

'Opinion on the Stresa Resolution' from L'agriculture dans le marché commun


Caption: In November 1958, the European Confederation of Agriculture (ECA) expresses its opinion on the Resolution adopted by the Delegations of the six Member States of the European Economic Community (EEC) following the Stresa Agriculture Conference held from 3 to 12 July 1958.

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The European Agricultural Confederation

Opinion on the Stresa Resolution

The Conference did not pursue the problem analysis as far as it should have done, in line with the spirit and objective of Article 39 of the Treaty. It was to mark only the beginning of the work required to establish a common policy.

A comparison of agricultural policies was not made, either through lack of documentation or because of the lack of standardisation in the statistics provided by the delegations.

The Conference only touched briefly on the problems, without providing the outline of a solution to any of them, to such an extent that the future of agriculture will depend on the spirit in which the Resolution is implemented.

The European Commission should maintain close and continuous collaboration with professional organisations in continuing the activities deriving from the Resolution.

The Conference must not give the impression that it sought to hide behind structural reform in order to avoid the tricky problem of pricing and market policies. However that may be, in any reform of agricultural structures, it would be unthinkable to ignore the human consequences. Indeed, nothing would be gained from forfeiting at the social level what is gained at the economic level.

The relationship between increased productivity and a pricing policy to prevent surpluses is acceptable only if the increased productivity serves, first and foremost, to improve agricultural income, which has decreased in comparison with other sectors of the economy.

In no circumstances should the label specialisation mean total specialisation for each region, since that would not be in line with the family-based structure of European agriculture.

With respect to the family-based structure, when one reads the Final Resolution in its entirety, one has the impression that it is limited only to the economic and technical aspects of problems and that it does not give sufficient weight to other aspects, particularly social aspects.

One of the most important problems for a genuine common market for agricultural products is that of a joint policy on fodder. There must be direct linkage between this problem and the problem of a common policy for the animal processing sector.

The statements made in the Final Resolution on relations with third countries give no indication, not even a rough one, of how these problems will be addressed.

Finally, it is essential that sustainable, close and permanent cooperation be established between the European Communities' institutions and the farming organisations so that they participate in considering and finding solutions to the problems.

(November 1958)