Fruit and vegetables: common organisation of the market COM

1995/0247(CNS) - 17/01/1996 - Committee of the Regions: opinion

The Opinion stressed that it was important to take account of geographical, social, cultural and economic diversity and referred to the severe impact that economic globalisation was having on the fruit and vegetable sector, which was particularly sensitive because of the size of its workforce, the geographical disparity of its social costs, the urban pressure acting on its production centres and various environmental problems. The products concerned were localized in areas where alternatives in respect of agricultural diversification were strictly limited and where the growing phenomenon of urban concentration brought additional expenses, to which had to be added the costs resulting from the abandonment of entire sections of territory. The opinion called for agricultural revenues and Community preference to be assured, for competition not to be distorted by monetary fluctuations and by disparity between social costs and for much greater attention to be paid to the direct and indirect consequences of commercial agreements with third countries. It praised the way in which specific situations affecting products of local and regional importance were being taken into account and also welcomed the proposals for organisations and interprofessional agreements aimed at promoting the efforts of producers towards product quality and respect for the environment. However, as the guardian of regional interests the CoR expressed concern about the risks of relocation and various radical measures such as grubbing-up.