

TRADE UNION INFORMATION BULLETIN

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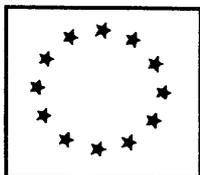
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Commission Propose Establishment of European Works Councils

The latest European Commission proposals under the Social Charter Action Programme call for the establishment of European Works Councils in companies employing more than a 1,000 workers and based in two or more Community Member States. The proposals are contained in a draft directive which will be considered by the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and submitted to the Council of Ministers.

Under the proposals, management and workers' representatives will determine the nature and functions of European Works Councils, but if there is a failure to agree a set of minimum requirements contained in an Annex to the proposal will apply. The proposal is fully summarised in the Background Briefing report on pages 2 and 3 of this edition of the Bulletin.

The latest progress on the implementation of the Social Charter is summarised in the second edition of the Social Charter Action Programme Checklist. It follows the format of the checklist which was first published in Issue 2/90 of the European Trade Union Information Bulletin. Other recent development in the field of social policy are also covered in this edition of the Bulletin, including reports on two new health and safety initiatives - the harmonisation of regulations dealing with safety signs in the workplace, and health and safety protection in the extractive industry.



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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (DGX)

200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.

Editor: Alan Burnett. Sheffield UK.

The views expressed in this Bulletin are those of the Editor and are not necessarily those of the European Commission

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

Reference:

Proposal for a Council Directive on the Establishment of a European Works Council in Community-scale Undertakings or Groups of Undertakings for the Purposes of Informing and Consulting Employees. COM(90) 581 final. 25 January 1991. Official Journal: C39 15 February 1991 p.10.

Background:

Attempts by the European Community to introduce some form of minimum requirement for consultation and participation systems in companies date back to 1970s, when both the Fifth Directive on Company Law and the Vredeling Directive were both first proposed. These initiatives were eventually blocked through a lack of unanimous support on the Council of Ministers. Commission President, Jacques Delors, gave notice of a new attempt to introduce legislation when the social dimension was first proposed and plans for a Community instrument on the procedures for informing and consulting workers figured prominently in both the Social charter and the Social Charter Action Programme.

In particular, the Action Programme pointed out that national practices on consultation and the provision of information did not always correspond with the complex structure of undertakings having establishments in more than one Member State. The Action Programme concluded that it would be desirable to improve the information and consultation of the workers in these companies which employ a large number of people in the Community. The new Commission proposals are intended to meet this requirement.

European Commission Proposals For The Establishment of European Works Councils

Objective:

The objective of the proposal is to improve the information and consultation of employees in Community-scale undertakings and groups of undertakings. To this end the proposal envisages the creation of a European Works Council within such undertakings at the request of employees or their representatives or at the initiative of central management.

Definitions:

The proposals apply to Community-scale undertakings or Community-scale groups of undertakings. The former is defined as an undertaking with at least 1,000 employees within the Community and with at least two establishments in different Member states employing at least 100 employees. A Community-scale group of undertakings comprises a controlling undertaking and its controlled undertakings employing at least 1,000 employees within the Community and with at least two group undertakings in different Member States each of which employs at least 100 employees within the Community.

European Works Councils:

A European Works Council (EWC) shall be established in every Community-scale undertaking and group of undertakings. The EWC will encompass all establishments located within the Community, each of which employs at least 100 employees. The setting up of the EWC will be the responsibility of central management of the undertaking, but where the central management is located outside the Community it will be the responsibility of a designated representative agent within the Community.

BACKGROUND BRIEFING - European Works Councils

The EWC Agreement:

The nature, composition, competence and mode of operation of the EWC will be determined by means of a written agreement between management and workers' representatives. Where there are no workers' representatives within an organisation, the employees concerned will be entitled to elect from amongst their numbers representatives for the purpose of the proposals. The proposals establish the composition and mode of operation of the special negotiating body charged with the task of determining:-

- (a) the nature and composition of the EWC, the number of members, the allocation of seats and the method and duration of appointment or election of the members;
- (b) the functions and powers of the EWC;
- (c) the procedure for informing and consulting the EWC;
- (d) the place, frequency and duration of meetings of the EWC;
- (e) the financial and material resources to be allocated to the EWC.

Absence of Agreement:

Where management and employee representatives fail to agree on the nature, composition and competence of a EWC, a set of minimum requirements defined in the Annex to the proposal will apply. These minimum requirements limit the competence of the EWC to those matters concerning all establishments or groups of undertakings located inside the Community. They provide for the EWC to have a minimum of three members and a maximum of thirty, including at least one member from each Member State where the undertaking employs at least 100 employees. The minimum requirements provide for at least one meeting of the EWC each year at which it will be informed of the progress of the undertakings' business and its prospects. In particular,

such information will relate to its structure, economic and financial situation, the probable development of the business and of production and sales, the employment situation and probable trend, and investment prospects.

The EWC will also have the right to be informed and consulted by central management about any management proposals likely to have serious consequences for the interests of the employees of the undertaking, and at least one special meeting of the EWC shall be convened each year for this purpose.

Restrictions on Information:

The proposals give management the right to withhold information which, if disclosed, would substantially damage the interest of the undertaking concerned.

EWC Members:

Members of the EWC will have the same rights and guarantees provided for employee representatives by national legislation in force in the country of employment. They must be allowed to attend meetings of the EWC, and the special negotiating body which will determine the nature, composition and powers of the EWC, and they must be guaranteed payment of full wages whilst undertaking activities in relation to the EWC. The costs of the EWC meetings are to be met by management.

Implementation:

The proposal calls for Member states to implement the Directive by 31 december 1992 at the latest.

This is merely a summary of the Commission proposals, the full text of which can be found in the Official Journal. It is a proposal for a Council Directive and therefore it is subject to amendment following the opinions of the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee. To be adopted it will need to receive the approval of the Council of Ministers.

NEWSBRIEF

Eurobarometer

The majority of people in all Member states of the European Community continue to support the social charter and see it as a "good thing". This is one of the results of the latest Eurobarometer survey conducted amongst some 12,000 citizens of the Community. The interviews for Eurobarometer No. 34 were held in October 1990, and for the first time they included over 1,000 interviews in the former territory of the German Democratic Republic. Support for the social charter was highest in Italy, where 76% of the population saw it as a "good thing" and only 2% recorded a negative view. Over two-thirds of the citizens interviewed in the Netherlands, Greece, Ireland, the United Kingdom and Germany also supported the charter, and a majority supported it in all other Member states.

Support for individual countries membership of the Community reached an all-time high, and there was a clear majority in favour of an acceleration in European unification. There was also a majority in favour of extending the powers of the European Parliament and faster progress towards economic and monetary union. There was majority support for the creation of a single European currency within 5-6 years in all Member States except Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and Denmark.

Surviving in the City

Over 80% of the population of the European Community either live, work or socialise in cities. The urban environment is of great importance to us all and the improvement of what is often a pollution-centred environment is a key objective of the Community. This objective was underlined in the recent European Commission Green Paper on the Urban Environment, and it was further emphasised

during a European Workshop - "Cities and the Global Environment" - organised jointly by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions and the Municipality of The Hague.

The workshop was held last December and, amongst other things, the delegates identified a series of essential requirements for European cities of the twentyfirst century. These included a transport policy favouring public transport, an energy conservation and recovery policy, a better balance between the use of raw materials and the production of waste and a policy which actively encourages environment-friendly behaviour on the part of all citizens.

The European Foundation will in due course publish the conclusions and recommendations of the Workshop, and further workshops on the urban environment are planned during 1991 and 1992.

Sunday Trading

Two new decisions of the European Court of Justice have underlined the ability of Member States to establish their own rules for Sunday trading. The judgements follow in the wake of the Torfaen Borough Council case of November 1989 during which the Court decided that restrictions on Sunday trading did not constitute a barrier to trade.

The first of the new judgements relates to the legality of a Belgian law banning agreements requiring retail trade personnel to work on Sunday afternoons. The Court decided that the national law was valid as "national regulations governing opening hours for retail businesses reflect certain political and economic choices". A similar argument was put forward by the Court in a French case where the national law stating that weekly rest periods must be granted on a Sunday was challenged.

NEWSBRIEF

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities in its Opinion on the Commission proposals for funding pilot projects amongst small and medium sized enterprises has stressed the important role of workers' organisations and women in the development of such enterprises. The Opinion points out that the new pilot projects should be implemented in close consultation with the relevant workers' organisations. The Opinion stated that "the factor of labour deserves more attention than it receives in the Commission proposal" The Committee was equally critical of the lack of attention paid to the position of women entrepreneurs and women who want to start up businesses.

Council of Ministers on Women

187 Members of the European Parliament from all political groups other than the European Right have signed a letter addressed to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands - who will become President of the Council during the second half of 1991 - proposing the calling of a special Council of Ministers on women's issues during the period of the Dutch Presidency. They want to see progress on a number of legislative issues related to women's rights, including child care facilities, parental leave, sexual harassment and the burden of proof in discrimination cases.

Political Union

The Italian Government have presented a report to the Intergovernmental Conference on political union relating to social policy and the social dimension. The report calls for an extension of qualified majority voting to social policy issues, and for the increased participation of the social partners.

Euro PTT Info

Internationale du Personnel des Postes, Telegraphes et Telephones (the International Postal and Telecommunications Workers' Union) have just published the first edition of their new European Newsletter - Euro PTT Info. The Newsletter is intended to reflect European developments of importance to the sector. Issue 1 of the Newsletter reports on the latest stage of development on two important European Commission Green Papers - one on postal services and the other on satellite communications. It also examines developments in the postal and telecommunications sector in central and eastern European countries.

Copies of Euro PTT Info can be obtained from the Editor, Philip Bowyer, Internationale du Personnel des Postes, Telegraphes et Telephones, 38, Avenue du Lignon, CH 1219 LE LIGNON, Geneve, Switzerland.

NOW Programme

The European Commission formally launched the NOW (New Opportunities for Women) Programme on 31 January. The programme will run until the end of 1993. A budget of ECU 120 million has been allocated for the Programme which will encourage women to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the single market, on equal terms with men.

Three main types of activity will be financed -

- (1) Help for women establishing their own businesses.
- (2) Guidance and vocational training for women who have been unemployed for long periods of time.
- (3) The creation of nurseries, especially in industrial areas, and improvements in the training of child care personnel.

Minimum Requirements to Improve the Mobility and Safe Transport to Work of Workers with Reduced Mobility.

The new European Commission proposals on the safe transport to work of workers with reduced mobility were published in February. The Annex to the proposal contains a set of minimum requirements which must be met by means of transport used by workers with reduced mobility. The minimum requirements cover four areas:-

Access to Transport:

Transport must be made available to workers with reduced mobility in such a way as to meet their special transport needs. This means a sufficient number and frequency of services and appropriate transport schedules.

Accessibility of Means of Transport:

There must be safe access to and from transport in one of three possible ways:-

- either by built-in technical aids such as lowered floors, lifting platforms etc, or
- by technical aids external to the transport vehicle such as mobile ramps, folding platforms etc, or
- by personal assistance from specially trained transport company staff.

At least one entrance/exit must be designated to allow workers with reduced mobility to board/alight from the mode of transport safely.

Facilities to be Provided:

The interior of the means of transport must provide the following for workers with reduced mobility, in accordance with the specific requirements of different types of handicap:-

- reserved seats in sufficient number and appropriate positions,
- corridors,
- toilet and washing facilities

Signs:

Signs for the use of the means of transport for workers with reduced mobility, together with the access facilities to the associated infrastructure, must accord with the special needs of the various types of workers with reduced mobility.

The Commission proposals require Member States to take measures to promote training schemes to help workers with reduced mobility travel in safety. Similar training should also be provided for staff of public transport companies.

Article 5 of the proposed directive states that when workers with reduced mobility cannot travel without the help of an accompanying person or some other form of assistance, Member States shall take measures to ensure that such assistance does not give rise to additional transport costs for the workers in question. If approved by the Council of Ministers, the directive will require Member States to implement the proposals contained within it by 31 December 1994. The full text of the proposal can be found in the Official Journal C68, 16 March 1991.

European Trade Union Information Bulletin

SOCIAL CHARTER ACTION PROGRAMME CHECKLIST

This is the second edition of our Social Charter Action Programme Checklist. It follows the same style and layout of the first Checklist which was published in Issue 2/90 of the Bulletin. It is based on the list of initiatives contained within the European Commission Communication "Communication from the Commission Concerning its Action Programme Relating to the Implementation of the Community Charter of Basic Social Rights" [COM(89) 568 final - 29 November 1989]. In each case the subject of the initiative is followed by a brief description of the content. The third column summarises the key developments to date and provides references to the Official Journal and Community Documents.

The checklist has been revised to take account of developments up to the end of March 1991.

<u>Initiative:</u>	<u>Description:</u>	<u>Developments:</u>
Employment Report	An annual report from the Commission on the employment situation in the Community.	First Report published - July 1989, second - July 1990. Third Report due - July 1991.
Industrial Relations Observatory	Creation of an employment forecasting and documentation centre.	Invitation for tenders to run the service issued in March 1990. Commission Communication awaited.
Action Programmes on Employment Creation	Development of specific programmes to identify most successful experiences and disseminate results.	LEDA (Local Employment Development Action) and ERGO (EC Programme to Combat Long Term Unemployment) already in operation.
Clearance of Vacancies	Revision of European System for international clearance of vacancies and applications for employment (SEDOC).	Regulation on the revision of the SEDOC system to be introduced by the Commission during 1991.
European Social Fund	Monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the European Social Fund.	On-going process. Results to be presented annually by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee.
Equitable Wage	Opinion on introduction by Member States of a basic equitable wage.	Opinion to be published during 1991. Van Ostrive Report on Employment and Wages considered by September 1990 Plenary Session of EP.
Atypical Contracts	Directive on employment relationships other than full-time, open-ended contracts.	Three draft Directives on atypical contracts - part-time, temporary and seasonal work - adopted by Commission : June 1990. Draft Directives published in OJ C224 - 8/9/90. See also Raggio Report (September 1990 Plenary Session of EP) Council adopts common position on health and safety and atypical workers - December 1990

<u>Initiative:</u>	<u>Description:</u>	<u>Developments:</u>
Working Time	Proposal of minimum reference rules on adaptability of working time.	Proposed Directive adopted by the Commission - July 1990. Published as COM (90) 317 - 20 September 1990. Economic and Social Committee Opinion - December 1990. European Parliament discuss and amend proposals - February 1991.
Health and Safety on Board Vessels	Directive on minimum standards for medical assistance on vessels.	Proposal for a Directive published - July 1990 (OJ C183). Amended February 1991 - COM(91) 65 - 27 February 1991.
Mobile Work Sites	Minimum health and safety requirements for mobile work sites.	Proposal for a Council Directive published in OJ C213 28/8/90. Amended by European Parliament - February 1991.
Exploration and Drilling	Directive to improve health and safety conditions.	Draft Directive to be published.
Quarrying and Open Cast Mining	Directive to improve health and safety conditions.	Draft Directive published - January 1991. (COM (90) 663, January 1991)
Fishing Vessels	Directive establishing minimum health and safety requirements.	Draft Directive to be published during first half of 1991.
European Schedule on Industrial Diseases	Updating of existing recommendations.	Recommendation published by the European Commission - (OJ L160 26 June 1990)
Safety Signs at the Workplace	Directive updating existing requirements.	Draft Directive published - December 1990. (OJ C53 28 February 1991). See also COM (90) 664, December 1990
Protection Against Dangerous Substances	Introduction of preventive and corrective measures.	Draft Directive on protection of workers from risks relating to exposure to biological agents at work published December 1990 (OJ L374 December 1990). Draft Directive on exposure to risks caused by physical agents to be published in 1991. See also Pisoni Report discussed at September 1990 Plenary Session of EP.
Safety, Hygiene and Health Agency	Establishment of support Agency.	Draft Decision awaiting publication.
Asbestos	Amendment to existing 1983 Directive of risk protection.	Draft Directive published June 1990 (OJ C161 30 June 1990)
Safety and Health in Transport Sector	Directive establishing minimum standards.	Draft Directive to be published during 1991.
Protection of Young People	Approximation of laws on the protection of young people from exploitation at work.	Draft Directive to be published during second half of 1991. See also Nianias Report debated at the September 1990 Plenary Session of the EP.

<u>Initiative:</u>	<u>Description:</u>	<u>Developments:</u>
The Elderly	Action Programme and initiative for the elderly.	Action programme published - April 1990. See also the De Vito Report discussed by the September 1990 Plenary Session of the EP. Council Decision of 26 November 1990 (OJ L28 2 February 1991)
Disabled People	Proposal for a third Action Programme.	Action programme to cover the period 1992-1996.
Travel Conditions for the Disabled	Proposals to increase the mobility of the disabled.	Draft Directive published - March 1991 (OJ C68 16 March 1991).
Collective Redundancies	Revision of 1975 Directive on collective redundancies.	Draft Directive to be introduced during first half of 1991.
Social Integration of Migrants	Memorandum on the social integration of migrants from non-Member States.	Memorandum awaiting publication along with an in-depth study of immigration within the Community.
Right of Residence	Revision of Commission Regulation 125/70 on the right of workers to remain in Member State after leaving employment in that country.	Regulation to be proposed during 1991.
Social Security	Application of social security systems to employees, self-employed and their families moving within the EC.	Proposed Regulation amending current 1971 regulations on social security published in OJ C221 5/9/90.
Working Conditions of Transfrontier Workers	Community instrument on working conditions applicable to workers from another Member State, particularly sub contracted workers.	Community instrument expected during the latter part of 1990 - as yet no indication of the type of instrument envisaged.
Labour Clauses	Proposal to introduce a "social clause" to guard against "social dumping".	Community instrument to be introduced during 1991 - as yet no indication of the type of instrument envisaged.
Supplementary Social Security Schemes	Communication on the possible harmonisation of social security schemes supplementary to statutory schemes.	Communication to be published during the second half of 1991.
Frontier residents and Frontier Workers	Communication on the effects of the single market on living and working conditions of frontier residents and workers.	Communication to be published during the first half of 1991.
Social Protection - Objectives	Design of a strategy to bring about convergence of objectives of social security systems of Member States.	Recommendation to be published during 1991.
Social Protection - Resources	Creation of common criteria for minimum resources to assist disadvantaged citizens.	Recommendation to be published during 1991.

<u>Initiative:</u>	<u>Description:</u>	<u>Developments:</u>
Social Partners and Collective Bargaining	Development of European level collective bargaining and role of the social partners.	Communication from the Commission to the Council to be published during 1991.
Information, Consultation and Participation	Community instrument on procedures for information, consultation and participation of the workers of European scale undertakings.	Proposal for a Council Directive published in February 1991 (OJ C39 15 February 1991) See also COM(90) 581 - 25 January 1991
Equity Sharing	Community instrument on equity sharing and financial participation by workers schemes.	Community instrument due in the first half of 1991. As yet no indication of the type of instrument envisaged.
Equal Opportunities for Women	Third Community programme to be presented.	Action programme published November 1990 COM(90) 449 - 6 November 1990
Protection of Pregnant Women at Work	Directive on the protection of pregnant women from risks to their health and safety.	Draft Directive published - September 1990. COM(90) 317 20 September 1990. Amendment published - February 1991 (OJ C25) . Economic and Social Committee Opinion - February 1991.
Child Care	Recommendation on ways to enable workers to combine family responsibilities and occupational ambitions.	Recommendation due to be published during first half of 1991.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Code of Good Conduct on minimum standards on maternity and pregnancy provisions.	Commission Recommendation to be published during second half of 1991.
Vocational Training	Community instrument on access to vocational training.	Action programme on continuing training (FORCE) published in 1989. Adopted by Council of Ministers - May 1990. (OJ L156 21 June 1990) Community instrument to be published in 1991.
Common Vocational Training Policy	Updating of proposals on a common vocational training policy.	Draft Decision to be published during the second half of 1991.
Co-ordination of Action Programmes	Measures to rationalise, simplify and co-ordinate various action programmes relating to training and exchanges of young workers.	Decision on second phase of Youth for Europe programme to be published during 1990. Exchange of Young Workers Programme extended until end of 1991 to achieve better synchronisation. (OJ L156 21 June 1990).
Qualifications	Further preparatory work on comparability of qualifications.	Work to be undertaken during 1991.

Health and Safety

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

The Commission have published proposals for a Council Directive on the minimum requirements for improving the safety and health protection of workers in the extractive industries. The proposals relate to mineral extraction operations both on the surface, underground and at sea. Article 3 establishes a series of general obligations of the employer in such undertakings, which relate to:-

- the design, construction, equipment, commissioning, operation and maintenance of workplaces;
- supervision;
- work involving special risks;
- safety instruction;
- first aid facilities;
- safety exercises.

Other parts of the draft directive deal with fire and explosive precautions, means of escape and rescue facilities, alarm systems, and sanitary facilities. Articles 8 and 9 deal with the provision of information to workers and the consultation and participation of workers in health and safety issues. A detailed Annex to the proposal lists a set of minimum requirements for both the onshore and the offshore extractive industry

The legal basis for the proposal is Article 118a of the Treaty and it will form one of the individual directives under the 1989 Framework Directive on health and safety at work. If approved by the Council of Ministers, acting in co-operation with the European Parliament and following consultation with the Economic and Social Committee, Member States will be required to introduce legislation to comply with the Directive by the 31 December 1992.

DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES AND PREPARATIONS

Proposals have been issued by the European Commission to add a group of chemicals known as polybromobiphenyl ethers (PBBE's) to the list of chemicals whose use is restricted by the 1976 Directive on the control of marketing and use of dangerous substances and preparations. PBBE's are used as flame retardants in plastic products and are incorporated into a number of products including televisions, computers and automobiles.

Whilst research has indicated that there are no significant dangers to the public in handling products which contain PBBE's, high concentrations of Octa BBE and Penta BBE could potentially be dangerous. The particular dangers are associated with the release of furans into the atmosphere when PBBE's are exposed to heat. The Commission conclude that PBBE's pose a threat to human health and the environment which is unacceptable in the long term. PBBE's should therefore - in the opinion of the new proposal - be phased out once safer substitutes can be found.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The European Community and its Eastern Neighbours

Over the last two years changes have been taking place in Central and Eastern Europe which would have been unimaginable just a short period of time ago. Instead of two blocks facing each other in potential conflict, a new spirit of unity pervades the continent. Most central and eastern European countries wish to have close links with the European Community and eventually to join it.

This new booklet in the European Documentation series examines what the European Community is doing to help its eastern neighbours. It describes the various funding programmes established by the Community to help rebuild the infrastructure of central and eastern European countries and encourage new investment in industry and agriculture. It also looks at what steps are being taken by the Community to protect and improve the environment in these countries.

One of the most useful features of the booklet is a series of thumb-nail sketches of the central and eastern European countries themselves.

"The European Community and its Eastern Neighbours" European Documentation, Periodical 8/90. October 1990. Available in all Community languages from national information offices.

JANUS - Health and Safety.

The latest edition of JANUS - the regular publication of the Community Information System for Health and Safety at Work - examines developments in health and safety legislation and policies in individual Member States. The new draft Portuguese law on hygiene

safety and health at work and the latest Dutch directives on dangerous substances are amongst the items featured. Coverage of a new safety awareness course developed in Luxembourg and the latest French statistics on working conditions and temporary jobs is also contained in this issue.

JANUS Issue No. 4 December 1990. Available from Instituto Nacional de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo, Centro Nacional de Condiciones de Trabajo, C/Dulcet, s/n. 08034 Barcelona, Spain.

Managing Change

Last year the European Service Network with the support of the European Commission published a report entitled "Managing Change: Employment Practices for 1992" It was a report of the first of four seminars organised by the Community "Managing Change Programme". The seminars aim to promote the exchange of information on good employment practices among European and American firms. The reports on the final three seminars have now been published, covering the following subjects:-

- "Business and the Local Community"
- "Alternative Work Arrangements and the Changing Composition of the Workforce"
- "The Workforce: A Vital Resource"

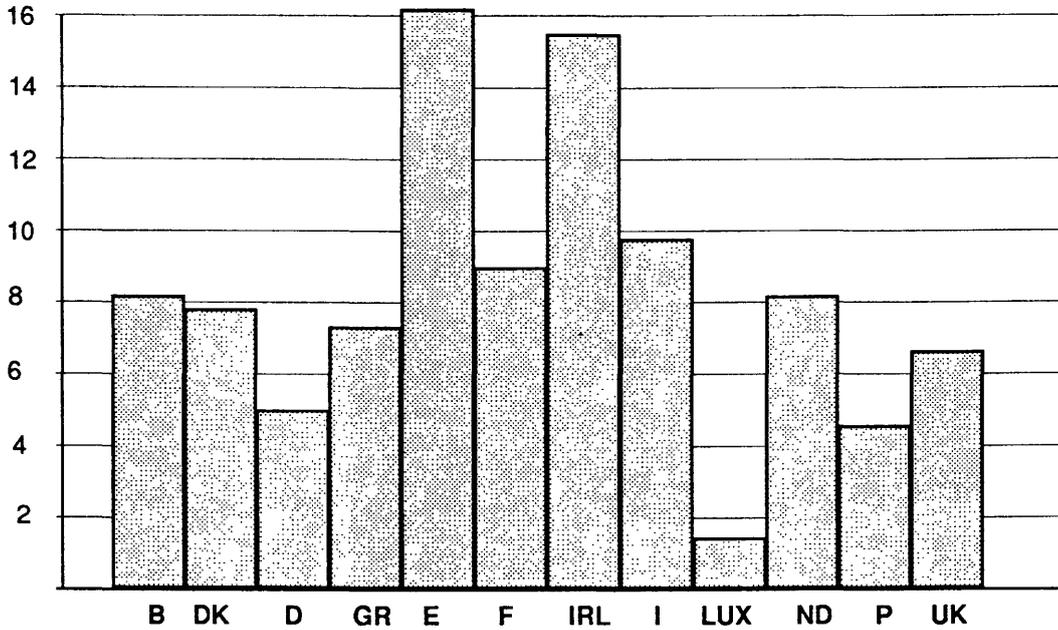
Each report contains a summary of the main contributions to the seminars which came from a variety of European and American managers and European Commission officials. From a trade union viewpoint, they provide an interesting insight to some of the more enlightened approaches to industrial relations by modern managers.

Further details of the Managing Change Seminar Reports are available from: European Service Network sc. rue Dautzenberg 38, bte 4, B-1050 Brussels. Tel +32 2 649 41 25 Fax +32 2 648 3693

UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

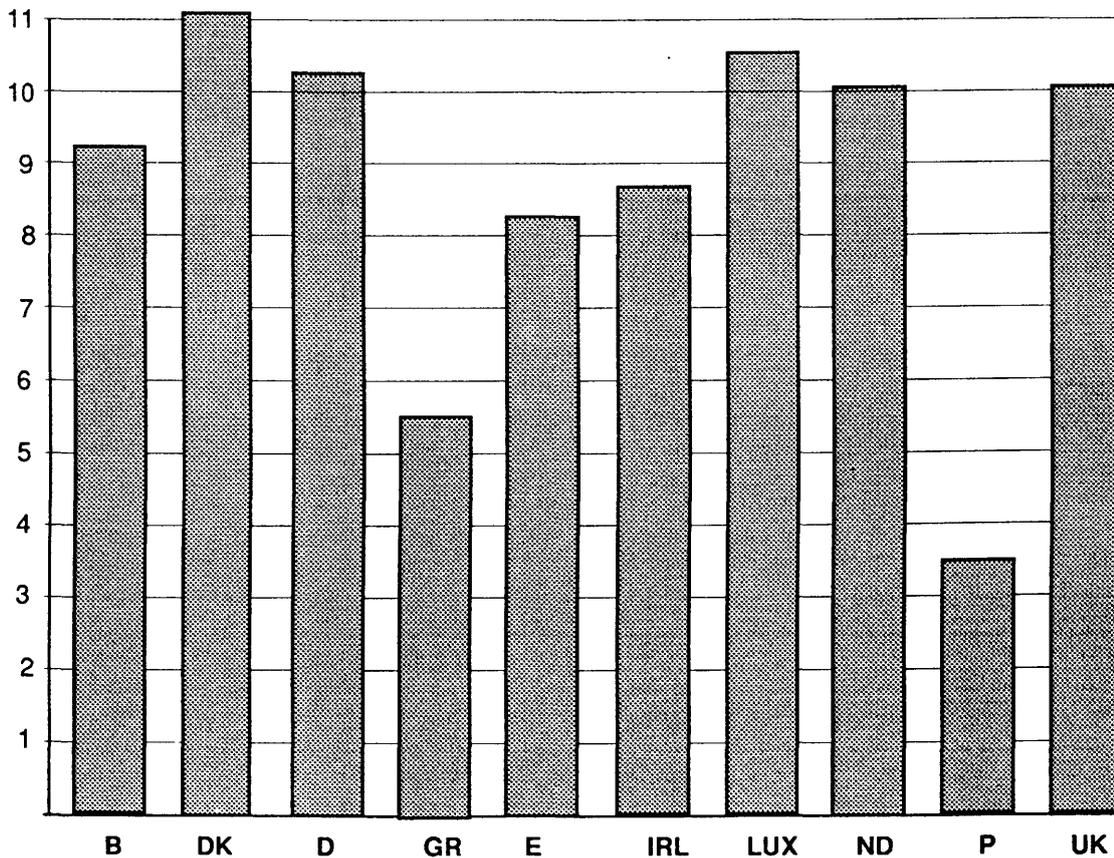
Percentage Unemployment rate - 1990

Source: Eurostat.



AVERAGE GROSS HOURLY EARNINGS - Manufacturing Industry

Expressed in terms of purchasing power standards (ie taking consumer prices into account) Figures relate to 1989 (Greece and Luxembourg 1988). Comparative figures for France and Italy not available.



European Trade Union Information Bulletin Readership Survey 1990

In Issue 3/90 of the Bulletin we asked readers to complete a readership survey questionnaire so that we could get a better picture of our readers and the kind of issues they wanted covering in the Bulletin. Over 300 readers responded to the questionnaire and the views they expressed will help us to ensure that the Bulletin concentrates on issues which are of importance to European trade unionists.

The aim of the survey was threefold:-

1. To establish the main groups which comprise the current readership of the Bulletin.
2. To determine the availability of modern communication resources (particularly Fax and Computer modem systems) amongst such groups so that we can examine methods of providing rapid information on European developments in addition to the Bulletin.
3. To identify those subject areas where readers would like to see additional coverage in the Bulletin.

The preliminary analysis of the returned questionnaires has provided the following results:-

Readership Groups:

The completed questionnaires came from the following groups:-

Full Time Trade Union Officials	41%
Lay Trade Union Representatives	23%
Academics	16%
Business and Management	5%
Information Services	3%
Others	16%

The pattern between the various different groups was similar for all language editions - English, French, German, Spanish and Greek.

Availability of Communications Systems:

Fax was the most widely available means of rapid communication to our readers. A majority of readers had immediate access to a Fax whilst a substantial minority had access via their organisation. The availability of computer modem systems was far more restricted.

Fax - directly available	59%
Fax - available via organisation	33%
Computer Modem - directly available	12%
Computer Modem - available via organisation	14%

Once again there was considerable similarity between the responses to the various language editions of the Bulletin.

Preferred Coverage:

Readers wanted to see more, as against less, coverage on all the various topics and issues covered by the Bulletin. However, there was a considerable level of support for increased coverage of the social charter, health and safety issues and the single market. The percentage support for increased coverage of individual subject areas was as follows:

More Coverage Required On:-

1	Social Charter	74%
2	Health and Safety	60%
3	1992 Internal Market	59%
4	Background Briefings	57%
5	Labour Market News	57%
6	Vocational Training	54%
7	Eurodata Statistics	44%
8	European Parliament	42%
9	Publications Reviews	40%
10	Meetings and Conferences	36%
11	Structural Funds	32%
12	CEDEFOP	22%
13	European Foundation	20%

Once again there was considerable coincidence of views between readers of the different language editions of the Bulletin.

Readers were also asked which additional topic areas they would like to see covered in the Bulletin. A large number of topics were requested, the most popular of which were as follows:-

- How to establish links between European trade unions
- Specific industry studies concentrating on terms and conditions of employment
- Trade union education issues
- Trade union structures in Europe
- Environmental issues
- Social security and welfare benefit issues
- Regional trade union initiatives and events
- Important judgements of the European Court of Justice
- The problems of long-term unemployment

We will obviously pay close attention to these suggestions and to the calls for increased coverage of certain issues when planning future issues of the Bulletin. The survey has provided us with a considerable amount of valuable information and we would like to sincerely thank all those readers who took part.

We would continue to welcome the views of our readers and their suggestions for additional topics which should be covered in the Bulletin. If you have any ideas please send them to:-
The Editor, European Trade Union Information Bulletin.

Commission of the European Communities (DGX) Trade Union Division.
200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels, Belgium.

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