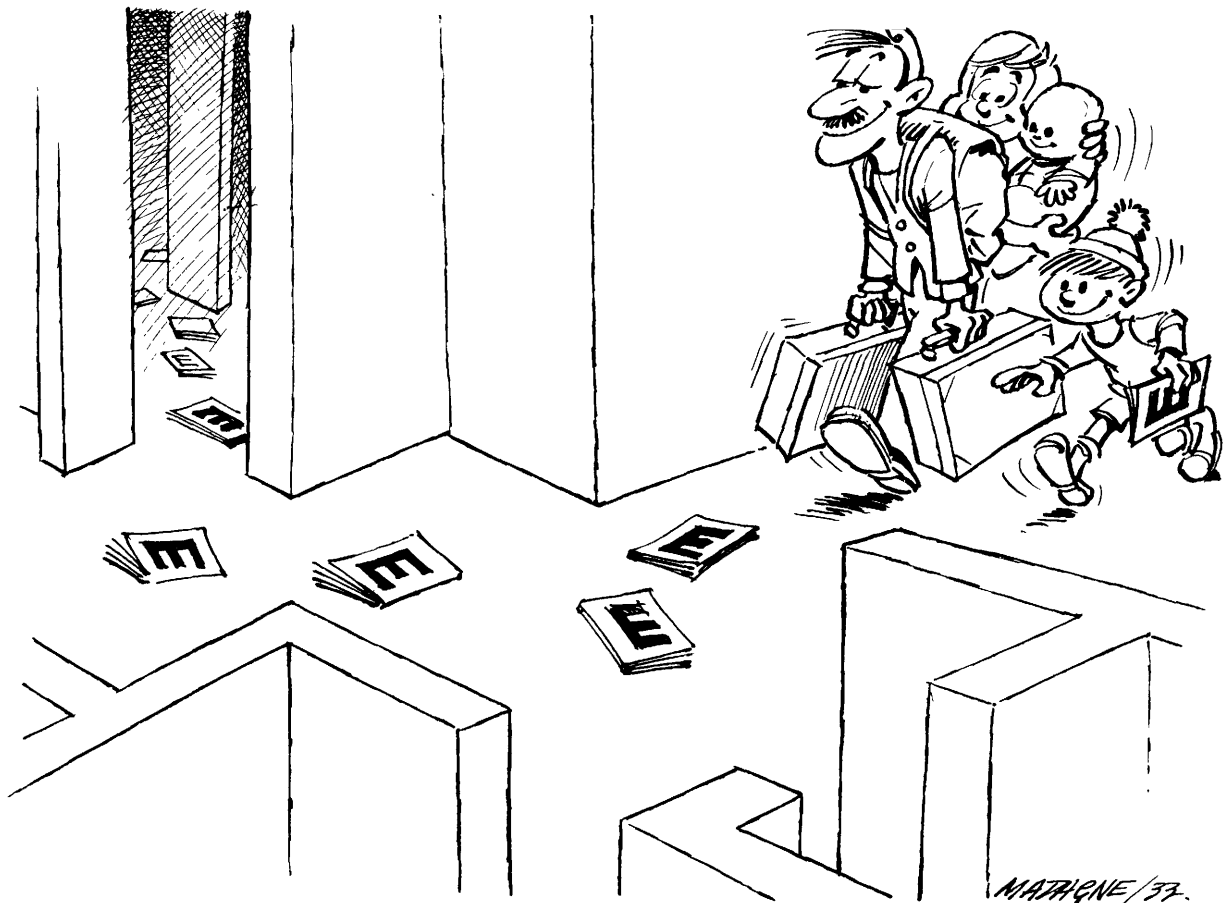


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In this issue Euroforum outlines a European Commission plan to ensure that Community workers intending to move to another Community country are better informed about living and working conditions there.

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** INFORMATION FOR EMIGRANTS

The European Commission is anxious to ensure that Community workers intending to move to another Community country are better informed about living and working conditions there.

In ANNEX 1, Euroforum describes the information system which has been devised. Migrant workers will now know what to expect when they arrive in the country of their choice.

** THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK AND SMALL BUSINESS

In 1975, as in 1974, over 30% of loans granted by the European Investment Bank (EIB) went to small and medium-sized businesses.

In ANNEX 2, Euroforum shows that this is not a recent development and outlines the procedure used by the EIB to finance this type of investment.

** ECONOMIC POLICY 1976-80

If the European Community is to restore full employment by 1980 and hold the increase in consumer prices down to 4 or 5% it will have to achieve a growth rate of more than 5%. Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the European Commission, told a press conference on the new medium-term economic policy programme recently presented by the European Commission to the Community's Council of Ministers that permanent cooperation between governments and both sides of industry was essential to attainment of these economic objectives.

The European Commission believes that full employment can only be restored by a three-pronged strategy combining a balanced growth policy (applicable to regions and industries alike), an incomes policy and a more forward-looking labour market policy.

The draft programme has now been referred to the European Parliament and the Community's Economic and Social Committee for an opinion.

** UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

The latest figures for registered unemployment in the Community are given below:

			% change on corresponding month of 1975
Belgium	August	223 141	+ 28
Denmark	July	11 700	+ 17
Germany	September	939 528	- 9
France	July	808 500	+ 6
Ireland	July	109 203	+ 12
Italy	June	1 142 789	+ 5
Luxembourg	July	346	
Netherlands	August	213 311	+ 10
Great Britain	} UK	1 439 969	+ 31
Northern Ireland			

Although the situation is somewhat better now than in October 1975, the improvement is far from dramatic and has yet to spread to all Community countries. In the United Kingdom, for instance, unemployment has been increasing over the past three months. Unemployment increased in Belgium too although here the upward movement seems to have stabilized during August; it is still too early to say whether this marks the beginning of a new trend. Unemployment has risen slightly in Ireland, and indeed in Denmark and the Netherlands.

Economic recovery has had very little impact on the number of women out of work. It's worth noting too that the proportion of women to men in unemployment figures varies considerably from country to country. In Ireland, one unemployed worker in five is female; in Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, one in four; in Italy and Luxembourg, one in three; and in Belgium, France and Germany, one in two.

** PUTTING COWS ON A DIET

Do Community cows eat too much? Last year they got through no less than 2 500 000 tonnes of primary protein products. Three-quarters of this was soya oil-cake.

Since 1.450 kg of soya supplies a cow with enough protein to produce 10 litres of milk, there is obviously a close link between milk production and soya consumption. But because other factors (such as fodder quality) also affect milk yield it is difficult to say whether the Community's surplus could be reduced by putting cows on a soya-free diet. The European Commission is as cautious as any dietitian in its predictions; it estimates that a 50% reduction in oil-cake consumption could cut milk production by five to ten million tonnes.

** TRADE WITH THE ARAB WORLD

Community exports to the Arab League countries increased by 314% between 1970 and 1975; Community imports from these countries increased by 191% over the same period. Obviously, crude oil accounts for the bulk Community imports from the Arab world: 90.8% in 1975. But these imports add little or nothing to the coffers of the Nine - 94% of them are duty free.

The Community's best customers are Libya, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria and Iraq. Machinery accounts for 40.4% of exports to the Arab world (cars, lorries and other transport equipment representing 14.8%). Manufactured products account for 24.7% and special manufactured products for another 5.9%. Food and chemical products each represent about 10% of total exports.

** NIMBUS-G AND POLLUTION

In a very short time artificial satellites have made themselves invaluable to world research allowing scientists to observe our planet from what is, to say the least, a rather unusual angle. This is why the European Commission is particularly interested in plans for cooperation between NASA, the US space agency, and the European Community in connection with the Nimbus-G satellite, which NASA is to put into orbit around the earth in 1978.

American and European research workers met in Brussels at the end of September to examine the EURASEP project (European Association of Scientists for Experiments on Pollution). This pilot experiment will organize Community-wide collaboration between scientists from national institutes to ensure that the best possible use is made of any data on coastal water pollution observed by Nimbus-G. NASA gave the project its blessing at the end of 1975; it is now for the Community's Council of Ministers to give the final go-ahead.

Nimbus-G can render enormous service but scientists will have to learn to use it properly. During the pre-launching period a Mystère 20 jet with a simulator aboard will fly over a test area to allow the final touches to be put to instruments and calculation programmes. Ships will record marine parameters which will be compared with calculation results to check the validity of the methods used and assess instrument performance.

Nimbus-G will be able to detect oil-slicks at sea and industrial waste in estuaries - a particularly useful service. It will help to measure quantities of phytoplankton (to measure changes in the fertility of the sea in polluted areas) and add to our knowledge of how sediments are carried by coastal currents.

**** TO BE A FARMER'S BOY?**

If enthusiasm for the back-to-nature movement has led you to consider signing on as a farm labourer, a look at the table below might make you think again. It shows what farm labourers were earning and what hours they were working in 1974.

	Average hourly earnings		Average number of hours worked per month
	in national currency	in units of account ¹	
Germany	DM 6.53	2.03	201
France	FF 6.48	1.08	204
Italy	Lit 931	1.15	187
Netherlands ²	Fl 7.16	2.13	201
Belgium	Bfrs 82.64	1.70	177
Luxembourg	Lfrs 36.67	0.75	229
United Kingdom	£0.66	1.24	207
Denmark	Dkr 16.93	2.23	182

¹ 1 unit of account = approx. US \$1.1
² Skilled workers only.

**** THE DANGERS OF NON-ENRICHED MILK POWDER**

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently confirmed widely-held suspicions that non-enriched milk powder is dangerous for undernourished children. Non-enriched milk powder forces the body to draw on its own depleted stocks of Vitamin A; the child's eyes are affected and he may even go blind. It seems that well-intentioned deliveries of non-enriched milk powder do more harm than good in developing countries with a warm, dry climate.

What does the European Commission propose to do? It already cooperates with WHO of course but now there is to be systematic consultation between the two bodies on problems connected with the vitamin-enrichment of skimmed-milk powder supplied to developing countries under the Community's food aid programme.

At the European Commission's request, WHO has prepared a regional map showing which countries in receipt of Community aid are in most urgent need of milk with added Vitamins A and D. A more detailed country-by-country report on vitamin deficiency and the prevalence of rickets being prepared by WHO will enable the European Commission to decide on priorities for the delivery of vitaminized milk, notably under the 1976 programme.

**** ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS**

The European Commission has just set up a Scientific Committee for Feedingstuffs to advise it on certain basic issues associated with nutrition and the wholesomeness of feedingstuffs, the protection of animal health, and the quality and wholesomeness of livestock products. The Committee has thirteen members chosen for their particular competence in toxicology, nutrition, hygiene, biology and the environment. Some of them already sit on the Scientific Committee for Foodstuffs.

** PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF DATA-PROCESSING

A number of Commission proposals on the applications of data-processing are being discussed within the Community's Council of Ministers at present. The European Commission is hoping that agreement will soon be reached on launching a feasibility study on an organ and bloodmatching data bank system and studies on legal document retrieval, computer-assisted design techniques and the processing of import-export data.

The European Commission considers that an urgent decision must be taken on a number of more general projects, such as the development of a joint real time programming language (RTPL) and the experimental use of data-processing in high-speed data-transmission techniques, in view of the rapidly changing situation and the commitments to be entered into with other organizations.

** THE ENVIRONMENT: COOPERATION BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND THE COMMUNITY

Swiss and Community experts met recently on the shores of Lake Geneva for another exchange of information on the environment (see Industry and Society No 44/75). The experts, who were well supplied with documentation, formed working parties to discuss methods of measuring air and water pollution and exchanged information about heat pollution, noise abatement and their own research projects.

Information exchanged over the next few months will relate principally to specific aspects of these general themes. Plans have already been made for the experts to meet again early in June 1977 to review work in progress and practical efforts to protect the environment.

INFORMATION FOR EMIGRANTS

The Community of Nine has a population of more than 250 million and a working population of 105 million. Under the Treaty of Rome any worker who is a Community national is entitled to move freely within the Community and work at the job of his choice in the country of his choice.

This means that Community workers can now choose from a much wider range of jobs than in the old days when they were limited to a national labour market. But how are they to find out about living and working conditions in the Nine?

Up to now they have had to find out for themselves. More often than not this meant that they had to rely on word-of-mouth information (or misinformation).

Embassies and consulates are the only official sources of information for workers contemplating a move. But the information supplied varies and in any event embassies are rather thin on the ground and rarely convenient to where workers live.

To remedy this situation the European Commission will shortly be launching a system whereby national employment services will distribute up-to-date information on living and working conditions in the Nine. With all the facts in their possession workers will be able to make an informed choice before deciding to settle, temporarily or permanently, in another Community country.

Once the system is in operation the potential migrant worker will be able to obtain detailed information in his own language on the Community country of his choice by dropping in to his local employment office.

The information will be supplied by the individual Member States and presented in a standard format approved by the European Commission and tested by specialized employment services in the Member States.

The system should prove particularly valuable for two reasons: the information will be presented in a standardized form by each country and will be exchanged twice a year, on the same day, at a meeting in Brussels of representatives of specialized employment services. The information will be examined and exchanged during the meeting; the next day each country will have up-to-date information on general working conditions and consumer prices in the rest of the Community.

This means that national employment services will be in a position to supply regional and local employment offices on request with information up-to-dated twice a year (in April and October).

The information is presented in a series of four illustrated brochures for each of the nine countries; they are available in all Community languages.

1. Free movement and social security

The first brochure tells the migrant worker how Community legislation on free movement and social security for migrant workers is applied in the country of his choice. It deals with his rights in the matter of equal treatment and trade union membership and outlines provisions enabling him to obtain allowances and other payments under the same conditions as national workers.

It also tells him how to go about getting a residence permit once he has found a job and lists the addresses of organizations that can help him when he first arrives.

2. The country itself

The second brochure describes the country itself, its climate and its population (including its foreign population). It gives a brief outline of its political organization, its economy and its education system, with particular reference to opportunities for vocational training.

The brochure also deals with social security benefits and family allowances payable to Community workers. It tells workers what the conditions for eligibility are and what they must do to secure payment.

3. Working conditions

The third brochure gives a general idea of working conditions. It gives details about working hours, holiday entitlement, bonuses and allowances, and opportunities for overtime. For some countries it indicates minimum guaranteed wages for the different categories of worker; for others it merely indicates average earnings. It indicates approximate deductions for tax, national health contributions, pension scheme contributions and so on for workers in different family situations.

It gives details of housing, transport and other allowances, if any, and payments migrant workers can expect to receive in the event of sickness or unemployment.

Finally, it tells potential migrant workers how to go about sending money home.

4. Cost of living

The fourth brochure gives minimum and maximum prices for a wide range of consumer goods and services. This information has no statistical value, but does give workers exercising their right to "free movement" some idea of the cost of living, especially since it is up-to-dated every six months.

It covers food, drink and tobacco, clothing, petrol and car servicing, the main consumer goods such as television sets, refrigerators and washing machines. Charges for various services such as laundry, hairdressing, amusements, transport, postal services and so on are also indicated.

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Armed with these brochures, easily available from local employment offices or national employment services, workers will have a much better idea of the opportunities offered to them by a Community-wide labour market.

THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK AND SMALL BUSINESS

In 1975, as in 1974, over 30% of loans granted by the European Investment Bank (EIB) went to small and medium-sized businesses in the European Community. And this is as it should be: the EIB's principal mission is to back investments that either enhance the Community's less-developed regions or help to create new activities in its older industrial regions. Development of a regional economy cannot be based solely on giant industrial complexes; small and medium-sized concerns have a special role to play, because investment for investment, they create more jobs.

Special procedure

In the early days the EIB used to grant numerous, if modest, direct loans for small and medium-scale industrial investment. But these operations proved so popular that it soon found itself unable to cope with all the projects submitted and had to devise a special procedure.

Under this special procedure, the EIB grants a "global loan" to a bank or financial institution. These funds are then used, with the EIB's agreement, to finance small or medium-scale investment projects recommended by the intermediary.

On 30 June 1976, the unit of account used by the EIB was worth:

DM 2.83513
£0.618268
FF 5.22189
Bfrs/Lfrs 43.7116
Lit 925.592
Fl 3.01347
Dkr 6.77311
US \$1.10112

Facts and figures

Between 1968 and 1975 thirty-two "global loans", totalling 342.8 million u.a., were granted to intermediaries as varied as the Crédit National and the Crédit Hôtelier in France, the Istituto Mobiliare in Italy, the Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation in the United Kingdom, the Industriekreditbank in Germany, the Finansieringsinstituttet for Industri og Håndvaerk in Denmark, and numerous regional agencies.

Over the period 1969-75, the Bank lent a total of 215 million u.a. to finance 468 projects.

Projects in Italy accounted for 97.8 million u.a. of this total. There were 176 in all, most of them in the Mezzogiorno: 41 projects in Campania received 30 million u.a., 41 projects in Latium received 23 million u.a. and 34 projects in Sardinia received 15 million u.a.

In France 170 projects were backed by the EIB to the tune of 70.5 million u.a. They were concentrated in the West (28 projects in Brittany received 11.5 million u.a. and 20 projects in the Pays de la Loire received 7.4 million u.a.) and in the East (24 projects in Lorraine received 13.3 million u.a. and 27 projects in Alsace received 8.3 million u.a.).

Some 88 projects were approved in Germany, the Bank lending a total of 36.1 million u.a. Most of them were in North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, Hesse and Bavaria.

In the United Kingdom, 26 projects received 7.6 million u.a. during 1974 and 1975. In Denmark, and in Ireland too, more and more intermediaries are making use of the special procedure.

Industries helped

Loans granted through the agency of national or regional institutions covered a very wide range of industries: mechanical construction (106 transactions, or about 22% of total funds lent), the food industry (80 transactions, or nearly 19% of total funds lent), textiles and leather (about 50 transactions), building materials and the timber industry (about 30 transactions each), the paper industry, the rubber and plastics industry, and the electrical construction industry (about 20 transactions apiece).

Jobs created

On the whole, the industries helped by the global loan system are labour intensive: EIB experts have calculated that the projects financed should help to create something like 30 700 jobs and to stabilize another 10 500.

One of the main advantages of investment by small and medium-sized businesses is that jobs are created at a lower cost. At 1975 prices the average cost per job created by EIB loans to small and medium-sized businesses worked out at 26 000 u.a.; the corresponding figure for major industrial projects directly financed by the EIB is about 96 000 u.a.

The current economic revival in the European Community should increase the propensity to invest and mean that EIB assistance to small and medium-sized businesses will expand even further.

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