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Preparing for
enlargement

Employment & social affairs



European Commission





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Foreword

Odile Quintin

DIRECTOR-GENERAL
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Preparing for enlargement: our joint responsibility

Now that the enlargement process is well on its way, the aim of this special issue of the *European Social Dialogue* Newsletter is above all to provide information on how the social dialogue fits into this process, to present the European social partners' initiatives and the tools the Commission makes available to them. We hope this issue will become a reference document and prove useful to the various political, economic and social players concerned in their preparations for enlargement, a responsibility which surely lies with us all.

The prime responsibility clearly rests with the European Union which has placed the social dialogue at the heart of the European social model. The social dialogue has a key role in the Community acquis. It is to be found in many areas within Community jurisdiction so it is broadly-based. It has been built up gradually on a dual basis, legislative and institutional. Thanks to the recent advances in institutional terms, the social dialogue can now be a veritable force for social progress. With the entry into force of the new provisions of the 1993 Social Protocol and its incorporation into the Amsterdam Treaty, the social partners are now entitled to be consulted on Commission proposals in the social field and also to replace the traditional legislative channels by negotiation and the conclusion of framework agreements which could subsequently be converted into Community legislation.

In addition, the social partners can implement this legislation in the Member States by means of negotiations. In the context of enlargement, therefore, the social dialogue should not be understood purely as a component of the acquis, but as a means for bringing this acquis into practical effect.

And there is a huge onus here on the governments of the candidate countries. The inception of independent social dialogue between social partners depends primarily on the will of their governments: they need to lay the legislative and institutional groundwork for this social dialogue. They also need to ensure that social dialogue is launched at company level, through improved worker representation and also by promoting within companies diverse forms of democratic participation – such as information and consultation and financial participation – which also form part of our Community acquis.

The social partners of the applicant countries, in a national environment propitious to the development of their dialogue, will then be able to assume the responsibility for implementing the acquis at grass roots, in branches, regions and enterprises.

The European social partners have taken these challenges on board and stepped up their initiatives in anticipation of enlargement. This issue shows how they have targeted the various facets of this acquis, responding at different levels, both cross-industry and sectoral. They have undertaken a whole series of individual operations without, however, neglecting the lead role of joint projects in the wake of their decisive conference held in Warsaw on 18 and 19 March 1999. And the support for their counterparts' operations in the candidate countries is reinforced to good effect by their participation in Community initiatives and programmes.

The European Commission has set up means for assisting the parties concerned in preparing for enlargement through the financial resources and specific programmes described in detail in this special issue. I would draw attention to the new funding potential for social dialogue projects under the PHARE programme. A few candidate countries have already made use of this option in 2000, but it has not yet been exploited as it could be so we would encourage the governments of the applicant countries to incorporate social dialogue projects more systematically into their annual programmings. The social partners must also press for such projects and for involvement in both design and implementation. The Member States take part in the process as well through their active partnership in twinning under such programmes.

I would point out that the Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs also gives the social partners the option of funding their social dialogue promotion initiatives directly; this option was extended to all the thirteen candidate countries at the beginning of 2000. The activities listed in this issue show that the social partners, notably those of the candidate countries, are increasingly making use of these options.

The Commission will step up its backing for initiatives by governments and social partners in the enlargement process. A good example of such commitment was the conference on the social dimension of enlargement held in Prague on 11 and 12 May 2000. The various components of EU social policy (working conditions, social protection, employment, social dialogue) were presented not as a cost, but as a productive factor, a key factor in the future European Union. This approach is also to be found in the Social Policy Agenda to be adopted at the Nice Summit. We must press on along this same path and reflect in particular on the adjustments and progress we still have to make in the run-up to enlargement. But this demands – and can also be seen in the ways Community funds are used – commitment by all the parties concerned: preparing for enlargement is our joint responsibility.

Bearing that in mind, the social dialogue must surely be regarded as a driver, in that it forms an integral part of the Community acquis, and also as an integrating process encompassing all economic and social issues; it can reconcile interests which may sometimes differ and ensure that the various responsibilities can be exercised in working towards one and the same goal: making a success of enlargement.

It is up to us to provide ourselves with the wherewithal.



Odile Quintin





I. Enlargement, stage by stage

1. From the onset of the changes in Central and Eastern Europe to the Helsinki Summit

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs) entered a phase of social and economic transition. During the early 1990s it began to become clear that most, if not all, of these countries would seek membership of the European Union, which offered the prospect of increased potential for economic growth, and enhanced social and political stability.

In June 1993 the Copenhagen European Council adopted the following criteria for countries seeking to join the Union:

- the achievement of stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities;
- the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; and
- the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

In December 1995 the Madrid European Council emphasised the importance of strengthening the administrative structures of the candidate countries in the pre-accession context. The Commission was asked to forward its Opinions on the candidate countries' applications for membership and to prepare a composite paper on enlargement. The Commission did this in July 1997 as part of the Agenda 2000 package, noting that none of the candidate countries fully satisfied all the criteria for accession yet, and identifying, for each country, the areas where further progress was necessary to meet the obligations of membership. The Commission proposed opening negotiations with the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia.

In December 1997 the Luxembourg European Council supported the enhanced pre-accession strategy, centred on Accession Partnerships and increased pre-accession aid through the PHARE programme. It also decided to open negotiations with the five above mentioned candidate countries of Central and

Eastern Europe. These joined Cyprus, on which a decision in principle had already been taken, the six together being commonly described as the "old ins". The other candidate CEECs are Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia, now commonly described, along with Malta¹, as the "new ins". Turkey is also a candidate for membership, although it is in a different situation from the other candidates, being neither eligible for PHARE funding as the CEECs are, nor in negotiations.

In December 1999 the Helsinki European Council decided to accept the proposal made by the Commission in October 1999 that negotiations be opened with Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania and Slovakia in the course of 2000². Accession negotiations with all six of these countries were formally opened on 15 February 2000. The Helsinki Summit also officialised Turkey's application for accession.

Following on from these decisions, preparations for enlargement are taking place on two parallel tracks:

- the negotiations and preparations for negotiations;
- the strategy for providing concrete assistance to the candidate countries – especially the CEECs – in their preparations for accession (the "reinforced pre-accession strategy").

The profile of employment and social policy in the enlargement process has been raised considerably over the past two years in the European institutions. At the initiative of the German Presidency, Ministers from the candidate CEECs and Cyprus were invited to meetings in the margins of both the Social Affairs Council in March 1999 and the Health Council in June 1999. On both occasions the key importance of employment and social policy in enlargement was stressed by Ministers from both the EU and the applicant countries. The same message emerged from the social partners at their high-level conference held with the support of the European Commission in Warsaw in March 1999. The most recent confirmation was seen on 11 and 12 May 2000 in Prague, where the first big Commission conference on "Employment and Social Policy and Enlargement" took place.

1. In February 1999, the Commission updated its Opinion of 1993 on Malta's application for membership following its reactivation, recommending to the Council that the screening of Malta's legislation should begin as soon as possible with a view to starting negotiations at the end of 1999.

2. Certain conditions were attached with respect to Bulgaria (economy) and Romania (orphanages), which the Helsinki European Council considered to have been fulfilled.

2. From acquis screening to negotiations

Acquis screening: a first formal, technical exercise of screening the acquis has been completed for, on the one hand, the “old ins”, and on the other, the “new ins”. The Commission explained each component of the acquis to the candidates, and then, in bilateral session, each of them set out its own current legislation and practice in the relevant field, and its plans to bring that legislation and practice into line with Community requirements.

The screening for employment and social policy³ started on 28 September 1998. The objective was to achieve the maximum understanding of the acquis by the applicants, and to obtain information on the state of transposition and implementation/enforcement structures for a report to the Council. In 2000 the screenings are being updated to take account of recently-adopted acquis: for the “old ins” (now called “Luxembourg group”) the screening completed in 1999 covered the acquis in place at 1 March 1998, and for the “new ins” (now called “Helsinki group”) the screening completed in 1999 covered the acquis in place at 31 December 1998.

Negotiations: in early June 1999, the six “old ins” transmitted to the Commission their negotiating positions on employment and social policy. Once the final common positions had been

adopted by the Council, the negotiations on these subjects were formally opened on 30 September 1999. Thus the negotiations on social policy and employment with Cyprus have been provisionally closed – the first candidate country to reach this stage. The “provisional” closure of a chapter means that there is nothing left to discuss for the moment. This conclusion is based on commitments made by the candidate concerning transposition and implementation of the acquis. The “provisionally” closed chapters remain subject to further review as to whether those commitments are actually met and incorporation of the acquis in the country concerned is still monitored as in all the other candidate countries.

The six “old ins” have also submitted their negotiating positions on the free movement of persons. The Commission has studied them and prepared the draft common positions, which were adopted by the Council on 22 May 2000, so the question of the free movement of persons was opened under the Portuguese Presidency.

The “new ins” have yet to be asked by the Council to provide their position papers on social policy, employment and free movement of persons.

3. Reinforced pre-accession strategy

Accession Partnerships: the Accession Partnerships adopted by the Commission and the Council for each candidate CEEC, first in 1998 and again in 1999, set out key priorities for work in the short and medium term. In the 1999 Accession Partnerships, employment and social dialogue feature as short-term priorities for all the candidate CEECs. Other social policy areas, as in 1998, feature as medium term priorities⁴. PHARE support is being granted to deal with the short-term priorities in 2000. Accession partnerships have also been adopted for Malta and Cyprus. A partnership is being prepared for Turkey.

NPAAs: each candidate CEEC has adopted a National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA), which is being updated this year and sets out in detail what it intends to do in both legislative and operational terms to meet the priorities set out

in its Accession Partnership. The programme also serves as an investment framework for the PHARE support.

Regular Reports: their purpose is to measure the progress achieved by the candidate countries in taking on the acquis and their administrative ability to bring it into effect. Starting with the reports adopted in November 1998 ahead of the Vienna European Council, and in October 1999 ahead of the Helsinki European Council, the Commission has begun its assessment of each applicant’s state of readiness to take on the obligations of membership. These reports will lead, if appropriate, to a fresh revision of the Accession Partnership (which is the responsibility of the EU) and/or the NPAA (which is the responsibility of the candidate country). The Regular Reports 2000 will be adopted by the Commission this autumn.

3. The negotiations are broken down into different chapters covering specific topics (for example: social policy and employment (Chapter 13) and freedom of movement for persons (Chapter 2)).

4. With certain exceptions: for example, health and safety is identified as a short-term priority for Estonia and Slovakia.



II. Social dialogue, broad-based acquis with many facets

In the course of the negotiations with the new applicants for EU membership, the Commission attached great importance to promoting social dialogue structures in these countries and presented the social dialogue as a vital part of the Community acquis. It is broadly based (falling within many areas) and has many facets (built up on a dual basis, legislative and institutional).

Social dialogue is part of the **legal** acquis as the requirement to consult the social partners is to be found in numerous Community directives (as shown in the boxes below which list – but not exhaustively – specific topics of significance).

In the area of labour law and fundamental rights, for example, the directives on European works councils and worker information and consultation are directly aimed at promoting the social dialogue in undertakings and groups of undertakings.

In other fields, such as health and safety at work and equal opportunities, the social partners' role is not only included in many directives, it has also been extended over the years.

The representatives of management and labour have now become, therefore, the main guarantors for application of the principles the European Union adheres to in regard to its workers, such as health and safety, equal opportunities, the right to be consulted or even the right to access to employment.

The social dialogue has also gradually become a means for implementing these directives at national level. Many Community directives specify that they may be implemented in the Member States by means of legislation or agreements between the social partners; this option was confirmed on entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty⁵.

Social dialogue should also be regarded as an integral part of the **institutional** acquis; it has become a means for promoting the European social dimension.

The Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties have afforded considerable additional scope for action to the European social partners, enabling them not only to negotiate and conclude framework agreements, but also to request implementation through Community legislation.

This room for manoeuvre has brought progress in many areas, for example, equal opportunities, with the social partners' framework agreement on parental leave, and in the organisation and adaptation of working time, with the agreements on part-time work and fixed-term contracts implemented at Community level through Council directives; these moves have subsequently been reflected at sectoral level with agreements on working time in sea and rail transport and civil aviation.

Employment was brought into the Amsterdam Treaty as a "common objective", and it also incorporates the role expected of the social partners. This involvement of the social partners has gradually increased through their role in the employment strategy and also in the macroeconomic dialogue with the European Central Bank. The social partners will also have a part to play in the implementation of joint action on modernising social protection.

At Community level too, the social partners' membership of numerous cross-industry advisory committees, for example in the fields of health protection and safety at work and equal opportunities for men and women, and of the Standing Committee on Employment, also constitute key achievements. The social partners of the candidate countries must now prepare for taking up such positions.

5. Article 137(4) of the Treaty.

- in labour law

Not only does labour law feature directives with a "social dialogue" component, it is also an area where the social partners can play a very active part. Many directives refer to their role in assuring implementation of directives.

Worker information and consultation

Directive 94/45/EC on European works councils⁶ constitutes above all an important social dialogue tool with a view to enlargement and companies with economic activities in more than one country. It provides the social partners with the means for preparing for industrial change and contributing to negotiated management of change.

The innovative principle of the Directive that the social partners should take the lead through negotiations has proved to be the right approach. Only where no agreement is reached within a multinational undertaking do the subsidiary requirements laid down by national legislation apply.

More than 650 voluntary agreements between management and workers' representatives have been signed since the Directive was adopted in 1994. Accordingly, many works councils have already been set up, also in subsidiaries of EU companies in the candidate countries. The social partners themselves have made the Directive an essential part of the process of restructuring in European companies providing a valid response by European industry to the challenge of globalisation. The agreements already in place so far cover more than one third of undertakings and more than 40% of employees fall under the scope of the Directive.

Under Directive 98/59/EC on collective redundancies⁷, an employer who is contemplating collective redundancies is required to consult workers' representatives in good time with a view to reaching agreement to avoid collective redundancies or at least limit them. The Directive also requires the employer to notify the planned redundancies to the competent public authorities. In 1994 the Court of Justice's ruling⁸ in a case brought by the European Commission against the United Kingdom clarified the scope of the Directive (formerly 75/129/EEC). The United Kingdom affirmed that, by virtue of its national law, it could be dispensed from the obligation to provide for a specific mechanism for worker representation as required by the Directive. However, the Court of Justice concluded that Member States must take all appropriate measures to

ensure that workers are in a position to intervene through their representatives in the event of collective redundancies.

On the same tack, Community legislation on transfers of undertakings⁹ protects employees in the event of a change of employer, ensuring in particular that their rights are safeguarded. The Directive protects existing worker representation bodies and requires both former and new employers to consult and inform workers' representatives on the reason for the transfer, its consequences and the measures envisaged.

Over and above these Directives, which strengthen machinery for information and consultation in certain well-defined areas, the Commission adopted in November 1998 a proposal for a Directive in this field, aiming to promote a general framework for information and consultation for employees in undertakings with more than 50 employees in the European Union¹⁰. The main objectives of the proposed Directive are to: ensure in all Member States of the European Community the existence of a right to regular information and consultation for employees on economic and strategic developments in the undertaking and on the decisions which affect them, include the employment situation within the undertaking among the essential subjects of information and consultation, provide for risk anticipation, and promote ongoing consultation on measures designed to maintain employment and boost workers' employability. The proposal specifies that the Member States may authorise the social partners to define freely at any time and at any level (including establishment level) through negotiated agreement the procedures for implementing the employee information and consultation requirements.

Lastly, mention must be made of the proposal for a statute for a European company¹¹ intended to facilitate the establishment of undertakings within the Community through a new legal form. A proposal for a Directive¹² complementing this European statute specifically concerns employee involvement and sets forth the process to be followed as regards worker information and consultation and the participation rights of workers' representatives in the decision-making bodies of the European company.

Working time and flexible work organisation

The social partners have been especially active at different levels in relation

to working time and flexible work organisation. Firstly, at Community level, they have produced the main legal texts applicable in this area both at cross-industry level and in different industries (for example, transport). Four of the five framework agreements negotiated by the social partners in this field have already been converted into Community legislation¹³. The social partners have submitted a request to convert the fifth agreement (on civil aviation) into a new Directive. The cross-industry social partners have also opened negotiations on temporary agency work.

The Council Directive on working time¹⁴ allows the social partners much leeway as regards its implementation in the Member States. The representatives of management and labour are to adopt various rules by means of collective agreement, including rules on breaks and maximum weekly working time.

Anti-discriminatory practices and fundamental rights

By virtue of its new powers following entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty, the Commission recently adopted two proposals for Directives¹⁵ and an action programme¹⁶ based on Article 13 of the Treaty. The two Directives (the Directive on equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin has already been adopted) include provisions encouraging the Member States to take the necessary steps to promote social dialogue and attain via this means the objectives set as regards non-discrimination. They also advocate the conclusion of collective agreements, the preparation of codes of conduct and the exchange of experience and good practices.

Insolvency

Directive 80/987/EEC¹⁷ is designed to provide employees in the Community with a minimum level of protection in the event of their employer becoming insolvent. To this end it requires Member States to set up an institution guaranteeing employees whose employer has become insolvent the settlement of outstanding claims relating to pay for a given period. The Directive authorises Member States to limit the liability of guarantee institutions, but Member States must respect a Community minimum. This Directive is also important with a view to enlargement: the candidate countries are dealing with major restructuring and there is generally no

protection for workers in the event of their employer's insolvency. The Commission has been pressing the applicant countries to establish without delay guarantee funds satisfying the conditions set out in the Directive. Considering its importance, the social partners in the candidate countries should also become more active in this area.

Financial participation and fair wages

Council Recommendation 92/443/EEC on financial participation¹⁸ should constitute in the candidate countries, as already the case in many Member States, a supplementary form of partnership between employers and work-

ers which links wages to productivity gains.

Lastly, the Commission Opinion on an equitable wage¹⁹ could help to improve living standards and combat discrimination in the candidate countries in a field which clearly comes within national jurisdiction.

6. Council Directive 94/45/EC of 22 September 1994 on the establishment of a European works council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees.
7. Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies.
8. Case C-383/92 *Commission of the European Communities v United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, European Court Reports [1994] page I-2479.
9. Council Directive 98/50/EC of 29 June 1998 amending Directive 77/187/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of businesses.
10. Proposal for a Council Directive establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community (COM/1998/612 final).
11. Proposal for a Council Regulation on the statute for a European company (COM/1989/268 final).
12. Amended proposal for a Council Directive complementing the statute for a European company with regard to the involvement of employees in the European company (COM/1991/174 final).
13. Council Directive 97/81/EC of 15 December 1997 concerning the framework agreement on part-time work concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC; Council Directive 1999/63/EC of 21 June 1999 concerning the agreement on the organisation of working time of seafarers; Council Directive 1999/70/EC of 28 June 1999 concerning the framework agreement on fixed-term work; the sectoral agreement in the railway transport has led to an amendment of the general Directive concerning the organisation of working time (Directive 2000/34/EC, amending Directive 93/104/EC).
14. Council Directive 93/104/EC of 23 November 1993 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time.
15. Proposal for a Council Directive establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation (COM/1999/565 final) and proposal for a Council Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin (COM/1999/566 final).
16. Proposal for a Council Decision establishing a Community action programme to combat discrimination (2001-2006) (COM/1999/567 final).
17. Council Directive 80/987/EEC of 20 October 1980 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the protection of employees in the event of the insolvency of their employer.
18. Council Recommendation 92/443/EEC of 27 July 1992 concerning the promotion of participation by employed persons in profits and enterprise results (including equity participation).
19. COM/1993/388 final.

- in health and safety

The social partners are consulted widely on workers' health and safety. From company level to institutionalised advisory committee, their opinion is sought to ensure the best possible protection for workers. The workers' representatives, who are in direct contact with the workforce to be protected, are vital partners in the process of adopting and implementing legislation and they now play an essential part in lawmaking on health and safety. The Community acquis in the field of health and safety cannot, therefore, be transposed in the candidate countries without their involvement.

At company level, the European Union has recognised the crucial role of workers' representatives. Directive 89/391/EEC²⁰ is based on the following principle: to ensure improved protection in undertakings, workers and/or their representatives must be informed of the risks to their safety and the measures required to reduce or eliminate these risks. Within the meaning of the Directive, a worker's representative is any person elected, chosen or designated in accordance with national laws and/or practices, to represent workers where problems arise relating to the safety and health protection of workers. It specifies that the employer must

ensure that the planning and introduction of new technologies are the subject of consultation with the workers and/or their representatives as regards the consequences of the choice of equipment, the working conditions and the working environment for the safety and health of workers. Under Article 11 of the Directive, employers are required to consult workers and/or their representatives and allow them to take part in discussions on all questions relating to safety and health at work. This presupposes consultation, the right to make proposals and balanced participation in accordance with national laws and/or practices. Many Council directives²¹ refer to the consultation procedure laid down in Directive 89/391/EEC which assigns the worker consultation process a vital role in legislation on health and safety. Some of them provide for recourse to worker representation bodies to notify information to workers²², while others provide for consultation for workers and/or their representatives on sampling carried out in accordance with legislation²³.

At Member State level, the social partners also participate in consultation processes. They are consulted before the adoption of provisions to implement

directives; subsequently they check that the directives are applied and that they are involved in their application²⁴. Two Council directives include provisions enabling the social partners to be associated in allowing derogations from some of their provisions²⁵. To ensure effective application, many directives specify that the Member States must submit periodic reports to the Commission, incorporating the views of the social partners²⁶.

At Community level, the social partners belong to two bodies. They sit on the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work and on the Administrative Board of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work located in Bilbao. The Advisory Committee²⁷ is a standing body which assists the Commission in the preparation and implementation of activities in the fields of safety, hygiene and health protection at work. It facilitates cooperation between national authorities and trade unions and employers' organisations with the aim of encouraging their initiatives to exchange experiences and establish codes of practice. The Committee comprises two government representatives, two representatives of trade unions and two representatives of

employers' organisations for each Member State. The European Agency for Health and Safety at Work²⁸ aims to encourage improvements in the working environment as regards the protection

of the safety and health of workers and to provide the Community bodies, the Member States and those involved in the field with the technical, scientific and economic information of use in the

field of safety and health at work. The Agency's administrative board consists of 27 members, of whom six represent the employers' organisations and six represent the employees' organisations.

20. Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work.
 21. Article 9(2) of Directive 83/477/EEC as amended by Directive 98/24/EC; Article 7 of Directive 90/269/EEC; Article 8 of Directive 90/270/EEC; Article 13 of Directive 90/394/EEC; Article 12 of Directive 92/57/EEC; Article 8 of Directive 92/58/EEC; Article 9 of Directive 92/91/EEC; Article 9 of Directive 92/104/EEC; Article 11 of Directive 93/103/EC; Article 11 of Directive 98/24/EC.
 22. See table below, first box.
 23. See table below, second box.
 24. See table below, third box.
 25. See table below, fourth box.
 26. See table below, fifth box.
 27. Article 4 of Council Decision 74/325/EEC of 27 June 1974 on the setting up of an Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work.
 28. Article 8 of Council Regulation (EC) No 2062/94 of 18 July 1994 establishing a European Agency for Safety and Health at Work.

Examples of the social partners' involvement in health and safety

Information for workers and/or their representatives

For example: "(b) workers and/or any workers' representatives ... are informed as quickly as possible of abnormal exposures ..."

Council Directive 90/394/EEC of 28 June 1990 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens at work, Article 12(b)

... and also Article 11(1) and (2) (information on risks from exposure, explanations, information and consultation on excesses) of Directive 82/605/EEC; Article 4(3) (access to the documents which are the subject of notification), Article 14(2) (access to results and information on excesses) and Article 16 (access to registers) of Directive 83/477/EEC; Article 4(1)(a) and (b)

(information on risks and access to results) of Directive 86/188/EEC; Article 6(1) and (2) (information on handling methods) of Directive 90/269/EEC; Article 11(1) and (2) (information on health risks) of Directive 90/394/EEC; Article 9(1) and (2) (information and training on risks and precautions) and Article 10(5) and (6) (access to information) of Directive

90/679/EEC; Article 11(1) (information on safety measures to be taken) of Directive 92/57/EEC; Article 7(1) (information on safety measures to be taken) of Directive 92/91/EEC; Article 7(1) (information on safety measures to be taken) of Directive 92/104/EEC; Article 8(1) (information on hazardous chemical agents in the workplace and action to be taken) of Directive 98/24/EC.

Consultation of workers and/or their representatives on sampling

For example: on the amount of asbestos in the air: "2. Sampling shall be carried out after consulting the workers and/or their representatives

in undertakings or establishments."

Council Directive 83/477/EEC of 19 September 1983 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to asbestos at work, Article 7(2)

Similar provisions: Article 3(4) of Directive 82/605/EEC; Article 3(4) of Directive 86/188/EEC.

Consultation of the social partners on the implementation of directives

For example: "Member States shall see to it that workers' and employers' organisations are consulted before the provisions for the implementation of the measures referred to in this Directive are adopted, and that where

workers' representatives exist in the undertakings or establishments they can check that such provisions are applied or can be involved in their application."

Council Directive 86/188/EEC of 12 May 1986 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to noise at work, Article 11

Similar provisions: Article 6 of Directive 80/1107/EEC; Article 4(3) of Directive 89/655/EEC as amended by Directive 95/63/EC; Article 6(3) of Directive 89/656/EEC; Article 6(3) of Directive 92/58/EEC.

Consultation of the social partners to allow for derogation from a directive

For example: "The Member States may, after consulting both management and the workforce, allow derogations from the provisions of the first subparagraph ..."

Council Directive 92/57/EEC of 24 June 1992 on the implementation of minimum safety and health requirements at temporary or mobile

construction sites, second subparagraph of Article 3(2)

... and also Article 6(2) of Directive 92/58/EEC.

Report on implementation of a directive: involvement of social partners

The following standard article is found in many directives: "Member States shall report to the Commission every [...] years on the practical implementation of the provisions of this

Directive, indicating the points of view of employers and workers."

Article 18(3) of Directive 89/391/EEC; Article 10(3) of Directive 89/655/EEC;

Article 10(3) of Directive 89/656/EEC; Article 9(3) of Directive 90/269/EEC; Article 11(3) of Directive 90/270/EEC; Article 9(3) of Directive 92/29/EEC; Article 14(4) of Directive 92/57/EEC;

Article 11(4) of Directive 92/58/EEC; Article 14(4) of Directive 92/85/EEC; Article 13(4) of Directive 92/104/EEC; Article 13(3) of Directive 93/103/EC; Article 15 of Directive 98/24/EC.

- in equal opportunities

Action by the social partners in this area is required to carry through the legislation adopted at Community level. They keep workers informed, advise the Commission, monitor implementation of legislation and contribute to its preparation. The social partners' role is accordingly essential and they need to review their responsibilities in this field with a view to enlargement.

At European level, social partners have a part to play in the adoption of Community texts on equal opportunities. They thus concluded a framework agreement on parental leave, the first of its kind at cross-industry level, which was subsequently converted on 6 June 1996, at their request, into a Community Directive (96/34/EC)²⁹. The Directive contains minimum rules which can later be improved or spelt out in more detail at national level in accordance with the individual situation of each Member State.

They also assist the Commission in preparing and implementing Community measures to promote equal opportunities, as laid down in Commission Decision 95/420/EC³⁰ relating to the setting up of an Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The Committee's members include five representatives of employers' organisations and five representatives of employees' organisations. The reasons for setting it up are set forth in the following principles listed in its recitals: "Whereas the application in practice of the principle of equal treatment for women and men must be encouraged by

improved cooperation and exchanges of views and experience between those bodies which have special responsibility in the Member States for promoting equality of opportunity, the social partners and the Commission."

"Whereas the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the Community's activities to promote equal opportunities require close cooperation ... with the social partners."

The social partners are also called on to take part in Community programmes promoting equal opportunities as mentioned in Council Decision 95/593/EC³¹.

Beyond this involvement at Community level, the social partners also have a role to perform in ensuring **in each Member State** proper application of equal opportunities at grass roots in the implementation of the relevant Community directives.

The social partners were required to make the appropriate amendments to collective agreements over twenty-five years ago in Directive 76/207/EEC³² and on 7 June 2000 the Commission adopted a proposal to amend this Directive³³ which greatly strengthens the social partners' role in implementing equal opportunities. The proposal clearly defines sexual harassment as a form of discrimination on grounds of sex and assigns the Member States major obligations as regards social dialogue:

1) they are to take adequate measures to promote social dialogue between the two sides of industry with a view

to fostering equal treatment, including through the monitoring of workplace practices, collective agreements, codes of conduct, research or exchange of experiences and good practices;

2) the Member States are to encourage the two sides of industry to conclude agreements laying down anti-discrimination rules.

It is clear that the social partners have a vital role to play in monitoring practices at the workplace through the adoption of codes of conduct. The code of conduct on the application of equal pay for men and women for work of equal value (1994) was drawn up in close cooperation with the social partners. The aim of this code is to give them practical advice to ensure application of the principle of equality in all pay components for men and women performing work of equal value. It is designed in particular to eliminate discrimination on grounds of sex where pay structures are based on job classification and evaluation systems.

Mention must also be made of Directive 92/85/EEC³⁴, of importance to both health and safety and equal opportunities, whereby working pregnant women, women who have recently given birth and women who are breastfeeding and/or their representatives are to be informed of the results of the assessment of any activity liable to involve a risk to health and safety or any possible effect on pregnancy or breastfeeding.

29. Council Directive 96/34/EC of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC.

30. Commission Decision 95/420/EC of 19 July 1995 amending Decision 82/43/EEC relating to the setting up of an Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

31. Council Decision 95/593/EC of 22 December 1995 on a medium-term Community action programme on equal opportunities for men and women (1996-2000).

32. Council Directive 76/207/EEC of 9 February 1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion and working conditions.

33. Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (COM/2000/334 final).

34. Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.

- in employment

Important steps forward have been recently accomplished in the area of employment. With the inclusion of **provisions on employment in the Amsterdam Treaty**, the European Union moved from non-binding Presidency Conclusions of European Councils – which had proved inadequate for establishing credible employment coordination – to a requirement in the Treaty for cooperation. Such an institutional basis for “employment as a common concern” was translated into the **coordinated employment strategy**³⁵ which implies new responsibilities for all players, Member States, European institutions as well as social partners.

In the **European Employment Strategy** (Luxembourg process), it is stipulated that the social partners at all levels (and also the regional and local authorities) have a significant role to play in the monitoring operations and, in their own field of responsibility, in contributing to the promotion of a high level of employment. They are called on to strengthen the four pillars of the Employment Guidelines (employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities). Moreover, they have a particularly important part to play in:

- improving capacity for occupational integration under the employability pillar. For instance, they are to seek to encourage partnership approaches to ease the transition from school to work, take into account the needs of disadvantaged groups in the labour market

and, more generally, help to develop opportunities for lifelong learning (the social partners have adopted a joint declaration on this subject);

- modernising the organisation of work under the adaptability pillar. They are invited to negotiate and implement, at all appropriate levels, agreements to modernise the organisation of work, including flexible working arrangements, with the aim of making undertakings productive and competitive and achieving the required balance between flexibility and security. The role of social partners is particularly important in making both workers and the organisation of work apt to cope with continuous structural change.

The **Employment Guidelines for 2000** call for consolidation of the social partners’ commitment to this process, emphasising once again the need for their involvement (notably in a joint process) in modernising work organisation.

The social partners’ role in the employment strategy will expand progressively, as referred to in the mid-term review in the Joint Employment Report: “Bearing in mind that a number of Guidelines are also or exclusively addressed to the social partners, the latter should be invited in future to provide a direct contribution to the NAP implementation reports, in which they should report on their role in implementing the employment strategy. This could imply the setting by the social partners of a joint approach and

objectives, enabling them to develop an autonomous process in the context of the Employment Guidelines, including the benchmarking of their contribution at various levels in all relevant pillars, and in particular under the adaptability pillar.”

Consultations and dialogue on employment between the Council, the Commission, and employers’ and workers’ representatives were also reinforced within the **Standing Committee on Employment**, notably through its reform in March 1999.

Finally, a **Macroeconomic Dialogue** (1999 Cologne process) was put in place between the representatives of the Council, the Commission, the European Central Bank and the social partners, an important new forum where macroeconomic policy issues are discussed within the broad economic policy guidelines pursued by the Member States and the Community.

In order to prepare policy makers from candidate countries, including social partners, for the above Community acquis in the field of employment, employment policy reviews are being prepared in each applicant country (as agreed in the Accession Partnerships). Their aim is to assess the progress of the candidate countries in making employment systems and procedures compatible with those of the EU. Social partners from candidate countries should also be involved in this evaluation.

35. Multiannual process for implementation and monitoring of Member States’ employment policies, also known as the Luxembourg process. It operates through: 1) **Employment Guidelines** for the Member States, adopted by the European Council on a proposal from the European Commission; 2) a **National Action Plan (NAP)** drawn up by each Member State which describes how these guidelines are put into practice; 3) the Commission and the Council examine each National Action Plan and present a **Joint Employment Report** to the European Council. The Commission presents a new proposal to revise the Employment Guidelines for the following year; 4) on the basis of the conclusions by the Heads of State or Government, the Council formally approves the revised Employment Guidelines for the following year. The Council may also decide, by qualified majority, to issue **country-specific recommendations** upon a proposal by the Commission.



III. Increased mobilisation by the social partners

1. Cross-industry impetus for enlargement

In the course of recent years, the European social partners have assessed the full implications of the enormous amount of preparatory work required by the enlargement process and have accordingly stepped up their initiatives in this area.

They started by working with their colleagues in the candidate countries, increasing contacts and affiliations. These initial steps are fundamental in preparing the representatives of management and labour in these countries for EU membership and social dialogue at Community level.

In conjunction with this work, many **joint initiatives** on enlargement have been promoted by ETUC, UNICE and CEEP. On 18 and 19 March 1999 they organised the first social partner conference on enlargement in Warsaw. This was a historic meeting, where all the EU and CEEC social partners discussed together, for the first time, their role in the enlargement process (box 1).

A working group was set up to follow up the conference; keeping up the momentum imparted by Warsaw, the European social partners decided to undertake jointly a wide-ranging project to review and take stock of the social dialogue in the candidate countries (box 2).

The social partners also multiplied their **individual initiatives**, in many cases with Commission support, for example the series of employers' round tables which on many occasions assembled employers from Member States and the candidate countries to discuss the subjects they considered most sensitive in the run-up to enlargement (box 3).

Mention should also be made of the efforts made by CEEP to examine together with the candidate countries the position of the public service and of services of general interest following the wave of privatisation in these countries (box 4).

The trade unions have given a great deal of help to their partners in the candidate countries in preparing for transposal of the Community acquis (particularly through the establishment of integration committees in all these countries). They have also made headway on the question of social dumping. ETUC has set up a project on company relocation with an eye to enlargement (box 5).

These initiatives by the European social partners have met with success and – an auspicious sign – their impact is increasingly being extended thanks to initiatives taken by the social partners of the candidate countries themselves.

The Warsaw conference, a historic meeting

The first conference on the social partners' role in the enlargement process was organised in Warsaw on 18 and 19 March 1999 at the joint request of the European social partners with Commission support. Over and above its symbolic significance, it constituted an important point of departure for the social dialogue in the candidate countries and helped the social partners' role to strike root in the enlargement process.

The aim of the conference was to launch a wide-ranging debate on the social dialogue challenges facing the candidate countries, notably following

the major progress made through the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties. The message conveyed to the social partners of candidate countries is clear: the need to develop their social dialogue structures and activities to prepare for these new challenges. The trade union and employers' organisations must be strong, representative and independent, able to negotiate and achieve a balance between flexibility and security.

The conference enabled the social partners of the candidate countries to discuss with their EU colleagues for the first time the different roles they are called

upon to play within the enlargement process: firstly in the negotiations now under way between their governments and the EU, notably on taking over the acquis, but also in the field, to prepare companies and economic and social players for the implementation of the various components of the Community acquis.

The joint declaration adopted by the social partners on that occasion confirms the importance assigned to the social dialogue in working towards successful enlargement and strengthens the role of the social partners in that process.

Extract from the joint declaration by the European social partners (ETUC, UNICE/UEAPME, CEEP)

[...] Enlargement of the European Union to the East and South is a process of historical importance. It faces the candidate countries and the European Union with the double challenge of profound economic and social reform currently

taking place in almost all candidate countries and of taking over the Community acquis.

The tasks to be fulfilled require active participation by social partners who must fully live up to their responsi-

bilities by contributing to the enlargement process, both at national and European level. [...]

CEEP, UNICE/UEAPME and ETUC invite the European Union and the governments of candidate countries to

involve social partners, in an appropriate way, in the enlargement process. [...]

18 March 1999

Full text at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/social/euro_agr/index_t9_en.htm

A status report on social dialogue in the applicant countries

In the wake of Warsaw, the European social partners (UNICE, ETUC, CEEP) put forward a proposal for a joint project on "social dialogue and consultation in the candidate countries, status and prospects" which was submitted to the Commission at the end of 1999. The aim of the project was to provide a comprehensive assessment of the consultation and social dialogue practices and systems in the candidate countries, including the set-ups used (tripartite, bipartite) and the various participants from

both sides of industry. This first snapshot should help to throw light, in each of the candidate countries, on the links between the different levels at which the social partners are consulted or negotiate and improve understanding of how the interests of workers and employers are covered in this process both at national level and in the different industries and regions.

Since December 1999 a working group comprising experts from Member States and candidate countries has been collect-

ing detailed information in the 13 candidate countries. The principal lessons to be learned and results of this work in the field will be presented in mid-2001 at a closing conference assembling social partners and experts from the EU and their counterparts on the candidate countries. In the run-up to enlargement, this conference should be an appropriate arena for discussing social dialogue in the candidate countries and taking stock of past developments and prospects.

Cyprus: yet another success for the employers' round tables

In May 2000 the Cypriot employers' (OEB) organised the fourth employers' round table. As pointed out by Ms Diamantopoulou, Commissioner responsible for employment and social affairs, who attended the event, this series of round tables, launched in 1997 and subsequently held in Brussels (1997), Prague (1998) and Stockholm (1999) with the support of the Employment and Social Affairs DG and TAIEX, has become a key arena for exchanges between employers' representatives from the EU and the candidate countries. The Cyprus round table was true to tradition; for two days the employers discussed the problems and challenges encountered by employers' organisations in the run-up to enlargement.

At a first session on *introduction of the acquis*, developments in the European social dialogue were compared with practices in the candidate countries. Although there are numerous examples of sound preparatory work, for instance the joint assessment papers on employment being prepared in candidate countries in direct cooperation with the social partners, certain problems still have to be dealt with. Given the frequent changes of political direction in the candidate countries, how can sustainable development of social dialogue be assured? Several priorities

were highlighted, such as stronger tripartite structures – more firmly anchored in national legislation – and also more scope for collective bargaining at branch level and promotion of forms of worker participation at enterprise level.

How can the European social dialogue be linked to the local context, a key issue of subsidiarity? Which Community provisions should be introduced by way of legislation and which by social dialogue? How should the various levels be coordinated?

The employers' representatives drew attention to the difficulties the transposal of the *acquis* causes at enterprise level and also to the need to introduce at local level cost/benefit analysis of implementation of the *acquis* in terms of competitiveness and human resources. On the whole, however, the employers agreed on the need to align their endeavours to implement the *acquis* with the conclusions of the Lisbon European Council, considering the various components of the *acquis* as productive factors and not merely a cost to be borne in joining the EU.

At the second session on *health and safety*, the participants underlined the importance of regarding the necessary adjustments in this area as an investment, ultimately far less costly to the employer than the accidents which could result from negligence.

On the employers' side, however, this demands not only technical adjustments, but a radical change in mentality. For example, implementation of the *acquis* in this field is clearly a problem for SMEs which constitute more than 90% of the industrial fabric of the applicant countries.

Against that background, the *Community programmes* take on their full significance, as mentioned by the employers in the third session. While underlining the usefulness of broad programmes in helping the candidate countries to improve their institutions and infrastructures, the employers also emphasised the need for more flexible programmes, subject to assessment and brought into operation more rapidly; in this way, microprojects, in many cases the best solution at local level, could also be funded. On that front, other international organisations, such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), could provide valuable supplementary assistance at grass roots.

Organisation of this series of employers' round tables also highlighted the usefulness of specific Commission social dialogue budgets for direct use by the social partners.

Promoting the concept of services of general interest

On 2 and 3 December 1999, CEEP organised in Brussels, with Commission support, a first seminar for representatives of services of general economic interest from the candidate countries.

Stock was taken at this seminar of the problems and challenges public enterprises and undertakings of general interest come up against and of the steps to be taken to improve social dialogue and employers' representativeness. It is important to assure the continuance of services of general interest in the candidate countries, even when they shift to the private sector as a result of privatisation. Other key questions were also covered, such as the role of these services in regional development and, more general-

ly, in economic and social cohesion.

It should be stressed that missions of general interest constitute a major challenge for the Member States and form part of the Community acquis to be taken on in the candidate countries. The Commission issued a Communication on services of general interest in 1996, while the Amsterdam Treaty (Article 16) states that "given the place occupied by services of general economic interest in the shared values of the Union as well as their role in promoting social and territorial cohesion, the Community and the Member States ... shall take care that such services operate on the basis of principles and conditions which enable them to fulfil their missions". The Lisbon European Council of

March 2000 and the Santa Maria da Feira European Council of June 2000 stressed the importance of services of general interest in the context of a dynamic single market and a knowledge-based society; they requested the Commission to update its Communication.

Moreover, CEEP has joined with ETUC in drawing up a charter for services of general interest.

On conclusion of this first seminar, CEEP decided to pursue and extend its activities in the candidate countries. CEEP is planning to organise a seminar in Bucharest from 19 to 21 October 2000 and is keeping up its bilateral contacts in all the applicant countries.

Enterprise relocation: a first review

In the context of its enlargement activities, ETUC launched at the end of 1999 a study on "Central and Eastern Europe in EU enterprises' strategy of industrial restructuring and relocation".

Experts from ten CEE candidate countries are taking part in this project; they are drawing up a first report on EU direct investments in their countries (notably when such moves have given rise to relocations from the country of origin), taking account not only of the "risk" aspects of such moves (for example, factory closures or job losses in Member States),

but also the "opportunities" aspects by including them, for example, in the global strategies of EU companies. The study has two principal aims:

- 1) to provide a first assessment of the distribution of EU direct investments in Central and Eastern Europe (by sector, industry, region, size of firm, and so on) in order to determine more clearly the main reasons behind them (industrial strategy, local conditions, market prospects, etc.);
- 2) to identify all the effects of these capital movements on local economies,

not only in terms of economic development (jobs, investments, exports) but also social development (labour relations, collective bargaining, working conditions).

This information will be collected through case studies in each candidate country, some carried out across-the-board, with interviews in the same companies in a number of CEECs. The results of this innovative approach will be discussed at a seminar closing the project which ETUC is expected to organise during 2001.

2. Dialogue at grass roots: sectoral initiatives

Deliberations on enlargement have started up in almost all sectors, with progress made varying from sector to sector.

In the building industry, for example, the catalyst was realisation of the fact that CEEC workers constitute a significant labour market resource for the industry. In rail, road and inland waterways, questions about enlargement and its repercussions on the transport industry took priority. The forthcoming negotiations in the inland waterway sector fall into this context as does the working group on social dumping planned for the road transport sector in 2000. The railway industry is also commencing deliberations in the light of problems of competition and opening-up of markets.

Other sectors are trying to single out their counterparts. In private security, a general joint declaration was adopted in 1999 on the role of the industry and the social partners in the future enlargement of the EU and a project was subsequently launched with a view to identifying the partners on both sides. The cleaning industry prepared a similar project and negotiations are in progress on a joint text. These moves towards identification and joint reflection have sometimes been made by trade unions alone; for example, in the hotel and restaurant sector where ECF-IUF organised a seminar in

May 2000 with the participation of the industry's Hungarian trade unions and the Commission.

In commerce, textiles and clothing, agriculture and banking, preliminary deliberations gave way to joint action. Commerce took the first step: four round tables were held in 1998 and 1999 for the social partners of the EU and the CEECs in Estonia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland. They are being followed by three more this year in Bulgaria, Slovakia and Latvia. In textiles and clothing, pragmatic cooperation is gradually developing on an original initiative: the extension to the CEECs of the code of conduct of fundamental rights adopted in 1997 by the EU-level social partners.

A first promising initiative was taken in agriculture: a conference organised by EFA (the European Federation of Agricultural Workers' Unions) with representatives of Hungarian trade unions and employers' organisations marked the first stage of the CEEC social partners' involvement in European social dialogue. Lastly, in the banking industry, a UNI-Europa conference held with trade union representatives from six CEECs in June 1999 on bank privatisation and developments opened the way for several joint follow-up projects among the social partners at European level.

Agriculture: a first promising initiative

Enlargement will have a substantial impact on farming in the CEECs. The challenges are enormous: at present the average proportion of the labour force working in agriculture in the CEECs ranges from 9% in Hungary to 17% in Poland, compared to between 2% and 3% in the Member States. Moreover, the monthly wage of a German farm worker is what a Polish farm worker earns in one year. Hence the important potential for migration of seasonal farm workers from the CEECs to the Member States.

It was in that context that the European Federation of Agricultural Workers' Unions (EFA) organised, with the representatives of the Hungarian trade unions and employers (MEDOSZ and MOSZ), a conference from 17 to 20 February 2000 in Budapest.

The conference paved the way for involvement by the CEEC social partners in the European social dialogue. The crux of the problem for the Hungarian social

partners was to reinforce independent social dialogue and give free rein to tripartism. There are currently nine employers' organisations and six trade unions in Hungary: this "dispersal" of structures obviously weakens the country's social dialogue.

Material for debate was provided by Austrian and German social partners from the sector who presented examples of good practices. The former explained how reconciliation of interests and social peace in Austria, based on social dialogue, had underpinned healthy economic development. The latter presented the set-up and operation of social dialogue in Germany and a scheme of the German employers' organisation (GLFA) for reintegrating into the labour market long-term unemployed agricultural workers.

Lastly, the German "PECO Institute" outlined a highly interesting experience: the restructuring of agriculture in the former German Democratic Republic follow-

ing unification. A "Qualifizierungsfonds" (qualifications fund), jointly organised by the employers and the trade unions and based on a collective agreement, had provided backing for the structural change. A similar process could be applied in the candidate countries following enlargement.

The Hungarian employers deplored the lack of strategy for jobs in agriculture: 50,000 jobs had been lost since 1990. If nothing was done, employment would be cut by between 30% and 40% in the next few years. There is also great concern about illegal work and wage differences between men and women.

The representatives of the Hungarian trade unions asked for account to be taken of the social partners' contributions in the accession negotiations.

The event may be regarded as a pilot conference; it will be followed by similar meetings in the other applicant countries.

Banking: taking up the challenges of enlargement together

Enlargement will have a significant impact on the banking industry in terms of competition, working conditions and employment. The industry will have to deal with restructuring and relocation on a major scale.

The sector's four European social partners (UNI-Europa, EBF, ESBG and EACB) realised that it was high time to boost the social partner organisations in the CEECs and involve them in the European social dialogue activities.

As a first stage, the European social partners and their respective national organisations, together with international organisations (such as ILO), are drawing up an inventory of activities carried out in the CEECs.

As a second stage, round tables will be organised in the CEECs, on the pattern of those held in the commerce sector. The first three will be organised from October to December 2000 in the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary. This joint

initiative can be traced back to the conference organised by Euro-FIET (subsequently UNI-Europa) in Prague in June 1999; it was attended by social partners from Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

In the long term the European social partners hope to invite their CEEC counterparts to attend meetings of their sectoral social dialogue committee as observers.

Commerce: the front line in the applicant countries

Commerce was one of the first sectors to be privatised in the CEECs. It very soon had to deal with numerous challenges: restructuring, new working conditions (transfers from full-time to part-time work, longer shop-opening hours), inadequately-trained workers and the advent of big multinational companies. It was not by chance, therefore, that the sector's trade unions were the very first to opt for a new approach as they had to adapt to the market economy.

Against that background, EuroCommerce and UNI-Europa (formerly EuroFIET) decided to organise, with the cooperation and financial assistance of TAIEX (Technical Assistance Information Exchange Office) and the Employment and Social Affairs DG, joint round tables in all the candidate countries. Four have so far been held: in Estonia (1998), Hungary

(1998), the Czech Republic (1999) and Poland (1999). They will be followed by three more round tables between October and December 2000 in Bulgaria, Slovakia and Latvia.

The prime objective of these meetings between social partners from the commerce sector in the EU and the applicant countries was to convey the following message: the imperative need for the latter to organise themselves into proper trade unions and employers' associations, capable of talking together on a bipartite basis with a view to negotiating agreements. This is the price of success for the accession process: unless appropriate structures are set up and good practices established from the outset, the conditions for membership will become very onerous.

The other objectives were to inform the CEEC social partners about the social

dimension of enlargement, the issues at stake in the European social dialogue and the activities carried out by the social partners in the commerce sector in the context of their European social dialogue.

Of all the contributions made by the European social partners to each round table, the most important was probably the agreement concluded in 1999 on fundamental rights and principles at work. It recognises employees' trade union rights and requires employers to negotiate collective agreements.

On 14 April 2000, it was the turn of the social partners from the candidate countries to come to the European Union. They took part in the Lisbon conference on employment in commerce organised by UNI-Europa and EuroCommerce. The accession process was a key topic in the debates.

Textiles and clothing: code of conduct extended to the applicant countries

Enlargement quickly became a sensitive subject in textiles and clothing, a labour-intensive industry. The differences in labour costs both between the Member States and the candidate countries and between the candidate countries themselves have had a significant impact on production sites and places of location: assembly work is relocated to CEECs while preparatory work (cutting) and finishing are kept in the Member States. This is known as "outward processing"; it promotes the sale of products as "EU goods" without requiring massive investment in the candidate countries.

A conference organised in Prague in November 1999 between the CEEC and EU social partners threw light on key problems regarding violation of social rights and trade union rights in many candidate countries, not only in domestic

enterprises but also in certain local subsidiaries of EU companies. All these matters call for concerted action with an eye to enlargement.

In the European textiles and clothing industry, this concerted action led to an original initiative: progressive application in the candidate countries of the code of conduct adopted in September 1997 by the European social partners (Euratex and ETUF:TCL). The code includes a ban on child and forced labour, freedom of association, the right to negotiate and non-discrimination in employment. It is being applied in an innovative manner: as clauses in the code are included in collective agreements negotiated and concluded at national level, it is acquiring legal, binding status. The aim is to encourage undertakings in the candidate countries to comply with the code's mini-

mum standards and fundamental rights, not only in production, but also in subcontracting.

Implementation of this code in the applicant countries inevitably forms part of a long-term, gradual approach based on incentives and partnership. The fact that the industry is made up above all of small businesses naturally increases the difficulties. Yet this is a vital issue: improving working conditions in all enterprises in the industry in the candidate countries. Ongoing, structured cooperation between social partners in the candidate countries and the EU is accordingly indispensable. A further seminar will be held in the near future in Turkey, another candidate country, where development of industrial relations and implementation of labour law in this industry is high on the agenda.





IV. Prague conference confirms: social policy at the heart of the enlargement process

At the conference organised by the Commission in Prague on 11 and 12 May 2000, explanations were given to the candidate countries about the role of social and employment policies in the enlargement process and their obligations in these areas. It was attended by high-level representatives from employment and social affairs ministries and also from other ministries holding specific responsibilities in the fields of enlargement, foreign affairs and economic and financial affairs in the Member States and the candidate countries. The social partners from the EU and the candidate countries also participated and played an active part. The Commission guidelines for social policy were outlined in detail in such diverse and complementary areas as working conditions, social protection, employment and social dialogue. These different, indispensable components of the Community acquis also reflect the different facets of overall European policy on economic and social cohesion. They must now be taken on board by the economic and social players in the candidate countries and incorporated into their policies, laws and national practices.

In regard to **working conditions**, this signifies adoption of many Council directives on, for example, labour law, health and safety and equal opportunities. However, the participants also referred to the candidate countries' need to prepare for and adhere to their commitments in these areas, notably by establishing and developing all the appropriate administrative and judicial structures required to implement and enforce this acquis in the field.

On **social protection**, the participants emphasised the need: 1) to ensure that social protection is not marginalised in relation to other policies, but, on the contrary, to modernise it in response to demographic change and ensure more satisfactory cover of increasing unemployment and social exclusion; 2) to develop financially-sound social protection systems which can also help to smooth the process of economic transition (for instance, by stimulating employment) and maintain political stability. Several speakers from the candidate countries requested the Commission to promote exchanges of information and experience between Member States and candidate countries on pension reform, a problem most of them are currently facing.

In the area of **employment**, the conference helped the candidate countries better to appreciate all the components of the European employment strategy in the Member States – its foundations and rationale, its implementation and the role of the different players – while explaining how the candidate countries can prepare for participation in this joint employment policy. Highly symbolic in this context was the conclusion and signing, on the occasion of the conference, of the first joint assessment on employment by the Commission and

a candidate country, the Czech Republic. Other similar papers should be completed in the forthcoming months in many other candidate countries already involved in these operations. So a good start has been made on bringing the candidate countries into the European employment strategy. But it now demands full involvement of the social partners. The EU social partners are already involved in employment policy and play their part; those of the candidate countries need to prepare themselves.

On the **social dialogue**, a strong message was sent to the governments of the candidate countries, setting forth the legal and institutional bases of the Community acquis in this field and pressing home the need to promote more solid social dialogue structures. Independent social dialogue, without State interference, was advocated in particular and this is still lacking in many applicant countries. The conference also highlighted the very practical role the social partners are called upon to play in implementing the Community acquis at grass roots, not only from the standpoint of the social dialogue, but also in other fields such as labour law, health and safety, equal opportunities, employment and social protection. Preparation for the European social dialogue must also be regarded as a priority by the social partners in the candidate countries for whom the assistance and experience of their EU colleagues is indispensable. At the conference, the European social partners presented their activities in the enlargement context, which have increased in recent years and form the basis for a veritable cooperation policy (see chapter III).

Community funds can be used to provide assistance in the development of this process. Stock was taken at the conference of the budget instruments the Commission has made available to the candidate countries (see chapter V). The speakers from the Enlargement DG outlined possible financial assistance – through twinning arrangements with EU partners – offered under the PHARE programme to the candidate countries to set up projects in the social field, including social protection or even social dialogue. These funds are set to increase in the coming years and confirm the importance the Commission attaches to the social dimension in the enlargement process.

Over and above the descriptions of the various components of the social acquis, in following up the Lisbon European Council, the conference also helped to improve understanding of the advantages of social and employment policy and its latest advances in economic terms as a real **engine for productivity and performance**. Accordingly, the candidate countries should not regard the different components of the social acquis solely as a cost, but rather as an investment, bringing gains in competitiveness, quality and ultimately improved integration of their economies into the EU.



V. Financial instruments at the service of enlargement

1. PHARE and other pre-accession programmes

The Accession Partnerships set out the priority areas of action for each candidate country from Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus and Malta with a view to their preparations for EU accession.

The candidate countries should, in principle, implement the short-term priorities in the course of 2000. For certain areas of action they receive pre-accession financial assistance under the PHARE, ISPA (environment and transport) and SAPARD (agriculture) programmes for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. For Cyprus and Malta, the Council adopted in March 2000 a Council Regulation on the implementation of operations in the framework of the pre-accession strategy. For Turkey, the Commission preferred to implement the strategy within a financial framework.

In including the social dialogue in these priorities, the Commission gave political recognition to its importance in the pre-accession process. To ensure that this recognition takes practical shape in the field, it has stressed to the ten CEEC applicants that they need to bring into effect during 2000 and the following years projects to build up the social dialogue and the role of the social partners. Some of these projects will receive support from the PHARE programme, while others will be funded from national resources in the candidate countries or other international aid systems (for example, the Council of Europe).

The projects have to be submitted to the social affairs ministries of the candidate countries which incorporate them into the annual programme subsequently transmitted to the Commission. The definitive projects are drawn up by the Commission and the respective ministries in close cooperation.

Among the social dialogue projects, mention should be made of a PHARE project designed to strengthen social dialogue in **Poland**. A round table for European integration is being set up; it assembles the most representative trade union and employers' organisations throughout the country (OPZZ – Polish Trade Union Alliance, NSZZ Solidarnosc, Farmers' Chamber, Confederation of Polish Employers, Confederation of Polish Private-Sector Employers). Working meetings will be organised on a regular basis to help them enhance their

capacity for constructive discussion. In the long run the round table should become a social partner committee, a consultative body providing advice for the government, notably in preparations for EU accession. The project also aims to support the setting-up of sectoral social dialogue committees, independent of the authorities; this will facilitate cooperation with their counterparts in the EU (notably under Commission Decision 98/500/EC³⁶). It is also planned to set up an independent arbitration body.

Another social dialogue project in **Slovakia** has been accepted under the PHARE 2000 programming. The aim is to promote the social dialogue at branch and company level. Before bipartite dialogue can be promoted in the different branches, the structures of the employers' and trade union organisations need to be consolidated at this level; training is required in collective bargaining, its methods and contents. At enterprise level, the project is designed to prepare the social partners for implementation of the Community Directive on European works councils and other components of the *acquis*, notably transfers of undertakings and information and consultation. The project should help to develop bipartite dialogue in Slovakia with practical results, such as an increase in the number of sectoral and enterprise collective agreements and their extension to more areas.

In addition, candidate countries have put forward twinning projects aimed at development of the social dialogue under the horizontal programme **Consensus III** which aims to facilitate the adoption and implementation of the Community *acquis* in the social field. Of the 20 projects submitted, only one concerns the social dialogue. It is a project from the **Czech Republic** designed to help the social partners in setting up independent social dialogue at enterprise, sectoral and regional level.

It is regrettable that so few social dialogue projects have materialised in the candidate countries as yet. This should inspire their governments and social partners to take on more commitments in this area, while the Commission should encourage them to include such projects in their forthcoming annual PHARE programming.

36. Commission Decision 98/500/EC of 20 May 1998 on the establishment of sectoral dialogue committees promoting the dialogue between the social partners at European level.

2. The social dialogue budget headings³⁷

- for industrial relations and social dialogue (B3-4000)

This budget heading covers grants to promote the development of multisectoral and sectoral social dialogue within the meaning of Articles 138 and 139 of the Treaty. It accordingly funds consultations, meetings, negotiations and other operations aimed at achieving the above objective.

This heading can also be used to support operations in the field of industrial relations, especially measures designed to develop expertise and exchange of information on a European basis.

Four subprogrammes have been defined: support for European social dialogue, promotion of workers' financial participation, improvement of expertise in the field of industrial relations, codes of conduct and fundamental social rights.

Applications eligible under the subprogrammes are as follows:

	I. Social dialogue	II. Financial participation	III. Industrial relations	IV. Codes, labelling and fundamental social rights
Social partners	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Organisations involved in industrial relations		Yes	Yes	Yes
Public authorities			Yes	Yes
Non-governmental organisations involved in promoting fundamental social rights				Yes

A maximum of 500,000 euro has been set aside to fund measures *in the applicant countries*, some 5% of the heading.

- for training and information measures for workers' organisations (B3-4002)

This heading covers information and training measures for workers' organisations, including *representatives of the social partners of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe*,

deriving from the implementation of Community action on the social dimension of the internal market.

- for information, consultation and participation of representatives of undertakings (B3-4003)

This heading covers funding of measures aimed at strengthening transnational cooperation between worker and employer representatives in respect of information, consultation and participation with undertakings operating in more than one Member State as well as measures providing for the transnational exchange of information and experience in the field of information, participation and consultation within undertakings.

Part of the appropriation concerned is earmarked to cover participation by social partners' representatives from *applicant countries*.

Promoters and the persons concerned must be representatives of workers or employers in undertakings. A project promoter cannot be an individual. Non-profit training organisations and advisory bodies may not be project promoters unless expressly authorised by representatives of eligible social partners.

A number of priority objectives have been established for the 2000 financial year:

- strengthening of transnational cooperation in the field of information and consultation between workers' representatives, between employers, and between worker and employer representatives in undertakings operating in more than one Member State;
- aid for the establishment of information and consultation bodies in Community-scale undertakings and groups of undertakings;
- cooperation between worker and employer representatives to ensure correct information and consultation of employees;
- exchange of experience with a view to preparing the participation of workers' representatives in the decision-making bodies of a European company (European Company Statute);
- innovative measures related to the prevention and settlement of disputes within multinational undertakings and to the promotion of employee participation in profits and enterprise results.

37. The calls for proposals concerning headings B3-4000, B3-4002 and B3-4003 and grant application forms are available at the following Internet address: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/social/index_en.htm

3. Active assistance from TAIEX

Since it was set up in 1996 the Technical Assistance Information Exchange Office (TAIEX) has actively been involved in providing technical assistance in the field of social affairs to the central CEEC authorities. Its first operations came within the framework of the White Paper on preparing the CEECs for integration into the internal market.

As stipulated in Agenda 2000, TAIEX's mandate has been extended to the entire Community acquis and the Office has intensified its activities in the social field by organising directly and taking part in expert missions, study visits, round tables and workshops on social policy, in particular on social dialogue.

In cooperation with the Employment and Social Affairs DG, UNICE, CEEP and ETUC, TAIEX helped to organise a high-level conference on social dialogue and enlargement for all CEEC social partners in Warsaw in March 1999 and a conference in Prague on the social dimension of enlargement in May 2000.

TAIEX was responsible – as it will be in the future – for logistical assistance and financial support for the participation of social partners from the ten CEECs.

At present, to adapt the assistance more specifically to the needs of each CEEC, TAIEX is providing support for a series of round tables for social partners in the commerce sector in the various candidate countries. More generally, the sectoral social partners of the applicant countries have been able to meet their counterparts in their particular sector, to exchange information and build up an informal network. Similarly, the Office organised a seminar for Romanian social partners in cooperation with the Romanian Social and Economic Council in December 1999.

TAIEX will carry on providing assistance to the CEEC social partners. However, their active role should be more clearly defined in their applications to TAIEX for technical assistance. They are expected to be more visibly involved in each event.

VI. Useful Internet sites

European social partners

- at cross-industry level

1. European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and of Enterprises of General Economic Interest (CEEP)

<http://www.ceep.org>

CEEP represents the interests of enterprises with public participation or carrying out activities of general economic interest before the European institutions by promoting initiatives, formulating proposals and producing studies and opinions (for example, list of opinions at <http://www.ceep.org/en/doc.htm>). It plays an active role with regard to enlargement, through a permanent CEEC committee.

2. European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

<http://www.etuc.org>

ETUC represents European workers and has 59 million members. It believes that greater attention should be paid to the social dimension in the enlargement process and it points out that the Union is not just a market and an economic entity, but also a social model with negotiation between social partners as its cornerstone.

Its site includes, inter alia, press releases and reports, news articles and working documents.

5-7/10/2000: Joint ETUC/ETUI annual conference on "Enlargement of the European Union as a Trade Union concern" (Bad Mündler, Germany). The results of this key conference will be published.

• European Trade Union Institute (ETUI)

<http://www.etuc.org/etui>

Founded by ETUC in 1978, ETUI carries out research on topics of importance to trade unions and produces background reports. Its site includes research notes, publications (Infoletters, the journal "Transfer", reports) and a bibliographical reference database (ETUILIB).

Recent publications on enlargement (to be ordered):

- "Les organisations patronales dans les pays de l'Europe centrale et orientale - Pologne, République tchèque, Hongrie" (Employers' organisations in Central and Eastern Europe - Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary), F. Draus, report 64, 2000.

- "Livre blanc sur la protection sociale dans les pays d'Europe centrale et orientale" (White paper on social protection in Central and Eastern Europe), H. Lourdelle, report 62, 1999.

- "Romania and Bulgaria - in quest of development and integration", R. Langewiesche, report 61, 1999.

- Quarterly journal "Transfer": background articles (for example "The role of the social partners in the European employment strategy", D. Foden, No 4/ 1999). No 3/2000 of "Transfer" is devoted to enlargement.

- See also articles on enlargement in "ETUI Yearbook", 1998 and 1999.

• European Trade Union Technical Bureau for Health and Safety (TUTB)

<http://www.etuc.org/tutb>

Established by ETUC in 1989, TUTB has a clear, comprehensive website.

3. Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE)

<http://www.unice.org>

UNICE is the mouthpiece of European companies; it covers all sectors and has 35 member-federations in 27 European countries.

It regards EU enlargement as a priority to increase prosperity in the entire European continent and supports several initiatives aimed at facilitating the incorporation and implementation of Community acquis in the candidate countries (for example, its support to annual employers' round tables on enlargement).

Its site includes news, publications, statements, newsletters, and so on.

On-line publications:

- UNICE's social manifesto "Releasing Europe's employment potential: companies' views on European social policy beyond 2000" (2000).

- UNICE's statement with a view to the Helsinki European Council "European business supports enlargement of the European Union" (3.12.1999).

4. European Confederation of Executives and Managerial Staff (CEC)

<http://www.CEC-managers.org>

CEC is the independent representation of the interests and specific preoccupations of 1.5 million employed managers at European level.

5. EUROCADRES

<http://www.etuc.org/eurocadres>

EUROCADRES, set up under the auspices of ETUC, represents more than 5 million professional and managerial staff (P&M) throughout Europe.

6. European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME)

<http://www.ueapme.com>

UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing the interests, at European level, of crafts, trades and SMEs in the EU and applicant countries. It has an enlargement task-force.

- at sectoral level

1. EuroCommerce

<http://www.eurocommerce.be>

2. UNI-Europa (regional section of Union Network International - UNI)

<http://www.union-network.org/UNISite/Regions/Europa/Europa.html>

The "European Social Dialogue" page of the "UNI Commerce" sector is particularly interesting in the context of enlargement: <http://www.union-network.org/UNISite/Sectors/Commerce/Commerce.html>

Publication:

- "Only one Europe - Euro-FIET and Central and Eastern Europe - Trade unions and the social dimension as Europe comes together again - Background report":

<http://www.fiet.org/com.nsf>

European Community institutions and bodies

Useful general sites

• Agenda 2000

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/agenda2000/index.htm>

• CIG 2000 - Intergovernmental Conference

http://europa.eu.int/comm/igc2000/index_en.htm

• EU official documents

http://europa.eu.int/abc/off/index_en.htm

Useful tool for accessing key EU official documents (EUR-Lex base, Treaties, "Bulletin of the European Union" - which has an "Enlargement" section -, "General report on the activities of the European Union", press releases, etc.).

• Europa

<http://europa.eu.int>

European Union server.

• IDEA (The Electronic Directory of the European Institutions) <http://europa.eu.int/idea/ideaaen.html>

• SCADPlus

http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/scad_en.htm

Background information on the European Union (institutions, policies, Agenda 2000, Amsterdam Treaty, etc.) which includes a section on "Enlargement: preparations for accession".

1. Committee of the Regions

<http://www.cor.eu.int>

2. Council of the European Union

<http://ue.eu.int>

3. Court of Justice of the European Communities

<http://europa.eu.int/cj>

4. Economic and Social Committee

<http://www.ces.eu.int>

The site includes opinions (e.g. "Hungary's progress towards accession - own-initiative opinion" CES239-2000; "Poland's progress towards accession - own-initiative opinion" CES1132-1999) and also follow-up to the work of the joint advisory committees set up by the EU and certain CEECs.

5. European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (Bilbao)

<http://europe.osha.eu.int>

The Agency's site is a vast, constantly-updated source of information on health and safety at work.

6. European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)

<http://www.cedefop.gr>

7. European Commission

http://europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm

See in particular the "Directorates-General and Services" and "Official documents" pages.

See also overleaf "A few Commission Directorates-General worth visiting".

8. European Council

• To read the Presidency conclusions (for example, Helsinki) or access the Presidencies' sites:

<http://ue.eu.int/en/info/eurocouncil>

• Special Portuguese Presidency "Enlargement" page (first half of 2000):

<http://www.portugal.ue-2000.pt/pt/alargamento/index.htm>; see in particular the "Documents" section.

• French Presidency page (second half of 2000):

<http://www.presidence-europe.fr>

9. European Court of Auditors

<http://www.eca.eu.int>

10. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Dublin)

<http://www.eurofound.ie>

• European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO)

<http://www.eiro.eurofound.ie>

The EIRO online site contains information and analysis on the most important events and issues in industrial relations in Europe. Studies, reports and bulletin, concerning, inter alia, enlargement.

11. European Investment Bank (EIB)

<http://www.eib.org>

12. European Parliament

<http://www.europarl.eu.int>

Publication:

- "The social dimension of enlargement: social law and policy in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia" (04/1998): <http://www.europarl.eu.int/dga/wkdocs/soci/en/default.htm>

• Enlargement Task-Force

<http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement/en/default.htm>

A useful site, established in 1997. This European Parliament working group is responsible for following all stages of preparations for EU enlargement.

To provide for more systematic information on enlargement, the working group decided to group all the documentation in a White Paper comprising three volumes. The first one lists the most important official positions adopted so far by the EU institutions and bodies; the second one assembles and summarises the positions and

views of the Member States and the candidate countries; the third one contains briefings (<http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement/briefings/en/index3.htm>) drafted by the working group on the major topics on the negotiation agenda (for example, Briefing 21 "The enlargement of the EU and the economic and social cohesion"). It also contains links to the most relevant sites of governments, national parliaments, the academic world and press agencies in the Member States and candidate countries (see "most relevant sites" on <http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement/references/en/default.htm>).

13. European Training Foundation <http://www.etf.eu.int>

The Foundation wishes to contribute to the development of vocational training systems in the CEECs, the Independent States of the former Soviet Union and Mongolia. The site includes a "Candidate countries" section with publications (for example, the series of "background study" reports on employment and the labour market in the CEECs) (<http://www.etf.eu.int/etfweb.nsf/pages/candidatehome>).

14. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities (EUR-OP) <http://eur-op.eu.int/general/en/index.htm>

NB: on <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex>, EUR-Lex provides free access to the Official Journal for a period of 45 days following publication, together with the Treaties, legislation in force, etc.

15. Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat>

A few Commission Directorates- General worth visiting

1. Economic and Financial Affairs DG

http://europa.eu.int/comm/economy_finance/index_en.htm
To consult the full text of "European Economy: Supplement C. Economic Reform Monitor – Economic situation and economic reform in the candidate countries" (quarterly report on economic developments and the progress of reform in the candidate countries) or the "Joint assessments of medium-term economic policy priorities" of the candidate countries: http://europa.eu.int/comm/economy_finance/document/eesuppc/eeecidxen.htm

2. Employment and Social Affairs DG

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/index_en.htm
To access the DG's main fields of activity, such as industrial relations & industrial change (social dialogue, labour law, work organisation, information society, health and safety at work) and equal opportunities for men and women, or to consult the Social Policy Agenda.

Numerous documents are to be found on the "Social dialogue" page (http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/social/index_en.htm): news, "European Social Dialogue" Newsletter, main joint texts, how to respond to calls for proposals under budget headings B3-4000/4002/4003, Commission Communication COM/1998/322 "Adapting and promoting the social dialogue at Community level", and so on.

Key publications:

- "Social dialogue for success, the role of the social partners in EU enlargement, the Warsaw conference, 18-19 March 1999": http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/social/index_en.htm
- "Report: industrial relations in Europe 2000" (includes a section on enlargement): http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/index_en.htm
- "The impact of Eastern enlargement on employment and labour markets in the EU Member States": http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment_social/key_en.htm
- "Joint employment report 2000": http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment_social/key_en.htm

3. Enlargement DG

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/index.htm>

A site for information on: the state of play in the negotiations, screenings, the pre-accession strategy, Europe Agreements, Accession Partnerships, financial instruments (PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD), key documents, speeches, press releases, Internet links, general e-mail addresses for specific questions, etc. For any question: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/contacts/index.htm> provides a long list of contacts and details of the "PHARE and TACIS Information Centre".

Publications:

- In the "Key documents" section (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/index.htm>), the following may be consulted:
 - "Reports on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries" (13/10/1999) (composite paper + 13 separate reports).
 - "Accession Partnerships 1999" (February 2000).
 - "Enlargement and civil society – 1999 Conference proceedings", brochure, 64 p. (April 2000).
 - "European Union enlargement, a historic opportunity", brochure, 47 p. (October 1999).
- Communication on "Participation of candidate countries in Community programmes, agencies and committees" (20/12/1999) (COM/1999/710): http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/pas/phare/publications/ocp/com710_en.pdf
- "Enlargement Weekly" (weekly electronic newsletter): http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/weekly_arch.htm

• PHARE

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/pas/phare/index.htm>

The site of the EU's main programme for financial and technical cooperation with the CEECs contains detailed information on: the history of enlargement, activities, how to participate, partners, guidelines for implementation of the PHARE programme in the candidate countries for the 2000-2006 period, publications, etc.

• TAIEX (Technical Assistance Information Exchange Office) <http://cadmos.carlbro.be>

The site of the Technical Assistance Office run by the Enlargement DG comprises data bases (but many of them require a password), a newsletter, etc.

International organisations

1. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

<http://www.ebrd.org>

The EBRD aims to support the CEECs' transition to the market economy.

2. International Labour Organisation (ILO)

<http://www.ilo.org>

Set up in 1919, the ILO promotes social justice and internationally recognised human and labour rights. Its wide-ranging site includes a "Social Dialogue" section, with an "InFocus Programme on strengthening social dialogue" and a "Publications" section.

• ILO-CEET – Central and Eastern European Team

<http://www.ilo-ceet.hu>

The Multidisciplinary Advisory Team for Central and Eastern Europe (ILO-CEET), based in Budapest, was set up in 1993. It produces a twice-yearly newsletter and regular reports on industrial relations, wage policies, social security and the activities of workers' and employers' representatives in Central and Eastern Europe.

3. World Bank

<http://www.worldbank.org>

"The Changing Europe" site is devoted to enlargement; it includes studies on the applicant countries and a number of links: <http://www.worldbank.org/eca/eu-enlargement/index.html>

Other interesting sites

1. CEEC-LOGON – Local Governments Network of Central and Eastern European Countries

<http://www.ceec-logon.net>

Focusing on the impact of enlargement at local level, this network organises working groups and conferences on the subject; its documents are available for downloading.

2. Central Europe Review (CER)

<http://www.ce-review.org>

This weekly on-line journal on politics, society and culture in the CEECs has a semantic archive going back two years which includes enlargement (http://www.ce-review.org/thematicarchives/eu/ta_eugeneral.html), for example, Issue 18 of 9 May 2000: "EU, ready or not?".

3. Countdown – The Challenge of the European Union's Eastern Enlargement

<http://wiwswr.ac.at/countdown>

Run by the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (WIIW), Countdown is an international network of cooperating institutions with an on-line information, documentation and communications centre (expert list) on EU enlargement. It has a systematic collection and classification of all relevant information on the subject accessible via a search engine (four categories: literature, expert list, list of institutions, list of conferences covering 18 areas); it also organises discussion forums (for example on migration).

4. Euractiv

<http://www.euractiv.com>

Internet press agency specialising in Community matters; enlargement is one of its principal topics. Its information includes: news, positions, background articles, hyperlinks to documents, reports and brochures, guide to 10,000 EU actors, and so on.

The "Enlargement NegoMonitor: Who is Who" is also useful: <http://www.euractiv.com/cgi-bin/eurb/cgint.exe/9529?714&1015=3&1014=enwwo>

5. EuroInternet

<http://www.oaew.ac.at/cgi-usr/ita/eurolink.pl>

Comprehensive list and update of Internet resources for issues concerning the integration of Europe.

6. European Research Papers Archive (ERPA)

<http://olymp.wu-wien.ac.at/erpa>

A site providing easy access to working papers (full text) on-line on six European integration research sites, including European Integration online Papers (EIoP) (<http://eiop.or.at/eiop>).

On-line working papers:

- "The European Union's eastward enlargement", H.-D. Jacobsen, EIoP, 1997.
- "The social construction of the *acquis communautaire*: a cornerstone of the European edifice", K. E. Jørgensen, EIoP, 1999.

7. Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)

<http://www.ippr.org.uk>

Established in 1988, IPPR is a think-tank focusing on social, economic and political problems. Its activities include research, debates and publications.

Recent publication (to be ordered):

- "Hard budgets, soft States – Social policy choices in Central and Eastern Europe", J. Eatwell, M. Ellman, M. Karlsson, D. M. Nuti and J. Shapiro, IPPR, 2000.

8. The European Policy Centre (The EPC)

<http://www.theepc.be>

The EPC is an interface between government, business and civil society which discusses the major political challenges facing the EU. The extensive website provides comprehensive information by means of: briefings, communication, breakfast meetings with political leaders (e.g. 19/04/2000: Mr Verheugen, Enlargement Commissioner, on "The enlargement of the EU: the road ahead"), forums, including one on enlargement, an on-line journal "Challenge Europe" (including many articles on EU enlargement: http://www.theepc.be/Challenge_Europe/core.asp).



