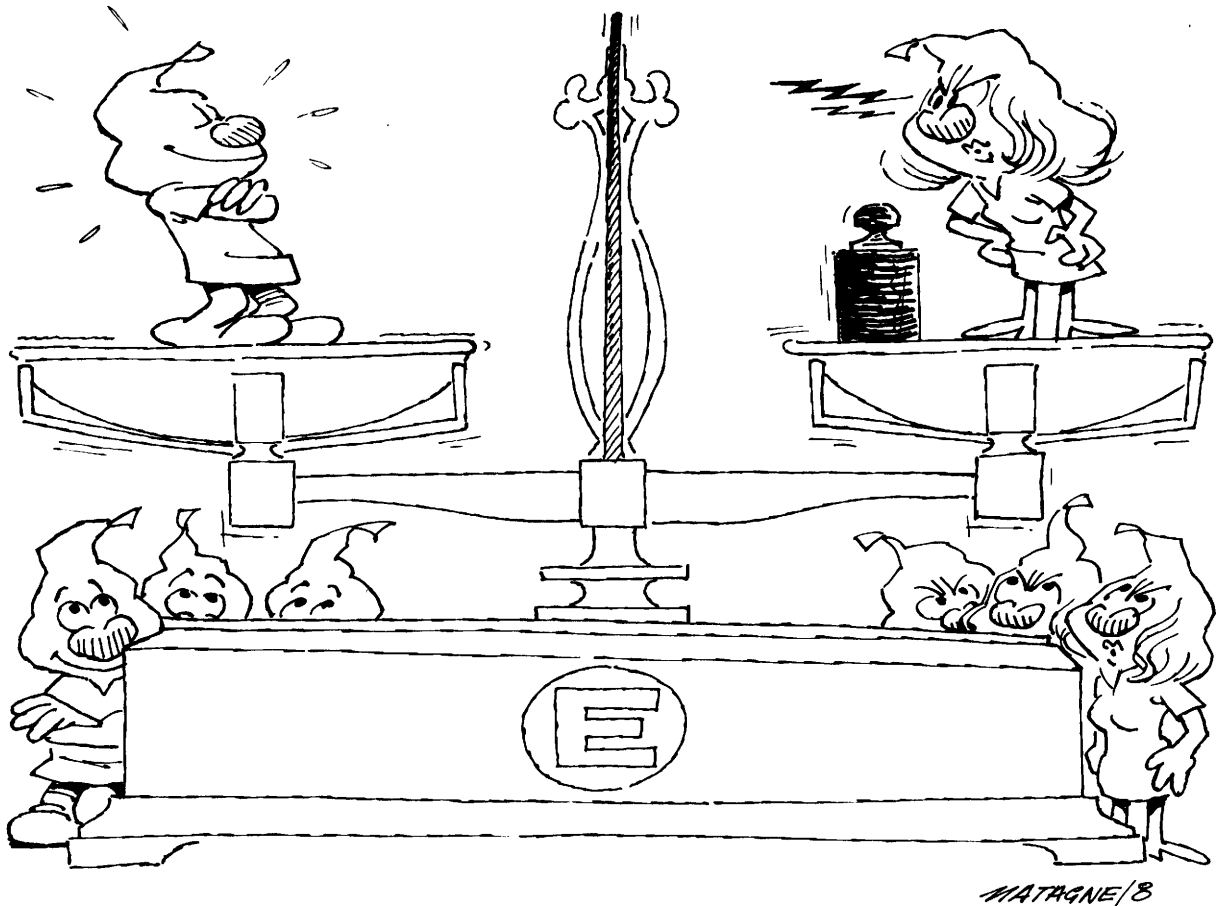


Brussels, 9 March 1976

No 10/76



EURO-WHITE AND THE NINE DWARFS

Some of the dwarfs are a bit confused this week. Are women never satisfied? All this fuss about slimming and now they want to carry more weight in the Community! Or could it be (dreadful thought!) that they want to throw their weight around? What did that survey say?

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This bulletin is published by the

Commission of the European Communities
Directorate General of Information
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 - Brussels - Tel. 735 00 40

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The information published in this bulletin covers, very freely, different aspects of the European Communities' activity. It is, therefore, not limited to recording official Commission decisions or opinions.

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** WOMEN IN EUROPE

A recently-published Commission survey shows that 78% of men in the Community feel that the changing status of women is a good thing.

In ANNEX 1 Euroforum takes a look at this survey, the first of its kind.

** "EUROCRATS"

"Europe is just a huge bureaucracy!". Is there any truth in this? Are there really so many "Eurocrats", as Europe's civil servants are mockingly called?

Euroforum comes up with some statistics in ANNEX 2.

** A EUROPEAN PASSPORT

A uniform passport for all European citizens would seem to be one of the easiest ways of emphasizing that we all belong to the same Community.

In ANNEX 3 Euroforum summarizes progress on this front.

** THE COST OF UNEMPLOYMENT

The European Community is thought to have spent three times more on unemployment benefits in 1975 than it did in 1972. This emerges from the following estimates produced by the European Commission:

Unemployment benefits in u.a. (1 u.a. = US \$1.2)

	1972	1975
Belgium	305 464 784	796 742 503
Denmark	138 743 731	357 218 263 ¹
France	439 268 362	2 926 086 956
Germany	353 258 912	1 438 254 570
Ireland	38 369 304	82 776 831
Italy	358 476 071	763 213 542
Luxembourg	49 324	1 438 641
Netherlands	387 453 874	969 299 552
United Kingdom	1 266 187 050	1 816 013 628
	3 287 271 412	9 151 044 486

¹The Danish Government expects that the final figure for 1975 will be between 650 and 700 million u.a.

Source: First European Social Budget (revised); Appendix I.

** PURER MINERAL WATER

No decision has yet been taken on a proposal for a directive on the abstraction and marketing of natural mineral waters presented by the European Commission to the Community's Council of Ministers in May 1970. This emerges from the Commission's answer to a written question tabled by a member of the European Parliament concerned about this particular aspect of consumer protection.

The proposal takes account of opinions delivered by Parliament and Community's Economic and Social Committee and the Commission feels that the conditions laid down in it are sufficiently stringent to allay consumers' fears. Particularly worthy of note are the bacteriological criteria applicable at source and the specifications to be met by water catchment and bottling plants to prevent contamination and ensure that natural mineral waters retain their original properties.

** SOCIAL EXPENDITURE IN THE COMMUNITY

The European Commission is currently revising the first European Social Budget (see I&S No 44/74). This contains information on actual social expenditure and receipts in each Member State in 1970 and 1972 and estimates for 1975. The second European Social Budget will cover the period up to 1980, 1975 serving as the base year.

Some figures for social expenditure by Member States are given in the table below.

(in thousand million national currency units)

	D	F	I	N	B	L	UK	IRL	DK	
	<u>1971</u>									
Social benefits	151	156	11 325	27.4	243	9.6	9.14	0.24	26.5	
of which old age	67	61	4 167	10.9	92	5.8 ¹	4.29	0.09	9.3	
	<u>1972</u>									
Social benefits	175	179	13 605	32.8	290	10.9	10.55	0.29	30.5	
of which old age	79	72	4 814	12.5	109	6.9 ¹	5.08	0.10	10.4	
	<u>1973</u>									
Social benefits	198	206	15 831	38.3	337	12.4	11.84	0.38	37.4	
of which old age	90	84	5 592	14.7	132	7.8 ¹	5.78	0.14	12.0	

¹Including invalidity.

**** CONSUMERS' UNIONS PROTEST TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

The European Bureau of Consumers' Unions (BEUC) recently came out against any price increase for farm products (such as butter, milk, beef and veal) which are in plentiful supply within the common market, particularly since these are often exported at a lower price than the European consumer has to pay.

In a note to the Community's Council of Ministers, the consumers' unions protested against this practice arguing that the European consumer should be the first to benefit from the common agricultural policy.

They have no quarrel with the idea of farmers being guaranteed a fair income. But they do object to the method used, namely excessively high prices being fixed for farm products. They feel that this policy inevitably leads either to a drop in consumption, because consumers are not prepared to pay such high prices, or to production in excess of consumers' requirements.

With over-production consumers are paying twice over: as consumers they pay more than is necessary for their food and as taxpayers they foot the bill for destroying surpluses or exporting them at a loss.

**** TAXES IN THE COMMUNITY**

In 1974 taxes and social welfare contributions rose more sharply than prices in all the Member States. Except in Italy, revenue from "direct" taxes (taxes on income and wealth, social welfare contributions) rose more sharply than revenue from "indirect" taxes (mainly turnover and consumption taxes and taxes linked to imports) in line with economic trends in 1974.

The sharp rise in revenue from current taxes on income and wealth was due to the rapid increase in personal incomes in money terms - in 1974 as compared with 1973 the average income of wage and salary-earners rose by 17% for the Community as a whole - combined with a "fiscal drag" effect. In France, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom a further factor was the very substantial increase in the yield from corporation tax.

Social welfare contributions rose more sharply than prices but less sharply than taxes. Unlike income tax, social welfare contributions are not progressive; the rates of contribution and contribution ceilings were, however, raised in a number of Community countries.

The main factor governing the relatively small increase in indirect taxes was the general slowdown in economic activity in 1974.

In 1974 tax revenue and social welfare contributions as a proportion of GDP ranged from 31.6% in Italy, where tax yields are particularly low, to 46.2% in the Netherlands, where high social welfare contributions are an important factor. The figures for the other countries are 38.1% in Germany, 36.4% in France, 39.3% in Belgium, 40.4% in Luxembourg, 36.7% in the United Kingdom, 33.4% in Ireland and 44.5% in Denmark.

**** FACTORY CLOSURES AND JOB PROTECTION**

The European Commission is concerned about the social consequences of factory closures. This is why the directive on collective redundancies, adopted by the Council of Ministers in February 1975 on a proposal from the Commission, requires an employer contemplating such a course of action to consult workers' representatives and to notify the competent public authority which can then seek solutions to the problems this will present.

Firms frequently approach the public authorities for financial aid before finally resorting to this extreme. The Commission is keeping a close watch to ensure that state aids to sectors in difficulty do not lead to an overall increase in production capacity and that they provide priority support for companies which, despite adaptation problems, have economic potential and are in a position to switch to modern production methods.

**** JAPANESE CARS ON EUROPEAN ROADS**

In 1974 the European Community imported 249 556 cars from Japan - ten times more than it exported to Japan that year (25 676). This pattern was even more marked in 1975: while 269 233 Japanese cars were imported into the Community between January and September only 21 616 European cars were exported to Japan.

Discussions are now under way between the Commission and the Japanese Government in an attempt to find some practical way of righting the balance.

**** ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH GETS THE GO-AHEAD**

The Council of Ministers has given its blessing to the Community's Environmental Research Programme. But it hasn't written a blank cheque! Sixteen million units of account (1 u.a. = approx. US \$1.2) have been allocated to the programme for 1976-80 to finance research in four priority areas:

- . pollutants and potentially toxic chemicals;
- . information management (with particular reference to chemicals);
- . reduction and prevention of pollution and nuisances (e.g. the application of clean technologies);
- . protection and improvement of the natural environment.

**** UNEMPLOYMENT: PUBLIC ENEMY No 1**

The present economic crisis is international and must be tackled internationally. This, in a nutshell, is the premise on which the Community's Economic and Social Committee based its review of Europe's unemployment problem at its recent session.

The Economic and Social Committee considered that all nine Governments should take steps to protect present employment levels and to create new jobs. It recommended a number of

emergency measures, including temporary subsidies to keep workers in employment until the recession is over and aids to create new jobs in hard-pressed regions. Countries with balance of payments surpluses should make an effort to stimulate demand by encouraging investment and consumption. Economic growth and job creation are not necessarily incompatible with anti-inflation policies.

The Economic and Social Committee recognized that the Community can only do so much: its resources are limited as are the areas in which it can intervene through the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund. The Community's Council of Ministers should see to it that available funds expand in line with the obvious industrial reorganization needs of several Member States.

The Economic and Social Committee also gave its opinion on a number of proposals put forward by the European Commission. These dealt with the status of women, titanium dioxide, data processing, drinking water, summer time and the aircraft industry.

** CLAMPING DOWN ON PCBs

The use of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) is to be severely restricted in the European Community. Its Council of Ministers is expected to adopt a directive in the matter within the next few weeks. The European Commission's proposal was presented in August 1974 (see I&S No 28/74 and 7/75) and endorsed by both the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee.

One of the three largest manufacturers of PCBs in Europe has already announced that it will stop producing and selling this product ... though it has yet to say when.

** RADIATION PROTECTION

At a recent meeting of the Community's Council of Ministers devoted to research it was decided that 39 million units of account should be spent between now and 1980 on scientific and technical studies to improve radiation protection. The Community's research programme will endeavour to define admissible irradiation levels for man and his environment and to devise ways of improving radiation protection arrangements in the Member States. The research will be carried out by the Joint Research Centre in Ispra, and by specialist laboratories in various Member States.

WOMEN IN EUROPE

A recently-published Commission survey shows that 78% of men in the Community feel that the changing status of women is a good thing. About 9 500 men and women aged 15 and over were questioned orally by pollsters from eight specialized institutes in an attempt to get a better idea of male and female attitudes towards certain problems facing our society: the status of women, job opportunities for women, women in politics and so on.

A welcome trend

A third of those questioned considered the problem of women's position in society to be very important, although the actual percentage varied considerably from country to country. In France, Italy, Luxembourg and Ireland it ranged between 42 and 49%. There was less enthusiasm in the other Member States: only 11% in the Netherlands, 20% in the United Kingdom, 23% in Germany, 26% in Denmark and 29% in Belgium considered the problem to be very important.

The majority of those questioned were well aware of how the situation is changing and thought it a "good thing": 19% felt that the change was too quick and 28% that it was not quick enough.

One person in three (36%) felt that women had fewer opportunities than men, while one person in two felt that both sexes had the same opportunities. The main reasons given for women's relative lack of opportunities were family commitments, male attitudes and occupational attitudes, in that order. The main areas of discrimination were felt to be wages, promotion prospects, job opportunities and job security.

The Commission's survey shows that most women prefer to work. This is true of 80% of women from households where both partners work, 75% of women living alone, and 56% of women from households where the husband works but the wife doesn't.

What do women want?

The most important social reforms for improving women's status were felt to be a flexible working week, access to creches, child-minding services and kindergartens, and paying housewives a wage for the work they do in the home.

Politics is still regarded as a male preserve by both men and women, though less so by young women and interviewees with a high level of education. On the whole, 35% of those questioned felt that politics should be left to men and 38% (42% of the men and 33% of the women) said that they would have more confidence in a man than in a woman as their representative in parliament.

It is interesting to note that attitudes towards women in politics were most favourable in countries where women have had the vote longest: Denmark, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Ireland.

Degree of satisfaction

Despite their status in society, women do not seem any more dissatisfied than men. 57% of both sexes are "fairly satisfied" with their lives. On a more personal level, 53% of the women and 54% of the men would honestly say that they are "fairly happy".

Women were generally less in favour of the European Community and the unification of Europe than men, but attitudes were largely dictated by the level of education, information and participation of the interviewee: 63% of the men and 55% of the women felt that the Common Market was a "good thing".

Most of those questioned (62%) saw no connection between the development of the Community and the changing status of women. Only 34% felt that the development of the Community could have a favourable effect and 4% felt that it could have a bad effect.

An analysis of these results shows that the European public can be broken down into five main categories: 34% are in favour of a change in the status of women; 18% are firmly opposed to any change; another 18% can be classed as moderates who are in favour of a certain amount of change but do not want to be rushed; 21% have adapted to existing conditions and to the way things are going; and the remaining 8% are indifferent apart from the fact that they feel politics should be left to men.

The analysis also showed clearly that sex as such has no bearing on attitudes; the important factors are the generation gap and the influence of national culture and history. The debate on women's place in society is in fact only one aspect, one expression, of a desire for a change in society and for a better quality of life.

The European Commission is organizing a symposium in Brussels on 12 and 13 March on "Women in the European Community" to draw conclusions from this survey. Over a hundred women have been invited to attend. They include ministers, members of the European Parliament, members of the Economic and Social Committee, heads of organizations, prominent figures in national trade union movements and political parties, and women from the world of art, literature and science.

"EUROCRATS"

"Europe is just a huge bureaucracy!". Even those who should know better are inclined to make this kind of facile remark.

Is there any truth in this? Are there really so many "Eurocrats", as Europe's civil servants are mockingly called? Do they really do nothing? A closer look at the facts should kill this myth once and for all.

The European Community is "run" by four institutions (and a number of specialized bodies like the Economic and Social Committee and the European Investment Bank) based in the main in either Brussels or Luxembourg: the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Court of Justice.

These four institutions are manned by European officials, those famous (or infamous) "Eurocrats". In 1975 these officials, who come from the nine Community countries, numbered 12 907: 1 206 were working for the Secretariat of the European Parliament, 1 481 for the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, 9 959 for the Commission and 261 for the Court of Justice.

The most striking fact here is that 9 959 officials work for the Commission! But don't jump to hasty conclusions. If you subtract the 1 120 translators and interpreters (don't forget that the Community has to work in six official languages: Danish, Dutch, English, French, German and Italian) and the 2 183 research scientists, technicians and other staff employed by the Community's Research Centre, you are left with 6 656 "real" Eurocrats.

Compare this, for example, with the 10 000-strong staff of the British Department of Industry. Remember too that the Commission deals with nine countries and that for this reason alone its work is far more complicated than that of a national government department. And don't forget that these poor "Eurocrats" have to work (yes, most of them do work!) in six languages!

A British daily recently calculated that there were 4 "Eurocrats" per 100 000 inhabitants in the Community, compared with 300 civil servants per 100 000 inhabitants in the United Kingdom. It also worked out that, while each European taxpayer pays 50p a year towards the running of the Community, the British taxpayer pays 48 times more (£24 a year) to keep the British administrative machine oiled.

Obviously, similar calculations can be made for the other Community countries. These would help to prove that Europe doesn't cost a lot to administer. As to the sort of Europe "Eurocrats" are working towards ... well, that's a matter for the politicians.

EUROPEAN PASSPORT

A uniform passport for all European citizens would seem to be one of the easiest ways of emphasizing that we all belong to the same Community.

Once the idea of a European passport was approved by Heads of State and of Government of the nine Member States at the European Council on 9/10 December 1974, Community experts got to work only to discover that things weren't quite as simple as they had imagined. The European Commission formulated detailed proposals (see I&S No 29/75). Working parties were set up; they discussed and argued, went away to consider and consult, met again, argued again, produced reports, counter-proposals, supplementary reports and so on.

How far have they got?

One thing seems certain: a uniform passport will be available for issue to all Community citizens from 1978 onwards. Anyone with a valid passport will obviously continue to travel on it until it expires; the European passport will come into use gradually as passports are renewed in the normal way.

It also seems certain that the colour of the European passport will be somewhere between purple and burgundy.

Apart from that nothing, or virtually nothing, has been decided. And what appear to be mere details often hide serious and complicated problems.

For instance, it is maintained in certain quarters that the introduction of a uniform passport for all European citizens will mean that checks at internal frontiers will have to be abolished sooner or later. Travellers arriving from outside the Community will, therefore, have to be checked at the external frontiers, which means that national legislation on aliens and immigration will have to be harmonized.

Another important problem to be solved is how to prevent forgeries. What sort of paper should be used? Should it be watermarked? What physical and chemical properties should it have?

Passports are handled a great deal and need to be tough. Should Europe go in for luxury, with a leather cover? This seems unlikely. Or should it settle for plastic or cloth-covered boards? The choice of cover is still open as is the choice of binding. It would not do if the European passport fell apart on its travels; nor should it be possible to add extra pages on the quiet.

Then there is the big question of the language to be used. It has been suggested that the particulars on the inside pages should be given in the national language(s), English and French, the exact order being left to the individual Member State. A counter-suggestion is

that all the official languages of the Community should be used to ensure that the passport will be understood at all Community frontiers. The fact of the matter is that the importance attached to various parts of a passport (cover, personal particulars of bearer, pages for visas, instructions and useful information for the bearer) depends on whether they are being read by the bearer, the issuing authorities, the frontier authorities or the authorities of the country visited.

It has been agreed that the inscription "European Community" should appear on the cover. But should this come before or after the name of the country issuing the passport? Should there be a European emblem or symbol and, if so, what should it be? Although the coats of arms of the nine Community countries represent an impressive heraldic zoo, the Community itself has never felt the need to shelter under an eagle's wing or hide behind a lion's claw.

It can be seen then that a lot remains to be decided. Politically, the road to a European passport is hedged with technical difficulties - as indeed is the road to a united Europe.

PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

BELGIUM

1049 BRUSSELS
Rue de la Loi 244
Tel. 735 00 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. 886 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
Centre européen du Kirchberg
Tel. 479 41

NETHERLANDS

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

UNITED KINGDOM

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

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 10017
277 Park Avenue
Tel. 371-3804

URUGUAY

MONTEVIDEO
Calle Bartolome Mitre 1337
Casilla 641
Tel. 98 42 42