



## Recommendation 280 (1961)<sup>1</sup>

# Agricultural policies in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

Considering that agriculture retains an important position in the economies and policies of most European countries;

Considering that many difficulties arising in the way of European economic cooperation and integration - within the European Economic Community and the European Free Trade Association as well as between these two regional groupings - stem from the problems encountered in the sector of agricultural products;

Considering, further, that European agricultural policies have an immediate bearing on trade relations between Europe and many countries of the outside world (in particular those of less developed regions);

Welcoming the increasing awareness of the need to solve the problems with which Governments are faced in the field of agriculture by a concerted European approach;

Noting with concern the tendency of food production to increase faster than food consumption in Western Europe with the result of creating high-cost surpluses for which it will be difficult to find outlets and believing that developments in this direction will prove to be still more pronounced than anticipated in recent ECE-FAO and EEC studies;

Being aware of the danger that the growing disproportion between consumption and production may constitute a serious obstacle to raising national incomes as much as possible and to improving farm incomes in relation to incomes in other sectors of the economy, and with every wish to improve the incomes of a farming population which is efficiently employed;

Believing that genuine progress in this matter can only be achieved by a simultaneous endeavour in the following directions: a better knowledge of the changing volume and pattern of demand, greater flexibility of agricultural production, vigorous development of labour productivity, particularly by reducing the number of people engaged in agriculture, and, finally, by stimulating changes in consumption patterns ;

Affirming that trade in agricultural products should be expanded on the basis of a more rational division of labour, and that it is a pre-condition for self-sustained economic development in the less developed countries that Europe should continue to import their agricultural produce;

Convinced that the free provision of certain European surplus products, if made available on a regular basis and in accordance with generally agreed principles, could constitute a useful contribution to improving diets and alleviating under-nourishment in less developed countries,

Recommends the Committee of Ministers and the Council of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) :

1. to ensure that the regular confrontation exercises hitherto carried out by the Ministerial Committee for Agriculture and Food shall be continued, extended to structural policies and intensified in the framework of OECD;

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1. Assembly debate, on 26th April 1961 (5th Sitting) (see [Doc. 1276](#), Report of the Committee on Agriculture).



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2. to request member Governments to report annually to OECD on progress made in the implementation of the recommendations addressed to them by OEEC/OECD, if necessary giving reasons why such recommendations have not been fully implemented;
3. to undertake jointly or to sponsor a comprehensive market research programme for agricultural commodities with a view to determining more clearly the factors influencing demand, thus obtaining a more adequate basis for planning agricultural production, and to review the relationship between production of, and demand for, agricultural products at regular intervals;
4. to prepare and elaborate a European plan for structural improvements and concurrently to intensify national structural improvements in the agricultural sector with a view to increasing labour productivity and to promoting the establishment of appropriate industries in rural districts for the purpose of absorbing uneconomically employed farm population without causing social difficulties;
5. to study the possibility of adapting the US system of Soil Banks to European conditions;
6. to study the possibility and advisability of vertical integration in agriculture ;
7. to examine the possibilities of utilising European agricultural surpluses which may materialise very shortly for the purpose of economic development and of improving the diet and alleviating under-nourishment in less developed countries in close collaboration with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation and the countries concerned;
8. to ensure that close contacts and an effective co-operation be maintained with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, particularly on giving assistance, in the field of agriculture, to the countries in course of development ;
9. to ensure that the practice of the Ministerial Committee for Agriculture and Food of submitting a special annual Report on Agriculture to the Consultative Assembly be continued by the OECD, and to make arrangements for yearly meetings between the OECD, the Committee on Agriculture and the Economic Committee of the Consultative Assembly for the purpose of securing closer co-operation between Governments and Parliaments;
10. to inform the Assembly of the action taken by member Governments in the framework of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation.