convention, which prohibits all forms of discrimination on grounds of the national origin of applicants for refugee status?

Answer

(30 September 1993)

As the Honourable Parliamentarian will be aware, the European Council held in Edinburgh on 11/12 December 1992 welcomed the progress made by Ministers with responsibility for immigration matters with particular regard to the adoption of recommendations relating *inter alia* to manifestly unfounded applications for asylum and conclusions on countries in which there is generally no serious risk of persecution.

Both these texts were adopted by Ministers in London on the 30 November—1 December 1992 in the context of intergovernmental cooperation in which the Council, as such, has no role to play. It is, however, clear that both texts relate directly to the work programme adopted by Heads of State and Government at Maastricht which outlined the main objectives for harmonizing asylum policy throughout the 12 Member States. It is equally clear that in the resolution on manifestly unfounded applications for asylum which refers to the concept of countries in which there is no serious risk of persecution, the 12 Member States express their determination, in keeping with their common humanitarian tradition, to guarantee adequate protection to refugees in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

The Twelve state furthermore that an application for asylum is manifestly unfounded because it clearly raises no substantive issue under the Geneva Convention.

Moreover, in their conclusions on countries in which there is generally no serious risk of persecution, it is underlined that it must be clearly shown in an objective and verifiable way that circumstances which might in the past have justified recourse to the Geneva Convention have ceased to exist. In addition, assessments of the risk of persecution in individual countries should be based on as wide a range of sources of information as possible and information from the UNHCR has a specific place in this framework.

The Geneva Convention is fundamental, therefore, to the texts adopted by the Twelve on harmonization of asylum policy.

The Council's role in the harmonization process relating to asylum matters will develop only after the entry into force of the Treaty on European Union in which asylum policy becomes a matter of common interest. The Treaty on European Union prescribes in its Article K 2 that cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs will be in compliance with the Convention relating to the status of refugees.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 2635/93
by Mr Gérard Fuchs (PSE)
to the Council of the European Communities
(1 September 1993)
(93/C 292/142)

Subject: Tax on savings and the Belgian Presidency

The 'broad lines' presented by the Belgian Presidency for its action during the second-half of 1993 include its intention to reintroduce the plan for a minimum tax on savings.

This decision is undoubtedly essential if we wish to avoid competition to lower taxes as a result of the newly established freedom of movement for capital within the Community, a tendency which would ultimately deprive Member States of vital resources in periods of budget deficits and recession.

I was appointed rapporteur on the subject in 1989 by the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and have had no material to work on as a result of the Council's inaction since then. I therefore wish to know:

1. what initiative the Presidency intends to take to reactivate the discussions which have made no progress over the last three years;
2. what timetable it hopes will be adopted to bring this about?

Answer

(30 September 1993)

In order to reactivate the discussions on tax on savings the Presidency has called a meeting of the ad hoc Working Party competent to deal with the matter, which is to meet regularly. The Presidency hopes to lay this matter before the Council by October.