

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

11265/84 (Presse 216)

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977th Council meeting  
- Labour and Social Affairs -  
Brussels, 13 December 1984

President: Mr Ruairi QUINN  
Minister for Labour  
of Ireland

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Michel HANSENNE  
Minister for Labour  
and Employment

Denmark:

Mr Henrik HASENKAM  
State Secretary,  
Ministry of Labour

Germany:

Mr Wolfgang VOGT  
Parliamentary State Secretary  
to the Federal Minister for  
Labour and Social Security

Greece:

Mr Evangelos YIANNOPOULOS  
Minister for Labour

France:

Mr Michel DELEBARRE  
Minister for Labour, Employment  
and Vocational Training

Ireland:

Mr Ruairi QUINN  
Minister for Labour  
Mr George BIRMINGHAM  
Minister of State at the  
Department of Labour and at  
the Department of Education  
Mr Barry DESMOND  
Minister for Health and for  
Social Welfare

Italy:

Mr Gianni DE MICHELIS  
Minister for Labour

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER  
Minister for Labour

Netherlands:

Mr J. de KONING  
Minister for Employment and  
Social Security

United Kingdom:

Mr Tom KING  
Secretary of State,  
Ministry of Employment  
Mr John PATTEN  
Minister at the Department of  
Health

Commission:

M. Ivor RICHARD  
Member

EXCHANGE OF YOUNG WORKERS

The Council adopted the Decision establishing a 3rd joint programme to encourage the exchange of young workers within the Community.

This Decision involves the organization of training periods of long or short duration for young workers, in a Member State other than the Member State in which they reside, aimed at:

- developing their vocational knowledge and enriching their practical experience,
- promoting their awareness of the problems of the working world,
- bringing them into contact with the working environment of the host country,
- improving their knowledge of living conditions and social relations in the host country, and
- promoting adequate information on the Community's objectives and how it functions.

Young workers who are nationals of a Member State will be eligible for exchanges if they are between 18 and 28 years of age and are employed or are available on the labour market in accordance with national legislation and practice, and have received basic vocational training or have practical working experience.

To facilitate the development of exchanges, the Commission may, within the limits of the appropriations entered in the budget of the Communities, grant aid comprising:

- a contribution, not exceeding 75% of the expense incurred, towards the cost of the (outward and return) journey between the place of residence and the place of training, the amount of which may vary depending on the distance,
- a flat-rate weekly contribution per trainee or, exceptionally, in order to promote exchanges, a subsidy for each exchange project.

Supplementary aid per trainee and per week of language training may be granted.

This Decision will apply from 1 January 1985.

#### PROMOTION OF POSITIVE ACTION FOR WOMEN

The Council adopted the recommendations in Annex I.

#### PROTECTION OF WORKERS - NOISE

The Council discussed the draft Directive on the protection of workers from noise.

The Council concentrated its discussion on the major outstanding problems, in particular the limit value to be specified, the role of audiometry as a means of prevention, and the degree of further improvement to be made to the protection introduced by the Directive.

At the close of discussions, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue its work on this proposal with a view to it being adopted at the June Council session.

ACTION TO COMBAT LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT

The Council reached general agreement on a Resolution on action against long-term unemployment.

The unrevised text of this Resolution is in Annex II.

COMMUNITY ACTION TO COMBAT POVERTY

The Community reached general agreement on a Decision on specific action to combat poverty.

This Decision allows the Community to implement an anti-poverty programme in order to combat poverty more effectively and carry out positive measures to help the underprivileged and identify the best means of attacking the causes of poverty and alleviating its effects in the Community. To this end, the Commission may promote or provide financial assistance for various types of action-research measures:

- designed to test and develop new methods of helping persons beset by or threatened with poverty in the Community ;
- drawn up and carried out as far as possible with the participation of the persons concerned ; and

- of particular interest to the Community in that they are addressed to problems common to several Member States ;

promote or provide financial assistance for the dissemination and exchange of knowledge, the co-ordination and assessment of anti-poverty measures, and the transfer of innovative approaches between Member States ;

promote or provide financial assistance for collection and dissemination on a regular basis of comparable data on poverty in the Community.

The programme will be for a four year period and the total amount estimated necessary for its implementation is 25 MECU.

Financial support may be granted, in the framework of the appropriations entered annually for this purpose in the general budget of the European Communities, for:

- action-research projects, up to 50% of actual expenditure within the limits of assistance requested and approved. However, in exceptional cases which will often include assistance to less favoured areas, this limit may be raised to 55%.
- other types of activity, if such activities are of exceptional interest for all or part of the Community, in excess of 50% of actual expenditure within the limits of assistance requested and approved.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to finalize the texts of this Decision to enable them to be favourably adopted as soon as possible.

PROCEDURES FOR INFORMING AND CONSULTING THE EMPLOYEES OF UNDERTAKINGS WITH COMPLEX STRUCTURES, IN PARTICULAR TRANSNATIONAL UNDERTAKINGS

The Council took up its discussion of the proposal for a Directive on procedures for informing and consulting the employees of undertakings with complex structures, in particular transnational undertakings, on the basis of work done by the ad hoc Working Party set up by the Presidency. The Council identified the questions on which it should concentrate further examination and, in particular, the new approach emerging from that work, and instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue its work in the light of the Council's discussion.

STATISTICAL MECHANISM TO ESTABLISH THE ORDER OF PRIORITY TO  
APPLIED WHEN GRANTING EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND ASSISTANCE TO REGIONS

The Council had an initial discussion on a Commission communication on a statistical mechanism to establish the order of priority to be applied when granting European Social Fund Assistance to regions. The Council invited the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue its examination.

EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN OF MIGRANT WORKERS

The Italian delegation made a statement on the education of the children of migrant workers in which it asked the Commission to submit proposals.

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Under other business the Council heard a statement from its President on progress made on the draft recommendation on social security protection for voluntary development workers.





MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Other social decision

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Regulation on the organization of a labour force sample survey in the Spring of 1985.

E.F.T.A.

The Council adopted the common position on draft Decisions N° 2/84 of the EEC/Switzerland EEC-Austria Joint Committees - Community transit - amending the Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Swiss Confederation/Republic of Austria on the application of the rules on Community transit.

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PROMOTION OF POSITIVE ACTION FOR WOMEN

THE COUNCIL HEREBY RECOMMENDS MEMBER STATES

- 1) To adopt a positive action policy designed to eliminate existing inequalities affecting women in working life and to promote a better balance between the sexes in employment, comprising appropriate general and specific measures, within the framework of national policies and practices, while fully respecting the spheres of competence of the two sides of industry, in order:
  - (a) to eliminate or counteract the prejudicial effects on women in employment or seeking employment which arise from existing attitudes, behaviour and structures based on the idea of a traditional division of roles in society between men and women;
  - (b) to encourage the participation of women in various occupations in those sectors of working life where they are at present under-represented, particularly in the sectors of the future, and at higher levels of responsibility in order to achieve better use of all human resources;
- 2) To establish a framework containing appropriate provisions designed to promote and facilitate the introduction and extension of such measures.
- 3) To take, continue or promote positive action measures in the public and private sectors.

4) To take steps to ensure that positive action includes as far as possible actions having a bearing on the following aspects:

- informing and increasing the awareness of both the general public and the working world of the need to promote equality of opportunity for working women;
- respect for the dignity of women at the workplace;
- qualitative and quantitative studies and analyses of the position of women on the labour market;
- diversification of vocational choice, and more relevant vocational skills, particularly through appropriate vocational training, including the implementation of supporting measures and suitable teaching methods;
- measures necessary to ensure that placement, guidance and counselling services have sufficient skilled personnel to provide a service based on the necessary expertise in the special problems of unemployed women;
- encouraging women candidates and the recruitment and promotion of women in sectors and professions and at levels where they are under-represented, particularly as regards positions of responsibility;
- adapting working conditions; adjusting the organization of work and working time;
- encouraging supporting measures such as those designed to foster greater sharing of occupational and social responsibilities;
- active participation by women in decision-making bodies, including those representing workers, employers and the self-employed.

- 5) to ensure that the actions and measures described in points 1 to 4 are made known to the public and to the working world, especially to potential beneficiaries, by all appropriate means and as extensively as possible;
- 6) to enable national equal opportunities committees and organizations to make a significant contribution to the promotion of such measures, which presupposes that these committees and organizations are provided with appropriate means of action;
- 7) to encourage both sides of industry wherever possible to promote positive action within their own organizations and at the work place, for example by suggesting guidelines, principles, codes of good conduct or good practice or any other appropriate formula for the implementation of such action.
- 8) to make efforts also in the public sector to promote equal opportunities which might serve as an example, particularly in those fields where new information technologies are being used or developed;
- 9) to make appropriate arrangements to gather information on measures taken by public and private bodies, and to follow up and evaluate such measures;

and to this end REQUESTS the Commission:

- 1) to promote and organize in liaison with the Member States the systematic exchange and assessment of information and experience on positive action within the Community;
- 2) to submit a report to the Council, within three years of the adoption of this Recommendation, on progress achieved in its implementation, on the basis of information supplied to it by Member States.



ACTION TO COMBAT LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENTGeneral Guidelines

The Council is seriously concerned about the problem of long-term unemployment. It recognizes that it cannot be resolved without a general policy designed to achieve economic recovery and employment growth.

At the same time, it considers that an effective Community policy to combat unemployment must employ specific measures to take account of the serious problem of long-term unemployment. This requires both individual and joint action by governments on both sides of industry at local, regional and national levels, which should be supported at Community level.

The specific measures to be adopted should seek, in the case of long-term unemployment, to increase the efficiency of existing social and employment policies by:

- improving the dissemination and comparability of information and analysis regarding long-term unemployment;
- making greater efforts to create new jobs and to increase flexibility on the labour market;
- considering the possibilities and the problems of adaptation and adjustment of working time and patterns;
- reinforcing initial and ongoing training systems and programmes so as to permit workers, and especially the long-term unemployed, to adapt and further develop their skills;

- improving the organization of the employment and social-security services so that they can better effect required policy responses and so prevent the development of long-term unemployment;
- providing adequate support for those who remain unemployed for long periods.

#### National measures

To deal with the problem, Member States are requested, in the framework of their own policies and practices and in the light of the responsibilities and autonomy of both sides of industry, to take the following steps:

- undertake and/or pursue co-ordinated analyses designed to provide comprehensive data on long-term unemployment in order to gain an increased awareness of the characteristics of the situation of the long-term unemployed;
- in the case of redundancy help to ensure, in co-operation with employment services and both sides of industry, that workers threatened with unemployment are informed in good time and that appropriate measures (in particular, counselling, training) are expeditiously made available to them in order to allow them to become qualified for other activities or, where appropriate, to choose early retirement;
- ensure that the various services concerned, including employment services, are so structured, organized and equipped that they can identify as rapidly as possible and follow-up those who are likely to become long-term unemployed. These services should also offer them the necessary personal assistance in good time, in particular in the form of in-depth guidance or training;



- identify persons who have become long-term unemployed so that suitable measures - including continuing guidance, training and specific work programmes or measures - may be taken;
- review the functioning of labour markets, notably the application of certain regulations, and, if necessary, existing practices for recruiting, selecting and laying off workers which may aggravate long-term unemployment;
- overcome possible obstacles to the introduction of new forms of adjustment of working hours which could help the long-term unemployed to find employment; taking into account the fact that a reorganization and a reduction of working hours can only have positive employment effects if the competitive position of firms is not impaired, if there is sufficient flexibility in the labour market to prevent bottlenecks, and if appropriate account is taken of specific and sectoral characteristics, notably the size of the firms;
- ensure that specific work programmes or measures to help unemployed persons, individually or in groups, including co-operatives, are prepared, assessed and improved, in conjunction with the various parties concerned. The scale of such programmes or measures should reflect the scale of the long-term unemployment problem at local and regional levels. Their structure and content should also be determined by local needs but should, where appropriate, incorporate an element linked with mainstream education and training provision;
- where it is not already the case, review the rules for payment of social security and/or unemployment benefits with a view to permitting unemployed people to undertake, without losing their entitlement to benefits, certain voluntary activities on a temporary basis, provided that this does not affect the normal operation of the labour market;

- encourage and assist unemployed persons wishing to set up their own enterprises, for example by providing for continued income support or equivalent payments in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Resolution of 7 June 1984 on the contribution of local employment initiatives to combating unemployment;
  
- encourage both sides of industry to:
  - (a) promote the recruitment of the long-term unemployed including through the use of government incentive schemes;
  - (b) support actively, wherever possible, voluntary and community job-creation efforts by, for example, seconding staff, allowing use of vacant premises or assisting with product identification and development;
  
- seek to avoid the long-term unemployed becoming discouraged and isolated by strengthening possibilities for their re-integration into the employment market by providing equal opportunities for access through public or private initiatives to activities of a professional or non-professional kind, which offer both social contact and vocational help and guidance;
  
- more generally, encourage greater awareness of the activities and schemes open to the long-term unemployed through various means, including the media, where appropriate.

#### Action at Community level

Taking into account the role played by the Community financial instruments and existing Community action programmes in combating long-term unemployment, the Commission is requested to undertake the following supplementary action and, where appropriate, present proposals to that effect to the Council:

- in collaboration with the Member States, obtain a better understanding of the nature and scale of long-term unemployment,

- (a) by improving the collection of adequate statistics on an agreed Community basis;
  - (b) by ensuring that the Commission has the necessary information so that long-term unemployment can be explicitly taken into account as a criterion for allocating financial support, where it is foreseen, notably from the European Social Fund;
- encourage and support Member States' policy efforts, co-operate with both sides of industry in the development of their actions and provide, in accordance with the rules governing it, appropriate aid from the European Social Fund to combat long-term unemployment;
- (a) with particular regard to the organization of the employment and related services as well as of specific work programmes or measures;
  - (b) with particular emphasis on actions to assist the recruitment and social support of the long-term unemployed.
- consider the possibility of developing positive measures aimed at giving, for example, training, retraining or work experience after a certain period of unemployment ;
- undertake further research with the assistance of MISEP into those measures and practices, whether taken by Governments or the two sides of industry, which are successful in combating long-term unemployment, with a view to extending their use to other areas of the Community.

The Council notes the Commission's intention to initiate a broad policy appraisal at Community level in order to develop a more incisive medium-term employment and social policy which is better suited to addressing the problem of long-term unemployment. Particular issues to be studied in this context will be job creation and labour market flexibility, possibilities for improving competitiveness of enterprises so as to provide more jobs, social support schemes, retirement, education and training and future patterns of life and work.

The Commission is requested to inform the Council every two years of progress made in the implementation of these actions.

Community financing for the actions set out in this section will be decided on in the framework of the budgetary procedure and in accordance with the legal commitments entered or to be entered into by the Council.

Bruxelles, le 12 decembre 1984  
NOTE BIO (84) 481 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE

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Preparation du Conseil Social (13.12.84) (Robinson)

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Il y aura deux series de points a l'ordre du jour du Conseil :

En premier lieu les points qui devraient etre adoptes, et ensuite les sujets qui feront l'objet de discussions.

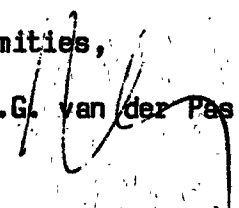
Parmi la premiere serie (les points a adopter), se trouvent :

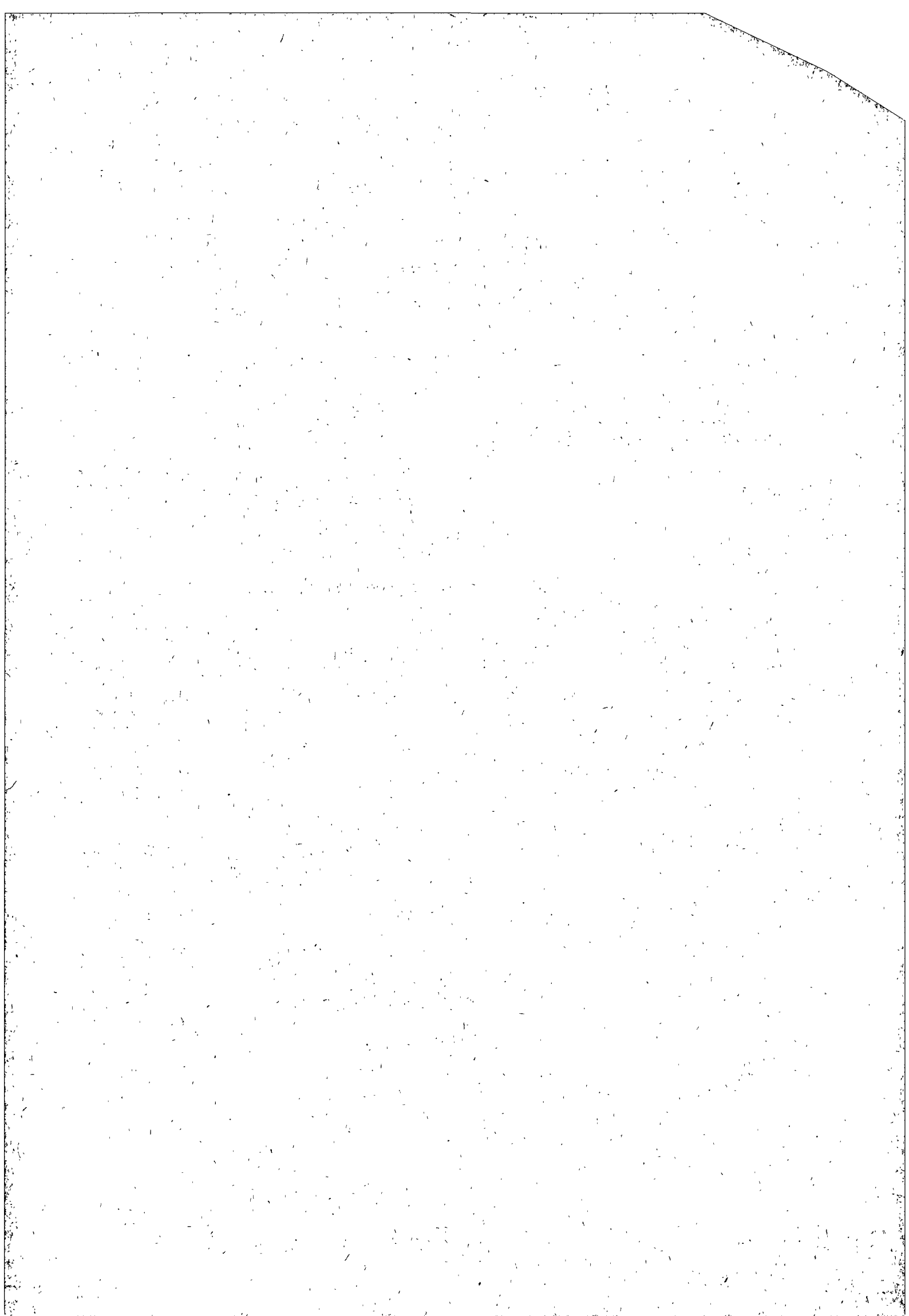
- une decision sur le troisieme programme communautaire concernant les echanges de jeunes travailleurs;
- une recommandation sur les actions positives en faveur des femmes (P-31, avril 1984);
- un reglement du Conseil sur l'organisation d'une enquete par sondage sur les forces de travail au printemps 1985;
- decision sur une deuxieme action communautaire pour combattre la pauvrete (P-53, juillet 1984);
- resolution pour combattre le chomage de longue duree (P-71, septembre 1984).

Dans la deuxieme serie on devrait discuter des points suivants :

- la proposition de Directive du Conseil sur la protection des travailleurs contre le bruit (P-63 : proposition modifiee, juillet 1984);
- etat des travaux sur la Directive dite "Vredeling";
- le mecanisme statistique afin d'identifier les priorites regionales pour ce qui concerne le Fonds Social (P-54, juillet 1984).

amities,

  
N.G. van der Pas COMEUR 13.20///



Bruxelles, le 14 decembre 1984

NOTE BID (84) 481 (suite 1 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE

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Conseil Social (13.12.84) (Robinson)  
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Le Conseil Social a debute le 13 a 10.00 pour se  
terminer juste avant 20.00.

La reunion etait presidee par M. Ruairi Quinn, ministre  
irlandais du Travail et M. Ivor Richard, Commissaire  
responsable des Affaires Sociales, y participait egalement.

Au cours de la session du matin les ministres ont assez  
rapidement adopte la decision portant sur LA CREATION D'UN  
TROISIEME PROGRAMME COMMUN CONCERNANT LES ECHANGES DE JEUNES  
TRAVAILLEURS DANS LA COMMUNAUTE, et ensuite une RECOMMANDATION  
SUR LA PROMOTION DES ACTIONS POSITIVES EN FAVEUR DES FEMMES -  
recommandation qui a ete tres chaleureusement appuyee par  
plusieurs delegations nationales. Un tour de table a suivi sur  
l'etat des travaux au sujet de la proposition de Directive  
"BRUIT". On pense que cette proposition pourrait etre mure pour  
l'adoption par le prochain Conseil Social que M. Quinn a  
annonce pour le 13 juin 1985.

Cependant les discussions se sont ralenties quand les  
delegations ont aborde les deux points suivants de l'ordre du  
jour, a savoir : le projet de RESOLUTION SUR LA LUTTE CONTRE LE  
CHOMAGE DE LONGUE DUREE et un DEUXIEME PROGRAMME COMMUNAUTAIRE  
DE LA LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETE.

Les deux pierres d'achoppement etaient respectivement, dans  
le cas du CHOMAGE DE LONGUE DUREE, le role que pourrait y jouer  
LA REDUCTION ET LA REORGANISATION DU TEMPS DE TRAVAIL et en ce  
qui concerne le PROGRAMME PAUVRETE, le montant du volet  
financier qu'on allait y consacrer. Ce n'est qu'apres un long  
dejeuner en tete a tete, suivi de discussions qui se sont  
finalement terminees en debut de soiree que les ministres ont  
finalement adopte la RESOLUTION SUR LE CHOMAGE DE LONGUE DUREE  
et ont decide le PROGRAMME PAUVRETE. Ce dernier portera sur 4  
annees, et les quelque trente projets pilotes qu'il devrait  
financer seront passes en revue apres trois ans ; le volet  
financier est fixe a 25 millions d'unites de compte etales sur  
4 ans.

Le Conseil s'est tourne ensuite vers la DIRECTIVE VREDELING,  
proposition sur laquelle un rapport, presente par la presidence  
irlandaise et redige par le Groupe ad hoc qu'elle avait  
cree a cette fin, fut discute par les ministres.

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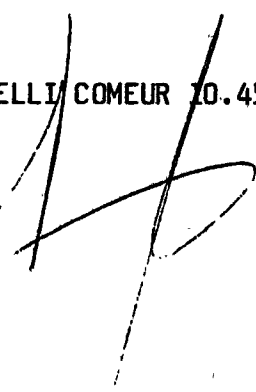
Ce rapport qui recommande une nouvelle approche dans ce domaine, a été chaleureusement accueilli par toutes les delegations. Celles-ci s'étant mises d'accord de donner leur reactions par écrit au rapport pour le 15 janvier 1985. Le ministre italien, qui presidera les travaux du Conseil Social a partir du 1er janvier, s'est engagé a continuer les travaux entames par ce rapport l'année prochaine.

Le dernier point discute par le Conseil était LE MECANISME STATISTIQUE DU FONDS SOCIAL, mecanisme qui devrait permettre de definir les regions prioritaires a l'octroi du concours de ce fonds. Il y a eu un large debat a ce sujet qui, pour l'instant, n'a pas abouti.

A noter, enfin, que le point ENQUETE PAR SONDAGE DES FORCES DE TRAVAIL DANS LA COMMUNAUTE a été retire de l'ordre du jour.

Amities,

M. SANTARELLI/COMEUR 10.45





Number, place and date of meeting	Subject	President	Commission	Main items of business
973rd meeting Brussels 10 December	Economic and financial affairs	Mr Dukes	Mr Tugendhat Mr Haferkamp Mr Andriessen	Financing of agricultural structures policy <sup>3</sup> Export credits (sectoral agreement on aircraft) <sup>4</sup> Strengthening of EMS <sup>5</sup> Medium-term financial assistance <sup>5</sup> Annual report 1985 <sup>5</sup> Tax allowances for travellers, small consignments and fuel Direct non-life insurance Undertakings for collective investment in transferable securities Tourist assistance <sup>6</sup>
974th Brussels 10 and 11 December	Agriculture	Mr Deasy	Mr Dalsager	Structures Impact of EMS on common agricultural policy Wine Sparkling wines <sup>3</sup> Addition of sucrose in aqueous solution Beef and veal Milk <sup>3</sup> Veterinary measures
975th Brussels 11 and 12 December	Transport	Mr Mitchell	Mr Andriessen Mr Contogeorgis	Weights and dimensions <sup>7</sup> Sea transport Unfair practices in shipping <sup>7</sup> Social legislation and introduction of recording equipment in road transport <sup>7</sup> Inland transport <sup>7</sup> Negotiations with Austria Road vehicle tax measures taken by Switzerland <sup>7</sup> Air transport
976th	Cancelled			
977th Brussels 13 December	Labour and social affairs	Mr Quinn	Mr Richard	Exchange of young workers <sup>8</sup> Promotion of positive action for women <sup>8</sup> Protection of workers — noise Action to combat long-term unemployment Community action to combat poverty <sup>8</sup>

