



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

ON THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS
(ECIR)

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Article 118b of the Treaty and Article 3 of the Agreement on social policy have shown the need for awareness-raising and education within each member organisation of the UNICE, CEEP and ETUC in order to pass on the results of the social dialogue and disseminate a true European social relations culture based on a mutual understanding of national realities and a common understanding of Community realities.

With this in mind, the Commission proposes to maintain, continue and reinforce as much as possible its support, particularly financial support, for training the main social partners for the European social dialogue.

- 8 The introduction of European-level training for employers' and trade union representatives appointed by their respective organisations meets this need. The aim of this joint initiative by the social partners is to make trade union and employers' representatives more aware of the problems associated with the social dialogue at national and European levels. Significant efforts must still be made in terms of explanations and training to reinforce mutual understanding of the realities of Member States and the European social dialogue.
- What is required, in order for an understanding of a European dimension to industrial relations to emerge, is to combine at high level input from university teachers and social relations practitioners.

It should be pointed out, however, that this joint training, due to its innovative and experimental nature, is in no way intended to be a substitute for management training programmes already organised by the UNICE and CEEP on the one hand and the ETUC and its sector-based organisations on the other, aimed at ensuring improved qualifications and more dynamic participation within the various bodies established to conduct a dialogue at Community level.

A partnership with the *European University Institute in Florence* could be based on the establishing of a Chair at this Institute.

- 9 Training must take into account the historical development of social relations and provide specific prospects for their development, for the social dialogue and for the different social cultures both at national and European levels. This training must enable the employers' and workers' representatives appointed by their organisations to use tailor-made methods to acquire appropriate knowledge and the ability to use analytical instruments in order to:
- acquire a general awareness of the culture underlying the construction of the European Union and of how its institutions operate;
 - assess and study in depth information relating to socio-economic scenarios in their various dimensions and in the context of the internationalisation of markets and production, economic and monetary integration and the prospects offered by the Treaty on European Union;

- [REDACTED]**
- identify, by comparing industrial relations models and structures in the European countries, the instruments, levels and content of collective bargaining and practices and the economic and social structure for encouraging the social dialogue, particularly in its Community dimension deriving from the implementation of the Treaty, the Social Protocol and the Agreement by 11 Member States on the role of the social partners based mainly on the Agreement of 31 October 1991;

10 The Centre will also make it possible for participants to exchange information and views on:

- industrial relations systems in the different Member States;
- forms of economic and social regulation and the respective role of the State and the social partners;
- the structure and operation of employers' and trade union organisations;
- Community policies and new instruments for economic and social regulation and intervention.

11 The aim is to bring together information in order to enrich the content of training. Research will be conducted at the Centre in liaison with the EUI by:

- those taking part in long courses;
- rapporteurs from conferences, meetings, seminars and long courses (specific or thematic) organised at the Centre.

Research will therefore be directly related to education and training activities at the Centre or elsewhere within the context of the social dialogue at national and European levels.

12 The EUI, having full scientific autonomy, will carry out the basic research necessary for enhancing the work of the Centre and for analysing trends in social relations at Member State and European Union levels without restricting the opportunity for the social partners to call upon other institutes or universities.

The European social partners also consider that it would be worthwhile establishing a permanent chair of industrial relations at the EUI and ask the Commission to take the necessary initiatives.

The incumbent would be an ex officio member of the Scientific Council.



16 SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

This is to comprise 16 full members and 16 alternates, all academic representatives and senior practitioners appointed by the members of the Management Board, the FUI and the Commission. It has an advisory role.

17 COMMITTEE OF HONOUR

This is to comprise politicians, intellectuals and personalities from the world of business and from the trade union environment with a European and international reputation. This committee would lend the Institute considerable moral support.

18 EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

This is to comprise a Director and the necessary staff.
The Executive Secretariat would be responsible, under the Management Board, for the staffing, administration and management of the Centre.

IV CONCLUSIONS

- 19 Taking into account all the considerations set out above, the Commission informs the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament of its interest in the rapid establishment of the European Centre for Industrial Relations and of its intention to finance the Centre's work.
Relations between the Commission and the ECIR will be the subject of an agreement.

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