

11308/98

LIMITE

PUBLIC 8

LEGISLATIVE TRANSPARENCY

STATEMENTS WHICH MAY BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC JULY 1998

This document contains a summary of definitive legislative acts adopted by the Council in July 1998, together with statements in the minutes which the Council has decided may be released to the public.

It should be noted that only the minutes concerning the definitive adoption of legislative acts are authentic. Extracts from the minutes in question may be released to the public in the same way as the statements in the minutes under the conditions laid down in the Code of Conduct of 2 October 1995.

STATEMENTS IN THE MINUTES WHICH MAY BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC – JULY 1998 –			
DEFINITIVE LEGISLATIVE ACTS	TEXTS ADOPTED	STATEMENTS	VOTES
2113th Council meeting (General Affairs) on 13 July 1998 Council Directive on the extension of Directive 97/80/EC on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 88/98 laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the waters of the Baltic Sea, the Belts and the Sound	8548/98		
	6468/98 + COR 1 (fin)		
2114th Council meeting (Budget) on 17 July 1998 Council Regulation on co-financing operations with European non-governmental development organisations in fields of interest to the developing countries Council Regulation on decentralised cooperation Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1360/90 establishing a European Training Foundation Council Directive amending Directive 93/75/EEC concerning minimum requirements for vessels bound for or leaving Community ports and carrying dangerous or polluting goods	10119/1/98 REV 1	171/98, 172/98, 173/98, 174/98, 175/98, 176/98	
	10246/1/98 REV 1	177/98, 178/98	
	9641/98 + COR 1 (fin)	179/98, 180/98	
	9917/98 + COR 1 (fin)	181/98	

STATEMENTS IN THE MINUTES WHICH MAY BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC – JULY 1998 –			
DEFINITIVE LEGISLATIVE ACTS	TEXTS ADOPTED	STATEMENTS	VOTES
2115th Council meeting (Agriculture) on 20 July 1998			
Council Regulations on			Against NL
(a) the prices for agricultural products (1998/1999)			
1. Council Regulation fixing the monthly increases in the intervention price for cereals for the 1998/1999 marketing year	9795/98		
2. Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1765/92 establishing a support system for producers of certain arable crops	9796/98 + COR 1 (fin) + COR 2 (s)		
3. Council Regulation fixing the monthly increases in the intervention price for paddy rice for the 1998/1999 marketing year	9797/98		
4. Council Regulation fixing the amounts of aid for fibre flax and hemp and the amount withheld to finance measures to promote the use of flax fibre for the 1998/1999 marketing year	9798/98		
5. Council Regulation fixing the guide price for wine for the 1998/1999 wine year	9799/98		
6. Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 22/87 on the common organisation of the market in wine	9800/98		

STATEMENTS IN THE MINUTES WHICH MAY BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC – JULY 1998 –			
DEFINITIVE LEGISLATIVE ACTS	TEXTS ADOPTED	STATEMENTS	VOTES
7. Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2332/92 as regards sparkling wines produced in the Community and Regulation (EEC) No 4252/88 on the preparation and marketing of liqueur wines produced in the Community	9801/98		
8. Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1442/88 on the granting, for the 1988/89 to 1997/98 wine years, of permanent abandonment premiums in respect of wine-growing areas	9802/98		
9. Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2392/86 establishing a Community vineyard register	9803/98		
10. Council Regulation fixing, for the 1998 harvest, the premiums for leaf tobacco by group of tobacco varieties	9804/98		
11. Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 805/68 on the common organisation of the market in beef and veal	9592/98 + COR 1 (s)		
12. Council Regulation fixing the basic price, and the seasonal adjustments to the basic price, for sheepmeat for the 1999 marketing year	9805/98		
(b) Council Regulation derogating from certain provisions of Regulation (EEC) No 1765/92 establishing a support system for producers of certain arable crops	9752/98		Against DK/F/NL

STATEMENTS IN THE MINUTES WHICH MAY BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC – JULY 1998 –			
DEFINITIVE LEGISLATIVE ACTS	TEXTS ADOPTED	STATEMENTS	VOTES
Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 404/93 on the common organisation of the market in bananas	10009/98	182/98, 183/98, 184/98, 185/98	Against DK/NL
Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2075/92 on the common organisation of the market in raw tobacco	9964/98	186/98, 187/98, 188/98	Against EL/NL
Council Regulations		189/98, 190/98, 191/98, 192/98	Against NL
– amending Regulation No 136/66/EEC on the establishment of a common organisation of the market in oils and fats	10007/98		
– amending Regulation (EEC) No 2261/84 laying down general rules on the granting of aid for the production of olive oil and of aid to olive oil producer organisations	10008/98		
Council Directive on the marketing of propagating material of ornamental plants	9301/98 + COR 1 (s) + COR 2 (fin) + COR 3 (nl) + REV 1 (d)	193/98, 194/98, 195/98, 196/98, 197/98, 198/98	Abstention E
Council Directive on the control of <i>Ralstonia solanacearum</i> (Smith) Yabuuchi et al.	9778/98 + COR 1 (d,i,nl,en,p,s) + COR 2 (dk) + REV 1 (fin)		
Council Directive concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes	10098/98	199/98, 200/98, 201/98, 202/98	Against NL

STATEMENTS IN THE MINUTES WHICH MAY BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC – JULY 1998 –			
DEFINITIVE LEGISLATIVE ACTS	TEXTS ADOPTED	STATEMENTS	VOTES
Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the review of the European Community programme of policy and action in relation to the environment and sustainable development "Towards Sustainability"	PE-CONS 3614/98 + COR 1 (d) + COR 2 (dk) + COR 3 (gr)	203/98, 204/98, 205/98, 206/98, 207/98	
Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Community action programme "European voluntary service for young people"	PE-CONS 3613/98 + COR 1 (dk)	208/98, 209/98, 210/98	Against D, NL
Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the European Community	PE-CONS 3615/98 + COR 1 (dk) + REV 1 (s)	211/98	
Council Decision on a common technical regulation for the attachment requirements for connection to the analogue public switched telephone networks (PSTNs) of terminal equipment (excluding terminal equipment supporting the voice telephony justified case service) in which network addressing, if provided, is by means of dual tone multi-frequency (DTMF) signalling	10047/98 + REV 1 (s)		Abstention P
Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies (consolidated version of Directive 75/129/EEC)	10027/98		
Council Regulation (EC) amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 1749/96 concerning the coverage of goods and services of the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices	10059/98 + COR 1 (p) + COR 2 (d)	212/98, 213/98, 214/98, 215/98, 216/98	

STATEMENTS IN THE MINUTES WHICH MAY BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC – JULY 1998 –			
DEFINITIVE LEGISLATIVE ACTS	TEXTS ADOPTED	STATEMENTS	VOTES
Council Regulation (EC) amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 1749/96 concerning the geographic and population coverage of the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices	10060/98 + COR 1 (p)	217/98, 218/98, 219/98, 220/98	
Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 97/33/EC with regard to operator number portability and carrier pre-selection	PE-CONS 3618/98 + COR 1 (en)	221/98	
Written procedure completed on 30 July 1998			
Council Regulation (EC) amending the Annex to Council Regulation (EC) No 2362/97 temporarily suspending some or all of the autonomous Common Customs Tariff duties on certain fishery products (1998)	10425/98	222/98, 223/98	Abstention F

STATEMENT 171/98

Commission statement on Article 1(1)

"Part of the costs of some projects could be incurred in Europe."

STATEMENT 172/98

Commission statement re Article 1(2)

"The Commission will maintain regular contact with those responsible for cofinancing in the Member States in order to ensure coherence between Community and national systems."

STATEMENT 173/98

Commission statement re Article 2

"In the context of Community action, taking into account the eligibility criteria and the need to ensure the efficiency and quality of cofinanced operations, the Commission will endeavour to extend the network of NGOs collaborating with them, with a view to promoting NGO action in all Member States."

STATEMENT 174/98

Commission statement re Article 4(1), last indent

"The administrative costs covered are comparable to those in similar projects in the Member States."

STATEMENT 175/98

Council statement re Article 9

"The Member States will endeavour to communicate their evaluation reports to the Commission."

STATEMENT 176/98

Commission statement

"The Commission confirms to the Council that it intends to propose the setting up of a system of multiannual programme contracts with the European NGOs in connection with the revision of the General Conditions of Cofinancing to be submitted as soon as possible."

STATEMENT 177/98

Commission statement re Article 4

"The Commission would point out that, under the declaration by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission of 6 March 1995, legislative acts concerning multiannual programmes not subject to the co-decision procedure are not to contain an amount deemed necessary.

Since the Commission proposal for a Regulation on decentralised cooperation does not provide for the inclusion of a financial reference, this is the sole responsibility of the Council and does not affect the powers of the budgetary authority."

STATEMENT 178/98

Council statement re Article 11

"The Member States will endeavour to supply the Commission with their assessment reports."

STATEMENT 179/98

Joint statement by the Council and the Commission

"The Council and the Commission state:

The successful support by the European Training Foundation (Turin) in the field of vocational training for the countries eligible under Regulation (EEC) No 3906/89 (PHARE programme) and Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 1279/96 (TACIS programme) is hereby acknowledged. The extension of the Foundation's sphere of activity to cover cooperation with the third countries and territories listed in Regulation (EC) No 1488/96 on a new partnership in the Mediterranean must not adversely affect the level of cooperation attained with the States participating in the PHARE and TACIS programmes. The Commission considers that the additional tasks arising from this Regulation can be carried out within the framework of existing resources."

STATEMENT 180/98

Statement by the Commission re Article 6

"The Commission considers that the number of members of the forum must remain within reasonable limits so as to ensure efficiency in the forum's work."

STATEMENT 181/98

Commission statement re Article 1(2): Amendment of Article 11 (Committee procedure)

"The Commission considers that the words "without broadening its scope" added to the third indent of Article 11 only refer to proposed amendments which would fundamentally alter the objectives and the scope of the Directive. Therefore, the Commission is of the opinion that the procedure laid down in Article 12 of the Directive may be used to amend the Annexes in line with all relevant amendments to international conventions, codes and resolutions on safety at sea and protection of the environment which do not fundamentally alter the objectives of the Directive."

STATEMENT 182/98

Council statement

"The Council states that in adopting the Regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 404/93, its objective as regards the Community's international engagements is fully :

- to safeguard the advantages traditionally enjoyed on the EU market by the twelve ACP ⁽¹⁾ suppliers;
- to meet its obligations to the World Trade Organisation."

STATEMENT 183/98

Statement by the French delegation

"France notes, and welcomes, the Commission's statement that it will consider the impact on Community production of the adjustments to the CMO in bananas and will, if necessary, raise the producers' reference income accordingly".

⁽¹⁾ "Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Surinam, Somalia, Jamaica, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, Belize, Cap Verde, Grenada, Madagascar."

STATEMENT 184/98

Statement by the Italian delegation

"The Italian delegation notes that the legal text concerning the Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 404/93 on the CMO in bananas (10009/98) includes neither in the recitals nor in Article 19 the criteria governing the allocation of import licences as laid down in paragraph 36 of the text of the consolidated compromise (10061/98).

The Italian delegation would draw attention to the text of the consolidated compromise which, with regard to the CMO in bananas, provides for the amendments proposed by the Commission in 5357/98 to be adopted subject to certain clarifications.

These clarifications include those referred to in paragraph 36 of the compromise which commits the Commission, albeit in the context of the management committee procedures, to taking the years 1994/1996 as the initial reference period for determining operators' rights on the basis of recognition of actual importers who are able to produce the import licence used or equivalent proof.

The Italian delegation expects the abovementioned criteria to be fully incorporated into the implementing text for which the management committee is responsible, in order to give practical effect to the spirit of compromise, the aim of which is to recognise the effective execution of import operations during the three-year period 1994/1996, and to avoid any reference to activities, such as those carried on during 1997 and 1998, which are not in line with the principle of effective execution and the rules of the World Trade Organisation."

STATEMENT 185/98

Statement by the Swedish delegation

"Sweden voted in favour of a broad package deal during the June Council. However, Sweden considers that already at this stage a solution for bananas based on customs duties alone would have been preferable. Combined with compensation for EU producers and increased aid to the ACP countries for restructuring and diversification, this would have produced a long-term solution to the issue, clearly compatible with the WTO, and also more favourable for consumers."

STATEMENT 186/98

Council statement

"The Council notes that in the exercise of its management powers, the Commission will stipulate that cultivation contracts must also include a breakdown of purchase prices according to the different qualities of tobacco to be supplied."

STATEMENT 187/98

Council statement

"The Council notes that in the exercise of its management powers, the Commission will stipulate that the national quota reserve may include unused quota and that it can be used to distribute quota to young farmers or to improve production structures."

STATEMENT 188/98

Council statement

"The Council notes that in the exercise of its management powers, the Commission will take the necessary steps to tighten the criteria for the recognition of producer groups, having regard to the particular circumstances in each Member State. In particular, the Commission will raise the minimum threshold for the recognition of producer groups in Member States where structures warrant such a move."

STATEMENT 189/98

Council statement re Article 4

"The Council notes that programmes of new plantings of olive trees in Greece, France and Portugal justify the taking into account, in the context of Article 4 of the amended proposal, of 3 500 ha, 3 500 ha and 30 000 ha respectively to be approved during the period up to 1 November 2001. The Council asks the Commission to verify with these three Member States, in the context of the examination procedure specified in Article 4, that the phasing of the programmes should be undertaken in a way that is compatible with the absorption capacity of the market."

STATEMENT 190/98

Council and Commission statement on quality strategy

"The Council and the Commission will give special priority to a detailed examination of matters concerning quality strategy during the period leading up to the proposal for a permanent reform of the olive oil CMO.

These matters concern:

- the quality of olives and the existing programmes for improving the quality of olive oil production;
- environmental aspects relating to olive oil production, including the residues from mills;
- the classification of olive oils, in particular the creation of a category of "super" extra virgin olive oil, aspects relating to deodorised lampante olive oil, refined oil and olive-residue oil;
- improvement of analysis methods for classifying and verifying olive oils;
- aspects to do with determining origin and with labelling;
- mixtures of olive oil and seed oil;
- traceability and quality certification;
- improvement of quality checks."

STATEMENT 191/98

Commission statement on the approach concerning checks

"The Commission will reorient the checking programmes carried out by the checking agencies, in the Member States that have them, and will encourage the national authorities of the other Member States to do likewise.

Priority will be given to olive oil production aid, using the funds made available by the abolition of aid for small producers and of consumption aid. These checks on production aid will basically be carried out between November and May. Checks on consumption aid for the 1997-1998 marketing year will be concentrated after the period of priority checks concerning production aid.

The checking agencies and the other national authorities involved will also have to plan for their participation in the study on national yields, in checks on declarations concerning new plantings and in checks on private storage covered by the relevant aid scheme."

STATEMENT 192/98

Commission statement on the table olives sector

"Before the end of 1998 the Commission will send the Council a report on the table olives sector in the Community describing:

- the economic situation in the sector;
- the possible support measures;
- the impact that any aid for table olives would have on the olive oil sector, on the budgetary situation and on olive-producing third countries."

STATEMENT 193/98

Council and Commission statement

Re Article 14

"The Council and the Commission agree that, if Community trials concern organisms covered by Directive 77/93/EEC, there should be full co-operation between the relevant Standing Committees, based on the Scheme for improved co-operation submitted in February 1996 or any further such Scheme."

STATEMENT 194/98

Commission statement

Re Article 1(3)

"The Commission will examine the need for the requirements of the current Directive to apply to seed of particular species or groups of plants with a view to presenting, prior to the date referred to in Article 19(1), appropriate draft measures to the Standing Committee for Propagating Material of Ornamental Plants."

STATEMENT 195/98

Commission statement

Re Article 7

"The Commission confirms that the requirements relating to reporting of occurrences of harmful organisms in Article 7 of the current Directive are without prejudice to any such requirement pursuant to Directive 77/93/EEC."

STATEMENT 196/98

Commission statement

Re Article 11

"According to the procedure in Article 17, the Commission will establish the implementing measures in respect of Article 11(2) envisaged in Article 11(4) within 12 months of the adoption of the current Directive."

STATEMENT 197/98

Commission statement

Re Article 12(1) and Article 16

"In the context of the report envisaged in Article 12(1), the Commission will examine the possibility of establishing a list of genera or species which may be excluded from the field of application of the current Directive in light of experience of the operation of Article 16."

STATEMENT 198/98

Commission statement

Re Article 20

"The Commission will review the provisions of the Commission legislation in order to decide whether they should be maintained, amended or repealed. The review will be carried out on the basis of the SLIM principles and will be completed prior to the implementation of the Council Directive now being adopted. Any changes proposed as a result of this review would be subject to the appropriate Standing Committee procedure. The Commission will propose the repeal of any provisions in the Commission legislation which are incorporated in the Council Directive now being adopted. In reviewing Commission Directive 93/49 the Commission will apply the criteria set out in Article 5(5) of the current Directive. In reviewing Commission Directive 93/78 the Commission will have due regard for the recommendation of the SLIM report."

STATEMENT 199/98

"The Council calls on the Commission to submit a report, together with any necessary proposals, on the possible harmonisation of a system for the approval of new methods concerning husbandry, equipment and buildings.

In the meantime, the Council and the Commission point out that a Member State may implement such measures in its territory in accordance with Article 10(2) in such a way as to avoid any obstacle to trade."

STATEMENT 200/98

"The Council invites the Commission to address the question of international livestock welfare standards in ways other than import prohibitions, in particular:

- by considering which are the most suitable international organisations within which to work for a wider multilateral consensus on farm animal welfare, and developing a strategy for proceeding with this,
- by negotiating for animal welfare standards equivalent to those in the Community to be built into future bilateral agreements between the EU and its third country suppliers and, where appropriate, into multilateral agreements, and
- by considering the scope for introducing WTO compatible labelling requirements, applicable to imports, concerning the animal welfare standards under which products have been produced."

STATEMENT 201/98

"The Council and Commission note that adoption of this general farm welfare Directive is without prejudice to the future consideration of more detailed proposals on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes."

STATEMENT 202/98

"The Commission will examine the possibility of amending WTO rules to address welfare concerns more generally in the context of the determination of the Union's negotiating objectives for the next stage of the WTO negotiations."

STATEMENT 203/98

Statement by the German delegation

Re Article 2(1)(a)

"Germany assumes that when "integrating environmental considerations into agricultural policy-making" and "taking appropriate steps to ensure that specific environmental objectives are achieved", due account will be taken of common agricultural policy objectives in every case, particularly in negotiations on the Commission's "Agenda 2000" communication."

STATEMENT 204/98

Commission statement

Re Article 2(1)(a) (on agriculture), on its CAP proposals:

"In the Agenda 2000 proposals the Commission indicates that there is a need to give a new impetus to the CAP and to reflect the integration of the environmental protection requirements into the other community policies. The Commission's proposals on the reform of the EU agricultural policy are designed to ensure that the European model for agriculture can be sustained in the long term, to the benefit not only of the agricultural industry, but also consumers, employment, environment and for society as a whole.

The Commission proposals provide an integrated approach including:

- a reinforced rural development pillar to be further developed in the future, embracing strengthened agri-environment measures as compulsory elements of regional programmes, area-based support for sustainable farming in less-favoured areas, forestry measures including sustainable management practices and environmental training;
- the budget for agri-environmental measures can be expanded in particular through the funds available from aid reduction linked to environmental conditions;
- further reductions in market support prices compensated via an increase in direct payments.

According to these proposals, Member States will be obliged to undertake environmental measures, including those relating to the protection of biodiversity, groundwater, drinking water and landscapes. In fulfilling this obligation, Member States have three options at their disposal:

- the agri-environmental measures being part of rural programmes;
- mandatory environmental legislation the enforcement of which can be supported by reducing direct payments in the case of non-respect;
- specific environmental requirements being a condition for the receipt of direct payments under the market organisations.

In the case of beef and dairy, national envelopes are established for a part of the payments which can be linked to environmental standards. In addition the extensification premium will be made more effective under stricter conditions.

The Commission is confident that this reform once adopted will prepare the ground for more sustainable forms of agriculture and rural development in the European Union."

STATEMENT 205/98

Commission statement

Re Article 2(4)(d) on environmental liability:

"In accordance with its work programme, the Commission will shortly adopt a White Paper on environmental liability. This White Paper will consider the need for Community legislative action in this field, in particular in the form of a framework directive."

STATEMENT 206/98

Commission statement

Re Article 4, second paragraph, points (d) to (g) on enforcement:

"The Commission will give details of Member States' performance in implementing and enforcing Community environmental legislation both in the relevant expanded chapter and enclosures in its Annual Report on Monitoring the Application of Community Law and in its Annual Survey on the Environment. The details will include, inter alia, information on the number of complaints received, the number of matters investigated by the Commission, the number of matters brought before the Court of Justice, the findings of the Court and any follow-up action taken by the Commission."

STATEMENT 207/98

Commission statement

Re Article 11(4) on waste management:

"The Commission will as appropriate further develop the Community hierarchy of waste management principles and, in considering initiatives, will respect the optimum use of this hierarchy."

STATEMENT 208/98

Statement by the German and Austrian delegations

Re recital 21a and Article 7(1):

"It is the understanding of the Austrian and German delegations that the civilian service to be performed instead of military service in Austria and Germany does not come within the scope of similar national activities of various kinds as referred to in recital 21a and Article 7(1)."

STATEMENT 209/98

Commission statement

(on the elimination of obstacles to mobility)

"The Commission attaches great importance to eliminating all the legal and administrative obstacles hampering access to the Community action programme "European voluntary service for young people" and the transnational mobility of European youth volunteers.

The Commission will carefully monitor implementation of the programme, including the elimination of these obstacles, and, where necessary, will take the appropriate initiatives."

STATEMENT 210/98

Commission statement

(on the Programme Committee)

"With due regard for interinstitutional procedures and agreements, the Commission will inform the European Parliament once a year about the implementing measures taken pursuant to this Decision."

STATEMENT 211/98

Commission statement

"The Commission will take particular care to set up, in the light of the resources available, a clearly identified structure with sufficient staff to ensure application of the Decision."

STATEMENT 212/98

Joint Council and Commission statement

"The Council and the Commission agree that the ongoing study by the Commission services for the proper implementation of the regulation on extended coverage of goods and services of the HICP under consideration should focus, inter alia, on the following points :

- Are existing data sources adequate?

If not:

- What new data collection would be required?
- How much would they cost?
- How much impact would the changes have on the HICPs, MUICP and EICP?
- What is the relationship between impact on indices and cost of change?
- Which is the most cost-effective way to meet the timetable?"

STATEMENT 213/98

Commission statement

"After consulting the European Central Bank, the Commission considers it essential to be able to calculate meaningful changes in the HICP and its sub-indices, when coverage of the HICP is extended in December 1999 according to Regulations [reference numbers].

To permit such calculations to be made, the Commission seeks from Member States, at the latest with the first releases of HICPs which include the extended coverage, sufficiently comparable data covering each of at least the preceding 12 months.

The Commission and the ECB undertake that such estimates relating to the 12 months preceding the extension of coverage, will be used publicly only as the base for the calculations of percentage changes in the HICP and its sub-indices, with a suitable warning concerning the status of this base."

STATEMENT 214/98

Statement by the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom

"Recognising the need expressed by the Commission and the European Central Bank, the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom will seek to provide, in a cost effective way, their best estimates of data comparable to the extended index, covering each of at least the 12 months preceding the date of extension of coverage. Member States will seek to provide these data at the latest with the first release of HICPs which include the extended coverage in accordance with this Regulation."

STATEMENT 215/98

Statement by the Spanish delegation

"With regard to Article 1(2) of the Regulation, Spain confirms, as already indicated during the meeting of the Working Party, that it will have considerable difficulty in implementing the necessary amendments by December 1999 at the latest. The fact that this is a new and complex enquiry, which involves defining expenditure on household consumption irrespective of the place of residence (tourists), makes it impossible to obtain the necessary information on the subject by December 1999.

However, the Spanish National Statistical Office (INE) will maintain close and permanent contact with Eurostat in order to find a way of overcoming the technical problems posed by the enquiry and to find a rapid and suitable means of obtaining the funds the Community must provide in accordance with Art. 13 of Council Regulation (EC), No 2494/95."

STATEMENT 216/98

Statement by the German delegation

"The German delegation unreservedly supports the position of the European Central Bank (ECB) of 14 July 1998 on both proposals for Regulations. The German delegation emphatically endorses the ECB's view under No 7 that the European Community should maintain the option of including owner-occupier housing costs in the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) and not exclude them definitively from its scope here and now. The delegation also supports the review of Commission Regulation (EC) No 2214/96 urged by the ECB under No 8 of its statement."

STATEMENT 217/98

Statement by the Irish and Spanish delegations

"The Irish and Spanish delegations consider that the ongoing study by the Commission services for the proper implementation of the regulation concerning the geographic and population coverage of the HICP should focus on assessing the cost-effectiveness of using the concept of Household Final Monetary Consumption Expenditure as opposed to alternative concepts currently used by a number of Member States in calculating the HICPs. The assessment should take into account the relationship between the cost of changing to the Household Final Monetary Consumption Expenditure concept and the impact of the change on the HICPs, MUICP and EICP."

STATEMENT 218/98

Statement by the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom

"Recognising the need expressed by the Commission and the European Central Bank, the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom will seek to provide, in a cost effective way, their best estimates of data comparable to the extended index, covering each of at least the 12 months preceding the date of extension of coverage. Member States will seek to provide these data at the latest with the first release of HICPs which include the extended coverage in accordance with this Regulation."

STATEMENT 219/98

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STATEMENT 221/98

Commission statement

Re Article 20(2)

"The Commission states that the possibilities for deferment under Article 20(2) would apply in particular to parts of the public telecommunications network which will not have been upgraded yet to a modern digital network standard by the deadlines referred to in Articles 12(5) and 12(7) and where the implementation of number portability and carrier pre-selection with call-by-call override could only be accomplished through intermediate solutions requiring disproportionate investments. In such cases, deferment of the obligations under Article 12(5) and 12(7) will be granted following a request which may cover all such problems within the national network, on the conditions and following the procedures mentioned in Article 20(2), with regard to subscriber lines within those parts of the network, until modernisation is completed."

STATEMENT 222/98

Commission statement

"When it submits its 1999 proposals on the suspension of duties, the Commission will, in accordance with normal practice, take account of the current state of the market in fishery products on the basis of the available data. The decisions taken in 1998 on the suspension of duties do not therefore serve as a precedent for future Commission proposals."

STATEMENT 223/98

Statement by the French delegation

"By abstaining, the French delegation wishes to show its concern at the continued dismantling in 1998 of the customs duties applying to Alaska pollack. Unlimited imports of this product at preferential rates gives rise to a substitution effect on the Community white fish market, thereby destabilising prices and having a negative impact on the incomes of the Union's producers.

The CMO reform, which is intended to protect the interests of Community producers in the context of increasing trade liberalisation, should therefore include financial means designed to improve the competitiveness of the European Union's production."