



COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT



PRESS RELEASE

10710 e/85 (Presse 182)

1047th Council meeting

- Labour and Social Affairs -

Brussels, 5 December 1985

President: Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER

Minister for Labour
of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

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
Mr Daniel COENS	Minister for Education
Mr André DAMSEAUX	Minister for Education

Denmark:

Mrs Grethe FENGER MØLLER	Minister for Labour
Mr Bertel HAARDER	Minister for Education

Germany:

Mrs Dorothee WILMS	Federal Minister for Education and Science
Mr Wolfgang VOGT	Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Labour and Social Security

Greece:

Mr Evangelos YANNOPOULOS	Minister for Labour
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France:

Mr Claude MARTIN	Deputy Permanent Representative
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Ireland:

Mrs Gemma HUSSEY	Minister for Education
Mr Ruairi QUINN	Minister for Labour

Italy:

Mr Gianni DE MICHELIS	Minister for Labour and Social Security
Mrs Franca FALUCCI	Minister for Education

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER
Mr Fernand BODEN

Minister for Labour
Minister for Education and Youth

Netherlands:

Mr J. DE KONING
Mr W.J. DEETMAN

Minister for Employment and
Social Security
Minister for Education and Sciences

United Kingdom:

Mr Kenneth CLARKE
Mr George WALDEN

Paymaster General,
Department of Employment
Parliamentary Under-Secretary
of State,
Department of Education and Science

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Commission:

Mr Alois PFEIFFER
Mr Peter SUTHERLAND

Member
Member

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Present as observers:

Spain:

Mr José J. ALMUNIA AMANN
Mr Juan ROJO

Minister for Labour and
Social Security
State Secretary for Universities
and Research

Portugal:

Mr Luis MIRA AMARAL

Minister for Labour and
Social Security

PROPOSAL FOR A DIRECTIVE ON NOISE

The Council reached agreement on a proposal to give workers increased protection against one of the most widespread and major risks in industry.

The Directive's provisions will include:

- reduction of the risks resulting from workers' exposure to noise to the lowest level reasonably practicable;
- where exposure exceeds 90 dB(A), introduction of a programme of measures to reduce it and, if this is not possible, use of ear protectors, which must, in addition, be made available to workers as from 85 dB(A);
- checks on workers' hearing to diagnose any hearing impairment by noise;
- application of the principle of reducing risk to the lowest possible level in the design, building and construction of new plant;
- consultation of workers' representatives.

The text of the Directive will be adopted formally after legal and linguistic finalization.

PROPOSAL FOR A DECISION ON THE COMETT PROGRAMME

The Council came to a political agreement, with a reservation from one delegation on one particular point, on the Commission proposal to increase, within the Community, co-operation between higher education and industry on technological training.

The COMETT programme, which is an important addition to the Community's research and development programmes, will last for four years: after a preparatory phase (1986), it will enter an operational phase (1987-1989).

It is estimated that an appropriation of 65 MECU will be needed for the four-year period; this amount will be divided among the different sections of the programme using a distribution scale.

A Committee of representatives from the Member States will assist the Commission with implementation of the programme.

The objectives of the COMETT programme include the following

- to promote a European dimension in co-operation between universities and industry in training related to innovation and the development and application of new technologies;
- to develop the level of training in response to technological and social change;
- to improve the opportunities for training at local, regional and national level.

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to finalize the text of the decision so that it could be adopted formally as an "A" item.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

Adaptation of certain rules in view of the accession of Spain and Portugal

Without prejudice to the Opinion of the European Parliament, the Council took a favourable view of proposals for amending the Decision of 17 October 1983 on the tasks of the European Social Fund and Regulation No 2950/83 on the implementation of that Decision in order to make the adjustments necessary to enable Spain and Portugal to qualify, as planned, for Fund assistance from their accession.

Accordingly, the whole of Portugal and a number of Spanish regions (Andalucia, Canarias, Castilla-Leon, Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura, Galicia, Murcia and the towns of Ceuta and Melilla) would be included in the list of Community regions which are particularly disadvantaged economically and socially and which qualify for an increased rate of assistance and accelerated depreciation of training centres. At the same time, the percentage of Fund appropriations earmarked for operations to promote employment in top priority regions throughout the Community would be increased from 40% to 44,5% for the next three years. However, from 1987 onwards the Council may reconsider these arrangements on the basis of a Commission report, accompanied by proposals where appropriate.

Extension of the Fund's activities to the self-employed

The Council also took a favourable view of a proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation No 2950/83 on the implementation of the Decision on the tasks of the European Social Fund, the aim of which is to extend to the creation of jobs for the self-employed (except for professional people) the assistance for job-seekers and the long-term unemployed which is currently available solely for jobs for employed persons.

This measure, which is designed to increase the means available to the European Social Fund for reducing unemployment, should come into effect from 1986, on the basis of applications which, by way of exception, it will still be possible to make up until 31 January 1986.

As the Opinion of the European Parliament is expected in the next few days, the Council should be able to take a final decision on the draft Regulation before the end of the month.

POLICY PROPOSALS IN THE AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF YOUNG PEOPLE

The Council held an exchange of views on the Commission memorandum setting out policy proposals in the areas of employment, education and training of young people.

At the close of discussions, the Council requested the Commission to take account of the views which had been expressed when drawing up its future proposals.

PARENTAL LEAVE AND LEAVE FOR FAMILY REASONS

Following a detailed exchange of views, the President concluded that it had not been possible to reach agreement on this proposal for a Directive.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Education

The Council and the Ministers meeting within the Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, a Resolution extending for one year, until 31 December 1987, certain measures taken to improve the preparation of young people for work and to facilitate their transition from education to working life. Final reporting and dissemination of the results of the programme will be completed by 30 June 1988.

Euratom loans

Following the political agreement reached in the Economic and Finance Council on 18 November, the Council adopted a Decision - amending Decision 77/271/Euratom - increasing from 2 000 to 3 000 MECU the amount of Euratom loans which the Commission is empowered to contract for the purpose of contributing to the financing of nuclear power stations.

The Decision also stipulates that when the total value of the transactions effected reaches 2 800 million ECU, the Commission shall inform the Council, which, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission, shall decide on the fixing of a new amount as soon as possible.

Energy

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, a Directive on crude-oil savings through the use of substitute fuel components in petrol. See press release 10237/85 (Presse 167) of 11 November 1985, p. 5.

Customs union

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, Regulations opening, allocating and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas for

- 2'-tert-pentylanthraquinone falling within subheading ex 29.13 F of the Common Customs Tariff
- certain hand-made products
- certain hand-woven fabrics, pile and chenille falling within headings ex 50.09, ex 55.07, ex 55.09 and ex 58.04 of the Common Customs Tariff
- certain grades of ferro-chrome falling within subheading ex 73.02 E I of the Common Customs Tariff
- sweet clear-fleshed cherries, marinated in alcohol, falling within subheading ex 20.06 B I e) 2 bb) of the Common Customs Tariff, and
- boysenberries, preserved by freezing, not containing added sugar intended for any form of processing except for the manufacture of jam entirely from boysenberries, falling within subheading ex 08.10 D of the Common Customs Tariff.

The Council also adopted two amendments to Regulation (EEC) No 950/68 on the Common Customs Tariff to take account of enlargement.

Appointments

The Council appointed, on a proposal from the German Government, Mr Klaus SCHMITZ, Leiter der Abteilung Strukturpolitik beim DGB-Bundesvorstand, member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Dieter CREMER, who has resigned, for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 20 September 1986.

The Council also appointed, on a proposal from the Confédération française démocratique du travail, Mr Jacques DEZEURE, Secrétaire National of the Fédération Générale des Mines et de la Métallurgie CFDT, member of the ECSC Advisory Committee in place of Mr Jean-Marie SPAETH, who has resigned, for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 17 February 1987.

Lastly, the Council appointed:

- Mr Antoine DONCK full member of the Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers in place of Mr J. LABART for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 6 October 1987;
 - Mrs Anne Sylvie DELOUVRIER full member of the Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers in place of Mr P. PADOVANI for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 6 October 1987.
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Bruxelles, le 4 decembre 1985

NOTE BIO (85) 397 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE

Conseil Social du 5 decembre 1985 (P. van Enk)

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Points principaux a l'ordre du jour

1. Le programme COMETT pour le renforcement de la cooperation entre universites et entreprises dans le domaine de la promotion des nouvelles technologies (voir P-64) - programme qui devrait etre mis en vigueur le 1er janvier 1986. Le projet de decision contenant ce programme sera discute au cours d'une reunion conjointe avec le ministres de l'education qui se deroulera dans la matinee. Il semble que le dossier COMETT a de bonnes chances d'aboutir, bien que certaines delegations au sein du Conseil (France, RFA, Royaume-Uni) posent des problemes au niveau de la gestion du programme. En effet ces delegations souhaitent que les Etats membres soient representes dans un Comite d'experts qui rendrait des avis contraignants, tandis que la Commission, se preservant ses pouvoirs executifs, ne saurait accepter qu'un Comite consultatif. Ce probleme devra trouver sa solution au cours de la seance pleniere du Conseil.

2. La proposition de directive protegeant les travailleurs contre les risques du bruit, sera probablement adoptee maintenant qu'un nombre de problemes techniques restes sur a la table du Conseil depuis sa session precedente du 13 juin dernier semblent pouvoir etre resolus.

De mesures preventives sont prescrites si la valeur moyenne (pour une journee de 8 heures) du bruit depasse 85 decibels (information sur les risques, fournitures de protecteurs, droit a un controle de l'audition), si cette valeur depasse 90 decibels ces mesures sont renforcees (lutte technique contre le bruit, port des protecteurs). Apres quatre annees d'experience, la directive sera reexaminee en vue de reduire encore les risques, le texte precise encore les informations a fournir sur les equipements bruyants et met en evidence la lutte contre le bruit lors de la conception des installations et materiels.

Dans la Communaute, dix a quinze millions de travailleurs sont exposes a des niveaux moyens de bruit depassant 85 decibels et beneficieront donc des dispositions de la directive, pour six a huit millions d'entre eux, ce niveau depasse 90 decibels. Peu d'activites industrielles sont epargnees par le bruit, qui est particulierement present dans des secteurs traditionnels de l'industrie lourde, la construction mecanique, l'elaboration et la transformation des metaux, les filatures en sont quelques exemples.

A noter que le cout du mesurage du bruit, de la fourniture de protecteurs et de l'audiometrie est estime a 20 a 40 ECU par an pour chaque travailleur expose (a rapprocher d'un cout horaire moyen de la main d'oeuvre dans l'industrie de l'ordre de 10 a 12 ECU). D'autre part, une moindre exposition au bruit se repercute favorablement sur la perte d'audition : sans compter la reduction des couts humains et sociaux, l'economie peut etre appreciable sur l'indemnisation de la surdite.

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Autres points :

- Adaptation du Fonds brut en vue de l'adhésion de l'Espagne et du Portugal (P79).

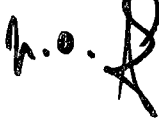
- Extension de l'action du Fonds aux indépendants

- Proposition de directive congés parentaux (P107 de 1983)

- Memorandum politique des jeunes (P42)

Amitiés,

H. PAEMEN-COMEUR ////



Bruxelles, le 6 decembre 1985

NOTE BIO(85) 397 (suite 1 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
C.C. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

CONSEIL SOCIAL DU 5 DECEMBRE 1985 (P. VAN ENK)

Le Conseil conjoint des Ministres du travail et des affaires sociales et ceux de l'education ont, apres de longues deliberations conclu un accord politique qui permettra de declencher en temps voulu, c'est-a-dire en 1986, le programme COMETT. Le compromis que le Conseil a pu degager prevoit que la duree du programme sera de 4 annees et son enveloppe financiere de 65 MECU (au lieu de 80 MECU proposes par la Commission).

Pour l'assistance dans la mise en oeuvre de COMETT, le Commissaire Sutherland a, devant l'insistance des delegations allemande et francaise, consenti a la creation d'un comite consultatif compose de representants des Etats membres, qui, contrairement aux preferences de la Commission, detient quelques competences de gestion. En effet, en cas de conflit entre la Commission et ce Comite consultatif, le Conseil a, selon l'accord conclu, le dernier mot sur des problemes tels que les orientations generales du programme et celles qui concernent le soutien financier fourni par la Commission et les questions liees a l'equilibre general de COMETT.

Le projet de decision comportant le programme sera finalise par le COREPER et fera l'objet d'un point A lors d'un prochain Conseil. A noter que la delegation allemande a emis une reserve pour ce qui est du montant du programme.

Le Conseil social a adopte les regles de base du Fonds Social en vue de l'adhesion de l'Espagne et du Portugal. En effet, le Portugal entier et neuf regions de l'Espagne sont ajoutees a la liste des regions beneficiant d'une super-priorite, ce qui entraine un accroissement de la part du Fonds - jusqu'ici fixe a 40% de ses moyens - destinee a ces regions de detresse. Le Conseil a decide que ce pourcentage sera de 44.5 % pour les trois ans a venir. La Commission fera un rapport sur le fonctionnement du Fonds ainsi adopte avant la mi-1987.

La proposition d'etendre le champ d'application du Fonds aux independants pour ce qui est des aides a la creation d'emplois a egalement ete adoptee. La delegation allemande s'est abstenue du vote.

Le Conseil a finalement approuve la directive contre les risques du bruit sur le lieu de travail. Cette directive entrera en vigueur en 1990, sauf en Grece et au Portugal qui ne l'appliqueront qu'a partir de 1991.

La proposition de directive sur les congés parentaux s'est heurtee a nouveau contre la reserve fondamentale de la delegation britannique qui considere que ce projet contribue aux problemes du marche de travail plutot que d'en resoudre. Le Commissaire Pfeiffer a neanmoins refuse de retirer la proposition et a annonce que la Commission poursuivra ses efforts de persuasion.

Amities,


H. V. PAEMEN