

# Women of Europe

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Brussels, November/December 1978 - no. 6/78

## A GOOD YEAR?

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Happy New Year. As a new year dawns, it is traditional to exchange good wishes and express hopes. But hopes and wishes depend on chance or fate. Now, more than ever, it depends on us whether this new year, 1979, will be good or bad.

Good or bad, the year is bound to be a difficult one. In Europe, the crisis of growth is combined with the economic crisis. There is no dearth of issues of concern: the elections, the role of the institutions, enlargement of the Community.

What about women? Against this stormy background, the women of Europe are organizing themselves and fighting for their rights. They are helping each other and becoming better informed without worrying very much about past differences and entrenched habits.

Women are on the move. In spite of everything. In face of every obstacle. This is the reason why the year will be a good one.

The Editor

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Our Correspondents in the Community

Germany	Christa Randzio-Plath, Hadermannsweg 23, 2 Hamburg-61
Denmark	Edèle Kruchow, Dronninggards Allé 10b, 2840 Holte
France	Jeanne Chaton, 53 avenue Ernest Reyer, 75014 Paris
Ireland	Council for the Status of Women, 27 Merrion Square, Dublin 2
Italy	Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli, 47 via Borgognona, 00187 Rome
Netherlands	Marjolijn Uitzinger, Savelsbos 85, Zoetermeer
United Kingdom	Peggy Crane, 12 Grove Park Road, Chiswick, London W4

**PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**

**BELGIUM**

1049 BRUSSELS  
Rue Archimède 73  
Tel. 735 00 40/735 80 40

**DENMARK**

1045 COPENHAGEN K  
4 Gammeltorv  
Postbox 144  
Tel. 14 41 40

**FRANCE**

75782 PARIS CEDEX 16  
61, rue des Belles-Feuilles  
Tel. 553 53 26

**GERMANY**

53 BONN  
Zitelmannstrasse 22  
Tel. 23 80 41

1 BERLIN 31  
Kurfürstendamm 102  
Tel. 8 92 40 28

**IRELAND**

DUBLIN 2  
29 Merrion Square  
Tel. 76 03 53

**ITALY**

00187 ROME  
Via Poli, 29  
Tel. 68 97 22 à 26

**LUXEMBOURG**

LUXEMBOURG  
Bâtiment Jean Monnet B/O  
Plateau du Kirchberg  
Tel. 43011

**NETHERLANDS**

THE HAGUE  
29, Lange Voorhout  
Tel. 070-46 93 26

**UNITED KINGDOM**

LONDON W8 4QQ  
20, Kensington Palace Gardens  
Tel. 727 8090

CARDIFF CF1 1WF  
4 Cathedral Road  
P.O. Box 15  
Tel. 371 631

EDINBURGH EH2 4PH  
7, Alva Street  
Tel. (031) 225.2058

**CANADA**

OTTAWA, Ont. K1R 7S8  
350 Sparks St.  
Suite 1110  
Tel. 2386464

**CHILE**

SANTIAGO 9  
Avenida Ricardo Lyon 1177  
Casilla 10093  
Tel. 25 05 55

**GREECE**

ATHENS 134  
Vassilisis Sofias 2  
Tel. 743 982/83/84

**JAPAN**

102 TOKYO  
Kowa 25 Building  
8-7 Sanbancho  
Chiyoda-Ku  
Tel. 239-0441

**SWITZERLAND**

1202 GENEVA  
37-39, rue de Vermont  
Tel. 34 97 50

**TURKEY**

ANKARA  
Kavaklidere  
13, Bogaz Sokak  
Tel. 27 61 45/46

**UNITED STATES**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20037  
2100 M Street, N.W.  
Suite 707  
Tel. (202) 872-8350

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017  
245 East 47th Street  
1 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza  
Tel. (212) 3713804

FACTS, INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES

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G E R M A N Y

Women in the Third World

The Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation) has issued a working document on "the promotion of women in developing nations". After analyzing the problems, the paper proposes several measures that will help involve women with economic development, prepare them for the radical changes by which the Third World is being disrupted and overcome the serious handicap of being a woman in a developing country.

To this end, the paper suggests that all development projects be considered from the point of view of their effects upon women's status. Steps should also be taken to speed up progress in the fields of health and nutrition in which women play a leading role. Closer cooperation should be encouraged between women's organizations in the developed and in the developing countries. Finally, women should play a far more active part in development projects, one of the implications being that they should be better educated and better trained.

Useful address: Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit  
Kaiserstrasse 185  
53 Bonn

Equality in Hamburg

The Burgermaster of the city of Hamburg has announced his intention of setting up a department with special responsibility for equality of status within the area covered by the city. One of the new department's tasks will be to implement the decisions reached by the city's Senate on equality.

The department may also consult the Senate on any constructive measures which can be adopted to ensure that decisions on equality reached at federal level are put into effect.

Useful address: Hamburger Landtag  
Rathaus Markt 1  
Hamburg 1

B E L G I U M

Married couples and tax law

Belgium, together with Finland and Spain, is one of the last countries in which the incomes of married couples are lumped together for tax purposes. The Association belge des Femmes juristes (the Belgian association of women jurists) has pointed out that this tax arrangement penalizes couples married in church or in the registry office. For example, a Belgian couple whose cumulative earnings are Bel.ƒ.500,000 will pay ten times more tax than a comparable French couple.

In Italy, the Constitutional Court had already ruled that tax measures prescribing the taxation of cumulative earnings are unlawful, and the system was finally abolished in 1977. The French have a graduated system: a couple's earnings are first added together and then divided by two, with their tax liability being calculated on this basis and multiplied by two.

In the campaign being conducted by the Association belge des Femmes juristes, the proposal is that "whatever the formal financial arrangements made in a marriage, the couple's earnings should be accumulated only at its request. Depending on the circumstances, the tax liability will be assessed in the name of each of the married people or in both their names. If the assessment is made in both their names, they will be jointly liable for payment of that tax."

Useful address: Association belge des Femmes juristes  
19, rue Guimard, Boîte 1,  
1040 Brussels

D E N M A R K

Due to a page-setting error, an article by Karen Ytting on "the role of the sexes and training" did not appear in our last issue. We apologize to the author and to our readers. This is the text of her article.

Inequality and Training - an article by Karen Ytting,  
President of Danske Kvinders Nationalraad  
(Danish National Women's Council)

The role of the sexes and training

In December 1976, the Danish Minister of Education, Ritt Bjerregard, set up a committee on questions pertaining to the role of the sexes and training.

The committee's terms of reference were to draw upon its own or other people's research to formulate a report on the effects of training on the problems associated with non-discrimination and the role of the sexes and, in the light of the conclusions reached in this report, to embark upon further studies and to propose measures that would promote equality between the sexes in the educational system.

The Education Minister hopes that the committee will report regularly on the progress it is making with its work so that its findings can be taken into account in discussions on education policy objectives and instruments. The committee published its first report on 1 August 1978. In Denmark, boys and girls, men and women, have the same rights to education and training; it is one of the principles in education policy that they should also be given the same opportunities for training.

In the introduction to its report, the committee thought it necessary to repeat that fact, for it is not clearly apparent from the actual situation.

When one looks at the bodies on which the leading "decision-makers" in Danish society sit - Government, Parliament, employers' associations and the unions, the civil service, etc. - the impression is given that being born a boy is one of the main criteria for reaching a high level position.

When one considers the labour market, it is no more evident that boys and girls or men and women enjoy the same rights, let alone the same training opportunities for many generations.

Women are still in the majority in jobs at the lower end of the scale where pay is lower. While two boys out of ten leaving primary school receive no vocational training, the comparable figure for girls is four out of ten.

To take the example of the body of teachers in Danish primary schools, we find that the traditional patterns of the role of the sexes continues: 54% of teachers are women, but only 4% of the inspectors.

The committee responsible for considering the problems raised by the role of the sexes and training has defined its main objectives as follows:

- to identify instances of inequality based on sex in the educational system;
- to determine the links between the role of the sexes and training opportunities for girls and boys;
- to pinpoint the problems and generate discussion on those problems; and
- to formulate proposals to reduce inequality.

In its first report, the committee set out many ideas and proposals, a few of which are repeated here.

During their basic training, all would-be teachers should make themselves familiar with the problems raised by the role of sexes so that they can make practical use of their knowledge in the course of their teaching work. All professional careers officers and those working in employment agencies must be educated in the problems raised by the role of the sexes.

Teaching content and methods must be based on non-discrimination and equal rights for men and women. Emphasis may not be indefinitely placed on the traditional role of one of the two sexes; any form of grouping children according to sex should be avoided.

All subjects of importance with a view to continuous training in adult life and working activities or with a view to the future life of children or young people as citizens and parents must be compulsory.

The school must base its activities on the principle that children will be engaged on the same tasks on the labour market and in the family, and that it is just as important to train boys for the parental role as to train girls.

The parents of schoolchildren and young people in training should be briefed on what they are being taught with regard to the role of the sexes and non-discrimination.

Emphasis should be placed on the responsibility of every employer, in both the private and the public sector, to implement an employment policy based on non-discrimination. The bodies representing management and the unions must take the initiative in launching a promotional campaign for non-discrimination and equality of status in the world of work.

Finally, the report sets out views and proposals on specific measures that might have positive results. To break away from the traditional concept of the role of the sexes and to give children different models with which they can identify, thus encouraging ventures that will help to achieve equality of status, arrangements must be made:

- for the recruitment of an equal number of women and men into the teaching profession;
- for teachers of the two sexes to have an equal share in the syllabus of subjects being taught and in the timetable for every class, at every level of education; and
- for authorities with the power of making appointments to be obliged to distribute senior level positions in the educational system equally between men and women.

#### Women priests in the Danish National Church

An article by Inger Lanberg,  
Secretary to the Danish National Women's Council,  
Member of the Church of the Holy Spirit Parish Council,  
Copenhagen

In Denmark, when a woman is ordained to the priesthood and given a pastoral ministry in the Danish National Church, the event causes no sensation.

The main reason for the situation in Denmark lies in the organization of the Danish Church, which is a Lutheran Evangelical church with a membership of almost 95% of the Danish population.

The King has been the head of the Church since the Reformation. Since the monarch gave the Danish people a liberal constitution in 1849 with universal suffrage, it was inevitable that the situation within the Church would evolve along the same lines. At that time, women were not considered to be citizens so that they were not given the right to vote. It may have been a good thing for women that they had to wait such a long time to achieve a form of democratic management within the National Church: not until 1902 was a law passed on parish councils stating that all Danes entitled to vote and members of the National Church were entitled to elect the members of their Church's parish council. By 1903, women had fought so effectively for the vote that it was inevitable that they should obtain it and that their eligibility for a seat on parish councils should be recognized. (Women obtained the right to vote in local elections in 1908, and in national elections in 1915.)

One of the tasks of a parish council is to suggest the names of candidates for priesthood to the Religious Affairs Ministry. If that proposal is made unanimously, the parish council has the sovereign power to decide who shall be the minister in its own parish.

Nevertheless, before becoming a minister in the Danish Church a certain background training is needed. Although women were allowed to attend degree courses at the university in 1875, they were excluded from theological studies. In 1904 they were allowed to attend degree courses in theology but they were still not entitled to be employed in the Church on the same footing as men.

The problem of equality of status for women in the Church was raised from time to time from the 1920's on, with the Danish Women's Union being particularly active in its struggle for the cause of women's priesthood. The Danish Parliament (the supreme authority in the Danish National Church) was asked to reach a decision that would give women the opportunity of being recruited as ministers of religion, and attempts were made to obtain a statement of their views from the Ministry for Religious Affairs and the Episcopate, but they declined to give an opinion by saying that they had no concrete case on which they could take a stand.

Such a case occurred for the first time in 1946 when a rural parish council expressed the wish to appoint a woman who had completed her theology studies as the minister for its church.

In 1947, the Folketing passed a bill whereby women were given the right to be ordained as priests in the Danish National Church. This settled the issue as far as the Ministry for Religious Affairs was concerned, as it was under an obligation to abide by the law. The bishop for the diocese in question, however, refused to ordain a woman. The problem that probably concerned Bishop Øllgaard most was the fact that 500 male ministers of the Church declared that they would leave the Church if anyone was so bold as to ordain women - something that would have caused a radical upheaval in the Danish National Church.

In Denmark, one is entitled to be released from the parochial link - in other words, it is officially possible to choose a priest from outside one's original parish and to become a member of another parish. With this in mind, a bill was passed empowering a parish to break away from its diocesan link, so that the parish in question was able to go to the bishop of the neighbouring diocese who had declared that he would willingly ordain a woman. When it came to the point, however, he backed down, saying that he would ordain women only in his own diocese. An appeal had to be made to Bishop Hans Øllgaard of Fyn (also famous as a member of the "Danish Resistance Council" during the German occupation of Denmark), and he ordained Denmark's first three women priests in Odense Cathedral in March, 1948.

It was inevitable that all manner of difficulties should arise: there was a campaign in the press, theological arguments were aired for or against women priests and many articles appeared by indignant writers declaring that the Church would lose all authority were this frightful thing to come to pass, if a woman were to officiate before an altar in priest's robes.

All this proved to be no more than hot air, however. Nobody resigned, all the male priests stayed in the National Church and since then they have had to come to terms with their fellow pastors of the female sex.

There has been progress since that time. As things now stand, none of the ten Danish bishops opposes the ordination of women. In 1975, women accounted for 25% of the graduates in theology (compared with 7.4% in 1967), and about 9% of the pastoral positions are now held by women.

Women have not made great inroads, in other words. It is hoped that the distribution of men and women ministers will be more equal in the future. Above all, it is hoped that the first appointments will be made of women deacons and bishops.

Useful address: Danske Kvinders Nationalraad  
Niels Hemmingsengade, 8  
1153 - Copenhagen K

F R A N C E
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The Ministry for Women's Status

Monique Pelletier, the minister for women's status, has received a comprehensive team of "regional women delegates" in her new offices, briefing them on the guidelines for her work.

The minister began by paying homage to the work being done by the regional delegates: "You have been working under difficult and precarious conditions, sometimes coming up against irony, often encountering indifference. Despite this handicap, the cause of women's status owes you a good deal. You have greatly contributed towards arousing public concern for the problems of women's status. It is also to your credit that women are more enlightened as to what they stand for and the role they must assume in our society."

Monique Pelletier went on to speak of the future: "Our first task is to outline a rational medium and long term plan: a plan to make it possible for women to control their own lives, in other words to provide them with equality of opportunity so that they can lead full and useful lives at home, at work and in the city."

"For many reasons, a woman's work is probably the central factor around which family and social life must be organized. This demonstrates the importance of all action which is carried out in the future in the fields of education, vocational guidance and training for work and in working conditions themselves.

"You must make yourselves heard in the places where decisions are taken so that you can influence those decisions. You must also urge women unceasingly to participate in social and political life."



A circular is about to be sent out to the prefects in the regions asking them to provide regional delegates with the resources that they need in the form of equipment, premises and staff. "You must act as the technical advisers to the prefects in the regions on women's problems and, as such, take part in all administrative action and attend all joint meetings discussing issues that affect women's status."

Monique Pelletier also announced that gradual steps will be taken to establish departmental women correspondents, along the lines of what has already been done in the Ile de France.

Useful address: Ministère à la Condition Féminine  
Tour Mirabeau  
39-43 Quai André Citroën  
75015 Paris tel. 578.38.11

#### National Employment Pact

On the initiative of Nicole Pasquier, Secretary of State with responsibility for Women's Employment, the National Employment Pact introduced by the Law of 6 July 1978 is specifically open to women who are the support for their families. "This is the group," comments Nicole Pasquier, "which is catered for least in employment, as shown by the 1977 report on female unemployment."

The INFFO Centre has prepared various information sheets on this subject as well as a complete file, available on request, with the title of "Measures for the employment of young people and certain categories of Women".

Useful address: Centre INFFO  
Tour Europe  
Cedex 07  
92080 - Paris - La Défense

#### Job Diversification

Diversifying the jobs open to women: this is one of the major objectives of the Secretariat of State with responsibility for women's employment. A dossier has been prepared to outline the situation. In addition to providing statistics on women's vocational training and unemployment, it sets out the main guidelines for the work that has been undertaken and the various facilities made available to employers and working women. It also quotes a few examples of experiments being conducted in different French regions.

Useful address: Secrétariat d'Etat à l'Emploi féminin  
25, avenue Charles Floquet  
75700 Paris tel. 783.63.72

#### Parents and educational guidance

The Minister for Women's Status, Monique Pelletier, has announced that some of her work will relate to guidance in the school. Jacqueline Nonon, when she headed the Delegation for Women's Status, presented a survey on "the attitudes and behaviour patterns of parents with respect to the problem of educational guidance". This survey has now been published and can be obtained from Documentation française.

Useful address: Documentation française  
29-31 quai Voltaire  
75340 Paris Cedex 07 tel. 261.30.10

The Children of Women Prisoners

The Minister of Justice, Alain Peyrefitte, has just announced new measures to improve the lot of the children of women prisoners. At present, they are allowed to keep their babies with them until they are eighteen months old, but at that age they are automatically taken from their mothers. Under the new regulations, there is no longer a fixed age limit. Each case will be considered by a commission consisting of a psychiatrist, a psychologist and a social worker, after consulting the prisoner's solicitor. Creches will also be set up in women's prisons.

Useful address: Ministère de la Justice  
13 place Vendôme  
75008 Paris

I R E L A N D

Rape

The Council for the Status of Women has submitted a draft to the Minister of Justice regarding the law on rape. The document recommends changes in the legal procedure as well as in legal aid to the victims of rape. It also emphasizes the importance of including more women on juries and of there being more women doctors, scientists and policewomen investigating such cases. In the course of its work, the Council benefited from the cooperation of many experts in medicine, the law and police work.

A "Rape Crisis Centre" will be opening shortly in Dublin. The group which is setting up the centre attracted more than 4,000 women to a torchlight procession which it recently organized.

Useful address: Council for the Status of Women  
27, Merrion Square  
Dublin 2

Employment Equality Agency

The Employment Equality Agency has served notice on Aer Lingus that it must change its cabin staff recruitment policy to bring it in line with the law on employment equality.

The report prepared by the Agency on night work for women has also been officially accepted by the Minister of Labour.

Finally, a major seminar on the place of women in the Irish economy has been organized by the Agency to highlight the problems being encountered by women at work (or women who would like to work) in these times of dramatic change.

Useful address: Employment Equality Agency  
Davitt House  
Mespil Road  
Dublin 4

I T A L Y

Women's Status and the Government

As a result of undertakings given by the Prime Minister, Mr. Andreotti, to women's organizations at the time of forming his government, Mrs. Ines Boffardi has just been appointed Under-Secretary to the President of the Council with special responsibility for women's status problems.

Mrs. Boffardi, a member of the Christian Democrat Parliamentary group, was elected to represent the constituency of Genoa Sestri for the third time in June 1976.

European Women on the Air

The Italian radio and television corporation, RAI-TV, has introduced a radio broadcast on the GR2 station which goes out three times a week and is devoted to European affairs. One of the items in the programme is a feature entitled "Donne d'Europa" (Women of Europe), with the journalist Clara di Meglio. Questions and requests for information are invited by RAI and the answers are given during the programme.

Useful address: RAI-TV  
Rubrica Donne d'Europa del GR2  
9 via del Babuino  
Rome tel. 3878

Immigrants state their views

As part of a day devoted to the problems of emigration organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Luxembourg, 18 women immigrants made a joint statement emphasizing the problem of isolation, aggravated by the low educational level and language difficulties of wives of immigrant workers. Equality of status is even more of a rarity for women immigrants than for women in their own country.

Women who go with their husbands when they emigrate feel that they are cut off not only from their own homes but from political and social life. This is the reason why they would like briefing sessions to be organized - in Italian - on all kinds of topical problems. It seems that ventures of this type have already been launched in Switzerland.

N E T H E R L A N D S

Equal pay - an inaccessible goal?

Women employed on the same work as men are still earning 2.5% less than their male counterparts. This is the finding of a survey conducted by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs.

The Ministry survey covered 717 firms and 1296 comparisons were made between the earnings of men and women. In over half of the cases (54%), women were earning less than men; in 24% of the cases they enjoyed equal pay, while they were higher paid than their male colleagues in 24% of the cases.

Useful address: Ministerie van Sociale Zaken  
Anna Paulownastraat, 36  
The Hague tel. (070) 46.94.70

Emancipation in Education

The Ministry of National Education is to hold a congress on emancipation in 1979 as part of the working programme it has formulated to help women catch up in the field of education.

The focal issues in this congress will include: sexist stereotypes in text books used in schools, discrimination between the sexes in education and the ways in which girls are discouraged from going on to higher education.

Useful address: Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen  
Nieuwe Uitleg, 1  
The Hague tel. (070) 74.27.42

Night shifts

Mr. W. Albeda, the Minister of Social Affairs, and Mrs. J. Kraaijeveld Wouters, the Secretary of State with responsibility for emancipation, have decided to lift the bans on night work for women. It is a controversial subject, since the regulations now in force were introduced with the primary objective of protecting women against exploitation. Nevertheless, if the policy of equality of status for men and women is to be truly effective all distinctions should be abolished.

With this in mind, there has been consultation with both the Economic and Social Council and the Emancipatiekommissie. The views expressed by these bodies may help to lift the old ban without paving the way for abuse.

U N I T E D   K I N G D O M

Children and taxation

Mrs. Itzin, a theatre critic and single parent, recently sued the tax authority in the courts on the grounds that she was entitled to set off the cost of employing someone to look after her child while she, as a free-lance, was working against her tax liability. Mrs. Itzin lost her case but she has appealed against the decision.

Discussing Mrs. Itzin's courageous challenge, the Vice Chairman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, Lady Howe, noted that the case illustrates a serious problem being faced by many families. Today, the number of British taxpayers has risen to 21 million. Knowing that women make up almost 40% of the working population, it can readily be inferred that an enormous number of women not only work but also pay taxes. It is high time that further thought be given to the regulation that the care of children is not tax-deductible, as has been the case in the United States.

Useful address:    Equal Opportunities Commission  
                    Overseas House  
                    Quay Street  
                    Manchester M3 3HN

Discrimination in higher education

A Government paper on higher education in the 1990's has been severely criticized by the Equal Opportunities Commission for not taking account of women and adults. As the system is described by the paper, it provides no opportunities for mothers. According to the Equal Opportunities Commission, creches should be as common as canteens in higher education if the ideal of equal opportunity is to be achieved.

In proportion, more women go on to higher education in Great Britain than in any other EEC nation with the exception of France. More than half of these women, however, aim to take up teaching, the very field in which the Government would like to reduce recruitment because of the smaller school population.

The Equal Opportunities Commission is asking the Ministry to increase the number of part-time courses and to introduce a course "credit system" so that students could transfer from one branch of learning to another and from one educational establishment to another.

Useful address:    Department of Education and Science  
                    Elizabeth House  
                    York Road  
                    London S.E.1

Too few women engineers

Great Britain has fewer women in engineering than any other developed nation and even many developing countries. Only 0.2% of qualified engineers in Great Britain are women, compared with 3 per cent in France and 30 per cent in Russia.

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) wants to see the situation change and has urged that more engineering courses be introduced at high examination levels in schools.

The Commission is particularly concerned at the disproportionately high number of women engineers working in research and development who do not move into top management positions.

Useful address: Department of Education and Science  
Elizabeth House  
York Road  
London S.E.1

A POSTER COMPETITION

You don't need to be Mrs. Leonardo da Vinci: any woman with a spark of imagination can take part in the poster competition that has just been launched by eight leading women's magazines in eight EEC countries on the theme of "women and the European Parliamentary elections".

At the invitation of the European Commission's information department, Annabella in Italy, Femmes d'aujourd'hui-Rijk der Vrouw en France and Belgium, Libelle in the Netherlands, Woman's Own in Great Britain, Madame in West Germany, La Revue in Luxembourg and The Irish Woman in Eire are calling on their women readers to display both their talents and their interest in Europe.

In January 1979, a European jury of women politicians and publicity experts will select the best poster which will then receive an award and be printed and distributed by the European Commission.

The designer of the winning poster will be invited to the opening session of European Parliament.

M I L I T A N T   A C T I V I T I E S

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Christian Democrat Women

Now that the European elections are drawing near, the Christian Democrat women in the European People's Party are organizing a "women's week" in every EEC nation.

The two-fold ambition in launching the week is to make women electors more aware of the European programme of Christian Democrat parties and to support the women candidates being put forward by these parties.

The women's week will culminate in a major international meeting to be held in Luxembourg on 23 March 1979, the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome.

In 1979, the Christian Democrat women in the European People's Party will take every step to strengthen the links with women in "friendly" parties in European countries who are not members of EEC.

Useful address: Partito Popolare Europeo - Sezione Femmina  
Via del Plebiscito 107  
Rome

Socialist Parties and Women

The Socialist group in European Parliament has set up a working group on women's problems which has the special feature of including both one member from each Socialist Party in the Community countries and one member from each Parliamentary Committee.

Under the chairmanship of the Danish member, Karen Dahlerup, the deputy chairman being Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody from the United Kingdom, this "women's" working group will whenever necessary draw the attention of the Socialist group bureau to policies affecting the lives of women in the European Community. The group will also study developments in legislation promoting equality for women and will keep a very close watch on the way in which EEC regulations are in fact being applied.

Karen Dahlerup - this time assisted by the German member, Christa Randzio-Plath - will also preside a working group established by the federation of Socialist and Social Democrat parties in the Community, with a representative from each of the women's organizations recognised by the Socialist parties.

The objective of the latter group is to ensure that the parties select women candidates for European elections and place them with care. Another task will be to persuade women to vote for Socialist or Social Democrat candidates in June 1979.

The federation group has already started to draw up a manifesto for the direct elections which will call for compliance with EEC regulations and the establishment of an EEC commission on equal rights.

It goes without saying that the two working groups chaired by Karen Dahlerup will be working together very closely.

Useful address: Groupe socialiste du Parlement européen  
Centre européen  
Plateau du Kirchberg  
P.O. Box 1601  
Luxembourg

#### COPA's Women's Committee

COPA, the Committee of Professional Agricultural Organizations, is a particularly powerful association in Europe as it acts as the spokesman for farmers throughout the year and has done so right from the start of the Common Market.

The Women's Committee set up by COPA includes representatives from associations representing women in an agricultural environment, ranging from the Centrale paysanne luxembourgeoise to the National Farmers' Union and the Katholieke Plattelands Vrouwen Nederland.

Every member of the COPA Women's Committee attended the European briefing session organized for it by the EEC information department. No problem was neglected during this "refresher session": employment, education, the Social Fund, expansion.

Useful address: Commission féminine du COPA  
23-25, rue de la Science, bte 3  
1040 Brussels tel. (02) 230.39.45



G E R M A N Y

Women in the Third World

The Deutscher Frauenrat, the German Women's Council, has been giving thought to the position of women in the Third World nations. A report that it has drawn up emphasizes two major aspects of the problem: women's family and occupational status in different countries on the one hand and, on the other, their role in development projects (both government and non-government) supported by Germany.

The concerns that recur most frequently are how best to involve women in development efforts and how to improve their living conditions, education and training.

The German Women's Council would like to see closer links with women and women's organizations in the developing nations.

Useful address: Deutscher Frauenrat  
Augustastrasse 42  
53 Bonn - Bad Godesberg 1 tel. (02221) 36.50.05

Europe: a challenge and an opportunity

The Deutscher Landfrauenverband is a German association of women living in farming communities. It has just organized a seminar for its regional and local leaders on the theme of "Europe - a challenge and an opportunity". Those present were not content just to listen to the interesting speakers: they expressed their intention of bringing about closer contact with similar organizations in other EEC countries, calling for more sustained and thorough efforts from the EEC information services in providing information so that women are kept constantly abreast of topical issues.

Useful address: Deutscher Landfrauenverband e.V.  
Godesberger Allee 142-148  
5300 Bonn 2 tel. (02221) 37.80.51/32

On the road to Europe

"Frauen auf dem Weg nach Europa" is the title of a special issue of Frau und Kultur, the journal of the association of the same name. With only 11 of the 198 members of European Parliament being women, the female sex is poorly represented in Europe today. This special issue is a heartfelt plea for women voters to control their own destinies when the time comes for the European elections.

Useful address: Frau und Kultur  
Wasserstrasse 254  
4630 Bochum

Media Women

"Klartext" is the name of an association which has been founded in Bonn by women working in radio and television. Its objective: to increase the number of women working in the mass media, particularly radio and television.

In German television channel I, 3.6% of the senior positions are held by women. In channel II, out of 34 senior posts only one is held by a woman, despite the number of programmes specifically designed for women.

The Robert Schuman Prize

The German Foundation for European Culture has awarded the Robert Schuman Prize gold medal to a French woman writer, Louise Weiss, the author of "Mémoires d'une européenne". Mr. Gaston Thorn, the Luxembourg head of government, handed the prize to its winner in the salons of the French Senate building.

B E L G I U M

Christian Socialist Women

The new president of the Christian Socialist Party women's association is Cécile Goor. A senator for the past two legislative periods, Cécile began her active political life very early, since she campaigned for votes for women in her university days.

In succeeding the former president, Betty le Hodey, Cécile Goor is taking over in an organization which has helped women to take a greater share in the life of the Christian Socialist Party: 10% of its members in Parliament, for instance, are women.

In its programme for the forthcoming months, the association has included two major themes: the International Year of the Child and the European elections. As part of the first theme, the C.S. women have decided to study "the child in its environment". In pursuance of the second theme, they will see that women are well placed in the lists of candidates for the elections and they will arrange for widespread distribution of proposals prepared by European Christian Democrat women.

Useful address: Femmes P.S.C.  
Rue des Deux Eglises, 41  
1040 Brussels

Education: a lever for emancipation

This theme ("Onderwijs als hefboom van de emancipatie") has been adopted for a seminar being organized by the women of the Dutch-speaking section of the Christian Socialist party, the C.V.P. Does the school help or does it act as a brake? This was the question raised by Miet Smet, who chairs the working group on woman and society in the C.V.P.

Those attending expressed their views on the question during meetings of three discussion groups on the family, work and the democratic process.

Useful address: C.V.P.  
Vrouw en maatschappij  
Tweekerkenstraat, 41  
1040 Brussels

Belgian Working Women's Guilds: objectives and plans

The Kristelijke Arbeiders Vrouwengilden, KAV for short, or guilds for Christian working women, form a women's movement and socio-cultural association serving women in a working class environment.

The organization has adopted as its objectives: to educate its members to make them more aware of the problems and issues at stake, to help them develop and to enable them to tackle their personal and social obligations with greater ease; to defend its members' interests and reform administrative and management bodies and structures so that women can take their place in social life and help to create a just society; and to provide aid to individuals and families, both personally and by community measures - for instance, by offering services to families in trouble, furnishing social information and giving support in matters of social concern. All of these objectives are pursued in a Christian spirit.

The KAV's number about 285,000 members and they are active throughout the Flanders region. The themes they have chosen for the year from June 1978 to June 1979 are:

- changing consumption to change our lives - with emphasis being placed on colouring matter and plastic packaging;
- starting in 1979 (the year of the child), the central issue will be the protection of children's rights, whatever their race, sex, language, class or creed;
- special efforts to be made in the fields of topical issues, road safety, health, the home and the environment, women and legislation, women's work outside the home, women in middle age, women in their sixties, widows and single women and the problem of learning to talk and be with other people.

To increase women's awareness of European issues, the monthly magazine aimed at all members, Vrouw en Wereld, will be publishing an article on Europe every month from October 1978 to June 1979, and there will be general features on women's position in the family, at work, in politics and in society and the arts throughout Europe.

Articles to arouse public concern and provide information on the European elections will also be published in "Ontmoeting", the monthly magazine produced for leaders in the movement.

With the approach of the European elections, general efforts will be exerted to organize information evenings in local sections under the catchphrase: "Vote for ... Europe". Special stress will be placed on the importance of Europe to women.

Useful address: National Verband KAV  
Poststraat, 111  
1030 Brussels

### The Belgian National Women's Council

Founded in 1905, the Belgian National Women's Council is today structured as two separate and completely independent branches, one French-speaking and the other Dutch-speaking. The latter, the Nationale Vrouwenraad van Belgie, is presided by Lily Boeykens, while Ingrid van Eycken is its secretary general.

On 19 October 1978, there was a unanimous vote for new status and from now on the Nationale Vrouwenraad will accept women's organizations only, not individual members. The member bodies have agreed to pass on 0.5% of the official subsidies which they currently receive to finance the Council.

One of the most popular type of events arranged by the Vrouwenraad is lunchtime meetings to meet leading personalities who discuss burning issues of the hour: the life of the political parties, the multinationals, woman's image in the press and so on.

Useful address: Nationale Vrouwenraad van Belgie  
Queteletplein, 1a  
1030 Brussels

### The European Movement

Under the chairmanship of Marijke Van Hemeldonck, the European Movement's women's committee is preparing a dossier on demands with a view to the European elections. The following subjects will be tackled in the dossier: women's legal status in Belgium; female participation in economic and social life; and claims in the consumer field. A day will be set aside early in 1979 when information will be publicized for the benefit of women's environments.

Useful address: Conseil belge du Mouvement européen  
Commission féminine  
49, rue de Toulouse  
1010 Brussels tel. 230.04.35

### A "Woman's Day"

For several years now, the date of 11 November (a holiday in Belgium) has become "Woman's Day". In 1978, the theme chosen for the Day was: "Motherhood if we want, but always the right to work - the crisis won't send us back home". It is rather too long to be catchy, but it has the virtue of being explicit.

There is no lack of subjects for discussion: part-time work, community facilities, abortion. It is of interest that certain organizations preferred not to take part in the event, fearing that more "traditional" organizations would take over.

A helping hand

Twenty years ago a venture was launched that has come to be known by the name of the "Centre féminin de rencontres et d'échanges" - the women's encounter and interchange centre. The association's aim is to respond to any call for help from women on their own, with or without dependents, who are facing difficulties at the time of an event such as separation, divorce, illness, the loss of a husband or a child.

In a sisterly atmosphere of mutual assistance, the Centre also provides women with the opportunities for adult training. Over the course of the years the Centre has set up valuable services: a legal section, an information centre, the provision of psychological advice and a creche.

The Centre has produced a major survey on the condition of women on their own in the form of a booklet (reference JEB 1/78) entitled "Femmes seules". It discusses many questions - psychological difficulties, economic and legal problems, health - and the answers that are given are disturbing.

Useful address: Centre féminin de rencontres et d'échanges  
89, rue St. Henri  
1200 Brussels tel. 733.27.68

Going through the proper channels

To ensure that men and women actually do enjoy the equal status prescribed by law, a number of women have decided to make systematic formal complaints when a job vacancy is advertised, for example, in a newspaper and either a man or a woman is specified.

A form is already being circulated privately and is being extensively photocopied: all that is needed is to fill in the details and send it off to the "Director or Directress of Public Prosecutions" in Brussels. Accompanied by practical tips, this form should prove highly effective.

Useful address: Marion Jacot-Descombes  
339, Chaussée Saint-Pierre  
1040 Brussels

D E N M A R K

Preparing for the European Elections

At the invitation of the Danish National Women's Council about fifty women leaders, women's organization officials and women politicians met for two days at Odense to consider the prospects for the European elections.

The discussions were wide-ranging: the way that European Parliament works today, the scope of its terms of reference, its changing powers and the part that women can play in Parliament.

Representatives of the five political parties (Conservatives, Liberals, Radicals, Socialist and Social Democrats) were invited to round-table discussions to explain their attitudes to Europe as a Community and to the hopes and concerns to which the next European Parliament is giving rise. These encounters provided an opportunity for a true dialogue, not just between the speakers and their audiences but also among the women politicians themselves.

By the end of the two days, it was apparent that those attending are no longer concerned with whether we should or should not be part of the European Community but with what the Community really means.

Useful address: Danske Kvinders Nationalraad  
Niels Hemmingsengade, 8  
1153 Copenhagen K

Helpmates

The position of women who help their husbands in their work without enjoying the status of a wage-earner is one that is giving rise to concern in every EEC country, and it was a subject that aroused great interest among those at the two days' seminar devoted to the professional, economic and social problems of "helping" wives organized by the Danish Women's Council, with the support of the European Communities information office in Copenhagen.

Marriage settlements, taxes and individual circumstances: certain problems can be solved only within the national context. Even so, there may be certain issues in common that make it worth while for Community bodies to embark upon action at the European level. The domains in which there can and must be solidarity in the Community include education, vocational training and recycling.

Useful address: Danske Kvinders Nationalraad  
Niels Hemmingsengade, 8  
1153 Copenhagen K

Women and Development

Nineteen groups and organizations have already joined Kvindernes U-Landsudvalg, or K.U.L.U. for short, (Women and Development) to express the solidarity of Danish women's organizations with respect to development problems in concrete form.

Created in May 1976, the aim of K.U.L.U. is to inspire Danish women's organizations and help them to take practical steps in favour of developing countries. K.U.L.U. also hopes to contact women's movements in the Third World to support them in their efforts. Its ambition is to influence the policies of the authorities in Denmark so that greater account is taken of the specific position of women in the overall problems of development.

Useful address: Kvindernes U-Landsudvalg  
Købmagergade, 67  
1150 Copenhagen K

tel. (01) 15.78.70

F R A N C E

Association of Democratic Women

The "Association des femmes démocrates", whose members are both politically committed women and those without political affiliations, celebrated its tenth anniversary during a lunch attended by three women ministers: Simone Veil, Monique Pelletier and Nicole Pasquier. Chaired by Andrée Mirochnikoff, the National President of Democratic Women, there were lengthy discussions on the inclusion of women candidates in the lists of those standing for the forthcoming European elections. Preparing for the International Year of the Child, the Democratic women are contributing towards working committees set up by the French non-governmental associations which are to study various aspects of the child's life.

Useful address: Association des Femmes Démocrates  
207 Boulevard Saint Germain  
75007 Paris

The Woman of the Future

"Femme Avenir" is the title of a journal published by the Centre féminin d'études et d'information, the women's research and information centre. Under the chairmanship of Christiane Papon, C.F.E.I. organizes training courses, seminars and lectures on topical issues.

Brought into being by women who were close to the Government majority party at the time (the Gaullists), C.F.E.I. now numbers more than 20,000 members, not only in France but also in French overseas territories. In encouraging women to take an active part in every aspect of the nation's life, the movement has as its main objective to educate women in civil, social and political matters, providing them with information and promoting their aims. C.F.E.I. lays special stress on protecting women's work, both inside and outside the home.

In the course of a meeting with Premier Raymond Barre, C.F.E.I. urged that at least one third of the candidates presented for the European elections should be women, especially among the twenty names at the top of the lists of candidates.

Europe is a primary concern for C.F.E.I. officials. To quote the vice president, Suzanne Poisson, "let us create Europe - but let us breathe a soul into it as well".

While C.F.E.I. is anxious to preserve and promote the spiritual heritage of Gaullism, unlike political parties it welcomes any women, whatever their affiliations, who wish to work within its body.

Useful address: Femme Avenir  
43 rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré  
75008 Paris tel. 265.43.68

"Choisir"

Founded in 1974 to defend women charged with the offence of abortion free of charge, "Choisir" - meaning "Choice" - is an organization, but it also lends its name to a magazine providing information to its members. Under the guidance of Gisèle Halimi and Michelle Chevalier, Choisir has been represented at many trials for rape and has distributed wide-ranging information to women on all problems of sex and contraception.

The movement has multiplied its activities, which include the publication of its magazine, the provision of legal advice, holding meetings open to all women, organizing "friendship" group meetings and setting up a theatre workshop. It has more than fifty sections in Paris and in the provinces with a total of more than 6,000 members.

Choisir does not want to be dependent upon any political party, but it does not stand aside from practical politics. For instance, there was a list of "Choisir" candidates at the last parliamentary elections in France, and the movement will also have its own list of candidates standing for the European elections. For this occasion, Choisir has drawn up a joint electoral platform with the Belgian unified Women's Party.

Useful address: Choisir  
Rue Saint Dominique, 102  
75007 Paris

Women engineers and scientists

The fifth international congress of women engineers and scientists has been held in Rouen, on the subject of "techniques and freedom", under the patronage of the President of the Senate, Mr. Alain Poher, and the ministries with responsibility for production, environment and education. Women came from all over the world to the meeting and were divided into five committees to discuss subjects in which they had professional experience: industrial production and access to greater responsibility; the transfer of technology and technical cooperation; training and the provision of information to women on scientific and technical careers; the responsibilities of research scientists; and the technical development of information media.

Jacqueline Nonon, the head of the "Women's Employment" Bureau for the European Communities, opened the congress. Its conclusions were summarized by Marcelle Devaud, the chairwoman of the Women's Working Committee.

French women engineers have formed a specialist group within the French association of women university graduates - "Association française des Femmes diplômées des Universités" - and they work closely with the European and international engineers' associations.

Useful address: Cercle des ingénieurs de l'AFFDU  
Présidente: Nicole Bécarud  
4 rue de Chevreuse  
75006 Paris



French women architects

The French union of women architects - "Union française des femmes architectes" - has arranged an exhibition at the Beaubourg centre in Paris to present projects, designs and photographs of the achievements of women architects throughout the world. After an outstandingly successful opening private view, the exhibition proved to be very popular, deservedly so in view of all the technical and artistic talents which it illustrated so well.

Useful address: Union française des femmes architectes  
Présidente: Mme. d'Herbez de la Tour  
14, rue Dumont d'Urville  
75016 Paris

I R E L A N D

A vamp or a servant?

Irish television has done little to improve the image of women on the small screen. The range of roles attributed to her is limited: vamp or servant. This is the observation made by Gemma Hussey, member of the Seanad Eireann and the former president of the Women's Political Association as well as a member of the Council for the Status of Women, in an article courageously printed by the Irish Broadcasting Review (published by RTE, the Irish broadcasting corporation).

The conclusions reached by Gemma Hussey reflect those arrived at by women journalists in Germany - and no doubt elsewhere. Although some attention is paid to the work of women's organizations and women's problems on radio and television, these media have done little to change attitudes by their entertainment programmes - comedy shows, films or series.

This evident passivity, clinging to the old stereotypes, is not unconnected with the fact that there are still very few women in the bodies that administer radio and television broadcasting, either on the management side or in creative jobs.

Useful address: Irish Broadcasting Review - Radio Telefis Eireann  
Donnybrook  
Dublin 4

The future for women?

The Alcide de Gasperi Cultural Centre, working in cooperation with the Italian Women's Centre (Centro italiano femminile), has recently held a seminar in Ferrara on the theme of "the status of women in the European Community on the eve of the new European Parliament".

Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago, a member of European Parliament, introduced the seminar by expressing her hope that the new European Parliament would not only confer a new dimension on democracy but would also create fresh "ideological space" in Europe, providing a more natural setting for the promotion of women's interests.

During discussions, the point was made that, while the achievement of equal pay undoubtedly represented a step in the right direction, there are still many injustices which are difficult to regulate by law. One example is that women are still confined to the jobs with lower qualifications.

Laws will have to be amended in every country, but it is even more important to persevere in attempts to alter attitudes and behaviour. This is the task of everyone, both men and women.

To quote the words of Alcide de Gasperi at the Council of Europe inaugural session: "Each of us knows that this is a fleeting opportunity, one that will not occur again. We must grasp this fugitive moment and insert it in the logic of history".

Useful address: Centro italiano femminile  
Via Carlo Zucchi, 23  
Rome tel. 622.11.67

The National Women's Council celebrates its 75th birthday

The "Consiglio Nazionale delle Donne Italiane" has reached the age of 75. It was a good opportunity to demonstrate the kind of subjects with which it is concerned and the CNDI invited Lorenzo Natali, a member of the European Commission. He outlined the prospects for the enlargement of the Community, both culturally and from the economic and political viewpoints.

The CNDI is anxious to arouse interest in Europe among young people with potentially constructive attitudes. It has just organized three days' of discussions on the theme of "Commitment to Europe" in Catania, aimed at the leaders of social and cultural movements.

Useful address: Consiglio Nazionale delle Donne Italiane  
Via Quirino Visconti, 55  
Rome tel. 31.42.93

An appeal to European women

At a seminar conducted by the Elsa Bergamaschi Training and Research Centre which forms part of the Unione Donne Italiane (Italian women's union), the idea was put forward that all women's associations and organizations should meet at European level early in 1979 to launch an appeal to European women in view of the forthcoming European elections.

The purpose of this venture, as of the seminar at which it was suggested, is to help women to take a truly active part in building the Community and to become vital figures in the new European Parliament.

Useful address: Unione Donne Italiane  
Via Colonna Antonina, 41  
Rome

tel. 679.17.38

The European Movement: a vast network

The European Movement Italian Council has been pursuing its work of coordinating women's ventures in a highly systematic fashion, with a view to the European elections. In Bologna, for example, an inter-regional meeting has been arranged solely for women in the range of "constitutional" political parties, the unions, women's associations and bodies belonging to the European Movement.

Chaired by Margherita Barnabei, vice president of the Italian Council and president of the European Movement's International Women's Committee, the meeting reviewed the situation "on the eve of the European elections" and looked forward to "what Europe can do for women" and "what women can do for Europe".

Another meeting was organized in Pescara with the same objectives: to arouse public opinion to European problems in specific sectors. This time, the discussions focussed on "Europe and employment problems" and on "schools and the European Community".

Useful address: Consiglio Italiano Movimento Europeo  
Via Guido Baccelli, 10  
Rome

tel. 574.22.78  
574.40.40

Housewives and the Poet

One of the many ventures that first saw the light of day in International Women's Year was a "Centre for Domestic Research" (Centro Studi Casalinghe), set up in Ancona to upgrade and promote the active and constructive role of housework in Italy's social, cultural and economic development. It is an odd but significant fact that the Centre has brought out an Italian version of a work by the Lebanese poet, Gibran (already translated into 25 other languages). This is his book entitled The Prophet, which sensitively and realistically describes the housewife's lot.

The Centre's plans also include discussion meetings and lectures on "the housewife and European Parliament", "the housewife and the arts", "the housewife in history", etc. The Centre will also be conducting "updating" courses in the very near future for housewives in fields as wide-ranging as economics, law, health matters, etc.

Useful address: Centro Studi Casalinghe  
c/o A.C.C.I.  
Viale della Vittoria 4  
Ancona

tel. (071) 230.21

L U X E M B O U R G

The National Council of Luxembourg Women

Founded in the form of a non-profit making association in 1975, the National Council of Luxembourg Women has as its objective the defence and promotion of women's interests. Its members are twelve women's associations, ranging from Women's Catholic Action to the Luxembourg Union of Soroptimist Clubs, including the Union of Israelite Ladies and all the political parties' women's sections.

According to the Council's statutes, responsibilities on the board of administration are shared out by lot. In the year 1978-79, the president is Mrs. Hilda Rau-Scholtus (Christian Socialist Women), while Mrs. Jacqueline Hansen-Peffer (Soroptimist) is responsible for the secretariat. In addition to giving the Luxembourg Government its views when a bill is to be debated that affects the status of women, the Council will be drawing up a dossier during the forthcoming year on the position of women in paid work.

Useful address: Conseil National des Femmes Luxembourgeoises  
Case Postale 160  
Luxembourg

N E T H E R L A N D S

Coffee sessions

Truly Dutch both in its humour and in its thorough and effective approach, the news letter issued by the Socialist Women's Platform - the Nieuwebrief van het Feministies Socialisties Platform - faithfully reflects the life of the organization itself. Its columns contain an impressive number of addresses and telephone numbers to encourage direct contact to the maximum.

Another way of making it easier to meet is for local Platform leaders to arrange "Vrouwenkafé" (coffee meetings for women) on fixed dates. If you happen to be in Hilversum on a Tuesday evening, you have a date at 26, Kruissteeg. The same applies to many other towns and villages, where you will enjoy the open-hearted warmth and solidarity so badly needed by many women.

Useful address: Feministies Socialisties Platform  
Nieuwe Herengracht, 95  
1011 RX Amsterdam

Setting a precedent

"Denken & Doen" - "Think and Do" - is the title of a magazine sent out free of charge to members of the Dutch housewives' association, Nederlandse Vereniging van Huisvrouwn, as part of the benefits they receive in return for their subscriptions. But how can the subscriptions be adjusted to the cost of living? The association has found a neat solution to the problem by linking the subscription to the cost of living index. The latest issue of the magazine includes a footnote to members telling them that, based on the figures published by the national statistical bureau, in 1979 the subscription will be increased from 31 to 32.40 guilders. It is an example that deserves consideration.

Useful address: Denken & Doen  
Jan van Wassenstraat, 89  
The Hague tel. (070) 24.13.47

U N I T E D   K I N G D O M

Scottish Convention of Women

An offshoot of International Women's Year was the creation of a "Convention" in Scotland, in other words an assembly of both organizations and individual activists.

The Convention was not set up as a new body in its own right, competing with existing organizations, nor as a "super-body". Quite simply, the Convention has become a highly flexible forum in which individuals or groups can come together, swap information and ideas and embark upon joint concrete action.

The executive committee, with a membership of 19, represents a broad cross-section of Scottish women. Its members hail from Inverness and Dundee, Glasgow and Aberdeen, but at the same time they include members of the Scottish Trades Union Congress and the Secondary Head Teachers' Association, the Royal College of Midwives, Women in Media, etc.

The Convention's primary concern is of course women in Scotland and the means whereby their lives can be improved. Nevertheless, it also tackles the broader issues: racism, violence and vandalism, for instance, or aid to the Third World (through the YWCA, the Convention is taking a special interest in a literacy project in Madras).

"Convention Notes" are issued regularly to report on new activities.

Useful addresses: Scottish Convention of Women  
c/o Ms. Jean Little  
Whitehorse Close  
Edinburgh 8 tel. (031) 556.65.26

Convention Notes  
c/o Kath Davies  
15 Avondale Place  
Edinburgh TH 3 RAHX tel. (031) 332.96.72

Job advertisements

The Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland has just brought out a booklet setting out the rules on equal opportunities as they apply to the offer of employment. It discusses the text of the law and its interpretation and describes the exceptions. In a few pages it sets everything that one needs to know in clear terms.

The Equal Opportunities Commission has also decided to conduct two formal enquiries to ascertain whether the laws on equal pay are being carried out in the field of higher education and in the clothing trade.

Useful address: Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland  
Lindsay House  
Callender Street  
Belfast BT 1 50T tel. (0232) 427.52

Who looks after the children?

"I want to work ... but what about the kids?" It is a question that many mothers raise. The problem is particularly acute in Great Britain and it is one that is discussed in a hard-hitting pamphlet published by the Equal Opportunities Commission which takes the question as its title. It calls upon the authorities to take urgent steps to deal with the problem. According to statistics dating a few years back (1974), but which are still significant, local authority day care units cater for only 0.7% of the children aged under five.

A survey on existing child care facilities stresses the various problems that must be tackled: cost, staff training, premises, grants from the authorities, etc. This Survey of Child Care Facilities, together with twenty or so other pamphlets bound in a special catalogue, can be obtained free of charge on writing to the address below.

Useful address: Equal Opportunities Commission  
Overseas House - Quay Street  
Manchester M3 3HN

Women & Europe

The British Council of the European Movement publishes information and comments on those aspects of EEC policy which affect women and women's organizations every two months in a publication entitled "Women & Europe".

In the latest edition, a thought appears that concerns all European women. Many women's organizations have let the British Government know the ways in which they would like medical research to develop in Britain. Why should the same thing not be done at European level?

Useful address: Women & Europe  
c/o The European Movement  
1a, Whitehall Place  
London SW1A 2HA

tel. (01) 839.66.22

GENTLE READERS .....

Your letters and comments are very encouraging and welcome. Thank you, all who have written.

But "Women of Europe" is not an encyclopaedia or a year book or an official gazette.

Don't expect too much of us. We try very hard to report on all the active women's bodies in Europe, but we cannot discuss each one in each issue. Faced with a whole pile of information, we have to select the items of outstanding interest, either because of the example they set to others or because they reflect success - sometimes because they tell about a failure.

Wherever possible we quote the address to which you can write to make contact for yourselves. This is helping to weave a network of solidarity and build up an invaluable library of knowledge from which anyone can borrow.

We of "Women of Europe" would like to hear about any such links which are being established so far away from us. Do us a favour: if other women write to you or come to see you as a result of one of our articles, drop us a line. It helps us to gauge how effective our publication is and how active you, as readers, are.

Thank you in advance!

THE CHANGING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Equality and social security

Following the EEC directive on equal pay and later the directive on access to employment, training and promotion at work as well as working conditions, a third directive has just been adopted by the ministers of the nine EEC countries, dealing with equality between men and women in the field of social security.

Despite the radical differences between the systems in force in individual countries, the directive governs equality in social security systems providing safeguards against sickness, disability, old age, accidents at work and occupational disease, as well as against the risk of unemployment. The directive, however, excludes family allowances, benefits to surviving members of families and professional schemes providing protection against the risks listed above.

Absolute equality will not be achieved all at one time. Each country has been allowed a six year period of grace in which it must amend its system. It may seem a long time, but it is shorter than the periods demanded by certain parties with respect to some of the items covered by the directive.

Mr. Vredeling, a member of the European Committee with responsibility for social affairs, has emphasized that no country or organization had been so far from applying the principle of equality. In addition, the ministers undertook to issue further measures on the application of equality between the sexes in professional schemes.

Europe and Health

Under the chairmanship of Mrs. Antje Huber, the German Minister for Youth, the Family and Public Health, the health ministers of the Member States met to discuss at length the economic aspects of health, with particular reference to the soaring cost of providing health care.

While the ministers considered that it was reasonable that about 6% of the gross national product should be devoted to health, they also thought the money should be better spent by organizing the sector as a whole along sounder lines.

The ministers also considered the problems raised by smoking and stated the view that efforts should be concentrated on educating and informing young people on the risks of smoking - efforts that have already been launched in all our countries.

Another item on the agenda was education and information on the subject of nutrition, with the ministers calling for more interchange of information among health authorities to be organized in this field. It would be particularly useful if ideas and experience were to be pooled on the results of educational campaigns on nutrition directed at children and adolescents.

It is of interest that four of the nine delegations to the meeting were led by women: in addition to Mrs. Huber from Germany, Mrs. Weil represented France, Mrs. Anselmi Italy and Mrs. Veder-Smith the Netherlands.



Women's vocational training

CEDEFOP (the European centre for the development of vocational training) has embarked upon a project in the course of which it will systematically identify new ventures in the field of vocational training for women so that they can be publicized at European level. This is a project which was warmly recommended to CEDEFOP at the time of a seminar held in Berlin in September 1977 on the theme of "Equality of opportunity and vocational training".

In its search for good examples to be studied, CEDEFOP will not overlook any venture, on however small a scale. What is important is the spirit of imagination and innovation in any experiment that is conducted. A "national coordinator" is being appointed in each country to gather all the information available.

Useful address: CEDEFOP  
Bundesallee 22  
1000 Berlin 31 tel. (030) 88.10.61

A Students' Vade-mecum

Faced with overwhelming demand, the "European Community Students' Guide" has been reprinted and is now available in the six Community languages. This invaluable handbook sets out full particulars on the nature of advanced studies, enrolment fees, the diplomas awarded, conditions of entry, social security arrangements, etc.

The European Commission is currently working on a second revised edition to be published next summer, before the start of the 1979-1980 academic year.

Useful address: Office des publications officielles de la Communauté  
européenne  
Boîte postale 1003  
Luxembourg

Working women: who cares about you?

These are the bodies which, to the best of our knowledge, are responsible for matters relating to working women in the EEC countries:

Commission du Travail des femmes  
Ministère du Travail  
51-53 rue Belliard  
Brussels

President: Miet Smet

tel. 513.40.90

Ligestillingsradet (Council for Equality)  
Federiksgade 21  
DK 1265 Copenhagen K

President: Karen Dahlerup

tel. (01) 11.30.38

Referat Politik für Frauen - Frau Elisabeth Haines  
Bundesministerium für Familie, Jugend und Gesundheit  
Kennedyallee 105-107  
5300 Bonn - Bad Godesberg

tel. (02221) 834

Comité du travail féminin  
14, Avenue Duquesne  
75007 Paris

President: Mrs. Marcelle Devaud

tel. 567.55.44

Employment Equality Agency  
Department of Labour  
Mespil Road  
Dublin 4

Chairman designate: Mrs. Sylvia Meehan

tel. 76.58.61

Nationale Adviescommissie Emancipatie  
Ministerie van Cultuur, recreatie en maatschappelijk werk  
Steenvoordelaan 370  
Rijswijk (Z.N.), Netherlands

President: Paula Wassen - Van Schaveren

Equal Opportunities Commission  
Overseas House  
Quay Street  
Manchester M5 3HN

Chairman: Betty Lockwood

tel. 061 833 9244

Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland  
Lindsay House  
Callender Street  
Belfast BTM 5DT

RESEARCH, MEETINGS, BOOKS

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Feminist studies in universities

In its June 1978, "Le Monde de l'Education" has devoted several pages to the development of women's studies in the universities of Great Britain and France. The issue of women has now become part of academic life, and it is analyzed here in detail.

"Le Monde de l'Education" provides a useful list of seminars, specialist courses, theses and research centres. In an article signed by Katie Breen, it also looks at the chances that this development will survive.

Useful address: Le Monde de l'Education  
5, rue des Italiens  
75427 Paris Cédex 09

Portrait of an absence

"The decision-making process in the unions: the role of women", with the sub-title, "Portrait of an Absence": this was the interesting paper contributed by Val R. Lorwin of the University of Oregon to the discussion group conducted by CRISP (Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politique) in Brussels on the occasion of its 20th anniversary. Is the union a world without women? Hardly surprising, for any woman interested in union activities would have to find the time to be a wife, worker and unionist. Nonetheless, the major obstacle is male prejudice.

Useful address: CRISP  
35, rue du Congrès  
1000 Brussels tel. (02) 218.32.26

Donna e famiglia

Under the title of "Donna e famiglia: realtà a confronto" (Women and the family - the true story), M.T. Garutti Bellenzier discusses all the kinds of conflict which arise within families when women claim their right to emancipation.

The traditional response to their claims (devotion, resignation, etc.) no longer hold good. It is at the very place where confrontation occurs, in the family, that a new balance must be sought.

Edizioni A.V.E., 180 pp., Lire 3,000.

Non-discriminatory job advertisements

Out of one hundred positions vacant, 31 are specified as being for women, 34 for men, in the case of 26 no preference is stated and only 9 are explicitly open to both men and women. These are the figures used as a point of departure in an interesting joint paper on "discrimination in 'jobs vacant' small ads" recently published by the Centre concerned with permanent education in Brussels.

Useful address: Centre féminin d'Education Permanente  
1a, Place Quételet  
1030 Brussels tel. 219.65.18

The Status of Women

A collection of the texts and conclusions of research projects conducted on the instigation of CERM (the Marxist research centre) has just been published to highlight the theoretical problems raised by women's status.

La Condition féminine  
- a joint publication -  
Editions sociales, 380 pp., fr.55

The ASPEN Institute

Under the guidance of Dr. Hanna-Beate Schoepp-Schilling, a seminar on "women with a family and a job" was held in the Aspen Institute for Human Sciences. The main aim was to identify the measures that already exist to promote equality for women in the various countries.

It was the opinion of the women attending the seminar that to allocate a "quota" of jobs for women would be one of the most reliable ways of introducing equality at work in sectors traditionally reserved for men.

A full report on the seminar will be printed later in English and German.

Useful address: ASPEN BERLIN  
Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies  
Inselstr. 10  
D - 1000 BERLIN 38