

# EUROPEAN BACKGROUND INFORMATION COMMUNITY

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE

2100 M Street NW, Washington DC 20037 Telephone (202) 872-8350

New York Office: 277 Park Avenue, New York NY 10017 Telephone (212) 371-3804

April 9, 1976

BACKGROUND NOTE

No. 18/1976

## COMMUNITY HIGH COURT FINDS FOR PLAINTIFF IN FIRST SEX BIAS CASE

A former Belgian air hostess is entitled to the same pay as male flight attendants and can collect it for the period 1962-68, the Court of Justice of the European Communities ruled yesterday.

This was the Court's first ruling on the "equal pay for equal work" clause of the Rome Treaty creating the European Economic Community (EEC). The Court held that this right has applied in the six original EC countries since 1962, when the Community began its second transitional period. This clause has applied since January 1973 in the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Ireland, the Court said.

To prevent floods of claims from women demanding back pay, the Court held that only women who have already begun legal proceedings could collect retroactively.

The Court of Justice is the Community's court of last resort. No national court can overturn its decisions.