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PRESS RELEASE

EEC COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON HOUSING FOR MIGRANT WORKERS AND
THEIR FAMILIES

The Commission of the European Economic Community has just addressed a recommendation to the six Member States on the housing of workers and their families who move from one Community country to another.

The draft of this recommendation had been submitted to the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee for their opinion. Both had expressed full approval of the Commission's action, stressing at the same time that the problem must be considered within the wider context of low-cost housing policy in general and that it would be desirable if the Community institutions were to participate directly in financing the building of dwellings for migrant workers.

The economic expansion that has taken place in Europe during the last few years has led to a considerable increase in the number of wage-earners working outside their own country. Whether they have virtually settled in the host country or are simply working there temporarily, their arrival poses special problems in most countries and aggravates housing difficulties that are already complicated enough.

The Council regulation on the free movement of workers within the Community states that a worker who is a national of one Member State but regularly employed in another should enjoy the same rights and privileges in obtaining accommodation as workers who are nationals of that country. Nevertheless, in certain areas numerous difficulties arise when this principle is fully applied, particularly when the migrant worker wishes to settle down in the host country with his family, as is socially desirable.

The Commission therefore thought it essential to recommend a number of measures that would considerably improve the situation, and enable the good results already achieved by certain Member States to be extended:

- (i) The Commission points out that the migration of workers should be taken into account in assessing present and future housing requirements and working out programmes for financing house-building;
- (ii) Member States are requested: to report all the measures they adopt to abolish direct or indirect discrimination in accordance with the principle of equality of access to accommodation laid down in Regulation No. 38; and to improve

the housing conditions of migrant workers, with due regard to current national and international standards in that respect;

- (iii) Member States are urged to co-operate in promoting the building of living accommodation, particularly in areas where there is a housing shortage and considerable immigration is expected.

The Commission recalls that assistance may be obtained from the European Investment Bank, if the statutory conditions are fulfilled.

- (iv) Workers who have to move should be given precise information as to the actual housing conditions and possibilities they can expect in the host country, especially as regards accommodation for their families;
- (v) Where accommodation is provided by the employer, the worker's contract should contain precise clauses on the subject, stating particularly the conditions for relinquishment.

An improvement in the housing conditions of migrant workers, which is the main object of the recommendation, would contribute to social progress and promote stability in this part of the labour force.

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