

WEEKLY

REPRODUCTION AUTHORIZED

Brussels, 16 April 1974

No 15/74

** There are great differences in the functioning and organization of the various SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEMS in the Community. Reports on the various systems are published regularly by the European Commission, as is pointed out in a reply to a written question by a member of the European Parliament on unemployment benefits in the nine countries of the Community. The most recent publication by the European Commission on the various social security systems comes in two leaflets of which the first covers the countries of the former Community of the Six, whilst the principal characteristics of the social security systems of the three new Member States of the European Community are for the first time collated in the second leaflet. These studies bring out the diversities in the functioning and organization of the different systems as practised in the various Member States on 1 July 1972.

./.

This bulletin is published by the

Commission of the European Communities
Directorate General of Information
Division for industrial information and consumers
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1040 - Brussels - Tel. 3500 40

Further information is available from the Commission's press and information offices in the countries listed on the inside cover.

The information published in this bulletin covers the European Communities' activities in the fields of industrial development, protection of the environment and consumer welfare. It is therefore not limited to recording Commission decisions or opinions.

PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

BELGIUM

1040 BRUSSELS
Rue de la Loi 200
Tel. 35 00 40

DENMARK

1457 COPENHAGEN
4 Gammeltorv
Tel. 14 41 40

FRANCE

75782 PARIS CEDEX 16
61, rue des Belles-Feuilles
Tel. 553 53 26

GERMANY

53 BONN
Zitelmannstraße 22
Tel. 2380 41

1 BERLIN 31
Kurfürstendamm 102
Tel. 886 40 28

GREAT BRITAIN

LONDON W8 4QQ
20, Kensington Palace Gardens
Tel. 727 8090

IRELAND

DUBLIN 2
41 Fitzwilliam Square
Tel. 66 223

ITALY

00187 ROME
Via Poli, 29
Tel. 68 97 22 à 26

LUXEMBOURG

LUXEMBOURG
Centre européen du Kirchberg
Tel. 479 41

NETHERLANDS

THE HAGUE
29, Lange Voorhout
Tel. 070-46 93 26

SWITZERLAND

1202 GENEVA
37-39, rue de Vermont
Tel. 34 97 50

UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20037
2100 M Street, N.W.
Suite 707
Tel. (202) 872-8350

NEW YORK 10017
277 Park Avenue
Tel. 371-3804

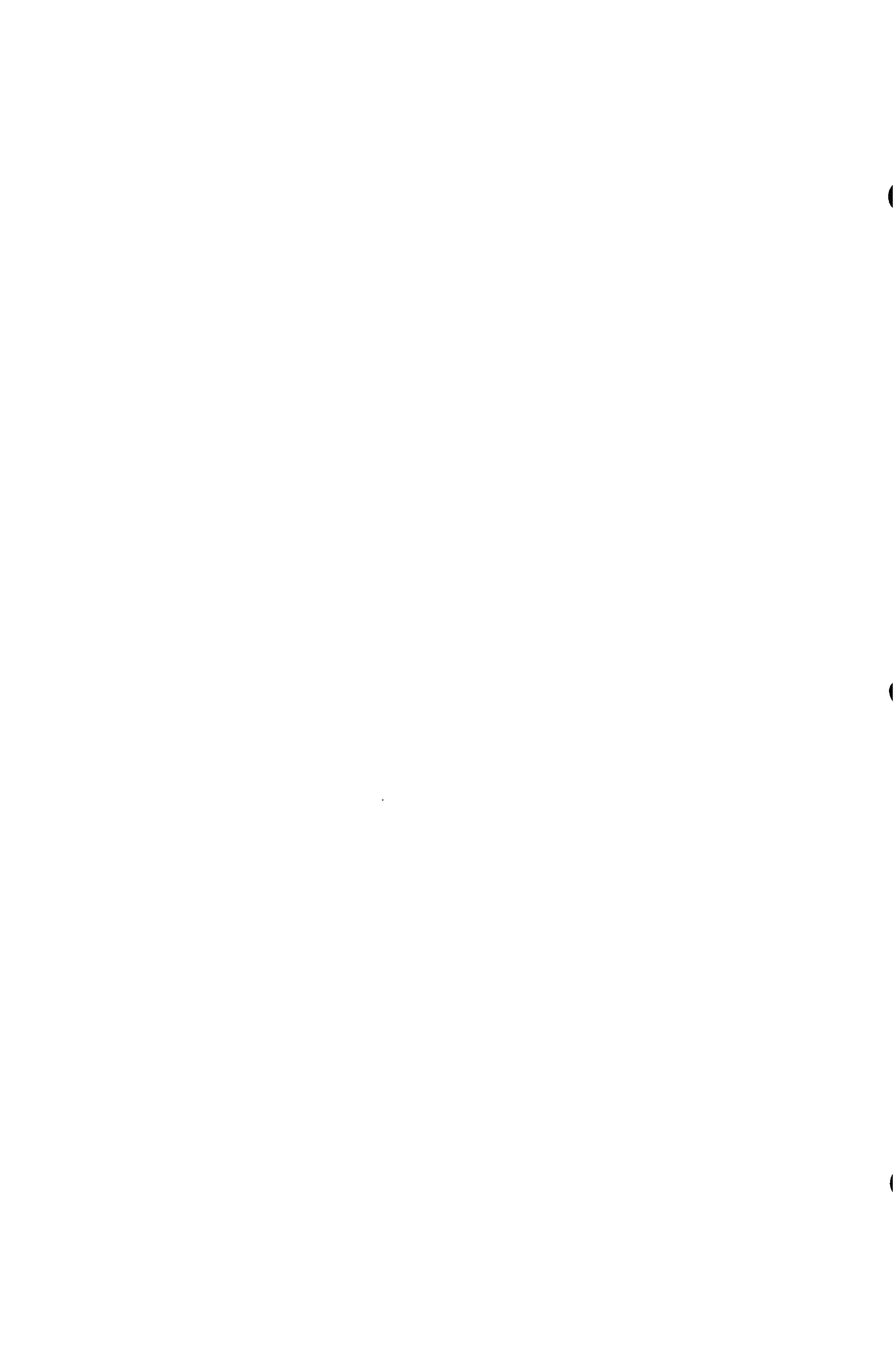
The leaflets are published by the Official Publications Office of the European Communities (P.O. Box 1003, Luxembourg).

ANNEX 1 gives a brief summary of these comparative studies.

** The increase in the number of women in the Community who combine a JOB with family responsibilities adds a new dimension to the problems encountered by women in the course of their working life: access to jobs, promotion, training and refresher courses, paid maternity leave, mothers' helps and day nurseries, flexible working hours, social security payments, etc. Among the objectives to which it gives priority, the Community's social action programme (see IS No 1/74) stresses that working conditions must be improved and EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN as regards jobs must be assured. In some Community countries steps have already been taken towards achieving this objective. In France, the United Kingdom, and more recently Italy, national committees for womens' employment have been set up to study these problems and find practical solutions.

ANNEX 2 gives a brief summary of the activities of the three national committees for womens' employment so far established in the Community.

** Currently 42 of the world's 134 operative NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS are installed in the European Community. By the end of 1980, according to forecasts by the European Commission, there should be about 400 nuclear power stations in the world (of which 90 will be in the Community).

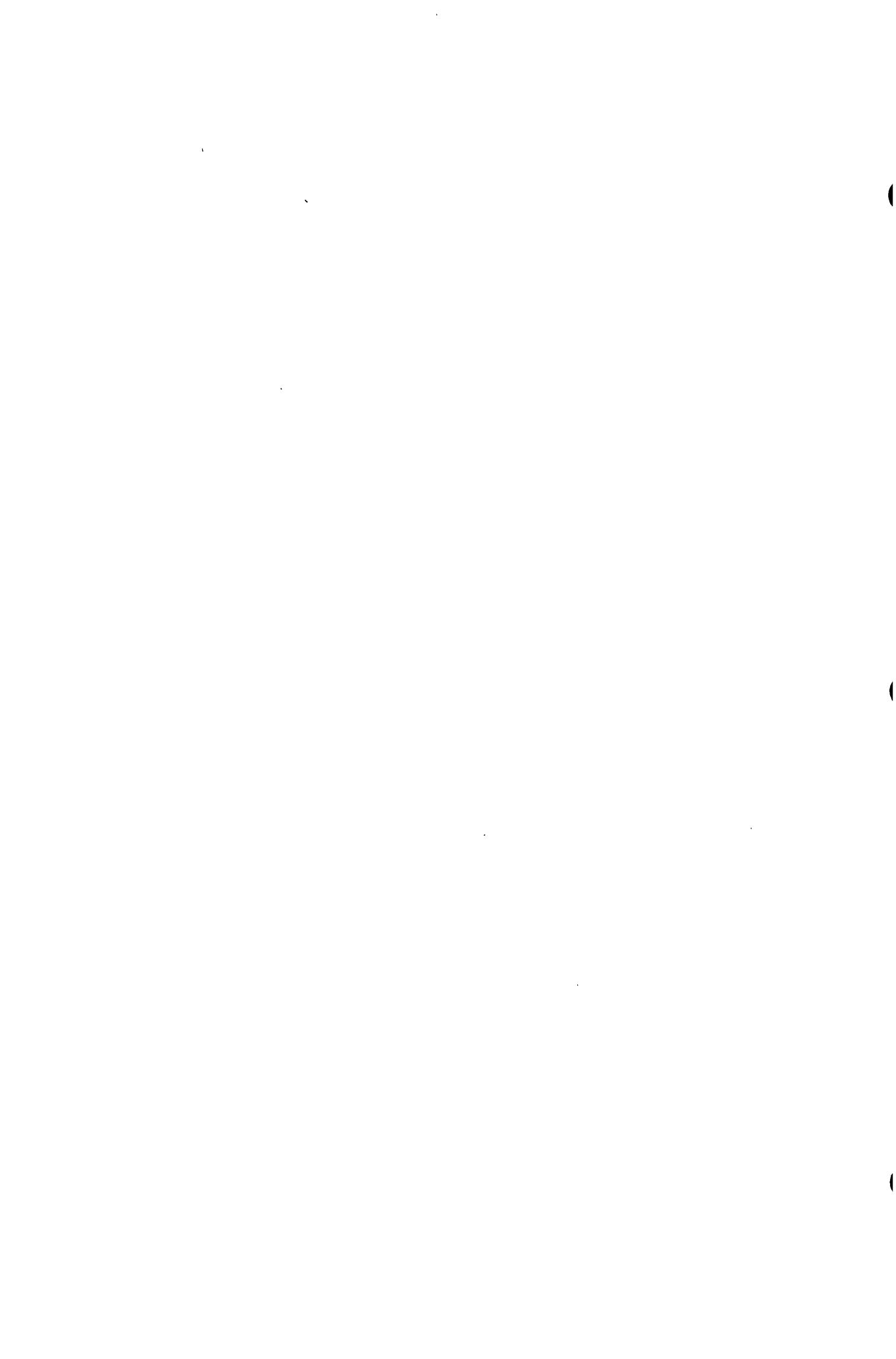


ANNEX 3 gives a detailed table of the number of nuclear power stations in the European Community and some non-member countries, as well as their capacity.

** With regard to ANIMAL FEED CONTROLS, and in spite of directives that have already been adopted in this field with a view to their progressive harmonization, Member States are still applying differing methods which could lead to very divergent results. The European Commission is therefore continuing its work in this sphere. A new directive, which completes the preceding ones and defines Community methods of analysis for the official control of some products contained in animal feed, has just been adopted.

** In the European Community WOOD furnishes only three-sevenths of the domestic wood pulp supply whilst recycling of old papers furnishes four-sevenths. But it would be possible to achieve a considerable increase in the amount of wood pulp recovered from recycling of old papers and the Commission has arranged for a study to be made on organizing the collecting of old papers and perfecting new recuperation techniques.

** From 23 September to 4 October 1974 the Italian Association for Health and Radiation Protection is organizing an international summer course in Italy on the subject of METROLOGY OF IONIZING RAYS. Further information may be obtained from Prof. E. Castani, CNEN - CSN della Casaccia, P.O. Box 2400, 00100 Rome - Italy.



** In order to remedy the present lack of accessible scientific and technical information in the European Community concerning the quality of the environment, the Commission has arranged for a study to be made on the possibility and advisability of setting up a restricted European centre for the ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION ON POLLUTION CONTROL TECHNOLOGY.

** "TOWARDS A COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY" - This is to be the subject of the annual colloquium organized by the European College for 16-18 May 1974 in Bruges. Further information is available from the European College, Dyver 7, B - 8000 Bruges, Belgium.



COMPARISON OF THE DIFFERENT SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEMS IN THE
COMMUNITY

There are great differences in the functioning and organization of the various social security systems in the Community. Reports on the various systems are published regularly by the European Commission as is pointed out in a reply to a written question by a member of the European Parliament on unemployment benefits in the nine countries of the Community. The most recent publication by the European Commission on the various social security systems comes in two leaflets of which the first covers the countries of the former Community of the Six, whilst the principal characteristics of the social security systems of the three new Member States of the European Community are for the first time collated in a second leaflet. These studies point up the differences in the functioning and organization of the different systems as practised in the various Member States on 1 July 1972. The leaflets are brought out by the Official Publications Office of the European Communities (P.O. Box 1003, Luxembourg).

Organization and financing of the social welfare systems

The systems applied in the various Member States vary greatly and are fairly complex. Nowhere has a unified organization been achieved.

The French system includes two types of agencies at local level (sickness insurance fund and family allowance fund) which correspond to three funds at national level for sickness insurance, old age pensions and family allowances.

In Italy the administration of the various risks is divided between three institutions (and their local agencies): INAM for sickness insurance, INAIL for insurance against industrial accidents, and INPS for invalidity and old age pensions, unemployment benefit and family allowances.

In Denmark local administration is the responsibility of the sickness insurance funds, the municipalities (for old age pensions and unemployment benefit) and private insurance companies (for industrial accidents). At national level the Ministry for Social Affairs controls the activities of the three bodies.

In Ireland the Ministry for Social Welfare is responsible for administering all insurance benefits with the exception of sickness which is the responsibility of local health authorities controlled by the Ministry of Health.

In the United Kingdom the various national insurance benefits are administered by the Department of Health and Social Security and its local offices, whilst medical services are the responsibility of the National Health Service.

In the remaining countries of the Community we are faced with more complex structures. These arise out of the existence of different administrative agencies for each risk (Federal Germany, Belgium) or out of the presence of several agencies covering the same risk e.g. company funds (Germany, Luxembourg), professional organizations (Germany, Netherlands), mutual insurance societies (Belgium) and public agencies.

IS No 15/74, 16 April 1974, ANNEX 1 p.3

Throughout the nine countries the financial resources come either entirely or in part from contributions. These are paid by both employers and wage-earners as follows:

- in Germany and Luxembourg (invalidity and old age and survivor pensions) employers and employees pay equal contributions;
- in the other countries the employer pays a higher proportion;
- with the exception of Luxembourg (sickness) where the insured pay the larger contribution.

On the other hand, there is a tendency for the State to increase its participation in the financing of social security. This participation can take different forms:

- paying a share of the contribution: this formula is found in the Netherlands for unemployment benefit, and in Ireland for sickness insurance;
- annual subsidy or taking over specific expenditure: this is practised in all the countries except France;
- family allowances paid out of the national budget: this method is practised in Germany and the three new Member States.

Over and above these systems which provide for the State to participate in financing, provision is made for the State to cover any deficit that may occur.

Sickness insurance

The organization of sickness insurance brings with it the problem of relations between doctors, social security authorities and

those insured. The choice of doctor is limited in several countries, e.g. in Germany, the Netherlands, Italy (for direct assistance), the only choice is between doctors on the national health authority lists. In Ireland and the United Kingdom a doctor is chosen from lists drawn up for each region. In addition, in the Netherlands an insured person may not change doctors more than twice a year and referral to a specialist is dependent on special conditions. In France the insured party may consult any doctor he chooses but, if the doctor is not on the health authority's list, the patient is reimbursed on the basis of imposed tariffs lower than those generally applied.

Only the Netherlands and Ireland (preventive health care) and Germany (for employees) require a minimum period of contribution before the insured person acquires the right to benefits.

However, it is appropriate to single out the very special system practised in the United Kingdom, where all residents in the country have the right to entirely free medical care (except for payments by some categories of residents for expenses incurred in dental care, prescriptions, etc.). The system applied in the United Kingdom is an original formula and is unique within the European Community.

Throughout the nine countries the range of benefits is more or less the same. There are on the one hand cash payments in the event of sickness and, on the other, benefits in kind including: medical care, hospitalization, prescriptions, dental care, protheses, periods spent in convalescent homes and at sanatoria. Only in two of the countries (Belgium and France) is provision

IS No 15/74, 16 April 1974, ANNEX 1 p.5

made in the insurance system for seniority in the service subject to the insurance. Sickness benefit is granted only for a limited period which varies according to country (generally six months to one year; 78 weeks in Germany). The rates vary from 50 to 90% of earnings (not including hospitalization). The rate may be changed in the light of the family's means.

Throughout the nine countries maternity benefits are included with sickness benefit and therefore there is no separate organization or financing. Benefits in kind are awarded according to the same rules as those for sickness insurance. The range of cash benefits varies from one country to another. However, in all countries of the Community, and for a period varying from 10 to 22 weeks, an allowance in lieu of earnings is paid to a working woman. With the exception of Italy and the Netherlands the legislation of all the countries provides further allowances upon the birth of a child (birth allowance, birth grant).

Invalidity pension

In some of the countries the invalidity pension is included with the old age pension (Germany, Luxembourg, Italy) and with sickness benefit in all the others. The definition of invalidity which gives the right to the pension varies. In all countries reference is made to the "normal" earnings, but this concept of normal earnings is open to different interpretations. The level of pensions on the other hand is calculated according to different formulae in each country. In some countries increases in these pensions are awarded in respect of family burdens.

Old age pensions

Old age pensions are closely linked with invalidity pensions. With the exception of Belgium and the Netherlands a minimum period of contributions, ranging from three to fifteen years according to country, is obligatory in order to acquire the right to a minimum pension. The general retirement age is 65, except in Italy (60) and Denmark (67). In Belgium, the United Kingdom and Denmark, the retirement age is lowered by five years for a woman.

Unemployment benefit

As yet not all the countries have laws on unemployment benefit. Only in France and Luxembourg is legal provision made for such benefit. In France and Italy benefits are awarded in the form of a fixed sum. In the remaining countries they are fixed as a percentage of a base salary, which is defined in different ways and fixed at very varying levels. The rates range from 35-90% (the maximum in Denmark).

In all the Community countries the unemployed retain their right to family allowances and sickness benefits.

Family allowances

Family allowances, which in most of the countries are the most recent addition to the social security system, assume greater or lesser importance in each country, depending on the circumstances which led to their being awarded.

The principle of family allowances from the birth of the first child is enshrined in the laws of all the countries, but it should be pointed out that only in France are allowances awarded for the first child by virtue of the single-wage system. The German and British systems provide for allowances only from the second child on.

Allowances are paid only until children reach a given age, which varies between 15 and 19 years depending on the country. Extensions are provided for, notably to cover studies, vocational training or serious infirmity and different age limits are fixed in each case, depending on the country.

In Italy and Denmark the same allowance is paid for each child. In the other countries the allowance varies according to the number of children, and in Belgium and France it varies according to their age.



NATIONAL COMMITTEES FOR WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT

The increase in the number of women in the Community who combine a job with family responsibilities adds a new dimension to the problems encountered by women in the course of their working life: access to jobs, promotion, training and refresher courses, paid maternity leave, mothers' helps and day nurseries, flexible working hours, social security payments, etc. Among the objectives to which it gives priority the Community's social action programme (see IS No 1/74) stresses that working conditions must be improved and equality between men and women in the work situation must be assured. In some countries of the Community steps have already been taken towards achieving this objective. In France, the United Kingdom, and more recently in Italy, national womens' employment committees have been set up for the purpose of studying these problems and finding practical solutions.

French committee

In 1965 a "Committee for the study and coordination of problems affecting womens' employment" was set up in France by the Ministry of Labour. In 1971 this Committee was reorganized to make it more representative and given increased powers; it became the "Committee for womens' employment" an organization in which employers and the trade unions as well as family and womens' rights associations are equally represented.

This Committee delivers its opinion on draft laws which will affect the employment of women or their pre-employment education. It has the right to draw up its own studies and activities

programmes, as well as the right to submit to the relevant Minister proposals for any action which it deems likely to improve the position of the working woman. In its role as information and documentation centre it serves women in the first instance, but also various groups interested in socio-economic problems.

The Committee's activities have already brought about improvement at national level in legislation affecting the employment of women. In particular, a draft law on equal pay for men and women drawn up by the Committee led the Government to table a draft law which has been approved by Parliament. In addition, several reports have been drawn up by the Committee on improvements in the system of Social Security pensions, vocational training, and regional differences in women's activities, which have been the subjects of thorough studies.

The Committee plans to continue its efforts to update legislation, spread its activities at regional level, and contribute to the development of social facilities (with particular emphasis on day-care for young children).

British committee

The first womens' consultative committee in Britain was established in 1941. It was reconstituted in 1970 and named Consultative Committee for Women in Employment. This Committee comprises well-known politicians, employers', trade union and teachers' representatives, etc. It meets twice a year and its principal studies to date have included: women in employment

and their family responsibilities, hours of work for women in industry, training, equal pay, pensions, etc.

Italian committee

The statute of the Committee on womens' employment which has just been constituted in Italy is similar to that of the French committee. It is an organization in which the relevant Ministries, the trade unions for the different categories of workers, the employers and various family associations are equally represented and the priorities with which it has been charged are to study the present situation and prospects as regards the employment of women, access to jobs, promotion, training, vocational and qualifications retraining, the reconciliation of women's responsibilities to the family and to work, and the development of welfare and social aid standards, etc.

≡

≡ ≡

The existence of such committees in the European Community should permit not only progress at national level as regards legislation on employment of women, but also effective action at European level to improve working conditions for women throughout the Community.



WORLD DISTRIBUTION OF NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS

Currently, 42 of the world's 134 operating nuclear power stations are installed within the European Community. By the end of 1980, according to forecasts by the European Commission, there should be about 400 nuclear power stations in the world (of which 90 will be within the Community).

COUNTRY/AREA	1 January 1974		end 1980		end 1985	
	In-stalled power*	Number of stations	In-stalled power*	Number of stations	In-stalled power*	Number of stations
Germany	2.3	11	20	30	40	46
France	2.8	11	13.5	23	37	47
Italy	0.6	3	6	9	18	21
United Kingdom	5.6	14 ¹	11.8	19 ²	30	38
Belgium	0.4	1	2.1	4	6.8	9
Netherlands	0.5	2	1.5	3	4.1	6
Luxembourg	-	-	1.2	1	1.2	1
Denmark	-	-	0.7	1	1.5	2
Ireland	-	-	-	-	1.2	2
Community	12.2	42	56.8	90	140	172
Western Europe (remainder)	2.4	7	30	42	58	70
United States	32.4	54	130	155	300	310
Japan	3.1	7	32	40	60	65
USSR	2.6	9	15	25		
Eastern Europe (remainder)	0.6	3	8	19		
Canada	2.5	6	7.5	13		
Latin America	0.3	1	2.7	5		
Asia (remainder)	0.9	5	5	12		
World total	57	134	287	401		

*in gigawatts.

¹ comprising 28 reactors.

² comprising 39 reactors.

