# Creation of a European Rural Charter

1995/2104(INI) - 25/10/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Liam HYLAND (UPE) on European rural policy, the European Parliament called on the Commission to promote a coherent framework for creating employment inside and outside the agricultural sector, in areas such as the conservation of natural environmental resources. This meant giving priority to the concept of integrated rural development in order to put a stop to rural depopulation. Parliament drew attention to the social cost associated with the stagnation of rural zones and the uncontrolled growth in urban populations (pollution, motor traffic, social exclusion). In order to solve these problems, it advocated developing new obligations towards the family (childminders, the provision of young people's accommodation, reception centres for the aged, the creation of public and private multi-service points) together with the decentralisation of economic activity, particularly through the support of medium-sized urban centres capable of revitalizing the economic fabric of the surrounding area and of incorporating new centres of activity. To this effect Parliament considered that priority should be given to including the development of rural towns in the future urban policy of the European Union. Taking the view that agriculture should no longer be considered merely as a means of production, the report felt that a reform of the CAP should give priority to the following objectives: agriculture based on quality produce, with a view to safeguarding public health and protecting the environment; adapting agriculture to the needs of the market; measures to support the growth of the rural population; the restoration of farmers to their role as guardians of our natural resources by providing financial recognition for these activities. Finally, Parliament stressed the need for rural zones to have better access to public services and to benefit from greater investment in public transport. In conclusion, it called on the Commission to present a comprehensive and innovative document on rural development.