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- ECOFIN -

Brussels, 12 July 1999

President : **Mr Sauli NIINISTÖ**
Minister for Finance of the Republic of Finland

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PARTICIPANTS

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

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Minister for Finance

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Ms Marianne JELVED

Minister for Economic Affairs

Mr Michael DITHMER

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Mr Hans EICHEL

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* * *

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Mr Mario MONTI

Member

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Member

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Mr Jürgen TRUMPF

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Other participants :

Sir Brian UNWIN
Mr Jean LEMIERRE
Mr Norman GLASS

President of the European Investment Bank
Chairman of the Economic and Financial Committee
Chairman of the Economic Policy Committee

PROGRAMME OF THE FINNISH PRESIDENCY - OPEN DEBATE¹

Proceeding to its customary open debate on the programme of the incoming Presidency in the ECOFIN area for the next six months, the Council heard a presentation by its President, Finnish Finance Minister Sauli NIINISTÖ, outlining the priorities in four main areas, namely enhanced economic policy co-ordination, taxation, financial services and economic and financial questions relating to Kosovo/Western Balkans.

With regard to the strengthening of economic policy co-ordination, the President stressed that its efficiency had to be further improved. A progress report will be drawn up by the Presidency in view of the Helsinki European Council. In this context he recalled the role of the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines as the most important tool for policy co-ordination. He also underlined that it was time to implement structural reforms in the goods, capital, and labour markets.

On taxation the President stressed that an agreement needed to be reached on all elements of the tax package, namely business taxation, savings taxation and taxation of interest and royalties. He also stated that a framework for energy taxation was necessary both for Internal Market and environment related requirements.

With regard to financial services, the President recalled the importance of the Commission's Action Plan and appealed to Member States to withdraw reservations on directives where negotiations are already underway.

On reconstruction in Kosovo/Western Balkans, the President underlined that aid had to be efficient and that therefore clear criteria for economic assessment of the reconstruction effort were to be defined. He stressed the important role the EU would be playing in this context but also recalled that the EU could not be left alone in this effort.

¹ The list of forthcoming public ministerial debates to be held at the Council of the European Union under the Finnish Presidency (second half of 1999) can be found in the Annex.

Giving full support to the Finnish Presidency's priorities, Commission President Santer set out the actions already undertaken as well as those envisaged by his institution in the four above-mentioned areas.

In their interventions, Ministers welcomed the work programme of the Finnish Presidency which comes at an important juncture for the European Union, given in particular that it will work with the newly elected European Parliament and the new Commission.

Ministers agreed with the need for better economic policy co-ordination for the EU as a whole and for enhanced implementation of structural policies in order to achieve growth and higher employment.

On taxation matters, Ministers undertook to work constructively on the outstanding directives with a view of reaching agreement by the end of this year. On financial services, Ministers assured the Presidency of their full co-operation in implementing the Commission's Action Plan.

With regard to the situation in Kosovo/Western Balkans, several Ministers welcomed the envisaged establishment of a reserve of 500 million euro in the 2000 draft budget at the Budget Council session on 16 July and expressed the view that resources available under the new Financial Perspective (2000-2006) should allow to finance present reconstruction efforts.

UKRAINE - ELEMENTS FOR A COMMON STRATEGY OF THE UNION

The Council took note of a presentation by the President of the Economic and Financial Committee on its work concerning an ECOFIN contribution for the common strategy for Ukraine on which the Union is working at present. The Council endorsed the result of this work which will be taken into account in the future work on the common strategy.

The Presidency indicated that it will ensure that the Economic and Financial Committee is kept informed of the progress of work in order to allow ECOFIN to be involved in the further preparation of the common strategy.

KOSOVO / WESTERN BALKANS - ASPECTS OF THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SITUATION

After a useful discussion on the Balkans, the Council agreed that the following points could be presented by the Council President at the High Level Steering Group meeting scheduled for 13 July 1999.

- The improvement of the economic situation in the Western Balkans, including notably in Kosovo, is very important for humanitarian reasons and for political stability. Thus, financial support must be politically justified. Furthermore, for the economic situation to improve, it is essential that financial support is based on sound economic considerations.

To be efficient, financial support to promote this improvement must be based on the following six principles :

1. Clear priorities starting from immediate needs (health, food, reconstruction including housing and utilities)
 2. Systematic assessment of needs and absorption capacity
 3. Conditionality of economic assistance and prevention of misuse of funds
 4. Fair burden sharing between the international actors
 5. Transparency and efficient co-ordination of activities and responsibilities of the actors involved.
 6. Major financial contributors should be able to participate in the (Kosovo/Western Balkans) Steering Group's meetings.
- A long-term view must be taken on the Balkans. It will take time before prosperity and stability is attained in the region. In the EU efforts to help the Balkans the above six principles should be followed from the very beginning, in order to secure lasting public support for the assistance: taxpayers must be confident that money is used well.
 - The ECOFIN Ministers will be closely following the international assistance efforts in the Balkans and the implementation of the above principles in practice.

**EIB LENDING: RENEWAL OF COMMUNITY GUARANTEE FOR PROJECTS IN
THIRD COUNTRIES**

The Council reached agreement on the main elements of the proposal for a Decision granting a Community guarantee to the European Investment Bank against losses under loans for projects outside the Community (Central and Eastern Europe and Western Balkans, Mediterranean countries, Latin America and Asia and the Republic of South Africa), subject to the examination of the forthcoming opinion of the European Parliament. The existing guarantee expires on 31 January 2000.

The main elements accepted by all delegations are the following:

- a rate of 65% for the blanket guarantee from the Community budget (the present rate being 70%);
- global guaranteed amounts based on an annual amount of 2 630 million euro (hence ensuring real stabilisation compared to the previous mandate, in line with strict budgetary discipline);
- a duration for the guarantee of seven years with a review on first accession or at the latest after 4,5 years, whichever the earlier;
- a Council statement whereby "the Council expresses its readiness to examine, on the occasion of the mid-term review, the possibility of future extension of the present guarantee arrangements to Russia, Ukraine and Moldova, once the necessary conditions in these countries will be met, in particular in relation to the presence of a stable working market economy in accordance with IMF programmes, which will make in turn EIB lending in these countries under the usual EIB sound economic and financial conditions feasible.

The Council is willing to review its present decision before mid-term review in case the above conditions are met at an earlier date."

It is recalled that the basic framework for external lending guaranteed by the Community budget is set out in Regulation 1149/99 adopted on 25 May following the conclusions of the Berlin European Council on Agenda 2000. This Regulation provided for the lowering of the target amount of the Guarantee Fund (from 10% to 9%) and its provisioning rate (from 14% to 9%). Moreover, an amount of 200 million (in 1999 prices) was fixed for the Guarantee Reserve for external action under heading 6 of the new Financial Perspective.

VAT: REDUCED RATE ON LABOUR INTENSIVE SERVICES

The Council took note of the state of work concerning the Commission proposal of 15 March 1999 for a directive giving Member States the option of reducing the rate of VAT on certain labour intensive services on a trial basis. The main question considered by Ministers was how to determine the labour intensive services eligible for the reduced VAT rate (application of general criteria or - in addition - establishment of a list of eligible services).

In conclusion, the Council asked the Committee of Permanent Representatives to present to it, if possible before the end of July, a basis for an overall agreement, including a list of services to which a reduced rate of VAT could be applied, with a view to allowing early adoption of the directive.

It is recalled that the Commission proposal of 17 February 1999 provides that Member States would have to present to the Commission possible requests for a reduced VAT rate on services which are labour-intensive (such as domestic care or renovation of buildings) provided directly to final customers, predominantly local and not likely to create distortions of competition or effect the smooth functioning of the Internal Market. The Commission would then table a specific proposal to the Council that would authorise unanimously Member States to apply a reduced rate between 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2002.

The initiative of this proposal goes back to the Luxembourg Employment European Council of November 1997, which concluded that, in order to making the taxation system more employment-friendly, each Member State should examine, without obligation, the advisability of reducing the rate of VAT on labour intensive services not exposed to cross-border competition. This conclusion was confirmed both at the Vienna and Cologne European Councils.

OWN RESOURCES

Commissioner LIIKANEN presented to the Council a proposal for a new Own Resources Decision adopted by his Institution on 8 July further to the conclusions of the Berlin European Council and which shall come into force at the beginning of 2002.

The proposed decision is not aimed at changing the structure of own resources since no new own resources are introduced and the existing ones (traditional own resources, VAT and GNP) will remain. However, as a result of the Berlin European Council's reforms, the importance of each resource in the financing of the EU budget is expected to change.

Reforms will be introduced, in particular, in the financing side of the budget, namely the increase in the percentage of traditional own resources withheld by Member States to cover collection and related costs from 10% to 25%, effective from the beginning of 2001; and the reduction of the VAT maximum rate from 1% currently to 0.75% in 2002 and 2003 and to 0.50% from 2004 onwards. Further reforms will concern the rules determining the UK rebate and its financing.

IMPLEMENTATION OF OLAF

During the German Presidency the Council approved a package of acts related to the establishment of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). During the Finnish Presidency, it has to be ensured that OLAF becomes fully operational and that all the necessary implementing measures are taken accordingly. To that effect, the Presidency, recalling the conclusions of the High Level Group from 25 May 1999, emphasised the following issues which the Council endorsed:

1. The Finnish Presidency will, in accordance with its working programme, devote particular attention to the follow-up of the implementation of Community acts concerning the establishment of the European Anti-Fraud Office OLAF and will provide the necessary assistance for guaranteeing an effective implementation to make OLAF a fully operational office without delay.
2. OLAF should be able to start its operations effectively and fully in accordance with the mandate given to it by the Community legislator and reiterated in the conclusions of the European Council of Cologne.
3. The appointment of the director of OLAF requires the opinion of the OLAF Supervisory Committee. The Council therefore welcomes the fact that the European Parliament following the Council's and the Commission's decisions from the end of May, approved the names of the members of the Supervisory Committee⁽¹⁾, and notes with satisfaction that this Committee has its constitutive meeting on 12 July 1999. The Supervisory Committee might also give its opinion to the draft establishment plan.
4. The Council advocates with the aim of a rapid nomination of the Director of OLAF, the immediate launching of the nomination procedure foreseen in article 12 of the Regulation concerning OLAF. The Council considers it appropriate to have a call for applications in the Official Journal of the European Communities.
5. The Council refers to the statement made jointly by the European Parliament and Council on 25 May 1999 according to which the Commission has committed itself to prepare a draft proposal and to start the consultation process on the amendments to the Staff Regulations concerning the rights and obligations of the civil servants and other agents of the Communities in the course of investigations of OLAF, and invites the Commission to take all necessary measures in order to have the respective provisions incorporated into the Staff regulations.

⁽¹⁾ Mrs. Mireille DELMAS-MARTY
Mr. Edmondo BRUTI-LIBERATI
Mr. José Narciso DA CUNHA RODRIGUES
Mr. Raymond KENDALL
Mr. Harald NOACK

6. For the attainment of the objective of an effective and operational OLAF it is required that all institutions and bodies of the Union adopt the necessary decisions and other concrete measures to enable OLAF to carry out its mission, and, in particular, its internal investigations, fully and effectively within those institutions and bodies. These measures will also enable OLAF to have regular and sincere co-operation with the respective institutions and bodies. Whereas almost all institutions and bodies have taken appropriate decisions referred to in Art. 4 paragraph 1 of the Regulations or have declared themselves ready to do so, in accordance with the Interinstitutional Agreement accompanying the Regulations, the content and form of the corresponding provisions have yet to be found with the European Central Bank, the European Investment Bank and the Court of Auditors. The Council repeats its invitation to those institutions. The Finnish Presidency, like its predecessor, keeps itself ready for the consultations foreseen for that in the last sentence of paragraph 1 of Art. 4.
7. The Council underlines that OLAF should be entitled to carry out investigations for the protection of the Community's interests within the Kosovo Agency and within the beneficiaries and intermediaries of the Agency's subsidies. The Council also recalls that OLAF should carry out investigations in all future bodies, agencies and other organs of the Communities.
8. A comprehensive report on the state of the implementation, including the elements of the establishment plan, will be presented to the Council (ECOFIN) at its session on 8 October 1999 and the Council will then draw the necessary conclusions. The Council hopes that it can then welcome the effective launch of operations of OLAF and the finalisation of the implementation measures.
9. The Finnish Presidency suggests furthermore, that reflection is undertaken to find out whether and in which way OLAF could, as a part of the pre-accession strategy, usefully assist the authorities of pre-accession countries in their fight against fraud.

* * *

The Council agreed to the draft decision concerning the appointment of the members of the Supervisory Committee of OLAF (see above). This draft decision will be signed shortly by the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission.

The President informed the Council that at the Triologue meeting (involving the European Parliament, Commission and Council) on 2 July it was agreed that OLAF should become fully operational on 1 November 1999.

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION OF THE EURO AREA

With regard to the informal external representation of the Community in the G7 at ministerial level on EMU issues, the Ministers unanimously welcomed the understanding reached with the non-European members of the G7.

According to this understanding, the President of the European Central Bank (replacing the national central bank governors from the euro area) and the President of the Euro-11 Group will take part in the meetings of G7 Finance Ministers when the world economic situation, multilateral surveillance and exchange rate issues are being discussed.

The Commission will be involved to the extent required to enable it to perform the role assigned to it by the Treaty, and it will attend the meetings in connection with specific issues, to be determined by the Ministers.

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Over lunch, the Presidency briefed Ministers on the discussions of the Euro-11 meeting, which took place in the morning, dealing with the economic, financial and budgetary situation in the euro-area, as well as external representation.

Ministers also took note of a presentation by Commissioner DE SILGUY on the issue of the Millennium bug.

Moreover, Ministers discussed the question of the nomination of the next President of the European Investment Bank.

STATISTICAL REQUIREMENTS IN EMU

The Council took note and endorsed the progress report (see hereafter) drawn up by the Economic and Financial Committee on the implementation of the Report on statistical requirements approved at its session on 18 January 1999. The Council will return to these issues on the basis of a new progress report in the spring 2000.

Information requirements in EMU

The Ecofin Council endorsed a report by the Monetary Committee on information requirements in Economic and Monetary Union in its meeting on 18 January 1999.² The report underlined that for the proper functioning of EMU and the Single Market, effective surveillance and co-ordination of economic policies are of major importance and that this requires a comprehensive information system providing policy makers with the necessary data on which to base their decisions. It stressed that while it will be important to have such information available for the European Union as a whole, it will be even more important to have such information for the euro-area and the Member States participating therein. The report concluded that, while the statistical work programmes seem generally adequate and faithfully reflect the relevant decisions, it is important that progress be made more quickly in a number of priority areas. To this effect, the report made specific recommendations and, to follow-up their implementation, called for a review of progress in the autumn of 1999.

This report responds to this mandate by presenting the recommendations followed by an assessment. The appendix to this report provides a summary overview of current and prospective timeliness of selected key euro area statistics.

Overview of progress on the implementation of the recommendations.

1. *Quick progress is needed on establishing quarterly national accounts, as well as quarterly statistics covering public finance and the labour market. If possible, these statistics should be integrated into the quarterly national accounts framework.*

In accordance with the Council Regulation (EC) No 2223/96³, Member States are currently changing over to the ESA-95 national accounts system, which includes specific requirements on the production of quarterly national accounts covering the main aggregates. Member States have provided their first data complying with the new ESA-95 requirements in the Spring with about half of them doing so, as required, in April.

Some Member States (Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and Austria) have agreed not to make full use of their derogations under the Regulation. Furthermore, to speed up progress on establishing quarterly national accounts relative to what is foreseen in the Regulation, Member States have agreed to reduce the time lag with which these accounts become available. In addition, most Member States have agreed to providing longer time series of back data than required in the ESA Regulation. For the time being, results for the euro-area as a whole will commence only in 1991 due to lack of data for unified Germany in previous years which is a considerable drawback for the longer term analysis of euro area developments.

² See document MC/II/616/98-EN-final of 16 November 1998. The text of the report was reprinted in the Council's Press Communiqué and published on the internet at <http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/press/a/05344.htm>. See also <http://ue.eu.int/emu/stat/main.htm>.

³ Council Regulation (EC) No 2223/96 of 25 June 1996 on the European system of national and regional accounts in the Community (OJ No L 310 of 30 November 1996).

First quarterly national accounts covering the main aggregates for the Euro area and EU 15 for the first quarter of 1999 were published after 70 days. As a consequence of the delayed release of ESA 95 data in several Member States, this data had to be on a mixed ESA 79/ESA 95 basis and could only be provided for a small sub-set of the full quarterly data set required under ESA 95. These are transitional problems and the situation is expected to improve markedly.

In future data on an ESA 95 basis are expected to be available 70 days after the period concerned. A second estimate based on more countries and detail in current prices will be published after 100 days and the intention is to reduce this to 90 days. The possibility of producing, by mid 2000, flash estimates after 45 days is being considered by Eurostat.

Implementation of ESA 95 will inevitably complicate interpretation of national accounts data for some time. At each stage of the implementation it will be necessary to identify, as far as possible, the statistical effects due to the new methodology.

2. *A high priority should be given to **statistics on the public finances**. The objective is the production of quarterly national and financial account data for general government. This requires substantial changes and results will only be available in 2001 at the earliest. Such a move should be supported by a number of regulatory changes, among others to ensure that the necessary quarterly information is collected from all levels of government, including social security institutions, and that it is promptly transmitted to the national statistical offices. To bridge the gap, efforts must be made to produce quickly, on a quarterly basis and in an appropriate format, information on a selected set of key public finance variables that is already - or can quickly be made - available at national level. First results should be available early in 2000.*

Progress is on track to ensure that the first indicators on some of the major items will be available from the start of 2000. On the basis of the discussions on the draft Commission regulation so far, some harmonised quarterly national accounts data for general government receipts are now expected to become available in June 2000. Most Member States agree to provide data on all general government receipts by 2002. Efforts will have to be pursued, especially as regards expenditure items, to cover all relevant statistics in 2001.

A draft work programme on quarterly financial statistics for general government has recently been established. Considerable efforts have to be made by all parties involved to comply with the recommended timetable.

3. *To permit a better view of **labour market developments**, Member States should accelerate the implementation of a continuous Labour Force Survey providing quarterly results on employment and unemployment at the latest by the year 2000.*

In accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98⁴, a continuous Labour Force Survey is actually implemented in 10 Member States; preliminary studies are being undertaken in France and Italy (pilot surveys) and in Luxembourg; there is no real progress so far in Germany and Austria. As a result, reliable data for the euro area on a quarterly basis cannot be compiled; so far, they are only available on an annual basis.

Furthermore, the compilation of a European level labour cost index for both EU-11 and EU-15 using existing data should be speeded up as a temporary solution for early 1999.

In response to this recommendation, Member States have undertaken to produce quarterly labour cost indices. Most of them are already providing the data to Eurostat and Greece and the United Kingdom are expected to do so by July 1999. On the basis of the available data, Eurostat published first estimates for European totals for the last quarter of 1998 in April 1999 and intends to publish data on the first quarter of 1999 in July 1999. Over time, data are expected to become available more quickly.

⁴ Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 of 9 March 1998, OJ No L 077, 14.3.1998.

But further efforts should be directed towards the development of more comprehensive and comparable indicators and accounts for labour at both national and European level by the year 2000. A specific work programme should be defined in 1999, for implementation starting in 2001.

Eurostat is discussing with the relevant national statistical offices the establishment or, where appropriate, the improvement in estimates on labour (number of employed persons, hours worked, compensation of employees) on an annual and quarterly national accounts basis. National estimates should make use of the results of the continuous Labour Force Survey, as well as of relevant business statistics and administrative sources. As a result, the consistency, timeliness and comparability of these labour statistics should improve. Eurostat expects to reach full agreement with ten Member States in the Autumn.⁵ Furthermore, discussions have continued with key users on the need to develop a European Labour Price Index.⁶

4. *The Council Regulation of 19 May 1998 concerning **short-term statistics** should be quickly and fully implemented by the year 2001 for manufacturing, construction, and retail trade.*

On the basis of current progress, it appears that most Member States are on track to meet the recommendation that the short-term statistics regulation⁷ be fully implemented by the year 2001 for manufacturing, construction and retail trade. However, for data on new orders received by industry judging on the basis of the progress achieved so far and current plans, Greece, Spain, France⁸, Ireland and Portugal may not be able to achieve that objective. This implies that euro area data will not be available for these indicators by 2001. Moreover, many statistical offices are not yet providing data as promptly as required by the Regulation, nor are they providing the legally required proxies when full data is not available. As concerns the timeliness of euro area results, urgent progress is needed in particular for retail trade for which the current delay is unacceptably long.

Also, for the cyclically sensitive service industries faster progress than currently envisaged is required.

Efforts have been stepped up in most Member States to accelerate progress in producing short-term statistics relating to cyclically-sensitive service industries. It is not yet known when concrete results can be expected. There is clear need for more rapid progress in Germany, Spain and Italy. The absence of such statistics remains a major obstacle to analysis of the conjunctural situation.

To this end, relevant derogations should be reviewed.

Eurostat is examining with the Member States concerned how relevant derogations should be reviewed to remedy the identified shortcomings and is expected to reach agreements with them by October 1999.

Qualitative surveys on business and consumer confidence should be further developed to give better coverage of services that are particularly sensitive to variations in economic activity. Concrete results should be obtained by the year 2000.

⁵ The relevant national statistical offices are those of Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

⁶ Conventional labour cost indices record the total cost of employing labour divided by labour input (such as number employed, hours worked). They thus include the effect of changes in the composition of the labour force. A labour price index measures the cost of specific types of labour, much as the HIPC measures prices in consumption, and is valuable for some analytical purposes.

⁷ Council Regulation (EC) No 1165/98 of 19 May 1998, OJ No L 162, 5.6.1998.

⁸ France has indicated that it will publish this statistic in 2002.

Some progress in further developing qualitative business surveys in the service sector has been made. A harmonised scheme for covering the major branches has been agreed with Member States. However, the timely collection of data in some Member States and, in the Commission, its evaluation and utilisation, have not been advancing sufficiently to obtain results by the year 2000.

5. *Concerning the **balance-of-payments and trade**, the provision of data on cross-border flows within the euro area should be considered in the light of the new circumstances of Monetary Union. For this purpose, the present intrastat system should be simplified and other methods should be explored to arrive at a suitable output, while reducing costs. If the intrastat data collection system is modified along these lines, it would require amendment to Council Regulation (EC) No 3330/91.*

With a view to simplifying the Intrastat system, the Commission (Eurostat) had submitted several proposals to the Council in 1997 and 1998. While some results⁹ have been achieved, a proposal on the simplified use of the nomenclature is still under discussion between the Council and the European Parliament. In the immediate future, the study of asymmetries and the reconciliation process should continue and so should the efforts to respond in particular to ECB's and the Commission's requirements for early available results in terms of reconciled data. Looking further ahead, Eurostat will present a strategy for the compilation of trade statistics on goods. The Commission (Eurostat) intends to present a report by the end of this year on 1) the results of studies on simplification measures, 2) the possibility to produce monthly macroeconomic aggregates of higher quality and 3) the possibility to produce less detailed information, limiting the response burden while still responding to the essential needs of core users.¹⁰ Progress will depend on the support by the Council and the European Parliament for proposals aimed at simplification in the Intrastat system.

The CMFB is embarking on a broad review of balance-of-payments statistics in the new circumstances of EMU, taking account also of the wider economic and financial background and the need to improve quality. This exercise is welcome, and the CMFB, in its further work, should also incorporate the issues raised in this report and conclude its review by mid-1999. This review should contain concrete proposals for regulatory reform and the time frame for implementation.

The CMFB is conducting its broad review of balance of payments statistics in the new circumstances of EMU. Beyond changes in Intrastat legislation (see above), and any ECB plans for data legislation, CMFB is unlikely to propose further regulatory reforms.

The quality of the new balance-of-payments data for the euro area is still clearly insufficient as indicated, for example, by the large errors and omissions in the euro area in first quarter (and monthly) balance-of-payments accounts published by the ECB. There are inconsistencies within and between national and euro area balance-of-payments statistics and between the euro area balance of payments and euro area national accounts compiled by aggregating national data. These inconsistencies, which limit the usefulness of the data, are receiving urgent attention in the CMFB, and efforts are being stepped up to minimise them.

⁹ Regarding simplification of statistical reporting with regard to net mass, statistical value and other data elements
¹⁰ in particular those of the business community as supported by business associations and UNICE.

6. **Publication** of statistical data should be timely at pre-determined release dates at all levels (national and European), and the main suppliers should guarantee electronic access and distribution to all users.

Regarding the publication of statistical data, some progress has been made in reducing the delays of transmission, in improving the timeliness and quality of major short-term indicators as well as in setting up a release calendar. A first step has been made with the publication by Eurostat of Euro-Indicators on the internet¹¹, but further developments are needed. To ensure a better service to short-term analysts a special Intranet site (Euro-SICS¹²) will be set up and become operational by September 1999. Its main objective will be to provide a comprehensive system of short-term economic indicators for the euro zone, the EU and its individual Member States. It will be accessible to Member States' statistical offices, finance and economics ministries and central banks, and to the ECB and the Commission. Another positive development in enhancing the accessibility of statistics is the publication by the ECB of comprehensive statistics on the euro area in the statistical section of their monthly bulletin. This bulletin, published since January this year, and the euro area statistics are freely available on the ECB's web-site.¹³ At present, euro area results are made available with some delay after the publication of national data. It is essential to reduce these delays, which arise partly from delays in transmitting data to Eurostat.

7. To respond to these priorities, **adequate resources** should be available to those involved in the collection, production, and dissemination of data.

In Member States where progress can be considered insufficient, the lack of adequate resources devoted to the priorities identified in the recommendations has generally been advanced as a major explanation. This applies particularly to areas such as the Labour Force Survey, short-term statistics, notably on new orders received by industry, and qualitative surveys.

In addition, it must be ensured that national statistical offices have adequate legal means to collect the necessary information, in line with the possibilities that national central banks already have in this regard.

There have been no major changes in the national statistical offices' possibilities, including, where appropriate, legal ones, to collect the necessary information. The quality of balance-of-payments statistics could, in some cases, be improved relatively quickly by making it legally possible that the relevant micro-data are exchanged between the national central bank and the national statistical office, under the condition that the confidentiality regime of the sender of the data is safeguarded.

¹¹ <http://europa.eu.int/en/comm/eurostat/serven/part3/euroind/eur11key.htm>

¹² Statistical Information Common Site.

¹³ <http://www.ecb.int>

Appendix: Current timetable (t+x days after the reference period) for publishing the euro indicators and prospective timetable (mid 2000)

Indicators	Current situation			Mid 2000	Freq.	Unit	Measure
	1st est.	2nd est.	3rd est.	1st est.			
National accounts (1)							
Gross domestic product	T+70	T+100	T+120	T+60	Q	A/B	Real
Private final consumption expenditure	T+70	T+100	T+120	T+60	Q	A/B	Real
Government final consumption expenditure	T+70	T+100	T+120	T+60	Q	A/B	Real
Gross fixed capital formation	T+70	T+100	T+120	T+60	Q	A/B	Real
Changes in inventories	T+70	T+100	T+120	T+60	Q	% of GDP	Real
External balance	T+70	T+100	T+120	T+60	Q	% of GDP	Real
Gross national disposable income	T+100	T+120		T+90	Q	A/B	Nominal
Compensation of employees	T+100	T+120		T+90	Q	A/B	Nominal
Gross wages and salaries	T+100	T+120		T+90	Q	A/B	Nominal
Gross disposable income of households	T+100	T+120		T+90	Q	A/B	Nominal
Gross saving	T+100	T+120		T+90	Q	A/B	Nominal
GDP deflator	T+100	T+120		T+90	Q	Deflator	Deflator
External trade							
Exports of goods	T+70	T+100		T+40	M	B	Nominal
Imports of goods	T+70	T+100		T+40	M	B	Nominal
Balance of trade	T+70	T+100		T+40	M	Mrd EUR	Nominal
Unit value index of export	T+70	T+100		T+40	M	B	Unit value
Unit value index of import	T+70	T+100		T+40	M	B	Unit value
Balance of payment							
Current account balance	T+60			T+60	M/Q	Mrd EUR	Nominal
Trade in services balance	T+60			T+60	M/Q	Mrd EUR	Nominal
Current account balance	T+60			T+60	M/Q	% of GDP	Nominal
Prices							
Harmonized index of consumer prices	T+30			T+20	M	A/B	Prices
Producer price index - domestic market	T+40				M	A/B	Prices
Labor cost index	T+90			T+75	Q	A/B	Prices
Conventional earnings indices	T+90				Q	A/B	Prices
Industry							
Industrial production index (2)	T+60				M	B/C	Real
Industrial turnover	T+60				M	B/C	Nominal
Service							
Retail sales turnover (3)	T+90				M	B/C	Nominal
Labour market (4)							
Employment in whole economy	T+75			T+60	Q	B	
Persons employed in industry	T+90				M/Q	B/C	
Unemployed ILO definition (SA)	T+30				M	A/B	
Monetary and financial indicators							
Money supply (5)	T+30				M	A/B	Nominal
3-Month interest rates (6)	T+60				M	MA	Nominal
Long term government bond yield (6)	T+30				M	MA	Nominal
Euro yield curve	T+2				M	MA	Nominal
Stock market capitalisation	T+30				M	Mrd EUR	Nominal
Government deficit	T+70				A	Mrd EUR/% of GDP	Nominal
Government debt	T+70				A	Mrd EUR/% of GDP	Nominal

Legend:

The frequency is indicated by Q (Quarterly), M (Monthly), and A (Annually).

The unit is indicated by:

A = Percentage change on previous period

B = Percentage change on corresponding period of previous year

C = Trend cycle

MA = Monthly average

Timeliness is expressed in t+x days after the reference period, (National Accounts have 3 estimates per period and External Trade 2)

Footnotes

1. Legally required deadline for transmission of national data to Eurostat is $t + 120$. Eurostat plans a flash estimate at $t + 45$ from mid-2000. The planned shortenings of the timetable will be dependent on sufficient coverage.
2. At present, data are missing on several Member States amounting to 60% of the total euro area weight. Thus, the first estimates for the euro area are based upon estimates for these Member States and are subject to substantial revision.
3. Legally required deadline for transmission to Eurostat is 60 days. Present timeliness could probably be improved.
4. Quarterly Labour Force Survey results (due 2001) offer prospect of better quality though not timeliness (deadline in Regulation is $t + 90$). But likely absence of data for Germany, Italy, Austria makes reliable quarterly results for euro area unachievable from this source.
5. Monetary aggregates for euro area are first published by the ECB, normally on the 19th working day of the following month.
6. Market rates continuously available. The ECB publishes monthly averages in its Monthly Bulletin around the middle of the following month.

In addition, important statistics not at present available are expected to become available during 2000. On the basis of a draft Commission Regulation currently under discussion with the Member States, these statistics would include quarterly data for taxes, actual social contributions and social benefits (other than social transfers in kind) on an ESA 95 basis. Member States would transmit these data to Eurostat within three months of the relevant quarter.

<i>Indicator(s)</i>	<i>Legally required deadline for transmission of national data to Eurostat</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Financial accounts - annual financial transactions and balance sheets	9 months	First release in Sept. 2000.
2. Government statistics – (a) non financial accounts - receipt (taxes and social contributions) - expenditure (social benefits) (b) financial accounts - general government debt** (qtrly)	3 months* 3 months*	Timetable acceptable but coverage will have to be widened. First release in June 2000. Back data by 2002. The transmission programme is under discussion between the ECB, Eurostat and the Member States; the same timetable as for non-financial accounts should apply.
Industrial new orders (excl. construction)		The transmission programme is under discussion between Eurostat and the Member States.

* A legal decision is expected by October 1999.

** As defined in Article 1 (5) of Council Regulation (EC) No 3605/93 of 22 November 1993 on the application of the Protocol on the excessive deficit procedure annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community (Official Journal L 332, 31/12/1993 p. 0007 - 0009).

List of forthcoming public ministerial debates to be held at the Council of the EU
under the Finnish Presidency (second half of 1999)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 19 July | <i>GENERAL AFFAIRS</i>
EU External Relations in the post-Kosovo era
(Presidency Programme) |
| 12 October
Luxembourg | <i>ENVIRONMENT</i>
Subject to be announced later |
| 28 October
Luxembourg | <i>INTERNAL MARKET</i>
Internal Market action plan and future measures |
| 29 October
Luxembourg | <i>JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS</i>
An area of freedom, security and justice |
| 8 November | <i>CONSUMER</i>
Consumer protection and services of general interest |
| 18 November | <i>HEALTH</i>
Integration of health protection in Community policies |
| 26 November | <i>EDUCATION</i>
Education in the next Millennium |
| 30 November | <i>TELECOMMUNICATIONS</i>
The road towards a true information society |
-

ITEMS APPROVED WITHOUT DEBATE

(Decisions for which statements for the Council minutes have been made available to the public are indicated by asterisks; the statements in question may be obtained from the Press Office.)

ECOFIN

Broad Economic Policy Guidelines

The Council adopted its recommendation on the broad guidelines of the economic policies of the Member States and of the Community.

This adoption took place in accordance with Article 99(2) of the Treaty and following

- the approval by the Council (ECOFIN) on 25 May 1999, on a recommendation from the Commission, of a draft for the broad economic policy guidelines of the Community and the Member States,
- the endorsement by the European Council on 3 and 4 June 1999 of the broad economic policy guidelines contained in the report of the Council.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Rwanda - common position

Further to the common position adopted on 30 March 1998 on Rwanda, the Council adopted a new common position which replaces the previous one and which sets out the principles on which the EU will base its future relations with Rwanda.

The common position stipulates, in particular:

" The objectives and priorities of the European Union in its relations with Rwanda are to encourage, stimulate and support the process, begun by the Government of Rwanda, of

- recovery from genocide and the promotion of national reconciliation;
- reconstruction and development;
- protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- transition to democracy.

Regional instability can jeopardise the achievement of these goals. The European Union shall therefore encourage efforts of the Government of Rwanda to orientate their foreign and security policies towards the achievement of regional stability, as it does with all other parties to conflicts in the region.

The European Union affirms that progress in these areas is primarily the responsibility of the Government of Rwanda. In order to support and encourage the efforts of the Government of Rwanda in these areas, the European Union, including through the offices of its Special Envoy to the African Great Lakes Region, shall pursue a constructive and critical dialogue with the Government of Rwanda on the basis of the following provisions.

With regard to the Government of Rwanda's regional foreign and security policy, the European Union shall:

- encourage it, as it does with all other parties involved in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to participate in a constructive manner in regional and international efforts to negotiate a peaceful solution. This solution must lead to a ceasefire as soon as possible, followed by withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo. It must take into account security concerns and further legitimate interests of all parties concerned and respect the principles of territorial integrity and national sovereignty;
- encourage the Government of Rwanda, as it does with all other parties to the conflict, to abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law.

With regard to the situation within Rwanda, the efforts of the European Union shall be based on the following principles:

- (a) concerning reconciliation and power-sharing, the European Union shall encourage and support efforts by the Government of Rwanda to bring about reconciliation among all Rwandans within and outside Rwanda, including through dialogue with all groups which reject violence and genocide, focusing on power-sharing and minority protection. The independence, effectiveness and broad-based composition of the National Commission on Reconciliation and National Unity is considered to be important in this context by the European Union;
- (b) concerning democratisation, the European Union shall:
 - encourage the Government of Rwanda to devolve competencies and powers to the newly elected local authorities as soon as possible, in order to ensure the participation of local populations in the political process at grassroots level; and is willing to consider, in principle, supporting the training of newly elected local councillors in order to facilitate the process;
 - encourage the Government of Rwanda's plan to hold elections at commune and prefecture level in two years' time and to elaborate an appropriate mechanism, timing and management for these elections. This mechanism, while taking into account the problem of illiteracy, should establish a voting mechanism that will ensure free and fair elections, guaranteeing equal rights for all groups; the participation of civil society; public debate; the right of free expression; transparency with regard to the whole electoral process and electoral legislation; the nomination of an independent body to prepare and oversee the entire electoral process and an opportunity for all sectors of society to express their views. The European Union shall examine possibilities of supporting the elaboration of such an electoral mechanism;
 - encourage the Government of Rwanda to continue to make progress towards democratisation and to plan for elections to be held at national level in the near future;
- (c) concerning the judicial system and the establishment of traditional justice (Gacaca), the European Union, concerned that the gacaca system may not comply with international human rights standards and may cause further discord, shall:
 - encourage the Government of Rwanda to establish clemency as a general working principle of gacaca, to safeguard the right of civil defence and to sensitise the population in general and genocide survivors in particular as to the need to accept this in order to deal simultaneously with the problem of impunity and to reach a pragmatic solution to the alarming problem of a large prison population awaiting trial under precarious conditions of detention;
 - encourage the Government of Rwanda to continue its efforts to reduce the prison population and its campaign of sensitisation, including by realising its decision, announced in 1998, to release prisoners against whom there are no files, or incomplete files, as an important step towards alleviating the over-crowded prison population;
 - support the work of the International Criminal Tribunal in Arusha, including through renewing its efforts to ensure that all States surrender to the Tribunal all those indicted by it for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law and by seeking continued improvement of the Tribunal's administrative effectiveness;

- encourage the Government of Rwanda to show the utmost restraint with regard to the imposition and execution of the death penalty with a view to its total abolition and to comply fully with its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to observe other international safeguards concerning the death penalty;
- (d) concerning villagisation policy, the European Union shall encourage the Government of Rwanda to proceed with such policy only after careful planning, prior impact studies, pilot projects and campaigns to sensitise the population and to assure an equitable redistribution and management of land, in order to avoid resettlement, hastened by security considerations, bringing about human rights violations, results contrary to the desired effects and causes for further discord;
- (e) concerning human rights, the European Union shall encourage and support efforts by the Government of Rwanda to protect and promote the human rights of all Rwandans, including through assuring the independent and effective functioning of the National Human Rights Commission and by continuing to work with the Special Representative and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;
- (f) concerning economic development and co-operation, the European Union shall continue to support the efforts of the Government of Rwanda to promote inclusive economic development and to extend progress achieved on the macroeconomic field as instruments for peace and stability, including by encouraging additional efforts with regard to good governance;
- (g) concerning reintegration, the European Union shall encourage and support efforts by the Government of Rwanda to facilitate the reintegration into Rwandan society of genocide survivors, demobilised soldiers and all other displaced people, including through close co-operation with relevant international organisations.

The Council notes that the Commission intends to direct its action towards achieving the objectives and priorities of this Common Position, where appropriate, by pertinent Community measures.

In implementing this Common Position, the European Union will co-operate closely with the UN, OAU and other interested organisations.

The implementation of this Common Position will be monitored regularly. The Common Position will be reviewed within 12 months.

This Common Position shall replace Common Position 98/252/CFSP. It shall take effect on the day of its adoption and shall be published in the Official Journal."

Export of dual-use goods

The Council decided to publish - for the information of the EU's exporters - in the Official Journal an updated version of the index to the goods whose export is subject to authorisation under the Community's system of export controls for dual-use goods. These goods are listed in an annex (I) to the 1994 Decision setting up the EC export control system, and which has been amended on a number of occasions.

Relations with Slovenia

The Council adopted a Regulation on certain procedures for applying the Europe Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Slovenia, of the other part.

It is recalled that the Agreement entered into force on 1 February 1999.

This Regulation concerns both the management of quotas and tariff ceilings laid down in the Agreement and the procedures for taking possible safeguard and trade protection measures. Similar Council Regulations have been adopted when Europe Agreements entered into force with the other associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Ukraine - nuclear Co-operation Agreements

The Council adopted the Decision approving the conclusion by the Commission of two Co-operation Agreements between the European Atomic Energy Community and the Republic of Ukraine in the fields of nuclear safety and controlled nuclear fusion - conducted for peaceful purposes and on the basis of a balance corresponding to the concept of mutual benefit.

The co-operation under the first Agreement shall encourage and contribute to the improvement of nuclear safety, including the definition and application of scientifically warranted and internationally accepted nuclear safety guidelines.

Co-operation shall be as broad as possible and involve the following areas:

- nuclear reactor safety research
- radiation protection
- nuclear waste management
- decommissioning, decontamination and dismantling of nuclear installations
- research and development on safeguards of nuclear material
- prevention of illicit trafficking of nuclear material

Other areas of co-operation may be added in accordance with procedures in force on each side.

The co-operation shall be implemented in particular through:

- exchange of technical information by means of reports, visits, seminars, technical meeting, etc.;
- exchange of personnel between laboratories and/or bodies involved on both sides, including for training purposes;
- exchange of samples, materials, instruments and apparatus for experimental purposes;
- balanced participation in joint studies and activities.

The objective of the second Agreement is to maintain and intensify co-operation between the Parties in the areas covered by their respective fusion programmes in order to develop the scientific understanding and technological capability underlying a fusion power system.

Co-operation under this Agreement may be undertaken in the following areas:

- experimental and theoretical studies of plasma confinement, transport, heating and current drive (including the development of related RF systems) and diagnostics, in toroidal magnetic devices;
- studies in plasma theory, in particular on the physics of fast ions and alpha particles in toroidal magnetic devices, and studies of turbulent plasmas and of non-linear plasma-wave interactions;
- fusion technology;
- applied plasma physics;
- policy concerning programme and plans.

Other areas of co-operation may be added in accordance with procedures in force on each side.

The co-operation shall be implemented in particular through:

- exchange of technical information by means of reports, visits, seminars, technical meetings, etc.;
- exchange of personnel between laboratories and/or bodies involved on both sides, including for training purposes;
- exchange of samples, material, instruments and apparatus for experimental purposes;
- balanced participation in joint studies and activities.

Opening of consultations with the Comoros under Article 366a of the Lomé Convention

Following condemnation by the European Union on 7 May 1999 of the overthrow of the legitimate government of the Comoros by the Comorian army, the Council decided on the opening of consultations with the ACP side under Article 366a of the Lomé Convention with a view to assessing the situation in the Comoros in detail and, if necessary, remedying it. To this end, the Council approved the letters to be addressed to the authorities of the Comoros and to the Presidency of the ACP Group.

TRADE QUESTIONS

Textile agreements with Newly Independent States

The Council adopted a decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations for the renewal of the existing bilateral agreements on trade in textile products with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

Lao People's Democratic Republic - trade in textile products

The Council adopted the Decision on the conclusion of an Agreement between the European Community and the Lao People's Democratic Republic on trade in textile products.

The Agreement between the European Community and Lao People's Democratic Republic on trade in textile products was initialled on 16 June 1998 and has been applied on a provisional basis (Council Decision (EC) No 678/98 of 9 November 1998) as from 1 December 1998 pending its formal conclusion.

Cambodia - trade in textile products

The Council adopted the Decision on the provisional application of the Agreement between the European Community and the Kingdom of Cambodia on trade in textile products.

The Agreement between the European Community and Cambodia was initialled on 3 February 1999. The purpose of this Agreement is dual: firstly, to establish efficient and workable administrative co-operation with the goal of preventing circumvention of textile trade from quota countries via Cambodia and secondly, to ensure that Cambodia textile trade with the EU will develop without obstacles from the EU provided that Cambodia takes full responsibility on the actual origin of the products.

Taiwan - imports of certain textiles

The Council adopted an amendment to its Regulation (EC) No 47/98 of 22 December 1998 on the arrangements for imports of certain textiles originating in Taiwan.

The main purpose of the amendment is to ensure that Taiwan maintains an access to the Community market for the supplementary quantities to Category 28S (knitted shorts, bib and brace overalls) not lower than the quantities exported in 1998. Therefore the limits set for the supplementary quantities to Category 28 under Protocol A to Annex II of the above-mentioned Council Regulation (EC) No 47/98 for the year 1999, 2000 and 2001 are amended.

Anti-dumping / Anti-subsidy measures concerning stainless steel wires originating in India and the Republic of Korea

The Council adopted three Regulations imposing countervailing respectively anti-dumping duties and collecting definitively the provisional duties imposed on stainless steel wires originating in India and terminating the proceedings concerning imports of stainless steel wires originating in the Republic of Korea:

- anti-subsidy: countervailing duties for products with a diameter of 1 mm or more

The rate of the definitive countervailing duty applicable to the net, free-at-Community-frontier price, before duty, shall be as follows:

	Producer	Rate of duty (%)	Taric additional code
-	Bhansali Bright Bars Pvt Ltd., C-8/3, T.T.C. Industrial Area, Village - Pawne Opposite P.I.L., Thane - Belapur Road, Navi Mumbai 400 705, India.	18,5	A009
-	Devidayal Industries Ltd, Gupta Mills Estate, Reay Road, Mumbai 400 010, India.	18,4	A010
-	Indore Wire Company Ltd., Near Fort, Indore 452 006 (M.P.), India.	19,3	A004
-	Isinox Steels Ltd., Indiateel Complex, Railway Gate No 4, Antop Hill, Wadala, Mumbai 400 037, India.	13,2	A002
-	Isibars Ltd., Indiateel Complex, Railway Gate No 4, Antop Hill, Wadala, Mumbai 400 037, India.	13,2	A011
-	Mukand Ltd., L.B.S. Marg, Kurla, Mumbai 400 070, India.	13,2	A003
-	Raajratna Metal Industries Ltd., 909, Sakar - III, Nr Income Tax, Ahmedabad 380 014, Gujarat, India.	28,6	A005
-	Venus Wire Industries Ltd., Block No 19, Raghuvanshi Mill Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai 400 013, India.	35,4	A006
-	Macro Bars and Wires Pvt. Ltd., 702 Bombay Market Building, Tardeo Road, Mumbai 400 032, India.	25,4	A008
-	Kei Industries Ltd., D-90, Okhla Industrial Area Phase-1, New Delhi, India.	0	A020
-	Triveni Shinton International Ltd., Kanti Mansion, 6 Murai Mohalla, Indore 452 001 (M.P.), India.	0	A012
-	All other companies	48,8	A999

- anti-dumping: anti-dumping duties for the same products with a diameter of 1 mm or more

The rate of the definitive anti-dumping duty applicable to the net, free-at-Community-frontier price, before duty, shall be as follows:

Producer	Rate of duty (%)	Taric additional code
- Bhansali Bright Bars Pvt Ltd., C-8/3, T.T.C. Industrial Area, Village - Pawne Opposite P.I.L., Thane - Belapur Road, Navi Mumbai 400 705, India.	0	A009
- Devidayal Industries Ltd, Gupta Mills Estate, Reay Road, Mumbai 400 010, India.	2,4	A010
- Indore Wire Company Ltd., Near Fort, Indore 452 006 (M.P.), India.	16,5	A004
- Isinox Steels Ltd., Indiateel Complex, Railway Gate No 4, Antop Hill, Wadala, Mumbai 400 037, India.	0	A002
- Isibars Ltd., Indiateel Complex, Railway Gate No 4, Antop Hill, Wadala, Mumbai 400 037, India.	0	A011
- Mukand Ltd., L.B.S. Marg, Kurla, Mumbai 400 070, India.	10,1	A003
- Raajratna Metal Industries Ltd., 909, Sakar - III, Nr Income Tax, Ahmedabad 380 014, Gujarat, India.	0	A005
- Venus Wire Industries Ltd., Block No 19, Raghuvanshi Mill Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai 400 013, India.	0	A006
- Macro Bars and Wires Pvt. Ltd., 702 Bombay Market Building, Tardeo Road, Mumbai 400 032, India.	0	A008
- Kei Industries Ltd., D-90, Okhla Industrial Area Phase-1, New Delhi, India.	32,6	A020
- Triveni Shinton International Ltd., Kanti Mansion, 6 Murai Mohalla, Indore 452 001 (M.P.), India.	55,6	A012
- All other Indian companies	55,6	A999

- anti-subsidy: countervailing duties for products with a diameter less than 1 mm

The rate of the definitive countervailing duty applicable to the net, free-at-Community-frontier price, before duty, shall be as follows:

Producer	Rate of duty (%)	Taric additional code
- Drawmet Wires Pvt Ltd, B-482, Industrial Area, Bhiwadi, India.	8,5	A001
- Indore Wire Company Ltd., Near Fort, Indore 452 006 (M.P.), India.	19,3	A004
- Isinox Steels Ltd., Indiateel Complex, Railway Gate No 4, Antop Hill, Wadala, Mumbai 400 037, India.	10,1	A002
- Mukand Ltd., L.B.S. Marg, Kurla, Mumbai 400 070, India.	13,2	A003
- Raajratna Metal Industries Ltd., 909, Sakar - III, Nr Income Tax, Ahmedabad 380 014, Gujarat, India.	42,9	A005
- Venus Wire Industries Ltd., Block No 19, Raghuvanshi Mill Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai 400 013, India.	35,4	A006
- Macro Bars and Wires Pvt. Ltd., 702 Bombay Market Building, Tardeo Road, Mumbai 400 032, India.	25,4	A008
- Kei Industries Ltd., D-90, Okhla Industrial Area Phase-1, New Delhi, India.	0	A020
- All other Indian companies	44,4	A999

INTERNAL MARKET

Technical harmonisation of motor vehicles

The Council adopted a common position regarding the proposal for a Directive amending Directive 70/221/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to liquid-fuel tanks and rear underrun protection of motor vehicles and their trailers.

The aim of this proposal is to introduce into Council Directive 70/221/EEC new provisions for fuel-tanks made of plastic material for vehicles of category M₁ and to amend the title of Directive 70/221/EEC and extend its scope to tanks for fuels other than liquid fuels (i.e. gaseous fuels). Furthermore, the amending Directive modifies the current provisions as regards the adjustment of the Annexes to technical progress so that in future technical provisions concerning tanks for all types of fuels can be introduced and amended in accordance with the committee procedure.

FISHERIES

TACs for blue whiting, sprat, northern shrimp, and spurdog *

The Council adopted the Regulation on the allocation of the Total Allowable Catches (TACs) for blue whiting, sprat, northern shrimp and spurdog. The quotas have been published in Press release of 10 June 1999 No 8877/99 (Presse 186-G).

HEALTH

Limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields

The Council adopted by qualified majority, the Italian delegation voting against, the recommendation on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields 0Hz-300Hz.

The aim of this recommendation is to provide for a commonly agreed framework concerning a high level protection against acute effects from 0Hz-300hz electromagnetic fields (EMFs). Among such EMFs are sources of static electric and magnetic fields, power lines and electric appliances, electric railway systems, broadcast transmitters, cellular radio, mobile phone base stations, and radar.

EDUCATION**Inclusion of Turkey in the SOCRATES and YOUTH FOR EUROPE Programmes**

The Council adopted two common positions with a view to the adoption of decisions of the European Parliament and the Council

- amending the basic decision relating to the SOCRATES Programme so as to include Turkey among the beneficiary countries;
- amending the basic decision relating to the third phase of the YOUTH FOR EUROPE Programme to include Turkey among the beneficiary countries.

LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**Organisation of working time**

Further to the political agreement reached at the May 25 Council session (Labour and Social Affairs), the Council formally adopted its common positions regarding

- the proposal for a "horizontal" Directive amending Directive 93/104/EC concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time to cover sectors and activities excluded from that Directive;
- the proposal for a Directive concerning the enforcement of seafarers' hours of work on board ships using Community ports.

Both common positions will be transmitted to the European Parliament in accordance with the co-decision procedure which has now become applicable also to EU social policy legislation.

See press release No 8439/99 (Presse 164) of 25 May 1999 for more detail.

APPOINTMENT**Economic and Social Committee**

The Council adopted a Decision appointing Mr Jean-Jacques CARMENTRAN a member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Jacques PE for the remainder of his term of office, which runs until 20 September 2002.

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DECISION ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE**EU assistance to the Palestinian Authority in the field of counter-terrorism**

The Council adopted on 6 July 1999 by written procedure a Decision extending until 31 May 2002 the Joint Action of 29 April 1997 which established a EU assistance programme to support the Palestinian Authority in its efforts to counter terrorist activities emanating from the territories under its control.

This Decision is taken further to the positive conclusions of the mid-term review of the Joint Action, and takes account of the delays which have occurred in the start of the implementation of the assistance programme.

It stipulates in particular that the EU's Adviser appointed in 1997 to oversee the implementation of the programme and the EU's Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process - whose mandate was extended on October 1998 to include security questions - will co-ordinate their action in the field of security co-operation to ensure coherence of EU action in support of the peace process.

The Joint Action will be reviewed no later than 30 June 2000 with a view to the possible adoption of a multi-annual programme and the establishment of a financial indicative amount for the remaining period, on top of the 3.6 million euro initially foreseen for the period 1997-2000.

It is recalled that the objective of the EU programme is to support the Palestinian Authority's capacity to counter terrorism and help sustain the Middle East Peace Process and to provide the relevant security and police services with a comprehensive understanding of the principles of human rights in the implementation of their activities in the territories under the control of the Palestinian Authority. It includes elements such as training in surveillance search and interview techniques; the establishment of a technical investigation bureau with forensic capability; training of management personnel of the security and police agencies involved to bring about co-operation and effective reaction concerning acts of terrorism; assistance to senior management of the various services for effective administration.