



# a newssheet for journalists

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## S U M M A R Y

- P. 2 INTERNAL MARKET: An end to the old-fashioned custom-house  
The European Commission wants the Twelve to prepare for 1993.
- P. 3 SOCIAL FUND: More than 1 billion ECU for training 550,000 persons  
The European Commission approves grants for seven EC countries.
- UNEMPLOYMENT: Unchanged in November 1990 ...  
8.3% of the workforce was unemployed for the sixth consecutive month.
- P. 4 NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN: The Commission launches NOW ...  
... with a budget of ECU 120mn.
- P. 5 SPORT: Transfers of football players come under scrutiny  
A European Commissioner has asked the Belgian football union for an explanation.
- P. 6 AIR TRANSPORT: European airlines are victims of the Gulf war  
The European Commission envisages exceptional measures.
- P. 7 EASTERN EUROPE: ECU 25mn. to promote East-West cooperation  
The European Commission to fund two new aid programmes.
- P. 8 REGIONAL POLICY: The green light for PRISMA and TELEMATICS  
The European Commission approves two programmes aimed at helping regions lagging behind in their economic development.
- P. 9 ARCHITECTURE: Mies van der Rohe Pavilion award  
The Stansted airport project has won the 1990 European architecture award.

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**INTERNAL MARKET: An end to the old-fashioned custom-house**

The European Commission wants the Twelve to prepare for 1993.

After 31 December 1992 the customs services of the 12 European Community countries will no longer be the same. The elimination of the Community's internal frontiers, set for the end of 1992, will mean an end to customs procedures and controls on trade between Member States. Such activities will be restricted to trade between the Community and non-member countries. This is no small matter: It must be remembered that the 12-nation Community imported goods worth more than ECU 447 billion\* from countries outside its borders in 1989, while its exports to them exceeded ECU 413 billion. To help the national customs authorities prepare for this major change, the European Commission sent the Twelve at the beginning of February a list of the adjustment measures they will have to take.

These measures are of two kinds. On the one hand the Member States must recognize their respective customs services, even while developing cooperation between them, and, on the other, adapt both national and Community customs legislation to the new situation. To help them the European Commission proposed to the Twelve, at the end of December, to go all out in implementing the MATTHAEUS programme, which has been experimental in nature so far (see Eurofocus N° 1/91). The programme seeks to prepare customs officials to the tasks awaiting them in a single market.

The task of adapting customs legislation will require a good deal of work. Of course the countries of the European Community have formed a customs union since 1968: The Twelve do not levy tariffs on goods traded between them and apply a common customs tariff in their trade with third countries. But they must adopt fresh legislation on the organization of checks at the Community's external borders; ensure that the penalties imposed on offenders are the same throughout the Community and incorporate all Community customs rules in a Community customs code, something which the European Commission proposed to the Twelve a year ago.

With less than two years to go to the introduction of the single market, the Commission considers it important to alert all interested parties: the national administrations, political leaders, businesses and trade unions.

\* 1 ECU = UK£0.70 or IR£0.77

**SOCIAL FUND: More than 1 billion ECU for training 550,000 persons**

The European Commission approves grants for seven EC countries.

More than 550,000 persons, most of them without jobs or qualifications, will receive vocational training, thanks to a series of grants from the European Community's Social Fund, which the European Commission approved in recent weeks. The total amount involved is in excess of ECU 1,100mn.\* and it will be used in combination with funds from the Member States themselves, on training and employment creation programmes in seven EC countries: Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

In Portugal alone more than 243,000 persons will benefit from the programmes for young apprentices and computer specialists, on the one hand, and help for firms wanting to take on more staff on the other. The numbers that will benefit in Spain are almost as impressive: 175,000. They include the long-term unemployed, out-of-work young people and employees of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the throes of modernization. In Italy some 70,000 persons will be helped; here the emphasis will be on training for those employed by SMEs and technological innovation. The 62,000 or so who will benefit in Germany include women, the disabled and immigrants from Eastern Europe. In Greece, the 1,830 persons involved work in SMEs or in the tourist industry. The European Social Fund will also contribute to job creation in the disadvantaged areas of Rotterdam and the practical training of apprentice craftsmen in Flanders (Belgium).

\* 1 ECU = UK£0.70 or IR£0.77

**UNEMPLOYMENT: Unchanged in November 1990 ...**

8.3% of the workforce was unemployed for the sixth consecutive month.

Between June and November 1990, the level of unemployment remained unchanged in the European Community, with one exception - the former East Germany, for which comparable statistics are not yet available. Unemployment stood at 8.3% last November, according to Eurostat, the EC's statistical office.

This stability in the unemployment rate was evident in most EC countries during the six months to November 1990. However, the rate fell slightly in Germany (the Western part) and Portugal, and rose slightly in Britain and Luxembourg.

**NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN: The Commission launches NOW ...**  
... with a budget of ECU 120mn.

More and more women are finding themselves in the ranks of the long-term unemployed, especially in the European Community's less-developed regions. The reasons are not only sexual discrimination but also a lack of qualifications and a shortage of nurseries. As a result, women find themselves in jobs which are precarious at best, badly paid and not particularly satisfying. This is especially true in the Community's least-favoured regions, which have high unemployment rates and a shortage of nurseries.

To help women join the labour market on an equal footing with men, the European Commission has just launched a new, Community-wide programme, with a budget of ECU 120mn. for the period up to 1993. It has been baptized NOW - New Opportunities for Women.

The new programme will finance vocational training and employment measures aimed at helping women who have been unemployed for a long time, or who would like to return to work after a long absence. It will also help women who want to go into business for themselves, by providing them training and other forms of assistance.

The Commission has noticed that while more and more women are setting up their own businesses, which are generally small, individual enterprises or cooperatives, the rate of failure is high. This is largely because of a lack of training and know-how. NOW has therefore been entrusted with the task of taking the measures needed to provide vocational training and financial support, so as to enable such enterprises to blossom, given that they represent an important element in local economic and social development, particularly in the Community's less developed regions.

Finally, the NOW programme will tackle one of the major obstacles facing women who want to work: the absence of nurseries. The European Commission has therefore decided to support their creation, to bear the operating costs of nurseries attached to vocational training centres and to finance training programmes intended to raise the professional qualifications of those working in nurseries.

\* 1 ECU = UK£0.70 or IR£0.77

**SPORT: Transfers of football players come under scrutiny**

A European Commissioner has asked the Belgian football union for an explanation.

In the frontier-free Europe that is taking shape, will football remain a world apart, governed by its own rules? Football's professional bodies have already had brushes with the European Commission on several occasions, regarding the number of "foreign" players - in fact nationals of other EC countries - that can be included in a club team. The point currently at issue involves transfers of professional football players whose contracts have expired.

At the beginning of February the European Commission Vice-President responsible for the internal market, Martin Bangemann, wrote to the President of the Belgian football union (URBSFA). He was seeking an explanation of the situation of a professional Belgian football player, Jean-Marc Bosman. In the Commission's view Mr. Bosman is being discriminated against because of his nationality, which amounts to a breach of the free movement of workers guaranteed under the Treaty of Rome, the Community's "Constitution".

Mr. Bosman had a contract with the Football Club of Liège (Belgium) from 1988 to May 1990. He should then have played for the French club of Dunkirk for a season. But the project never materialized because neither the Liège Football Club nor the URBSFA sent the French football federation the necessary authorization in time - i.e. by 2 August 1990. On August 3, the Liège Football Club told Mr. Bosman that it was dispensing with his services.

This authorization is current practice in professional football. Its issue is conditional on payment of a transfer fee by the player's new club to his previous club. The size of the fee is at the discretion of the previous employer.

Mr. Bosman refused a proposal from the Liège Football Club for a new contract and took the matter to a judge in Liège. He was granted a monthly indemnity equal to his salary in Liège and payable by his old club until such time as he found fresh employment. In addition, he was authorized to enter into a work contract without the payment of a transfer fee to the Liège Football Club.

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That is not the end of the matter, however. The judge gave an interim ruling; in fact he has asked the European Community Court of Justice if the practice of transfer fees for a worker at the end of his contract is compatible with the freedom of movement guaranteed by the Treaty of Rome. Mr. Bosman meanwhile concluded a 2-year contract with the French Club of Saint-Quentin in November 1990. He has also lodged a complaint with the European Commission against URBSFA and the European football union (UEFA) for violation of Community competition rules. The ball is now well and truly in the European court.

**AIR TRANSPORT: European airlines are victims of the Gulf war**

The European Commission envisages exceptional measures.

During the last few months, and the last few weeks in particular, European airlines have found it very difficult to fill their aircraft. They have recorded falls of between 30 and 40% in the number of passengers, because of the Gulf crisis and its transformation into war. The scheduled airlines, which are certain they will be in the red this year - some even fear bankruptcy - sent a delegation to the European Commission on January 30 at the invitation of the European Transport Commissioner, Karel Van Miert. It was received by Mr. Van Miert and the Competition Commissioner, Sir Leon Brittan.

The Commission and airlines decided to ask a group of experts to propose the exceptional measures needed to deal with the situation. These measures must not modify European legislation nor call into question the on-going liberalization of air transport, which should normally result in cheaper air fares.

It would seem that as a result of events in the Gulf, and the threats of terrorist action, potential travellers, and more especially the firms that employ them, have been gripped by panic. They are cancelling trips not only to the Middle East but also across the Atlantic - and even within the Community. Not surprisingly the sector, which employs some 500,000 people in the 12-nation Community, has been hard hit.

**EASTERN EUROPE: ECU 25mn. to promote the East-West cooperation**

The European Commission to fund two new aid programmes.

The European Commission has decided to allocate ECU 25mn.\* for two projects, to be carried out within the framework of the PHARE programme, which seeks to support the process of economic and social reform in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia). The first of these projects aims at facilitating the creation of joint ventures between firms from Eastern and Western Europe, the second at providing technical assistance, so as to make it easier to manage cooperation between the EC and Eastern and Central Europe.

The first project, which has a budget of ECU 20mn., is designed to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from all sectors of the economy. It will encourage and help SMEs from the EC countries to set up joint ventures in the East - by helping with the preliminaries to the creation of joint ventures; financing feasibility studies; extending the credits needed to launch a venture and providing commercial assistance. The project also provides for activities in the fields of training and information and help with technical and managerial problems.

The project will be managed in close cooperation with a Community network of financial institutions, acting in the capacity both of intermediaries and co-investors. These institutions will thus provide East and Central European countries the investments they need to relaunch their economies.

The second project will receive ECU 5mn. It has been designed to reply flexibly and rapidly to the urgent needs of East and Central European countries as regards technical cooperation, training, trade promotion and investments. The project will also seek to improve professional skills and promote economic and commercial contacts with the 12-nation Community.

The PHARE programme was launched in July 1989 by 24 industrialized countries. The EC is providing a total of ECU 498mn.

\* 1 ECU = UK£0.70 or IR£0.77

**REGIONAL POLICY: The green light for PRISMA and TELEMATICS**

The European Commission approves two programmes aimed at helping regions lagging behind in their economic development.

Helping regions of the European Community that have fallen behind economically to take full advantage of the single market is the aim of the two complementary programmes of regional policy - PRISMA and TELEMATICS - adopted by the European Commission at the end of last month.

PRISMA (Preparation of Industries Situated in the regions for the Single Market) seeks to improve infrastructures and services, so that businesses in the Community's less-favoured regions can benefit from the single market. With an indicative appropriation of ECU 100mn.\* for the period up to 1993, PRISMA will provide businesses technical assistance and managerial advice for improving their production and distribution methods.

In concrete terms, the new programme will support efforts to develop facilities for production certification and testing, to enable businesses and laboratories to demonstrate to potential customers their ability to meet technical quality standards. It will also prepare small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) for participation in public contracts.

The aim of TELEMATICS is to promote the use of advanced telecom services in the least-favoured regions. It has been given an indicative appropriation of ECU 200mn. for the period up to 1993.

TELEMATICS will help SMEs in particular have better access to the advanced telecommunications services available elsewhere in the Community. It will also help them to create or develop such services themselves. TELEMATICS will also promote the development in the public sector of those telecommunications services likely to contribute to regional development.

For Mr Bruce Millan, the European Commissioner for regional policy in the Community, "the entire system of Community initiatives for the less-favoured and the declining industrial regions is now in place and ready for the implementation of practical measures".

\* 1 ECU = UK£0.70 or IR£0.77



**ARCHITECTURE: Mies van der Rohe Pavilion award**

The Stansted airport project has won the 1990 European architecture award.

Established in 1987 by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Barcelona Mies van der Rohe Foundation, of which the Pavilion is considered to be a genuine symbol of architectural innovation, the 1990 Mies van der Rohe Pavilion prize for European architecture was awarded to the project for the new terminal for London's third airport, to be sited at Stansted. The architects are Foster Associates.

The prize will be presented to Foster Associates on April 27 by Mr Jean Dondelinger, the European Commissioner for audiovisual and cultural affairs, in the reconstructed pavilion of the Mies van der Rohe Foundation at Barcelona, in the presence of the Mayor of Barcelona and president of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, Mr. Pasqual Maragall.

At the same time an exhibition of the award-winning project, together with those submitted by the 22 other finalists, will open at the Association of Catalan Architects, Plaça Nova 5, in Barcelona. The exhibition will tour various European cities.

The prize, consisting of a sculptural object representing the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion and the sum of ECU 50,000\*, is a recognition, in terms of concept and technical quality, of projects designed and carried out within the Community during the last two years by European architects. It is intended to stimulate interest across a broad sector of the general public as well as that of the national, regional and local authorities and the economic sector, of the cultural significance of contemporary architecture and its impact on the present and future development of the European city.

\* 1 ECU = UK£0.70 or IR£0.77