

Editorial

Sixth Report on the Completion of the Internal Market

Unlike, as it may well turn out, *perestroika* and *glasnost*, the completion of the internal market is regarded as an irreversible process, now entering the final straight. In its Sixth progress report (COM (91) 237 final) the Commission noted that of the 282 proposals in the White Paper on Completing the Internal Market (COM (85) 310 final) three-quarters of the necessary decisions have been adopted and 89 still had to be approved by the Member States. Now that all of the proposals have been presented the Commission's attention, as the last proposals are guided through the Community's decision-making procedure, will turn to administering existing legislation and ensuring that the Member States implement correctly the new legislation which is adopted. Internal measures were adopted by the Commission in 1990 to ensure that infringement proceedings could be instituted rapidly. The level of transposition of Community law into national law has accordingly increased from 69 per cent in December 1990 to more than 73 per cent in May 1991, with France and Greece in particular improving their rates of transposition, a step Portugal had already taken in 1990. Once again, Italy continues to provide the greatest cause for concern, with only

just over half the necessary national measures adopted.

Whilst work on customs formalities is complete and the abolition of transit agreements and the Single Administrative Document comes into force on 1 January, 1993, various problems, particularly in the field of veterinary and plant health controls remain. In the field of controls on persons Denmark has now signed the Convention determining the State responsible for examining an application for asylum and ratification can now proceed via the normal constitutional procedures of the Member States. Most progress has, however, been made in the field of technical harmonisation and standards, a field in which the transposition rate is also above average (at 7 per cent), although here too delays are accumulating in the fertilizers and agrifoodstuffs sectors. Of the new approach directives only those concerning toys and pressure vessels are at present in force but the lack of proper transposition of these directives means that for the directives due to come into force in the near future the Commission has had to devote resources to guiding the Member States on correct transposition. As readers of this *Review* will be aware, work on the opening-up of public procurement is proceeding at a very satisfactory rate.

Questions on value added tax and on company law continue to give cause for concern. The United Kingdom continues with its scarcely credible

determination not to see the need for the increased level of social protection proposed by the Commission; similarly the United Kingdom seems to be set on maintaining systematic immigration controls after everyone else has agreed that they should disappear. It seems a pity that the notion of Community citizenship within a single market does not yet appear to have penetrated the more insular realms of political thought in the United Kingdom. Corruption by garlic and philosophy is not a logical or even necessary consequence of the abolition of immigration controls.

Into Its Second Year

With the publication of this number this *Review* moves from its first into its second year of publication. It is perhaps an appropriate occasion to thank all those who have helped make its launch a success, particularly the contributors and Susan Nicholas whose sterling work as Editor is quite remarkable. Future issues will see an increasing range of articles and coverage which the Editorial Advisory Board hopes will continue to whet the appetite of readers.

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